

## Organization reaches consumers through parades

By JOANNE SPAHR  
MANHEIM, Pa. - Fairs are exciting events. There are the livestock competitions, the midways, the rides, the people, and the parades. And, while most agribusiness people think of Fairs mainly in the light of showing animals or discussing new implements on display Fairs can also be looked at as a time to actively promote good relations between farmers and consumers.

At least, that's how one farm organization views them. The Lancaster County Farmers Association decided that this year they were going to get out there and push farming to the city people by building a float and taking part in the various county parades.

"Our whole purpose was to reach the consumer and make them realize how important we are to their daily lives," explains Mrs. Robert Brubaker, (Lois) Mamheim R2 one of the women in the organization was responsible for getting the float together. "After all, when you think about it, if it weren't for us they couldn't eat," she adds.

Their float was entitled "Farmers Nourish the World," and so far it has won first place for most beautiful in the non-commercial category at the Ephrata Fair, and taken a top placing at the New Holland Fair.

"We really weren't out for the money," says Janie Garber, Marietta R1, another one of the four women who took on the chore of assembling the float. "But, now our costs are paid for, and that is sort of good to know," she continues.

As with many good ideas, to carry them out requires a lot of work, and that is exactly what the women who volunteered to do the project found out.

To start with, they had to come up with an idea. This was formulated at a board meeting where several different concepts were mulled over. Their particular idea originated from the Lehigh County Farmers Association who had the idea to use a barn and grass at the Lehigh Fair. From this basic idea, however, the Lancaster group innovated and came up with their own flourishes.

Basically, the Lancaster County float consists of a 5 x 8 foot red barn on a 7 x 16 foot flat bed wagon. Then, embellishing the barn are all sorts of crops and animals found on the farm. For instance, on either side of the barn doors are shocks of corn, and in the front on the left hand corner is a display of farm produce sitting on a wheel barrow. Adorning the sides of the barn walls, themselves, are antique rakes donated by one of the members.

The group also has livestock on the float, which is probably the most attention-getting part of the whole creation. In the front right hand corner is a pen of



The Robert Brubakers work on Farmers Association float before the assembling the Lancaster County New Holland Fair.

piglets and between them and the barn stands a calf.

"If the remarks we hear along the parade route are any indication of our success, I'd say we're doing pretty good," say Lois and Janie. "We kept hearing people say, 'Oh, look at those cute little pigs,'" notes Lois. She also points out that even in the livestock tents at fairs, there are rarely young animals. So, for many city dwellers, the piglets on the float are a real treat to behold.

When the float arrives before the fudges during the parade, one of the women on the float feeds the calf out of a bottle. The president of the organization and hand Mrs. Earl Newcomer, ride on the float dressed in quaint, old-fashioned clothing. Two children and another adult also ride on it.

Some of the other decorations to adorn the float are pumpkins, indian corn, apples, potatoes, and two pig troughs of flowers, which are placed beside the barn.

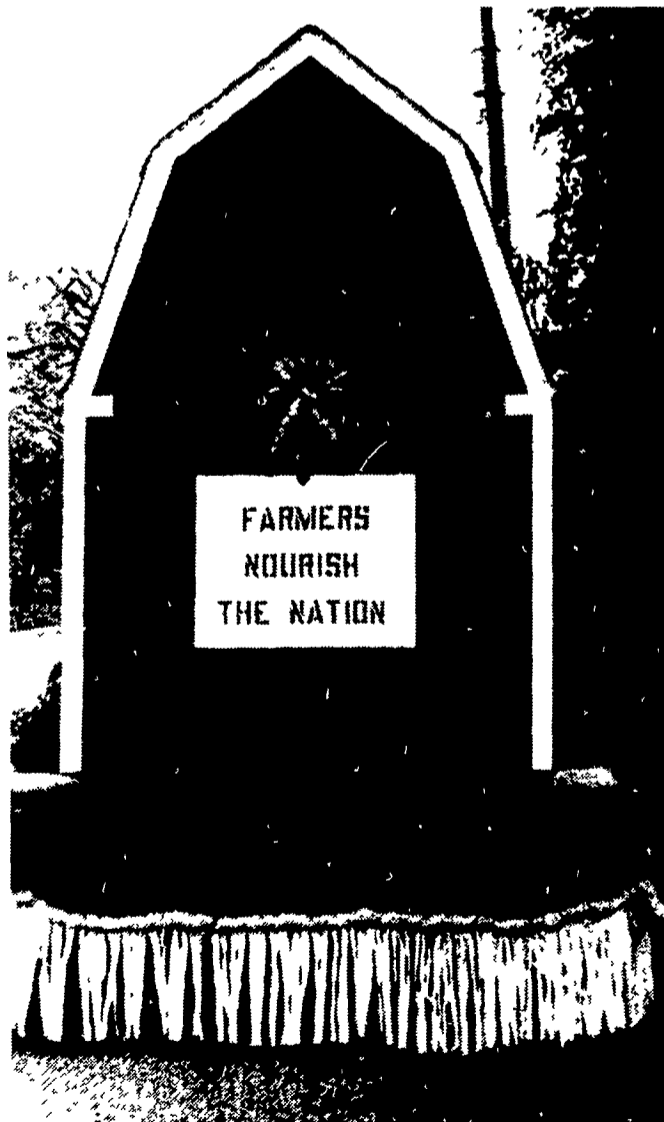
"We tried to include every area of farming," says Janie. Unfortunately, they only had a limited amount of space to work with, so some of the different facets of farming were omitted out of necessity. The float is, nevertheless, highly representative of all types of farming.

According to Jane and Lois, assembling the float the first time was really hectic. A specially sized barn was made for them in a matter of four days, and when it arrived it then had to be welded together and bolted down on the wagon. Before this, however, the grass, which was manufactured astroturf, had to be stapled to the flat

bed. Letters for the association's name had to be cut out and nailed down along the side of the float onto the grass, and white crepe paper which hangs down under the grass had to be cut and fringed. The little operations took a good day's work in themselves, then after that came the assembling of the float which was another eight-hour day.

After the float was assembled, the next part of the project to come was decoration with the various commodities, and after the parade, came the tearing down and storage of the loose pieces of the float. Because the group will be taking the float to several Fairs, the loose parts have to be stored for transport. Then, when

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The Lancaster County Farmers Association Float was entitled "Farmers Nourish the Nation."

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