

# Hired Labor Availability Changes For Farms

UNIVERSITY PARK (Centre Co.) — Pennsylvania farmers are having a harder time finding hired labor, according to a survey conducted by Dr. Jill Findeis, associate professor of agricultural economics in Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences.

To assess hired farm labor availability in Pennsylvania and to determine the strategies farmers use to keep laborers, Findeis and project associate Timothy Bowser asked 484 farm households about the amounts of time the principal farm operator, spouse, children and other relatives spent doing on-farm work by season.

The researchers also asked about the use and perceived availability of different types of farm labor, the wages and perks given to hired farm labor, the needs for additional hired labor, and strategies used to retain workers.

According to the results, Pennsylvania farmers believe that hired labor has become less available in the past five years. "When asked about the availability of farm labor in their area compared to five

years ago, 62 percent believed labor was less available in 1991, while 31 percent saw no change and 7 percent perceived an increase," Findeis said.

When asked about the availability of local labor, many farmers said that jobs outside farming were attracting students and others that they had previously relied upon for summer work. "Some farmers believed they were unable to compete with nonfarm jobs in terms of providing comparable wages and benefits," Findeis said. "Others felt that these jobs did not necessarily pay more per hour, but that fewer work hours per day or per week were more attractive than farming hours."

The survey also indicated that few Pennsylvania farmers adopted practices designed to attract and retain labor other than being kind, friendly, and considerate to their workers. "Farmers who must hire workers will need to find other methods for meeting the workers' needs, if not in the short run during the recession, then in the long run," Findeis said.

As nonfarm opportunities increase, farmers will need to provide potential farm workers with competitive salaries, benefits, and hours. "Some farmers will be unable to match conditions in the nonfarm sector," Findeis said, "but those who do will find the labor they need."

The survey also showed that Pennsylvania farmers found full-time labor particularly difficult to hire, but many farm families also had difficulty hiring seasonal and year-round part-time labor.

"Some farmers said they would hire more workers if they were available at an affordable price in their area," Findeis said. "Interestingly, although farmers thought full-time labor had become particularly more difficult to hire, more farms reported needing additional seasonal and part-time labor. Of the more than 450 responding farms, 85 reported wanting to hire more seasonal farm labor and 65 reported needing more year-round part-time workers. Only 26 farms wanted to hire more full-time labor."

From the viewpoint of Pennsylvania farmers, said Findeis, several trends are important for the future. "It's likely that the trend toward fewer part-time workers will continue. The hired farm work-

force will have an increasingly greater proportion of full-time workers.

"Second, mid-size farms may have the most difficulty attracting and retaining farm workers now and in the future," she said. "Small and large farms pay higher wages on average and are more likely to attract hired labor than mid-size farms."

"Smaller farms - those with less than \$40,000 in annual sales - hired fewer workers, especially full-

time labor," Findeis said. "Only 20 percent of small farms in Pennsylvania hired labor."

"About 60 percent of the large farms - those with more than \$100,000 in sales - hired some labor. Only 10 percent of mid-sized farms hired full-time labor compared to 30.1 percent of larger farms. Larger farms also were more likely to hire seasonal labor than mid-size farms - 23 percent of large farms compared to 15 percent of mid-size farms."



SCRANTON (Lackawanna Co.) — Keith Eckel, Lackawanna County vegetable and grain farmer and president of the Pennsylvania Farmers Association, received the "Friend of Extension" Award from Epsilon Sigma Phi, the national extension honorary fraternity, at the annual meeting of the Alpha Omicron Chapter and was the "center piece" speaker at the All College Conference of the College of Agriculture at Penn State University. Shown with Eckel, left, is Tom Jurchak, Lackawanna County extension agent, center, J. Lee Miller, Beaver County extension director, right.

## Public Auction Register

Closing Date Monday 5:00 P.M.  
of each week's publication

### DECEMBER

SAT. DEC. 12 - 9AM, Antiques, Furniture, Glassware, Collectables, Guns, Coins & Household Goods. Estate Of J. Evans Wiker ET Al. Barr & Davis, Aucts.

SAT. DEC. 12 - 9AM, Special Consignment Of Old Oriental Rugs From Mud. Estate. Located At Rudnick's Sales, Route 213, Galena, Md. Harry Rudnick & Sons, Inc., Sales Manager, Aucts., Real Estate Broker.

SAT. DEC. 12 - 10AM, Large Cat Attachment & Late Model Cat Equipment Auction Located 15 Miles East Of Harrisburg, Just Off Interstate 81 (Exit 28). Proceed North On Rt. 743, Follow The Signs To The Sale Site. Alex Lyon & Son, Sales Manager & Aucts.

WED. DEC. 16 - 3:30PM Brad Smith Auction Co Antiques. Selling the Anna Marie Malone Estate 5 miles South of Red Lion along Rt. #74, just before the Brogue, York Co., PA. Signs posted. Bradley K. &

Patricia L. Smith, aucts  
WED. DEC. 16 - 6PM, Over 150 Winross Trucks. Located At Kleinfelter's Auction Room, 105 Chapel St., Lebanon, Pa. 17042, Between 7th & 8th Sts Off Willow St. Clayton, David & Ralph Kleinfelter, Aucts.

SAT. DEC. 19 - 9AM, Auto Mechanics Auction. Located Indoors On Site At The Intersection Of North & Eichelberger Streets In The Boro of Hanover, Pa. Earl & Bill Motor Company, Inc Randy L. Hilker, Auct.

SAT. DEC 19 - 10AM Landscape, construction equip, dump truck & truck tractor auction Use Rt 78 to Clinton, proceed on Rt 31 South, 8 miles to the Flemington Fairgrounds,

approx 35 minutes from Newark Alex Lyon & Son, aucts

SAT. DEC 19 - 10AM, Montour County Farm Auction Of Farm Machinery & Livestock. Located 7 Mi North Of Danville & 1 Mi South Of Washingtonville Off Rt 54 Just 4 Mi. North Of Interstate 80, Exit 33 Off Rt. 54. Owner, Allen H. Schafer Bryan D Imes, Auct.

SAT. DEC 19 - 10:45AM, 31 Banks & Lending Institutions Offer Approx. 175 Repossessed And Lease Vehicles. Located At Keystone Public Auto Exchange, Rt. 22/322 Between Dauphin & Clarks Ferry Bridge Local Banks Kerry Pae, Auct.

## PUBLIC AUCTION

OF  
OVER 150 WINROSS TRUCKS  
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DEC. 16TH AT 6:00 P.M.

At Kleinfelter's Auction Room, 105 Chapel St. Lebanon, PA 17042. Located between 7th & 8th Sts. off Willow St.

Here's A Partial Listing - Pie - Arasmith - Yellow Freight - Preston All Dbl., Singles - You've Got Frien in PA "Blue" - Try Me In Milk Hershey - Rohrer Seeds - Leffler "Plister Pak" - 1st Hirsh w/Flowers Middleton - Met. Ed Line Truck - Mack Trucks - Pie - Allied Van Lines - Rutter's Dairy - Sico Tanker - Red Star Express - Coca-Cola - Carolina - 7-up - Reeses Cups "Amer. Flag" - 88' Hatfield Meats - Keebler Elves - Clyde Weaver "Chrome tank" - Penn State 86 Ford - Penn State Mack - 88 Election Dem. & Rep. - Copes Corn - Taynton's - Keller Bros. "Red-Blue-Yellow" - Hershey AACA Meats - Roadway - Penfield - Hershey Cocoa - M&R Grain "Soybean" - Rough & Tumble - Rajah Temple - Rajah Ertl - Bell Ertl - Penn State Ertl - Tonka Bell tel. - 4-Hess Trucks (2-First) - etc. Plus Lots of unlisted trucks!

Preview of Trucks: Wed. Dec. 16th 8:00 - 12:00 noon & 1:00 p.m. till sale time.

Clayton, David & Ralph Kleinfelter  
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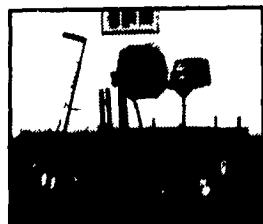
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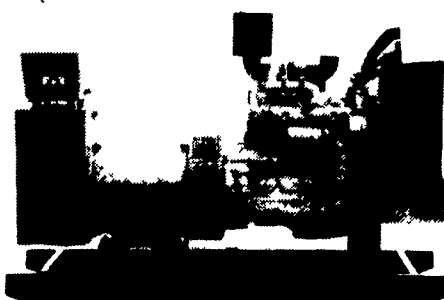
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