

One of the many annual unanswered questions:

# Will demand continue for lighter Pa. tobacco leaves?

BY DICK ANGLESTEIN

LANCASTER — Will the trend toward increasing demand for Maryland and the lighter-colored Pennsylvania leaf continue in Lancaster County for the 1982 tobacco growing season?

This was one of the questions being asked at this week's Lancaster Tobacco Show and one of many that annually begin facing the county's tobacco growers about this time of the year.

While the majority of tobacco grown in the county remains the Pennsylvania type headed for the chewing market, there has been a growing segment in that overall market for the lighter-colored, better leaves for several years.

Particularly during the past couple of years, buying activity for the lighter leaves has picked up.

Growers like it since the lighter Pennsylvania leaves have been bringing a bit of an extra premium from buyers.

Youthful Jere Neff, of Sheeplane Rd., R1, Millersville, member of the Manor FFA, is an example. He and his cousin Gary sold off a total of about 30 acres on Monday.

About three-quarters of the crop was sold for 85 cents a pound — the same price it brought last year. But a quarter of the crop, the lighter leaves, brought 95 cents a pound — an extra 10 cents.

And in these difficult economic times, an extra premium on even a portion of a cash crop is a welcome bonus for farmers.

But where does this lighter-colored leaf go?

That's just another of the many unanswered questions that characterize the tobacco industry and the secret way it goes about getting its raw material.

The best speculation is that the lighter-colored leaves head down South for the cigarette market.

For example, it's known that there was a short burley crop in

Kentucky in the 1970 and 1980 growing seasons. But this past year's crop was pretty good.

So, it's possible that the heavier buying of the lighter Pennsylvania leaf was done to help make up for the burley shortfall.

If this is the reason, another good burley growing season in 1982 might seriously cut into the demand for the lighter Pennsylvania leaves when the 1982 crop is sold.

But there's also the possibility that the cigarette manufacturers are changing their tobacco blends — going to more use of lower nicotine tobaccos to make cigarettes with this selling appeal.

If more lower-nicotine tobaccos are going to continue to be used by the cigarette manufacturers, it might indicate that there will be a continuing higher demand for the lighter Pennsylvania leaves.

Air-cured tobacco, such as the Pennsylvania and burley, is lower in nicotine than other flue-cured tobaccos. And the lighter Pennsylvania leaf is closer in appearance to burley and Maryland than the other greener Pennsylvania varieties.

But since tobacco blends are as closely guarded secrets as the buying of tobacco, it's just another phase of the annual guessing game that the tobacco growers face each year.

So, as growers conduct their individual negotiations with buyers concerning this year's crop, such questions of outlook toward the coming year will be in the back of their minds.

Thus far, there has been limited major buying activity for the straight-strip Pennsylvania tobacco — the bulk of Lancaster County's crop.

It's expected that brisk buying will wait until after the Farm Show. In fact, buyers will use next week to travel to Wisconsin — the

other principal location for the growing of tobacco which goes into the chewing market.

Most of Lancaster County's tobacco goes into the chewing market.

In Tuesday's Lancaster County Show, a dry-run for the Farm Show competition, many of the top awards went to Millersville area growers.

Many top winners in Monday's show, which attracted 143 entries as compared to 236 last year, hailed from the Millersville area.

Champions included Kandy Rohrer, 508 Georgetown Rd., Ronks, wrappers; Bill Wiggins, R1 Millersville, fillers; Gary Neff, R1, Millersville, binders.

Other first-places went to Roger Rohrer, Ronks, short wrapper; Jere Neff, R1, Millersville, short filler; and Gary Neff, short binder.

In 4-H, the grand championship was won by James Stauffer, Penn Manor.

The FFA champion was John Dohner, R1, Elizabethtown.

Results:

Long Wrappers

1 Kandy Rohrer 2 Mike Cassel R1 Manheim  
3 Roger Rohrer 4 Gary Neff 5 Marlin Cassel  
R1 Manheim 6 Bob Burkholder R1 Washington  
Boro

Short Wrappers

1 Roger Rohrer 2 Gary Neff 3 Steven  
Reinhart R1 Millersville 4 Lois E. Rohrer 1428  
Lime Valley Rd. Lancaster, 5 David Cassel R1  
Manheim 6 Donald Rohrer 1428 Lime Valley Rd.

Long Fillers

1 Bill Wiggins 2 Gary Neff 3 Roger Rohrer 6  
Kandy Rohrer 5 Dawn Rohrer 6 Jere Neff

Short Fillers

1 Jere Neff 2 Roger Rohrer 3 Gail Rohrer, 4  
Eugene Rohrer 5 Henry Bowman R1 Washington  
Boro 6 Mike Cassel

Long Binder

1 Gary Neff 2 Marlin Cassel 3 Robert Barr  
269 Strasburg Pike 4 Terri Rohrer 5 Jere Neff,  
6 Donald Rohrer

Short Binder

1 Gary Neff, 2 Mike Cassel, 3 Dawn Rohrer 4  
Roger Rohrer 5 Donald Rohrer 6 Jere Neff

4-H Wrapper

1 James Stauffer 2 Troy Muser 200 S  
Donerville Rd

4-H Filler

1 James Stauffer

FFA Wrapper

1 John Dohner 2 Jay Frey Jr R2 Conestoga.



Jere Neff, of R1, Millersville, examines leaf that made him one of class winners at Lancaster Tobacco Show.

3 Dan White R1 Washington Boro 4 Robert  
Musser, R2 Lancaster 5 Jere Neff 6 Jeff  
Brenneman R1 Millersville 7 Kevin Bauman R1  
Millersville 8 Duane Shelly R6 Manheim 9 Jeff  
Barley, R2 Lancaster 10 Clarence Eckman R2  
Conestoga

FFA Filler

1 Mike Acord R1 Washington Boro 2 Jere  
Neff 3 Lars White R1 Conestoga, 4 Kevin  
Dohner 5 Jeff Barley 6 Jay Frey Jr 7 Jeff

Brenneman 8 Duane Shelly, 9 Dan White 10  
John Wiker R1 Conestoga

FFA Corn

1 Brian Hess R1 Conestoga 2 Jay Frey Jr 3  
Barry Geib R1 Manheim 4 Jeff Barley 5 Geary  
Bitts R1 Millersville, 6 Clarence Eckman 7 Steve  
Main R2 Lancaster, 8 Dean Ober, 9 Nelson  
Hornig R1 Denver 10 Wayne Huber R2  
Conestoga

## Grape growers to meet

LANCASTER — To plan for 1982 and to look back on 1981 as a growing and vintage year, the Southeast Pennsylvania Grape Industry has scheduled a meeting for Sunday, Jan. 17, 2-5 p.m., at the Farm and Home Center, 1383 Arcadia Road.

The program topics include: harvest reports and reactions on the '81 crop year; plans for 1982 from a

growers standpoint; the new wine law now in effect and the potentials for our industry; 1982 Wine Conference, Jan. 26-27, at Hershey Convention Center; Recertification of private applicators pesticide licenses and short business meeting.

For the social period and wine tasting, bring a favorite snack food and wine to share.

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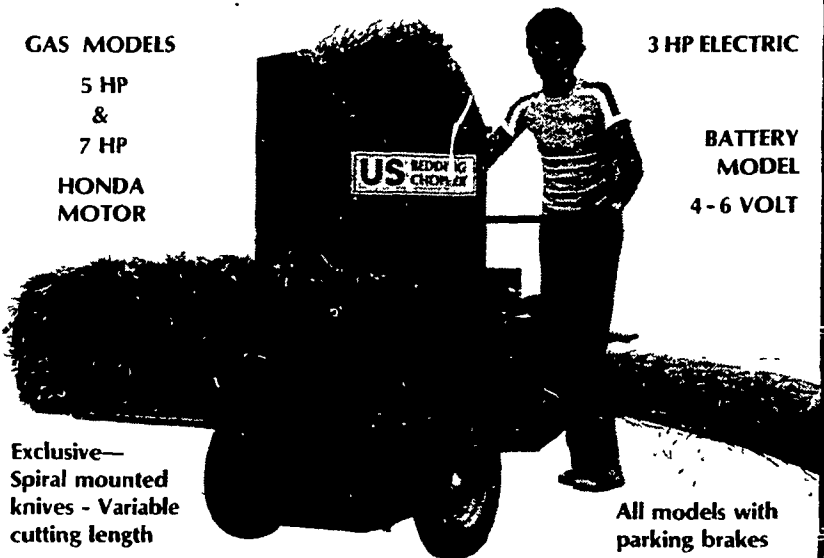
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