

Record Setters To Produce Pies Aplenty

JOYCE BUPP

York Co. Correspondent
YORK (York Co.) — Bernie Lehman is in the market for some apple trees. But the Wrightsville fruit grower doesn't want just any kind of apple trees, he is specifically searching for a variety named Eve's Delight.

A single Eve's Delight apple tree grows in the nearly four acres of fruit orchards on the Ellsworth, Jr., and Kathy Lehman family's dairy, crops and produce farm at Wrightsville R2. This year, it produced a whopping 2.49-pound fruit that broke all previous apple records at the York Fair, besting about 10 other hefty-sized apples in the running for the title.

Lehman has been entering produce in York Fair for several years, some of it in friendly competition with a neighboring grower. Last year, his uncle, John Lehman, won the fair's biggest apple category with a 2.18-pounder from a Stark's variety tree in his Hellam Township orchard.

Bernie Lehman set out to beat that.

"We've always thinned this tree to get good size on the apples; we just thinned it a little harder this year," says Lehman. "Usually, the apples grow to about a pound and a half."

In quest of extra-large apples, all but 15 to 20 fruits were removed from the dwarf Eve's Delight tree early in the summer. Neighboring trees were thinned just a bit harder, as well, to assure plenty of light reaching the potential prizewinners. The 10-year-old tree was irrigated along with the rest of the orchard during a few dry spells, but received no other special treatment.

Bernie did check it regularly, though, observing two apples early in the season that were outsizeing the others.

"I did pick it a little early, to make sure it didn't fall off and onto the ground," he relates. "When we weighed it, we figured it would be close to being a winner."

Like all the York Fair produce entries, only numbers identify the winners. Bernie recognized his winner right away, displayed in a glass-covered case. But the wrong name was initially given out to local newspapers. A phone call by his dad corrected the error and got Bernie his award.

Along with the champion apple, Bernie took blue ribbons on his Jack-Be-Little pumpkins, string beans, cucumbers, peppers and various awards on other produce entered.

The Lehmans retail their produce at their farm roadside market, just north of Route 30 at Wrightsville.

"The big apples sell almost as soon as we sit one out, usually within a few hours," says Bernie, of their customers' interest in the giant fruits. His record-setter, refrigerated on display at the farm market for a few weeks following the fair, ripened quickly. By early October it was beginning to show signs of bruising and was earmarked for one last round of enjoyment by the family — in a pie.

Next year, Bernie plans to thin the tree even a little harder. In fact, he jokes that if he could find a few more of the Eve's Delight variety, he would grow one apple per tree, aiming at breaking the world's record set by a 2.73 pound Washington state-grown one.

Meanwhile, the York Fair's

largest-ever pumpkin, weighing in at a whopping 375 pounds, is currently in use as a fall-season decoration.

Sam Brubaker, Sunrise Court, Lebanon, grew the monstrous pumpkin in one of two hills he planted in a small plot behind his home. Brubaker, who cultivates only a few pumpkins in a small backyard garden set out to grow a record-setter.

"We always visit the York Fair; and a couple of years ago, he looked at the giant pumpkins and said 'I can do that,'" relates Sam's wife, Audrey, who was admittedly skeptical at the time. "He's not a gardener, otherwise."

Nevertheless, Brubaker began planting a couple of hills of pumpkins in the rich soil of their yard. Last year's effort showed promise, Audrey recalls, until one day her husband checked the progress of his largest pumpkin and found the back of it rotted away from the season's extreme moisture.

Brubaker's plans for this season's planting initially went awry when the seeds he sent for never came in the mail. Two hills of "just a pack of pumpkins seeds" were then planted, but later than originally intended. Some pack-

aged dry manure worked into the soil and occasional fertilizer feedings kept two giant, and one smaller, fruits growing through the season. Only an occasional boost of drip irrigation was given during dry spells.

"He had read that for every leaf a pumpkin has, it grows a certain number of pounds," says Audrey Brubaker of her husband's pumpkin-growing technique. By pinching back the vines, they were confined to the small growing area while concentrating their strength into producing a few large fruits. By early summer, the eventual winner was already good-sized. Sam checked it every evening after work — and Audrey took pictures of it every weekend.

"It took six guys to get it on the truck," chuckles Audrey Brubaker of the difficulty in loading the huge pumpkin, moved onto a wooden pallet, to haul it to York for the fair competition.

While the couple would like to keep the pumpkin for Farm Show display, they were uncertain it would store that long without rotting.

"We know a lady who bakes for a living; it may eventually go there

for her use," speculates Audrey of the pumpkin's ultimate fate as a probable — and plentiful — pie source. She adds that the "meat" of the pumpkin variety is very thick and a deep orange color. The "baby" one at an estimated near 50 pounds may entertain neighborhood youngsters as a Halloween jack o'lantern.

Sam's goal, his wife notes, is to grow the largest pumpkin in the state. He has received numerous tips on growing giant pumpkins, including the advice to feed the

plants milk. The milk is believed to enhance pumpkin growth because of the added calcium available to the plant.

"Oh, yes, he'll save the seeds from this one," affirms Audrey Brubaker of her husband's plans for next spring's pumpkin patch. "He's been teasing his friends that he'll sell them some of the seeds."

A third York Fair record setter was a 20-pound cantaloupe, which unfortunately rotted while on display. It was grown by Dean Becker, Spring Grove R2.



Sam Brubaker sits on his 375-pound pumpkin, a prize-winner at this year's York Fair.

Herb Group Forming

ELIZABETHTOWN (Lancaster Co.) — A new herb group is forming on Monday, November 8 from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. at the Heritage House Museum, 43 E. High Street, Elizabethtown.

The top for discussion at the first meeting is rosemary, its history and uses. The group will meet once a month beginning in January. There is no charge to attend or belong to the group.

The meeting is sponsored by the

Herb Garden Committee of the Heritage House Museum.

The committee offers tours of the Museum garden in season, offers demonstrations on the uses of herbs during the monthly Heritage Days and special workshops, and creates a wide variety of herbal items sold during the Museum's Christmas Craft Show, December 3 and 4.

For more information, call (717) 367-4908.

Radon In The Home

LANCASTER (Lancaster Co.) — To find out about radon, what radon is, its health effects, how you can test for it, and what you can do about it, plan to attend "Radon in the Home: Myths and Realities," an educational prog-

ram presented by Penn State Cooperative Extension. The program will be held on Thursday, November 4, from 7 to 9 p.m. at the Farm and Home Center, 1381 Arcadia Road, Lancaster. To register call (717) 394-6851.



Weighing in at 2.49 pounds, Bernie Lehman's prize-winner set a new apple record at the York Fair. The giant dwarfs the normal-sized Red Delicious stacked in the crate beneath.

Pork Recipes

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HOT SAUSAGE

2 pounds sausage, stuffed
1 large onion
1 16-ounce jar cherry peppers
Cut sausage into pieces about the size of a hot dog. Slice down the middle, lengthwise. Place in frying pan and brown. Drain off excess grease. Cut onion in slices and add to the sausage. Add cherry peppers and the juice from the cherry peppers. Simmer approximately 45 minutes. Serve on hot dog rolls.

Doris Brenize
Shippensburg

CRUSTY HAM PATTIES

3 cups coarsely ground cooked ham
1 egg
9-ounce can crushed pineapple
½ teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon cinnamon
¼ teaspoon nutmeg
2 cups mashed sweet potatoes
¾ cup crushed cornflakes
¼ cup drippings

Combine ham with lightly beaten egg, well drained pineapple, seasonings, and sweet potatoes. Shape into 12 patties. Dip in cornflakes and fry in hot fat until well browned on both sides, for five to eight minutes.

Esther Stauffer
Port Trevorton

ZESTY GRILLED CHOPS

¾ cup soy sauce
¼ cup lemon juice
1 tablespoon chili sauce
1 tablespoon brown sugar
1 garlic clove, minced
6 rib or loin pork chops

Combine the first five ingredients. Place chops into a glass baking dish and pour marinade over. Cover and refrigerate 3 to 6 hours or overnight. To cook, remove chops from marinade and grill or broil 4 inches from heat to desired doneness. Brush occasionally with the marinade. Yield: 6 servings.

Doris Mellot
Needmore

PORK CHOP RECIPE

6 pork chops
4 unpeeled apples, cored and sliced
¼ cup brown sugar
½ teaspoon cinnamon
2 tablespoons butter

Brown chops in skillet until browned on both sides. Place sliced apples in a greased baking dish. Sprinkle brown sugar on apples. Sprinkle with cinnamon. Dot with butter. Arrange six pork chops on top of apples. Cover and bake at 350 degrees for 1½ hours.

Mrs. Carl Christ
Pine Grove

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