

Simmental Family Has Great Show — Five Years Running

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The Schaeffers care for about 16 dams, using all AI with many embryo transplants. Some dams serve as recipients for transfers.

The animals are pastured and fed hay. No TMR is used, though there are free-choice minerals available.

Special show rations are provided to the heifers. But for most cows and calves, hay and pasture is the rule.

The breed is noted for great weaning weight, good milk from the mothers, and good feed efficiency. Paul noted that one bull, born at 90 pounds, weighed 946 pounds at six months of age. "That's a tremendous rate of gain," said Schaeffer.

The family hopes to purchase a farm in the area so they can expand their beef breeding.

The farm near Myerstown totals about 42 acres, including owned and rented. Paul Schaeffer maintains a wood products business operation at the site but is limited in terms of how many animals he can stock.

Tracy said that their own breed operation is only a "small fish in a big pond" compared to the larger operations, including Leachman, headquartered in Montana, with a multihundred page catalog of available genetics. But one day the Schaeffers want to be an asset to the breed organization and provide top-quality genetics.

The Pennsylvania Simmental Association honored them with the award for their accomplishments in the show ring and with the breed. Paul credits many people who have helped them achieve so much in only five years.

Many contributed their expertise and time, besides helping fit and clip cattle, for exhibition.

Cassie said she simply enjoys

working with the breed. Cassie, 17, a senior at Elco and a member of FFA and 4-H, spends much time meticulously preparing the animals for show — and her efforts paid off handsomely in several. Cassie plans to attend Penn State to study ag business.

Her brother Tim has been considering several universities, including Oklahoma State, Virginia Tech, and Purdue. He is leaning toward Virginia Tech. Tim wants to pick a college not only for its academics, but for its location to the breeders and show rings.

Paul said to be chosen family of the year by the Pennsylvania Simmental Association was a great honor.

Some don't understand what it takes, though Tim credits watching others getting "good at it, and you get to feel more comfortable" about showing, he noted, as time goes along.

Tim's ideal farm: having about 50 head of cows with at least 30 good, purebred cows. Have a few good calves and "run a lot of recipis," he said.

Purchasing solid, proven genetics is the best and "quickest way," he said, to upgrade the herd. By selecting good quality female genetics and by crossing them to the right bulls, "we are starting to produce our own outstanding offspring, which will carry the S&S prefix," Paul said.

But right now, without a good farm to base the operation, "we're pushing the bubble," he said. "We can't really expand. So a bigger farm would help a lot."

No matter what, Tim believes the farm would stay strong with Simmentals and "Simmental-influenced" cattle, he said.

Simmentals, said Paul, are excellent in all areas — they have



Tim with Missy-O and calf. Tim has been considering several universities, including Oklahoma State, Virginia Tech, and Purdue. He is leaning toward Virginia Tech, but wants to choose a college not only for its academics, but for its central location to the breeders and show rings. Photo by Andy Andrews

the best combination of average hair coats, average to good temperament, good mommas, and other traits.

As for the show ring, Tim noted that Cassie and he have different styles. Cassie can be "picky," he said, or very meticulous when it comes to showing a heifer. She's a perfectionist about heifer leg placement in the show ring. "She's a good showman," said Tim.

Tim, however, works closely on making sure the judge can see the heifer always and isn't as

demanding of foot placement.

No matter who actually wins, if the family wins, Tim said he is satisfied. "The more shows we participate in, the better we'll get," he said.

During a recent interview at the farm, Tim paraded Missy-O (War O' Fancy Pants), a 2-year-old, with her calf. Missy-O was exhibited at the Eastern Nationals, Kansas City, KILE, the Houston, Texas show, and was a class winner at the National Western show in Denver, Colo.

Missy-O, if she could produce 30 calves, would be great, ac-

cording to Tim. At the first flush, there were seven freezable eggs. Buyers have already been lined up.

A judge in Kansas City called Missy-O "the best Simmental heifer walking in the pastures today," said Paul.

The American Royal was a great honor for the Schaeffer family. They were presented with the solid silver belt buckle with rubies, as champions at the 100th anniversary show.

"It's an extreme honor that we'll always remember and cherish," Paul said.

Dairylea Cooperative Launches Employment Program

SYRACUSE, N.Y. — Finding and retaining quality employees has become increasingly difficult for dairy farmers during this period of low unemployment. In response to its members' concerns with the current farm labor situation, Dairylea Cooperative Inc. has launched an employment program — Agri-Placement Services (APS) — to assist farms in locating farm laborers, and custom train those workers to meet the specific needs of the farm.

"The current workforce lacks

a sufficient amount of people who are willing and capable of doing farmwork, despite the industry's move toward better management practices, and increased pay and benefits," said Dairylea Chief Executive Officer Rick Smith. "With Agri-Placement Services, our intention is to bring farms and competent employees together and create a solid relationship that benefits both parties."

APS has workers available for placement on dairy farms in May. Additionally, APS is cur-

rently handling requests for seasonal workers for the 2000 growing season.

Since many of these laborers will be new to the United States and have limited English language skills, APS will assist the farm owner and farm workers in adjusting to the new situation by providing translation services. In addition, the program will

provide ongoing support, cultural and otherwise, to the farmer and worker to improve the possibility of successful long-term employment.

Those interested in more in-

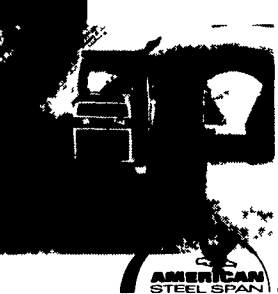
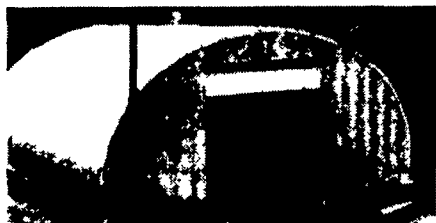
formation on how APS can assist with their farm labor requirements are encouraged to contact Brandon Mallory at 1-800-654-8838, ext. 447.

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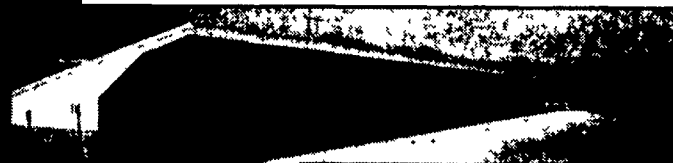


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