

'Dairying' By Different Means

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ing, so we subleased a farm and put veal in," he said. When the owner decided to return to the farm, the Lucas family again opted for agriculture and moved to their residence in Bernville.

Until recently, the farm hosted four barns with 100 calves in each room, however Lucas is renovating two of the rooms into a facility to recycle used oil filters. He plans to collect and process the filters to generate scrap steel that will go to a foundry.

The barn now hosts 200 head of calves, the average size of a veal operation, according to Lucas.

With 400 calves, "the rooms were set up five weeks apart, so there was about one room a

month coming out," he said. Lucas raised each room of bull calves for 18-20 weeks, until they reached 475-500 pounds.

With the smaller number of calves, Lucas can schedule the calves' arrival and departure around such events as family gatherings. "Having down time in between will make raising veal much more enjoyable," he said.

Although he has downsized, veal production is still important to Lucas. "Even with getting rid of half of my calves, I don't see myself getting out of it," said Lucas. "As an industry, veal has been one of the more profitable agriculture industries during the last 20 years," despite the market variation.

"Veal has always been the

main livelihood" on the farm, "even though it's a very vola-

tile market."

Swings in the market include the price for bob (baby) calves (per 100 head Lucas has paid \$6,000-\$24,000) and the price for fed calves (\$1.70-\$2.45 per pound).

A few cows provide milk for the Lucas family. Lucas is joined by his wife, Sharon, and children Darin, 23; Kristen, 21; Bryant, 18; Derek, 15; Kara, 13; Kenton, 11; Austin, 9; and Natalie, 7.

"The children help quite a bit," he said. The Lucas children lend a hand mixing the milk formula, filling buckets, and dumping buckets to help their father with the veal operation.

The family's diversified portfolio also includes selling and delivering produce and fruit to about 20 customers per week, Sharon's project



Kara, leaning against bags of milk formula and with the mixer behind her, helps clean up after the calves' feedings.



Lucas grows out Holstein bulls from eight weeks to two years of age on the farm's 60 acres of pasture.

The Veal And Dairy Connection In Pennsylvania

MIDDLETOWN (Dauphin Co.) — Nationally, the veal industry contributes \$250 million to the dairy industry through the purchases of bull calves and feed ingredients.

As for Pennsylvania, the commonwealth ranks second for veal production in the country, led only by Wisconsin.

As illustrated in the feature about David Lucas, Pennsylvania is home to many farm families who raise approximately 200 bull calves during an 18-20 week growing cycle.

Veal producers purchase Holstein bull calves at auction markets, and those bull calves originate at local dairy farms. Bull calves that receive colostrum within 24 hours of birth will command a higher price at auction and remain healthier at the veal farm.

During the growing cycle, veal producers feed calves a milk formula

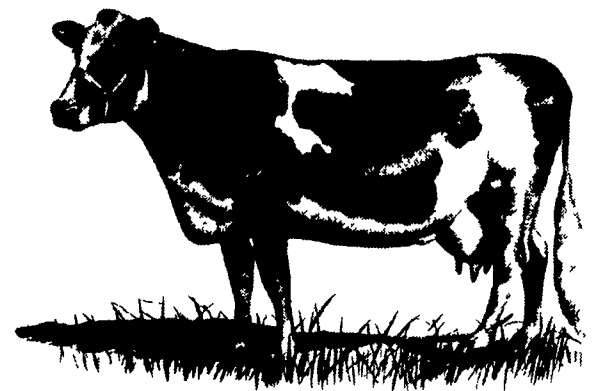
diet twice a day. Primary ingredients include skim milk and whey protein, by-products of dairy processing.

Pennsylvania is home to several veal feed manufacturing plants.

At approximately 475-500 pounds, veal producers market the bulls to processors. Pennsylvania is home to two veal processors: P & N Packing in the northern tier and Marcho Farms in the southeast.

Veal is an entree on many fine-dining restaurants, particularly those restaurants featuring Italian cuisine. Philadelphia is a popular market for veal in restaurants and also at grocery stores. Most popular cuts include chops, roasts, cutlets and ground veal.

For more information about veal, contact the American Veal Association, 1500 Filling Mill Road, Middletown PA 17057, (717) 985-9125. Websites www.vealfarm.com, www.veal.org, and www.vealstore.com also have information.

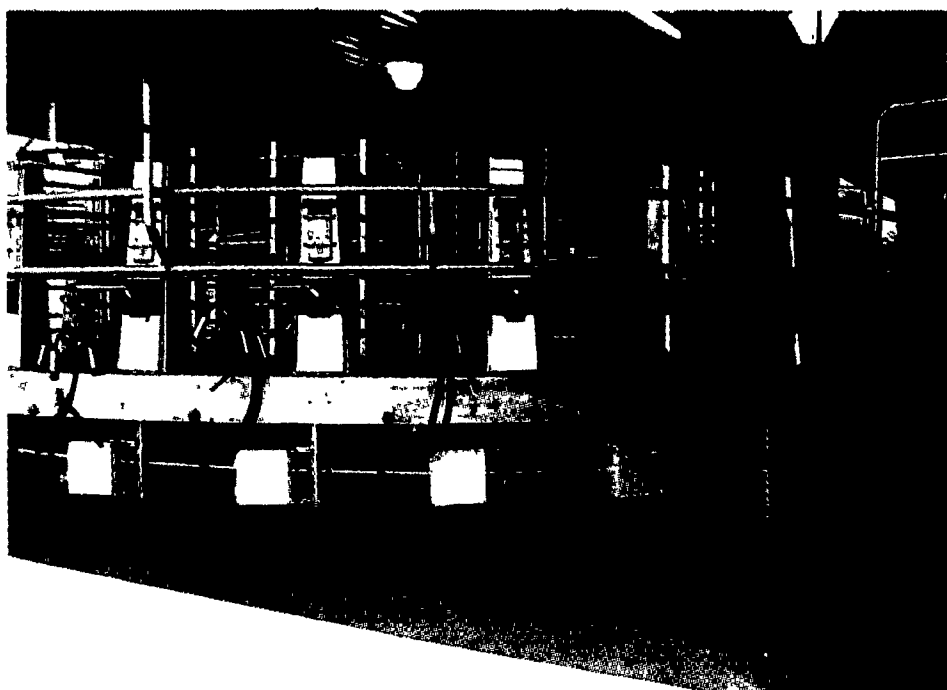


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