

Mystery Farm Number 54 Practices Diversified Farming Near Columbia

"A farmer must be able to reach back and lay his hands on something to sell at any time if he wants to make a success of this type of business" is the economic philosophy of the owner of Mystery Farm Home Number 54, Forrest Fortenberry, Route 4, Box 83, Columbia.

Mr. Fortenberry says this farm belonged to his grandfather, then his father, and now he owns it. Mystery Farm Number 54 is located about a mile past the Cedar Grove Baptist church, after leaving Highway 13.

The last night of 1919 was the wedding night of Mr. Fortenberry and Miss Bertie Mae Price. They have seven children.

Hazel married Marshall Fortenberry, another Fortenberry but no kin to her. He works at Gray's Ice Cream Company in Columbia. Their children are named David Gene and Deloris.

Rochelle married Carey Mae Breeland. They live in Columbia. Her children are Dianne, Glyn and Linda.

Lavonne married Faye Forbes. They are building a new house on the farm. Mr. Fortenberry said Friday morning he planned to help pour a concrete porch that afternoon. Lavonne and Faye will be glad to get the house finished, so they and Shirley, their child, can get settled.

Bobby Nell married Houston "Buddy" Stuckey. They live in Hartesburg where he is manager of an oil station. Their child is Keith.

Charles lives in Columbia with his wife, the former Jimmie Ruth Lea, and their children, Sheila and Mack. He is working at Soso with an oil company.

Ruth married Glenn Dunn. Ruth is a beautician in Columbia. Glenn is in school at Southern during the week and at home on week-ends. Their baby, Jeffery Glenn, stays with his grandmother while Ruth is at work.

Marlyn is a freshman at Columbia High. He went out for football last season. He is a member of the National Guard and belongs to the Boy Scouts, Troop 78 at Cedar Grove. He also has a 4-H Club forestry plot.

The Fortenberrys are active members of the Cedar Grove Baptist church. Mrs. Fortenberry teaches a class of junior girls in the Sunday School.

Mrs. Fortenberry says she likes to sew and does some work for the public. She says Mr. Fortenberry's

hobby is taking his grandchildren fishing in one of the two ponds on the farm that have been stocked with fish.

This farm is made of 340 acres, about 80 of which are in timber that is protected from fire. Mr. Fortenberry says he sells a little timber from time to time as he needs money from this source.

At different times during the year Mr. Fortenberry can reach and get a little money from several sources, not counting the timber.

Some products for the canning plant are grown. These include an acre of okra, two or three acres of peas and a small plot of sweet potatoes in over a good part of the year because there is an acre of cucumbers and about an acre of Irish potatoes in addition to crops grown for the canning plant.

Mr. Fortenberry says he used to farm with four mules and just about hoed himself to death. Now he farms with a tractor and says he

rarely does any hoeing. He is sold on tractor farming and says he hopes he is through plowing a mule.

The 60 head of cattle on the farm are grazing on approximately 50 acres of clover and oats. They have a large woods pasture that they can roam over, too.

Corn grown on the fifty acres in this crop is used at home, in the ear or crushed. It goes to feed cattle, hogs and chickens. Mr. Fortenberry says he likes O. I. C. hogs because they don't have long noses and don't root out of the fields.

An electric light at the barn makes night trips there safer and much more convenient. An extension cord will reach to the shop when it is necessary to do any night work there.

Although there is a deep freeze at this house, Mrs. Fortenberry does quite a bit of canning. She says she likes to give some canned goods to the children when they come home, and she enjoys taking some-

thing with her when she visits a sick neighbor. In fact, she was returning from such a visit when we stopped at her house.

This Mystery Farm Home is just getting a face lifting. Mr. Fortenberry says he is planning to paint the house as soon as the weather warms up. A concrete porch is to replace the present one of wood.

The favorite station at this home is WCJU. Mr. Fortenberry says you have to stay tuned in most of the time or you won't know what's going on in the county. To further his knowledge of happenings around him he reads The Columbian-Progress and Sunday Mirror.

Mr. Fortenberry is making plans for another growing season so that he can have something to sell most of 1955.

Mr. Fortenberry says his hogs are not registered but are direct descendants of hogs brought here from Wisconsin three or four generations ago. He has six brood sows.

