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Ag

# Lancaster Farming

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J. Clair Graybill is currently planting about 50 acres of potatoes on his farm near Manheim.

## Potatoes For Fun & Profit

That potato chip you may be eating could have been grown on a Lancaster County farm. That spud you are buttering up could also have been grown in the Garden Spot. The potato, you see is not just grown in Maine or Idaho but is also grown locally. And they are sold for a profit.

A typical farm which raises potatoes is found just east of Manheim. It is owned by J Clair Graybill. He is the third generation of Graybills to operate the picturesque farm just off the Manheim Road. But he is the first of his family to raise potatoes for fun and profit.

"I've been growing potatoes for some time now," said Graybill the other day as he sat in his kitchen waiting for the soil to dry out a bit so that he could finish his planting. "I'm planting about fifty acres this year. Forty of those acres will be for chip potatoes." Chip potatoes, by the way, are those potatoes used in the making of potato chips. "There are certain varieties of potatoes that are better for chips than others. Superiors and Norchips are quite good and I'll be planting some of those. But I can't ignore the local table variety market so I'll be planting some Cobblers and Katahdins for local stores. The weather has been quite wet so I am running late with my planting," noted Graybill, with one eye cast out the window.

Potatoes are usually planted the last week in March and on

into April. There are some varieties which are planted later and planting can run into May. Graybill tests his soil regularly but after farming his land for many years feels he knows what fertilizers are best for the different sections of land on his farm. He uses insecticides when he plants and sprays approximately five times thereafter. The corn bore and the blight are among the dangers to the potato "I did have just a bit of blight last year," said Graybill. "But for the most part I've been pretty free from it over the years. The wetter the weather while the potatoes are growing, the more problems there are likely to be with the blight."

Harvesting the crop starts in the middle of July and runs as late as October for some of the later varieties. Graybill uses a harvester which runs the potatoes in a wagon and bins and grades them loose in the truck. They are then ready for shipping to potato chip manufacturers. The table varieties are placed loose in storage and then bagged as needed.

"I've been averaging about 500 bushels per acre over the years. Sometimes, however, I've been able to average 600-700 bushels per acre depending on conditions," said Graybill.

What most housewives don't realize is that potatoes are selling on a retail basis just about what they were selling for twenty years ago. And yet farmers costs have increased greatly over the years. "Basically, the potato grower has to keep trying to improve his yield and keep his costs down. If he doesn't, he won't make a profit," cautions Graybill. To prove his point

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## New Group Forming

# Watershed Elects Directors

What is involved in forming a new organization. Much planning, work, headaches, and possibly even dreaming, goes into formation of a new group. Planning requires knowing the areas involved and the needs, research, talking with other groups, technicians, and then the actual job of involving area citizens in the plan.

The Cocalico Watershed Association is one such group swinging into action. The Watershed idea began this year by the Cocalico Jaycees, the area serving the Cocalico School District area.

The Watershed Association met in Denver Thursday night with about 25 persons in attendance. Having met several times previously, the meeting Thursday night was geared to electing directors, who in turn will set forth directives and form committees to begin projects.

Henry Hackman, executive secretary of the Lancaster County Soil and Water Conservation District, was at the meeting to present the work of the local Conservation District. He also showed the slide presentation prepared by he and his wife entitled "America the Beautiful."

A report of the project committee chairman was presented on the "Adopt the Stream" program. The committee hopes to involve youth from groups such as FFA, 4-H, Boy Scouts, to help work on cleaning area streams and to control erosion on stream banks so the stream will clean itself on silt, as well as yearly clean-up chores.

The first project for the Watershed Association will be building a waterjack dam on the Lititz Cocalico Creek. The project will begin the evening of June 6. Materials will be needed to build these devices, such as lumber, rocks, and utility poles. Interested persons are invited to help with this project.

Eight directors were

unanimously elected by the group to serve the Watershed Association. Those elected are: Marvin Bennetch, Denver RD2, farmer and salesman; Charles A. Prinz, Lititz RD2; Gary Christ,

## Farm Calendar

Saturday, April 29

Tri-County Relief Sale, Twin Slope Farmers Market, Morgantown.

55th Little International Livestock Exposition, Penn State University.

Monday, May 1

7 p.m. — Tractor Pull business meeting, Rough and Tumble Gift Shop, Kinzer.

8 p.m. — Lancaster County Poultry Association board of directors meeting, Farm and Home Center.

Tuesday, May 2

10 a.m. — Lancaster County Farmers Association Ladies Day Out, Farm and Home Center.

7:30 p.m. — Chester County Extension sewing workshop, West Chester Baptist Church.

8 p.m. — Lancaster County Farmers Association board meeting, Farm and Home Center.

Regional FFA Parliamentary Procedure and Public Speaking Contest, Lehigh Valley Vo-Tech School.

Wednesday, May 3

6:15 p.m. — Lancaster County Bankers' Association Banquet, Host Town.

7:30 p.m. — Lancaster County Soil and Water Conservation District meeting, Farm and Home Center.

Thursday, May 4

4:30 p.m. — Lancaster County Vocational Agriculture Teachers Association meeting, vo-ag department, Elizabethtown High School.

1:30 p.m. — FFA Leadership Training Conference, Penn Manor High School.

Schoeneck, chef; William Wingenroth, Ephrata RD1, salesman; G. Russell Drumm, Denver RD2, landscaper; David Cunningham, Denver RD1, engineer; John Reist, 1112 Pleasant View Drive, Ephrata, Earth and Space Science teacher, Cocalico High School, and Donald Graybill, Stevens RD1, dairy farmer.

The suggested duties of the directors will be to name the organization, adopt a constitution and by-laws, look into the possibility of incorporation, setting goals and objectives for 1972 and long-range plans, setting dues and membership requirements, meeting dates, and set up committees.

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Members and guests of Agway look on as George Steele, Chairman of the Board of Directors and Richard Goddard, Executive Vice-President and chief operating officer of Agway, cut the ribbon opening Agway's

new distribution center near Elizabethtown. Willis Esbenshade of Lancaster, fourth from the right, a member of Agway Board of Directors, assisted in the ceremony.

## Agway Dedicates New Distribution Center At E-town

Agway's new Elizabethtown Distribution Center is another example of Agway's continuing efforts to modernize and improve its distribution system, Ronald N. Goddard, the cooperative's executive vice president & general manager said on Wed-

nesday at the formal opening of the facility.

Goddard was joined by Agway Board Chairman George Steele, Vice Chairman Henry Bibus, Director Willis Z. Esbenshade of Lancaster, Agway officials and state, university, and extension

service leaders at opening day activities.

Ribbon cutting ceremonies were followed by tours of the distribution center, where trucks were being loaded for its first shipment of goods which begins Monday.