

*Some markets
not available due
to the holiday*

**Shenandoah
Valley
Livestock**

Harrisonburg, Va.
Dec. 19, 1992

Report supplied by auction

STEERS: M&L-1 300-500 LBS. 85.00-96.00; 500-700 LBS. 78.00-83.50; 700-1000 LBS. 71.00-78.00; HOLSTEIN 300-1000 LBS. 71.75-75.00.
S-L&M&L-2: 700-1000 LBS. 64.00-71.50.
FEEDER BULLS: 300-500 LBS. 80.00-90.00; 500-700 LBS. 65.00-77.50; 700-800 LBS. 60.00-62.50.
HEIFERS: 300-500 LBS. 71.50-79.00; 500-700 LBS. 68.00-75.00.
S&M&L-2: 300-500 LBS. 65.00-71.00; 500-700 LBS. 63.00-68.00.
BABY CALVES: BY THE HEAD 75.00-150.00.
SLAUGHTER COWS: UTILITY AND COMMERCIAL 45.00-48.25; CANNERS AND CUTTERS 1-2 38.00-40.00.
SLAUGHTER BULLS: 55.00-61.25.
LAMBS: BLUE O HIGH CHOICE AND PRIME 74.50; RED O CHOICE 67.50; FEEDER LAMBS CHOICE 73.00-80.00; SLAUGHTER EWES 23.50-36.50.
HOGS: US#1-3 250-400 LBS. 28.00-33.00.
SOWS: 29.00.

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CABBAGE: 2.00-5.00 50 LBS.
SWEET POTATOES: 2.50-4.00 ¼ BU.
POTATOES: 2.75-4.00 50 LB., 1.00-1.35 20 LBS.
ORANGES: 5.00-10.00 BOX.
GRAPEFRUITS: 6.00-9.00 BOX.
POINSETTIAS: SMALL TO LARGE 1.00-2.00 EACH.

What's Christmas Without A Tree?

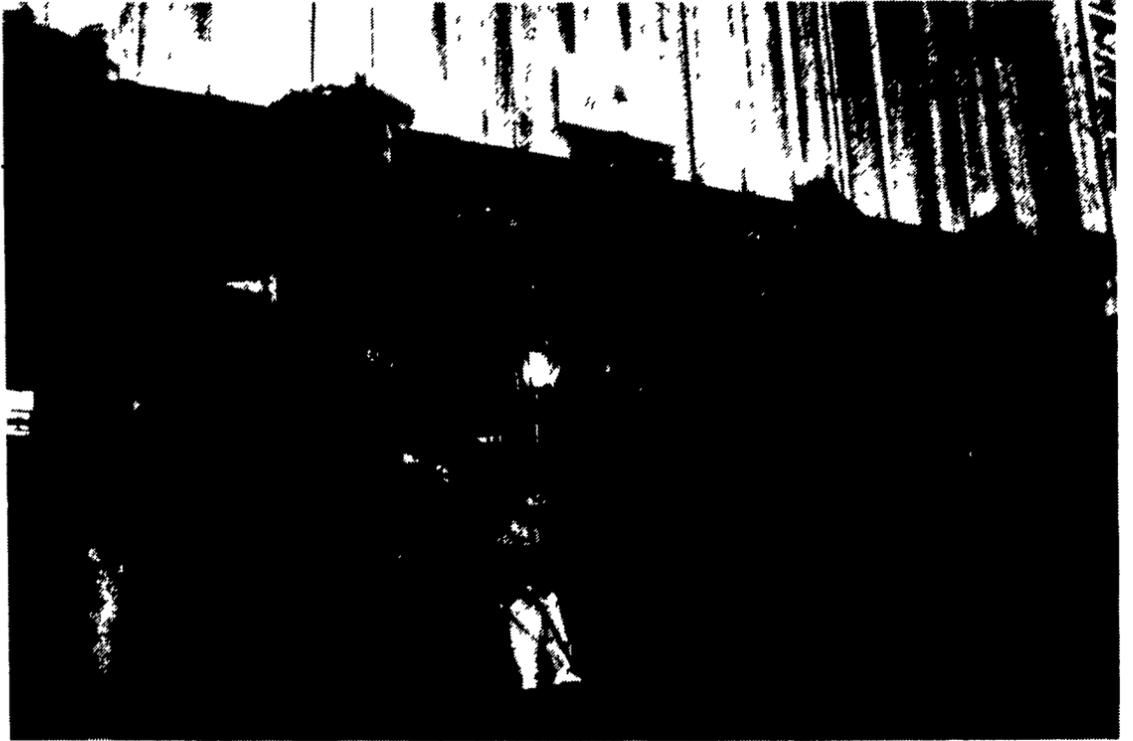
EVERETT NEWSWANGER
Managing Editor

ON THE ROAD FROM MILLERSVILLE TO NEW DANVILLE (Lancaster Co.)—Nestled on the hill overlooking the Conestoga River, the newly established Honeysuckle Hill Tree Farm poses for the antiquity and conservationism that many people blend into the meaning of Christmas. "Newly established" means the trees harvested this year were planted in 1985. And the people who blend the meaning of Christmas into the tagging, cutting and bringing home a live Christmas tree are Honeysuckle's customers.

And the customers come, 100 a day over weekends, up the gravel lane past the chateau to the weathered bank barn that serves as a sales room. A horse in the hill pasture lifts his head over the rail fence and neighs a small greeting as you disembark from your vehicle. You may pet his nose if you are inclined to do so. The sliding doors to enter the side of the barn are obviously new, but they look old.

Inside, a warm woodstove fire greets you along with a Holstein calf in the side stall and a friendly kitten. The smell of hot cider and apple munchies along with a pile of evergreen branches given free to customers fills your nose with a pleasant Christmas feeling that's hard to resist.

For Don Claussen, the idea to use his nine plus acres as a Christmas tree farm was an evolutionary process. At first the land was rented as corn ground. He later considered grapes, but the short period of intensive harvest required for grapes did not fit the



At Honeysuckle Hill Farm, selecting a tree becomes part of the Christmas tradition. On hand to help create this Christmas photo are from left, Mark Sharpe; Billy Killian, 3, and his dad Alan Killian who manages the farm; and Joe Koehler. Billy's twin brother Roger Alan III was in pre-school when the photo was taken.

part-time position he had available for farm work.

When a colleague at Armstrong World Industries suggested he grow Christmas trees, the idea seemed to fit with the resources and the land preservation desires Claussen had for the farm.

"I wanted a crop that looks good, beautiful year around, that the wild life would enjoy," Claussen said. "I'm not a hunter, a conservationist I suppose. I wanted the farm to be profitable, too, but that was not the driving issue."

In a business that is competitive,

Honeysuckle Farm has found a niche that works. They develop top quality trees. And they develop special customer relations with families who want the purchase of a Christmas tree to be part of the Christmas celebration.

To develop the trees, they plant in grids that include a sod strip between rows to hold the soil from washing into the river during heavy rain storms. Herbicide is used under the trees to prevent competition for moisture and to keep the lower branches nice.

Each tree is pruned to keep a

Christmas tree shape and remove excess growth. If the lead (top shoot) is bent, a pipe cleaner is attached to cause the tree to grow straight again. Seedlings are planted between older trees to get a head start on the next crop of trees.

"I'm competing with the large growers," Claussen said. "They know what they are doing on a large scale, and they would not use my methods. They do it in volume and commercially. I can't be big, but I can be good."

To accommodate customers,

(Turn to Page A14)

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