

# Pennwood Farms Relocates To Expand Dairy Operation



Duane and Andrea Stoltzfus were the first of Pennwood Farm's five household families to move to Somerset County.

**GAY BROWNLEE**  
Somerset Co. Correspondent

BERLIN (Somerset Co.) — Some 400 head of milking cows at Pennwood Farms are still adapting to the 28-stall rotary milking parlor during the hours of 2 a.m., 10 a.m., and 6 p.m.

Typically, the older cows, set in their ways, are more stubborn. The younger stock, naturally, are adapting more readily to the single-file order of entering and exiting the fully computerized facility.

Like their animals, the owners of Pennwood Dairy never before experienced a milking parlor and realize progress bring challenges.

Pennwood Farms is a partnership four-brothers who are carrying on a business begun in 1962 by their dad, Harvey Stoltzfus. They are

Don, Glenn, Dwight, and Duane Stoltzfus.

On 50 acres near Morgantown, Harvey began on land he rented from his mother, with 18 cows derived from her herd.

Stoltzfus, with his wife, Mary Jane, saw Pennwood Farms dairy, like their four sons, thrive and grow until it finally had outgrown its location. Ultimately, the entire family — five households — moved across the state to Somerset County, from their home on the border of Berks and Lancaster counties.

Pennwood had purchased the local farm and Holstein herd of Lewis and Barbara Berkley, as well as the William Schultz farm, which would augment heifer housing and cropland.

The Berkley lands were ample to support the new

freestall barn and milking center Pennwood planned to build. In 1999, these were constructed adjacent to existing facilities.

The freestall barn is equipped with the side and top curtains critical for maintaining temperature control and proper ventilation for cow comfort, since, in the Laurel Highland region, the four seasons are very distinct. The top curtain, unlike its side counterparts, is controlled by a thermostat.

Additionally, three big bunker silos, along with a five-bay commodity shed and several calf hutches, were built. The existing freestall barn was remodeled and a 2.5 million gallon manure pit was constructed. Dwight empties it with a 5,700-gallon capacity manure truck.

One loss in the move was a thriving custom manure hauling business they had built in Morgantown. They said, however, they hope to build a similar operation here.

Pennwood dairy spokesperson, Andrea Stoltzfus, wife of Duane and pregnant with their first child, said she and her husband were the first couple to arrive here. They milked the existing herd.

In November 1998, the couple was married one day, moved to Berlin the next day and honeymooned on the third day.

"We have had to make a lot of changes since we moved here," Andrea said of the group. "We made up at the outset a job responsibility sheet. We are still a family farm, but with different aspects as a business."

Don's speciality, for instance, is equipment

repair and maintenance. Glenn makes the cropping decisions, handles the employee aspect, and manages the parlor. Herd health, breeding decisions, and merchandising are Dwight's areas of responsibility and Duane's areas are nutrition and feeding.

"Each can take over the job of the other, if necessary," Andrea said. "Here they have the same focus and the same goal. There is no time for grudges."

Two couples are allowed

time off on alternating weekends. That is equivalent to four milkings. Five part-time employees and good neighbors have been a blessing.

The Berkleys live nearby. Lewis helps with tractor driving. According to Andrea, if Harvey is not on a tractor, he comes around once a day to see what's happening.

"He loves his cattle and he loves his family," Andrea said of her father-in-law. "He wants to make sure everyone

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Andrea Stoltzfus shows the Pennwood free stall barn, 342 by 112 feet. The herd is fed TMR twice daily at bunks.

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