

# Dairyman Sees Joy In Family Partnership

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**Adams Co. Correspondent  
GETTYSBURG (Adams Co.)**

— Adams County dairy farmer Larry Wilkinson not only has a Dairy of Distinction designation for his farm, Getty Acres, he was just named to receive the county's Clean Water Farm Award.

Wilkinson and wife, Doris, began their farming career at the 300-acre Rentzel Road property in 1977 when they moved from Chester County. Their homestead dates back to the early 1900s. Then in 1985 they bought an additional 85 acres adjacent to their land.

Another 2,300 acres located between their property and Gettysburg is rented, according to son Ed Wilkinson, a partner. The business not only includes the dairy operation, but also produces a large quantity of timothy hay for the mushroom industry in eastern Pennsylvania. Another son, Dan Wilkinson, is also a partner in the business.

For father Larry, the fact that

his sons are a part of the operation is most satisfying. He said of all the good things in his life, one that he has a lot of gratitude for is the fact that he was able to have his boys join him in a partnership.

And, Dan adds, because the two young men are partners in the business gives them an incentive to make the farm successful. Always working on the farm, he said, "Before (the partnership), we were just doing a job. Now we have a vested interest."

Do they ever disagree over the farm's operations? Sure, they say, but Dan said, "It brings different views to the situation."

Larry later explained that since each son uses his special talents in the job — Ed is the more mechanically inclined and might fix machinery — the three of them are not working shoulder-to-shoulder, so friction is seldom a factor.

Larry works with the dairy cows, noting that they have a herd of 230 cows with 200 milking at the end of April. They also have 225 head of replacement heifers

and 267 head of steers.

A day begins on the farm at 5 a.m. when Larry and another person start milking. They are joined at 6 a.m. by Dan, Ed, son-in-law Chris Smith — Chris and daughter, Debbie, were married at a ceremony by the farm pond on May 23 — and five other employees, who might be full time or part time depending on the season. Ed's wife, Tina, also helps with the milking in addition to helping Doris with the office work. A second milking takes place at 2 p.m. and a third is at 9:45 p.m.

"Only 125 of the high producers are milked three times a day," Ed explained.

What is the major problem facing a dairy farmer today?

Larry responds with a laugh, "Milk prices!" He goes on to explain that while last month the price was up, last fall when it had dropped, it made bill-paying difficult.

Ed said he doesn't think American farmers would be happy with a true milk quota system such as



Hanging newly painted signs became a Wilkinson family project for grandsons Carl and Lee Wilkinson, son, Dan Wilkinson, son-in-law, Chris Smith (in green hat), and farm-hand Randy Moritz.



The Wilkinson family poses for a family picture on their farm, Getty Acres, in Adams County. They are, left, back row, Chris and Debbie Smith who were married on the farm on May 23, Dan Wilkinson, Kendall Wilkinson, Laurie Wilkinson holding baby Ty Wilkinson, Earl Wilkinson, Doris Wilkinson, Larry Wilkinson, and Ed Wilkinson. Front row, left, Lee Wilkinson, Carl Wilkinson, Tina Wilkinson, Holly Wilkinson, and Heather Wilkinson.

Germany has, "but we should be somewhere in between.

"I know that we can't stand a true open market where you've got real highs and real lows when with dairy production you can't store that product. It's too perishable. You can't hold it in a bin or tank like you can corn or soybeans."

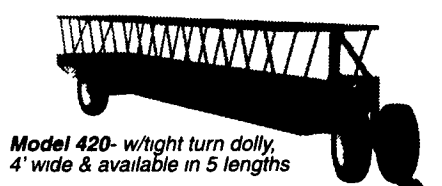
He said he can't solve the problem, and arriving at a solution

would be difficult because of the unique situations facing each farmer.

Larry said "Mother Nature plays a lot in this milk production." Last summer's dry, hot weather, and the milk winter have increased the Wilkinson's milk production by three percent. While that doesn't seem like much, when it comes to milk vol-

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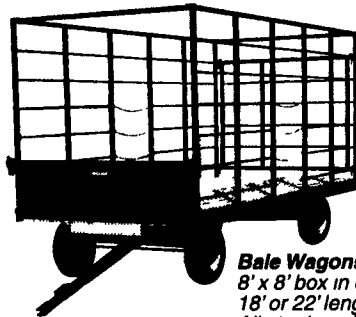
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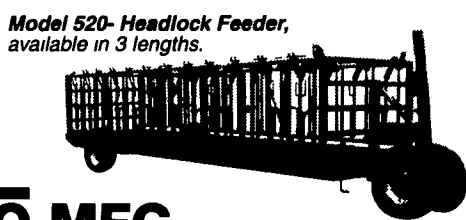
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## TOP 12 QUESTIONS



Dairymen Should Ask His Milk Market.

- |                                    |  |
|------------------------------------|--|
| 1. No Equity Deductions?           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes! |
| 2. No Co-op Dues?                  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes! |
| 3. Farmer Owned—Farmer Controlled? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes! |
| 4. No Bull Talk—Straight Answers?  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes! |
| 5. Secure Milk Market?             | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes! |
| 6. No Gimmick Milk Prices?         | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes! |
| 7. Top Competitive Milk Price?     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes! |
| 8. Fewest Deductions?              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes! |
| 9. Top Notch Trucking?             | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes! |
| 10. Milk Check Never Late?         | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes! |
| 11. Member Services?               | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes! |
| 12. Fair Treatment to all Members? | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes! |

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