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Interview;

Wm. H. Henderson

Narrator

George K. Capron

8/15/74

P.S. We seem to have developed a Rose Mary Woods problem in that the Henderson tape has been misplaced. But Mrs. Patricia Sniffeth, the transcribing typist, remarked how easy it was to type up Bill's ideas. We hope to locate the tape operator and send forward it to the University.

George K. Capron
11/21/74

Poultry: A Crisis Of Costs

By CHARLES LAYTON
Inquirer Staff Writer

GEORGETOWN, Del. — A combination of oversupply, high feed costs and low market prices has driven some Delmarva poultry companies to the edge of bankruptcy, and everyone from the chicken farmer to the town banker is worried.

Most poultrymen foresee a more favorable market by next year, but in the meantime processors on this rural neck of land between the Delaware and Chesapeake Bays are losing 10 to 15 cents on every chicken they sell. Some

aren't expected to survive much longer.

The problem is critical on the Delmarva Peninsula — which encompasses Delaware, the eastern shore of Maryland and part of Virginia — because the area could be described as the chicken coop of the Eastern Seaboard.

The peninsula supports a total of 13 processing companies. Together, they form a \$400 million-a-year industry that supplies 12 percent of the nation's broilers and employs 12,000 chicken growers, plant workers and supply and service personnel.



Special to The Inquirer/ERIC CROSSAN

Chickens move along assembly line in a Swift & Co. processing plant in Felton, Del., that prepares 40,000 fowl a day for market

"It's literally clobbering our poultry industry," said Ed Ralph of the University of Delaware's county extension service near Georgetown.

"Every company is taking drastic losses right now, even the biggest, the most efficient ones."

Last week, the Eshams Farm Corp. of Parsanburg, Md., defaulted on a \$1 million loan, and a local credit company seized the firm's chickens, feed supplies and other property.

The Eshams Farm failure threatened to drag down a sister farm, Maryland Chicken Processors Inc., which had

been extending financial support to Eshams in an effort to keep it going.

A Federal judge granted the processing firm debtors-in-possession status, forestalling actual bankruptcy and authorizing the company and its 350 employees to continue operations.

A company spokesman put the blame on "low prices for the chickens combined with high cost of grain."

Delmarva poultrymen see no quick solution to the price-cost squeeze, and with frozen stocks at an all-time high, many are planning for production cutbacks as high as

20 percent in the next few months.

The larger companies have increased their advertising, hoping to stimulate demand, liquidate stocks and bring prices back up. But the smaller processors are just trying to hang on.

"There probably will be some weak firms that will be squeezed out by this economic situation," said poultryman Hal T. Hansen of Harbeson, Del.

At a meeting this month with agriculture commissioners for Delaware, Maryland and Virginia, industry spokesmen warned that a severe

production cutback could depress not only the economy of the peninsula but of the tri-state area as a whole.

And any company failures "would have a domino effect," according to Hansen. "It would begin to affect the bank in the area which has loans on poultry houses."

So far, the poultry farmers — there are more than 3,300 of them on the peninsula — have escaped the full force of the price-cost squeeze, since most of them merely contract with processors to raise broilers at a guaranteed price.

But they too are expected to suffer soon. The antici-

ated production cuts will mean fewer flocks for them to grow, and some companies could well decide to slash costs by cutting their ties with some of their less efficient farmers.

What's more, any processing plant that goes broke would leave its farmers stuck with empty, useless and in some cases heavily mortgaged chicken houses.

The problem is much the same in the rest of the country as it is here. In Springfield, Ark., for example, Tyson Foods Inc. recently drowned 300,000 chicks, smashed 800,000 eggs and (See CHICKEN on 14-C)



Special to The Inquirer/ERIC CROSSAN

CHICKENS WAITING
... at loading dock

statt Deal

INTERVIEW OF

BILL HENDERSON

August 15, 1974

ORAL HISTORY PROJECT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE

GEORGE K. VAPAA, NARRATOR

Vapaa: It is the 15th of August. Let's see, it's a quarter of 3 and the day after our most successful Farm Field Day I believe at the Georgetown Substation, University of Delaware. And ah, to help present the program here today is ah, one of the king leaders--king pins, I guess, of the show yesterday. Will you introsuit--duce yourself, Bill?

B. Henderson: Bill Henderson, ~~Kent~~^{Sussex} County Agricultural Agent.

Vapaa: All right. Now tell us a little bit about your background, Bill. Where you were born and so forth and when.

Henderson: George, I was born in the little town of Lisbon, Howard County, Maryland about 25 miles west of Baltimore on Route 40.

Vapaa: Is that on a farm?

Henderson: Yes, on a small farm--general farm, dairy cattle and general crops. I was born December 13, 1912. Which means I'm getting a little age on me now. But that's all right. It's ah--you never can grow old unless you live. And so I'm glad to be alive.

Vapaa: Well, you have 3 years on me, Bill. Because I was born on the 23rd of December 1915. And I might say that ah, at this point that your narrator is George Vapaa. And I had been up until 1970 the County Agent in ah, here in Kent County, Delaware. Ah, Bill, we want to ah, know something about your early life history. Ah hat--where you grew up and something about since you grew up on a farm some of your experiences as a farmer.

Henderson: Well ah, I was born on a little farm there at Lisbon. Went to Lisbon High School, from there I went to the University of Maryland. Graduated from high school in 1930, enrolled at the University of Maryland in 1932 and gr--was graduated in 1936 with a

B.S. Degree in agriculture. I came to ah, Caroline County, Denton and Greensboro, Maryland, Caroline County. I was a Vo-ag teacher in the fall of 1936. I taught both schools for 1 year--Greensboro in the morning and Denton in the afternoon. The end of that 1 year--this was the first year they had vocational agriculture in Caroline County--at the end of that year they expanded their vo-ag departments and placed 1 in Greensboro full time and one in Denton full time and then opened a third department at Federalsburg with Federalsburg and Preston. And then the following year they opened the fifth school in the County at Ridgely having all the high schools with vocational agriculture. And I felt very good about that in that at least I must not have done too bad a job the first year to at least let them go on expanded into all the schools in the next 2 or 3 years.

Vapaa: So that you actually started vocational agriculture in Caroline County, Maryland?

Henderson: That's right--1936.

Vapaa: Um-hum. Well Bill, you still haven't told us anything about your earlier life before you--other than the fact--

Henderson: Well ah--

Vapaa: ...that you graduated from high school.

Henderson: As--as any farm boy at that time we had work with dairy herds--small dairy herd. And of course, a general farm such as corn and wheat and oats and barley and feed for dairy cattle. We shipped milk to Baltimore. And I was one of 4 boys--the youngest

of 4 boys. And I had ah--when my turn came I did whatever had to be done on a farm of that kind during those years.

Vapaa: Well Bill, you mentioned cows. What kind of cows did you have (voice overlap, unintelligible) ?

Henderson: Just had a mixed herd. Most of 'em were Holsteins, but it was a mixed herd.

Vapaa: How many cows were in the herd?

Henderson: 30--about 35 head all told.

Vapaa: Did you use milking machines?

Henderson: No. We did not have milking machines when I was on the farm.

Vapaa: Now you said you have 4 brothers. Do you have any sisters?

Henderson: One sister. Yes.

Vapaa: Still living?

Henderson: Ah, 3 of my brothers are living and my sister is still living.

Vapaa: Un-hun. And ah, what do your brothers do?

Henderson: Well one of them is retired and one of 'em works with a farm machinery company in ah, Frederick.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

Henderson: My sister is ah--is--now is retired. She used to work, but she is retired. She lives over not too far from Washington. Has her home over near Washington.

Vapaa: How did you happen to get to Delaware, Bill?

Henderson: Well, when I graduated from the University of Maryland there were 3 vocational ag departments open. And there were 3 of us in the graduating class looking for jobs in vocational agriculture. And

ah, I suppose I was selected to come to the Eastern Shore. The other 2 fellows were placed on the Western Shore--in schools on the Western Shore. And ah, it was in 1936 and I was glad to get a job anywhere.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

Henderson: Never been to the Eastern Shore of Maryland before, but never been sorry that I came.

Vapaa: All right. That got you into Maryland. Now what got you into Delaware?

Henderson: Well, in 194--in 1942, the early part of 1942, there was a vacancy created at--in the Sussex County Extension Office. And Mr. Ken* Baker was the Director of Extension at the University of Delaware. And he was a graduate of the University of Maryland. And ah, I had known Mr. Baker as the County Agent over in Queen Anne's County, Maryland for some time until he went to the University of Delaware. And I suppose that when he had a vacancy there in Sussex County he began thinking of people he knew and wrote me a letter wondering if I was interested. And I wrote him back and told him I'd be glad to talk with him about the job. And ah, I met with he and Frank Gordy who was then the Assistant County Agent in--in Sussex County. Met them in Seaford. We discussed the job. And they offered me the job. And I was very glad to accept it. And moved over July 1, 1942.

Vapaa: Now Bill, don't go too fast here. I want you to tell us--tell this group about ah, your lunch that day.

Henderson: Well George, I'd just as soon not remember that but here's--

here are the facts. We met at a little restaurant in Seaford on the day I came over to see Ken Baker and Frank Gordy. And we went in this little restaurant. And I sat across the booth from them. And they ordered some steamed shrimp. Well, I'd never had any steamed shrimp. In fact, I didn't even know what they were. But I said that would be good enough for me too. So the waitress finally brought the steamed shrimp. And Frank and Ken kept talking and I became a little embarrassed. And I said why, to myself, I'll start eating. So I--not knowing how to eat these shrimp--I got one of 'em on my fork shell and all into my mouth and began chewing it up. (laughter) And I thought, my God, I can't swallow this but I can tell you that I did. And about that time Frank Gordy picked up one and (cough) peeled it. From then on I peeled the rest of mine too. And they were much better that way. (laughter) So when I went back to Greensboro that evening I told my wife, I said, "Margaret, I doubt if I get that job over there." Explaining why I said, "Anybody dumb enough to do that they'll never turn loose to teach other people how to do things." But anyway I suppose they were hard up and I got the job. And been there ever since.

Vapaa: Well Bill, you're talking about your wife already and we didn't even get you married.

Henderson: Well, we were married in 1940. Margaret Cooper was a teacher in Harrington High School--lived at Chestertown, Maryland. And I met her--she had some friends in Greensboro where I was then teaching school. And I met her on one occasion when she was in Greensboro

and liked what I saw. I guess she couldn't see very well.
Anyway, we were married in June of 1940 in Harrington. And
George, you should remember that. You were my best man.

(voice overlap, unintelligible)

Vapaa: (voice overlap, unintelligible)

Henderson: ...and I don't know how you got my car decorated because you
said you were going to put it in the garage. But anyhow,
when it came out it was all decorated (laugh) and we had quite
a nice experience.

Vapaa: That was a real experience, Bill. And ah, you can be sure I'll
never forget it. Ah, you got married in what I call the wooden
church, Asbury Methodist Church. We had 2 churches in-- (HARRINGTON)

Henderson: Yes.

Vapaa: ...Harrington, you know. The brick church and the wooden church.

Henderson: Very nice little chapel there in the ah, Methodist Church in
Harrington. And I shall never forget it. I've been back in
there often since. We have a lot of meetings during the years
in that church with our swine growers and other groups. And I
always take a moment to stop by the chapel while I'm there.

Vapaa: Um-hum. Well Bill, as long as we're talking about that church
in ah, Harrington are they participating in this ah, program
you're having--

Henderson: They're--they're active in the Crusade for Christ that's being
held in Harrington ah, August the 16th through the 25th. It's
been a--quite an experience for me in serving as Chairman of the
Finance Committee for this Kent-Sussex Crusade. And ah, I've

gained a lot of good from it. And I hope a lot of other people have too and believe they have. Margaret's been very active over the years in all kinds of things and helping me with the job that I've been doing, and been very patient and very understanding and very helpful.

Vapaa: Now, what are some of the changes you've seen, Bill, over the years? In agriculture?

Henderson: Well, I've seen quite a few changes, George. I've seen quite a few improvements in yields of crops through better varieties and better cultural practices. Ah, corn for example, we worked--and you well remember a 10 year program on corn yield and soybean yields. We've seen the yield of both of these crops improve tremendously--particularly corn. When we first started talking about a hundred bushel crop people used to say you're talking about a hundred baskets. No, we said, a hundred bushel. And after 4 or 5 years indeed we did get hundred bushel yields. And it became rather a common thing. And ah, the thing that I was encouraged by was seeing the seed corn dealers ah, having their field men begin to sample their fields, determine their yields and ah, record this as a means of improving their--their seed corn their varieties and so forth. And it has been a tremendous, I think, improvement in yields. And it's kept us in the business.

Vapaa: Roughly Bill, on ah, hybrid seed corn production how much more production have you gotten as a result of the introduction of hybrid seed? Can you give us a figure on that?

Henderson: Oh, I would think--I would think safely George, we could say 20%. I don't know whether this is exactly right. But I am sure it's

been 20% or better. I feel confident of that. Hybrid corn was a real boost in--in our corn production program.

Vapaa: Isn't it true when you were a youngster you u--used to have to go out and select seed corn in the field?

Henderson: Oh, yes. Yes.

Vapaa: Do you want to te--describe that?

Henderson: Well, we'd always go out and look for the best ah, ears and the best stalks and try to even start by getting a idea by seeing the corn growing and then selecting the best ears, put this aside for seed for the next year. Then when the harvest seed came along why of course this program was completely changed and--and today, you know, we--we look to the seed corn companies to provide the hybrid seed. And they're doing a fine job of ah, providing good seed.

Vapaa: You know Bill, that right today the hybrid--or the Pioneer Hybrid Seed Corn Company is having a meeting in Dover up at the Holiday Inn. And ah, I'm sure since our drought this year--rather disastrous prospects for yield--why they're quite concerned how their hybrids are going to come out ah, this year. Ah, but this business of selecting seed corn--open pollinated varieties--is quite an experience I think when we were younger--both of us.

Henderson: Yes. Yes.

Vapaa: We didn't have hybrid seed corn in those days that we knew of it. Maybe somebody was researching it someplace but at least it wasn't on the market.

Henderson: One of the big changes. No question about that, George--ah, for

better of our agriculture.

Vapaa: Now we've skipped over the World War period really Bill, I think pretty much. Ah, actually--

Henderson: But during that World War, George, extension was pretty much geared to the farm labor supply. As you recall extension's job was the placement of farm labor determining the need of the farmers for labor--extra labor--and the placement of it. In other words providing a facility for farmers to secure additional labor when they needed it. Our job was to ah, determine the needs and then help them to supply it and supervise the ah, emergency labor program during those war years. And it ah, it was a wonderful experience. And I think really contributed tremendously to the war effort in the production of food.

Vapaa: Bill, can you think of any humorous events that happened ah, in that particular period when you and Frank were working on this farm labor? You also had another man as I remember.

Henderson: Oh, yes, we had several people in the combined offices of Kent and Sussex. Ah, yes, I can think of a number of a--a humorous incidences during those years working with other government employees and ah, who were responsible for the securing of the labor. And these were non farm people--little knowledge of farm operations at all. And it was quite an experience for ah, for us to work with them. One of them I remember was an office manager in the Cool Spring labor camp down in our county. And he got a call from his boss who was housed in Dover to be

in Dover to a meeting in 1 hours time. And so he came through Georgetown and ah, at the police station at the route 113 and the ah, street coming out of Georgetown was a stop sign. But this camp manager didn't stop. It just happened one of the policemen saw him go out on this road without stopping and ran him down and asked him, "What in the world, didn't he see the stop sign? He said, "Yeah, I saw the stop sign, but I got to be in Dover in an hour's time and I didn't have time to stop." Well, I don't know how he got out of that one but anyway that was one. That'll give you some idea of the kind of folks who were heading up a part of the labor program that we were trying to work with. And we made out very well with 'em but it was a entirely different group of people that we had been used to. They just had no farm background. And ah, we had many experiences with them that ah, are as humorous as that one I suppose. Ah, we had many with ah, some of the emergency type labor and the housing facilities that we had available for them. We had one group come in one night at 12 o'clock at Bridgeville. Three hundred emergency laborers arrived in Bridgeville one night raining as hard as I've ever seen it. This was at midnight. And we had to get these men in housing ah, from Bridgeville. And you can imagine with a storm like that and not room enough to house 'em in a little railroad station. But we finally got them all located.

And then one other time we had a bunch of laborers come in before we were really ready for 'em in one of our camps. We had every-

thing ready except the electricity. Well, they got there the middle of the afternoon but when night came it was in ah, a wooded area and there was no lights. And these 300 men walked out of the camp. Said they were not going to stay in there with all the bears and lions in that woods. (laugh) So about 12 o'clock that night I got a call from the State Police saying that we had 300 men out on their highway and wish we'd get 'em off. So we met with 'em about 12 o'clock that night and finally got a leader among them and got them back into camp. And while it wasn't humorous then looking back on it, George, it was (laugh) quite an experience.

Vapaa: I'm sure it was, Bill. Now ah, I think that's enough for the war period. Let's go back and pick up some of your ah, experiences in the ah, crop improvement program that particularly when we were trying to get farmers to--in the Greener Pastures Program, do you remember this?

Henderson: Oh yes, George, we--. The Greener Pastures Program was I thought an excellent program to help our dairymen and livestock producers to improve their forage production program to feed their livestock. It included not only their pasture land of evaluating this and helping them to carry out the practices that researchers had been telling us would improve the quality and quantity of pasture they'd get from a field such as spreading the droppings, fertilizing it, reseeding it, dividing the fields up into smaller sections, making better use of the

pasture that was there rather than to trample it down and waste it, but it also involved the production of hay and-- and silage. And we did, I think, a great deal of focusing attention on the best practices. A lot of our better farmers served as demonstrators in demonstrating the kind of practices that researchers were telling us would get results. And we used these as cooperators in helping their neighbors to see what was going on. And many people ah, followed these practices as they saw them develop and produce better yields of pasture, better quality, better hay fields, better silage. All of these things, I think, contributed tremendously to keeping us in the dairy business and making us competitive with other areas. And George, while we're talking about improvement programs I suppose 2 of the programs in our dairy industry that have contributed as much as anything else to the keeping us in the dairy business was the artificial breeding program that we helped to develop in our state back in 1948 which made the best sires available to every dairyman who was interested. It enabled him to have the best ah, sire power available on his farm for just a telephone call and a very small fee. It removed the danger of keeping bulls on the farm which was a practice in those days. Many people were hurt with dangerous bulls. It enabled them to get better sire power and with less danger. And this was a tremendous improvement in our dairy industry. The other practice was of course the Dairy Herd Improvement Association which enabled them to use records and have records on their cows for a

basis for management. And this has been tremendously valuable to good dairymen through the years.

Vapaa: I think so too, Bill. Well, you kinda got away from you on one point. In this ah, Greener Pastures Program why Bill Mitchell you know, Dr. Mitchell, was trying to get people to use alfalfa. And you have a couple of interesting stories about what happened on some of your visits ah, regarding alfalfa in Sussex County. Do you remember telling that?

Henderson: Oh, yes. Yeah. We went to one farm and talked a little bit about alfalfa. And the fellow says, "Well, used to grow some alfalfa but I can't grow it anymore. It's too drippy." And we had a time figuring out what he meant by that. But ah, he meant it ah--it ah, his soil was just a little too low wasn't drained well enough. Little wet weather made it difficult for him to grow alfalfa. But we worked with him and got his drainage program improved. And to make a long story short he got back into the alfalfa business and had some beautiful fields of alfalfa from then on.

And ah, we had many humorous experiences in our pasture program. One fellow--we got to his farm with Claude Phillips and Delmar Young who was our extension dairyman--Claude Phillips our extension agronomist. And when we got there the farmer listened to our proposition and said, "You fellows are working for the fertilizer companies. You're out here trying to sell fertilizer." And we said, "Yeah, that's right we are." And ah, I knew him pretty well so I said, "It looks to me like John, you need a little fertilizer on your field." Well again we worked with

him over a period of 5 years. And during that period he gradually made the changes that we were trying to encourage him to do. And to make a long story short he was a graduate of the Greener Pastures Program and had excellent pasture and hay and silage when we finally graduated him. And again it's an example of how you have to keep working. The old boys that set up the cooperative extension service and designated our job to be ext ah--disseminating information resulting from research and secondly to encourage it's application. And I'm not sure the second part isn't as important as the first because we don't do as well as we know. Most of us don't do as well as we know. So we need a lot of encouraging and this is what extension people do--tell 'em about the information resulting from research and then encourage 'em in every way possible to apply that information to their own farm operations. Each of 'em is different, but we try to work with them and help them to get it implemented on their farm.

Vapaa: Amen to what you said, Bill. But you still haven't told the story about the insect problem that you ran into on one of these ah, visits.

Henderson: Well, ah, the alfalfa weevil was an insect that was causing a great deal of damage at that time. In fact it--it was ah, a problem because the chemicals that we had available for ah, for controlling the weevil was declared ah, ah, out of use at ah, at some implication that they had that it might be carried over into the milk. Ah, and so we were unable to use that to control the weevil. And the weevil got to be a real problem. And it reduced our acreage of alfalfa for awhile. But then we came up with

means of controlling it and alfalfa acreage has expanded again. And ah, ah, trying to think of the incident you recall--you refer to--but ah, I remember now. Ah, we got to this farm and we asked the fellow how he was getting along with his alfalfa. He says, "Not growing alfalfa anymore." We asked him why. He says, "The whistles eat it up." And we had a time figuring out what he meant by whistles but after talking with him we concluded that he was talking about the weevil. And I think he agreed that that was what he really was talking about too. But anyway, we--we licked the problem as we went on and got other means of control. And to make a long story short he too began growing alfalfa and made out very well with it.

Vapaa: Bill, do you remember our first trip when I came on the extension staff?

Henderson: Yes I do, George. We took a poultry trip to ah, Harrisonburg, Virginia and on down into Georgia. It was probably the longest poultry tour ever devised by a county agent. And we had stops as much as 200 miles apart. But I want to tell you that we made it right on time. We weren't a minute late or early at any of these stops. And I think one of the reasons--if you will recall, you had a big ah--

Vapaa: Kaiser.

Henderson: ...Kaiser automobile and I had a little old Chevrolet--and every time I'd look into the mirror I'd see this big old Kaiser coming down on me. And I was traveling faster than I'd ever driven before. I got up some times as high as 50 mile an hour. But anyway we made our stops on time and we had an excellent poultry tour and ah, I think everybody enjoyed it.

Vapaa: I'll tell you, it was quite an indoctrination to extension service, Bill, for me to have that particular experience. The first day--I didn't even go into the office that first week. Ah, Bill Tarbell you remember was sick at the time and I came on the job primarily because he knew--we knew he had cancer and it was a question of how long he was going to be able to continue work. And I think at that time he was even only working about half the time.

Henderson: I think one other humorous experience about tours--we were planning another poultry tour into ah, Virginia area. And we were going to feature as one of the things we would see the new Chesapeake Bay Bridge. We left that morning about 6 o'clock from Georgetown. And you never saw it foggier in your life. Well we got across the bridge in the deepest of fog and while you could just barely see the--the banister on the bridges, when we got across over near Washington it cleared up and they kept asking us when they were going to see the bridge. (laughter) And of course, I think they were kidding us. But the truth of the matter was it was almost that foggy when we come across the bridge.

Vapaa: Yes. Well Bill, would you agree that ah, going out and seeing what someone else is doing is probably the best way to teach?

Henderson: One of the finest ways to teach that I know of George. We--this is one reason we conduct tours and field days and--and visit the farms. Ah, farmer comes in thinking of building or wanting to

talk about the growing of pasture or see different kinds of livestock--one of the things--first things we try to do is to think of some nearby locations where we can show him. The very kind of thing we're talking about. And we use our farmers in this way. And they are most cooperative in allowing us to come on very short notice, and are very willing and very eager to--to show anything that they're doing and talk about how they done it, and share their experiences and--and they are certainly very helpful in--in our teaching program.

Vapaa: Off the top of your head, Bill, can you think of any ah, dairy-men say on the eastern shore of Maryland particularly that we have gone to see in recent years?

Henderson: Yes, over in Queen Anne's County we visited ah, a number of them over there. We've been down in ah, in ah, edge of Virginia. We've been of course up in Pennsylvania, over in New Jersey. Over the years we've taken many tours to nearby dairy operations. And--and in some cases we've gone back after 3 or 4 years to see changes that they had talked about making. And we went back to see how these changes were working out. And each time it's a very ah, very valuable ah, opportunity to learn things that have taken place.

Vapaa: Well, let's put some tags on some of these people ah, Bill--Ed Fry for example.

Henderson: Yes. Ed's a very fine Holstein breeder over near Chestertown, Maryland. We've been over on his farm on 2 different occasions with tours--always very, very educational, has some very fine operations there that he shares his experiences with those who come to see his cattle and his equipment, his facilities and his cropping program.

Vapaa: And wouldn't you say he's one of the outstanding Holstein breeders in the country?

Henderson: No question about it--very fine, very fine Holstein man.

Vapaa: And of course, he has a neighbor not too far from his that we both know very well, a 4-H Club agent. He had--

Henderson: Stanley Sutton, Yes. Stanley Sutton--

Vapaa: Now retired.

Henderson: Yes. Now retired. Still in his son--still operates the dairy business--has a very fine herd in Chestertown.

Vapaa: And of course, he had a fire not--well, it's been quite a while ago now.

Henderson: Yes. Rebuilt his facilities and didn't stop shipping milk from that--from that experience.

Vapaa: Now in the change--do you remember what changes he made in his buildings or anything?

Henderson: Well of course, eh, his buildings had burned down were fairly old and he--he remodeled. He has a milking parlor, has--has a loafing shed, and has a new ah--new dairy ah, set up there and quite--quite a modern ah, operation now. Of course, this has

been 10 years ago so they're not modern facilities now, but when he re--rebuilt, he rebuilt ah, a very modern system at that time.

Vapaa: Now Bill, some pe--some of these people won't know what you're talking about when you say milking parlor. Do you want to describe one?

Henderson: Yes. A milking parlor is--is a building where the cattle come in and are fed there and are milked. Eh, the--the usual stanchion barn type where they were put in and kept ah, overnight in the wintertime--they were kept in there all the time. We are now using what we call loose housing system where they're--they--in other words, they have free stalls where they can go and come as they like. It's under shelter. But then they're brought into the milking parlor for milking. And--and these are various sizes. Ah, probably one of the more modern types would--would probably house 8, some of 'em are 10. Herringbone type they call 'em. And ah, they come in and they're fed and they're stanchioned there just for long enough for milk. And then they're released and move out and another batch come in.

Vapaa: Well of course, when you were a boy Bill, you had nothing of that type of--

Henderson: No, no. Ours were all stanchioned. And ah, as I told you earlier we did--our hand--was hand milking. But there were milking machines in our area. But--but they were not very

plentiful. This was back in 1926-27-28-29. I'm sure that a lot of our bigger dairies had milking facilities--ah, milking machines--but in our area wh--well herds were smaller and not to many of them had milking machines.

Vapaa: Well Bill, I've always admired your ah, ability to get around the way you have with ah, a--an arm that I--I shouldn't say afflicted, by (voice over lap - unintelligible)

Henderson: Well yes, I--I was injured at birth. My right arm is ah, crippled to some extent in my right arm--can't raise it very high, but can carry things with it. And ah, my mother used to tell me, "Bill, you've got one good one. Now focus your attention on the good one and--and do what you can with that." And--and it was good advice. And it's never been too much of a handicap. I ah, I always used to think I was handicapped when I used to like to play ball. But ah, I made out very well. I was on the Maryland team for 2 years--University of Maryland.

Vapaa: University of Maryland.

Henderson: Ah, not a regular but I was--I was there when Charlie Keller was on the team. And Charlie went on to the ^{Yankees} ~~Yankess~~. And he was a good ball player and I was a bench warmer. But I could warm the bench as good as he could. (laughter) And enjoyed my experience with it.

Vapaa: Yes. Well ah, Bill, I've--tell us how you used to play ball. I mean with this bad hand. They tell me you used to catch it with your good hand in---

- Henderson: Well, no, no. I could wear a glove on my hand and work my 2 hands together and did reasonably well. If I could get to the ball, I could catch it. Ah, never hit very well, but I didn't strike out very much. But ah, you know, didn't hit 'em very hard, but I got my share of hits I guess. Enjoyed it--I can tell you that. Nobody enjoyed it anymore than I did.
- Vapaa: You were always quite a soccer player too, weren't you?
- Henderson: Yes. I--
- Vapaa: Did you play at college?
- Henderson: Played--we didn't have a varsity team at college, but they--we--we--we did the preliminary work in intermurals. And the year after I left they made it a varsity sport. Eh, we beat such teams as Hopkins, us--and Western Maryland and Loyola and some of the other--George Washington and ah, Catholic University. We played those teams as intermural teams. But out of this intermural program that we helped to get started they did ah, make soccer a varsity team. And they've had an excellent varsity soccer team at the University of Maryland for years.
- Vapaa: Lets' come back to some of your college years, Bill. How did you get through college?
- Henderson: It was a very rough deal I can tell you. (laugh) They talked about a lot of things--particularly freshman English. I came from a very small high school. And they began doing what they called diagraming of sentences and I didn't even know what they were talking about frankly at the time. It took me 2 semesters to get through freshman English but ah--or took me 3 semesters

'cause I had to take it over. But anyway a lot of others did too. And the University of Maryland freshman English was real tough--that and chemistry. Those were the 1 tough courses. And ah, Burton Shipley who was the baseball coach--they made it a rule while I was there that everybody on the staff had to have ah--had to have a degree. And Burt Shipley had to get his English. And I can tell you Burt Shipley and I were in the same group. We had to take it over a couple of times to get it. But both of us got through and he went on to continue to be a very successful baseball and basketball coach at the University of Maryland. And ah, ah, outside of the English why I made out all right in the rest of my courses.

Vapaa: Did you work during your college days?

Henderson: Yes, I worked ah, summer work and ah, I was fortunate in getting a job taking care of the lawn for the President of the University of Maryland--Dr. Raymond Allen Pearson--which dates me way back. And ah, this was real helpful to me to get through college because Dr. Pearson had a big lawn in Hyattsville which was a neighborhood of--of College Park couple of miles away. And every hour I wasn't in class I was in he--at least during the summertime taking care of his lawn. And ah, made 35¢ an hour. That was big money in those days, George. And it really made the difference.

Vapaa: More than I made, Bill.

Henderson: Well, it was--it made the difference in me being able to stay

in school or not being able to stay there.

Vapaa: Um-hum.

Henderson: Then in my senior year I had a job with the ag engineering department. They were doing some work with ah, wheat storage facilities in Washington County. And they gave me a pickup truck and I had to spend ah, most every day in Washington County reading the meters on the temperature and moisture content of these stored grains. Was a very valuable experience for me. Professor Ray Carpenter was in charge of it. And he was a fine gentleman. And ah, I learned a lot during--during that summer.

Vapaa: Where did you live while you were at College Park--in the dormitory?

Henderson: Well, the first year I roomed in a private home in College Park and the next 3 years I was in the Alpha Gamma ~~Row~~^{Phi} fraternity house. In fact ah, for part of that time I was the ah, the steward in charge of the house. Ah, the--the regular steward was sick most of the time and was in and out of the hospital so they asked me if I'd help him out. And it so happened the last 2 years I was there, I guess I was doing more work at it than he was. But anyhow, together we operated it and this enabled me to get my board there which again was quite helpful in me getting through school. Gr--great experience. Learned a good--good bit about it.

Vapaa: If you had to do it over again, would you like to repeat your college years?

Henderson: I enjoyed them very much George. I--I enjoyed them very much. I ah, yes, I wouldn't mind going back again.

Vapaa: Would you do the same thing if you were going to live your life over again? Would you like to do--

Henderson: Yes, I have enjoyed--I've enjoyed my work and been fortunate in having a job ever since I got through school--working with some wonderful people--wouldn't know anything I'd rather do than what I've been doing is teaching vocational agriculture for 6 years and county agricultural agent work now for 32 years. Wouldn't ah--wouldn't know anything I'd rather do than what I'm doing.

Vapaa: Now Bill, if you had to name your best boss over the years in your lifetime, who would you say?

Henderson: Frank Gordy. Frank Gordy.

Vapaa: All right. Let's tell a little bit about Frank Gordy.

Henderson: Well, Frank was the Assistant County Agent there in Sussex County. And July 1st '42 he became the County Agent. I became his assistant. And he has been like a father and a brother to me for these 32 years. Kept me out of a lot of trouble--got me out of a lot of trouble and kept me out of a lot more. Never went to him with any problem that he didn't ah, give me all the time I needed and excellent advice and guidance--and the most patient man I know.

Vapaa: Do you know who preceeded Frank Gordy? As County Agent?

Henderson: Yes, yes. Russell Snyder retired as of July 1st, 1942. And Frank was his assistant and took over the job from him.

Vapaa: All right. Now ah, Bill, over the years we've known a man in Sussex County by the name of Molloy Vaughn.

Henderson: Molloy Vaughn was about the third county agent. There were 2 agents ahead of Mr. Vaughn and they were there only for a short time. I think probably no more than a year and a half or 2 years. And then Mr. Vaughn came and he was County Agent for 10 years. And then Mr. Russell Snyder was there I believe for about 18 to 20 years. And then Frank Gordy came as County Agent and the following May he was named chair--he was named ah, in charge of the Farm Labor Program which was during the war years. And after the war was over he returned but not as County Agent but as poultry specialist for our state. And ah, I was named County Agent at that time and continued in that capacity and Frank continued as poultry specialist. And then in more recent years--I don't know the date--but he was named Director of our substation, University of Delaware Substation. And ah, we moved our offices out there. I'd say it's been now about 15 years ago. And we've been housed at this University of Delaware Substation since. Frank was the Director up until his retirement about 4 years ago. And of course, Frank was the secretary--the executive secretary--of the Delmarva Poultry Industries, Incorporated which was an outgrowth of our first Delmarva Chicken Festival when the Chicken of Tomorrow Program

was started in 1948.

Vapaa: Don't get too far away from that, Bill.

Henderson: Ah, well as a result of the Chicken of Tomorrow Program it came about as the result of--of a remark made by Mr. Howard Pierce of the Atlantic and Pacific Tea Company when he spoke to the poultry breeders saying, "What we need is a better broiler chicken." And out of his remarks came the idea of a Chicken of Tomorrow Program in which the breeders agreed to send eggs to the University of Delaware ah, ah, to--to Delaware to be hatched and the chickens to be raised in the poultry houses at the substation. And ah, the breeders throughout the nation entered their chickens and they were judged and selected as the ones that they wanted to--to ah, further breed and improve. And when the ^{files} ~~files~~ of that program were held in 1948 some of the industries thought with people coming to our county--to our state from all over the nation, we ought to have some kind of little festival to show them our appreciation of them coming. And the first Delmarva Chicken Festival was held in 1948 with the parade in Georgetown and the beauty pageant which was the second phase of it at Easton. And following that the next year we began what has become known as the National Cooking Contest held in Salisbury. And it has grown of course, to today it is indeed a nationwide program and has done much to focus attention on preparation of chicken and improvement of chicken and it's been a very fine program.

Vapaa: Bill, do you remember who won the first ah, broiler contest in--it was held in Georgetown?

Henderson: Now, you mean the cooking contest?

Vapaa: Cooking contest--national cooking--

Henderson: I think it was a Mrs. Karlik. I'm not sure, but I think it was a Mrs. Karlik. from Salisbury, Maryland.

Vapaa: K-a-r-l-i-k?

Henderson: K-a-r-l-i-k I believe it was.

Vapaa: O.K.

Henderson: At least if she wasn't the first one, she was one of the first 2 or 3. And I think she was probably the first one.

Vapaa: Well, it's certainly ah, ah, significant development in Delaware, and particularly for agriculture in Sussex County, is it not?

Henderson: No question about it, George. We grow over a hundred million broilers in our County each year--have done now for years. And it ah--of course, our whole economy is built around the broiler industry. We sell our corn and soybeans to the broiler industry. It makes a good market for those. So many people who do not run broilers do have an outlet for corn and soybeans. And of course, with the labor problems that we've had over the years, we've gone--we've seen a lot of our farmers turn to the corn and soybean crops because they can handle those with machinery. We grow about a hundred thousand acres of corn, a hundred thousand acres of soybeans each year in our County. And this related to the broiler industry, of course, is the basis for our whole economy.

- Vapaa: (phone rings) All right, now ah, Bill, (phone rings)--. There goes the telephone. We won't pay any attention to it.
- Henderson: Sounds like a County Agent's office, George. (laughter) Must be close by.
- Vapaa: Well, I've forgotten the question I wanted to ask. But ah, you've given the size of the broiler industry and what it means to the economy of Sussex County. Now, how does this sus--raise Sussex County nationally among counties in broiler production?
- Henderson: I ^{suppose} ~~suppose~~ we're the biggest county in broiler production in the nation. Ah, we no longer--our area, Delmarva area, is no longer the biggest producer but we say that we make up for the size in quality. And we do believe we have as good a quality as anywhere. We're near the markets--New York, Philadelphia, Washington, Baltimore. We have some advantage market wise in that we're a little closer located. But we grew up in the business and we started almost from scratch. And--and we have some excellent ah, capabilities. Our men are well versed and are willing to seek out the best information from research and are constantly encouraging more research to find out how to improve our efficiency and quality. And they've done a fine job of this.
- Vapaa: Bill, have you seen the television adver--advertisements that Frank Perdue puts on ah--TV?
- Henderson: Haven't seen them, but I--I--I'd say this they're doing a fine job. They are certainly using television in an excellent way

and are doing a fine job in the promotion of broilers.

Vapaa: Of course, Frank Perdue is probably the outstanding individual on the shore. Is he?

Henderson: I would say that Frank--Franks among the top. And of course, this idea of promoting broilers and advertising and--and telling about the qualities was one of the things that the--that the Delmarva Chicken Festival helped get started. We were talking about this back in--as far back as 1948-49-50 trying to identify these ah, broilers from Delmarva. And while we didn't actually get it completed, I think it laid the groundwork for private individuals such as Franklin Perdue and others to capitalize on a lot of the work that was done earlier and actually begin to identify their product and label it and then talk about it with--as a specific brand name. And I think this has been a--a--another example of some of the things we've done over the years.

Vapaa: But isn't it true too that the industry on the shore here has accepted the feeling that as long as you're talking about chicken--

Henderson: Yes.

Vapaa: ...we ^{get} ~~did~~ our share in Delmarva--

Henderson: Yes. They--they've had this viewpoint from the start.

Vapaa: Who's our competition, Bill?

Henderson: Well of course, there's a lot of areas that are producing a lot

broilers--are the southern areas of Alabama, Georgia, North Carolina. And then of course, there's the areas out in Texas and Arkansas. There's a lot of broiler areas--California. But ah, ah, Maine and the New England states. But I suppose for the markets we supply of New York and ah, Washington, Baltimore and others nearby ah, our competition would be from the south and the north of us. I suppose that these are the areas where most of our broiler competition comes from.

Vapaa: Have we tried any foreign exports that you know of, Bill?

Henderson: Yes, but ah, there have been problems with this. And ah, we're still working on it. But there have been problems in--in ah, ah--lots of different problems. I can't enumerate them all. But ah, we haven't made the progress here as ah, we would--as we at one time thought we might. But we have le--we have loaned a lot of our talent and information to other countries in helping 'em to get ah, broiler production started which we think in the overall picture has been good for our nation. While at times it's been a little difficult for our poultry industry as such; but in--in total ah, ah, trade ah, with other nations it's been a good thing and been a good ah--it's been good for our nation. And we've ah--we've had many, many people from other nations come and look over our industry here. We've been welcoming them; showing them around; ah, helping them to learn more about what we are doing; and helping them to take information home; and encouraging them to do so.

Vapaa: And so that they could produce broilers themselves?

Henderson: Yes. Yes.

Vapaa: Ah, I think you're right on this, I do want to make this comment about F--Frank Perdue uses on television. I think it's worth repeating, Bill. He says, "It takes a tough man to make a tender chicken."

Henderson: Well, that's right.

Vapaa: And he--

Henderson: Real competitive. It's real competitive.

Vapaa: And he's one of the toughest businessmen that I know of.

Henderson: Well, you hear a lot of people talking about the integrated broiler industry, but it was because of integration--it was because of being able to get the feed people, the hatchery people, the dressing plant operators, and these different business people who had a broiler base of operation could spread their risk over a broader base that enabled our individual growers to stay in the business. It was only as--as they came in and provided the money and the--and the risk bearing that we were able to stay in the business. For example, 30 years ago some of our best broiler growers would grow every baby chick that they raised--that they got as baby chicks. But they'd happen to hit a low market beyond their control and they may have--in other words, 2 or 3 flocks and they were broke. So they were getting ready to get out of the business.

But then with integration they were able then to spread their sales over the high markets, the low markets, so they had chickens coming and going every day. And in this way they were able to--to bridge the gap of high and low prices and able to stay in the business and be competitive. And this is why we've been--why we're in the business today.

Vapaa: Well, how does the farmer, Bill, ah, operate an integrated system?

Henderson: Well--

Vapaa: ...(voice overlap) self.

Henderson: ...he grows--he grows as a contractor. He--He's a contract grower. He's guaranteed so much money for each thousand of broilers he grows. He furnishes the house and the labor and the equipment and the integrator furnishes the feed, buyer furnishes the chicks, operates---or takes care of the selling. And then when the--pays him so much a thousand to grow them. Then if the pr--if there are profits, he gets a share of the profits. And this will vary by contractors. But it has been ah--. The thing it has done, it has taken the risk out of it and spread the risk over a larger base so that--that the industry itself could bear this and--and stay competitive.

Vapaa: Now Bill, ah, there is this risk spreading ah, it wasn't very popular in the beginning. The idea of contracting (voice overlap - unintelligible)

Henderson: No. Our--our growers ah, the farmers as you know, are pretty much

individualistic but they were--they recognized the handwriting on the wall. When you--when you get 15 or 20,000 broilers ready for market you've got a lot of money invested in that. And if the price of broilers is at a--at a rock bottom, there isn't a thing that you can do. You gotta get rid of them. Well, you happen to hit 2 flocks in a--in succession and most people were not able to withstand the financial burden of that kind of a situation. And so they were either going to get out of the business or had to come along where we could spread the risk over a lot of ah--selling chickens every day. In other words, being able to take advantage of the high prices as well as the low price. This was the thing that kept us going.

Vapaa: Do we still have any independant growers, Bill?

Henderson: Very few. I cannot name you one, but there must be somebody somewhere that's still doing it.

Vapaa: Um-hum. This is where the farmer would assume all the risks--

Henderson: Absolutely.

Vapaa: ...and market it and do everything himself.

Henderson: Yes, sir.

Vapaa: Now there's one thing that we haven't touched on, Bill, as far as the broiler business is concerned--the Poultry Growers Exchange. Do you want to talk about it?

Henderson: Yes.

Vapaa: It's industry and so forth.

Henderson: Well, the Poultry Growers Exchange came out of a need for ah, getting the price established each day. Ah, back 30 years ago why ah, half a dozen buyers would come into your house and you really had a very difficult time knowing what the--knowing what the fair market price was. And ah, out of this problem came the idea of how they sold produce in other areas. And it was suggested, why don't we have a broiler exchange where the buyers and sellers could come together and have ah, a bid--a competitive bidding for these broilers. And this was set up in Selbyville and operated for a period of about 15 or 18 years and performed a real service in shifting over from the very ah, in--inadequate marketing system that was in operation 30 years ago into the system of today where it's integrated where we don't need this competition of buying because farmers are now protected with a contract. And ah, there are very few buyers in that there are very few integrators. So they are really pretty much growing their own chickens or contract growers. So this--they know the price. They are in the selling end of it as well as in the buying. They are in the feed business, the dressing plant, the whole thing. And the need for competitive bidding was no longer necessary. So the exchange was ah--performed it's function and was ah, was closed up.

Vapaa: Do you know what the price of broilers is today, Bill, for example?

Henderson: George, I don't know today but ah, ah, it--it's--it's of course the

markets are recorded each day. And anybody--or--eh--are on the radio each day. I--I don't follow it each day. But anyone who does want to can get it on the radio from several sources. And of course, the farmers not as much interested in it today in that he's not really responsible for the selling of them. They're sold by the--ah, the fact that they're not even sold that way. They're taken in to the plant and they--the market is recorded as of that day. And ah, the people who are handling the market end of it are professionals. And of course, they have access to the daily markets and ah, they--a record of it is made so that on the day of--my chickens, for example, would go in, that price is recorded as the price of chickens that day. So ah, we don't need--in other words, thousands of people don't need to know the market price today in that we are growing 'em under this integrated program. Like it was when we were--each individual was selling his own.

Vapaa: As you say, he could also find this price for any given day--

Henderson: Oh, yes.

Vapaa: ...in the newspaper.

Henderson: Yes. Yes.

Vapaa: As well as the radio.

Henderson: Yes. It's--it's a business in itself. If a person wants to keep up with it, it's you know, it's like following anything else. You've got to follow it everyday because they change every day. It's ah--it's up and down. And our broiler business like many

things we have a tremendous productive capacity. And if the price is right, in a very short time we can increase production and--and literally flood the market. As we're blessed--it's a blessing. We ought not to--we ought not to criticize this. We're just blessed as no other nation in the productive capacity. Not only of broilers but of corn, of hogs, you name it; and if we get the price right, we can--we've got the capacity to produce. And this has been a blessing for our nation. We ah--we're so blessed with abundant food supply that we--we ah, you know, we damⁿ it at times because we say that ah, well ah, the price of food's too high. But when we compare the price of our food with any other nation in the world, we're so far below the cost of food of any other nation that we just can't appreciate it unless we visit some of these other nations and realize their shortages.

Vapaa: Well Bill, if you had to make a forecast, what would you say is the future of the broiler business and the future of agriculture on Delmarva?

Henderson: I think it's good, George. I think we're going to see a continuous coming^b process of the least efficient. They're going into other phases of ah--of ah, business life. And we've got wonderful opportunities here. We're in a resort area. And while many farm people do not like to think of ah--of the resort area as a real potential--tourism and all this--ah, as generations come along

we're going to see us capitalize on this. And we're going to find more and more people are going to be doing those things that will cater to the beach trade and to summer resort areas and to tourism. And we're blessed with this. But I think that the good farmers who want to stay in the business and will--will use the latest and best information and be right on top of their business operation will be able to continue ah, for a--for a long time to come. We only have in our county now--we only have ah, about 45 commercial dairy herds. When I first came in to the county 30 years ago we had over 300. It's been a continuous culling process. The small dairymen have gotten out of the business. The good dairymen have gotten bigger and they now have herds of 150 - 200 head of cattle. We're producing more milk today than we've ever done before. We're doing it with better cattle, with better dairymen, better management, better feeding and better cattle.

Vapaa: How many herds do you have on test now, Bill?

Henderson: Twenty-two in our county.

Vapaa: Out of about 45 or so herds.

Henderson: About 45 herds--about half the herds. Yes.

Vapaa: Well, that's ah, unusual high percentage I think for the country as a whole.

Henderson: Very good percentage, George. It gives us current information--daily information on what ah, the dairy management program ought to be and where the problems are. So it enables us to not only

to help those dairymen that are on record, but it also helps us with current information for all the other dairymen who come to us for information and advice on--on their dairy programs.

Vapaa: Well Bill, ah, several years ago we made a changeover in our dairy herd record keeping system to ah, an automated system. Do you want to describe that a little bit?

Henderson: Yes. We used to have--the dairy tester would go to each dairy farm, take his equipment with him, and do the dairy milk testing right on the farm. Today we go to the farm, pick up the samples, ship them off to Penn State where they have an automated testing equipment. They run 'em through there by the thousands. They--those records are then sent on to Cornell University where they have a processing--IBM processing center--and those records are processed there and sent back to the farmer. Back--from the time they leave his farm till they're back, about 6 days. And this is excellent speed. And ah, comparisons with literally thousands of cows all over the northeast are available to our dairymen. It's ah--it's modern business, George. It's a modern business program today.

Vapaa: All right. Tell us how your Dairy Herd Improvement Association within Sussex County operates, Bill?

Henderson: Well, it's an organization of dairymen interested in records on their herd. And ah, they have their own organization, their

offices--president, vice president, secretary, board of directors. They pay for the cost of their testing program. They have an annual meeting at which time members come in with their families and have a dinner together. But then they also have a summary of the year's program. Their records ^(are - active) is made available to our extension dairy office. These records are summarized and ah, the spotlight is placed on the results of their year's records which they use as a basis for managing their dairy herds. It's a very fine business venture. Very helpful to them.

Vapaa: Let's see. Well, is your association in the black now or is it in the red?

Henderson: Yes. Yes. They are operating in the black. And they are members of the state association. And our state association is a member of the national DHIA. And each year we have a director from our state go and attend the national which gives 'em a chance ^{to} to rub shoulders with dairymen all over the nation--exchange ideas and hear what's going on in different sections of the country. This past year Owain Gruwell from Felton was our director from Delaware that attended the meeting down in Texas.

Vapaa: Is he the state president now?

Henderson: No. But he is a member of the board. And ah, as a member of the board was selected to go and represent our state.

Vapaa: Who is the state president?

Henderson: Ed Ealy, I believe, at ah, in New Castle County is the president at this time. *(Vapaa - Ealy is a Univ. of Del graduate)*

Vapaa: Yes. He actually lives in Maryland, but he belongs--

Henderson: Just across the line. And ah, we draw the line around him.

Vapaa: He has an Elkton--he has an Elkton address.

Henderson: Yes. But he's just a mile across the line in Maryland. But ah, ah, we carry him as a Delawarean.

Vapaa: And he's a graduate of--

Henderson: University of Delaware

Vapaa: ...the University of Delaware.

Henderson: Yeah. He has a daughter who's graduated from the University of Delaware. Was a former dairy princess for Delaware. And ah, Ed makes us a good member on the board.

Vapaa: How about the average age of dairymen, Bill, in the state? Would you know?

Henderson: Well, we've got a lot of young ah, fellows who are working with their dads now. But we have ah, some of them that are getting some age on and will probably go out of the dairy business in that they do not have any sons who will carry it on. But we have a number of dairymen who do have sons and this makes a very fine combination. And really ah, ah, the best way that I know to get in the dairy business is to grow up on a dairy farm and have a dad that when he retires will turn the business over to you.

Vapaa: Um-hum. Well Bill, we haven't talked anything about the hog business yet. And You're very much interested in hogs.

Henderson: Well, we've got a fine Delaware State Pork Producers Association.

We grow around 60 to 80,000 hogs a year in Delaware. Most of them are in Sussex County. Ah, we ah, do a good deal of work with them on ah, confinement rearing. More and more of them are going to confinement rearing as a--as they ^(expand) span their pork production program. They're going to confinement for labor saving ideas. And they can handle more hogs more efficiently. We still grow some outside and some very fine hogs outside. But more and more of 'em are going to confinement. I think we're going to see a continuation in this direction because it's a more efficient way. They can handle more hogs--less labor--cut costs this way. Ah, we have annual meetings of our association that have provides an excellent opportunity for young people to learn--to learn how to conduct meetings and to ah, discuss business matters with their fellow producers. And ah, for the past several years we've had a pork industry day here in Salisbury--Maryland and Delaware cooperating. It's focused attention on our pork industry here. And I think it's done a great deal of good in bringing current information resulting from research to our producers. All in all I think that our pork producers are a very fine area of enterprise ah, in our farm operations.

Vapaa: Do you have any pork producers who also grow broilers too?

Henderson: Yes, we have some that grow broilers too.

Vapaa: Do they fit in together?

Henderson: Very well. Yes, very well. Very good combination.

Vapaa: Well, what about the ah, increase in food prices that we can expect this fall? (tape slurred - unintelligible)

Henderson: Well George, I think we're going to see as long as we're in an inflated ah, period of time, we're going to see prices continue to go up some. Ah, but ah, again I think that we must recognize that everything else is going up and food prices in comparison with other things are not going as fast. And yet ah, I'm sure that consumers who are not aware of the problems and all going in the food production program ah, fail to realize that the price of all that the farmer has to buy is going up and there isn't much choice. When fertilizer almost doubles in cost, when labor prices are going up, when equipment prices are going up, all of these things add to the cost of production. And there is only one way he can get his cost back and that is to have the price of food go up a little bit. And if it doesn't go up then he goes out of business. He cuts down on his production and then we are faced with shortages. Just like we were with the gasoline. I don't know where all the gasoline was when they said they were short, but when they got the price up to 50 - 60¢ we seemed to have plenty of gasoline. Well, this is--I can understand why. If they were short, if there is any way possible when you put the price up and they can get it, they're going to get it. And this is what the farmer is going to do. You put the price of broiler chickens up high enough and I'll guarantee he'll grow 'em.

And the same thing is true if you put it down low enough, he'll stop growing 'em. And I think it's as simple as that. And I think ah, we must remind ourselves that we are blessed in this nation with a--really a low cost of food. It's--it's a one nation that has--. If--if low cost is the right word-- it may not be, but at least in comparison with other things food is one of our best buys.

Vapaa: Well Bill, if--we've just about run out of tape, but we've got time enough I think to talk just a little bit about your family. Tell us--

Henderson: George, I've got 1 son--my wife and I have 1 son, Tommy. He's a school teacher. He's taken a years leave of absence to go back and get his Masters Degree. We've encouraged him to do that. He has a wonderful wife. And he has--we have a wonderful granddaughter a year and a half old. I had no idea what the experience of having a grandchild was until we had one. But I can tell you this. If you ever have the opportunity to have one, you do it. You'll never regret--

Vapaa: I've got one.

Henderson: I know you do.. And ah, it's a great experience. It's one of the finest in--. We've been blessed, George. We've certainly been blessed.

Vapaa: We certainly have, Bill. And ah, do you have anything else?

Henderson: Just want to say I've been glad to have this chat with you. We've talked longer--. You've let me talk more today than you've ever done in the 30 years I've know^N_A you. And I appreciate it. (laughter)

Vapaa: Well, it's certainly been fun doing it, Bill. Thanks ever so much.

T H E E N D