



## New Farmers, New Generation

Marion Bowlan

Pennsylvania  
Farm Link

### WHO WILL BE YOUR SUCCESSOR?

Peter Drucker, a well-known management expert said, "The final test of greatness in a CEO is how well he chooses a successor, and whether he can step aside and let his successor run the company." When you are ready to step aside, do you know who your successor will be?

Many children who grow up on farms have their share of chores and are introduced at a very young age to working on the farm. They learn by doing. In my own family, all the children were expected to help with chores and there never seemed to be enough time in the day. Sometimes I thought my middle name was "Hurry."

Children can absorb a great deal of information by participating on the farm. They gain first-hand knowledge of living and working with family members, being one's own boss, and making important decisions. They also experience the problems that weather, regulation, and globalization of trade have inflicted on the profitability of the farm business.

Good successors do not happen by chance. Most CEOs don't start out as CEOs. Rather, they work their way up through the business and are groomed by interested mentors or founders. We should be doing the same for the successors, or CEOs, of our farms.

Unfortunately, many senior

generation farmers are reluctant to discuss farm succession because they may not have come to grips with the idea of stepping down or their own mortality. Or they may not believe that the junior generation is capable of running the farm as well as they did.

If you choose not to discuss farm transfer, you risk the danger of leaving the inevitable to chance. Sooner or later we all have to face our own demise. If you have no plans in place, you may leave the farm highly vulnerable, leaving dissent, disorder, and even failure as your legacy. Make a commitment today to schedule a family meeting and get discussions started. If you haven't discussed the transfer process, sooner is better than later.

Successors also need the opportunity to develop management skills before they take over the operation. Management skills are not inherited. Too often, the senior generation holds onto the checkbook and bank account, leaving the successor poorly prepared to take over or make critical decisions.

In addition to production skills, successors need the opportunity to manage labor, solve problems, understand the finan-

cial situation, and make major purchasing decisions. A well-trained heir has experience working in all aspects of the farm business with *both the responsibility and the authority* to make decisions.

Many options can be used to provide learning opportunities for the successor. The successor can rent a portion of the farm, take responsibility for one of the farm enterprises, start a new enterprise, or rent a portion of the farm. Profit or loss should be the

successors. Allow them to learn and make mistakes without jeopardizing the whole operation. More responsibility and authority can be added as they gain experience.

If you would like to learn more about farm succession, attend one of Pennsylvania Farm Link's upcoming workshops: Jan. 22 in Pleasant Gap, Feb. 19 in Manheim, March 10 in Lewistown, or March 11 in Bedford. Call (717) 664-7077 to register for these workshops or for information on farm succession.

## Dairy Day Jan. 15

LEESPORT (Berks Co.) — The Berks County Cooperative Extension Dairy Day will highlight feed additives, milk inputs for 2003, and nuisance birds Jan. 15 at the Berks County Agricultural Center.

Speakers and topics include:

- 9:00 a.m. - Registration, Visit Commercial Exhibits, and Refreshments
- 10:00 - Dealing With Nuisance Birds (Clyde Myers, Extension Agent, Penn State Cooperative Extension-Berks County)
- 10:30 Exploring the Rumen Digestive System - How It Really Works (Dr. Limin Kung)
- 11:15 From the Cost of Inputs Through the Price of Milk - What Can We Expect for 2003 (John Berry)
- 11:45 Lunch
- 12:45 Dairy Feed Additives - Which Will Work With Your Management (Dr. Limin Kung)
- 1:30 Experiences With Additives (Dr. Carl Brown, Dr. Dave Nirschl)
- 2:00 Panel Discussion (Dr. Kung, Dr. Brown, Dr. Nirschl)

2:30 Adjourn  
Featured speaker will be Dr. Limin Kung, a researcher and educator in dairy nutrition. He has conducted many research studies dealing with additives at the University of Delaware. He has given presentations to producers and professionals in the United States, Canada, and Europe.

Other speakers include John Berry, a multicounty extension agent in marketing; Dr. Carl Brown, sales manager and nutritionist for F. M. Brown's Sons, Inc.; and Dr. Dave Nirschl, a veterinarian for 32 years for Willow Creek Animal Hospital.

Reservations are required and are \$5 per person. Send check, made payable to Berks County Extension Special Account, to Berks County Cooperative Extension, Berks County Ag Center, P.O. Box 520, Leesport, PA 19533.

For more information, contact Clyde Myers at (610) 378-1327 or e-mail cam11@psu.edu.

## All-Breeds Convention Feb. 14-16

STATE COLLEGE (Centre Co.) — The 2003 Pennsylvania Junior All-Breeds Convention will be Feb. 14-16 in State College.

This year's theme is "Crazy About Cows!"

Workshops for older participants include calf nutrition, water quality, and manure analysis. Juniors will attend sessions on dairy judging and conver-

sion of feed to milk. Saturday lunch will feature Dr. Larry Muller talking about international dairy opportunities, and Sunday will feature Carrie Bomgardner as the inspirational speaker.

Registration fee is \$50, which covers all meals for the weekend. Hotel reservations should be made directly with Ramada Inn by Jan. 14. The hotel phone number is (814) 238-3001. Please mention that you are with the Junior All-Breeds Convention. Room rate is \$57 for one to four people in a room.

Antiques Center - in Section B'

### Aqua-Therm

**Outside Wood Burning Furnace**

- Clean  
- Safe

- Easy  
- Efficient



Buy the top of the line!

- \*Stainless Steel Fire Box
- \*Ash Removal Auger
- \*15 Year Warranty
- \*Thermostatically Controlled

Heat your house, shop and/or hot water with one unit.

For more information,  
call 717-838-9270 or 1-888-382-8170  
Email: mkpowell@paonline.com

### Dutch Country Soft Pretzels



Available for making fresh, hot, hand-rolled soft pretzels for your company, anniversary, open house, employee functions & sales meetings.

4 miles east of Ephrata along Route 322  
Website: dutchcountrysoftpretzels.com  
E-mail: ike@dutchcountrysoftpretzels.com

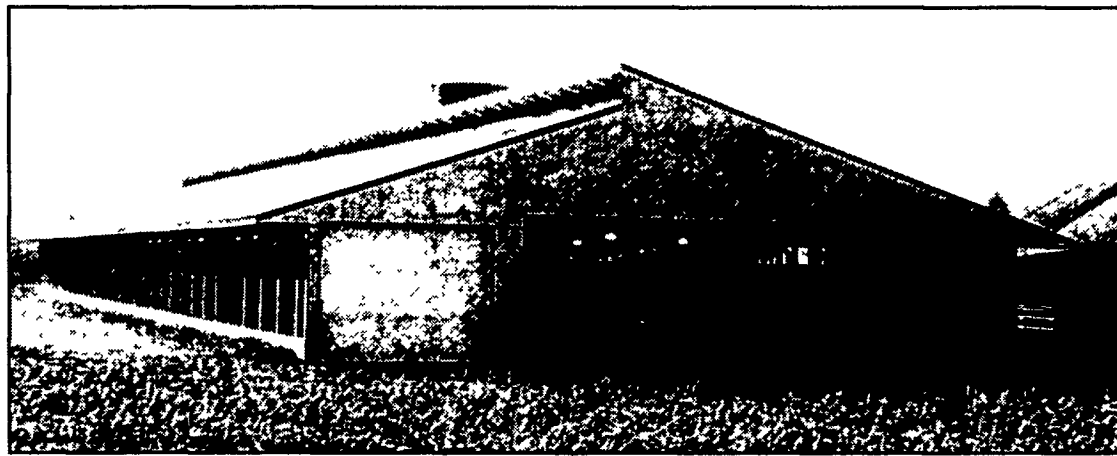
Ike Stoltzfus  
717-354-4493  
Fax 717-354-5125

2758-1 Division Hwy  
New Holland, PA 17557

## A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO ...

# Tom Bollinger & Family - Meadow Spring Farm

## New 3 Row Freestall Facility



Features:

- Double Sidewall Slider Curtains
- Alley Scraper with Gravity Flow to Storage
- Wide Front Freestalls • Brisket Boards • Mattresses
- Open Trough Type Energy Free Waterers
- Grooved Concrete Scrape Alleys, Diamond Grooved at Waterers
- Wave Grooved Type Feed Alley Matting

<p><b>White Horse Construction</b> 5070 Leike Road Parkesburg, PA 19365 Phone 610/593-5559 Dairy Facilities General Construction</p>	<p><b>Joe Zook</b> 450 Sheep Hill Rd. Newmanstown, PA 17073 Phone 717/949-6870 Dairy Facilities Consultant</p>	<p><b>Lapp's Barn Equipment, Inc.</b> 5935 Old Philadelphia Pike Gap, PA 17527 Phone 717/442-8134</p>
--	--	---

## When It's Time To Make Improvements...



Xtra Wide Free Stalls  
...Choose

### STEIN-WAY Barn Equipment

- Free Stalls     - Sand Traps™
- Self-locks     - Waterers
- Gates     - Bale Boss Hay Savers

Sold by:

**Joe Speicher**  
175 North Imler Valley Rd., Imler, PA 16655  
**(814) 276-3304**  
**1-888-605-2422**