

Meet The PA Pork All-American Couple

(Continued from Page A1)

nized for their contribution to the industry, their families and their communities. Only one pork producer from each selected state is chosen annually.

Burkholders operate a farrow to finish operation of 100 sows. An average 10.8 pigs are farrowed per litter with an average birth weight of 3.5 pounds. The piglets are weaned at three weeks of age with 9.2 pigs weaned at an average weight of 13.5 pounds.

About 1,400 finished hogs are marketed per year; he sells the balance as feeders. All market and feeder hogs are checked off in the 100% Legislative Pork Checkoff program.

The farm operation consists of 450-acres on which are located three hog buildings and a grain set-up. The facilities consist of 80 gestation crates and breeding pens. There are 24 farrowing crates on woven wire. All manure is handled through a pull plug system, which results in less gas in the building and better growth among hogs.

Concerned with producing the best pork for today's consumers, Steve uses PIC stock for his guilts and boars. He finds that the combination of specialized stock and feed analysis produces a good,

lean hog.

So lean, in fact, that their local butcher expresses amazement that there is no fat to trim from their hogs when butchering. It's the pork of today that the consumer demands: Lean, tasty and nutritious.

Steve worked for his father for 25 years before taking over the hog operation in 1985. The Burkholders live on a picturesque farm, a separate facility from their pig operation. The couple completely gutted and remodeled the house. They used red oak trees, cut down on their own property to make the woodwork, doors and shelves.

Although Darlene is employed full time in nursing, she finds time to serve as the national pork women's council director for the state and is a member of several of their committees. Her nursing profession kindles her interest in nutrition; consequently she heads the national diet and health committee for the council. That requires her to update dietitians on pork's progression to a healthy meat.

Darlene's pork promotion is carried through at home where pork is their main meat. She said, "I use ground pork in place of hamburger," she said. "It's very adapti-

ble to almost all recipes calling for ground beef."

Darlene is appalled that many people overcook pork. "People ruin pork. They destroy it by cooking it to death." For juicy, tender pork, it should be cooked only to an internal temperature of 165 to 170 degrees.

Convinced that people who taste properly cooked pork will increase their consumption, Darlene steered the pork promotions efforts into handing out 200 aprons to pork recipe contributors to "Lancaster Farming." In less than two weeks the paper received the 200 quota. Some of these recipes are printed in this issue and the remainder will be printed in upcoming issues.

The Burkholders regret that although the state is one of the largest pork producers nationally, it takes the smallest part in promoting its product.

They're out to change that. "We must educate people on the good qualities of pork." Steve said, "The more we do, the more we get out of it."

Steve has been a member of the Eastern Pennsylvania Pork Producers Association for 13 years, and has served as president for four years. He has been a member of the state Pork Producers Council for seven years and president of it for two. In addition to the state and national pork committees the



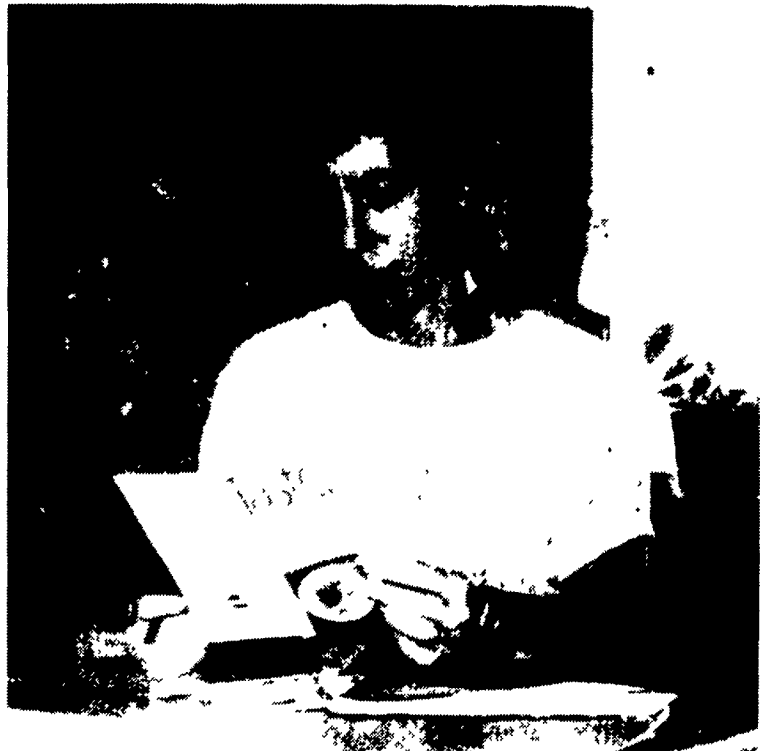
Stephen Burkholder received the PA Pork All-American award from Ray Hankes, president of the National Pork Producers Council.

Burkholders work on, Steve also does promotion at such things as the Ag Progress pork stand.

"We give a lot of time," he said. "It's volunteer work that we don't get a cent for doing, but we believe the more you're involved, the more you get out of life."

With their dedication and hard work, it is not surprising that Steve has been named PA Pork All-American." His name is added to the list of 544 men and women who have been recognized since the program was established in 1970. Only one per state is selected

annually. Candidates must be between 25 and 40 years of age. The size and type of the individual's operation is not a determining factor. They are chosen on the basis of their leadership, efficiency, and total contribution to the industry.



Darlene Burkholder checks over pork recipes and compares their nutritive value with other meats. She's convinced pork can't be beat.



Stephen and Darlene Burkholder take a moment to relax in front of their home. Both donate much time and effort into pork promotion.

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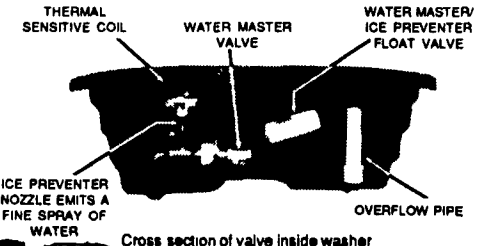
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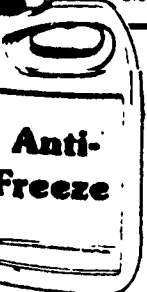
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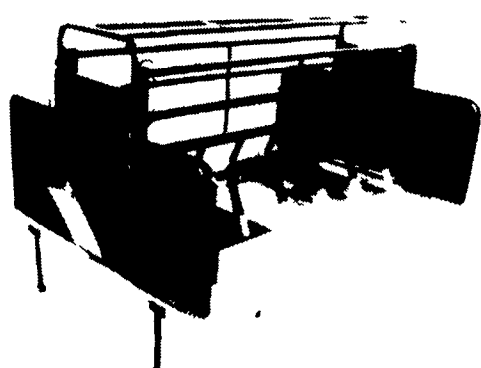
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