

Clair Martin American Farmer Degree

By DIETER KRIEG

BLUE BALL — E. Clair Martin 21, is in his last year of membership in the Future Farmers of America. And as he steps out, he will take with him the highest degree bestowed by that organization. That award - The American Farmer Degree - is given to only a select few members. One of the prerequisites is that candidates must have earned the highest state award, which is given to only 2.5 per cent of any state's membership. Martin earned his state award - The Keystone Degree - in 1975.

The son of Mr. and Mrs. Elmer Martin, New Holland Pa., the American Farmer Degree recipient says he enrolled in the vocational agriculture program at Garden Spot High School because he grew up around agriculture and enjoyed it.

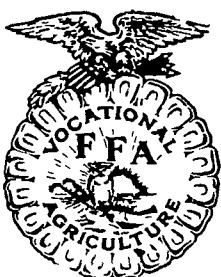
He did not actually grow up on a farm, however. The closest he came to that was several years of work on area farms, including dairy, steer, and hog operations.

For the past 4½ years Martin has been employed as a meat cutter by Yoder's Meats, Inc. of East Earl. According to Martin, it is primarily through his experiences with the butchering firm that he realized his goal of earning the coveted American Farmer Degree. While employed by Yoder's Meats, his place of work is the meat department at the Shady Maple Farm Market, east of Blue Ball.

Other factors which figured into the selection were his church and community activities, FFA activities and project work. He is a member of the Welsh Mountain Mennonite Church, was an officer on the

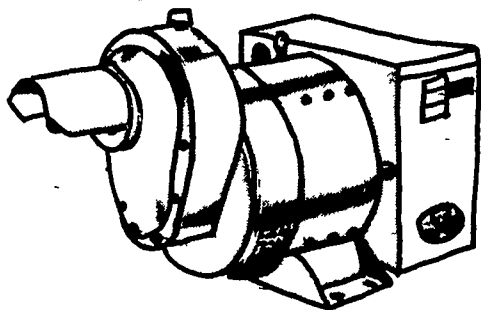
Grassland Chapter's parliamentary procedures team which took first place in state competition, and has traveled to Kansas City, Mo. and Springfield, Mass. to represent his Chapter. The young man will make his second trip to Kansas City on Tuesday to receive his American Farmer Degree.

"FFA has meant a lot to me," Martin said while reflecting on his years of membership which are now coming to a close. "It has taught me leadership and public speaking skills as well as the basics of farming which I couldn't have gotten anywhere else."



Clair Martin, a meat cutter for a Lancaster County butchering firm, is one of 22 Pennsylvania FFA members who will receive the American Farmer Degree in Kansas City next week.

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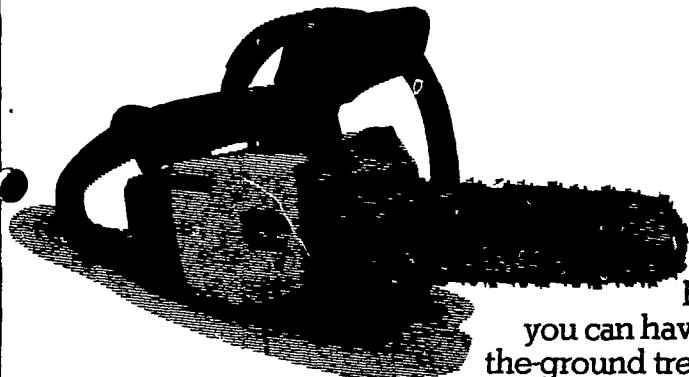
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