

# Franklin Countian is Master Farmer

HARRISBURG, Pa. - A Franklin County poultryman, who admits he doesn't like selling but nevertheless markets over 15,000 dozens of eggs each week, has been named a Master Farmer for 1976.

Glenn M. Gayman, 53, of Chambersburg R9, general manager of Hillside Poultry Farm, will receive the coveted award sponsored by the Pennsylvania Farmer magazine, Harrisburg, and the Cooperative Extension Service of The Pennsylvania State University.

Formal award presentations will be made January 11 at a Master Farmer luncheon in Harrisburg. Gayman will be inducted into the Pennsylvania Master Farmers' Association whose membership consists of all former award winners. The program was established in 1927.

Three years ago Gayman had to make a very important decision. Should he process his own eggs for direct marketing or place emphasis on production and nest-run sales?

Hen numbers had climbed over the years to 50,000. Most of the eggs had been marketed wholesale on a nest-run basis. Meanwhile, the Master Farmer's two sons had joined the operation in a three-way partnership. So there were three families to support on the farm's income.

"The decision wasn't an easy one," Gayman notes. "None of us really like the job of selling. But with the family staying on the farm and considering our location, we felt on-farm processing and a retail store was a 'must' for us."

Hillside Poultry Farm is located about a mile from Chambersburg and judging

from the number of houses surrounding the farm, they could be caught in urban sprawl within a few years.

In July 1973, the Gaymans found themselves in an on-farm processing and retail store business with a new, attractive 50 by 80-foot metal building. The front serves as a retail store and eggs are

processed in the back and held in a large cooler.

"The move to farm processing and cartoning wasn't all that different," Gayman indicates. "The machinery handles about 20 cases of eggs per hour. In about five hours the day's production is graded and

cartoned with three persons on the assembly line."

Some 80 per cent of their eggs are sold through Plain and Fancy Egg Ranch in Lancaster County. Another 10 per cent are sold through the farm store and the remaining 10 per cent goes to nearby stores and restaurants. The store outlet, naturally, is a boon to cracked egg sales. "We used to average maybe five cents a dozen for cracks. Now we have to limit sales to three or four dozens per customer," the Master Farmer said.

The Gaymans realized right from the start that egg sales wouldn't justify opening a store on the farm. When the doors opened they offered a wide variety of convenience-type items. But the mainstay, other than eggs, has been luncheon meats, frozen chicken, milk, a variety of baked goods, and more recently, ice cream cones and home-grown beef.

"Egg sales represents about half of the store's dollar volume business," Gayman indicates. "We also sell about 100 broilers and roasters a week. We had no problems getting customers, however, we advertise locally on radio and in newspapers. But the best advertising is a satisfied customer."

Glenn, who is general manager, oversees direct management of the store and makes periodic pickups of store items. His oldest son, Ronald, is bookkeeper as well as production and processing manager. The other son, Clifford, is crops manager and maintenance man for the enterprise.

Each has a one-third interest in the farm operation

under an articles of partnership agreement. The agreement includes provisions in case of disability, long-term illness, or death of a partner.

The Master Farmer's father purchased the original 25-acre home farm in 1923. And chickens were an integral part of the farm operation at the beginning. He worked with his father in partnership after he married


Viola in 1945. In 1956 he bought the farm outright.

The first "big-time" laying house was built in 1959. Another went up in 1963. But by 1968 the trend to cages was evident so he constructed the first 20,000-bird building. And, in 1970 with the purchase of an adjoining 130-acre farm, a second cage house for 20,000 birds was put up.

Current hen capacity is (Continued on Page 108)



Glenn Gayman has mastered the poultry trade.



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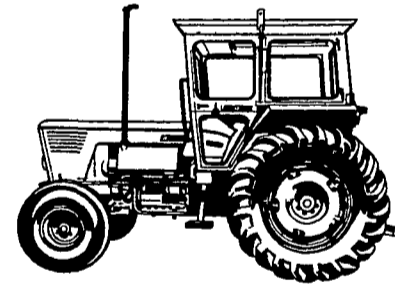
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