

Trees, Bending Low With Cherries



Heavy yields of cherries this year — several varieties — are bringing thousands to the Shank orchards along the New Danville Pike just southwest of

Lancaster. Here a man is seen, working away, picking the delectable fruit. (Lancaster Farming Staff Photo).

Cherry Picking Headlines Work On Shank Farms

(Continued from page one)

"But best of all is the shotgun," this fruit grower continued, "and you know the crow will waste as many cherries, knocking them off the trees, as he eats?"

After hay fields are cleared

and mulberries come on, problems with the birds will be lessened.

Fog Cuts Frost Loss

Land on which the Shank cherries are grown is hilly. Fog covered the low spots and saved a good share of the crop from frost damage which struck late in the season. But on the higher points of his cherry orchards, yields may be somewhat lower. Then there was hail two weeks ago which bruised some of the fruit, but fortunately there was no wind.

Birds, insects, weather — there's many another worry for the cherry grower. Luckily, many are being met. "Through breeding, the problem of cherry leaf virus has been almost licked," Mr. Shank advises.

He has searched afar to plant, and replant his stock. There are cherries from Ontario that will be ready July 4. One of the more luscious is the Emperor Francis from Austria, another that originated in Russia — the Black Russian, which survived the frost wonderfully. Still another variety originated in England.

There's a more universal touch to the program here, for assistance has been given Lancaster County cherry production from Purdue University at Lafayette, Ind., from New York State experimental stations at Geneva, from Chico and Davis, Calif., and from New Brunswick, N. J. New varieties have been developed by these stations to centralize on compactness of trees, higher quality fruit, heavier, larger size of fruit.

Terrific Expense Involved

Results are more than evident today, when one drives through the orchards with Mr. Shank and compares the old-type trees, rank in growth, heavy in leaf, lighter in production, and the newer varieties that are closer to the ground, whose branches are peppered with fruit.

While the thousands will be picking — on 1,000 stepladders and fruit picking ladders Mr. Shank keeps on hand — there may be echoes of noisemakers and shotguns reverberating through the wooded hills occasionally, to keep the birds away.

There's terrific expense involved in an orchard operation, to keep trees sprayed against the many plagues they face, to keep the soil in topnotch production.

Peaches and apples round out production from Shank Orchards, and the Lancaster County outlook is good in view of the fact that apples were badly frozen in northwestern United States. The Appalachian area expects an 85 per cent crop, and the entire eastern production may be down considerably from last year. Peaches will be ahead of last year, Mr. Shank believes, but he remains convinced that to sell, you must advertise.

"Any product that isn't advertised today just isn't sold," he asserted.

Despite increased advertising, prices have remained stable on the pick-them-yourself program, from 20 to 23 cents per pound for the white and dark sweets, 15 cents for the red pie cherries. These prices have been in effect for years and years.

Crow Glides Overhead

Mr. Shank, who has been very influential in Pennsylvania agricultural politics, and who has contributed much to state agricultural legislation and building, still remains modest, hard-working.

While the Shanks concentrate on production of fruit, Lancaster farming goes on about them. Across the road tobacco rows were straight and true. Pea hullers shelled out his year's crop.

While overhead, a wary crow glides about, convinced this pick-them-yourself program no longer included him.

Merck Issues New Booklet on Use of

RAHWAY, N. J. — A new leaflet of interest to broiler growers who face the danger of coccidiosis has been issued by Merck & Co., Inc., manufacturers of the coccidiostat, Nicarbazin.

The eight-page folder explains in dollars and cents the difference a preventative coccidiostat like Nicarbazin can make through effective control of mortality and through its effect on feed efficiency and weight gains. In addition to preventing cecal coccidiosis, a form difficult to detect because it does not cause loody droppings as occur in birds which have the cecal type.

The new Merck coccidiostat leaflet for broiler growers is available in feed stores which sell broiler rations carrying Nicarbazin. Copies may also be obtained by writing to Merck & Co., Inc., Chemical Division, Rahway, N. J.

Benson Booped in Iowa Appearance

Irate farmers Friday booped Secretary of Agriculture Ezra Taft Benson when he spoke before the Farm Family Field Day at Eldora, Iowa last week.

Mr. Benson told the 1956 Soil Bank program is "the best we can do for the farmers on short notice at a late hour. . . . The real test for this program will come in 1957, 1958 and 1959 when we can put it fully into operation."

Farm prices, the Secretary told, have as an average increased about nine per cent since Jan. 1, adding, "This increase in farm prices has occurred under flexible price supports, even though there has been only a modest application of the flexible principle."

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