

Young Farmers hear Shelhamer

By DIETER KRIEG

ELIZABETHTOWN, Pa. — The Elizabethtown Young Farmers voted Brian Risser as their outstanding member during the annual banquet held here last Friday night which featured Agriculture Secretary Kent Shelhamer as guest speaker.

The evening ceremonies were highlighted by a number of presentations, including a handsome appreciation plaque for Secretary Shelhamer who was obviously surprised by the gesture. Program chairman Ken Myer presented the gift.

When the Agriculture Secretary rose to address the Young Farmers, his audience stood to give him a rousing ovation. Speaking on several issues, Shelhamer's main message was that farming has a good future and that he will be working towards that end.

No matter which branch of agriculture the farmer is in, Shelhamer said, "the bottom line is really only how you market your time." Explaining the statement, the Secretary said it was still possible today to make a good living on 50, 200, or 500 acres. "The difference is how you market your time," he stated. It was a remark which the E-Town Outstanding Young Farmer, Brian Risser, found quick agreement with. Interviewed by Lancaster Farming after the formal program, Risser said:

"The only kind of farmer who is going to survive is the one who really watches his operation. Management is the key. A fellow doesn't have to get big just for the sake of getting big." More on Risser's thoughts and farming operation appear in a separate story elsewhere in this edition.

The Agriculture Secretary is looking forward to a

variety of programs during his reign at the Department. "We've got to have a better marketing program," he said, adding that he's hopeful of having new Farm Show facilities where Pennsylvania farmers can "show off" their products. "All too often we've been the victim of a depressed market," Shelhamer remarked.

Another project Shelhamer would like to see is a computerized network of state agriculture departments all across the country. He noted that the Commonwealth has had a computerized legislative system since 1962 and that such electronic resources could be used to have quick knowledge of farm situations around the country.

Continuing his talk on how agriculture can be improved, Shelhamer emphasized the importance of research and finding new innovative ways to increase production. He encouraged farmers to be flexible in their operations and to be very alert to marketing conditions.

Telling his audience "I am a politician" at the very beginning of his speech, Shelhamer included political personalities among his "bright outlook" for agriculture. Among them were President Jimmy Carter, USDA Secretary Robert Bergland, and Vice President Walter Mondale - all of whom have close ties to rural America. On a broader perspective, Shelhamer gave some details on the internal workings of his Department.

"We have 700 employees in the Department of Agriculture and seven districts," the Secretary began, "our budget is about three-tenth of one per cent of the state budget - so you needn't feel we are overly lavish with your funds."

Expressing concern over the recent energy crisis, Shelhamer noted that agriculture uses 15 per cent of the total energy output - more energy than the U.S. imported during all of 1974. "The use of energy on the farm has doubled since 1940," the Secretary said.

"I believe these problems can be solved," Shelhamer concluded. "My door is open to you."

FARMERS HONORED

Aside from Risser, nine others were cited for having done outstanding work with their farming operations last year.

Taking home three plaques was Robert Kauffman, Elizabethtown area dairyman who has become well known for his Holstein herd. Registering a 616 pound butterfat average on his cows, Kauffman captured first place in that contest. Another first came in the silage contest and a second-place award was given to him for his shelled corn harvest - 165.6 bushels per acre.

Joe Wivell, president of the E-town Young Farmers, won the shelled corn contest with 167.4 bushels per acre. In third place was Dale Hiestand with 142.5 bushels. Kauffman's leading performance in the silage contest was followed by Irwin Engle and Clair Hoover. Kauffman's winning tonnage per acre was registered at 23.3 tons.

In the ear corn contest, it was Glenn Schultz in first place with 160.1 bushels per acre, followed by Clair Oberholtzer with 145.7 bushels and Roy Bixler with 142.5.

Ken Myer was cited for having had the high producing cow in the area's DHIA program last year. She was C. Whycroft Supreme-Red whose record stood at 23,557 pounds of milk, with a 3.9 per cent test and 925 pounds of butterfat at the end of 305 days. With 357 days to her credit, the record stood at 26,131M, 4.0 per cent, 1046F. She was six years and ten months of age at the start of the lactation.



Recognized for high achievements at the Elizabethtown Young Farmer banquet last week were, (clockwise, starting from lower left) Ken Myer, high individual dairy cow; Joe Wivell,

top yield for shelled corn; Robert Kauffman, high dairy herd and first with silage corn; and Glenn Schultz, high in ear corn.



Kent Shelhamer, left, receives a plaque of appreciation from Ken Myer, representing the Elizabethtown Young Farmers. Myer recalled that when he stopped at the Pennsylvania Department of

Agriculture Building earlier this year to invite Shelhamer to the Elizabethtown banquet, the Secretary spoke with him for about a half an hour even though "he didn't know me from Adam."

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