

# Faith-based management

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average of 1 year 9 months at 1300 pounds," she explained.

John Gulya from Pennfield Corporation balances the pre-fresh ration at Little Hill Farm. Rick Stehr takes care of the milking herd and dry cow rations. The TMR ration includes cottonseed, hay, haylage, flaked corn, corn silage, and protein concentrate.

As for that most important ingredient -- water -- the herd owners make sure it's available at all times. In the new addition to the tie stall barn, water bowls were installed at every stall so that cows do not have to share water bowls. Eventually, they'd like to install additional water bowls in the old part of the barn too. The bowls are cleaned daily by the two couples' four children.

The herd health program has Dr. Brian Reed in charge. Aside from coming to the farm monthly for herd checks, he also designed a custom vaccination program for the herd. "Cows receive vaccinations at dry off and at less stress times in order to maximize health and production," Terry explained, adding that a custom vaccination program is also in place for the calves and heifers. "Vaccinations are a great return on your investment," she affirmed. Her husband, Kevin, performs all of the routine on-farm herd health duties such as administering IVs, vaccina-

tions, pills, drenches, etc.

Still, it is the love for their animals that underpins the herd management. It's not just a matter of responsibility; it's a privilege that's not taken for granted.

When Little Hill Farm was established in 1938 by Alice Little and George Hill, they maintained a 100% Brown Swiss herd. "When our grandfather passed away suddenly, their milking herd was dispersed quickly," Terry noted. "Our father started back milking with their young stock, but had to purchase additional cattle. It was too difficult to purchase enough Brown Swiss to be 100% Brown Swiss again," she explained. So Holsteins were added at that time.

When Terry and Rich purchased their parents' herd on November 1, 1994, it was approximately 85% Holsteins. "We have been trying to build our Brown Swiss numbers up, but at the same time we have also experienced more marketing opportunities with the Brown Swiss breed," she said.

Today, the Brown Swiss herd accounts for about a third of the total herd. Specifically, there are 32 cows milking, 6 dry cows and 35 head of youngstock.

"We love the hardiness and disposition of the Brown Swiss

and they are also lower in maintenance," Terry said further.

Asked what their primary motivation is to be in the dairy business today, Terry again responds for every member of the family:

"We cherish working with our families each and every day. Having our children grow up on a farm teaches them so much about responsibility and working together. It's so exciting and fulfilling to see the smiles on their faces when they drive the tractors and skidloaders, help deliver a newborn calf, find a new litter of kittens or joke around with their family while doing their chores. Hopefully, our passion for the dairy industry will motivate one or all of our children to be the fourth generation operating Little Hill Farm!

If you would like to learn more about Little Hill Farm, please visit their website: [www.littlehillfarm.net](http://www.littlehillfarm.net)

## WANTED: Herds to take part in herd health and cow care project

HARRISBURG -- Dairy farm families interested in improving herd health and cow care can apply to participate in the Center for Dairy Excellence pilot "Herd Health and Cow Care Improvement Project."

"Herd health care can have a significant impact on a dairy farm's profitability and on consumer perception of the dairy industry," said John Frey, executive director of the center. "Identifying problems related to this area and developing a step-by-step approach to resolving those issues can strengthen the farm's bottom line while demonstrating its commitment to animal care. Through this project we'll help more farms improve herd health."

The project is supported by a grant from the Pennsylvania Soybean Board. Each participating farm will have up to \$1000 in financial support to work with the herd's veterinarian and a Penn State veterinarian to aid in improving a component of the dairy, ultimately enhancing overall herd health and animal care on the farm.

Participating farms will provide details of their work in improving their specific herd health and animal care focus to the center. This information will be shared with the dairy industry to help other dairies looking to resolve similar issues.

"Working with these farms will help the center develop a tool to aid other producers quickly assess and identify steps to improve herd health care on the farm," Frey said.

Applications for the pilot project must be submitted by Nov. 15 and are available from the center by calling 717-346-0849 or emailing [info@centerfordairyexcellence.org](mailto:info@centerfordairyexcellence.org). Farms will be selected for the project on a first-come, first-served basis with considerations given to the herd management support area and regional location.

For more information about this pilot project or to request an application, contact the center at 717-346-0849 or [info@centerfordairyexcellence.org](mailto:info@centerfordairyexcellence.org).

## MDIA to meet Nov. 15

FREDERICK, Md. -- The Maryland Dairy Industry Association will host a meeting to discuss newly proposed Maryland nutrient management guidelines with Royden Powell, assistant Maryland secretary of agriculture, in the office of resource conservation. The meeting is set for 10:30 a.m. Tuesday, Nov. 15, in Room 130 of the Frederick County Public Training Facility off Reichs Ford Road at 5370 Public Safety Place, Frederick. For more information or to register, call 301-349-0750 or e-mail [secretary@marylanddairyindustry.org](mailto:secretary@marylanddairyindustry.org).

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