

## DEKALB award to Kirkwood girl

WILLOW STREET — Trudi Anne Zook, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Samuel F. Zook of Kirkwood, was recently named winner of the 1985 DEKALB Agricultural Accomplishment Award.

The award, sponsored nation-

wide by DEKALB AgResearch, Inc. and DEKALB-PFIZER GENETICS, is presented to the senior agriculture student attaining the highest degree of proficiency in scholarship, leadership and a supervised

agricultural program.

Trudi attends Willow Street AVTS, where she has been president and secretary of the local FFA chapter. Her agricultural program consists of part-time employment at Frey's

Evergreen Plantation, Willow Street, PA. Following graduation, Trudi plans to attend Penn State University with Ornamental Nursery Management as her course.

As this year's winner, Trudi receives a pin and certificate, and

her name will be inscribed on a special plaque displayed in the Horticulture Shop. The DEKALB Award, often considered the highest honor a vo-ag student can receive on the local level, is presented in nearly 4,000 schools annually.

## Cattle numbers

WASHINGTON — USDA's latest count of the nation's cattle herd shows that numbers are down again.

The annual beginning of the year inventory of cattle and calves fell 3 percent from the year-earlier level—dropping from 113.7 million to 109.8 million head. That's the lowest it's been since 1968, when the herd stood at roughly 109 million head. The 1984 calf crop, at 42.5 million head, was the lowest since 1963.

"The reasons for the strong herd liquidation vary. They range from drought in major cattle-producing regions, which reduced forage supplies, to low net returns to cow-calf producers since 1981. The general financial stress in agriculture also plays an important role," says Economic Research Service economist John Nalivka in a recent issue of the Agriculture Department's FARMLINE magazine.

This year's nose count of all cattle and calves marks the third consecutive year of decline, and "next year's January 1 inventory will likely show another decline," he says. "By January 1987, however, cattle numbers should begin to pick up as cattle prices and returns improve over the next couple of years."

The latest figures show that drought-battered Texas producers reduced their beef breeding herds to 5.6 million head, down 8 percent from a year earlier.

"Other major cattle producing states that showed substantial declines of more than 5 percent in their inventories were Missouri, Nebraska, Montana, and Kansas," says Nalivka.

The number of beef cows and heifers that calved during 1984 was 35.4 million, a drop of 6 percent from the 1983 total. The number of replacement heifers held for beef herds declined 10 percent from a year earlier. When producers are expanding the herd, more heifers are held for breeding. A substantial increase in the number of heifers put on feed (headed for the slaughterhouse) indicates producers are liquidating herds.

"Reluctance to expand was evidenced by a 16-percent increase in

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