

Jaycees Award

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agent. He gave a run-down of key trends in local farming and some of the factors which go into making an outstanding farmer.

Smith noted that while the increasing age of farmers is a major concern in most of the nation, Lancaster County farmers are "getting younger." The average age of the Lancaster County farmer is 44.5 years, one of the youngest average ages in the nation.

Smith said this young age is "a healthy sign," particularly since

most of these young farmers "have the blessing of good parents, fathers and grandfathers."

Smith acknowledged that the number of farms in Lancaster County has been dwindling, from 8,800 when he began Extension work in 1937, to about 5,300 today. But at the same time the number of acres per farm has risen from 56 to 80. The percentage of land in farms has dropped from 80 to 70 per cent.

He also pointed out the high investment required for farming. The average value per acre at last report was \$924 and it's still rising. The average value of a farm is \$73,000 and going up.

But Smith said, "I don't think you'll see it in your generation" in regard to projections that farms will disappear in Lancaster County. Smith said the tradition of farming is very strong here and farmers have been very successful. He projected that farms will remain in Lancaster County as long as they remain anywhere in this part of the East.

But he projected that the farms will continue to get larger and

more commercial. "While farming will continue to decline as a percentage of the total income in the County, I think making food and fiber will continue to be very important."

Smith also discussed the problem of the price-cost squeeze. While everything that goes into farming costs more, the farmer doesn't always get increases for the things he produces. Farm products often are not selling at any more today than they were 10, 20 or 30 years ago.

But Smith thinks this trend may not continue. "I think food costs will have to go up in order for farmers to be able to meet those costlier inputs."

In other comments, Smith noted the trend toward specialization in farming. Whereas local farmers used to have four or more key farm products, most of them now have only one or two.

At the same time, farms are increasingly automated, with non-automated products such as tobacco showing decline in importance.

But Smith warned that large farms "are not necessarily efficient."

"There was never a time when good management was more important than it is today." He predicted that the poor farm manager "is going to get squeezed out."

He also predicted continuing trends toward greater output per unit, such as more milk per cow. Better breeding programs made possible by sire services, the DHIA information system, better cows and better management are all factors pointing toward greater efficiency, he said.

Smith also noted that many local farmers have been content with three to four tons per acre of alfalfa at a time when some farmers are getting eight to 10 tons per acre. He said he expects

Holstein Calf Sale Set

The Pennsylvania Holstein Association sale committee is again asking dairymen to cooperate in making animals available for the annual state calf sale.

The entry deadline is February 1 and the sale is slated for Saturday, April 8 in the small

arena at the Farm Show building.

Entry quota from Lancaster County is 12 calves. Entries are being selected through Jay Landis, Lancaster RD6 and Nathan Stoltzfus, Gap RD2.

Any farmer in the county with Holsteins can become involved.

For each animal entered, available records and classifications information is needed including a pedigree form giving information on the dam, grand dam and great-grand dam.

The age range for eligible animals includes those born from July 1, 1971 through January 31, 1972, with preference given to calves born in July through October.

The annual sale strives for quality animals. In 1970, the 146 animals sold averaged \$398 and in 1971 the 132 animal average was \$480.

As a guide for selections, the sale committee recommends calves from popular sires and dams with Good-Plus or better ratings. Suggested 305 day production record for dams should be at least 13,000 pounds for two year olds, 15,000 for three year olds, and at least 16,000 completed or projected records for four year olds and over. The dam must be on or have completed standard DHIA

these increased outputs to occur eventually in Lancaster County.

The image the farmer presents to the public is increasingly important as more people move into the country, said Smith. He noted that many farm families are planting flowers and landscaping. Smith said this will "help make milk drinkers instead of soft drink sippers."

The county agent defended farmers against charges of pollution "I don't think in most cases you're (farmers) guilty at all." But he urged care and use of good judgment in applying fertilizers and manure in such a way that they will not cause pollution.

He also warned that "stiff regulations could reduce yields and quality, resulting in higher costs" of food products. He particularly noted recent stiffer rules on withdrawal of DES, but conceded this resulted because "somebody didn't follow the two-day rule."

He urged farmers to get involved in helping make rules and regulations on local planning and zoning.

He warned the Jaycees and farmers to expect "more of those lousy caterpillars" or gypsy moths which can't be controlled now because of the elimination of DDT. Unless new control measures are developed, people can expect the moths "to strip trees and crawl all over houses" in the next several years.

Boy Killed by Tractor

Kevin L Groff, four-year-old son of Mr. and Mrs. James Groff, 1426 Lime Valley Road, Lancaster, died Wednesday afternoon after becoming entangled in a power takeoff of a tractor attached to a manure spreader. The youth was playing outside with an older brother when the accident occurred

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