

4-H'ers Sell Safety Signs For Farm Equipment



Organizing orders for slow-moving-vehicle signs are from left Greg, Eric and Steve Gemmill, with assistance from their mother, Martha, who is chairman of the 4-H activity.

Joyce Bupp
York Co. Correspondent

DELTA (York Co.) — Thousands of kids will visit the Pennsylvania Farm Show this week.

Most of them will probably crawl up on a tractor or piece of equipment at least once during their visit.

Farm kids usually learn to drive and operate tractors at an age much younger than most people are when they first get behind the steering wheel of a car. One of the ways used to emphasize safety on farm equipment for kids — and for adults, too — was passing the law that requires use of Slow Moving Vehicle signs.

Slow Moving Vehicle signs — often called SMV signs — are those bright orange and red triangular-shaped symbols that must be displayed on the back of slow-moving farm equipment while being driven on public roads. The SMV signs are an easy-to-see symbol warning other drivers that the vehicle displaying it is not moving as fast as other traffic.

York County 4-H members Greg, Steve and Eric Gemmill know how important it is to properly display SMV signs on their family's farm tractors and equipment. Greg, Steve, and Eric live with their parents, Martha and

David, on the family's dairy farm near Delta.

The Gemmill family is careful to properly display SMV signs on the equipment they use on the public roads around their farm. In fact, they not only have SMV signs on their equipment, but also all around their house.

The Milk and Money 4-H Dairy Club, which the Gemmills belong to, is selling the bright orange and red SMV safety signs. The SMV sign sale is both to encourage equipment safety and to help raise funds for the club's 4-H activities.

Greg Gemmill, 13, knows firsthand how dangerous operating equipment on the roads around the family's farm can be. Once while he was hauling manure and preparing to turn, the driver of a car behind him was in such a hurry that he passed the equipment, even though the highway had double-yellow, no-pass lines down the middle. Greg never ran into the impatient driver.

Because he knows that drivers do get in a hurry and careless sometimes when they get behind slow equipment, he also tries to pull off the road and let traffic pass if there is room to safely do that.

"Dad tells me to always watch my speed and not to let anyone

ride with me," Greg says of the equipment safety lessons his father teaches him. Greg is in the eighth grade at Southeastern Middle School and is a member of the

school's Junior Ag club.

Steve, 10, is just beginning to operate some equipment and expects to help with raking hay next summer. Eric, 9, is looking forward to the day when he can also help operate the field equipment. Eric and Steve are in fourth and fifth grades at Delta-Peach Bottom Elementary School.

The Gemmill family milks about 80 cows and all three brothers help with some barn chores. Each raises and shows Holstein heifers for their 4-H dairy projects. Eric has a spring yearling named Martha, while Steve shows Myrtle, a winter yearling and Mavis, a spring yearling. Greg's two heifers, Susie and Moriah, are both in the same fall yearling class.

Sports are also a favorite pastime of Greg, Steve and Eric. They all play baseball, basketball, and soccer. A basketball hoop inside the family's machine shed lets them practice making shots at the basket even when the weather is cold or rainy.

All 22 members of the Airville Milk and Money Dairy Club are participating in the SMV sign sale. Since the members are scattered

over a large area of southeastern York County, they expect to contact many different farmers who might need new or replacement SMV signs, or decals to brighten old signs that have faded.

Member William Jenkins, Fawn Grove, is using his drawing talent to design a poster about the SMV signs. Other dairy club members will color and distribute the posters to area businesses. Messick Farm Equipment, Inc., of Elizabethtown, is cooperating with the club to supply the signs, decals and mounting equipment.

Martha Gemmill is chairman of the sign sale for the club. As a school bus driver, she has seen that drivers get upset at both school buses and farm equipment because they travel more slowly on the roads.

SMV signs of either fiberglass or metal are being sold by the club for \$7 each. Decals to re-do existing signs are \$5.50. A bracket and spade for installing signs on equipment are \$2. Orders for SMV signs can be placed through members of the Airville Milk and Money Dairy Club or by calling the Gemmill family at (717) 456-7372.



Steve, left, and Greg, get ready to mount a shiny new slow-moving-vehicle symbol to one of the family's tractors, while Eric carries signs for attaching to other pieces of the Gemmill equipment lineup.

Despite Poor Growing Conditions, Tobacco Grower Triumphs

ANDY ANDREWS

Lancaster Farming Staff

LANCASTER (Lancaster Co.)

— None too pleased with the poor growing conditions, but getting the plants in early, Donald M. Rohrer was happy to walk away with two grand champion ribbons Tuesday afternoon at the Lancaster Tobacco Show.

Rohrer, who farms eight acres of tobacco (four of Maryland Type 609 and four of Pennsylvania binder) in Strasburg, picked up grand champion smoking and Pa. Type 41 at the show.

The Lancaster show precedes state competition at the farm show.

Rohrer said the soil at his farm, which is sandier, is ideal to produce a stretchy, thin type of tobacco which the judges and the market prefer. He said, however, the growing conditions weren't the best — but he put the transplants in earlier. Rohrer said he was pleased with his crop because it wasn't

affected as bad with the cumbersome etch virus that most other growers in the county experienced this year because of the cool, wet conditions.

The Strasburg farmer said he grows most of his own transplants, and purchased the Maryland 609 type from a local Amishman.

He said he didn't do anything differently than in the past, and obtained help on planting, cultivating, harvesting, and drying the tobacco from his three daughters: Terri, 30, Gail, 27, and Dawn, 24.

Rohrer also entered a few grandkids in the contest, one of which placed first in the binder class. His wife, Lois, placed first in 609 (middle).

There were a total of 47 exhibitors, down from last year. Judges for the show were Geoffrey Ranck, Domestic Tobacco and Ray Rinehart, Lancaster Leaf.

Following is a list of show placings.

LANCASTER TOBACCO SHOW PLACINGS

OPEN CLASSES

PA. GROWN SEEDLEAF

Class 1 (Wrapper): 1. Mark A. Rohrer, 2. Todd M. Rohrer, 3. Robert P. Hoffines. Class 2 (Filler): 1. Mark A. Rohrer, 2. Barry Siegrist, 3. Jamie Frey. Class 3 (Binder): 1. Taylor D. Groff, 2. Courtney R. Ridley, 3. Mark A. Rohrer

PA. GROWN SMOKING

Class 4 (Bottom One-Third): 1. Neff Brothers, 2. Arlene K. Bingeman, 3. Ryan C. Smith. Class 5 (Middle One-Third): 1. Lois E. Rohrer, 2. Donald M. Rohrer, 3. Jessica L. Neff. Class 6 (Top One-Third): 1. Josh M. Bare, 2. Jeff M. Bare, 3. Arlene K. Bingeman.

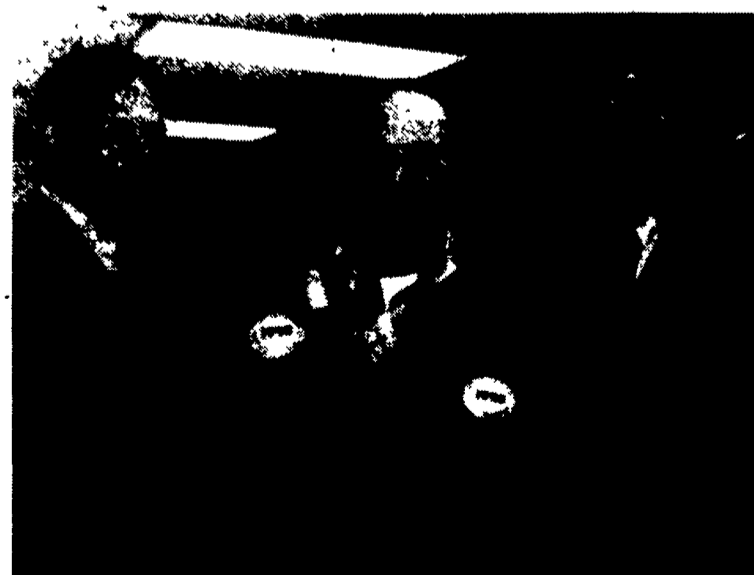
YOUTH CLASSES

PA. GROWN SEEDLEAF

Class 13 (Wrapper): 1. Peter A. Hoffines, 2. Stanley Knight, 3. Jessica L. Neff. Class 14 (Filler): 1. B. Michael Frey, 2. Stanley Knight, 3. Jessica L. Neff.

PA. GROWN SMOKING

Class 16 (Bottom One-Third): 1. Jessica L. Neff, Class 17 (Middle One-Third): 1. Jessica L. Neff, 2. Angie K. Hershey, 3. Stephanie A. Garrett. Class 18 (Top One-Third): 1. Jessica L. Neff, 2. Angie K. Hershey, 3. Keith D. Frey. **GRAND CHAMPION WRAPPER**
Donald M. Rohrer
GRAND CHAMPION PA. SMOKING
Donald M. Rohrer



Donald Rohrer, who farms eight acres of tobacco (four of Maryland Type 609 and four of Pennsylvania binder) in Strasburg, center, picked up grand champion smoking and Pa. Type 41 at the Lancaster Tobacco Show on Tuesday. At left is Geoffrey Ranck, Domestic Tobacco and at right is Ray Rinehart, Lancaster Leaf.