

Growing Dairy Family Partners For Success

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Lancaster Farming Staff

GETTYSBURG (Adams Co.) — In 1970, John and Bonnie Hess and their three young children moved from Lancaster County onto a farm they had purchased a few miles east of Gettysburg.

They began with a milking herd of about 50 cows. Now daughter Josie Riser, son John Hess, and son-in-law Dale Brown are partners with John and Bonnie in Jobo Holstein Farms, L.L.C. — an operation that includes a milking herd of about 500 cows, 1,000 acres of corn and alfalfa, custom forage harvesting, and custom TMR mixing for about 300 additional cows on local dairy farms.

Since moving onto the farm in 1970, the Hess family grew to include two more children. Joy, the youngest, is working fulltime on the farm, and daughter Jayne Sebright continues to be involved in the dairy industry as an employee of Land O' Lakes Cooperative.

In August of this year, Jobo Holstein Farms was one of two Pennsylvania dairy farms recognized by the Pennsylvania Dairy Stakeholders with the organization's Pacesetter Award.

According to N. Alan Bair of the Stakeholders, the organization was created six years ago "to facilitate

the viability and expansion of the dairy industry in Pennsylvania."

With 56 corporate members and a mailing list of about 900, the Stakeholders are involved in all aspects of the the industry "from cows to consumers," Bair said.

Pacesetter Awards are given to nominees who excel in the areas of vision, innovation, progressiveness, excellence of performance, and uniqueness. The award was created last year "to recognize individuals and organizations who have contributed significantly to creating a positive image of the Pennsylvania dairy industry."

Bonnie Hess said that expansion projects on Jobo Farm over the years were done with the goal of providing a livelihood for future generations of the family on the farm. These include a new freestall barn built four years ago and a double-10 milking parlor that is expandable to a double-18.

Another improvement planned for the near future is to upgrade the lagoon manure storage system on the farm. A separator system will be installed to remove the liquids for storage, said partner Dale Brown.

Brown and Josie Hess Riser manage the dairy herd,

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