

Moyer's Improvements To Junge Farms Net Conservation Honors

(Continued from Page A1)

family, daughter Suzann and husband Joe Veppert and family, daughter Leann and husband Mike Moyer and family, along with nephew Jay Garis and Robin Bedford, Karen's sister.

All of the farms are clustered close together in the Kistler Valley. Tillable acres on the all-registered Holstein dairy number about 1,000, including rented ground. There are 175 acres on the home farm.

The farm's beginning can be traced back to a small operation purchased by James Snyder in 1946. At the time, there were 16 cows at the home farm in addition to layers and swine. It was also a huge potato farm, like many in the lush Kistler Valley.

In 1969, Rev. Robert Junge purchased the farm. In the years since, additional farms were added to the farm complex. The Moyers have been managing the farm since 1970. In 1977, the farm became Lehigh County Conservation District cooperators.

According to the district, Junge Farms have installed numerous conservation practices on both owned and rented land to minimize soil erosion. Practices include 155 acres of contour farming, 2.2 acres of critical area planting, 15,000 feet of waterways, 2,070 feet of

diversion, 609 acres of contour stripcropping, 2,800 feet of underground outlets, 3,550 feet of sub-surface drainage, four water control structures, one livestock watering trough (near a stream that feeds into the Ontelaunee River), and two manure storage facilities. A third manure storage facility is in planning. Construction is scheduled to be under way in the fall.

In 1997, Junge Farms sold the preservation easements of the home farm. Another farm is under easement purchase this year.

Fortunately, adjacent farms have also gone under easement purchases, helping to secure a future for farming in the valley.

If the farms are preserved the way they should be, Ray's wife, Karen, noted the area "will stay agriculture." The more local, adjoining farms that decide to preserve their farms will add to a larger area they're trying to preserve, she noted.

"It's a shame that farming isn't as lucrative as building a house," said Ray. "Your food source should come before shelter."

Moyer plants about 400 acres in corn, 200 in soybeans, and another 370 acres in hay. Of the hay, 120 acres are in timothy and 250 acres are in alfalfa. Another 50-60 acres are in small grains.

There is also some pastureland,

much of which is simply used for an exercise area to improve the muscle tone of the cows. The dry cows have access to about 15 acres of land and the milk cows are kept in the barn.

In all, there are 92 milking cows at the farm, including more than 100 head of replacements. The farm sells registered Holstein bulls. About 43 commercial bred are sold and 23 for AI.

A top producer on the herd milked 43,000 pounds last year. One, in the third lactation, is close to 50,000 pounds. The herd, on Pa.DHIA, has a 25,000 pounds average at 3.9 percent fat and 3.3 percent protein.

There are two separate TMR rations, one for the milk cows and the other for the dry cows. For the milk herd, cows are fed a 60 percent haylage and 40 percent corn silage, with shelled corn and minerals. The dry cows are fed a TMR with 40 percent haylage, 60 percent corn silage, and all free-choice timothy hay.

One innovation the Moyers are using is a computerized ear tag system. The larger number on the

(Turn to Page A27)



Since he began managing the farm complex owned by Rev. Robert Junge 28 years ago, Ray Moyer has incorporated smart conservation on the farm in the form of terraces, waterways, diversions, and all the items necessary to ensure a more improved farm with better soil. With him is wife Karen. Photo by Andy Andrews.



A big innovation on the farm is the eight-foot high bull gate system. The system, constructed in the winter of 1996 by Ray's father-in-law, the late Harold Roeder, can handle seven bulls with an adjustable headgate. One such bull, a 3-year-old Beltone bull, weighs about 2,500 pounds. The sturdy, custom-built structure uses 2-inch steel pipe and high-tensile tubing. For a farmer to have that constructed by a contractor would cost about \$75,000. Here, Jake Moyer looks over the gate system.

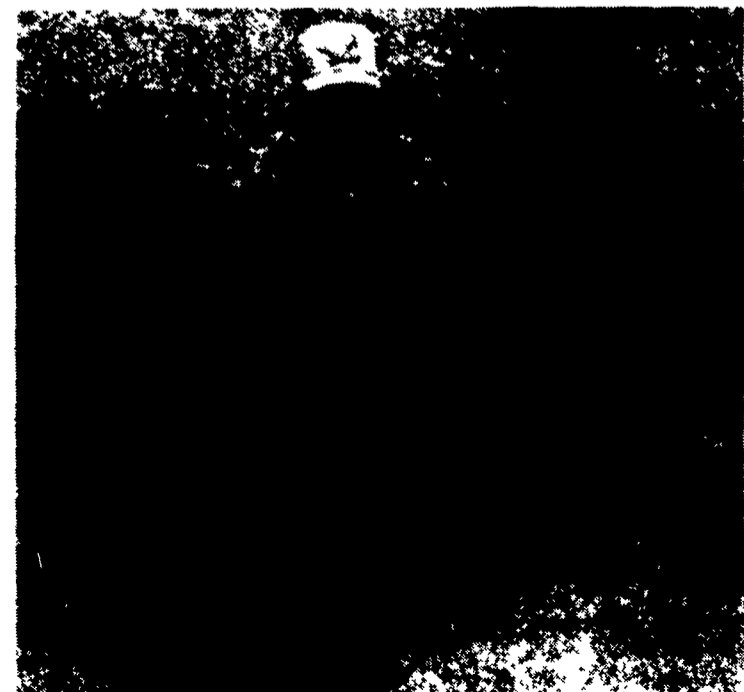


Two years ago, Moyer's father-in-law, the late Harold Roeder, constructed an eight-foot tall gate and headlock structure in the bull barn, with two aisles making up seven pens. Manure from the interlocking pens can be easily scraped out. Ray Moyer inspects the headgates.

CORN 1998

DATE	PLANTING	HYBRID	SEED	PLANTING	HYBRID	SEED	PLANTING	HYBRID	SEED	PLANTING	HYBRID	SEED
HOME	3	2.5	C	750	1125	100	490					
HOME	8	4	C	500	500	100	400					
HOME	15	4.5	C	750	1125	100	490					
HOME	17	2	C	500	500	100	300					
HOME	18A	3.5	C	750	1125	100	490					
HOME	20	3.5	C	750	1125	100	490					
HOME	21	3	C	500	500	100	300					

The Moyers have always placed importance on the benefits of soil testing, which they do every three years. The soil tests are based on about 240 carefully mapped field sites and not only record previous crops and nutrient applications, but also indicate what crops will be rotated into them and their nutrient needs. Here's a sample of the corn planting information.



Recently, at the bull farm, a piped outlet system was installed at the driveway to the barn to help control water runoff, which leads about 100 yards down to a grass area. Here Ray Moyer inspects the system.