

Hillegass Family

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courage their "farm kids" to embrace every opportunity that offers a new view of the world.

"I encourage the kids to go to college because it makes them well-rounded," their mother said. They hope the kids, even while preserving the farm, won't later allow themselves to be swallowed up by it.

One or two generations from now, his future grandchildren, Doug realizes, will face modernization of outmoded 1990s equipment and methods, regarding them as "old-fashioned" after the new millenium is here.

The kids, who all are FFA and 4-H members involved with ag projects, are learning to observe industry developments.

The youth have shown award-winning dairy animals, participated in dairy judging, speech contests, and won in record book-keeping. Tractor pulling is a Jared favorite.

Desi helped her dairy bowl team in 1994 to win the state contest and has traveled to Louisville, Ky.

The entire family enjoys tractor pulling contests, especially when they can cheer for their own guys.

Doug and Debra said it was the

Lord who brought them together and their love for Him has been the only constant thing in their lives.

Doug said it's strange that despite the farm's growth, he still does many chores that 20 years ago he did for his dad. "I still fix fence, still feed cows, and still do crop work."

"I still feed calves," said Debra, "only more of them. I still pick rock. I wish there were less of them!"

She also helps with milking, is the bookkeeper, and mows the expansive and attractive lawn while the kids, too, fulfill their assigned responsibilities.

Sometimes, according to observations Doug and Debra have made, family farms fall by the wayside because the precious unity of purpose is lost by the family itself.

"We have preached and preached to them (the children) to stay together. They will be all right if they stay together," said Debra. "One can't get it done alone."

"My goal, said Doug, a Berlin Young Farmer, "is to have this farm set up so that will never be a problem."

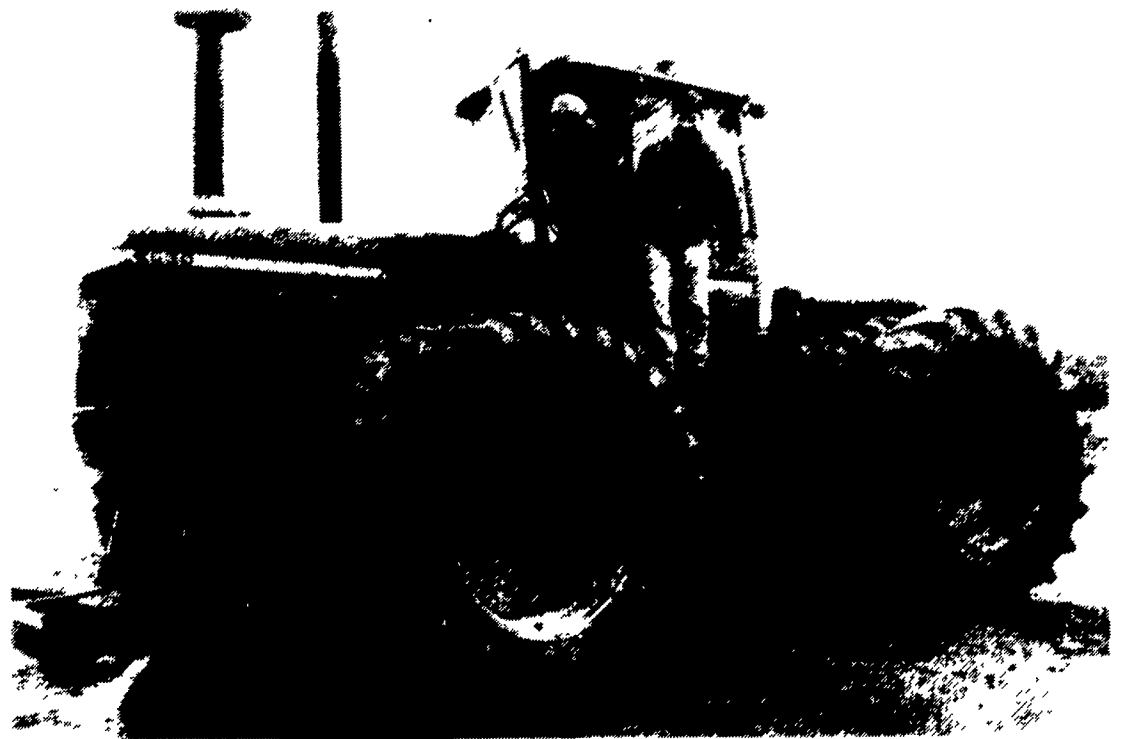
Exactly 49 years ago, in 1949, for \$12,000, Glenden, who died

last year, had purchased the original farm from Dan. To make the down payment, he converted the sugar maple tree assets into cash by cutting them for timber. It really has come a long way in

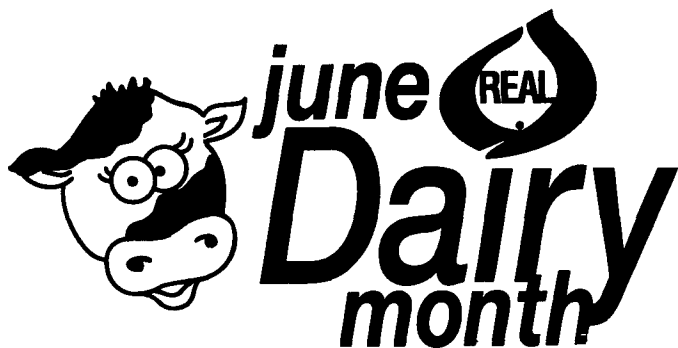
nearly half a century. Going from a tie-stall barn to bunkers was a tremendous adjustment, but it's their life and the cows, therefore, take precedence over other things. If a cow is mated right, with

proper feeding and good herd health, Doug said higher production will come.

"We're all for keeping agriculture in the state and in the county," stated the dairyman.



Jared Hillegass, left, and employees, Morgan Dickey and George Kovacs are pictured with the John Deere 8630.



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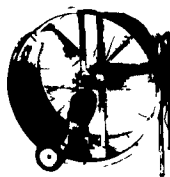
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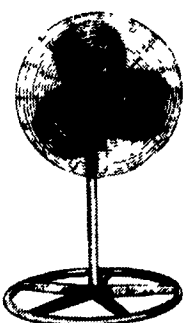
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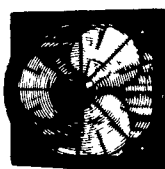
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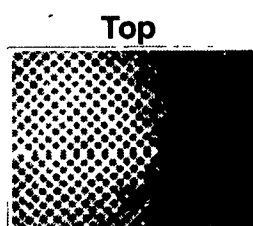
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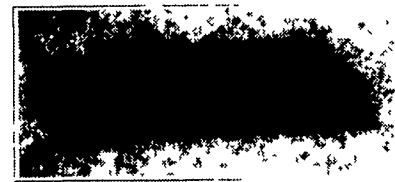
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