

**On Being a  
Farm Wife  
(and other  
hazards)**  
**Joyce Bupp**



It just didn't feel right.

That familiar yellow handle of the barn "cleaner-shovel" just didn't feel right when I grabbed it one day last week. That shovel is our all-purpose barn-use one, hauled along through the milking process to clean and lightly dust with sawdust cow mat areas under each of the girls as we prep them for milking.

A closer look revealed the problem.

At some point, the shovel had been left somewhere it shouldn't have and gotten either stepped on by a cow or run over - perhaps - by the feed cart. Whatever the reason, a section of the handle showed rough, cracked paint, and slight cracks on the smooth wooden handle detected.

Time to do the Duct Tape Dash.

We have stashes of repair pieces and parts of stuff everywhere, here on the farm. The shop has a vast array of nuts and bolts, nails, belts, hoses, shear pins, etc. (except for the one you need). Plumbing parts and electrical stuff might be found around the dairy barn utility areas, along with a couple of boxes of spare and "make-do" first-aid supplies used to minister to ailing milking machines when they act up.

The bathroom closet shelters my own private household repair stash, with hammer, screw drivers, pliers. It's safest to store them behind a stack of towels or cleaning supplies, though, to guarantee they'll be there when needed.

But few repair supplies are as frequently sought after - at the barn or the house - as that in the Duct Tape Dash.

The silvery-gray sheen of duct tape has replaced baling wire/baling twine as the all-purpose, emergency, farm-aid repair material. And while the sturdy tape is perfect for wrapping battered tool handles for more strength - and covering those rough, splintery spots - it's valve goes way beyond that.

When a milker occasionally crashes to the barn floor and major parts separate - as happens occasionally - nothing is so quick and handy to tie components back together temporarily than duct tape. And when you need to keep the milking process moving to beat the race with the milk truck, that little stretch of duct tape can be a lifesaver.

Split hoses and cracked wiring on vehicles and equipment can sometimes be spliced together with awkwardly wrapped wads of duct tape, thick enough to

temporarily hold in- or keep out - moisture. Ditto for piecing together cracked windows on tractors, pickups and equipment until they shatter and force a real replacement.

Duct tape makes one fine upholstery material. Now, granted, it has no colorful pattern or stylish texture, but the durability factor is hard to beat. It helps to contain the foam pushing through a crack in the pickup bench seat, to replace the chunk of foam missing from four-wheeler "saddle," strengthens several tractor seats worn from heavy use. While the shiny silver coating isn't a warm material for sitting on in cold weather, it's slipperiness allows you to just whip on and off the seats. Handy if you are doing the Duct Tape Dash for some other emergency.

Duct tape can be a life-saver for body-repairs. Not machinery, but people. I've seen finger injuries around the farm here which were temporarily first-aided with lengths of duct tape. Well, maybe it doesn't carry the American Medical Association seal of approval, but if it keeps blood in - and dirt out - isn't that the point? Speed records for the Duct Tape Dash may be shattered if there's much blood involved.

Less serious but equally handy is its use for foot injuries on cows, or cows with "ouchy" feet after trimming and in need of protective wrapping for a few days until healed. An artfully-applied bandage of duct tape forms a durable and inexpensive hoof "slipper."

From torn stretches of greenhouse plastic to loose storm windows, from rusty spots on old farm pickup fenders to broken pieces of toy farm equipment, we solve it with Duct Tape Dash.

Gee, if only we'd been smart enough years ago to dash to invest in some duct tape stock.

# Going Hog Wild

BLOOMINGTON, Minn. — Communicating for Agriculture Scholarship and Education Foundation is awarding \$10,000 in scholarships to those interested in participating in the 2001 International Pork Industry Internship.

The International Pork Industry Internship, developed by Dalum Agriculture College in Denmark and Communicating for Agriculture and the Self-Employed, Inc., in cooperation with the University of Nebraska in Lincoln, has developed a partnership that will provide skills and experiences valuable for a successful career in an export-driven pork industry.

The program, which begins January 8, 2001, includes a 8½ month practical training period on Danish pork producing farms, followed by a 12-week study period at Dalum College. Participants can complete the one-year program or a six-month practical training program. Room, board, and salary are provided to students.

Denmark, located in northern Europe, produces about 20 million pigs/year on a landmass about one-fifth the size of Nebraska. More than two-thirds of the total farm production is exported, making Denmark one of the USA's major competitors on the world market.

"This exchange will provide students a wonderful opportunity to learn about pork production and experience a foreign culture," said Milt Smedsrud, founder of CA. "The rewards of such an experience will last a lifetime."

Eligibility is based on the participant's knowledge of the pork industry and a strong desire to pursue a career in the industry. In addition, students must be 20 years of age and have completed at least one year of coursework at a community college or university before entering the program. It is also recommended that participants complete at least one course in economics before applying for the internship. Ten to 15 hours of college credit is available upon completion of the one-year program. Credits for the six-month program are to be decided.

Scholarship monies will be divided equally between all participants, with the amount not to exceed \$1,000 per person.

Scholarship application deadline is Nov. 15.

For more information about the internship program or to request an application, please contact Beverly Gilmartin, CAEP Coordinator at 1-800-432-3276 x3510 or e-mail [beverlyg@cainc.org](mailto:beverlyg@cainc.org).

# Belsnickel Craft Show

BOYERTOWN (Berks Co.) — This year's 30th annual Belsnickel Craft Show presents 150 local and regional juried artisans. The show opens Nov. 24 from noon to 8 p.m. and Sat. Nov. 25, from 10 a.m. until 5

p.m. The show is located in two gymnasiums at Boyertown Senior High School, 4th and Monroe Streets, Boyertown. Admission is \$3, children under 12 are free if accompanied by an adult.

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