

Three farms on display on York Farm Tour June 15

BY JOYCE BUPP
Staff Correspondent

YORK — Hellam Township is the site for the sixth annual York Farmers' Association's farm tour, Saturday, June 15, from 10 a.m. through 4 p.m.

"The purpose of the tour is to promote better understanding farmers and their urban neighbors," according to tour chairman Jack Dehoff, a Red Lion dairy farmer.

There is no charge for the tour, which takes participants, via haywagon rides, to three farms serving as this year's hosts. Opening their operations are William and Louise Flinchbaugh and their son Ritchie, operators of a fruit, livestock and poultry farm, Pearl and Paul Mills, owners of Willow Tree Horse Farm, and dairy farmers Harry and Dorinda Arnold.

The original 59-acre Flinchbaugh farm was purchased from the Dietz family in 1951 by William's father, Jacob. William and Louise formed a partnership with his father until 1968, when son Ritchie joined the operation. In 1978, Ritchie and his wife Sonja then joined in a family partnership.

Seventeen acres are planted to a variety of orchard fruits, with apples, peaches, plums, cherries and pears in season. Sales are mostly wholesale, with small amounts retailed.

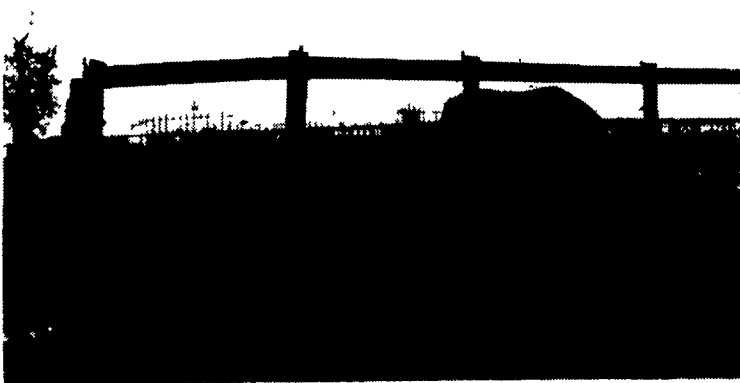
A diversified operation, the Flinchbaugh family also maintains an 800-head hog finishing house, and 8,000 heavy breeding chickens for the Longenecker Hatchery at Elizabethtown.

Crops are on 675 acres, 80 of them owned, with 540 planted to corn, 100 in wheat and 26 in oats. No-till planting is used primarily, for soil conservation purposes. Family members, full-time employee Rick Garner and occasional part-time assistants handle the chores of the changing harvest seasons.

The Flinchbaughs also have another son, Brian, and three grandchildren, at least one of



William and Louise Flinchbaugh are hosts for the York farm tour's stop at their orchard, grain, hog and poultry farm, operated in partnership with their son, Ritchie, and his wife Sonja.



Thoroughbreds at Willow Tree Farm graze 100 acres of pasture, enclosed with over six miles of new wire fence

whom they hope may someday find an interest in becoming the fourth generation to run the farm.

On hand to greet tour guests will be Susan Green of Biglerville, the Adams County Apple Queen, serving apple juice from Knouse Foods. Related commodity displays will feature grain equipment from Loucks Grain, planting and harvest machinery, and a bulk feed truck from Spangler and Sprengler Feeds.

Thoroughbreds grazing within the six miles of new fencing around 110 acres of pasture will welcome the wagons rolling up the lane to Willow Tree Horse Farm. This breeding and training facility is owned by Paul and Pearl Mills, who purchased the rolling land with its big bank barn in 1971. Two new barns have been added, for a total of 37 stalls available for the average population of 65 head, including two stallions, on the

farm. During peak breeding season, as high as 100 thoroughbreds roam the lush green pastures.

Mills' thoroughbreds are regulars in the racing ranks at Penn National. President of the Pennsylvania Horse Breeders Association, he has been the leading Pennsylvania breeder for the past six consecutive years, and seven out of the last eight.

A three-eighth mile length of

training track of the farm allows the Mills family to break and ready their own two-year-olds. Son Dennis is in charge of the family's training program at the Penn National track, with 19 horses presently in training and racing there.

Pearl handles the care of the brood mares, including her own mare, Royal Arapaho. Their daughter Kay is the farm's

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Along with the familiar black and white Holsteins in Harry Arnold's 40-head dairy herd are a number of the more unusual Red and White Holsteins.

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