'Farmer's Daughter' produce stand:

Megan Shaub created a 4-H success story

By JOYCE BUPP York Co. Reporter

SHREWSBURY, Pa. - "It started six years ago with a five-step stand, a chair, and a little girl sitting by the side of the road."

And thus begins one of York County's most suc-17, and the daughter of Mr.

and Mrs. Robert Shaub, 350 West Railroad Avenue, Shrewsbury. She composed the opening quote as the introduction to her own 4-H story

While the road is still there, what's along the side has changed considerably. cessful 4-H stories. The No longer a little girl, Megan author is Megan Shaub, age is preparing for her senior year at Susquehannock High

School and looking ahead to college selections.

The five-step selling stand has matured as well. It developed when a brooder house was remodeled and sales were moved into its more spacious capacity. Increasing business demanded cooling and storage, which led to the purchase of a eight-door

refrigeration unit. Finally, the mushrooming business overflowed into another expansion, the open air sales area.

This youthful story of success actually began more than six years ago, when Robert Shaub planted canning factory string beans in a field near the family home. As an enterprizing

picked some of those beans and began selling them along the road in front of her house.

"I sold them for 25 cents a pound 10 years ago - and I still charge the same amount per pound," Megan notes, commenting on the costprice squeeze faced by agricultural producers.

Business branched out the following year, when the family decided to include a one-acre patch of sweet corn for the string bean customers. But all the plants in the plot matured at the same time, sending the entire family peddling ears of corn throughout the streets of nearby towns. For the third year sales, sweet corn was spaced for intermittent harvests.

By this time, regular buyers at the growing business began requesting more variety. Megan's involvement in 4-H gardening grew, the acreage devoted to the produce stand grew, and the Shaub's support of the project as a family endeavor grew. "The Farmer's Daughter" fresh produce stand was off and running.

"Business each year has about doubled," according to Megan's records. Her 4-H garden now covers about a full acre. From the family's 350 acres of land, 25 have been set aside to raise continuous supplies for the always-busy stand.

"Sweet corn is still our best seller," emphasizes Megan, as she cuts and arranges it for her customers. "Most people will eat the yellow varieties until the white is ready, and then switch. It averages out to about a 50-50 demand."

Opening on July 4, the business will serve area residents through November. It's a full time venture,

seven-year-old, Megan requiring someone there a full 11 hours daily.

"I'm here every day, except when I go away on 4-H trips," Megan relates. "They're my vacations."

Through the sales business, this pretty darkhaired young lady has become somewhat of an expert on fresh fruits and vegetables. She grows and sells cantaloupes, peppers, squash, tomatoes, corn, lima and string beans, cucumbers, eggplant, cabbage, and red beets for Summer customers.

"About Labor Day, people are looking ahead to Fall, and sort of losing interest in garden vegetables," she notes. "But then, in a month they begin coming back and asking for fresh sweet corn again."

And, although fresh corn is gone by then, something else is ready to take its place. Gourds, Indian corn, and pumpkins are great sellers the Shuab's have found. Chilly Fall evenings bring Halloween, Thanksgiving, and pumpkin pie planners flocking to Megan's cash register.

But even the best planned garden cannot always meet buyer demands, especially when the weather doesn't cooperate, as it didn't this Summer. So, some weeks find Megan and her father making a trip during the early hours of a morning to the Baltimore Wholesale Produce Market, where they can purchase needed additions to available homegrown offerings. Regular purchases include peaches, potatoes, and onions. Baskets of other commodities are bought as gaps develop in the harvesting of the Shaub's acreage.

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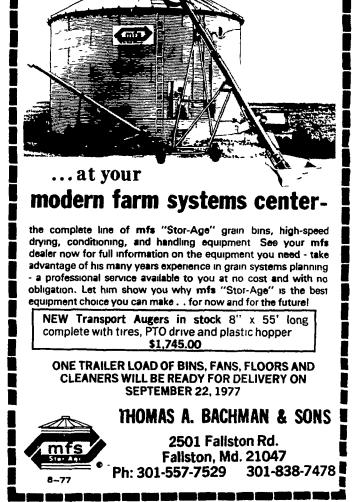
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