FORAGING AROUND

An 'angelic' win at Forage Superbowl

Charlene M. Shupp Espenshade
Special Sections Editor

The Kemmeren family of Bainbridge, N.Y. topped the grass hay category in the World Forage Analysis Superbowl at the World Dairy Expo on Sept. 30. The Kemmerens operate Angel Rose Dairy and received the grand champion ribbon for their entry.

Dianne Kemmeren said it was the second time the family entered the contest, but the first time they won this contest. The winning forage stand, King's Agriseed Greenfast, also topped a national contest sponsored by the American Forage and Grassland Council from a 2014 cutting.
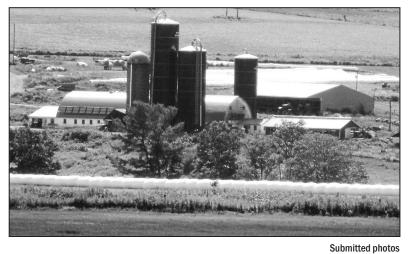
The farm is operated by John, Dianne, daughter Katy and son Peter. The farm was started by John's parents when the immigrated to New York State from Holland.

"We started out super and got our first cutting in by the end of May," Dianne Kemmeren said. "Then it rained the month of June."

The family delayed their second cutting until the field conditions improved. Then, during July, the weather turned around and it turned into a great haymaking year.

"We have a hay mow full of small square bales," she said. The rains came at the right times to keep the forage growing, and they ended up getting four cuttings from their grass hay.

Producers submitted 385 entries for the World Forage Analysis Superbowl. Dairy samples are judged on lab analysis (60 percent), visual

Submitted photos
The farm's quality forages are a key cornerstone to their dairy business.

Peter, John, Dianne and Katy Kemmeren at their farm in Bainbridge, N.Y.

The award-winning entry at the World Dairy Expo.

judging (30 percent), and calculated milk per ton (10 percent). Commercial entries are judged on lab analysis (70 percent) and visual judging (30 percent). Visual judging consists of analysis of the color, texture, maturity and leafiness, depending on the category. Dairyland Laboratories, located in DePere, Wis., tested the samples.

Dianne Kemmeren said the family wanted to enter the contest, but like many farms, it was close to the entry deadline before they pulled the 25 pounds of forage needed to enter. They quickly pulled the sample, boxed it and shipped it to Wisconsin, and waited for the results.

The humor of the win is that they entered the same hay in the local fair, and it did not place very high. The local fair only evaluates on the visual conditions of the hay.

The stand is a relatively new grass hay stand. It was no-tilled into the field following a corn rotation.

The family has been practicing no-till on the farm for more than 40 years. John Kemmeren will speak at the National No-Till Conference in January 2016 about his no-tilling experience.

Dianne Kemmeren said that the family has been "pretty deliberate on pH" levels, and applying only the fertilizer and lime needed. They also spread liquid manure from their dairy cows.

Quality forage is a key element to their dairy operation. The forages raised at the farm are utilized to feed the farm's 90-cow dairy herd, plus heifers. They farm 550 acres. The farm's crop rotation includes corn for silage, high moisture corn, hay for square bales, baleage and haylage, and they double crop with rye for precut rye straw for bedding. They also plant about 15 to 20 acres of sudangrass and clover mix after frost after the rye to help break up the crop rotations.

"Our general rule is to grow what we can use and market through our own animals," she said. Quality forage is valuable as it contributes to milk production and animal health. Quality forages also help with the farm's bottom line. The better the forage, the less protein concentrate they have to purchase to balance the ration.

Although they were unable to attend the World Dairy Expo to receive their award, the farm received a $1,500 cash prize for winning the contest.

World Forage Analysis Superbowl winners announced

MADISON, Wis. — Felling Dairy, Sauk Centre, Minn., took grand champion honors and was awarded a $2,500 check for its BMR corn silage entry in the World Forage Analysis Superbowl.

More than $22,000 in cash prizes were awarded to top-finishing producers participating in this year's contest. Producers submitted 385 entries in seven forage categories, representing 24 states and provinces. The winners were announced Sept. 30 at the World Forage Analysis Superbowl awards

luncheon at World Dairy Expo.

Regional champions of the seven forage categories include: Grass Hay — Angel Rose Dairy, Bainbridge, N.Y.; and BMR Corn Silage — Dwi-Bet Farms, Addison, N.Y.

Each category's top finisher received $1,500. Second-place winners received $500; third-place, $250; and fourth-place winners, $100 each.

Growers from across the U.S. and Canada were invited to send their best samples in either dairy or commercial divisions. Dairy

samples are judged on lab analysis, 60 percent; visual judging, 30 percent; and calculated milk per ton, 10 percent. Commercial entries are judged on lab analysis, 70 percent; and visual judging, 30 percent. Visual judging consists of analysis of the color, texture, maturity and leafiness, depending on the category. Dairyland Laboratories, located in DePere, Wis., tested the samples.

The top-placing regional entries from each category are:

Dairy Hay
Fourth Place: Mountainside Farm, Taylorsville, N.C.
Grass Hay
First Place: Angel Rose Dairy, Bainbridge, N.Y.
Fifth Place: Dawn Mar Farm, Pitman, Pa.
Haylage
Second Place: Co-Vista Holsteins LLC, Arcade, N.Y.
Standard Corn Silage
Third Place: Jason Baughman, Glencoe, Pa.
Fourth Place: Millview Farm, Pilesgrove, N.J.
BMR Corn Silage
First Place: Dwi-Bet Farms, Addison, N.Y.
Second Place: Tayl-Wind Farm, Cassville, N.Y.
Fifth Place: Emerling Dairy, Perry, N.Y.

Del Val and Penn State students receive PFGC scholarships

Photo provided by PFGC
Andrew Morris, PFGC scholarship recipient, at Del Val University.

HERSHEY, Pa. — The Pennsylvania Forage and Grassland Council provides scholarships to students at both Penn State and Del Val who are working toward degrees in a forage-related field.

Andrew Morris has been selected by Del Val University as this year's recipient of the PFGC scholarship.

Morris was born and raised in the small town of Newton, N.J. Growing up, he loved to play sports and found himself most comfortable while outdoors. He discovered his love for agriculture in eighth grade when he got his first job at the Sussex County Strawberry Farm. The farm grows about 18 acres of strawberries and 30 acres of rye and sudangrass straw for mulch. They also grow other crops such as raspberries, blackberries and pumpkins. The farm has a garden center with a wide array of bedding plants in the spring. Morris still works there and is now the crew chief/supervisor.

In high school, Morris had two primary interests, ice hockey and FFA. He played varsity ice hockey all four years and was the team captain his senior year. As for the FFA, he was a very active in soil judging, agronomy judging and environmental science and natural resources judging. However, his greatest honor was receiving the American Degree.

After high school, Morris wanted to pursue a career in agronomy and/or horticulture so he went to the County College of Morris, where he received an associate degree in science in landscape and horticulture technologies. He then started attending Del Val in the fall of 2013 pursuing a bachelor's degree in agronomy and crop science. He plans to graduate in December.

This year's PFGC scholarship

recipient at Penn State is Kevin Jamison. Jamison is a junior at Penn State working toward a degree in agroecology and minors in both horticulture and soils. Jamison did not come from a farming background but discovered his love of agriculture through working on his best friend's orchardgrass