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S243527-1

## LAGLER DAIRY

### Father and sons part of the team

By **HEATHER SMITH THOMAS**  
For the Capital Press

**EAST VANCOUVER, Wash.** — Dennis Lagler and his sons, Nathan and Tyson, operate a dairy near East Vancouver, Wash., across the Columbia River from Portland.

Dennis' parents moved there from Tillamook, Ore., in 1955.

"I grew up on the dairy then went to college to study architecture. Then the Army caught me and I was in the Corps of Engineers," Dennis said. "After that I decided I wanted to have my own business and came back to the dairy in 1972."

He worked with his parents a few years and then bought the dairy from them in 1975. Today he and his sons are milking 700 Holsteins, with a herd of 840 cows.

The farm has 700 acres, plus 500 rented river bottom acres about 25 miles away.

"Here on our place we grow alfalfa hay and high-quality grasses for silage. The rented ground produces corn silage, and we haul it home as we use it," Dennis said.

It's a long haul but still cheaper and more depend-



Tillamook County Creamery Association  
**Dennis Lagler, center, with sons Nathan, left, and Tyson. They operate a dairy near East Vancouver, Wash.**

able than trying to buy feed, he said, adding that when you grow it yourself, you know what it is, and can balance diets properly.

"We use consultants — a veterinarian who helps with our health and vaccination program, a nutritionist who helps balance the rations, get the most from our feed and waste the least, and an accountant who keeps us straight with the books and the taxes," he said. "It takes a good team to make it all work."

He's been using artificial insemination since 1972. Using sexed semen, the dairy raises all its heifers.

"We tried it on all the cows a few years back and ended up with too many heifers so now we breed the bottom end of the herd (least genetic potential) with Angus semen because

the crossbred calves are worth more," he said.

"We figure the heifers have our best genetic potential, and all of them get bred twice with sexed semen, plus a few other cows that are exceptional in the herd. After second service, however, everything is bred with Angus semen," Dennis said.

Milk from the dairy goes to the Tillamook County Creamery Association — one load per day.

"We are a member of that co-op, and that market has been good the past few years," he said. "The market for milk has been up and down, however. I can remember when I first started, some years I had to dump milk because we couldn't sell it all."

The climate is mild, and perfect for a dairy.

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