

Poultry Queen looking forward to Farm Show

BY SALLY BAIR
Staff Correspondent

LaVon Fuhrman has always looked forward to going to the Farm Show each January. This year she is especially eager to attend because she will be working to make the show interesting and fun for the thousands of visitors.

LaVon, 19, is Lancaster County's Poultry Queen and will be traveling the familiar route to Harrisburg five days next week. She begins her royal activities by participating in the Sunday opening ceremonies which begin with church services for the commodity queens and others involved with the Show. Then she'll go right to work promoting what she is most familiar with - the incredible, edible egg and other poultry products.

She will be handing out "egg sicles" to first-day visitors, along with recipe books and stickers which say "Get Eggcited!" LaVon says she and her poultry promoters are prepared to give away 3,000 egg sicles on opening day.

LaVon says, "I'm looking forward to it. Crowds don't bother me. It's fun to have a lot of people." She is the daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Harold Fuhrman, Bainbridge.

Just five months into her year-long reign, LaVon has already had lots of experience with crowds by participating in events like mall promotions and the big agriculture expo held in Philadelphia this summer where she helped make a 100 pound taco scrambler. The scrambler used 300 eggs, five quarts of milk and 10 pounds of cheddar cheese along with other ingredients and was cooked in a four foot wide pan. It was served in taco shells and was a real crowd pleaser.

LaVon also worked in downtown Lancaster during Harvest Days when she helped make individual ham and cheese omelettes which were served to observers.

LaVon has participated in many other events which may have

drawn smaller crowds but which give her the opportunity to talk up Lancaster County's poultry industry which leads the state.

She has spoken at Lions Clubs, Kiwanis clubs, banquets and open houses and has visited one elementary school.

She says, "I tell them the statistics on the Lancaster County poultry industry and how it has grown and then tell them what I have done." Being Poultry Queen has been a learning experience for LaVon, and she says she studied up on the industry for the local contest and currently receives much information from Vicky Wass, Egg Promotion Specialist for the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture.

In many promotions LaVon will help mix up the Instant Egg Pick-Up, a drink which consists of orange juice, an egg and some honey for sweetening. "Most people like it," she says, adding that it provides a lot of nutrients what with the protein and vitamins from the egg and the Vitamin C from the orange juice. It is a quick drink to mix up on the spur of the moment in a blender.

LaVon is always quick to point out the benefits of using eggs, saying, "They are versatile and used in every kitchen. They are an inexpensive source of protein costing about 60 cents per pound, compared to meat." She adds with a smile, "You can use them for breakfast, lunch and dinner."

Enthusiastic about her role as Poultry Queen, LaVon says, "I feel we should have more contestants. It gives you some great opportunities. Even just entering the contest helped me meet a lot of people and make a lot of friends."

LaVon feels a commodity queen can be very useful to promotional work. "Some people don't realize what the industry is all about and this is a good way to tell them what's going on. People listen to a queen." Young children are especially entranced with her

crowns, which instantly sets her apart.

Visiting the elementary school was fun for LaVon and she already has scheduled several more school appearances in 1982. She says, "I really did enjoy going to school. I took my puppet and spoke through it." Her puppet is a very cuddly-looking chicken that is bound to thrill small hearts.

In addition to telling them about the good nutrition of eggs, LaVon also gave each child an egg sicle, coloring pages and stickers which were received with enthusiasm by the children. They wrote her a very touching letter of thanks for her visit.

On her school visit LaVon took her incubator filled with eggs about to hatch, and left it there for the children to observe the hatching process.

Despite her wide variety of experiences, when asked if she has a goal she would like to reach during the second half of her reign, LaVon states, "I'd like to go to a senior citizen's group."

Donna Hess, Lancaster County's alternate Poultry Queen, has become very involved in promotions and has ridden with LaVon in six parades and made appearances with her. LaVon appreciates this assistance from Donna who has proved a real help at some of the larger promotional events, often pitching in when LaVon is called away for picture taking.

Since there is no state Poultry Queen, LaVon and the Adams County Poultry Queen, the only two in Pennsylvania, often make appearances on behalf of the state poultry industry. Most of these events are scheduled by Vicky Wass, who works closely with the two queens.

LaVon adds, "I have gotten tremendous support here from our queen committee. They travel with me and help schedule appearances."

A 1980 graduate of Elizabethtown High School, LaVon is now a member of the Elizabethtown Business and Professional Women's Club, a bowling league at Clearview Lanes and attends St. Luke's Lutheran Church.

LaVon's family is not directly involved in producing eggs, but she works as a secretary for Wenger's Feeds, Elizabethtown, which produces only poultry feeds. It was there that she became interested in the contest and received strong support to enter it. She expresses gratitude to the company for allowing her to make appearances which take her away from the job; it is a large contribution they are making to Lancaster County's poultry industry.

In addition to learning more about the industry and about its products, LaVon says, "I have learned to be with people and to be comfortable with people who I might not normally meet." Such people include Governor Dick Thornburgh with whom she has made appearances, and also Agriculture Secretary Penny Hallowell. She points out that she usually gets more nervous when meeting with a small group which she knows than with larger groups, usually of strangers.

When making speaking engagements, LaVon says, "I try to educate the public. I tell people of all ages the benefits of eggs and chickens and the importance of the industry in the county. I also talk about ducks, which most people don't think of." She quickly ticked



Lancaster County's Poultry Queen poses with some new friends she acquired - Brewster Rooster, Henrietta Hen and other crocheted items related to the poultry industry.

off the numerous industries related to poultry, including farmers, feed mills, egg and poultry processors.

Although she doesn't use it a lot, she figures the song she made up for the Lancaster County contest sums up how great eggs are for you. It is sung to a tune made famous by another locally produced agricultural commodity - milk.

"They're a special, special treat.
You can buy them by the dozen.
You can bake 'em, poach 'em, fry 'em,
Feed 'em to a Dad or cousin.
They're a special treat, special treat.
They've always been a favorite.
They're a special, special treat - eat eggs!"
Ask to choose a highlight from

her reign to this point, LaVon says simply, "I've enjoyed everything I've done. It would be hard to pick out one thing."

Three scrapbooks are filled with news clippings, programs and other remembrances of the promotional work she has done so far, and there will be many more needed before the conclusion of her reign.

For LaVon, traveling to Farm Show this week will offer an opportunity to renew acquaintances with other commodity queens whom she has met at statewide promotions.

All of Pennsylvania's agriculture royalty will be on hand to officially open the show and to share some of the bounty of this state's diversified agriculture. To LaVon, it is an opportunity not to be missed - and a great way to promote the products of Lancaster County's growing poultry industry.

Homestead Notes

Santa calls lucky little boy

(We recently learned of a very lucky country boy who got a phone call from Santa, so we decided to share it with you. Following is his mother's version of little Jonathan's lucky day.)

LANCASTER — Santa's bag was heavy and was slowing him down from doing his early Christmas rounds.

So on Tuesday evening before Christmas, he called four-year-old Jonathan Kurtz of Fleetwood and told him he left a Christmas gift under the tree at a friend's house. Santa then proceeded to ask Jonathan if he could pick it up there because it was much too heavy to carry any farther, what with his heavy toy bag and all.

Jonathan was wide-eyed and explained on the phone to his friend

what Santa had said. His friend, four-year-old Nathanel, just looked at him in awe. After all, he had never got a phone call from Santa!

Jonathan hurriedly jumped in the car with mom and dad and little sister and drove to Nathanel's house. When Jonathan walked through the door his eye caught the gift, all covered with a white blanket and a note saying, "Merry Christmas Jonathan."

At first Jonathan didn't know what to do. He just stared at the box until some coaxing convinced him to pull of the blanket.

There stood a huge play barn designed after his parents' real farm.

It had a two and one-half foot Harvestore silo and a place for

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LaVon holds up what she likes to promote most - a dozen fine, fresh ready to use Lancaster County eggs.