

Festival was a 'Peachy' Event

By Joyce Bupp
Staff Correspondent

GATCHELVILLE—Labor Day weekend was a peachy three-day event for the Paul and Gail McPherson family, as their 9th annual Maple Lawn Farms Peachilicious Festival pulled in record attendance crowds.

While the hot dry weather that has favored peach production continued, some 8500 visitors to the orchard and grain operation tapped their toes to country music, browsed through craft displays and ate - what else - lots of peaches.

Eating, in fact, is a favorite pastime at the unique peach celebration, originated by the McPherson family. Foods offered spotlight local farm commodities while incorporating peaches into each recipe in some manner. Peach pies, 670 of them, were either eaten on site or carried home by festival goers. Bakers of the popular peach pastries represented local church and community charitable organizations.

York County's Pork Producers roasted and sliced several hundred pounds of pork seasoned with a peachy sauce, serving over 1700 hot pork-n-peaches sandwiches. On hand to help with the sales were members of the York 4-H meats-judging team, who will travel to national competition with the funding assistance of the peachy-pork sandwich sales.

Other farm commodity favorites included fresh peaches and ice cream, hot dogs with peachy sauce, beef barbeque, peachy funnel cakes and chocolate chip cookies.

Craft displays ranged from oil paintings to woodworking to lapidary treasures, with artists including peach tole work, peach pit ornaments, and decorative peach-shaped items.

While peach season has been in full swing for several weeks, harvest of the "queen of fruits" is expected to continue strong for at least two or three more weeks, according to Paul McPherson.

"Peaches are abundant, and there should be lots left in the area

for a few more weeks," McPherson assures fruit lovers who still plan on further canning, freezing, preserving, or just delicious eating.

The veteran orchardist adds that the dry weather which has shriveled fields of corn, hay and beans has favored peach production, resulting in a superb growing year for the fruit.

The wealth of hot, dry conditions raised the solid content and concentrated sugars in the fruit, increasing the flavor and resulting in high quality yields. Firmness of the fruit also causes less bruising damage during handling of the peach harvest.

Fungus diseases, which favor prolonged stretches of wet weather, have been kept at a minimum with excellent drying conditions. Like many growers, Maple Lawn irrigates the peach crop, but moisture on the fruit evaporated quickly and rarely lingered on the trees long enough to foster bacterial growth.

Random showers that crossed York County also boosted the crop,

McPherson believes, adding enough moisture to later varieties to finish peaches to a desirable size. Earlier extreme dry weather had created some sizing difficulty

with certain earlier varieties.

Peach varieties being harvested through the remainder of the month are Red Skins, Rio Oso Gems and Marqueen.



Gladys Locke, tole artist from Bel Air, Maryland, designed peach paintings for her display of original creations at the Peachilicious craft barn.



Labor Day was just that for Paul McPherson and his orchard and sales staff, as they worked feverishly to keep a supply of fresh peaches on hand at the Peachilicious Festival.

Horticulture Show Scheduled

UNIVERSITY PARK — Widely known and often visited are the colorful flower gardens at Penn State University — site of the 70th annual Horticulture Show to be held September 17 and 18.

This year's theme is "Horticulture, The Science Artfully Yours." On display will be floriculture, vegetable, fruit, and ornamental crops. These exhibits will emphasize the art and science involved in horticulture.

Hours of the show will be from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. September 17, and from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. September 18. Sponsored by the Penn State Horticulture Club, the event will be held in a large tent in the flower gardens along Park Avenue (University Drive). Admission is free and parking will be available.

Co-managers of the 1983 Horticulture Show are Louis A. Becari and Carl A. Huttel. Louis, from Oakdale, is a junior majoring in pomology. Carl, a senior from Erie, majors in general agriculture. Faculty advisors for the Horticulture Club are Dr. Roland R. Daniels, associate professor of horticulture, and Dr. Ernest L. Bergman, professor of plant nutrition, both in the department of Horticulture.

Exhibits at the Horticulture Show will include fruits, ornamentals, floriculture, and vegetables. Designing the fruit

exhibit are David J. Quatchak and Ruth E. McCullough. David, a senior from Pittsburgh, majors in plant breeding, and is the president of the Horticulture Club. Ruth, a senior from Asheville, NC, studies floriculture, and is the secretary for the Horticulture Club.

The ornamental exhibit will be designed by James L. Beletti and Paul W. Neirotti. James, a senior from Cochranville, and Paul, a junior from Levittown, both major in ornamental crops. Alan D. Jones, Oxford, and Joseph C. Donchez, Bethlehem, both juniors majoring in plant breeding, are in charge of the floriculture display.

Coordinators of the vegetable display are Richard C. Craig, Jr., and Christian T. Pedersen. Richard, a State College native, is a junior studying horticulture business. Christian, from Zurich, Switzerland, is a senior horticulture student.

The Horticulture Show will also feature plant sales and an exhibit by Pi Alpha Xi, an honorary professional fraternity in floriculture and ornamental horticulture. The Pi Alpha Xi exhibit will be done by Lisa A. Blomquist, a senior from Meadville, studying greenhouse management.

Plant sales will be managed by Lisa J. Ferrera, Richard C. Craig,

Jr., and Paul C. German. Lisa, Pittsburgh, and Richard, State College, are both juniors studying horticulture business. Paul, a senior from Pittsburgh, majors in horticulture genetics.

A Horticulture Show booklet will be distributed to visitors. Advertising in the booklet was compiled by Darlene M. McConaughey, a junior from Smicksburg. Darlene majors in horticulture business and industry.

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Dairy Champs

(Continued from Page B16)

feeding calves, relief milking, and helping out whenever needed.

"We unload tons and tons of hay," she added as her mother laughed and stated that Patty did win the hay bale throwing contest at the recent 4-H days in the county.

Patty is a senior this year at Hamburg Area High School and plans to attend Virginia Polytech. She plans to return to the home farm and pursue a career in ag journalism. Currently a member of the National Honor Society, Patty is also president of the Pennsylvania Junior Jersey Cattle Club and reporter in her Hamburg FFA Chapter. She also serves as the 1983 Jersey Queen for the Pennsylvania Jersey Cattle Club.

"I thought I did OK," Patty stated about the contest. "I made the mistake of tasting urea," she added.

Most of the girls agreed that the feedstuff part of the contest was the hardest and they credited Carl Brown for their knowledge. Patty added that at their practice session Monday, before the contest, Carl brought a variety of feeds and coached them thoroughly. He said that if you taste urea, there was no mistaking what it was, Patty remembered. "Wow," she exclaimed as she explained how right he was.

"The hardest for me was the Hoard's Dairymen questions," Patty continued as she explained that all questions were taken from the past year's issues of Hoard's Dairymen magazine. "I really had to dig deep," she stated.

For second place honors there was a tie between William Leshner and Carol Dreisbach, with William winning the tie breaker. William is currently preparing for the National FFA judging contest in Kansas City, where his team, currently tops in the state, is hoping to win the national title. Team members are Clark Satzahn and Glenn Stoltzfus.

"Just about everywhere we go we clean up," William said of his Berks County associates.

William, along with Carol Dreisbach, was on the Berks County dairy bowl team last year and finished their year as second in the nation.

The current dairy bowl team on which Sandy Moser has a place, is fourth in the state. Patty Dreisbach, Charles Seidei, and Harold Dietrich recently took first place at the state level for their dairy judging team, and all of the eight who went to Maryland have placed high in any dairy contest they entered.

"We knew when we went there the biggest competition we would have would be each other," Patty stated. "Whenever we see each other...we talk about cows all the time."

When asked if their parents helped at all in preparing for this contest, Patty replied, "Yes, my gosh, the practical experience...."

Helene Dreisbach added her comments.

"It's listening to what we talk about at the dinner table," she said, adding that the families that these 4-H'ers come from are all active, interested dairy families, where their cows are their lives.

Wayne Leshner, William's father, belongs to the Milk Producer Handlers of America and participates on national phone conferences. William stated that this also helped him in the milk marketing area, since he often gets to listen in on the conferences.

Each of these youth had their own ideas for bettering the dairy industry.

Patty Dreisbach stated that we should "improve quality first," and added that more advertising and improved handling must come second. Milk should always be cooled properly, and cardboard boxes should be replaced.

Of the interviews where each student was asked about his thoughts on the milk surplus and dairy situation, William stated, "That was the best part of the whole contest...that really tests your ability... talking one on one."

"I'm really up on that," he added, and said that he completed a term paper on the subject. He said the problem is more under consumption than it is over production and believes that farmers should not be asked to cut back.

"That's the whole goal of farming, to produce to make money," he stated.