

On being a farm wife - And other hazards Joyce Bupp



Corn, tomatoes, and cantaloupes. That's lunch.

Dinner is maybe tomatoes, corn and cantaloupe.

Breakfast includes cantaloupe. (One family member likes to frill it up with a scoop of vanilla ice cream in the seed cavity.)

Sounds like a rut, doesn't it?

Not really. Fact is, we think August eating is just about tops. It makes weeds, gnats, snails, smut, hornworms, cornworms and cucumber beetles worth fighting. (Heavy on the weeds and gnats this season.)

"Could you use some corn or tomatoes?" neighbors hopefully ask each other, as every gardener overplanted to compensate for last summer's shortages.

"I want corn every day," pleaded the youngest family member after polishing off a half-dozen roasting ears at the first cob-

feast of the season.,

We've obliged almost 100 percent, interspersing roasting ear meals with chicken corn soup. The latter is due to the ultimate offering of their lives by some of the more vocal of last year's rooster crop.

To compensate for her shortcomings last year, Mother Nature seems to have hung her sprinkling can over the immediate area on a long-term basis, sending us almost record rainfall by inches.

While the hay crop languished and sometimes rotted in the rows, just about everything else has stretched upwards, reaching toward the heavens in gratitude.

And, several times, as vines curled around my ankles, this jungle which grew by inches seemed almost a dream.

"Let plenty of room between the rows," I had requested as the

family pitched in to help lay plastic mulch for the favorite crops. So they did, leaving broad expanses between rows of melons and tomatoes, cucumbers and squash.

Each crop saw the empty spaces as a challenge, and set off with Olympian grit to cover the gaps, weaving a tangled mesh of vines shaded with thick leaf covers.

Indeed, many have already split and spoiled under the canopy and clouds, and there are still more than enough cantaloups, Casaba melons, honey dews and watermelons.

While the scalloped squash did yield to the cucumber beetles, that only cheered on the neighboring zucchini to greater zealous output.

Butternut squash, planted instead of rot-prone pumpkins, crawled out of their broad patch, poked through the cosmos, between the cabbages and snuggled up to the onions.

This is all a cry, not of frustrations, but of elation for the productive and fruitful change after last year's desert-like heat and drought.

Thus, even droughts serve a purpose, if for no other reason than to remind us never to take for granted the blessing of abundant food which literally surrounds us.

Helaine Brown promoted

University Park, PA — Helaine D. Brown, Montgomery County Assistant Agent, has been promoted to the rank of associate extension agent. Associate agent is the third highest rank among Cooperative Extension agents.

Brown's responsibilities include managing the home and family living aspects of the county 4-H program. She has put special emphasis on promoting and improving the 4-H clothing and textile program, and since she joined the Montgomery County staff, close to

2,000 youth have participated in the 4-H self-improvement program.

Her efforts in cooperation with other county staff have helped increase the number of disabled youth in county 4-H programs by 200 percent.

She was a member of the Philadelphia County Extension Service staff prior to accepting her current position in 1980. There she worked with 4-H youth. She received a bachelor of science degree in education from Penn State in 1976.

Phyllis Paine

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care units were started. At that time a private duty nurse was hired when a patient needed additional attention.

At one time the Paines had over 300 head of hogs on their farm. They raised purebred hogs from 1961 to 1972. At the same time they were running a greenhouse. As the greenhouse business grew they couldn't do both well, so they sold the hogs.

Currently the Paines run both a greenhouse business and sell vegetables. A self-service vegetable stand is used to market their produce. The idea of a self-service stand evolved out of necessity when Phyllis had her second child.

How does she keep up with everything? "Every year I think I won't go through another year like this. Then I see the freshly plowed soil and I can't wait to get my

hands into it," says Phyllis. "I remember when I was in 4-H and someone told Tom King to make sure I married a farmer." It sounds like that was good advice.

Phyllis laughs easily, smiles, and seems satisfied as she discusses her life. As the mother of three children and a farm wife, Phyllis Paine has experienced her share of rough times, too. The family lost a barn to fire in the past and Phyllis recalls a time last fall when "everything seemed to be going wrong."

A quote which Phyllis has paraphrased serves as the thought which carries her through the rough times and lifts her above the hassles to enjoy life.

"God doesn't send you into the forest with a penknife to cut a tree. He equips you and provides the power for the task he has given you."

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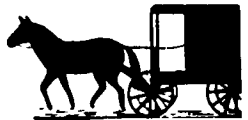
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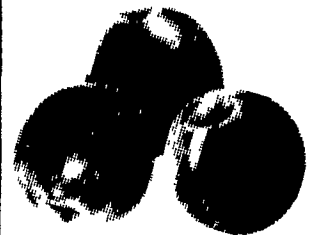
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