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# Lancaster Farming

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**NEW PROVIDENCE** (Lancaster Co.)—Because of the early break in the weather, Lancaster County's famous cash crop, tobacco, got a head start this year along with other field crops. Reports from farmers indicate that some tobacco has already

been planted in the Quarryville and Ephrata areas.

But not all tobacco seed beds are created equal this year. Donald Rohrer, Strasburg, said farmers who planted their seed dry in March were caught in

those five or six days of record high temperatures. And some of the seed didn't sprout.

County Agent Jay Irwin said the good weather has brought all the crops on about 10 days earlier this year. As for crop acres,

Irwin said, "I have not heard much about farmers wanting to cut back. So I expect we will have about the same number of acres as last year."

On the Harold S. Hess Farm in New Providence Monday

afternoon, son Dale was spraying the tobacco beds with a fungicide. These three beds of plants looked very good. The Hesses expect to plant about 14 acres this year. And they supply plants for neighbors too.

*Photo by Everett Newswanger*

## W. Va. Fruit Research Station Develops New Varieties

**ANDY ANDREWS**  
Lancaster Farming Staff  
**KEARNEYSVILLE,**  
W.Va. — And you thought growing peach trees took a long time.

It takes even longer to *breed* peaches. From the time a species

of peach, nectarine, or other fruit tree is hand-pollinated in the field until the fruit is weighed at the grocery store often takes as long as 25 or 30 years.

But it's all part of the job for the fruit scientists based in this small town located southeast of Martins-

burg. The Appalachian Fruit Research Station (AFRS), directed by the USDA's Agricultural Research Service (ARS), is one of 120 ARS locations.

Totalling 500 acres, more than 250 acres of land are planted with apples, peaches, pears, apricots,

and plums. A staff of 21 includes agronomists, research horticulturists, and a molecular biologist.

### Cold spring

Because of the excessively cold spring this year, many Northeast fruit trees were damaged. Orchard-

dist and other fruit growers look to some of the multidisciplinary research this station performs for local extension offices and, ultimately, the fruit farmer. Because of the frost, research is in "full bloom," as it were, on plant phys-  
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## Livestock Auctions Are Living History

**VERNON ACHENBACH, JR.**  
Lancaster Farming Staff  
**VINTAGE** (Lancaster Co.) — Perhaps no other aspect of rural life is more poignant than the changing direction of marketing livestock.

Just how long livestock auctions can viable in light of the changing farm scene is hard to predict.

According to one man who has seen the changes for more than a quarter century, the survival of these historic and culturally significant landmarks depends on the survival of a certain type of farmer

upon whose patronage these auction barns exist.

To John Zimmerman, director of the livestock division of the state agriculture department, the apparent course of local livestock

auctions is a saddening picture that reflects an irreversible change in agriculturally-dependent living.

Today the auctions are still central to business by certain factions

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## U.S. Ag Secretary Names Members To Dairy Board

WASHINGTON, DC—Secretary of Agriculture Clayton Yeutter recently announced the appointment of 11 new members and one incumbent to the National Dairy

Promotion and Research Board for three-year terms beginning May 1.

Newly appointed are: (region 2)

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The newly crowned Berks County Dairy Princess Suzann Moyer is the daughter of Karen and Ray Moyer, the managers of Junge Farms. Turn to page A 38 to read more about the pageant.