

# Farm Show fan is also Hampshire exhibitor

By JUDY MITCHELL  
Berks Co. Reporter  
KUTZTOWN, Pa. - According to Earl Rabenold of Kutztown R2, he and his family had been attending



the Pennsylvania Farm Show for years before they actually got involved in showing at the state event. An avid Farm Show fan, Rabenold says, "well, you just have to get up there and see it" to appreciate what an event it is.

The Rabenolds first began showing livestock at the Harrisburg show in 1958 when their son Richard was

in FFA, and for years after it became an annual family project. The Rabenolds run a dairy and a swine operation, and Rabenold has traditionally shown his Hampshires at Farm Show. He and his wife's sons, Richard and Carl, also showed swine; but the boys and their sisters, Shirley and Carol, all of whom were members of the Berks 4-H Baby Beef Club, showed steer as well.

His daughters, Rabenold explained, only showed steers because in those days there were no girls in FFA and only youth in the FFA were permitted to show swine at Farm Show. But of course the rules have changed now, he added, to permit 4-H members to show swine also.

Although the Rabenold "children" are all grown and married and between them have 10 children of their own, Rabenold is still involved with the Berks 4-H Baby Beef group. In fact, he is presently serving as president of the club's parents' committee and was recently recognized by the organization for 21 years of faithful service to the club.

Although he missed exhibiting at Farm Show the past couple of years due to "breeding problems," he

will be back for the 1977 Show with six of his Hampshires. As president of the Pa. Hampshire Association, Rabenold, who is also president of the Berks-Lehigh Pork Producers, feels it is important to participate in the state show. Although the numbers of swine at the show are still strong, he says, "not all breeds are meeting their quotas" and the Hampshire is one of them. Only 18 Hampshires, he reports, were entered this year against the 40 available slots.

The job of feeding and milking their dairy herd makes it impossible for the Rabenolds to stay with their animals through Farm Show Week, but delivery, grooming and showing them will require at least four trips to Harrisburg. Catherine recalled that when the children were involved in 4-H, "some years they went every day."

Weather conditions as they affect travel are a consideration for most Berks countians attending Farm Show, but particularly, as Rabenold says, "when you have animals there." Although he is hoping for clear weather this year, his son Carl who will be going up to groom the swine on



Earl Rabenold and his son Carl (left) look over summaries of this year's competition in the Hampshire breed (swine) event to be held at the upcoming Pa. Farm Show.

Sunday, suggested he might not mind getting snowed in. The Rabenolds recollect that weather conditions have not always been ideal for Farm Shows in the past. Carl remembers clearly one year,

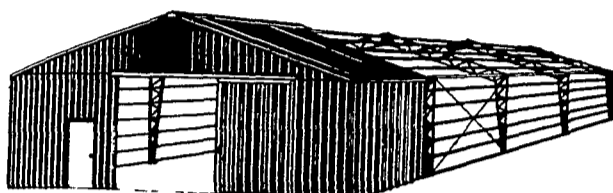
when he was quite young, when the highway near Harrisburg was drifted so high on the westbound lane that the only way to get through to the show was to cross into the eastbound lane. "But that was before the medians were put in," he hastily added. As for Rabenold, the most memorable year weather-wise was the time "we got five miles more (as registered by his car's odometer) from the wheels spinning. It was that slick." The highest award Rabenold has taken at Farm Show to date was a reserve champion. Although he's pleased with the swine he is entering this year, participating seems to be the important thing for the Rabenolds. "You meet a lot of other exhibitors," Catherine explained, "and it's like a whole big family." Her husband agrees recalling a couple from Bedford they made friends with some years ago, and "at Farm Show," he adds, "that's the only time we see them."

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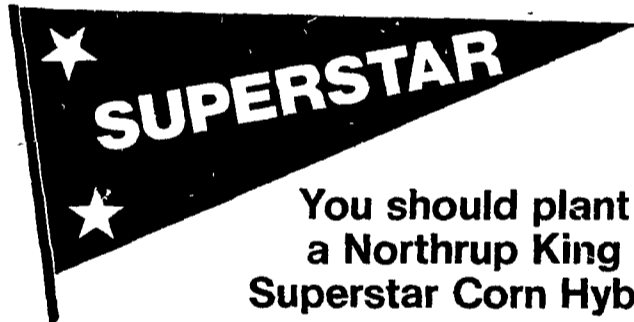
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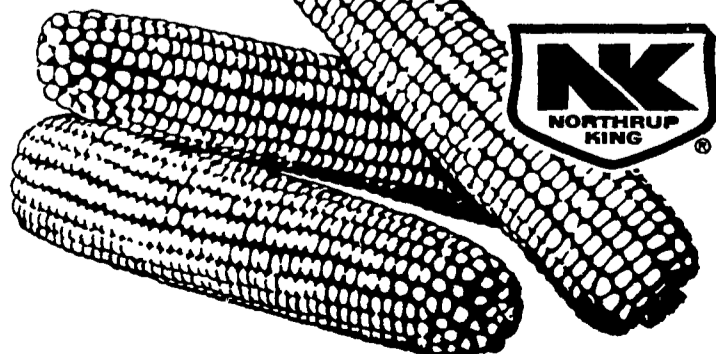
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