

Dairy Pipeline

By
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Extension
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Agent

25 Years of People Power

Life is a series of experiences and thresholds. Recently, I just crossed my 25-year threshold of working for the Penn State Extension Service, and what a wonderful experience it has been.

I consider it a privilege to have had the opportunity to work with so many interesting people and to work so closely with agriculture these past 25 years. To all of you who helped to fill my life with wonderful memories and experiences I say "Thank you; it's been great." Hopefully, I've been able to contribute as much to your lives as you've contributed to mine.

Life as an Extension Agent isn't all a bed of roses. In addition to the long hours, the irregular hours and the weekend details, there also is the nuisance of paper work, reports, committee work, governmental policies, budgetary crunches, help shortages, misunderstandings, and too much to do with too little time to do it. Sounds like farming, doesn't it? But overriding all of this is the reward and satisfaction of working with and helping people. They've taught me so much, and they've kept my batteries charged.

If there is one thing I've learned in these 25 years it's that there are a lot of great people out there. Most of them are very appreciative of what you do for them, and are supportive of worthwhile

programs.

I've always been impressed by how willing people are to share their experiences, their time and their talent in an effort to help someone else. This may be in the form of lending a helping hand to a neighbor in need, serving as a volunteer leader or as a member of an advisory committee. Others host tours and barn meetings or perform as speakers and panelists on programs.

It has also been rewarding to watch young people grow up into mature, responsible citizens. What a thrill it is to see a shy, young 4-H'er develop the poise and confidence necessary to give a winning set of oral reasons in a state-wide judging contest. It's great to observe how young people set goals, develop skills and then become role models to other young people, with whom they freely share their talents.

I can also remember when a 4-H club was concerned about the hungry people in Ethiopia. They conducted a show halter raffle at our 4-H dairy show and donated the proceeds to an Ethiopia project. Their actions inspired others to contribute, and the judge was so moved by their concern and efforts that he also donated his honorarium to the cause.

It's fun too, to watch young people learn how to work together, to conduct their own club meetings and to democratically arrive at

group decisions. In the arena of competition, young people learn to set high standards of achievement for themselves. It is also satisfying to watch these young people share their skills with other young competitors, and to watch them become humble winners and good "losers" — we try to get them to not think of themselves as losers.

I have a lot of faith in young people, and it's a great feeling to know that you've been involved with programs like 4-H that have helped people become excellent examples for others to follow.

I have also had great satisfaction in working with farm families helping young people get started in farming, helping more mature (more experienced) members of the family phase out of farming, helping farmers through rough financial and emotional situations, and helping them with a variety of herd and crop management concerns. I've also been fortunate in having many opportunities to work with friends in ag industry, agricultural organizations, and in the news media; they have been very supportive.

These thoughts may not do much

to help you manage your herd, your crops or your finances. But, there is more to life than cows, crops and money; occasionally, we need to reflect on our life's goals and our relationships with people.

This might sound like I am writing my farewell. Not so. I've

had 25 great years, and I hope to have many more. It's just my way of saying thank you for the good times; there are many great people in this world, and I am very fortunate to have been associated with so many of them.

Va. Apple Butter Contest

Set For Sept. 20

WINCHESTER, Va. — The Virginia Championship Apple Butter Making Contest will be held Saturday, Sept. 20, in the Winchester Recreation Park. The annual event is held in conjunction with the Rotary Club's Apple Harvest Festival and offers participants an opportunity to win over \$700 in prize money.

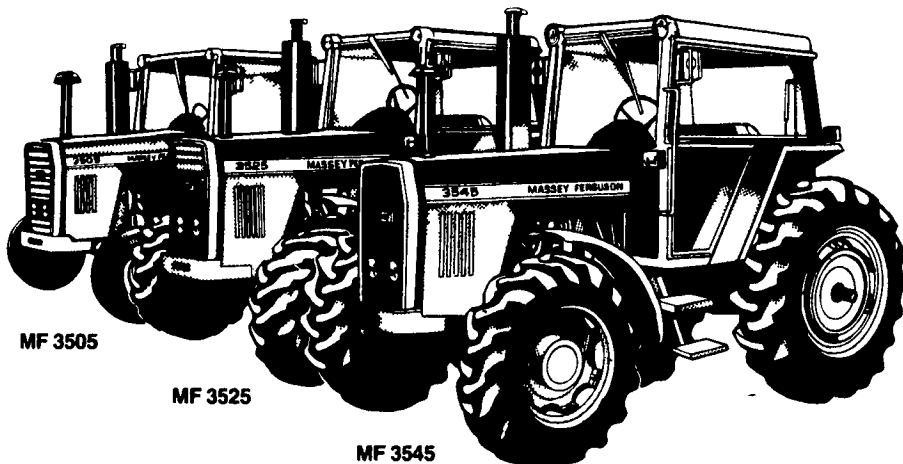
The contest is sponsored by the Frederick County Extension Service and the Winchester/Frederick County Chamber of Commerce in conjunction with the area apple

producers and support businesses. The apple butter must be made in the park on the day of the contest and can be sold on both Saturday and Sunday during the festival.

If you are interested in trying to unseat the 1985 Virginia Apple Butter Making Champions, John and Sherry Smith from Bunker Hill, W. Va., contact the Frederick County Extension Service by writing to Second Floor, Frederick County Courthouse, Winchester, VA 22601, or phoning 703-665-5699, for rules and entry forms.

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