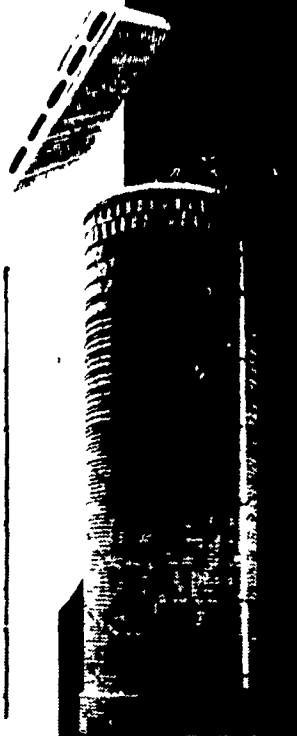


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PFA Honors Don Hershey

[Continued from Page 1]

pushed her luck just a bit too far.

"I paid my electric bill at the bank this morning," Hershey said, "and I just happened to comment to the teller, 'Boy, that thing sure gets bigger and bigger every month, doesn't it?'"

"And she said to me, 'Yeah, just like food.'"

"Well, she said that to the wrong person. I delivered my sermon right there, and when I was done, she knew a thing or two about what it costs me to produce food."

The theme of Don Hershey's food story is that the American farmer works 10 to 12 hours a day, 18 to 20 hours during planting and harvesting seasons, to produce to world's cheapest food. He reminds American consumers that they still spend a smaller percentage of their total income for food than any other country in the world. And he reminds them that for all his hard work, the farmer still very often doesn't make ten percent on his investment.

"I feel this is my way of telling agriculture's story to the public. We've got to tell the American people that food isn't as expensive as they think it is. More farmers have got to start talking up. It doesn't do us any good to go to farmer meetings and complain to each other about the treatment we get in the press. We've got to talk to consumers. We've got to reach the news media."

Food costs are only one

part of Hershey's farming story. The disappearance of good land is the other part.

"I don't know what's going to happen to the price of ground here," he said. "We should have some way to keep good productive land in farms rather than shopping centers, but developers are looking for the land they can make the most money with, and that's Class 1 and 2 farmland."

"The American people should get up in arms about the disappearance of farmland. We have to let the developers and realtors know that we want to save the land. We're not growing enough food right now to feed the world the way it ought to be fed, and things aren't going to get any better if we don't have land to grow the food on. Some farmers can resist the developers. I know one fellow who turned down \$10,000 an acre. But we can't depend on that kind of farmer to save the land. It'll take a lot of education."

Hershey's energy and dedication spill over into his church and community. He's a past president of the Manheim Farm Show, past president of the Sporting Hill Elementary School PTPA, he's on the Farm and Home Center board of directors, and with his wife, Gerry, he chairs an annual chicken corn soup supper to benefit the Sporting Hill school.

Both Hersheys are active in the Congregational Bible Church in Marietta as Sunday School teachers and

serve one night every week in the Church's Youth Center.

Don has served as president, vice-president and secretary of the Manheim Young Farmers, and was Region 2 vice-president of the state Young Farmer group for two years. He currently serves as president of the Lancaster County Farmers Association.

There are three Hershey children. Larry is 15, a member of the Manheim

Central FFA, and eagerly anticipating the day when he can go into farming. Stephen, 13 is anxious to get into the vo-ag and FFA programs. Daughter Patty is nine years old.

As the interview drew to a close, Don Hershey summed up his approach to farming and living. "When you come to the end of life's road, if you haven't left your community, church and farm better than they were, then I don't think you've fulfilled your purpose in life."

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