

# Longtime Dairy Exhibitors Share Talents At Farm Show

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 — One of the longtime dairy cattle exhibitors at the Pennsylvania Farm Show has something new to look forward to this year.

Mike Miller and his wife, Linda, have three children, Heidi, Holly, and Harrison, who will all be showing dairy cattle at the 2000 Pennsylvania Farm Show. But 17 year old Heidi plays another role in this year's event — she will sing the national anthem during both Farm Show opening ceremonies on Saturday and the livestock auction on Thursday.

This is the fifth time that Heidi has sung the national anthem in front of a large audience, performing at the Harrisburg Senators, the Hershey Bears, and other local events. Heidi and 15 year old Holly have recently formed a singing group with local farm boys, Jesse Baumgardner of Lebanon and Tyler Bower of Harrisburg.

The group's most recent performance was at the York County Holstein Club. "We like to perform at local meetings and events," explained Heidi. "And we are interested in singing at more local churches."

The girls are following in their father's footsteps, who used to sing with his family as "The Singing Millers" back in the early 70's. "The girls use the original sound equipment that my family had back then," said Mike. "We thought of selling it several years ago. But my father said to hold onto it. I'm glad we did."

Mike's parents, Paul and Pat, got Mike started in his dairy cattle showing career on their farm in Dauphin county. The Millers have been showing cattle at the Farm Show since 1972, and Paul will have one of his animals shown by Heidi at this year's show.

The Millers are taking seven animals to Farm Show this year — six Holsteins and one Brown Swiss. "Harry wanted to show a Brown Swiss," said Mike. "So last year, we bought Dublin Hills Jason-Lee Ellee, who will be a spring calf at the Farm Show this year."

Not interested in singing, 14 year old Harrison keeps busy helping his father take care of the animals on the farm.

The Millers attend the Farm

Show each year, despite weather hazards and the crowds, because they enjoy the opportunity to meet new people. "Each year new exhibitors come to the show," said Linda. "It's a great chance for the kids to make new friends."

The Millers also enjoy all of the activities at the Farm Show. "The rodeo is our favorite," said Holly. "We also like the food at the Food Court." But eating the entire week at the Food Court can get expensive, so they bring most of their food from home.

Mike's parents still help out the family at the show. Paul comes every day to help feed and fit the animals, while Pat brings the food. Linda's nephew, Nathan Heim, also will tie his heifer with the Millers at the Farm Show. "Nathan and Harry are my main helpers on the farm during the summertime," said Mike.

Linda and the kids stay overnight at the Farm Show while Mike treks back and forth each day, bringing the feed and taking care of things at home.

"The blizzard in 1995 was the worst," recalled Mike. "We drove the truck through mounds of snow and had cops stopping us because of the closed roads."

But, according to Linda, that was the best year because there weren't any people there. "Saturdays and Sundays are the worst days for the crowds," she explained. "But most of the people are really nice. And, on a more positive note, you're promoting your cattle to a lot of people."

Over the years, Mike has seen the show change from a mostly Holstein show to more color breed exhibitors. "It's not a high pressure show, either," said Mike. "Many of the top breeders don't bring their cattle because of the cold weather. It's more of a fun event for the family."

Mike, Holly, and Harry will bodyclip the animals this week to get them ready for Farm Show. Then they'll hire professional fitters to do the animals' toplines when they get up there. "We still have two that aren't halter-broke," said Harrison. "The other ones were shown before, but we have to start working on those two."

The Farm Show is one of several dairy shows the Millers exhibit at each year. They show at local fairs and at county, district, and some-



The Miller family is gearing up for their week at the Pennsylvania Farm Show. (LtoR) Heidi, Linda, Holly, and (FarLeft) Harrison will stay overnight at the Show, while Mike will make his daily commute from their home north of Harrisburg.

times state 4-H shows. Mike claims that if the kids wouldn't want to show, he wouldn't do it. "It's their project, not mine."

The Millers belong to the Lower Dauphin 4-H Dairy Club, where Heidi serves as president and Holly serves as secretary. Linda and Mike are both leaders of the club. Harrison has been a member for seven years.

The Millers live on a 257-acre farm outside of Harrisburg, where they raise 20 head of high-pedigree Holstein heifers from the original milking herd. Mike works for a copier company in Harrisburg, while Linda is employed as a medical assistant at a local doctor's office. The Millers grow corn and hay, and Mike markets the high quality alfalfa and other hay he raises to area farmers.

Mike is the third generation on the farm, where they milked 50 cows up until March 1998 when the Millers sold their cows. Mike's grandfather Harrison started the farm in the late 50's before being killed in a farming accident when Mike was 2 years old. Mike's father Paul is a retired dairy cow classifier who sells dairy minerals and still helps out on the farm when he can.



Harrison, seen here with two of the Miller's four Boxers — Max and Maggie, is his father's right hand man on the farm.



(LtoR) Holly and Heidi are enjoying their new venture, performing at local events, meetings, and church activities. The Miller girls are always looking for more opportunities for their singing quartet.

## Farm Bureau Delegates Vote To Support Sound Science

GLENMONT, N.Y. — At their state annual meeting earlier this month in Albany, New York Farm Bureau delegates passed a resolution to continue their strong support for the Regulatory Openness and Fairness Act of 1999 (H.R. 1592 and S. 1464).

This legislation was introduced to protect farmers and consumers, by requiring the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to abide by sound science and real world data when evaluating pesticides, the true intention of the Food Quality Protection Act of 1996 (FQPA).

"Our board of directors made this issue a priority for the upcoming year," said Patrick Hooker, director of governmental relations for New York Farm Bureau. "We support this legislation and the

true intention of the FQPA."

The recently released results from a Harvard University analysis revealed that unprecedented impacts of EPA's proposed FQPA rules could be more harmful to public health than the compounds they attempt to regulate. According to the Harvard study, the EPA has failed to consider or evaluate many health risks associated with the Agency's implementation of the FQPA. As an example, a ban on all organophosphate and carbamate pesticides could actually result in the premature deaths of 1,000 Americans every year.

The EPA has also failed to consider possible dietary changes due to higher crop prices, once the use of certain compounds are cancelled. "Many of our Congressional members agree that EPA must do

a better job of carrying out the nation's laws regarding food safety," said Hooker. "The Harvard report clearly shows that urging EPA to change the way they propose to regulate pesticides, is the right thing to do. The congressional support for this new legislation helps to prove it."

The Regulatory Openness & Fairness Act of 1999 has sponsorship of nearly 200 in the House and nearly 30 co-sponsors in the Senate.

