



PURINA SERVICE

CUSTOM PELLETS MAKE MIXING FEED A SNAP ON HOOVER DAIRY

When Gordon Hoover switched to a Purina feeding program about 10 years ago, he did it for the high level of service and no-hassle custom feed mix they deliver.

Hoover, who owns and operates the 120-cow dairy here with his wife Carole and their three daughters, used to harvest high moisture corn from the farm and buy the rest from several neighbors "here and there." A variety of feed commodities were delivered to the farm. These had to be stored, then weighed and loaded at each mixing. Ingredients could shrink in storage or even blow away while being moved on the farm.

That hassle was eliminated by Purina custom pellets. Now, Hoover doesn't worry about harvesting and storing high moisture corn or handling separate commodities. The complete pelleted feed, "formulated and mixed just for us," provides dry ground corn as well as all the protein- and mineral-balancing needs for the TMR, allowing Hoover to focus on herd management and growing alfalfa and corn for forage.

"We simplified our feeding program with this complete feed," Hoover said.

For good digestion and cow health, he aims for a 60:40 forage-to-grain ratio in the TMR, "pushing forages rather than concentrate." Under this program, "production has been very consistent."



Gordon Hoover, left, is happy with the ease of mixing Purina custom pellets with his homegrown forages, and the quality service offered by Purina representative Rick Kolb, center, and Doug High of High Bros.

Hoover's latest rolling herd average stands at 23,300 pounds of milk, 853 of fat, and 676 of protein. That meets his goal of being within the top 10 percent of Lancaster County DHIA herds - without using BST.

Low SCC counts have earned Hoover quality milk premiums for more than five consecutive years, another sign of overall good management.

Hoover's feedman is Doug High of High Bros., Gordonville. High visits the farm every

other week to do the nutritional work and balance the rations. While Hoover has come to expect consistent, high-quality feed from Purina, he said it's the accessible service that really makes the difference.

"My philosophy on feed companies is that they're all working out of the same playbook," Hoover said. "My biggest criteria is service. They have to meet my needs and deliver the feed on time."

For Hoover, that means Purina.

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