

Delta to salute agriculture during centennial celebration

BY JOYCE BUPP
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A quite country town, you'll find Delta on the extreme southeast corner of the York County map, richly steeped in Welsh heritage and ancestry. In earlier

years, Delta thrived on the fruits of Slate Ridge, towering above the community strung along its valley. Out of the quarries on the Ridge came a rare green slate, prized around the world as the unusual and

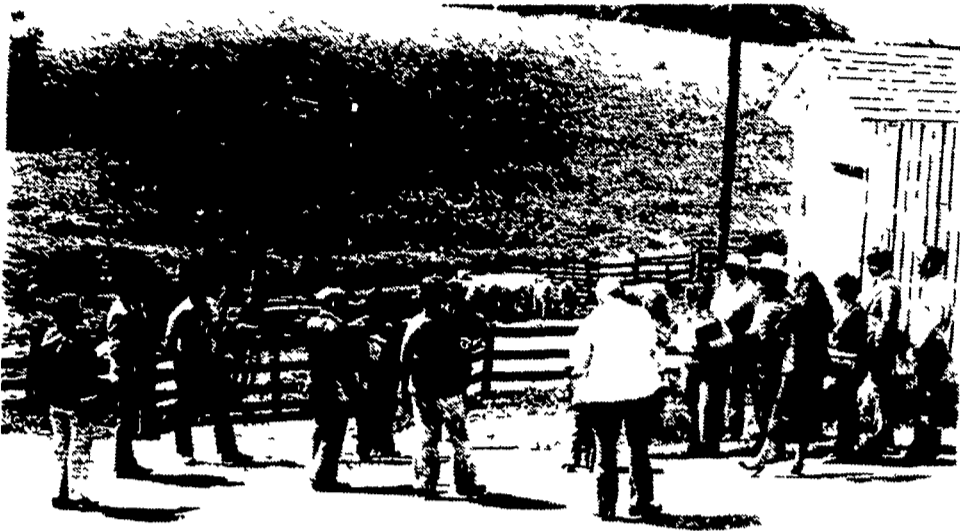
elegant in building material. Today the quarries are silent, some water-filled, but the rolling hills spreading out from the town throb with the activity of another industry that's become the backbone of the community:

agriculture. During the last week of June, Delta residents will host a nine-day centennial celebration. A day-long tribute to agriculture will open that festival on June 21. Six farms are scheduled to throw open their doors and welcome free tours to visitors. That program has been arranged by the Centennial committee in conjunction with the York County Farmers association, Pennsylvania Department of

Agriculture and numerous Delta agribusinesses and county-wide organizations. The tours will travel by hayride and bus, leaving between 9 a.m. and 2 p.m. from the Delta Community Building, with a choice of two tours available. Tour No. 1 heads out to the Barbara and David Stewart dairy farm, Cooper and Marley Boyd's Susquehanna Orchards and the beef and hog operation of Barbara and John Rush Baldwin, III. Tour 2 will take visitors to Sleepy Hollow Farm, a pick-your-own fruit and vegetable establishment of Mel and Marge Fifer, the Dave and Kate Thompson dairy farm and milk processing plant, and the Joe Ailes family's hog breeding and fattening set-up, one of the county's Century Farms. By tour day, peak of the

hectic strawberry season should be history at the pick-your-own plantings of the Marge and Mel Fifer, Ailes Road off Route 74, just north of Delta. A first-generation farm family, the Fifer's have been on their Sleepy Hollow 100 acres for nine years. Thirty acres are in fruits and vegetables, while the remaining acreage is cropped in hay until more fruit plantings are established. About three acres are planted with strawberries for this season, with up to four scheduled for planting this year. Weeds are controlled through a regular spraying program and cultivation, with no straw mulch between the rows. Berry acreage is selected on the top of the hills, to avoid the late frost that often

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Charolais cattle will be one drawing attention for Delta farm tour visitors to the John Rush Baldwin III family farm.



Marge and Mel Fifer and son Sean look forward to a bountiful strawberry harvest and the annual rush of pick-your-own customers at their Sleepy Hollow Farm.

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