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Accomplishments

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He received his animal science doctorate from Purdue. The doctoral thesis involved the study of nutritional physiology of dairy cattle ruminants.

Muller admitted he did "some feeding at home" but was really a "cow showman," he said. He won honors at the Tazewell County 4-H Fair and the Illinois State Fair in Springfield.

"I did quite well," he said.

The herd on the family farm remains registered Holstein. In 1924, the first Holstein cow was brought to the farm, and every cow since traces its breeding back to the "one cow," noted Dick.

Muller noted his brother also attended the International Dairy Show and the World Dairy Expo.

Muller noted the influence of Jack Albright, a teacher at the University of Illinois, in helping Muller study at Purdue for the doctorate. But Muller owes a great deal of thanks to friend and colleague Dr. Bill Baumgard, an instructor at Penn State in 1976, the year Muller came to the university to teach.

Baumgard noted he has since retired in January 1998 as associate dean and director of ag research at Purdue, returning to the university where Muller received his doctorate.

"At that time," Baumgard said, "the (separate) Penn State Dairy and Animal Science departments were combined. I immediately recognized the need for an experienced person with an excellent track record and who worked in dairy nutrition and management, one who could relate well to individuals and students and serve as a team player."

Baumgard noted he picked "the best person" in Muller.

"Larry is honest and sincere, and related those characteristics to students," Baumgard said.

Muller laughed. "He took a chance on me," Muller said.

Before arriving at Penn State, however, Muller was teaching undergraduates at South Dakota State University. When he arrived at Penn State, dairy was ranked fifth in the nation. Muller helped strengthen the Holstein breed and helped move dairy up a notch in the national rankings — to where it stands now, in fourth place.

"I've taught classes in upper level dairy nutrition and management," Muller said.

Since he began, Muller noticed some changes in the classrooms, including the ever-larger class size. "Back then there were more dairy farmers," he said. "There were more dairy farm families."

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