

They're the best in the north --

but when the department says

you've got to go *Feb 2/72*

that means prizewinners too

BY MARGARET SOUTHALL

The farmer of the Seventies probably spends as much time behind a desk as he does behind the wheel of his tractor.

Farming 1972 style still entails getting up to milk cows at 5 a.m. But although much of the operation is mechanized, Farmer '72 has plenty to keep his hands busy--keeping daily records and charts about his cows performance for the Department of Agriculture.

In today's highly-automated, computerized society, human beings are not the only ones whose every move is documented. It happens to cattle, particularly when they form a prizewinning dairy herd such as the 140 Holstein-Friesians at Monteith Correctional Centre.

Between cattle quarters and milk-processing equipment, is a small office where Monteith's farm manager Ivan Ellis has charts, files and records on the herd which last year took the W. R. Peters Memorial Trophy at New Liskeard for best Holstein-Friesian herd in Northern Ontario.

Mr. Ellis has been at Monteith since 1947, when the herd was begun with base stock from Burwash and Guelph.

Announcing cessation of farming operations at its centres, the Department of Correctional Services said staff involved would be transferred to other positions consistent with their qualifications. The amount of pen-pushing that Mr. Ellis and his four-man staff handle "down on the farm" might well merit them jobs in a government statistics department.

"The record-keeping is a lot less work with a beef herd," said Mr. Ellis. Each milking is recorded; there are charts to be filled in for the Department of Agriculture; and clinical data to be kept on the herd.

Breeding by artificial insemination provides a control factor in better breeding lines. Monteith has sisters, mothers and daughters who keep things "all in the family" when it comes to more and better milk production. In 1967 the Holstein Friesian Association rated Monteith's IFM Hermine Fern Echo sixth best cow in Canada.

The Department of Correctional Services says the value of farm training rehabilitating inmates has been minimized. The decline of agricultural employment opportunities due to increasing mechanization and consolidation of small farms is given as the reason for this.

Monteith's cattle will be disposed of to "the benefit of the farming community in Ontario--a community they have benefitted before. Monteith Holstein's have helped farmers to build up their stock.

Of the herd, an average 36 head produces 1,600 lbs. of milk

a day. The two-hour milking operations are at 5 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. The farm has its own homogenizing, pasteurizing, separating and packaging equipment.

Average monthly milk distribution: 16,000 lbs. to North Bay Psychiatric Hospital; 7,000 lbs. for the Monteith institution; 2,600 lbs. for staff sales (the only thing sold to staff). The excess, is separated; 1,200 lbs. of cream a month goes to the commercial market and skimmed milk is used for stock feed.

Monteith superintendent Donald Griggs, who was born on a farm, is proud of his institution's ability to live off its own land and have sufficient substance left over for other institutions.

Last year, the farm's 4,000 bushels of potatoes kept Monteith happy, the extra being taken by Haileybury Jail, North Bay Jail, and Millbrook Correctional Centre.

"We don't want to compete with the local farmers, so any surplus is usually absorbed within the correctional system," said Mr. Griggs.

Monteith's green houses also supply biennial and perennial plants to brighten Department of Health offices and Ontario Provincial Police District 15 headquarters.