

Neighbour

He Came To Farm

that was a bit much.

At that time land in the Fraser Valley was too costly so Roger came here to buy a farm. He still works from dawn to dusk but manages to spend time with his wife, Valerie, and their children. The Hughes are happily settled in the Fulford Valley.

He bought the Reid farm first - the house was built at the turn of the century and is their home. He took over the Shaw dairy and the Cunningham and Crawford milk routes and he finds the business is increasing. This is due, in part, to the enthusiastic interest many residents now have in eating well for health's sake.

The Hughes have 40 cows and 30 young stock. Their 97 acres include good grazing land, two creeks and cultivated areas for the production of tomatoes, corn and Brussels sprouts. For the past four years they have had pigs, which they have butchered to sell.

The best time for purchasing beef or pork for freezing, Roger tells me, is the late fall. They have also 150 chickens and four geese - the latter sort of changed the balance of things about a bit - three geanders and one goose instead of vice versa. The

children have rabbits, too. With all this, Valerie helps whenever she's needed and she does the egg candling. They have one full-time and one part-time worker.

Their bulk milk goes to the Palm dairy three times a week. They sell eggs and raw milk locally.

It's too bad mass production has made other farm produce quite impossible as an industry.

It is impractical to try to compete with market prices unless a farmer has enormous acreage in vegetables, with all the necessary equipment.

At one time the Farmers' Institute owned a cider press but it was stolen, so another industry was finished on Salt Spring.

His dairy business is Roger's largest and most time-consuming operation.

He also takes care of artificial insemination of about 100 animals a year. He used to help with ailing animals but now Salt Spring has a full time veterinarian, Roger is relieved of those duties.

Roger sells milk all over the island, except to the shops in Fernwood and Vesuvius. Raw milk makes good yogurt and cottage cheese.

His daily production is 1,700 pounds of milk.

Of this he sells on Salt Spring 72 quarts a day - approximately 200 pounds of milk. His bulk milk is pasteurized in town.

Many of the diseases in cattle are due to diet deficiency and, because of this, Roger would like to keep his cattle inside. In this way their diet would be scientifically balanced. Inspectors visit the dairy once a month and everything that goes off the farm must be tested.

Consequently our dairy farmer takes a sample of everything that leaves his farm. The milk sample is collected in a little bag designed for this purpose.

If residents expect to continue getting bottled milk in glass there will have to be more care taken with the bottles. They are irreplaceable. Bottles should be rinsed with warm water when they are emptied. They should not be used for wine, for planting, for oil or other mixtures.

Any bottle that has held oil is a lost bottle so before you reach for that empty milk bottle, my friend, remember this and find another container! There are usually plenty about.