

# Kauffman's is favorite of natives & tourists alike

**BY DICK ANGLESTEIN**  
**BIRD-IN-HAND** — In its third generation of family operation, Kauffman's Farm Market along Rt. 340, east of Bird-in-Hand, continues to move ahead in direct agricultural marketing techniques while keeping a firm grasp on rich traditions from the past.

This opportunity for a look into the future while keeping the past clearly in sight at Kauffman's was one of the highlights of the two-day tour of the State Horticultural Association through York and Lancaster counties this week.

On a typical summer day, Kauffman's attracts a variety of clientele, ranging from native Eastern Lancaster Countians to the many tourists who visit the area.

"Our main business is still with the many local people," explains Kenneth Kauffman, orchard manager and one of five cousins involved in the management of the diversified farm marketing operation.

"But we're seeing more and more repeat business among visitors. And that's the name of the game — keeping people satisfied and coming back."

Out in the orchard, Ken points to the variety in the sizes of the trees

that dot the landscape. They range from the direct ancestors of the conventional apple trees that grandfather Amos L. Kauffman began planting back in 1911, to the smaller semi-dwarf and now the much smaller dwarf trees that are grown on a trellis system.

"We just started putting the trellis dwarf trees in last year," Kauffman said.

"There are a little over two acres now, with 330 trees to the acre.

"This compares to 27 conventional trees to the acre.

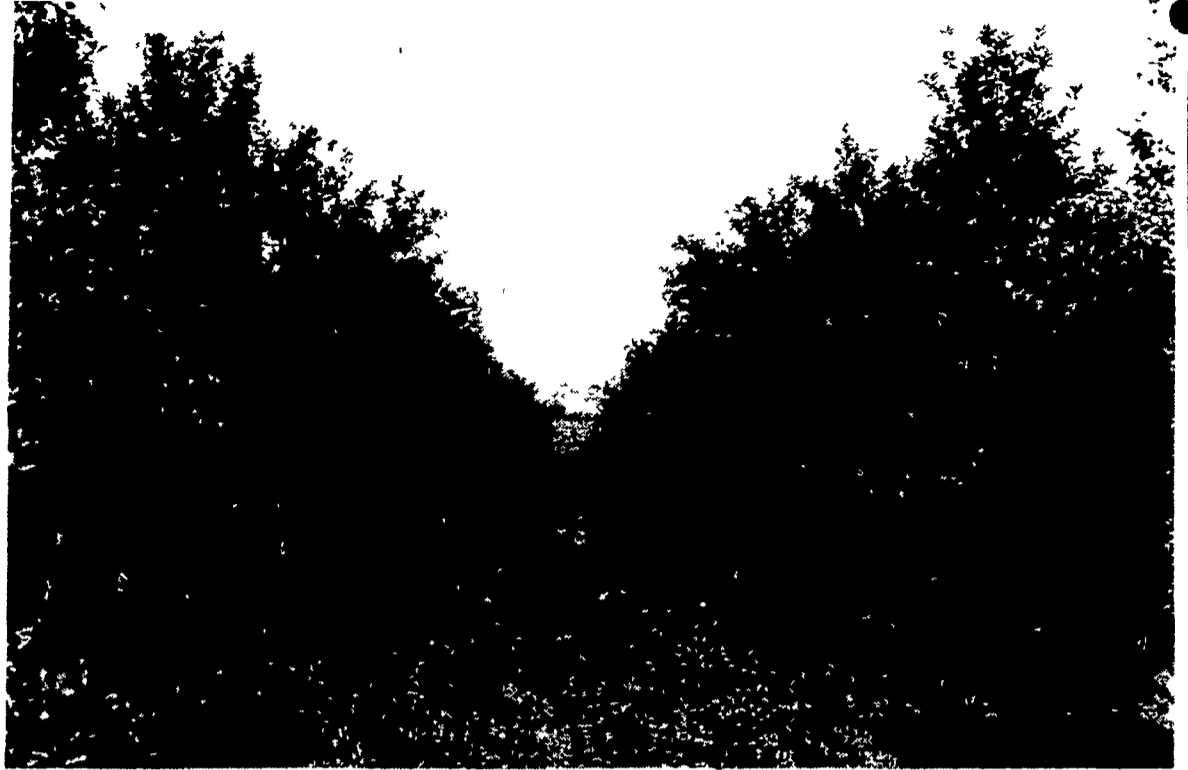
"It just doesn't make sense anymore to grow all of that grass around the trees."

Some of the Red Delicious dwarf trees, which were planted in April, 1981, already are bearing up to 18 apples. They are attached to the wire trellis with plastic ties since their root system will not support the early fruit-bearing capability.

The trees are planted eight feet apart in the row with 16 feet between rows.

"We'll be keeping our eyes on these dwarfs and comparing production and costs to the others," Kauffman said.

"It's hard to say at this point what five or six years down the road will bring."



Rows of semi-dwarf apple trees merge into the horizon at Kauffman's Farm Market orchard in Eastern Lancaster County.

Balancing the extra cost of the trellis system and the labor to erect it are advantages of ease in training the tree to the trellis, early fruit bearing, and additional ease in spraying, pruning and harvesting.

"The dwarf trees also yield a higher percentage of extra fancy fruit," according to Kauffman.

"Since the trees are smaller, more of the fruit has better access to the sunlight."

Kauffman is expecting a pretty good year in the orchard.

"Winter kill in this area was at a minimum," he said.

"The fruits are sizing well and we're in pretty good shape.

"We should be heavier on apples this year and the peach yield should be about the same as last year or possibly a little less."

The Kauffman operation covers some 150 acres, with 75 in apples and 30 in peaches as the two big crops. There are a couple of acres in pears, with some plums, cherries and grapes, too. Another 30 acres are devoted to barley, corn and alfalfa for fattening steers and hogs as the winter diversification.

With all those apples, you know the Kauffman cousins, who also include David, Raymond, Paul and Samuel, will merchandise them in every way possible. With three-quarters of the apples going through the market, Kauffman's also features quite a cider-making operation in season.

The market has one of the few



Ken Kauffman examines 18 Delicious apples on trellis dwarf tree, which was only planted in April, 1981.



Norm Kauffman, grocery store manager, is shown with automatic cider press, which permits Kauffman's to sell as much as 14,000 gallons a month in season.



Apple trees in Kauffman's Orchard are heavily laden with fruit. Apple harvest is expected to be heavier than last year with peach crop about the same or slightly less.

Schinko continuous cider presses in the state. Instead of the typical rack and cloth operation of the hydraulic press, the Schinko features a cloth belt that revolves around a drum. A series of rollers with decreasing levels of clearance press the apples.

The press feeds the cider into two holding tanks with a combined capacity of 700 gallons in the cold storage area, which provides storage for 20,000 bushels.

"We've sold as much as 14,000 gallons of cider in a month, as we did last October," explains Norman Kauffman, manager of the grocery store section of the market.

"Another popular feature of the store is the bulk food section.

"We bag 10,000 to 12,000 pounds of bulk items a month, including beans, noodle products, yeast, flour, sugar, rice, nutmeats, cereal and candy."

Dried fruits, particularly raisins and apricots, are other popular items.

A meat section and produce, including locally grown seasonal items, are also included in the makeup of the market.

The sprawling market building, the original section of which was built in 1939, also includes some 932 frozen food lockers. These are quite popular with Amish customers for frozen storage.

And out in the orchard area is about an acre plot of peas and sweet corn — almost lost amidst the varied trees. But it, too, is part of the rich tradition of the market.

Each year, the Youth Group of the Weavertown Amish Mennonite Church has a vegetable growing project which is sold through the market.

The proceeds from the vegetables go toward the church's missionary work.

And thus the rich traditions of the market extend even well beyond the Eastern Lancaster County area it primarily serves and the many tourists who shop its facilities.