

# 4-H offers a variety of benefits to 4-H'ers

By JOANNE SPAHR

LEBANON - Relaxing in his parents' suburban home outside of Lebanon, Ken Hoke, 19, the son of Mrs and Mrs Dennis Hoke, 1030 E. Maple Street, Lebanon, stopped to ponder the question for a second and then replied, "It's really hard for me to pinpoint the greatest benefit that I've gotten from 4-H - it's a combination of things, really."

Ken, who is a sophomore at Penn State, Berks Campus, majoring in geography, is in his last year of 4-H and has been a well known face on the 4-H scene for years.

In his 10 years of clubwork in which he has taken mostly gardening and horticulture projects, he has been the president of both the Nor-solebco 4-H club and the Lebanon County Teen Council, as well as holding other leadership responsibilities in these organizations.

Extending his involvement in 4-H, he also participated in state 4-H days at Penn State for five years, has taken part in the 4-H leadership Congress for three years, and participated in the 4-H citizenship shortcourse in 1976.

"4-H teaches you to achieve and strive for a goal as much as you can. It also helps you to make new friends and it broadens your world through the various trips you can make," he remarked, reflecting about the many benefits derived from the organization.

Continuing his thought, he noted, "I would say that almost every skill, in general, that you will ever use is developed or broadened in 4-H."

In particular, Ken was introduced to financial responsibilities such as bookkeeping at the tender age of nine as a result of 4-H.

"My first year I took



Ken Hoke, a 4-H'er from Lebanon County who is in his last year of 4-H, checks his three acres of strawberry plants which were marketed via "pick-your-own" this year

strawberry and vegetable projects," he said. "That meant that I had to keep track of supplies and profits. And, I know I wouldn't have learned to do that at the age of nine if it hadn't been for 4-H."

Ken also figures that his public speaking skills were heightened through clubwork.

"The demonstrations really helped me," he said. "I did them for five or six years when I first started in 4-H, and by the time I was 15 or 16 I was over the fear of getting up in front of the club."

For the most part, Ken did demonstrations on the county level, but he did have one crack at district competition.

The judging teams on

well as an individual effort. They also give incentive to learn more about the general processes of horticulture as well as teach the 4-H'ers about plants with which they might otherwise never have had contact.

Of course, there are always fringe benefits to the

judging teams, according to Ken. For instance, the individuals that take part in the teams come away with a better idea of what a judge will look for at the county fairs. And, even though there is much competition midst the 4-H'ers at state days, it doesn't hamper the

development of good friendships.

"I've found, for the most part, that at 4-H days, people aren't just out for themselves," remarks Ken. They also come to see their friends

(Continued on Page 127)

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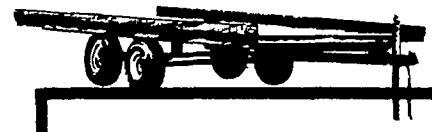


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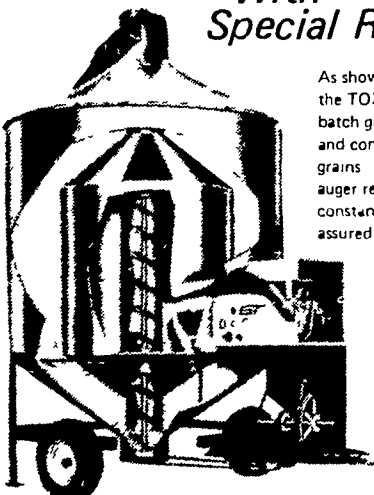
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