

Four-year-old Tom and 8-year-old Steve Bingham share in the pride of having earned many bright, new, inspiring trophies in the show ring with their dairy cattle in 1962.



Eight-year-old Steve is starting to get on-the-job training for the day when he'll be taking purebred cattle of his own into the ring. Sometimes ring technique contributes as much toward winning as the fine points of the animal.

He sprays buildings and premises periodically during hot months. Each cow is individually sprayed morning and night. The program was most effective. Says Jack, "I think we had more flies in the house than in the barn last summer. It pays to keep dairy animals as comfortable as possible. I just know that in bad years like this one was for flies, that a man could lose about 20 percent of his milk production. Flies can pester a cow almost to death."

"Individual cow care and good sanitation pay off in another way too," remarked Bingham. "It costs me less in animal health products and veterinarian service. Don't misunderstand me . . . I buy biologicals and medications when I need them, and I don't waste any time calling my vet when I run into trouble. I simply mean that a man can minimize his costly herd health problems by keeping a close eye on every animal in the herd and by caring for them properly."

Bingham believes a woman's place is in the home . . . not in the barn. He handles the entire milking-cleanup operation alone. I'm sure Charlotte Bingham has no objections. Never let it be said that she doesn't know his cows, though. She keeps records and helps with registration and production data. She fills her role of a dairyman's wife well.

What about the physical facts of the farm? Well, we could sum it up by calling it 192 acres of just about everything in the book. It contains sloughs . . . some drained, some undrainable. There are woods . . . some on scenic high ground, some in low areas. There are hills . . . some gently rolling and tillable, some that are kept in permanent pasture for good reason. There are good grain-growing fields . . . some jet black peat soil, some which heave up a good crop of glacier rocks every spring. There's even a good sized swamp in which nothing grows but Reed Canary Grass. How the young heifers go for it for a few weeks early in the season when the growth is new and tender.

Despite the variables, the farm can still produce 100 bushel corn, enough forage corn to fill a silo, a big bin of oats and 7 thousand or more bales of good hay. There is also plenty of pasture. Nearly every pound of crop produced is increased in net value by converting it into milk and saleable calves.

When asked if he would like to offer a little good advice to aspiring young would-be dairymen with very little cash, Jack replied, "Probably nothing new. But, first and foremost, utilize to the fullest a limited amount of carefully selected machinery and equipment. Start just big enough to get by. You'll probably be using your back more than you like, but things can look up fast in this business." Then, with a half smile on his lips, he added, "Oh, and you might make a point of throwing in with a good landlord like mine. It helps a lot."