

Berks Farmers Hold Corn Contest



Some of the participants in the annual corn contest held by Kutztown Young Farmers Association gather in front of the corn samples recently in Kutztown High School. They are, from left, Tom Ishler, a Cargill rep who judged the corn; William Boyd of Mertztown, association president; Robert Tercha of Mertztown, who won the yield contest; and David Schantz of Alburts, who won the corn quality and silage contests.

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Berks Co. Correspondent

KUTZTOWN (Berks Co.)—Berks County farmers were luckier than most others in the state this summer. Their corn crops were pretty decent, said Robert Tercha, a corn farmer from Mertztown.

"We got a couple of showers at the right time," said Tercha about the good yields. "This end of the county got decent rain."

Tercha was the winner of the yield division of the corn contest held recently by the Kutztown Area Young Farmers Association. His wife, Melinda, helped organize the contest held in the Kutztown High School agriculture rooms.

David Schantz of Alburts is first in the corn quality and corn silage division with a total of 19,430 tons per acre. The type of corn he planted was Pioneer 3358.

On Schantz's 450-acre farm, he milks 175 registered Holsteins. He also has 200 heifer replacements.

His winning corn was taken from a low-lying field, he said, imparting enough moisture to produce a top quality ear with a moisture content of 20.1 percent.

Tercha said he used a new variety from Pioneer--No. 3245, which gave him 229.9 bushels per acre with a moisture content of 22.5 percent. Tercha said he grew the corn in a good field and also applied hog manure to it, a change from last year.

An indicator of the good growing year was that the corn was harvested three weeks earlier this year due to the heat. He also noted that corn prices are better this year at \$2.65 a bushel, up from \$2.35 a bushel last year.

The association has been holding the corn contest since the mid-60s, Tercha said. Representatives from seed companies judge the corn and the silage.

This year, said Melinda Tercha, the association added a hay contest.

"We do it for a learning experience," Schantz said about the value of the contest. "It's adult education."

Seed company reps also give away prizes of bags of seeds and tools to the contest winners.

"About \$1,500 in prizes will be given away tonight," Tercha said.

Tom Ishler of Leola, a corn breeder at Cargill, judged the 22 entries of corn for quality. He said he looks for uniformity of ear size, kernel size, and disease resistance.

"This was a difficult year for growing corn," Ishler said.

In the corn yield division, Kathy Schantz, wife of Dave, came in second with Pioneer 3140; Dave Schantz was third with Pioneer 3358; David Bitler was fourth with DeKalb 636; and Karen Boyd was fifth with Doblars 7.

In corn silage yields, Ralph Sanner was second with Cargill 9027; Kenneth Sanner was third with Pioneer 3140; Floyd Kurtz was fourth, also with Pioneer 3140; and Kerry Young was fifth with DeKalb 689.

Ernie Angstadt of Kutztown won the hay contest, a new addition this year. Members were asked to bring later cuttings of alfalfa.

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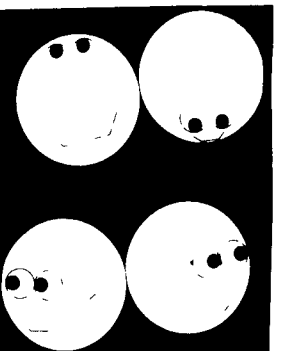
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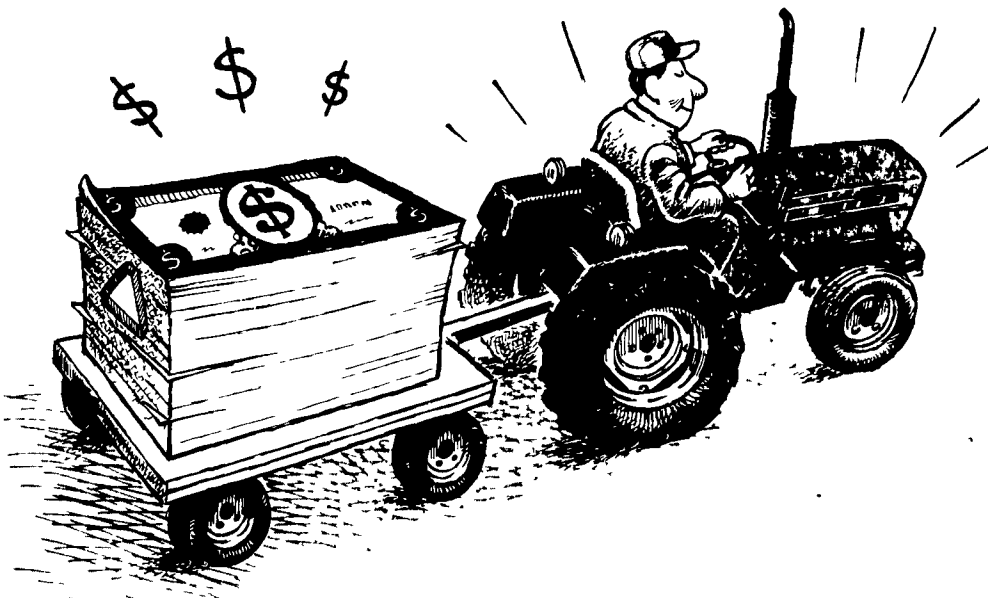
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