

Father-Son Team Up

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In the past this farm has been a hog and dairy operation. Dave became a full-time farmer with his father Lester in 1964, after his high school graduation from Meyersdale Area High School. His father and mother Lester and Gladys (Troutman) Kornes are both deceased. They acquired the farm from Lester's parents, the late Earl and Ella (Lepley) Kornes.

The Kornes' youngest daughter Amanda lives nearby with her husband Jeff McKinley and their oldest daughter Lisa lives in New York with her husband Kevin Butler and their daughter Emily.

"We love farming and we are now trying to find a niche in the market with F-1 seed stock and club calf production," said Dave.

The father-son team works well. For Dave, the genetics of these animals is intriguing. For Chris, showing and fitting the beef cows has become a passion. Chris travels throughout the U.S. as a showman in beef competition.

With 96 acres of farmland and more than 500 acres of rented pastureland and hay ground for production of round bales, the Kornes try to keep the overhead down as much as possible. The pastureland and hay fields are mostly reclaimed strip mined land.

"We keep overhead down in several ways," said Dave. "We use a four-wheeler in order to keep fuel consumption down. We also strive to keep problem-free cows."

The cattle are kept outside on



Dave and Chris Kornes of Southampton Township in Somerset County feed their herd of beef cows, mostly Angus-based brood cows, a round hay bale last week. Their farmstead has been in their family for three generations.



Dave Kornes started out as a dairy farmer and then had a hog farm for several years. In the early 1990s he became a full-time beef farmer. He has worked with beef cows all his life and enjoys working on herd genetics. Here, he feeds some grain to the cows by his home and barn, but the herd is almost entirely fed hay.

pastureland year-round and are fed primarily round bales throughout the year.

The cows must calve at two years old and are bred back on time each year. The Kornes look for structural soundness for longevity in a cow and udder quality and small teats, so the newborn calf can nurse easily.

An embryologist visits the homestead regularly. In order to produce a supreme club calf, a high quality donor cow is selected and then her eggs are flushed and implanted into recipient cows.

"The donor cow produces females that will produce high quality club calves," said Dave.

Cattle are baited into corrals for synchronization and for breeding A-I, and for putting embryos into recipient commercial cows, said Kornes.

"We have purchased some donor quality cows. A Meyer 734 daughter, an Angus Anchor daughter, and P.S., our proven Century Touchstone and P.S. Power Play daughter," said Dave. "I like to learn the genetics and Chris likes to show cattle, so we are starting to produce seedstock F-1 heifer and club calves for 4-H and FFA kids."

Chris most recently returned from the North American International Livestock Exposition in Louisville, Ky., and placed second in his class. He plans to attend more international shows in the future and enjoys clipping and fitting a beef cow. Chris has traveled to Oklahoma, South Dakota, Wyoming, and other states looking for quality donor cows to produce club calf stock.

"I enjoy the artistic aspects of showing and fitting cows," said

Chris. "You can take an average cow and depending on how she is clipped, that animal can do pretty well in the show ring. I enjoy the shows and working with the animals."

In addition to their beef operation, Dave also sells field and natural stone and landscaping boulders to markets in the East, and in Baltimore, Md. and northern Virginia. He acquires the stone from Somerset County and in Maryland on Big Savage Mountain and other parts of Allegany County, Md.

"We are in farming because we love it. In beef farming, the profit per unit is minimal, so we are always looking at ways to manage this operation more efficiently," Dave said. "Nowadays, farmers must be able to change and market their products more effectively."

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