

# Ayrshire Princess Shares Love For Breed

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**FAWN GROVE (York Co.)** —

She started out raising black and whites, then accented her herd with a dash of red

Now Susan Richardson is making her mark in the regional Ayrshire arena, both with her junior project animals and as the 1998 Pennsylvania Ayrshire Princess.

Susan, 16, is the oldest of three daughters of Charles and Ruth Richardson, Fawn Grove. The Richardson operation includes 400 acres of crops and a milking herd of 60 mostly homebred Holsteins and some colored breed cattle that entered the family dairying picture as 4-H project calves.

Encouraged by her dad and an aunt who had been 4-H'ers, Susan enrolled in the dairy program when she was 10 years old.

"My dad really wanted me to join," she recalls. "He dug out his old clippers and halters for me." Two years later, younger sisters Barbara, 14 and Tracy, 11, followed in the family's 4-H dairy footsteps.

As her involvement with showing cattle developed, Susan became interested in the Ayrshire breed. This season she is exhibiting two cows and two heifers.

"I've been lucky enough to have them calve out well," she says as her heifers have matured and developed. Her Wentworth-Farm Ms. Merrilee and Wentworth-Farm Heidi-Ho, junior and senior two-year-olds, took Ayrshire breed champion

and reserve honors at the York 4-H roundup in late July. That same week, Heidi-Ho was selected the supreme champion at the Cecil County, Maryland, open dairy show.

Fellow Ayrshire enthusiasts encouraged Susan to become more active in the breed association's youth programs. Initially, she shunned the idea of running for the state Ayrshire princess title.

"I don't particularly like to get dressed up," she admits with a chuckle. But after watching Marylander Becky Patrick crowned as the national Ayrshire princess last year, Susan began to give the idea more serious thought.

Along with three other contestants, she participated in the princess contest at the 1998 Pennsylvania Ayrshire Association's annual meeting, held at Towanda in late March. When the interviews and impromptu questions were over, Susan was the new Pennsylvania Ayrshire Princess.

In June, she attended the national Ayrshire convention in Iowa, not as a princess contestant, but as a member of the four person quiz bowl team representing Maryland and Pennsylvania. The team took second place out of eight.

As a spokesperson for Ayrshire cattle, Susan participates in various youth and general events, helps with ribbon and trophy awards at shows, and promotes the breed. Part of that responsibility includes speaking before groups, a skill that Susan both

enjoys and is comfortable with. She credits her speaking abilities in part to 4-H public speaking and demonstrations, and especially to dairy judging.

"At first I was not interested in judging; I didn't think I would be any good at it," she confesses. She credits youth dairy judging leaders, including Jerry Myers, Paul Knight, Scott Cooper, and Jeff Rutz, for their encouragement and help in honing her dairy judging skills.

"I love it," she says of the challenge of placing, remembering and presenting oral judging reasons for classes of dairy cattle. Her skill is evident in that she finished third in dairy judging at the recent 4-H State Days held the first week of August at Penn State, and was part of the York County team which placed second. As state third-high individual, Susan will be part of the four-member dairy judging team representing Pennsylvania at the national youth judging contest at the October World Dairy Expo in Madison, Wisconsin.

Susan is also an accomplished cattle showman and fitter who thoroughly enjoys the challenge of training, preparing and exhibiting her animals.

"Showing gives me a chance to present them to others," she says. The showing has also helped expand her interests in other aspects of dairying, including a keener interest in the family herd feeding program.

"I do all my own fitting," Susan is quick to emphasize. "I think 4-Hers especially should



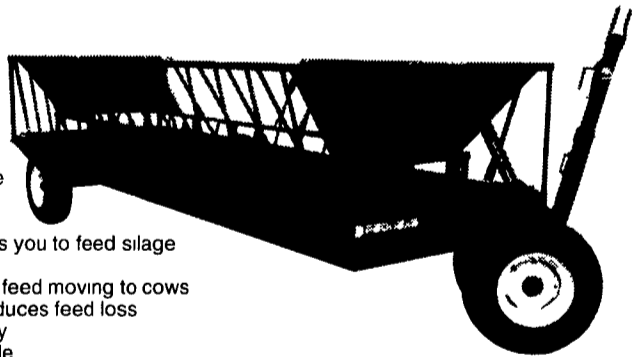
Pennsylvania Ayrshire Princess Susan Richardson pauses after a recent show with one of her favorite breed, her 4-H project Ayrshire junior two-year-old Wentworth-Farm Heidi-Ho.

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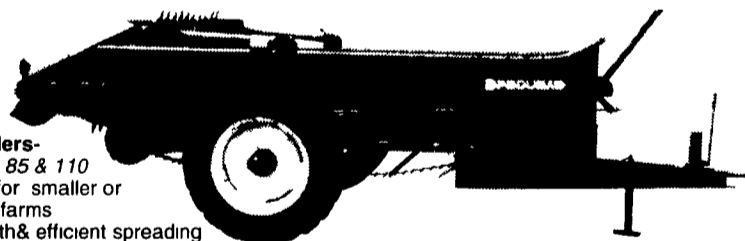
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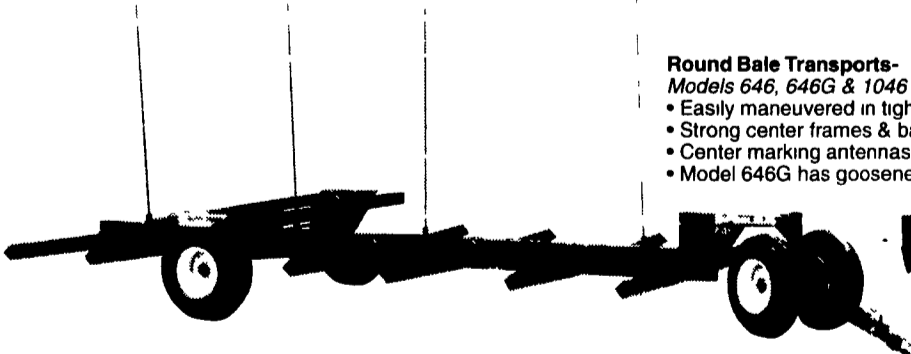
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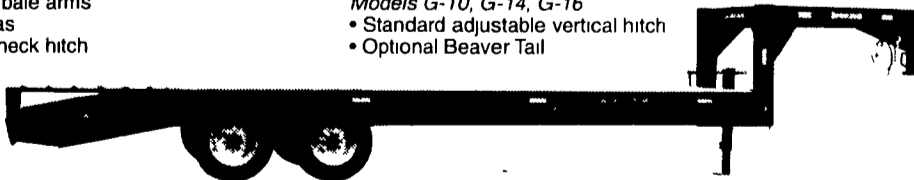
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