

Young Farmers gather in Berks County

BY ROBIN PHILLIPS
Staff Correspondent

LEESPORT — Pennsylvania Young Farmers gathered in Berks County last weekend as the Berks County chapters hosted the 25th Annual Pennsylvania Young Farmers Summer Conference at the Ag Center, Leesport.

The host chapters, Conrad Weiser and Kutztown Area, treated the 250 farmers and wives to a weekend of farm tours, dancing, volleyball and horseshoe competition and fellowship at the 4-H Center and on farms throughout the county. Displays and exhibits by local businesses were also featured in the 4-H Center for farmers to browse through on their free time.

After registration on Friday, Ontelaunee Orchards and Willow Creek Animal Hospital were toured while the Executive board and Committees held their meetings. At the orchards, visitors viewed the controlled atmosphere fruit storage building and also the retail operation. Willow Creek Animal Hospital with its nine veterinarians and staff, displayed the in-patient and out-patient facilities including a pharmacy, x-ray room, diagnostic lab, environmentally controlled examination rooms, operating room, recovery room, and a large animal treatment area.

Following lunch, afternoon tours were arranged in either the Conrad Weiser area or the Kutztown area.

The Conrad Weiser tour featured Big Springs Farm, Robesonia; Robesonia Flowers, Robesonia; Mark Wolfskill Dairy/Beef Farm, and United Associated Grocers, Robesonia.

Big Springs Farm is the temporary home of many soon-to-be outstanding race horses. Dr. Thompson provides a special veterinary service for these race horses from the United States and Canada who have racing disabilities. The 135 acre rail-fenced farm also raises Standardbred horses from foals until ready to race.

Robesonia Flowers is a family operated greenhouse covering 15,000 square feet with two poly houses and one glass house. Highly automated, they specialize in

annual flower, vegetable, and special perennial plants through direct marketing.

The Mark Wolfskill dairy/beef operation utilizes bull calves from the 95 cow milking herd plus purchases from various brokers. The herd maintains an average of 19,500 milk and 725 fat, and 290 head of beef animals are finished annually at 1400-1500 pounds. High emphasis is also placed on water and soil conservation.

The final stop on this tour was with United Associated Grocers, the distribution and warehouse facility in Robesonia that has 328 stores in 18 counties. The company features 184 employees and 65 trucks to facilitate delivery of a quality product.

Marstellar Farm was the first stop on the Kutztown area tour. Housing 900 head of beef cattle at all times, the farm featured three 25 x 80 Harvestores, two 30 x 85 stave silos, and a slurry store manure storage system.

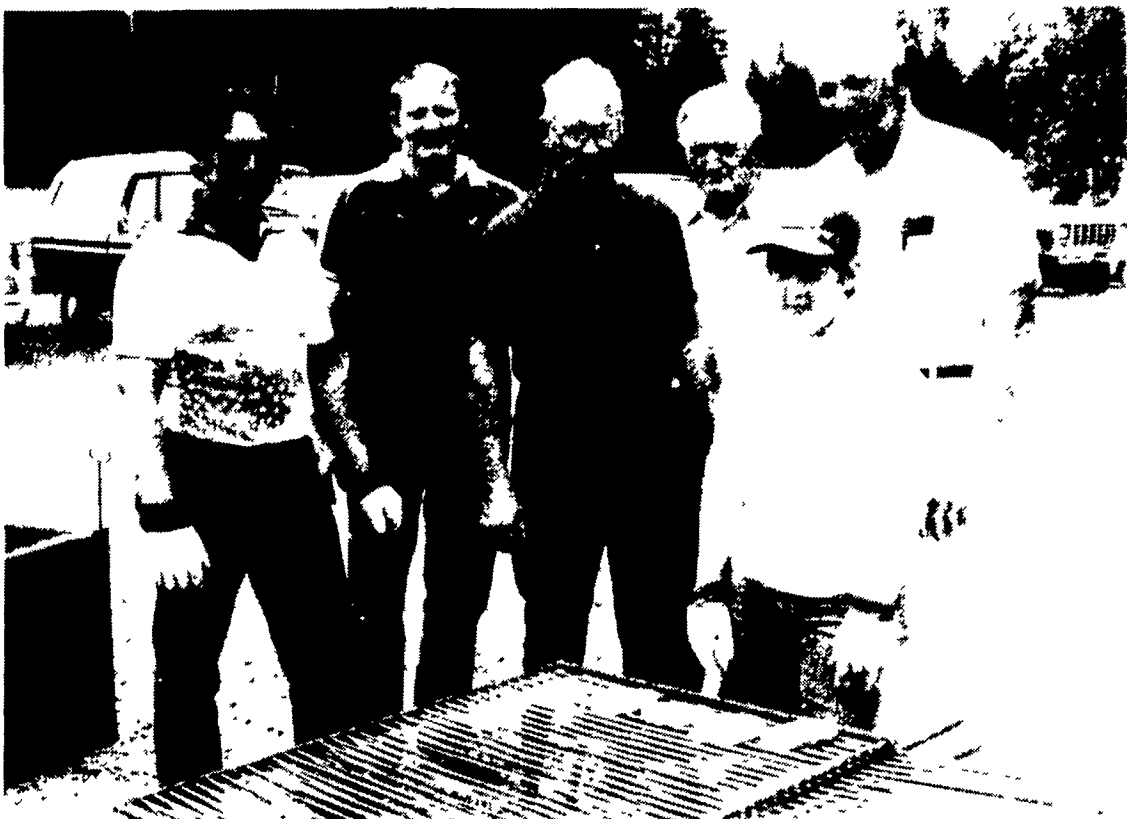
Vista Grande Dairy Farm was also visited. Founded in 1936 by Alpheus and Miriam Ruth, the farm is currently operated by Joseph and Joanne Ruth and David and Phoebe Bitler. The operation consists of 463 acres of cropland and a 85 head milking herd of registered Holsteins. A small herd of Jerseys is also housed on the farm.

The Rodale Research Center in Maxatawny Township, east of Kutztown, was also viewed. The agronomy, new crop, and aquaculture areas were featured on the tour.

The last stop was the Giorgio Foods, Inc. mushroom plant. The largest canner of processed mushrooms in the nation, the 150 acre Giorgio plant includes their own canning company, warehouses, and fleet of delivery trucks.

Friday evening highlights included the annual banquet and hoedown dancing after the catered meal. After greetings by Kenneth Sanner, Kutztown YF president, and Eugene Brubaker, Conrad Weiser YF president, State Senator, Michael A. O'Pake, spoke to the state's young farmers.

Saturday's agenda featured more tours including: Hidden-View Farm, Robesonia, Oaken-



The Eastern Pennsylvania Pork Producers prepared the noon meal for Young Farmers. Helping out at the grill are Dennis Cooper and son, Lenhartsville; Michael Moore, Oley; Paul Myers, Fleetwood; Melvin Burkholder, Fleetwood; and Lloyd Cooper, Lenhartsville.

bound Holsteins, Richland, Hedlund Martin, Inc., dairy industry equipment, Mil-Joy Farms, Virginville, Rothrock Golden Holsteins, Kempton, and Peters Brothers Meat Market, Lenhartsville.

The Eastern Pennsylvania Pork Producers prepared ham steak for the afternoon lunch break. Volleyball and horseshoe contests followed the noon meal as the Young Farmers concluded their conference.

The state president, Thomas Zartman, Ephrata, was on hand to remind everyone of the Mid-Winter convention scheduled for February 6 and 7 in Somerset County and the 1985 Summer Conference to be hosted by the Ephrata Chapter.

Twining heads Md. ag unit

ANNAPOLIS, Md. — Dr. Paul V. Twining of Princess Anne was elected Chairman of the Maryland Agricultural Commission at their last meeting which was held at the Department of Agriculture in Annapolis. Twining an independent poultry management consultant and contract broiler grower represents the poultry industry on the Commission.

The Agricultural Commission is an advisory group to the Secretary of Agriculture. The 17 members represent almost every commodity group throughout the State.

Twining succeeds George Kemp, also of Princess Anne who stepped down after four years as Chairman.

Secretary of Agriculture, Wayne A. Cawley, Jr., presented citations to two retiring members, F. Grove Miller and C. Rodman Myers. Cawley expressed his appreciation to both retirees for their dedication both to the Commission and to Maryland agriculture.

Miller of North East was one of the original members when the Commission was created in 1969 serving as the representative of the State Board of Agriculture. His term expired in 1971, however, he was reappointed in 1978 to represent the Maryland Farm Bureau.

Myers of Thurmont has represented the Maryland State Grange for the last six years. He is a dairy farmer who has been a very active member of several organizations and currently serves as president of Maryland Ag Week.



Guests from across the Commonwealth enjoyed the Pa. Dutch fixin's at Young Farmer gathering.



Standing below Young Farmer banner are Kenneth Sanner, left, president of the host Kutztown Chapter, and Harvey Krill, past officer of the Conrad Weiser Chapter.



On right is Tom Zartman, State Young Farmer president; and Ken Sanner, Kutztown president.