

## Celebrate Christmas with Poinsettias

LITITZ — Did you realize that the poinsettia plant you have growing in your living room is quite the stranger when placed with all your other holiday traditional decorations? Instead of being a cold weather character as evergreens and Santa are, poinsettias are common plants in the Mexican and South American areas.

This popular plant was named after an American diplomat, Joel R. Poinsett in 1851. It was he who helped introduce the plant to our country, and from there it turned to tradition to have them at Christmas time.

But despite their beauty and history, every year somebody with believable

credentials decides that poinsettias are dangerous to human and animal health.

However, demand and growth of these plants (see story on this page for PP&L's 20,000 plants) indicate that most people pay little attention to these warnings.

Milton Nelson of Maryland County's extension offices says Dr. Conrad B. Link, an Extension floriculture specialist at Maryland since 1948, notes that "false accusations about the poinsettia have circulated each year at Christmas time since 1919 - unsubstantiated by medical and scientific fact."

The source of these accusations appear to be an unfounded story about the

two-year-old child of a U.S. Army officer in Hawaii whose death was attributed to eating a poinsettia leaf (bract). As a result, the poinsettia was added to somebody's list of poisonous plants. And this list has been copied countless times by book and article writers without thoroughly checking its accuracy.

Dr. Gerald W. Ward is director of small animal care for the Division of Agricultural and Life Sciences at the University of Maryland in College Park. He notes that some textbooks and manuals in the field of veterinary medicine still show the poinsettia on lists of plants which are poisonous to animals.

"But those books or manuals which are most respected in the animal

health field do not list poinsettias in the toxic plant category," Dr. Ward comments.

Specific research on the toxicity of poinsettias was done 10 years ago at Ohio State University by two entomologists, Robert P. Stone and W.J. Collins. Their study showed that rats exhibited no ill-effects whatever, even when fed unusually high doses of various portions of poinsettia plants.

This research should be especially valid, notes Maryland's Dr. Ward, since rats and other rodents don't have the ability, which cats and dogs have, to vomit poisonous materials out of their stomachs before they can be absorbed into the digestive system - D.K.

## Vegetable growers to sell soup at Show

FARM SHOW — Pennsylvania grown vegetables will again be featured as the basic ingredient for the vegetable soup served by the Pennsylvania Vegetable Growers Association at the Pennsylvania Farm Show this year.

The rich vegetable soup, according to Soup Booth Chairman, Rudy Grob, will be hearty and delicious, as always, and will be enhanced by meaty stock.

The Farm Show officially opens on January 11, 1981 and the vegetable growers will sponsor the soup booth for the third consecutive year.

PVGA is a non-profit organization dedicated to the

improvement of vegetable production in the state.

PVGA president Warren Thompson, said that the growers have a close working arrangement with the Horticultural department at Penn State University and through the years have actually improved the quality and the quantity of Pennsylvania grown vegetables.

The booth will be operated by volunteers during the entire Farm Show from January 11 through the 16th.

All those in attendance at the Farm Show are invited to stop at the PVGA Soup Booth to see the improvement in vegetable quality as demonstrated in the vegetable soup.

## At Garden State Polled Hereford Classic

# S Gilead daughter brings \$2400

FLEMINGTON, N.J. — Top-selling female at the annual Garden State Polled Hereford Classic Sale, held here recently, went to Ron May of Asbury, N.J. for a bid of \$2400.

This high-selling heifer is a daughter of the Gold Trophy Sire, S Gilead 115. She was consigned by Dunwalke Farm, Far Hills, N.J.

During the presale grading, two heifers tied for the top spot. An Oakswitch BTF2 ESF32 daughter

consigned by Jayama Ranch, Skillman, N.J. sold to Mike Novak of Flemington, N.J. The other heifer, a PRL7 Bet 517B daughter, was purchased from Samuel Hunter of Smithsburg, Md. by Alyson Neuberger of Pennington, N.J.

The eighteen registered heifers averaged \$798 under the gavel of Mike Jones of LaGrange, Georgia.

Forty-five steer calves sold for an average of \$575.

The high-selling consignment was a steer sired by Vindicator, a Superior Sire. Jeff Fabijanic of Stockton, N.J. purchased the steer from Metch Polled Herefords, Flemington, for his 1981 4-H project.

A sale of Polled Hereford semen and certificates was held during the auction for the benefit of the Junior Polled Hereford Association. Semen was donated by Dunwalke Farm, Jayama Ranch, Lamington River

Farm, Far Hills, N.J.; and Raynham Farms, Hopewell, N.J.

Buyers from three states bought 63 head of Polled Hereford cattle.



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