

TMR Feed, Consistent Grooming Prominent In Dietrich Farm Show Preparations

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Lancaster Farming Staff
HAMBURG (Berks Co.) —
Kelly Dietrich calls her 15-month-old Simmental/Maine Anjou crossbred steer "Whitey" a few things.

First, "he's a baby," she said. "He's extremely spoiled. We bought him in Lancaster County and he's the most pampered one of the bunch."

Kelly and her sister, Kristy, spend a lot of time with their beef animals in preparation for this year's Farm Show. And they're willing to tell you how much time is spent in grooming champions.

But Kelly won't reveal the feed. "We have a certain type," she said, similar to a total mixed ration (TMR) for cows.

Kelly, 17, is the daughter of Donna and Jim Dietrich, Hamburg. This will be her fourth year at the Pennsylvania Farm Show, where she will also show a 7-month-old purebred Limousin homebred.

Her sister Kristy, 15, is also showing a couple of animals at the Farm Show. Kristy, in her third year at the Farm Show, will be exhibiting "Shania" (named in honor of the country singer Shania Twain), an 18-month-old purebred Limousin.

Shania has proved a dandy in the show ring for Kristy. Last year at the Farm Show the heifer already captured second place in the open show. Kristy said she was "first in her class" in 4-H competition as a junior yearling. This year Kristy is showing her a senior yearling (Kristy had the Farm Show 4-H champion last year with a purebred Limousin, "Moonlight").

Kristy also plans to take "Strawberry Wine," a 6-month-old purebred Limousin, to the show.

This year's junior breeding cattle will be shown on "Youth Day," Wednesday, Jan. 12, beginning at 8:30 a.m. in the Large Arena. Junior steer classes follow in the same place at noon.

"We spend a lot of time with each animal," said Kristy.

Kristy, a freshman at Tulpehocken High School, has shown at lots of area fairs. They include Kutztown, Oley, Denver, and "when there was a Reading Fair," she said. They also have shown at county roundup, the Pennsylvania Beef Expo (Kristy brought along Shania), the Keystone International Livestock Expo, and the Tristates Jackpot Show in Pennsylvania.

At Tristates, Whitey placed second, but only because "he was being a brat," Kelly said. "He was not working his body the way it should be — he had his front legs stiff. The judge likes to see that movement up front."

For Farm Show, Whitey could do well, she believes. "He has a good haircoat and muscling," said Kelly, a senior at Tulpehocken High School and president of her FFA chapter.

As for Shania, Kristy said she is smooth and "has nice muscling for a heifer." She also believes the calf's strength is in its "balance."

Kristy received the outstanding beef project and grand champion steer awards at the county roundup. Kelly came close but missed the reserve champion project by a point.

But time remains to prepare for a championship at Farm Show. As

for Whitey, "he's cool," Kelly said. "And he's so cute."

Kelly spends about a half hour every day walking, washing, clipping, and fitting Whitey. Before Farm Show, it will take about 2-3 hours, she said, clipping and grooming the animals to get them ready.

Sometimes Kelly and Kristy argue about chores, about the animals, and "about getting them ready," said Donna Dietrich. Kelly said she inspects the work Kristy does on clipping the animals for the show. But Kelly said she watches her friends and other, more experienced showmen to get tips for the show.

Kelly said that, during Farm Show week, the sisters don't get much sleep. But a whole week off from school allows them to see friends that "we hardly ever see all year," she said. "It's a lot of fun."

Kelly noted that, compared to some fairs that pay only \$30 to place a steer or \$10 for a heifer (some only award \$5 per animal), Farm Show pays \$26 for first place and \$18 for fifth. Fifteen dollars is awarded to all other placings.

The premium and sale money go into savings for college.

Kelly has been accepted at Penn State to study ag business. Kristy wants to attend Penn State to major in ag business or dairy and animal science.

At the farm, Kristy and Kelly help feed about 100 head of steers. The Dietrichs farm about 900 acres, including leased land.

The year's drought had a devastating effect on the Dietrich and surrounding farms. Even the Kutztown Fair was affected, according to Kelly. The fair is the site of the

annual "water battles" at the close of the event. This year, instead of showering fellow showmen with water from hoses, the restrictions forced them to use shaving cream instead. "So we had a shaving cream battle," Kelly said.

Kelly, who works part-time milking cows at Way-Har Farms in Bernville, has thought of showing sheep at the Farm Show. If she had all the money in the world, Kelly noted she would show a purebred Shorthorn. "They're awesome looking," she indicated.

Kristy, who works at the Way-Har ice cream stand at the Leesport Farmers' Auction, said if she had all the money in the world, she would show a purebred Limousin, maybe from Express Ranch in Yukon, Okla. "Limousins are cute," she said.

The Dietrichs use Limousin genetics — they make a good crossbred with Angus for feeder steers. At the farm, the Dietrichs, who use AI, also use a 3-year-old purebred Limousin herd bull, Mustang.

Kelly began showing at the Farm Show in 1997, and Kristy a year later. This year Kelly is receiving the FFA Keystone Degree (the highest FFA degree in the state, presented at the Farm Show).

Kelly said she simply can't miss out on this year's Farm Show, despite any predictions about the typical snow and ice that is often forecast.

"If I have to walk the steer, I'll be there," she said.

PCA Teams Up With Animal Health Companies

MIDDLETOWN, (Dauphin Co.) — Three deserving students will have the opportunity to earn a scholarship this spring through the Pennsylvania Cattlemen's Association (PCA) and sponsoring animal health companies.

One \$1,000 scholarship and two \$500 scholarships will be awarded to students planning to further their education in some facet of the beef, dairy, and/or veal industries.

Current involvement in the industry, among other related requirements, will be beneficial

in applying for these scholarships. Winners will be awarded their scholarships at the annual PCA banquet, March 30, at the 2000 Beef Expo in State College.

More information and scholarship applications will be available at the PCA booth at this year's Pennsylvania Farm Show or by contacting Jason McCorkle at the Pennsylvania Cattlemen's Association office, (717) 986-0333. All scholarship applications must be sent to the Pennsylvania Cattlemen's Association, 1500 Fulling Mill Road, Middletown, PA 17057, on or before March 10.

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