

## Organization Is Key

The Hansens hold weekly meetings to update status, establish priorities and exchange ideas.

Brent handles marketing and distribution, and helps with plant maintenance. Brad is processing manager, keeping a watchful eye over all products. Blair handles all things related to feed, from growing and storing crops to correctly balancing rations for milking cows. Blake not only supervises milking, but also herd upgrades, including breeding and embryo transplants. Plus, the wives have different talents to help the business in different ways, including giving tours, bookkeeping and preparing meals when needed.

So, what do Mom and Dad, who are building a retirement home on the farm, have to say about all these changes from a traditional farm? Jeanne sums it up best: “It’s simply awesome.” ■



# TIPS FOR GOING RETAIL

To help other producers go direct to the consumer, the Hansen brothers offer these suggestions.

**You have to be passionate about what you do and learn everything about your product so you can easily explain it to the consumer—“Why should I purchase milk from Hansen’s Dairy?”**

**Set up a transition period to help with cash flow and conserve capital. Brent continued being a hoof trimmer and Brad continued teaching while they developed a plan, purchased equipment, and conducted research on items they could use and ones they could not.**

**Don’t be afraid of the “school of hard knocks.” The Hansens say these are the best lessons. Everybody wants to sell a bill of goods, so you have to figure out what works for you.**

**Research information on your own. The best bet, the brothers agree, is talking to other farm families who have attempted something similar and are now doing it successfully.**

**Take the information you gather and form your own plan based on trade area, manpower, labor and the products you want to sell on the retail market.**