

# Lancaster Farming

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## Brothers win district titles at beef show

By JOANNE SPAHR

LANCASTER - Chester County 4-H'ers swept competition at the southeastern Pennsylvania beef show on Tuesday at the Lancaster Stock Yards thanks to the talents of two brothers - Ed and David Wylie of Octoraro Farm, Nottingham R2.

Sixteen-year-old Ed showed his 1125 pound Montana-bred smokey colored Simmental-Angus cross to the championship of the show while his 18-year-old brother Dave took the reserve title. Dave's steer weighed in at 1265 pounds, as the same cross as his brother's, and was bred by Linden Farm, Grangeville, N.Y. The steers had been penmates while the boys were raising them.

For both brothers, the championship titles were repeat performances of their district showing years. Five years ago Ed garnered the grand championship title and in the past Dave has been in the reserve spot. Two other brothers, Bill and Jim, complete the list of Wylie winners at the district show with Jim earning the top title in 1967 and Bill in 1974. They are the sons of Mr. and Mrs. Samuel J. Wylie.

In Tuesday's tri-county competition judges Henry Gruber, chief of livestock procurement for Arbogast and Bastian, Inc., Allentown, and Randall Updike from the Virginia Department of Agriculture, chose Ed's lightweight champion over the heavyweight champ primarily because of the finish over the loin.

"The champion was a real top calf - modern and with good finish - with more thickness to the loin," stated Gruber. "It may hang up a more desirable carcass than the reserve."

This district placing was just the reverse of the Chester County show the day before where Dave had taken the championship and Ed the reserve.

The Wylie's made it a clean sweep of the district show when Dave captured the champion showman award with Eileen Fairbairn, another Chester County farm from West Chester, taking the reserve berth in this competition.

Rounding out the list of the champions garnered by the Wylie family was the reserve heavyweight champion, a purebred Angus bred at Octoraro Farm, and shown by Linda Martin, of



Now that the holiday season is upon us, many of these gobblers will end up gracing tables in homes over the Christmas and New Years holidays.

## 61 families earn Century Farm honors

By JOANNE SPAHR

WEST CHESTER - Today the John and Harlan Speakman farm near Chatham in Chester County consists of 63 acres supporting a modern dairy operation and two mushroom houses rented out to a grower. However, there was a time when it was more than twice its size and supported only a simple log house beside a clear, fresh stream. That was 265 years ago when the virgin property was deeded from William Penn to the first Speakman family member to come to America -- Thomas Speakman.

Seven generations have owned the farm since the time of Thomas Speakman and last Monday evening, the seventh generation--John and Harlan--were honored along with 60 other Chester County Century Farms at the 19th annual Farm-City dinner sponsored by the Kiwanis Club of West Chester and the Chamber of Commerce of Greater West Chester.

A "Century Farm" is one which has been owned by the same family for a continuous period of 100 years or more, and must be at least 10 acres in size or gross over \$1000 a year in farm income.

According to records, the Speakman farm may well be the oldest Century Farm in the county.

### Speakman History

Thomas Speakman came to the London Grove area of Chester county in 1712 from England, and about a year later, married a local girl Ann Harry. The 200-acre tract near Chatham which eventually became the Speakman home was surveyed in 1718 but, probably due to lack of money, Speakman did not take ownership until 1722.

According to tradition, Speakman built his first house near a stream a good distance from where later farm buildings and a second house were erected. Shortly before his death in 1732, a log house was built and remained the Speakman residence into this century.

Today, the log house is gone, but the present farmhouse stands on the same site. According to John Speakman, the dairy operation consists of 80 to 90 head of milking cows with about as many young stock. Run by John's son Donald, the farm may some day be passed to the eighth generation of Speakmans.

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## Holidays are big business for Wegman turkey operation

By LAUREL SCHAEFFER

JACKSONWALD - For most farm people, the first fallen leaves and cool crisp breezes of Autumn signify the beginning of the busy harvest season which lies ahead. And, for people everywhere, these events are reminders of the oncoming holidays, a time to

visit with friends and family, and to indulge in those large specially planned meals which can't be compared to any other time of year.

However, for people such as Ronald and William Wegman of Reading R7, preparing for the harvesting and the holidays is their business, which they have

already begun during the second week of August. It is during this week that their busy season really starts, because at that time they begin operating their turkey dressing plant.

The Wegmans raise 50,000 turkeys a year and operate a plant where they kill, dress, cut-up, or bone up to 100,000

turkeys. An estimated 25 per cent of these are sold for Thanksgiving alone. What the Wegmans don't grow themselves are bought from other local growers.

The plant, which processes between 2000 and 3000 turkeys a day is manned by approximately 30 part time (Continued on Page 25)

## New outbreak of poultry disease reported in Lancaster County

By KENDACE BORRY

HARRISBURG - A new outbreak of the poultry disease laryngotracheitis has been reported in Eastern Lancaster County with three cases diagnosed in the past ten days, according to Dr. E. T. Mallinson, chief of the Avian Health Division, Pa. Dept. of Agriculture. This infection, which has a mortality rate among birds averaging between five and 20 per cent, but as high as 70 per cent in some cases, has the potential to spread to other flocks, and more cases are expected to be found now that an investigation has been started.

Symptoms of laryngotracheitis, which is an acute respiratory in-

sneezing and coughing, gurgling sounds, chickens stretching their necks often, and sometimes blood being coughed. It appears to be a

bad cold that comes on suddenly. The disease may start in a mild form, and then get worse.

The disease is not con-

tagious to humans or other animals, but can be spread through contamination and contact with carrier healthy birds that have recovered from infection. Preventive steps to stop this should be followed.

Poultrymen should always report outbreaks of the respiratory illness, taking the birds to a laboratory at the first sign of illness. Visitors should be kept out of buildings, as people can carry the disease on their clothes from place to place. Ninety per cent of the time, Dr. Mallinson estimates, the disease is spread by people.

Poultrymen should insist that pullets are hauled in cleaned and disinfected crates and trucks. These too (Continued on Page 26)

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