

Smiths Named Blair County Farm Family Of The Year

BY BETSY STITT-YODER
Blair County Correspondent
MARTINSBURG — Shock and surprise played across the faces of Dennis and Margaret Smith as their names were announced as the 1986 Blair County Farm Family of the Year.

The presentation was made Oct. 16 at the annual Blair County Farm-City Banquet. The award is presented annually to a county family in recognition of a successful farming operation and community involvement.

Along with their three children, Doug, Dan and Laurie, the Smiths farm 196 acres in Morrisons Cove near Martinsburg.

"We are just ordinary farmers; we don't do anything special," exclaimed Mrs. Smith. "We were completely surprised with the award."

They are the second generation to farm the 76-acre Piney Creek Farm. Dennis and Margaret bought the farm from Dennis' parents, Marion and Verna, ten years ago.

They had farmed 40 years and were ready for retirement. Although he helped regularly on the farm, Dennis was also working for PPG Industries Inc. and Burchfield's Inc., a farm equipment dealer.

Margaret is a registered nurse and has worked at Nason Hospital, Spring Cove School District and for Dr. Whitstone.

The farm is definitely a family enterprise with each of the children helping. Doug and his wife, Veronica, and son, Ryan, live on the farm. He is employed full time.

Dan is a student at Indiana University of Pennsylvania, but he helps in the summer and during school breaks.

Laurie is a senior at Central High School. She not only helps on the farm, but promotes the "product of their toil" as Blair County dairy princess. Laurie also attended the Pennsylvania Governor's School of Agriculture at Penn State.

The Smiths rent 120 acres and raise corn and alfalfa to feed 68 milking registered Holsteins and 53 young cattle.

During the 10 years the Smiths have been farming on their own, they have seen numerous changes. "Things are more technical now with both crops and animals," Dennis said. Hybrid crops, monitored dairy rations, and sire selection have made dairying more complicated. "Computers are also on the increase," he continued.

The Smiths also discussed government involvement in agriculture. "The government can't get out of it all at once, but the less involved they are, the better," Dennis said. "Farming should be run as a business."



The Dennis Smith family is the new Blair County Farm Family of the Year. They are (front from left) Margaret and Veronica, and (rear from left) Dan, Dennis, Laurie and Doug.

Margaret agrees that farming requires better management than it used to. "Much more time is now spent on keeping records and making management decisions," she said.

Mrs. Smith's main job on the



Laurie, who serves as the Blair County dairy princess, checks on the calves.



Laurie, Margie, Dennis and Doug work together closely to run an efficient farm.

farm is record keeping and she is also very involved in the community, especially in the Dairy Promotion Committee.

She believes the public needs to be educated about the time and money involved in farming and sees her work with the dairy promotion committee as one way of working toward that goal.

Although the future is not always bright, the Smiths would not trade their lifestyle. "The closeness of the family working together on the farm can't be beaten," Dennis and Margaret agreed.

They think the farm is a good

place to raise children because it teaches them responsibility. Farm children also learn to depend on one another, they added.

The Smiths have allowed their children to choose their future careers for themselves. The children have been involved in school activities and sports and have always received their parent's support.

"We hope we can keep everything going and see the third and possibly fourth generation farming here," they said. With the start they have, their future looks bright.

PA Farmers Annual Meeting To Be Held In Hershey

CAMP HILL — The future course of Pennsylvania's leading general farm organization will be determined by several hundred farmers during the 36th Annual Meeting of the Pennsylvania Farmers' Association (PFA) Nov. 17-19 at the Hershey Lodge and Convention Center.

PFA Voting Delegates will elect officers, including a president, and will set policies on important farm issues for the coming year. PFA is a voluntary farm organization representing 23,361 farm families statewide.

The Governor-Elect of Pennsylvania is scheduled to deliver the Opening Address to the PFA convention during a luncheon at 12:15 p.m., Monday, Nov. 17. At 2 p.m., a roll call of 170 Voting Delegates will begin three days of deliberations on policy resolutions originating from PFA's 54 county associations.

"Market Culture", the theme of the Annual Meeting, will be highlighted in a number of conferences planned for the event. On Monday, Nov. 17, Snyder County vegetable grower Titus Hoover will speak about "Marketing Your

Own Products" at 10 a.m., and Lancaster County egg producer Richard Myer will discuss "Waste Marketing" at 2:30 p.m. PFA staff will conduct concurrent sessions beginning at 3:30 p.m. on farming with computers and managing marketing risks through forward contracts, hedging and other methods.

On Tuesday, Nov. 18, nationally known commodity marketing consultant Richard Brock will speak about "Megatrends In Agriculture" and "Marketing Strategy" in back-to-back sessions beginning at 8:45 a.m. From 2 p.m. to 4 p.m., PFA's annual outlook conference will present expert forecasts on next year's markets for fruits and vegetables, grain, poultry, finances, livestock and dairy.

Other topics will also be featured in convention conferences. Dairy Council Inc. nutrition consultant Lila Darling will discuss osteoporosis at 2 p.m., Monday, and public affairs consultant George Wolff of Lebanon County will conduct a seminar on "Environmental Pollution and Farming", also at 2 p.m. On Tuesday, Dr. James Van Horn, Associate

Professor of Family Sociology at Penn State University, will speak at 8:45 a.m. on the topic, "Are Volunteers A Thing of the Past?" At 2 p.m. Dr. Suzanne Harris, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Food and Consumer Services, USDA, will address "Consumer Concerns". Marie Peiffer, past County Commissioner for Cumberland County, will discuss "Opportunities In Local Government" at 3:15 p.m.

PFA President Keith Eckel of Lackawanna County will present the President's Annual Report to the convention at noon Tuesday.

Recognition of Outstanding Young Farm Couples will also highlight the Tuesday luncheon.

PFA will present its Distinguished Service to Agriculture Award during the Annual Banquet, Tuesday at 7 p.m., County farmers' associations which have received "Star" awards for excellence in PFA programs will also be recognized.

Dr. Lamartine Hood, Dean of the College of Agriculture at Penn State University will be the guest speaker at the Tuesday evening banquet. He will speak on "Charting A New Path for Penn-

sylvania Agriculture."

PFA voting delegates will adopt final policies on Wednesday, Nov. 19. They will also conduct elections for the office of PFA president and for 10 members of PFA's 16-member State Board of Directors. Eight vacancies on the 16-member State Women's Committee will also be filled.

The annual meeting of PFA's marketing cooperative, PACMA, will take place Tuesday, Nov. 18, beginning at 4:45 p.m.

About 900 farmers are expected to participate in various activities during PFA's convention.

USDA Buyout Report

WASHINGTON — An estimated 10,400 head of dairy cattle were slaughtered in federally inspected plants during the week ending Oct. 11, as a result of the Dairy Termination Program, the U.S. Department of Agriculture announced Wednesday.

This total includes all cows, heifers and calves identified as dairy animals designated for disposition in compliance with the program requirements.

The cumulative total of cattle slaughtered under the program from April 1 through Oct. 11 is an estimated 811,800 head.

The purchases of meat in addition to normal purchases are to help offset the effects of the DTP on the domestic meat market. For the two-week period ending Oct. 25, the government purchased 200,000 pounds of meat. The cumulative purchases, reported bi-weekly as

of Oct. 25, total 297.8 million pounds.

Dairy cattle reported for export under the program for the period April 1 to Oct. 25 totaled an estimated 39,143 head. An estimated 1,108 were exported during the week ending Oct. 25.

Live cattle exported under the program are expected to increase as countries develop tenders to participate in the export enhancement program.