

By Andrew Bernard
Warren County, N.J.
Soil Conservation District
 I caught Russell Smith, Pohcong Township dairy farmer, on a sunny morning between barn chores and fieldwork. As with any farm, especially with dairy, there is never a lack of things that need to be done.

"I have about 120 cows, 60 of which are milking," according to Russ, "and with 500 acres to tend to, things are never dull."

Russell is a third generation dairy farmer. He graduated from Warren County Vocational Technical School in Washington, N.J. with a degree in welding and says it sure hasn't gone to waste being on the farm. He purchased the farm from his father 10 years ago and now, with help from his wife Karyn, who does a lot of the barnwork and finances, and the part-time "help" from his three children Lauren, Russell Jr. and Savannah, he's got a full family operation.

"Unfortunately dad had passed away a couple of years ago, but mom does a lot with the kids, especially when Karyn or I can't be there — like with after school sports," says Russell.

When it comes to his farm and resource conservation on a scale from one to 10, Russell feels he's a nine. "For years I've had grass waterways, terraces, practiced strip cropping and no-till and minimum till crop planting methods," Russell said. On top of these practices, Russell is enrolled in the Integrated Crop Management program sponsored by the North Jersey Resource Conservation and Development Council.

Tom Morgart, who is Russell's

agricultural consultant from the North Jersey Resource Conservation and Development Council makes weekly visits to the Smiths' farm.

"Tom has been a great help in reducing my overall production costs. My weeds are under control, which has reduced my use of herbicides, and he has cut out a lot of the legwork that comes along with inspecting the fields," Russell commented.

The ICM Program offered by the NJRC&D helps farmers plan crop rotation, determine fertilizer schedules by soil sampling and visual inspections, develop insecticide and herbicide spray schedules by weekly field visitations, and provides technical information on new crop varieties.

Along with his existing conservation practices, Russell is hoping to get assistance from EQIP (Environmental Quality Incentives Program) and the New Jersey Conservation Cost-Share programs.

"I'd like to start a manure management program, construct fencing for the animals, and create a rotational grazing program," Russell said.

Established in the 1996 Farm Bill, EQIP and the New Jersey Conservation Cost-Share Programs provide voluntary plans for farmers to conserve water, soil, and related natural resources. Nationally, these programs provide technical, financial, and educational assistance to install or implement structural, vegetative, and management practices within five- to 10-year contract period. He's been happy with the programs through the USDA NRCS and believes is the cost-share in-

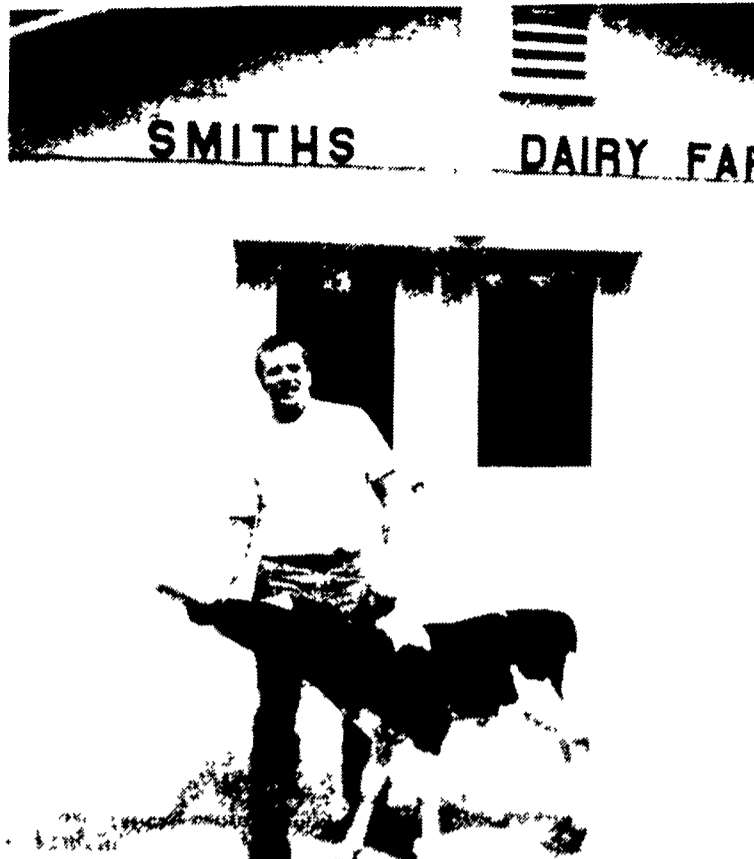
centives have been adequate.

When it comes to water quality, Russell feels it's a group effort in order to keep the streams and rivers clean. "I think industry, farmers, and individual landowners have to work together to keep the rivers and streams clean. But generally I don't believe the public really knows what I have to go through on a daily basis to keep a dairy operation going. You can't take the weekend off and expect the animals to take care of themselves. Maybe if the non-agricultural community knew that we still exist and care about our community that we live in, the public's outlook on farmers might be different."

As we walked through the barn and out the milkhouse, I asked him what inspires him to keep farming.

"It's getting harder every day to get out of bed to keep doing this," said Russell, "but I want to keep the farm going for my next generation. Unfortunately with the way milk prices keep dropping, it's hard to see a future for the dairy business. Just last month my milk check dropped \$3,500. It's been a slow and steady decrease, but never that drastic.

"I've got to try to keep up with the times and the new trends in the agricultural world. I might not be doing dairy for the rest of my life, maybe it will be veggies or another type of crop to make a profit, but in some way, shape, or form, it will be farming," Russell said.



Russell Smith cares for this 3-week-old calf at his New Jersey farm.



SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

(Times and Events Subject to Change)

FRIDAY, JULY 23 - SNEAK PREVIEW

NO GATE FEE CHARGED!

- 4 00 - 8 00 Entering of Exhibits
- 5 00 - Closing MIDWAY SPECIAL \$8 unlimited rides
- 6 00 pm Horse Pulls
- following CLASSIC TRACTOR
- Horse Pulls PULL - (2 weight classes)

SATURDAY, JULY 24

OLD TIME FARM WEEKEND

- 8 30 am English Horse Show
- 8 30 am Cecil County Fair 5-K Run
- 8 - 11 am Entering of Exhibits (Home Arts Building)
- 12 - 8 pm Judging of Exhibit Building - Closed to Public
- 2 - 6 pm Midway \$9 unlimited rides
- 1 00 pm ANTIQUE TRACTOR PULL
- 6 00 pm Midway Rides open - pay per ride
- 7 00 pm Antique Tractor Parade
- 8 00 pm ANTIQUE TRACTOR PULL
- 9 30 pm FIREWORKS

SUNDAY, JULY 25

OLD TIME FARM WEEKEND

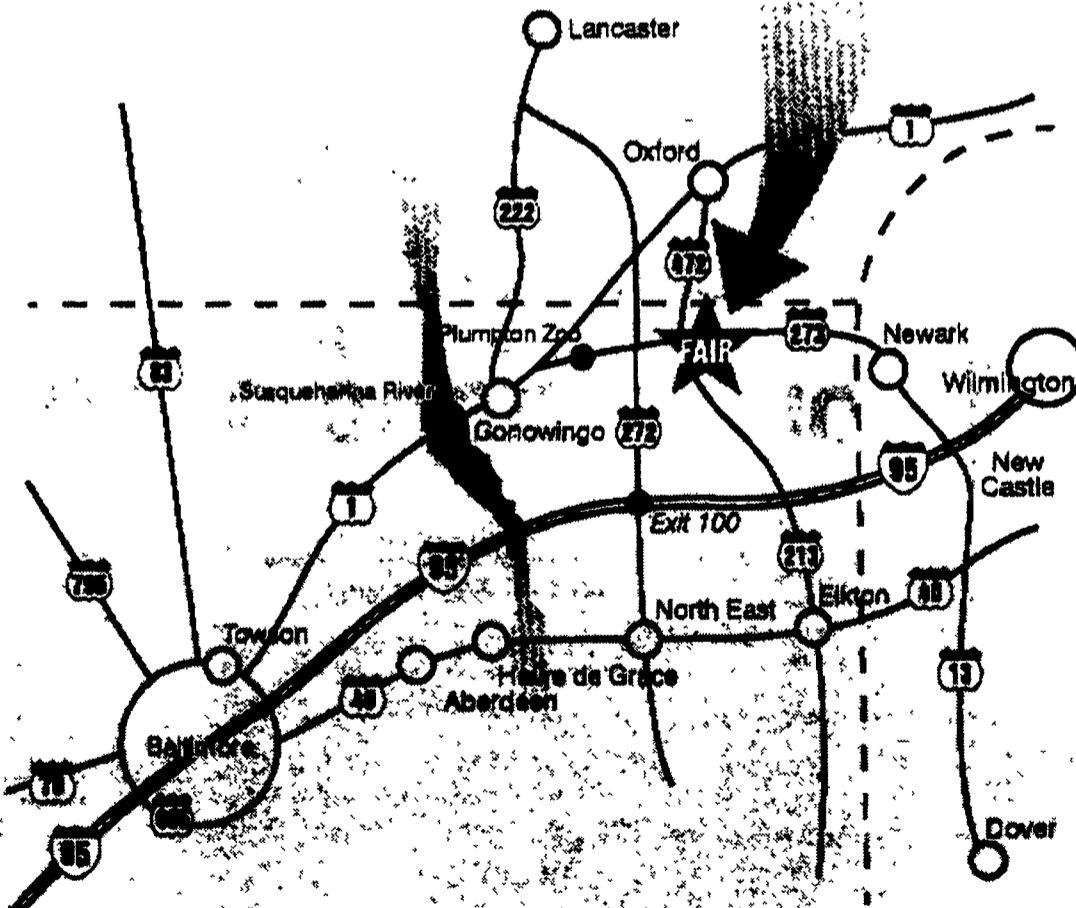
- 9 am Rabbit Show
- 10 am Antique Tractor Demonstrations
- 2 - 6 pm Midway \$9 unlimited rides
- 1 00 pm Slow Antique Tractor Races
- 1 00 pm Poultry Show (Poultry Building closed during judging)
- 6 00 pm Midway Rides open - pay per ride
- 8 00 pm Roper (Band)
- 7 00 pm ALL AMERICAN RODEO

MONDAY, JULY 26

DAY CARE DAY

- 9 am - 1 pm Childrens Entertainment
- 4 - 7 pm Republican Chicken Bar-B-Que
- 5 00 pm Midway Rides Open - pay per ride
- 6 00 pm Farm Queen contest
- 6 00 pm Dairy Goat Show
- 7 00 pm ALL AMERICAN RODEO
- 9 00 pm Blue Grass Music Night

All Roads Lead To The Cecil County Fair



TUESDAY, JULY 27

AG DAY

- 10.00 am AG Showcase
- 10 00 am 4-H Bicycle contest
- 10 00 am Sheep Show
- 12 - 1 pm AG Lunch
- 5 00 pm Midway Rides open - pay per ride
- 6 00 pm 4-H Fashion Revue
- 6 30 pm Peddle Tractor Pull
- 7 00 pm Hay Toss Contest
- 7 30 pm Needle in a Hay Stack Contest
- 7 00 pm SANCTIONED TRACTOR PULL
- 8 30 pm Musical Entertainment

WEDNESDAY, JULY 28

YOUTH DAY

- 10.00 am Youth Olympics
- 10 00 am Dairy Show
- 1 - 5 pm Midway \$9 unlimited rides
- 2 00 pm 4-H Auto Contest
- 5 00 pm Midway Rides open - pay per ride
- 7:00 pm Cow Chip Throwing Contest
- 7:00 pm 4 WHEEL DRIVE TRUCK PULL & CLASSIC TRACTOR PULL (2 Weight Classes)
- 8 30 pm Musical Entertainment

THURSDAY, JULY 29

SENIORS DAY

- 9.00 am Hog Show
- following Hog Show Beef Show
- following Beef Show Dairy Steer Show
- 10 am - 4 pm Local Artisans and performers
- 10 am - 3 pm Seniors BINGO
- 2 00 pm 4-H Garden Tractor Contest
- Midway Rides open - pay per ride
- 5 00 pm
- 6:00 pm 4-H Float Parade
- 7 00 pm Pie Eating Contest
- 8 00 pm DEMOLITION DERBY
- 8 00 pm GOSPEL MUSIC NIGHT

FRIDAY, JULY 30

4-H APPRECIATION DAY

- Throughout Day Various 4-H Demonstrations
- 10 00 am Holstein Dairy Show
- 12 00 pm 4-H Tractor Driving Contest
- 2 - 6 pm Midway \$9 unlimited rides
- 6 00 pm Midway Rides open - pay per ride
- 7 00 pm 4-H Livestock Sale
- 8 00 pm DEMOLITION DERBY
- 9 00 pm Long Lonesome Highway Band

SATURDAY, JULY 31

DEMO DERBY DAY

- 8 30 am Western Horse & Pony Show
- 10 00 am 4-H & Open Obedience Dog Show
- 10 00 am Pretty Baby contest
- 12 pm-closing Midway - pay per ride
- 2 00 pm DEMO DERBY MATINEE
- 4 00 pm Pretty Animal Contest
- 4 30 pm Pretty Lamb contest
- 6 00 pm Big Wheel contest
- 7 00 pm Tug of War (1500 lb Weight Class)
- 8 00 pm DEMOLITION DERBY
- 8 00 PM SH BOOM

APPEARING DAILY
 (Times To Be Announced)
 Sonny Dayze the Clown,
 Banana Derby, Alfie Cocatoo Show
 Jack Foreaker

ADMISSION CHARGES TO THE FAIR

Friday, July 23rd
FREE ADMISSION
\$8 PAY ONE PRICE FOR UNLIMITED RIDES
 Saturday, July 24 thru Saturday, July 31
DAILY ENTRANCE FEES
 \$4.00 Adult (13 to 59 Years)
 \$2.00 Senior Citizens (60 Years and Over)
 \$2.00 Children (6 to 12 Years)
 Children Under 6 Enter Free
FAMILY DAY SPECIAL
 Good Only 8 am - 5 pm Wednesday, July 28
 \$10.00/Family (2 Adults and up to 4 Children)
 Additional Children \$1.00/Child
WEEKLY PASSES
GOOD FOR JULY 24 THRU JULY 31
 \$15.00 - Advance Purchase Adult Weekly Pass*
 \$20.00 - Adult Weekly Pass (Purchase at Gate)
 \$10.00 - Senior Citizens Weekly Pass
 \$10.00 - Children's Weekly Pass
 *Weekly passes may be obtained in advance through any Fair Board Member, The Cecil County Extension Office, or at any County Bank Location
RIDES SPECIALS
 Afternoon Pay One Price Special \$9.00
 July 24, 1999, 2 pm - 6 pm
 July 25, 1999, 2 pm - 6 pm
 July 28, 1999, 1 pm - 5 pm
 July 30, 1999, 2 pm - 6 pm