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Lancaster County retains her position of pride

Latest farm census unveiled

By DIETER KRIEG

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- Agriculture in Pennsylvania -- particularly Lancaster County -- is as aggressive and progressive as ever, but some noteworthy changes have taken place, according to the most recent (1974) Census of Agriculture. Lancaster County, for example, continues to be the number one non-irrigated agricultural county in the United States, but its overall agricultural importance has dropped from a previous 12th position to 18th.

Illustrating the Lancaster County ag scene in more detail, the 1974 Census of Agriculture reveals that the Garden Spot ranks 25th in the number of hogs and pigs sold. That represents a dramatic jump from a 65th place in the 1969 Census.

In dairy product sales, Lancaster County previously stood second in the nation; now it's fifth. But despite this set-back, the Garden Spot

still has more cows within its borders than any county outside of California.

Meanwhile, tobacco production in the Garden Spot dropped from fifth place to 20th, and feeder pig sales jumped a notch to take a commanding third place, nationally. Livestock and poultry segments of agriculture each moved up a notch in the national standings. The Garden Spot's industry now ranks fourth in the country, while livestock and poultry combined rate eighth. The value of cattle and calves alone gives the County a 39th place. While that may not be impressively high on first glance, it is significant when one realizes that there are some 3000 counties in the United States and out of all of them, Lancaster County is the only one east of Illinois that's mentioned in the 1974 Census.

Numerous other Pennsylvania counties were mentioned as well, although no other Keystone State county made the national ratings as often as Lancaster County.

Chester County, for example, rates first in the nation with its sales of horticultural and greenhouse products. According to the 1974 Census, Chester County cashed in on more than \$48 million worth of plants. That's up from a value of \$26 million recorded in the previous Ag Census, taken in 1969. Berks County ranks 21st on the national horticulture list, and Lancaster County takes the 79th position.

In U.S. apple production, Adams County ranks a proud fifth, while its place in total acreage devoted to orchards is 45th, according to the 1974 Ag Census.

Just now becoming available to the public, information for the 1974 Census of Agriculture was compiled nearly four years ago by the U.S. Department of Commerce. The Bureau of the Census is charged with specific dealings in the matter.

More revealing statistics of the voluminous document follow:

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New crop insurance program introduced

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- Secretary of Agriculture Bob Bergland on Wednesday proposed a comprehensive, nationwide all-risk crop insurance reform bill which he said would provide better protection for farmers than present disaster programs at no additional cost to the government.

The proposed Farm Production Protection Act would consolidate four present disaster assistance programs into one comprehensive, share-the-cost program to insure crops against natural disasters

and some other uncontrollable risks. Coverage would be provided the first year for 18 major crops which account for 89 per cent of all cropland acreage, with the potential for expansion over 10 years to cover all farm products, including livestock.

"Our present system of providing disaster assistance to farmers must be improved," Secretary Bergland said. "The present programs overlap, with some producers eligible for

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Farm editors sample Bergland's opinions

By DIETER KRIEG
WASHINGTON, D.C. -- Secretary of Agriculture Robert Bergland isn't "terribly worried" about the milk surplus, doesn't believe that the Capper-Volstead Act will be amended by Congress, has hopes of offering farmers a more meaningful crop insurance program, and isn't convinced that the American Agriculture movement will take a lasting hold.

Speaking Monday evening to an assembly of farm editors from all across the country, Bergland touched

on a variety of issues, telling reporters that he'd field questions on any program.

But before the question and answer session began, Bergland announced an all-county, all-crop insurance program which is now receiving consideration in Congress. Details on that announcement are printed in the story beginning directly above this one. His statements on the Capper-Volstead Act and Congress' current investigation of farmer cooperatives are in a separate article, inside.

Secretary Bergland isn't
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Lancaster Farming photo by Dieter Krieg

Blossoms adorn the orchards in Lancaster Farming's coverage area.

Fruit blossoming nicely on schedule

By JOANNE SPAHR
LITITZ - From the looks of things the fruit crop in Lancaster Farming's coverage area is coming along right on schedule with a bright promise of a bountiful season, barring unforeseen problems.

Although about 10 days to two weeks behind the extraordinarily early '76 and '77 seasons, this year's crop is developing at a normal rate, and most orchardists predict good crops for the coming season.

Phillip Pitzer, Aspers R1, the president of the Adams County Fruit Growers

Association, is optimistic about the May 7 Apple Blossom Festival to be held at the South Mountain Fairgrounds near Biglerville.

"We should have plenty of apple blossoms for everybody to enjoy," he states, adding that as of this weekend (April 29) the sweet cherries and early plums are in full bloom with some peaches and tart cherries starting to blossom. With warm weather, Pitzer predicts that the peaches and tart cherries should be in good bloom by Monday.

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Grading, labeling concerns Foreman

By JOANNE SPAHR
WASHINGTON -- Problems with meat grading and proper labeling were two concerns stressed by Carol Tucker Foreman, United States assistant secretary of agriculture, at a recent news conference with farm editors, here.

"We have a problem out there, folks, in meat grading," she told the group. In California several years ago 17 meat packing companies were indicated for bribing meat graders, and over the last several years administrative action has been taken in Nebraska,

Iowa, and South Dakota for intentionally mislabeling graded meat.

"If we want the public to use meat grades," noted Mrs. Foreman, "if we want buyers and producers to use meat grades, then they've got to know that the system works effectively, or you might as well have a meat grading system done by the industry instead of the government."

The assistant secretary of agriculture pointed out, however, that the problem is being tackled in three ways. First of all, additional

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