

Maryland fairs drawing crowds

ANNAPOLIS — Going to and taking an active part in agricultural fairs is a source of joy to a great many Marylanders, in fact over one million went to a county fair or the State Fair in 1975.

Figures on 1975 fair attendance and participation recently reported to State Agriculture Secretary Young D. Hance by R. Nelson Phelps, Executive Secretary of the Maryland State Fair Board, show that total attendance at 15 county fairs and the Maryland State Fair (Timonium) again were in excess of one million — 1,021,149 to be exact.

This was a slight decrease from attendance at fairs in 1974, which totaled 1,121,946, due mainly to heavy rains

Insurance discussed

Ninety people attended the insurance committee seminar held recently by the Lebanon County Farmer's Association. Reporting to the board of directors at their monthly meeting, Swen Bomberger, Chairman of the organization, congratulated the insurance committee for the fine program which included talks on estate planning by local attorneys and bank consultants.

In other action, the directors decided to send a committee of local members to Washington to meet with Pa. representatives in Congress.

Bomberger explained that Chester Heim, legislative analyst for the Pa. Farmer's Association will be the speaker for the local spring meeting on March 19th. Tickets are available from the directors or by calling 1-865-5693.

during the Labor Day weekend which washed out prime days for the Timonium event.

However, in reviewing the figures, Secretary Hance noted, "What impresses me most, is the number of people who actively participate in county fairs by entering exhibits or taking livestock to be judged. In 1975, some 40,263 Marylanders entered a total of 110,935 exhibits. This is real participation and shows that thousands of our citizens get a healthy degree of satisfaction out of entering their cow, chicken, horse or prize home canning product at a fair.

"Obviously our urban population enjoys going to fairs and entering them too, because the Montgomery County Fair staged at Gaithersburg is now the state's second largest fair in terms of attendance, second in the number of individuals entering, and first in the number of exhibits entered.

"The State Fair is first in attendance with 361,151, Montgomery is second with 225,000 and Frederick third with 91,000. Individuals entering exhibits indicate

Frederick first with 6,295, Montgomery second with 5,618 and Timonium third with 5,570. The rankings for the number of exhibits entered have Montgomery first with 16,722, Timonium second with 14,624, and Frederick third with 13,807.

"Actually fair attendance showed gains in 1975 whenever the weather permitted," Secretary Hance noted. "Six fairs (Calvert (8,500), Cecil (20,000), Charles (25,000), Garrett (52,000), Somerset (7,200) and Montgomery

showed gains last year, while four held their own (Hagerstown (55,000), Queen Annes (30,000), Howard (60,000) and Prince Georges (20,000). The six fairs showing declines, due mainly to rainy weather were Timonium, Anne Arundel (30,090), Frederick (91,000), Cumberland (21,548), St. Marys (23,160)

and Wicomico's (9,500) Farm and Home Show.

"I would urge everyone, during these cold and housebound days of winter, to start thinking about fairs for 1976 and if they did not participate in 1975, to think seriously about having a wonderful experience by doing so in 1976" Mr. Hance concluded.

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