

Cherries

(Continued from Page 1) favorable, the end product will be well worth the wait.

"The quality looks very good, so far," says Ben Lapp, Christiana, who has about three acres of cherries that he markets via pick-your-own. "They should get pretty big."

Other orchardists in Lancaster, York, and Adams Counties back up Lapp's statement saying, on the average, the crop looks very good, and barring hail or rainy weather close to

picking time, the fruit should be excellent.

"It's really too early to tell for certain," points out a representative from Blevins Fruit Farm, Stewartstown, York County.

Blevins has a full crop of sour cherries and about a 75 per cent crop of sweet cherries. On the average, the turnout for Blevins' crop is higher than for other orchards in Lancaster Farming's coverage area.

Most estimates from growers contacted show that

the cherry crop for this year is anywhere from 50 to 75 per cent full.

"We have 65 to 70 per cent of a crop because around May 1 we had a hard frost," says P. Joseph Raab, owner of Raab Fruit Farms, Dallastown, York County. Raab has about 12 acres of cherries and, due to the frost, he lost the crop in his lower orchard. However, the trees on the higher elevations made it through the frost unscathed. Raab operates almost strictly on a pick-your-own basis.

Ben Lapp also reports that he has only 50 to 60 per cent of his crop. Rather than the frost or the rain, Lapp believes that Winter damage is to blame for his less-than-full crop.

Says Richard Haas, owner of Cherry Hill Orchards, New Danville Pike Lancaster, "This year's crop looks the same as last year's. It's not a bumper crop, but it's a good crop." He anticipates opening his orchard on the weekend of the 24th through the 26th.

Carlton Groff, of Groff's Orchard, in Kirkwood, also reports that his crop is shaping up like last year's. His sour cherries are exceptionally good.

Clair E. Winand, farm supervisor for the Musselman Division of Pet Inc., says that, on the whole, Adams County has 1/2 to 2/3 of its crop.

"I get around to pretty many growers," notes

Winand, "and I'd say we have 50 to 60 per cent of our crop. That's about 10 per cent better than last year."

Winand, who manages 235 acres of cherries for Musselman's, also noted that the fruit on the lowlands are pretty well frozen out.

Phillip Pitzer, the president of the Adams County Fruit Growers Association, on the other hand, is highly enthusiastic about his crop.

"My crop is much, much better than last year," he remarks. "It's at least double, or maybe three times, as good as last year." In some cases, Adams County orchardists only had a 20 per cent turn out in 1977 due to frosts.

"We are finding that this crop is very, very spotty, though," he adds.

There is also an extra problem this year. Unlike other years, this Spring's crop is scattered.

"Some of the trees have big clusters, others don't," remarked Richard Haas.

"It's not going to be good for ladies to pick this year," notes Ben Lapp, thinking of his customers. "The people will have to climb higher for cherries. There will be some you can pick right off the tree, but people will need ladders more this season."

Mac Lott, from Bonnie Brae Fruit Farms, Gardeners, says that his crop of cherries is not consistent, either.

"It's unusual," he notes, although he does point out, also, that the quality so far looks pretty good.

Although it is really too early to set prices and many orchardists refuse to estimate, the general feeling is that the prices will have to be as good as last year, and maybe even higher.

"The warehouses are pretty well sold out," notes Winand, "and we're coming through with a half crop, so you can figure the prices will be good."

At this point the crop still

has some important weeks to get through before picking time.

"This rain we're getting now is welcome," notes Phillip Pitzer, the president of the Adams County Fruit Growers Association, "We need it for a boost. But, when they stop growing, we need some dry weather for them to sweeten up."

It will only be a few more weeks until the results are known.

Craft Days set June 17 and 18

LANCASTER — The 23rd annual Craft Days festival will be held at the Pennsylvania Farm Museum, Landis Valley, on June 17 and 18. The festival will feature over 40 live demonstrations of crafts and skills practiced in early rural Pennsylvania. Visitors will be given an insight into the lives of farming families in the 18th and 19th century.

Demonstrations to be viewed include woodwork, whittling, wood-turning, cabinet making, metal working, tinsmithing, blacksmithing, quilting, cross stitch embroidery, rug

hooking, scherenschnitte, fractur, egg scratching, and other skills including gunsmithing, theorem painting, open hearth cooking, stone carving, chair caning, lace making, and basket making.

Special activities include operation of a Conestoga Wagon drawn by six oxen, a shooting exhibition with flintlock Pa. long rifles, operation of two late 19th century steam tractors, and performances of traditional folk music.

Craft day activities are scheduled from noon to 5 p.m. on both days.

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