



Last year's Yorkshire champion was exhibited by Craig Miller, Spring Grove RI.

Farm Show weather: frigid fact or fiction

HARRISBURG — There's an old Pennsylvania proverb that says Farm Show Week and bad weather go together. This idea has gained such acceptance that any type of "bad" weather in the Harrisburg area has residents talking about "Farm Show Weather."

Every year Farm Show officials keep their fingers crossed weatherwise. They look at weather reports of Farm Show Weeks beginning with the first Farm Show in 1917.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Office in Harrisburg provides the records which reveal that the average Farm Show over the 64-year period has experienced only two days of inclement weather.

State Agriculture Secretary Penrose Hallowell, chairman of the State Farm Show Commission, notes that there have been 36 Farm Show Weeks with less than one inch of snow, and 19 show weeks with no snow at all.

"The nice thing about the Farm Show is that no amount of bad weather can dampen the enthusiasm of the hundreds of thousands of visitors who come to Harrisburg every January," according to Hugh Coffman, Farm Show Director. "From Farm Family Day on Sunday, January 6 through the sale of the Champion 4-H Baby Beef, our show generates enthusiasm for all."

Five shows have had perfect weather, according to NOAA records. The four-day shows in 1921 and 1922, the five day shows in 1934, 1953 and 1973 all shared this Farm Show record.

The 1973 show broke all existing attendance records as more than 730,000 visitors flocked to Harrisburg in crisp, clear winter weather. "The biggest snowfalls in Farm Show history," Hallowell said, "came in 1964 with 18 inches of snow on the ground, in 1918 with 16 inches and in 1970, when a Sunday night snowfall put 14 inches on the ground. The

1964 snow, 14 inches, was far and away the worst in Farm Show history."

Zero degree weather struck only two Farm Shows, with six below recorded in 1936 and two below zero in 1957. The high temperature for a Farm Show was hit in 1972 when the thermometer struck 66 degrees.

Hallowell said while chances are against a perfect weather week, four out of the past ten Farm Shows have had only one day of bad weather and better than one-half have had only two days of inclement weather.

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Michael Miller, Dauphin County, ties up the top two honors in last year's Junior competition during the Holstein Show, showing the champion and reserve grand champion.

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