

Seven generations of Nisslys farm near Mount Joy

MOUNT JOY — For seven generations now, an 86-acre farm near here has been passed down through the Nissly family.

This week the farm was recognized as one of Lancaster County's Century Farms. What won't be recognized is that Gerald N. Erb will be the recipient of the honor.

Erb is the youngest son of Paul and Katherine Nissly Erb. Out of a family of six children, only Gerald and his oldest brother Wilbur have accepted the challenge of farming for occupations. Wilbur is farming in East Donegal Township while Gerald purchased the family farm in 1971

The Nissly family took ownership of the farm back in 1822. Gerald points to a calf-skin document hanging in the office of the 1857 brick house where in scroll-type print is written the original William Penn Indenture for their farm. This document bears the date 1772

Other antiques decorating the high-ceilinged rooms in the farmhouse advertise Erb's interest in agricultural history, especially that of the Nissly family

He recalled that his great grandfather Joseph had originally owned five farms in the area until 1897.

"That's when the estate was broken up. Each of his

five children received one of the farms," Erb explained. All that's left now of the original estate, he pointed out, is his 86-acre farm

Pulling out farm records kept by his grandfather and a diary kept by Erb's Great Aunt Annie Trout, Erb shared some of the family's past history.

From Aunt Annie's diary, the Erbs discovered that at one time in the family's past, the dining room in their Civil War-era farmhouse had been used as a mortuary.

The farm records have served as an invaluable link to the way of life on the farm around the turn of the century.

"My grandfather started

farming back in 1905 He was able to start with one tobacco check amounting to a little over \$3000. With this he paid for all his equipment in cash — a total of slightly more than \$1600. The highest amount on his purchase list was the pair of mules he bought for \$450

"A quarter century later, my grandfather bought the farm Up until that time, he had been renting it from my great grandfather.

"My grandfather always claimed this farm was only big enough for four cows — and that's all he ever had. After my dad started farming it, there were 18 cows here. Now, we have 100 cows on test. It's a matter of economics on size."

Helping Gerald in the commercial dairy operation are his wife Judith Ann Emenheiser Erb and their two children, Amy Jo, 10, and Mark, 12. Amy Jo raises

the calves and Mark helps with the barn and field work in the family farm tradition.

The Century Farm designation will be a heritage that Erb's children will be able to pass on to their families some day if the future allows family farms to continue as an American way of life

Said Erb, "I'm committed to preserving the family farm — it's a matter of great importance to me."—SM



Symbolic of their belief in the family farm, the Erbs work together on their commercial dairy farm to improve their herd of Holsteins with each generation.



The Gerald Erb family, recipients of the Century Farm Award, pose proudly in front of the original calf-skin indenture for their 86-acre farm. The farm has been in the Nissly family for about 150 years.

Two win FFA Floriculture awards

KANSAS CITY — Two students from the Lancaster County-Mount Joy Vo-Tech School have achieved outstanding recognition in FFA National Floriculture contests held at the FFA Kansas Convention.

A First place Gold was awarded to Cathy Best from Columbia and a Silver awarded to Deborah Grube of Manheim. Their individual awards combined with Holly Eselby from

Limerick, PA won Pennsylvania the third place team award out of thirty-six teams.

The National Floriculture Contest is a competitive activity in which FFA members test their judging and identification skills in Floriculture products.

In addition, contestants take a written examination testing general knowledge of such subjects as plant anatomy, growing media

and diagnosis of plant disorders.

Contestants are also evaluated on their ability to make floral arrangements, pot chrysanthemum cuttings and take an order by telephone. The contest utilized plant material donated and loaned by merchants in the Kansas City area and was held at the Swope Park Municipal Complex in Kansas City, Missouri.

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SALES & SERVICE



ORGANIC EDUCATIONAL MEETING

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 1980
1:30-3:30 P.M. and 7:00-9:00 P.M.

PLACE — BLUE BALL FIRE HALL, ON RT. 322, 1 BLOCK EAST OF RED LIGHT, BLUE BALL, PA., 12 MILES EAST OF LANCASTER

The half has never been told about God's wonderful soil of creation and His plan for its preservation, and disease elimination to avoid future starvation

One speaker will be Ray Nielson from Michigan who manufactures an outstanding liquid soil conditioner, an improved one called National Ag Soil Treatment. It loosens soil fast and breaks hardpan so that the rain can go down, avoid run off and be stored for future use. It sure showed this year.

John Mosher of N.Y. State University has an excellent report on BX soil bacteria to send for the meeting if he can't be here himself. There are other excellent farm reports on BX, better crops with much less fertilizer, better plant emergence, better quality and feed value.

There will be farmers giving testimonies and a panel of teachers will answer your questions. We have many happy customers and we want to help you too. It is a program with service, not just grab your check and run.

There will be good opportunity to talk with other organic farmers and learn during the intermission period. There is a restaurant at the fire hall.

Come and learn the easy, natural way to prevent pestilence, disease and nematodes etc.

Learn how to grow nearly enough protein for your livestock by just increasing the protein in your corn and hay.

Learn how to conserve moisture in soil so that crops don't mind an average drought.

Learn why livestock do better for organic farmers.

Learn how to have vegetables ripen earlier with more flavor and keeping qualities and stand a harder frost and a lot more.

ORGANIC VEGETABLES WANTED

Buyers will be at the meeting from the cities who want quantities of certified organic vegetables at 10% to 15% premium price and huge quantity of partly organic. Restaurants and stores are learning organic is better. Talk with the buyers from 3:30 to 7:00. Tell other farmers who like to grow vegetables.

ORGANIC CENTER

217 S. Railroad Ave., New Holland, PA 17557
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Tell others about the meeting
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