

Wet, but festive Apple Blossom fete held

Adams' Beef Queen on hand

Not even the weather keeps large crowds away

BY JUDY HULL

ARENDSVILLE — Mother Nature was less than cooperative, but last weekend's 34th Annual Apple Blossom Festival in Adams County was attended by sizable crowds of visitors despite the wet weather.

The two-day festival got off to a better start weatherwise on Saturday. This marked only the third year that the full weekend schedule was followed and this year's crowd more than doubled last year's opening day. Buses filled with tourists arrived from all over the East Coast to tour orchards, view the blossoms and browse through the festival headquarters at the South Mountain Fairgrounds.

But on Sunday, the rains came,

but also so did a number of charter buses and faithful local festival-goers. Sunday's highlights included the crowning of the new Adams County Apple Queen and the auctioning off of the winning pies in the apple pie baking contest.

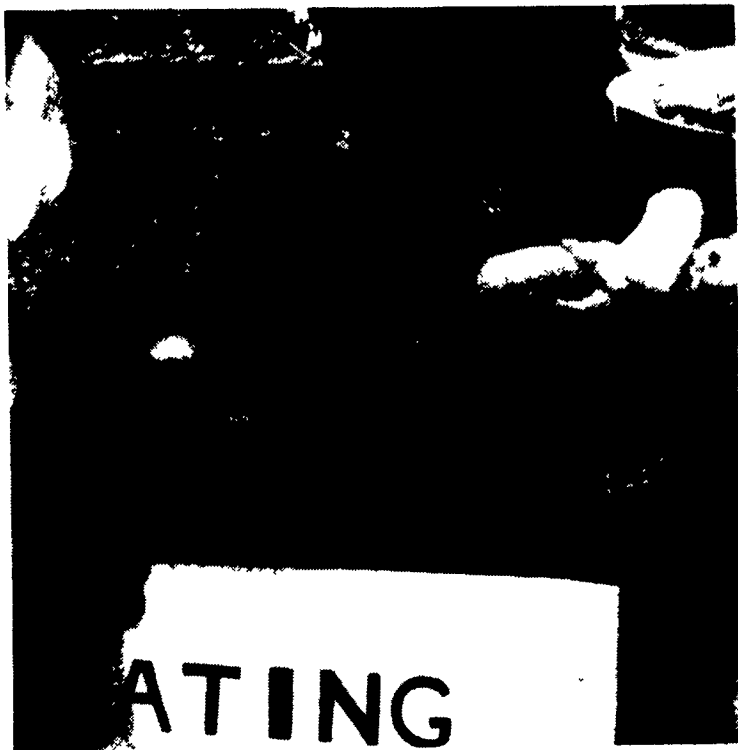
New Apple Queen, with a very appropriate name for the day, is Missy Showers, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. James Showers, fruit growers from R1 Aspers.

The annual festival has grown significantly over the more than past three decades of sponsorship by the Adams County Fruitgrowers Association. It's the traditional kickoff of another growing season for the county's more than 20,000 acres of fruit orchards.



Tina Hawn, Adams County's Beef Queen and 4-H Beef Club were in charge of the Petting barnyard at Apple Blossom Festival.

Some went bobbing



A floating Golden Delicious is not the easiest thing to chomp on to, but young and old tried last weekend in Adams County.

Plenty of fresh products to buy



Sales of apples, cider and apple butter were brisk last Saturday and even on Sunday despite wet weather at Apple Blossom Festival.

Let's take a hayride



Some festival-goers preferred old-fashioned hayride through orchards, while others toured through blossoming trees in buses.

Others dived into pies



No festival is complete without apple pie eating contests. Both youngsters and adults competed in Adams County.