

*Hard Work Pays Off*

# Lakeside Farms

*Country Market & Restaurant*

Owner - Dick Pearce

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**Success Magazine:** Dick, what does success mean to you?

Dick Pearce: Success is hard work. You keep on trying—never give up. You can never become complacent in your struggle to get ahead. Love what you're doing and keep your nose to the grindstone.

**SM:** How did you get started in your business?

DP: We moved out here from Schenectady when I was sixteen. Initially we were a dairy farm, working 365 days a year. When the government intervened, the farm and dairy business were sold at auction and we then went to grocery wholesaling and then retailing. My mother, Agnes was wonderful in the kitchen. She could cook and she could bake. She is my inspiration for the success of the farm—she never gave up. I used to dream about converting to a retail store, but I knew we had competition from the big stores in the area. The cider mill was our primary business in the 50's and 60's. Back then, the hippies wanted everything fresh—cider, vegetables... and we expanded on our retail site. We eventually converted the space to have a breakfast and lunch restaurant with a family atmosphere. You

have to try new things sometimes, to keep your marketshare.

**SM:** Like you said, there was competition. How did you fare through the tough times?

DP: I love competition—it makes you sharp. It makes you work harder. You have to constantly plan the next day. You must keep a vision, and have the ability to dream about things. I was always trying to figure out our next move to stay one up on the competition.

**SM:** You said you got your perseverance from your mom?

DP: She was tough—a hardworking woman. When she passed away, I didn't even know that she was sick. She never let on.

**SM:** What kept you going after you lost your mom?

DP: It was very rough. I was actually going

through a divorce at the time as well. I looked up above and asked my mom for answers. She told me to keep going, so I did. And I never looked back.

**SM:** What are your hopes for the next generation to follow in your footsteps?

DP: My son, Jeff, runs the store now and my three grandsons help in the off-season.

**SM:** How do you inspire your family members and employees to work as hard as you do?

DP: Well, in this world we have leaders and followers. If you are a leader you can study the business, work hard, and be part of the future. A follower could never run a business. It takes a specific personality to be a leader. Right now, we are running on eight cylinders, and we have a few more years in us. I have noticed with other family businesses everything relies on the father. When the father goes, often the business goes with it. If the family doesn't stick together and work together the farm,



business cannot continue. Young people today don't often understand hard work or the sacrifice it took to make America great. I am doing my best to make future generations understand what it takes to make a business run through the tough times.

**SM: How have you been able to keep balance in your life?**

DP: In the off season, after November, I travel to Florida. I fish, ride my bike, and play cards.

**SM: What keeps you going?**

DP: As long as I feel good, I will keep on working. I know some people who've retired, but I'm in better shape because I am working and thinking and constantly moving. Though I enjoy my time in Florida, I love to work.

**SM: Why do you think you have been successful through all these years?**

DP: Luck is part of it, but also persistence.

**SM: How do you deal with people who don't pay their bills and run up your accounts receivables?**

DP: I've always paid on time and I can go to sleep at night. There are people who owe me money and they had better get out of my way. Sometimes you have to take a stand and fight for your rights. Stand your ground and be patient.

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**SM: What successful characteristics do you have?**

DP: The most important is perseverance. I never give up. I have vision and am able to change direction quickly and with authority. I am also able to deal well with people in business and at home.

**SM: Who impressed you the most in your life?**

DP: My grandfather. He worked hard and played hard.

**SM: What would you have changed in your life?**

DP: I would have built more Lakeside Farms. The challenges are good for the soul.

**SM: What was your toughest criticism while you were building your business?**

DP: My mother-in-law told me to go out and get a good stable job.

**SM: Why didn't you heed her advice?**

DP: I knew that I could overcome the obstacles and I would never quit.