



Arrows and dark area (above) denote water "pad" on which the Rotaflo floats. Cows are milked along the outside of the new 35 ft. dia., 20 cow Rotaflo (left photo) on the Jacobs farm.

HAS NO MOVING PARTS AND IS MAINTENANCE-FREE

Floating Milking Parlor Now On Wisconsin Farm

"We looked at both herringbone and conventional rotary parlors but decided to go with the Rotaflo because of its ease of maintenance and convenience," says Gerry Jacobs, Hilbert, Wis.

The Jacobs farm is the first in the U.S. or Canada to put in the unique parlor from New Zealand which floats on water. FARM SHOW first reported on the Rotaflo 18 months ago (Vol. 8, No. 1, 1984 issue).

"We decided to get a parlor since we weren't getting any younger. Milking cows in stanchions is hard on the knees and back. We selected the Rotaflo because it didn't have the wear points and maintenance costs of a conventional rotary. And, unlike a

herringbone, one slow-milking cow can't hold up the rest of the string," says Gerry, who farms with his father, brothers and brother-in-law. They've been milking in the parlor since April.

The Jacobs' have a 20-cow Rotaflo for their 150-cow Holstein herd. "It took a few days to get the cows used to it, especially since they were used to stanchions. But now they're very content. Two people can milk our entire herd of 150 in about 1 1/2 hours, Gerry notes.

There's a milking unit for each stall but only 18 cows are milking at the same time as one cow is entering and another cow exiting as the parlor revolves.

The 20-cow parlor is 35-ft. in dia. and is built off the end of the Jacobs' barn in a 40 by 40-ft. extension. The Jacobs milk from the inside (outside is an option) of the Rotaflo because of the close access to the milking units. Their system makes a revolution once every 9 1/2 min.

Nu-Pulse America, Inc., Madison, Wis., has been named North American distributor for the New Zealand-based Rotaflo company. Barry Gascoigne, Nu-Pulse president, explains that Rotaflo engineers take care of the plans and specifications, while Nu-Pulse arranges for the concrete work.

The 20-cow unit requires about 5,000 gal. of water. Despite Wisconsin's cold weather, says Gascoigne,

antifreeze isn't needed because the thick concrete walls provide enough insulation. He notes that the only maintenance requirement is to drain the water once a year to get rid of any salt build-up.

Gascoigne says low-maintenance Rotaflo parlors are priced competitively with other parlor set-ups. The Nu-Pulse company offers Rotaflos to handle up to hold 50 cows at once. An 80-cow model is in the works.

For more information, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Barry Gascoigne, Nu-Pulse of America, Inc., 908 Stewart St., Madison, Wis. 53713 (ph 608 274-2722).

"I CAN SELL EVERYTHING I CAN RAISE"

Deer Easy To Raise Says Largest U.S. Producer

Deer farming is already big business in New Zealand and it's catching on fast in Europe. Now, the largest deer producer in the U.S. has taken steps to form a North American Deer Farmers Association in an effort to trade information and increase the numbers of deer farmers, if possible.

Josef Von Kerckerinck, a German who originally came to the U.S. to raise beef, has a 4,500-acre farm near Chaumont, N.Y. He already has a herd of fallow deer that numbers over a thousand. All animals are slaughtered right on the farm and the carcasses sold direct to restaurants in New York City. He gets \$4 per pound for the meat and says he can sell everything he can raise. He's been raising deer in New York for seven years.

Von Kerckerinck raises fallow deer which is the most common type of deer raised in Germany. They've been domesticated for centuries and thus take well to confinement. In England and New Zealand, the most common type of domesticated deer are Red deer.

Fallow deer generally produce a single fawn each June starting at age two. Over 90% survive. They require tall fences — a major expense — because they can easily jump fences of ordinary height. They have almost no known disease problems and about 400 does can be maintained on 100 acres of good pasture. Surveys of over 2,000 deer farmers in New Zealand have shown that domesticated deer gain almost twice the lean tissue per acre as beef cattle and put on only half as much fat. Carcasses of Von Kerckerinck's slaughtered animals weigh out at about 60 lbs.

Breeding does sell for around \$400 apiece while younger does can be had for \$250 to \$350. A good stag that can service from 12 to 30 does may sell for as much as \$3,000.

The initial meeting last April of the North American Deer Farmers Association drew about 20 new members. "We hope to work together to establish reliable markets for venison and to develop a larger gene pool for cross breeding," Von Kerckerinck told FARM SHOW.



For more information, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Lucky Star Ranch, Box 372, Chaumont, New York 13622 (ph 315 649-5519).

New York deer farmer Josef Von Kerckerinck sells deer meat direct to restaurants for \$4 per lb.