

Delta fruit growers

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fruits and vegetable crops.

Over a couple of ridges, and high on the plateau jutting to the Susquehanna River, lies another family fruit operation, the Susquehanna Orchards of the Cooper and Marley Boyd family.

Visitors on this stop will be treated to demonstrations of hand-thinning peaches, the operation of a "hydro ladder" (a powered bucket that lifts orchard workers to the tops of trees for pruning or picking), and displays of orchard sprayers.

The Pennsylvania Apple Marketing Board's promotional film will be shown in the "cold-storage theatre," and drawings will be held for baskets of peaches and apples to be claimed during the harvest season.

Orchard visitors are not new to these second-generation fruit producers. Beginning in mid-June with the sour cherry crop, the Cooper's sell both retail and pick-your-own fruits. Peaches comprise about 25 acres of the tree-studded hillsides, and there is a small planting of pears, but the star and sustaining crop is apples.

Among the most popular varieties are standards like Stayman, York Imperial and Red and Yellow Delicious.

Susquehanna's pick-your-own project began almost by accident about twenty years ago. When the apple harvest was complete one Fall, some apples remained scattered throughout the trees and lots more lay on the ground. Boyds proclaimed a "Ground Apple Day," offering to sell these leftovers and drops "real cheap" to anyone who wanted to come and harvest them.

The first customer rolled in the lane in the chill and dark of 5 a.m., followed by a parade of others. Bowing to this demand from loyal buyers, the pick-your-own sideline took off. "Ground Apple Day" is still an annual tradition, usually held in late October, and apples remain the number one crop for do-it-yourself enthusiasts

Boyd's family orchard began in 1922 as a business investment of five original incorporators. Cooper's father, Paul C. Boyd, eventually bought out all the other partners. While Cooper was still a youngster, his father died and for several years Mrs. Boyd and her children ran the family fruit business. In 1959, when he was discharged from the service, Cooper took over the operation.

"Our children have worked in the orchards since they were old enough to pick up a basket" relates Marley Boyd.

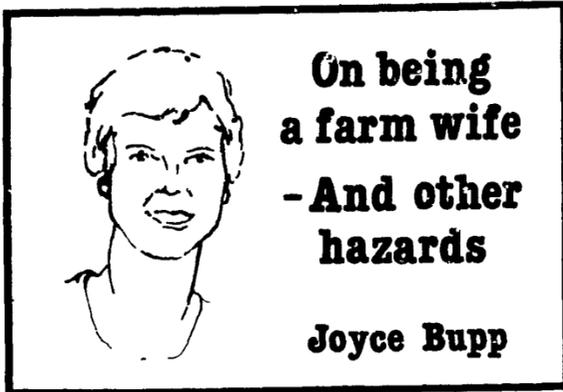
"Even while in school and college, they've spent weekends and evenings helping to sell fruit and packing fruit. We're encouraging them to test their wings at something else, before making any decision to return home to the fruit industry," she said.

David is graduating from the University of Delaware this year with an engineering degree. Kathy, a nursing student at Harford Community College, was the 1979 Pennsylvania Apple Queen, mixing studies with travels across the state on behalf of its major fruit crop. A freshman at the University of Delaware, second daughter Anne is majoring in computer science; and the youngest, Joan, is a sophomore at Kennard Dale High School.

"We cater to selling good fruit," is the philosophy of the family of orchardists. More and more, though, they find themselves burdened with the problem plaguing all fruit growers: the bureaucracy.

"We feel we are over-regulated and that puts the cost of fruit up," Marley worries. "And we have an awful lot of forms to fill out."

Packing and storage facilities are an important part of the retailing and there is storage for eight thousand bushels of apples. Marketing ideas used include a brochure that goes out regularly to a mailing list of 1500, just a small portion of the customers who faithfully come for fresh fruits in a season.



On being a farm wife - And other hazards

Joyce Bupp

Farm wives, I've always contended, stay healthier and live longer due to the exercise and fresh air they enjoy as part of the chores they contend with everyday as farm business partners.

Added to that is my personal philosophy that parents should frequently join, not just watch, their children at play. That physical participation evolved from the once quiet and restful toddler games of blockbuilding and picture books, or leisurely strolls in the sunshine, into mini practice sessions for the pre-teen decathlon.

It might be the softball to chase, socked out of the backyard and into the rosebushes. Or maybe they

want to shoot a couple of baskets before calf feeding, bicycle to the heifer barn, or whip the frisbee around for a while. More recently they've discovered tennis, squabbling over who has to play on Mom's side, while the meatloaf finishes up for supper back in the oven.

Short of falling off the skateboard periodically, these aging bones have managed to scramble along after the offspring rapidly outgrowing me in size and capabilities. And then the jump rope came out.

Jumping rope was a piece of cake when I was back in elementary school. So when the kids announced that we were going to play "school" with the jump rope, I agreed.

"School", it seems, is a game where you begin with jumping once for first grade, twice for second, etc., until you've gone through all the grades using various rope techniques.

I eased through the elementary numbers, jumped through junior high and hopped on into high school levels.

"Now we have to finish with hot peppers," the leaders informed me. Hot peppers?

That, I was enlightened, meant jumping very, very fast. Sure, I remember that. When one of our younger players couldn't get it down pat, I offered to demonstrate.

Onetwothreefourfivesix jumps. A half dozen hot peppers was suddenly too much and my hip never graduated from the game. Hobbling into the house, I figured on doing penance for a couple of days. Hot peppers has been scratched from my curriculum.

It was the least I could do in observance of May - National Senior Citizens Month.



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4-H Council to hold dance

YORK — The York County 4-H Council's May meeting was held at the 4-H Center, near Barr.

It was announced that the chicken barbecue will be held on Saturday, June 21 at the center. The adult meal is \$3.25, child's \$2.25, and carry outs consisting of a half chicken only is \$1.50.

Recently the group cleaned around the walkways at Pleasant Acres Home.

This weekend, York

County will be hosting junior exchange members from Indiana County. The program was a slide presentation by Tony Dobrosky on the BMY beef promotion.

The next meeting will be on Wednesday, June 4 at the center at 7:30 p.m. The program will be a mixed dance. Reported by Christine Shive.

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