

# Roadside marketing gaining in popularity

**By KENDACE BORRY  
GETTYSBURG** — Direct-to-consumer marketing is increasing, according to Harold Hoecker, College Park, Md. program coordinator of the Maryland-Pennsylvania Roadside Marketing Conference which was held in Gettysburg this

week. He claims that people are more interested today in quality and fresh produce.

"The farmer cuts out the middleman," he explained. "And he receives a higher return for his products."

As if backing his words, 350 people attended the 12th annual conference this year, with about 50 to 75 of them

being milk jugglers from the Pennsylvania area and the remainder of the group concerned with roadside marketing or pick-your-own enterprises.

More farmers are getting involved in the roadside marketing field, Hoecker reasoned, and most of the successful operations today are family operations.

"Roadside marketing is highly successful for medium and small-sized farmers," he continued. "It's a very good way for them to market their product."

But, he added there were several problems concerning those who have roadside markets, and many of these were covered at the conference.

"Advertising and promotion is a big item," he

noted. "We need more guidance and need to do more work in advertising and promoting the product. Farmers need to know how to get the most for their money in advertising. They need to know how to set up attractive displays and how to merchandise to their best advantage."

"They need to know ways of getting free advertising from newspapers, television, and radio," he continued. "And they need an advertising budget. If they have their advertising program laid out well in advance of the season, they will be well prepared."

He also told that farmers need to maintain and improve their product constantly. And their personnel at their roadside stands need to be trained to give effective and courteous service, if the business is to be successful.

"Once a person starts a roadside market, they usually keep it," he commented. "They may change the operation to or from a 'pick-your-own' but less than two per cent will drop out."

He thought that most markets in Maryland were seasonal, but more of the year round variety were found in Pennsylvania.

Throughout the three days, programs and exhibits were offered to give those who attended an opportunity to see new products, learn new ideas, and exchange views with other participants.

Program coordinators for the program, in its sixth year at Gettysburg, included Charles Dull, Camp Hill; Harold H. Hoecker, College Park, Md.; J. Bernie Reagan, Harrisburg; James Toothman, University Park; and Laurence Yager, Gettysburg.

## Crop and Soils Day to be Feb. 20

**LANCASTER** — The annual Lancaster County Crops and Soils Day will be held on February 20 at the Farm and Home Center, from 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.

The program will include information relating to crop production for the year 1979.

Included in the day's agenda will be such topics as County crops and what's ahead for 1979; farm machinery costs, a broad approach to soil fertility needs; saving energy in using machines; trends involving tillage equipment use; how herbicides can be applied for better weed control; and understanding

herbicide performance in fields.

Agri-business companies will have exhibits and displays of their farm products used in growing crops.

Lunch will be available with half of the lunch cost courtesy of the National Central Bank. There will also be early morning coffee and donuts courtesy of Farm Credit, Lancaster.

The program is an educational meeting by the Penn State Cooperative Extension Service of Lancaster County for farmers and those working with and serving farmers.

## Chapter Farmers initiated

**ELVERSON** - Recently 22 members of the Twin Valley FFA Chapter were raised to the degree of Chapter Farmer. These members included: Eric Wright, Jeff Wolfe, Mike Beam, Brian Dormer, Tim Stoltzfus, Keith McVaugh, Bill Quillen, Steve Stoltzfus, Steve Kearns, Glen Hagans, Kim Noyes, Mike Williams, Sue Ford, Martin Miller, Lori Brynan, Ed Max, Bret Strough, Brian Snyder, Don Myers, Dave Deck, and Roger Stoltzfus.


The Chapter Farmer Degree is awarded to those FFA members who have received the Greenhand Degree, have successfully completed one year of vocational agriculture, have participated in at least three major FFA activities, have earned at least \$50 from their projects, have lead a group discussion for at least 15 minutes, have demonstrated at least five parliamentary abilities, and have a satisfactory scholarship record.

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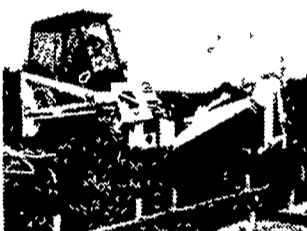
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