

# Cole's Majestic Percherons

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family, works with the spunkier Percheron and rides the show wagon with Chad. Daughter Kelly Zettle, and even a granddaughter, help out.

Cole relies on a driver from their Farm Store to manhandle their showrig, a 48 foot long by 10½ foot wide tractor trailer that holds nine horses, the show wagon, all of the harnesses, and a cart.

And teamwork wouldn't be complete without veterinarian Scott McCallister who knows the background of every horse.

The show horses take special care also. One full-grown hitching horse eats 10 pounds of grain a day, 30 pounds of hay, plus supplement.

But for the jet-black look, Percheron horses must be kept out of the bleaching sunlight. For this reason, Cole trains his horses at night under an artificially lit practice ring. For a sleek coat without a winter undercoat, Cole said he houses the horses with horse blankets under 16 hours of indoor light. Otherwise they'd have a winter coat in July.

One of seven or eight Percheron draft horse farms in Centre County, a county that totals more than 250 animals, Cole maintains 50 animals, including young stock. His herd increases by six to eight foals each year and, according to Susan, the "little black fillies sell like crazy."

John Cole became familiar with draft horses by watching his father till the fields with the "smaller" Belgian breed of draft horse. Percherons resemble their ancestor



The frigid air and crisp snow made Mark, a gentle giant Percheron, frisky as he danced around his barn-mate, a blue healer dog.

war horses which carried armored knights into battle. Legend even has it that Joan of Arc rode off to battle on a Percheron.

Cole brought his first draft horse harness in 10th grade, began competitive hitching in 1981, and six-horse hitching in 1984. Now he owns one of the biggest hitches in the country, horses weighing almost 2,230 pounds and standing eighteen-two and eighteen-three hands high. Overall, a six-horse hitch with wagon can weigh seven tons.

Cole serves on the KILE board and the American Percheron Association board. As cochairman of the Horse Committee for KILE, Cole believes the KILE show is underrated. It is one of the top three shows in the country with two big nights of hitching and four types of hitches, Shire, Clydesdale, Belgian, and Percheron. It also has a big halter show.

To promote the industry, Pennwoods Farm is hosting a Pennsylvania Percheron Association informational clinic for beginners and hitching drills for experienced equine enthusiasts. The May 8 clinic is for ages nine to 19, with lunch provided. For more information, call the Coles at (814) 364-1885.

## Northeastern Farm Credit Honors Eshelman

LEWISBURG (Union Co.) — Timothy W. Eshelman, chief credit officer of the Northeastern Farm Credit, ACA, received the Executive Award — the highest honor given by Farm Credit.

Eshelman was recognized for his outstanding leadership contributing greatly to Farm Credit's business success. In making the presentation, Robert T. Reich, CEO of Northeastern Farm Credit said, "Tim has demonstrated exemplary performance in his ability to train and mentor new loan officers and in managing the ACA's loan portfolio. His expertise and assistance is often sought by the district office to assist with credit workshops and other leadership areas of credit administration."

The award was presented at the annual Christmas Party and Awards Dinner held recently at Brynwood, Lewisburg. Receiving the Distinguished Service Awards for 1992 were Nancy Lindstrom,



Timothy W. Eshelman

financial management services technician, Towanda Branch Office; Cathy Ransom, senior loan processor of the Coudersport Branch Office; and Carol A. Johnston, senior loan processor of the Williamsport Branch Office.

## March 31 Deadline For Ag Easement Applications

ALLENTOWN (Lehigh Co.) — The Lehigh County Agricultural Land Preservation Board is accepting applications for the first 1993 funding round of the Lehigh County Agricultural Conservation Easement Program.

Through this program, qualified Lehigh County farmland owners can apply to sell an agricultural

conservation easement to Lehigh County and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

To date, the agricultural conservation easement program has preserved 11 farms in Lehigh County totaling 1,314 acres. Landowners in Lehigh County have been paid from \$1,700 to \$3,700 per acre to

sell agricultural conservation easements.

Applications may be picked up in room 105 of the Lehigh County Agricultural Center in South Whitehall. The deadline for submitting an application is Wednesday, March 31. Call Jeff Zehr at (215) 391-9583 for more information.

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