Frustrated With Conventional Farming, Grazier Employs New Ideas

(Continued from Page 10)

"The paddocks are variable. Not all of them are the same size. This is such a hilly farm and a wet farm that different areas mature at different times," Simpson said.

To supplement the cows over the winter months or in case of severe weather, Simpson makes hay from the lush spring growth. He also buys TMR to supplement the cows, if needed.

He machine hires most of the work that involves equipment and is able to rent his father's equipment for mowing hay or hauling manure out of the holding pen. He also rents additional ground from his father to graze his 32 cows and 17 bred heifers.

"As far as equipment investment, I have a four-wheeler and a cart," said Simpson.

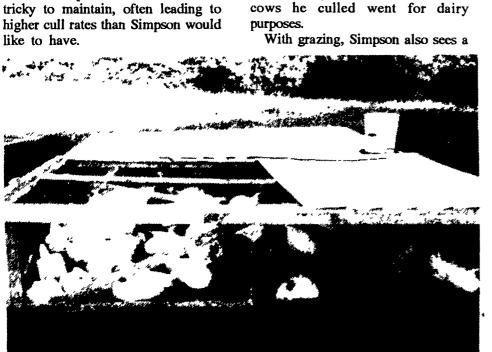
Seasonal production can also be tricky to maintain, often leading to higher cull rates than Simpson would

"The first year I had a 40 percent cull rate and we milked 90 percent 2-year-olds that I had started two years previously," he said. "I'm learning. There are lots of mistakes to be made. That's part of the reason I'm playing so much with the genetics. I'm trying to fit an animal to the environment I live in. We need a cow to go out and harvest in all kinds of conditions, no matter if its hot, cold, whatever," he said.

This year he estimates a 25 percent cull rate on cows and plans for a 90 percent conception rate on heifers to be bred for next season. He uses a herd sire because he was having difficulty settling the cows with artificial insemination to keep them on the seasonal schedule.

"Any cows not due by the 15th of June are gone," he said.

Thankfully, he notes that most of the



Simpson also raises pasture poultry. The pens are moved around the pasture to provide plenty of feed for the chickens. Simpson raises and butchers five groups per season.



The Simpsons also keep several layers on their farm to supply the family with fresh eggs.

tremendous improvement in the health of the herd, especially the feet.

"My vet bill for all of 1998 was \$675," he said.

Cows aren't the only livestock that nibble grass at Simpson's farm.

He also raises pasture poultry on his 170-acre farm, where he calls 80 acres grazable land.

The meat chickens are in pens and the pens are moved around the farm either in front of or behind the cows, depending on the height of the grass. He processes the birds on the farm and has developed several strong markets in the area. Every year he raises and butchers five batches of birds which he markets for \$1.45 per pound.

The poultry also help fertilize the fields resulting in better grass growth.

Things can get pretty hectic at the farm in the spring months when all the calves are coming, the new batch of chickens arrives, and the hay needs to be cut, but Simpson says he loves the

"All the cows calve at once, so you deal with that. The chickens come at the same time into the brooder barns. But the calves all get fed milk for a certain period of time and they're all weaned in a 30-day period, so there's no more calf feeding. They all get dehorned, vaccinated all at the same time because they're all the same age, and it makes the management of this stuff so much easier," he explained." I love spring and I feel like working in spring."

(Turn to Page 15)



Improved Palatability Higher Feed Value Digestibility Hearty/Long-Lived

Setting A Higher Standard

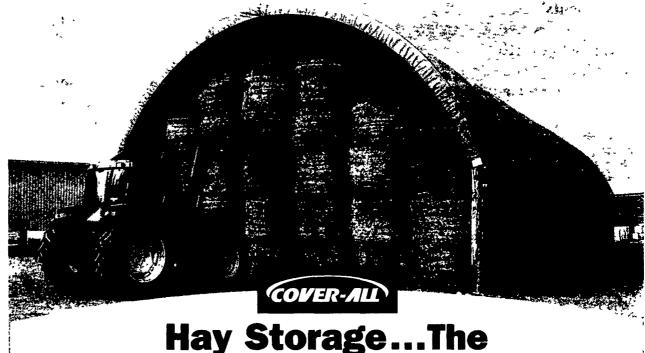
Each Pasture Pefect™ Mixture must contain at least 70% improved varieties. Improved varieties are defined as varieties in their species classification in the fields of palatability, feed value, digestibility, and/or yield. Varieties must have results proven by independent testing agencies.

Varieties must be suited to grazing. Pasture Perfect™ Mixes contain varieties that have proven to be well fit for grazing. Many mixes can be used for hay production as well, but this criterion ensures graze-ability.

- Highland Pasture Mixture
- Lowland Pasture Mixture
- Horse Pasture Mix
- Triple Purpose Hay & Pasture Mixture
- Intensive Grazing Mixture
- Hay Diversion Mixture

P. L. ROHRER & BRO., INC.

Smoketown, PA PH. 717-299-2571 Hours: Monday-Friday 8:00-5PM, Saturday 8:00-12:00 Noon



Hay Storage...The Reasons Are Cut & Dried



Cover-All's clear-span désign allows for exceptional height, width and sidewall clearance for easy hay access.

Cover-All™ protects your hay bales from spoilage while retaining its

New 12 oz. DURAWEAVE II™ covers, only from Cover-Ali™, are 20 percent stronger and warranted for 15 YEARS.



Cover-All Building Systems of Pennsylvania 1-800-268-3768

www.coverall.ca