

# Lancaster Farming

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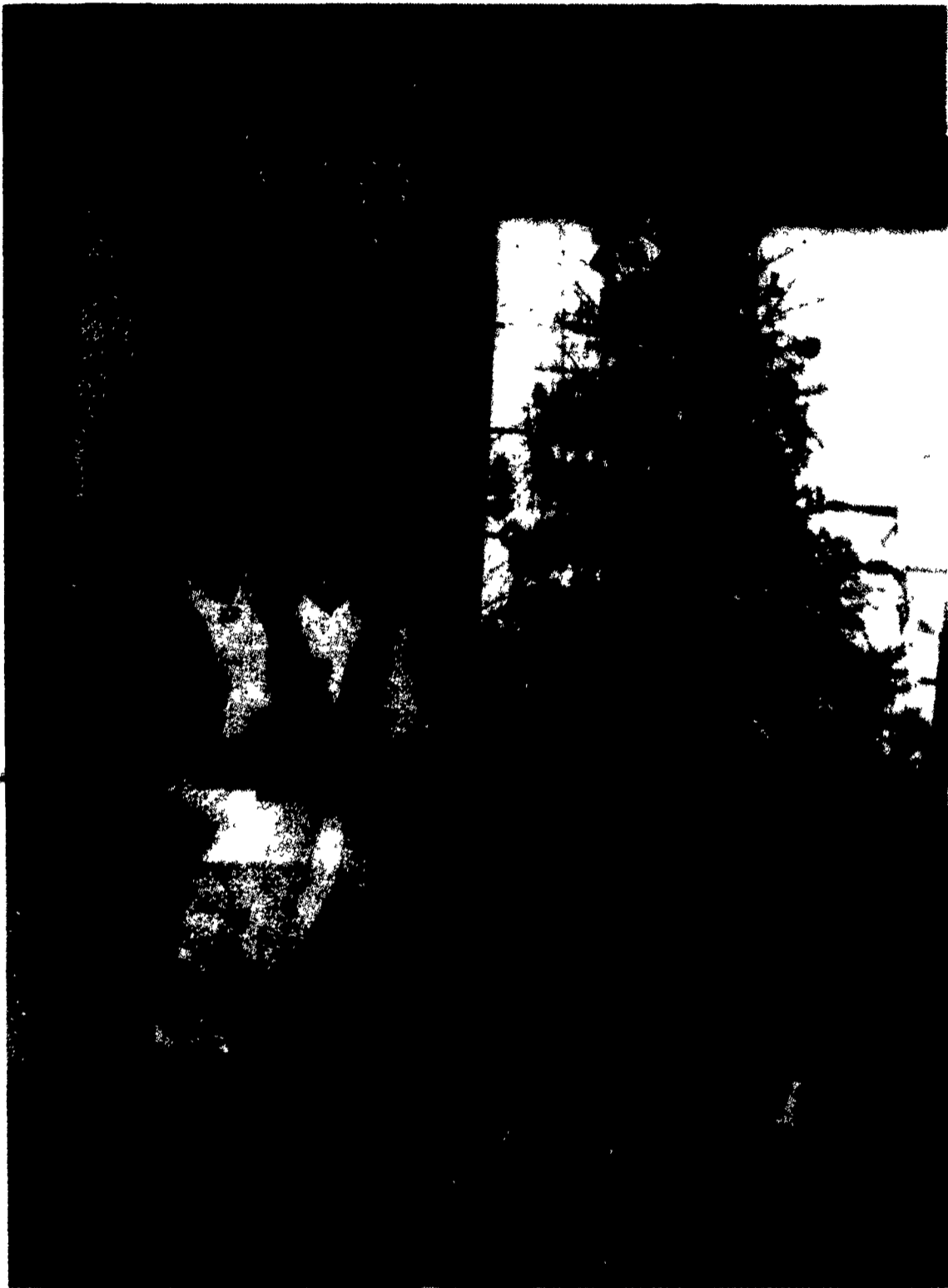
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Christmas means a time to relax and enjoy family for Roger and Kandy Rohrer and their children, from left, Ashlee, Todd, and Mark. The Rohrers recently received a Century Farm Award from the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture for their Strasburg farm. See page B14 for story. Photo by Lou Ann Good.

## Apple Exports To Mexico Increase

**VERNON ACHENBACH JR.**  
Lancaster Farming Staff  
HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — The Pennsylvania apple industry is apparently going to see some benefit from the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), according to Brenda Briggs, program manager of the Pa. Apple Marketing Program, located in Harrisburg.

Briggs, who recently was hired to head the marketing program, has been busy recently working with the Mexican government and Pennsylvania processors to get certification by the Mexican government for shipping apples there. "Pennsylvania is among a number of other states working to be certified to export to Mexico," Briggs said in a Monday telephone interview.

She said the application paper-

work has been approved, and that a Mexican official was inspecting a representative sample of Pennsylvania apple packing houses on Nov. 15 and Nov. 16.

"The stage we're at now is waiting on Mexico to present a work plan which will outline the criteria which packers have to meet in order to export to Mexico," she said.

After the work plan is received, packers will be in a position to decide whether to pursue certification to finalization.

The role of NAFTA in exporting apples to Mexico is apparently secondary to the recent increase of tens of millions of bushels of apples being shipped by the U.S. to Mexico.

The Mexican government has been opening up its borders to more apples from the United States

for the past three years, Briggs said.

(Turn to Page A33)

## New Year's Deadlines

The Lancaster Farming office will be closed on Friday, December 31, in observance of New Year's Day. Next week's deadlines are as follows:

Public Sale Ads — Noon, Mon., 12/27.

General News — Noon, Wed., 12/29.

Classified Section C Ads — 5 p.m., Tue., 12/28.

All Other Classified Ads — 9 a.m., Wed., 12/29.

## Fir Trees Foster 'Decoratability' Of Christmas Season

**ANDY ANDREWS**  
Lancaster Farming Staff  
HARMONYVILLE (Chester Co.) — If you ask "cut-your-own" Christmas tree grower Gary Westlake his opinion about decorating Scotch Pine this holiday season, he would probably say the tree is old hat. The better trees are the firs.

"In the 1950s, that was the Christmas tree, Scotch Pine. My grandfather planted Scotch Pine. We're glad to see that most of our Scotch Pine has been sold and we're not growing many of them anymore," he said during a recent interview at his farm.

Why has Westlake Tree Farms gravitated away from the Scotch Pine? A combination of factors, according to Westlake, make the firs more desirable. Westlake, a Delaware Valley College graduate who put most of his life into grow-

ing trees, maintains more than 45,000 Christmas trees on about 180 acres (including 20 acres of rented ground) off of Rt. 23, near the quaint northern Chester County town of St. Peters.

The Scotch Pine was a favorite 40 years ago for the newly-began Christmas tree industry because the trees were easy to grow, they grew well on marginal and wet ground, and they could command a higher price. But Westlake said the industry has levitated away from the pines and more toward the firs because "they have less insect and disease problems, they decorate easier, and they hold up very well inside the house."

Westlake Tree Farms grows three variety of firs, including Douglas, Concolor (White fir), and Fraser. Fraser is a favorite because of its "decoratability," said West-

(Turn to Page A28)

## Bradford County DHIA Dinner Meetings Held

**ANDREW BURNS**  
Bradford Co. Correspondent  
NORTH ORWELL AND TROY (Bradford Co.) — Bradford County DHIA marked 80 years in operation recently with two meetings and awards banquets. To show how things have changed in those 80 years, average milk production in the DHIA's first year was 6,064 pounds, compared to 17,703 this year, down slightly from 1992. It was only 20 years ago that the 10,000-pound level was surpassed.

Although Bradford DHIA is a single association, two separate dinner meetings were held for the convenience of the 259 members, one in the eastern and one in the western sections of the county. Awards were given at both banquets.

The North Orwell Community

Hall, complete with Christmas decorations, was the setting for the eastern meeting on Wednesday, December 15. Dinner was prepared by the Community Hall trustees.

On the following evening, Thursday, the western dinner meeting was held at the Troy High School cafeteria. Dinner was prepared by the cafeteria staff.

William Hennip of Rome, county president, was the master

(Turn to Page A22)

## Farm Show Deadlines

The Lancaster Farming office will also have early deadlines for our Pennsylvania Farm Show issue. Because of the opening of the Farm Show late in the first full week in January, deadlines will be as follows:

Public Sale Ads — Noon, Mon., 1/3.

Mailbox Markets — Noon, Mon., 1/3.

General News — Noon, Wed., 1/5.

Classified Section C Ads — 5 p.m., Tue., 1/4.

All Other Classified Ads — 9 a.m., Wed. 1/5.



## Seasons Greetings

May the blessings of Christmas extend through the new year for you and your family.

—Lancaster Farming Staff