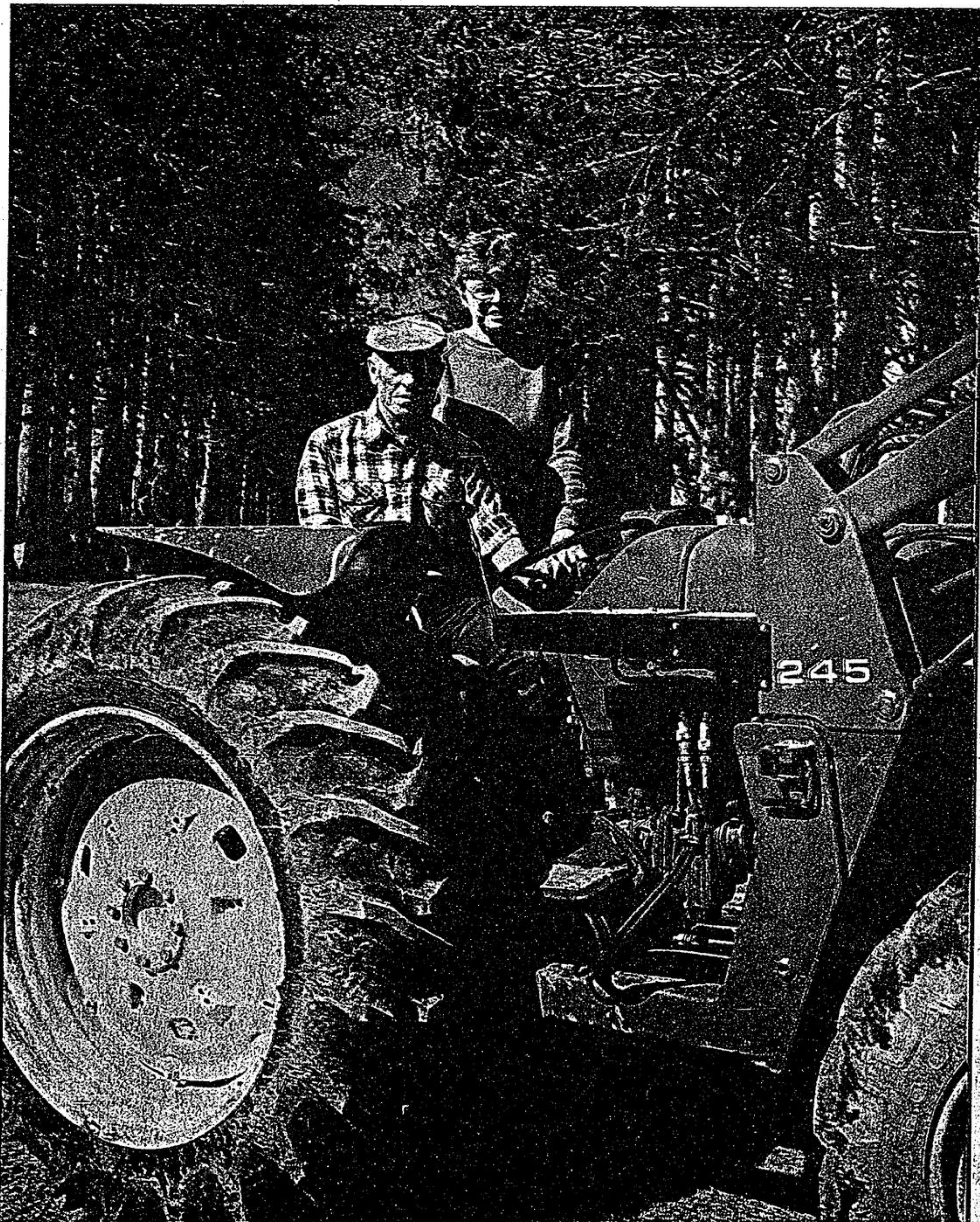


This family farm alive and well co-operation makes things work



'Togetherness' is the key to this successful family farm

Teamwork and a firm belief in the benefits of the family farm have made for a rewarding and satisfying life say Grant and Marion Wells of 'Sprucefair', R.R. 4, Stouffville. Despite the many prob-

lems associated with farming today, they would choose to live, no other way.

—Sjoerd Witteveen

By ERKKI POHJOLAINEN

Spending the first two hours of every day feeding and milking cows, may not be the kind of life some people prefer, but Grant and Marion Wells and family would have it no other way.

They're farmers. Every morning, Sundays included, Grant with sons Ken, 26, and Kevin, 23, rise at 6 o'clock to milk more than 30 cows in a herd of 75 purebred Holsteins. This is only the beginning of a typical day.

Besides the dairy operation, Grant and sons fatten 250 pigs for market and work two farms that produce enough feed for all the cattle.

Seated in his living room, Grant explains how he's accustomed to the work involved. "My father bought this farm in 1930. I've lived here all my life."

It was back in 1955 that Grant and Marion (Atkinson) were married. They took over the operation of the home farm when his parents moved to Stouffville.

With his sons now old enough to manage the property, the young-looking 55-year-old is planning to take things easier. "The boys will soon take over. It's either be semi-retired or be weeded out," he says with a smile.

Before the boys were big enough, Marion helped out at the barn, feeding the cattle and doing other chores. But now Ken and Kevin do all that," Grant says.

With three men working the farm, one can have a day off with little inconvenience to the others, he adds.

The boys spend some of their days off participating in plowing matches. They want to maintain another family tradition: Grant is a Canadian Tractor Plow Champion.

Several have approached them wanting to buy the farm, "but I shy away from real estate agents," Grant explains in a soft-spoken voice.

Their property, he points out, is perhaps in greater demand than some other local farms because of a neighboring gravel pit. "They can't open a new pit," Ken interjects, "but they can expand the existing one."

But so far, they've shown no in-

terest in selling.

Three years ago, they upgraded the dairy operation by installing a DeLaval milking pipeline, a holding tank and four milking units. This, Grant says, makes the work much easier.

Their dairy quotas are 344 litres daily of number 1 and 85,337 litres annually of MSQ. The number 1 is used as table milk while MSQ goes to make cheese and other dairy products. Grant is quick to add that both quotas are met with milk from the same cows.

Their milk has long been recognized for its top quality. Last year, Grant received a Gold Seal Certificate. Only 10 of York's 124 dairy farms were so honored.

"We've always had 20 to 30 pigs on the farm," Grant says, "but the boys wanted more."

Kevin bought a nearby barn and built enough pens for about 100. They also installed automatic feeders and established a dry manure management system. Kevin says he's in the barn for only an hour most days, leaving time for other jobs.

The family rents a 100-acre farm adjacent to their own 150 acres and grow all of the feed needed for the herd. They harvest corn, hay and mixed grain that they send to the Co-op to be milled.

The farm's operating cost was about \$75,000 last year, Grant notes. Ken explains the costs would have been much higher if they hadn't done most of their own equipment maintenance.

"We maintain the machines and do our own welding," Ken says, "but mechanical repairs are done at the shop."

With the whole operation in mind, let us now return to the typical day that began with milking and feeding at 6 a.m.

After breakfast, Grant, Ken and Kevin clean out three barns, do repairs and other jobs. Following dinner, there's more to be done. In the winter they cut wood in the bush. In the summer there's haying, harvesting and other field work. The cows are milked and fed again at 5 p.m., followed by supper. Often, there's still two to three hours work before going to bed. "If you're planting, you can't just stop and leave it for the next day," Grant concludes.

Milk production

Gold Seal quality

Several York Region dairy farmers were recently honored through the presentation of Gold Seal and General Certificates.

The presentations were made at the York Regional Milk Committee meeting.

Certificates were received by the following:

GOLD SEAL—Oliver Busby, King City; Bruce Snider, Maple; Grant Wells, Stouffville; Glen Hulse, Schomberg; Mervyn Wideman, Unionville; Byron and James Lockie, Sutton West and Fieldhouse Farms, Woodbridge.

GENERAL—Allan Crossley,

King City; David Paisley, Stouffville; Augustinian Fathers, King City; Robert Beynon, Maple; Gerald Livingston, Woodbridge; Canada Packers, Maple; Lloyd Bolender, Stouffville; Green Valley Farms, Kleinburg; Harold Hulse, Schomberg; Murray Reesor, Markham; Grant Leonard, Schomberg; Barry Little, Markham; Blake and James Coulter, Bolton; Dandyland Farm, Schomberg; Flowerview Farm, Mount Albert; Brown Bros., Unionville; Carolmac Farm, Woodbridge; David Wardlaw, Woodbridge and Robern Farm, Schomberg.

Farmer's wife wonderful life

By MARION WELLS

Farm wives come in all shapes and sizes. They are slender, slim and petite. They are plump, large and jovial.

Some farm wives are fearless and brave, tackling angry sows and raging bulls. Some are timid, quiet, much better at helping with ewe lambs, newborn calves and old mother cows.

Some farm wives are social butterflies, involved in a hundred community events and activities. Some are content to remain at home, caretakers of the family, the house and the barn.

Some farm wives are authorities on animal breeding, statistics and genetic backgrounds. Some can't tell the difference between a heifer, a springer or a cow.

Some farm wives spend considerable time trying to keep an attractive outward appearance under highly smelly and dirty conditions. Some like to spend their time developing a better inward appearance in caring for others more than themselves.

Some farm wives are horticulturalists with prime landscaped farms, beautiful flowerbeds, and gardens full of every kind of vegetable. Some, no matter how hard they try, grow more weeds than flowers.

Some farm wives are authorities on commodity options and the market. Some never know why milk and chicken quotas are necessary or why feed costs are so high.

Some farm wives despair over farm records, expenditures and cash flow, while others are excellent bookkeepers and enjoy the challenge of operating a personal business or the home computer system.

Some farm wives are concerned amateur veterinarians, interested powderpuff mechanics and good at squeezing a grease gun. Some are more often seen at the farm implement dealership than at the local beauty parlor.

Some farm wives are outstanding homemakers, seamstresses, bakers and crafters. Some perform minimal household duties but rather devote their time to community projects, church work, volunteer services or an off-the-farm job.

Some farm wives can do all these things—and more.

While our city sisters may label us as serfs and slaves, deep down in her heart, each farm wife knows she is unique and special—the way God made her to be!

Father and sons share work load on family farm



Grant Wells, (centre), with sons Kevin, (left), and Ken, (right), operate 'Sprucefair', a lovely farm on the Bloomington Road in Whitechurch-Stouffville. Through teamwork and good planning, they produce

excellent crops and milk quality that's rated with the highest in York Region.

—Erkki Pohjolainen