

Environmental Stewardship

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cil (NPPC) and National Hog Farmer magazine, which annually co-sponsor a contest.

In an effort to reward "a strong environmental conservation ethic," the contest highlights producers from four regions of the U.S. as outstanding environmental stewards.

A national selection committee evaluated the applicants in seven areas that include general production information, manure management, financial management, farm aesthetics and neighbor relations, wildlife habitat, innovative ideas, and an essay on the meaning of environmental stewardship.

Other winners included Maple Grove Pork Co., North English, Iowa; 3-L Farms, Optima, Okla.; and Arends Sow Farm, Webster City, Iowa.

Farm Growth

"Steve is a progressor," said Darleen. "He always had a vision of what he wanted to succeed to in a couple of years to improve and grow his hog business — that's why I named it 'Greater Vision Farms,'" she said.

After a lifetime of farming with his father in the swine industry, in 1985 Stephen bought his father's 100 sows and began incrementally increasing hog numbers.

In 1993 he purchased his family's home farm and added two barns, including a five-room, 1,500-head finishing barn expanded to include 450 PIC sows.

The Burkholders sell half of the hogs as feeders and keep half to finish out. In the future, hopes Stephen, they will expand to feed out all of their own hogs.

They market 8,800 hogs annually, which means that Stephen takes an almost-weekly trip to market.

The couple lives on a 70-acre property five miles away from the home farm that houses the hogs. They rent and own 600 acres, with 450 of that acreage in

corn.

Darleen, who grew up on a dairy farm in Annville, is a full-time nurse and takes care of the operation's bookwork.

Neighbors and development proximity have brought environmental issues to the front burner for the Burkholders.

A large factory, located in view of the farm, employs more than 3,000 people, plus the highly-trafficked road running below the farm is a main stretch into nearby towns, said Darleen.

Consequently, odor control is a priority issue. By devoting themselves to learning about the industry and environment and becoming involved in odor control studies, the couple has been able to form good working relationships with the nearby business and community and keep up with the latest odor control technology.

In the mid 1980s Stephen served on the NPPC, which provided not only valuable experience but also gave him a glimpse into what he would need to do as a pork producer.

"I saw that in the future, leanness is what producers would be paid on, and that environmental issues would play a big role in agriculture. We talked about this stuff 15-20 years ago, and now it's here," he said.

"Agriculture is changing so much. What you do today you may not be doing next year."

To stay on the cutting edge of the industry, Stephen was a member of, and later president of, the Eastern Pennsylvania Pork Producer's Association. "I saw a need to attend meetings to learn," he said. He is vice president of the state pork council and past president of the state pork council.

Greater Vision Farms was a pilot farm in 1998 for an on-farm odor and environmental assessment program sponsored by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the pork checkoff program. They have earned the Audit Program Seal,

which signifies that their farm is in compliance with EPA regulations.

In addition the Burkholders participated in a Penn State University study addressing odor control. Also, in September 1997, Stephen became involved in the national pork board's environmental assurance program.

Odor Control Techniques

Ninety percent of the farm's manure is injected, according to Stephen. In 1997, the Burkholders purchased a liquid manure spreader complete with injectors on the back. The injection method saves \$5,000-\$6,000 a year on fertilizer, according to Burkholder.

Spring, before planting, and fall, after harvest, are the designated times to empty the two effluent tanks and spread manure at Greater Vision Farms. A crop consultant helps to draw up the nutrient management plan to ensure that the nutrients are most efficiently used, a job made



Stephen is joined by herdsman Floyd Huber, left, and employee Gary Hagenbuch.

more difficult because of the variety of the farm's manure.

The manure from the often-

washed nursery, for example, is "not as potent as the manure

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Pa. Weekly

13 Livestock Auctions

Friday, October 12

Report Supplied By PDA

CATTLE 4001...Compared with 4168

head last week and 4271 head a year ago. Compared with last Friday's summary...sl. steers reversed their downward trend and closed 1.00 to 2.00 higher, heifers closed 1.00 to 3.00 higher, cows gained 1.00 to 2.00, bulls mostly 1.50 higher.

STEERS: High Choice and Prime 2-4 67.60-70.75, Choice 2-3 65.00-69.00, Select and Low Choice 2-3 63.00-67.00, Select 1-3 58.75-65.00, Standard 1-2 50.00-59.00.

HOLSTEIN STEERS: Choice 2-3 57.00-61.35, Select 1-2 51.50-56.00, Standard 1-2 48.00-50.00.

HEIFERS Choice few Prime 2-4 64.00-68.50, Select 1-3 60.00-64.00, few to 57.00, Standard 1-2 50.00-58.00.

COWS: Breakers 75-80% lean 40.00-44.50, Boners 80-85% lean 37.00-42.00, Lean 85-90% lean 33.00-38.00. Shells 33.00 and down.

BULLOCKS: Choice 2-3 60.25-61.00, Select 1-3 49.75-51.75.

BULLS: Yield Grade 1 1000-2500 lbs 51.50-59.75, Yield Grade 2 900-2400 lbs

43.50-51.00.

FEEDER CATTLE: STEERS: Medium and Large 1 300-500 lbs 82.00-96.00, 500-700 lbs 76.00-85.00, Medium and Large 2 300-500 lbs 72.00-85.00, 500-700 lbs 52.00-76.00; HEIFERS:

Medium and Large 1 300-500 lbs 75.00-94.00, 500-700 lbs 69.00-82.00, Medium and Large 2 300-500 lbs 70.00-80.00, 500-700 lbs 63.00-76.00; BULLS: Medium and Large 1 300-500 lbs 82.00-95.00, 500-700 lbs 60.00-68.00, Medium and Large 2 300-500 lbs 60.00-80.00.

CALVES 2113...Compared with 2407 head last week and 2453 head a year ago Vealers steady to weak. VEALERS: Choice 150-325 lbs 87.50-90.00, Good 140-275 lbs 79.00-84.00, Standard and Good 75-120 lbs 30.00-50.00, Utility 50-100 lbs 10.00-37.00. FARM CALVES:

Holstein bull calves steady to 15.00 spots 20.00 higher, Holstein heifers 20.00 to 50.00 higher..No 1 Holstein bulls 80-120 lbs 90.00-137.00, late sales to 142.00, No 2 80-120 lbs 70.00-102.50; No 1 Holstein heifers 80-120 lbs 20.00-695.00, No 2 70-120 lbs 220.00-450.00.

Beef type bulls and heifers 75-140 lbs 90.00-265.00.

HOGS 900...Compared with 1215 head last week and 1105 head a year ago. Barrows and gilts steady to .50

lower, spots 1.00 lower, sows steady to 1.50 higher.

BARROWS AND GILTS: 49-54% lean 220-265 lbs 41.00-44.50, 45-50% lean 220-275 lbs 40.00-41.00, 40-45% lean 245-300 lbs 35.00-40.00.

SOWS: 1-3 300-500 lbs 32.00-34.00, 500-700 lbs 34.00-37.00.

BOARS: 21.25-29.50.

FEEDER PIGS 139...Compared with 168 head last week and 40 head a year ago. 1-3 20-40 lbs 10.00-24.00, 40-65 lbs 39.00-52.50. — per cwt.

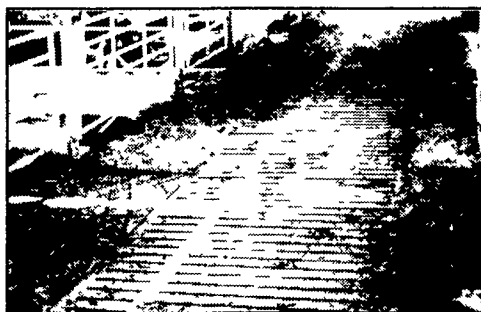
SHEEP 848...Compared with 1270 head last week and 542 head a year ago Slaughter lambs 5.00 to 10.00 higher

SLAUGHTER LAMBS: Choice 40-60 lbs 90.00-110.00, 60-80 lbs 70.00-90.00, 80-110 lbs 45.00-75.00.

SLAUGHTER SHEEP: 20.00-40.00.

ONE GRADED FEEDER PIG SALE 443...Compared with 1097 last week and 653 head a year ago. Feeder pigs 5.00 to 10.00 lower spots 40.00 lower with light demand for slaughter pigs. FEEDER PIGS: 1-2 25-40 lbs 70.00-75.00, 40-50 lbs 52.00-72.00; US 2 20-40 lbs 55.00-57.00, 40-55 lbs 50.00-67.00; Slaughter 20-40 lbs 60.00-90.00, 50-80 lbs 46.00-68.00. — per cwt.

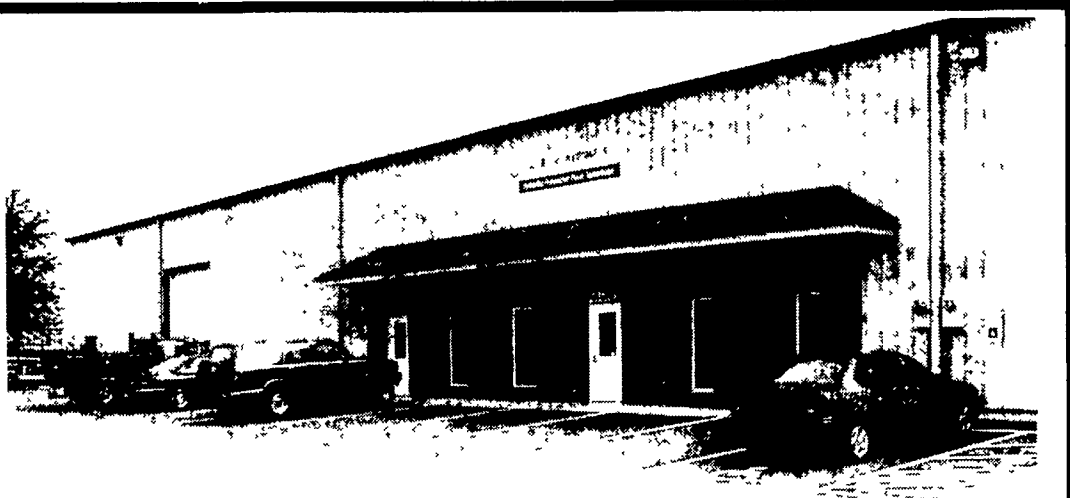
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