

Outstanding Farm Family

(Continued from Page A19)

"If we stay small, the problems are smaller," he said.

"I'm just a do-it-myself person."

"We do things by steps. The main thing is keeping the debt load small."

If the children prove to be interested in the farm, the couple will look more closely at expanding, he said.

Besides recently adding a heifer facility and mattresses, tunnel ventilation, a milking parlor and freestall barn are also on the list of improvements for the future.

Self-Education

The couple often takes advantage of the opportunity to attend open houses on other farms "to keep our options open," said Denise. "It's good to have an open mind instead of sticking to one idea."

Public auctions, one of Larry's hobbies, also provide the chance to talk to other farmers and learn still more.

Salesmen may also be a source of learning "what other farmers are doing, or what new products" are on the market, he said.

The Grumbines purchase feed, from several different businesses, which may also yield information as they work with different sources, they said.

Working with an independent nutritionist who is in contact with several mills is also beneficial, both to compare prices and to see what each mill has to offer, believe the Grumbines.

Part of profitability means utilizing custom operators for some of the farm work to try to "keep equipment debt low," said Larry.

Farm Upgrades

The farm has been improved through such opportunities as the Chesapeake Bay Program, which enabled the Grumbines to put in a manure tank that is emptied twice a year.

The Grumbines have also installed strip cropping with financial help from the Natural Resource Conservation Service.



Denise designed and painted this sign for the farm. The name, "Laddbine Farm," is a combination of Larry and Denise Grumbine's names.

In addition, partnering with the Department of Environmental Protection has yielded fenced-in streams on the property.

4-H Members Honored

Besides honoring the Outstanding Farm Family, the Reading Fair Board will also recognize

4-H'ers Caitlin Ketterer and Cathy Levan as outstanding 4-H members.

Caitlin, Bernville, is the daughter of Jo-Ann and Brian Ketterer and is a five-year member of their Leesport 4-H Club. Besides holding several offices in the club, she has been a teen leader for five years.

Additionally, she has founded and is organizational leader for

She has severed in leadership capacities in the livestock clubs and has organized and coached the Berks County participation in the Keystone Pork Bowl. She has also served as a 4-H Member on the Berks County 4-H Livestock Council.

Cathy plans to attend Reading Area Community College, then finish her education studying ag business at Penn State.

FFA Members Honored

FFA members that will be recognized are Kristy Dietrich and Justin Shupp.

Kristy, Hamburg, has served as FFA secretary and president. In addition she is accomplished in public speaking and livestock evaluation. She owns numerous beef animals in the family beef herd.

She has also been a member of 4-H for several years, exhibiting animals at various events. Kristy plans to attend Penn State Berks in the fall and major in an agriculturally-related major.

Justin Shupp, Birdsboro, is a graduate of Twin Valley High School. He is the son of Michael and Roxann Shupp and has held several FFA offices.

He has emphasized environ-

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The Grumbines recently added a heifer facility.

the 4-H cake decorating club. She has been active in the sewing and cooking projects with the Leesport club and has participated 4-H State Days and the County Fashion Revue, advancing to the Regional Fashion Revue four times, in addition to the State Fashion Revue.

A graduate of Tulpehocken High School, she plans to attend Albright College to major in secondary education.

Cathy Levan, Hamburg, is the daughter of Shirley and Paul Levan.

She is a 10-year member of the Berks County 4-H Swine Club, sheep club, and beef clubs.

During these years, she has received grand champion awards in showmanship and fitting in the three project areas. She also placed in the top five in the 4-H Swine Skill-A-thon for several years.

mental studies and has won the regional forestry contest twice, in addition to placing second in the state forestry conference and being a member of the second-place team.

He has also won the regional wildlife competition twice, and has placed second in the state wildlife contest. He has helped to plant trees and with the border cutting project, besides cleaning and repairing nest boxes for the Pennsylvania Game Commission.

The game commission has honored him with state level awards. In January he was selected as the Eastern Pennsylvania Star in Specialty Agriculture for his conservation work. He has also chaired the school's Christmas tree recycling projects.

Shupp plans to major in forestry at Penn State this fall.

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