

As published in



Who: Randy Brougher

What: Beaver Run Dairy

Where: New Oxford, PA

Only seven miles from Gettysburg, the Pennsylvania countryside around Beaver Run Dairy was already a well-populated place when Randy Brougher's grandfather, Forrest Ogburn, founded the dairy in the early 1940s.

Since then, many of Eastern Pennsylvania's family dairy farms have become subdivisions with scenic views. But a good number have survived, making a decent living for families while sustaining attractive rural scenery for their neighbors. Farms like Beaver Run Dairy have proved that close family, hard work, and attention to cow care and comfort have enduring economic value despite the ups and downs of real estate and dairy markets.

From its 11-cow beginning, Beaver Run Dairy has grown to 165 milking Holsteins fed feedstuffs produced on up to 600 acres on the home farm and nearby acreage. Randy's part of the family has grown to 10 kids, with his three teenage boys involved in dairy and crop production.

The Beaver Run Dairy operation features free stalls with sand bedding, milking three times per day in a double 10 parallel parlor.

Producer Spotlight

Location: Challenge and opportunity for family dairy



At Beaver Run Dairy, Randy Brougher with sons, from left: Curvin, Leonard, and Nathaniel.

"We see the benefits of cow comfort all the time," Randy says. "Sand bedding is a pain to work with but is great for the cows. It helps give us very low somatic cell counts."

Feedstuffs storage at Beaver Run Dairy is in upright silos and ag bags. Feeding is by total mixed ration (TMR) using corn silage, roasted soybeans, dry hay, and supplements from Red Dale Ag Service, which include Diamond V Original XPC™. Randy works with Daryl Maufair, Ph.D., PAS, from Red Dale and Dorothy Pastor, PAS, from Diamond V.

"Beaver Run Dairy forage quality is excellent," Daryl notes, "which provides a solid foundation for great performance."

"We want to keep the quality all the way to the cows," Randy adds, "so we want to do better with feedstuffs storage. We're currently using the upright silos for corn silage and ag bags for haylage. Bunker storage may not be the best option, but ag bags are expensive."

Like other dairies in the area, Beaver Run Dairy hires a local service to roast the farm's own soybeans.

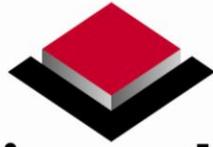
"Roasting beans gives us some extra flexibility," Randy says. "The roasted beans store well and work well in our TMRs. Or else we can go directly to market with the raw beans."

On the management side, Randy says it has been good to watch his sons develop as dairymen. The oldest, Nathaniel, looks after the milking cows, while the middle son Leonard likes field work and heifer breeding, and younger brother Curvin is the farm's calf specialist.

Beaver Run Dairy shares the challenge of the low price of milk with dairies everywhere. However, the farm also is close to urban areas, including Baltimore, a little over 50 miles away. The farm's location in the densely populated area between Gettysburg and York, PA gives "neighborliness" a special meaning.

"Folks driving down the road like to look over and see the pretty farms," Randy says. "But those farms have crops and cows, which means moving equipment and hauling manure. Drivers don't like following farm equipment or getting manure on their tires."

Randy and his boys stay safe on the road, and, when necessary, clean up afterward. With respect, they'd welcome more respect for farmers.



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