

Russian Poultry Exchange Builds Friendship



Through the Friendship Force, a group of poultry ambassadors from Russia stayed with local families who had visited Russia last year. The group is shown here with host family members that included Frank and Ellen Baber, Lancaster; Alan and Sally Bair, Columbia; Harold and Ruby Esbenshade, Manheim; Mel and Ann Gehman, Annville; Dick and Linda Peacock, Lancaster; Paul and Karen Wolgemuth, Elizabethtown; and Robert and Regina Zimmerman, Reinholds.

LOU ANN GOOD
Lancaster Farming Staff
REAMSTOWN (Lancaster Co.)
— For the final 10 days of April, 13 Russian poultry representatives

examined the area's poultry industry. It was a reciprocal visit for the Russians, who stayed in host families' homes and absorbed American culture while studying the intricacies of successful poultry operations.

The group, traveling under the auspices of the Friendship Force, expressed fervent praise of the poultry farms and industries that they toured.

According to Yuri Solomin, deputy director of a large poultry farm in Russia, the poultry operations in the county are not similar to those in Russia, where large state farms are operated.

He foresees that the state farms will continue in his country because it is too difficult to break them into smaller farms. But the Russians hope to see smaller family-run farms being built.

The ambassadors were interested in learning how family-run farms are organized and the relationship of these to feed companies, processing plants, and wholesalers.

Solomin was especially intrigued with visiting Shady Brae Farms, operated by his host family, Harold and Ruby Esbenshade of Manheim. The large poultry complex offered Solomin ideas that could be applied to those in Russia.

A lot of camaraderie was evident between the visitors and their host families as they discussed the lifestyles of Americans.

"The way American people live is more than I expected. It seems the right pace," said Maya Donskikh, chief personnel. "I liked the land, enjoy the standard of living, and all the people — they are friendly and hospitable."

The environmental side did not go unnoticed. "I admire the way the people treat the land, their houses, and their heritage," said Eugeni Artemyev, chief engineer. He stayed with Alan and Sally Bair of Columbia. He mentioned that he was impressed that children are taught to be independent from their early years.

The visitors vehemently shook their heads in agreement with this observation. In Russia, they said, the children never leave. They almost always stay living with their parents because of their country's housing shortages.

It was the third time that Galina Gorislavskaya spent time with Robert and Regina Zimmerman, broiler producers in Reinholds. "We are very close, like family," she said.

The Zimmermans had accompanied the poultry to exchange to Russia last year and stayed in the Gorislavskaya home. Later, the Zimmermans went with the

Friendship Force Relief Exchange to give medical supplies and equipment to Russian children's orphanages. When Galina heard about it, she insisted the Zimmermans stay in her home again.

The visitors accompanied their host families to church services on Sunday. Ulyana Trusova, an accountant, said that she accompanied Paul and Karen Wolgemuth of Elizabethtown to a local Mennonite church.

"They keep a belief that makes the people more in community and closer to each other," she said.

The visitors said that although they came to see the poultry industry, they did not consider that the most important benefit of the visit.

"The poultry industry is everywhere — it's the friendships with Americans that is the most important part of our visit," said Vladimir Stepantsov, deputy director. He and his wife Vera stayed with Mel and Ann Gehman of Annville.

Vera said she observed that American housewives do not have as much to do in the kitchen as Russian housewives.

"Americans have dishwashers, microwaves, and many appliances to do the work for them. They can buy meals ready to cook — we don't have that," she said.

Many of the foods were unusual to the Russians, who said that they liked it all, especially the tapioca pudding, someone remarked.

Stepantsov said that his people felt that their host families have given them food that is "too much and too tasty."

The host families said that they were only trying to feed them as much as they had been fed when they had visited their homes.



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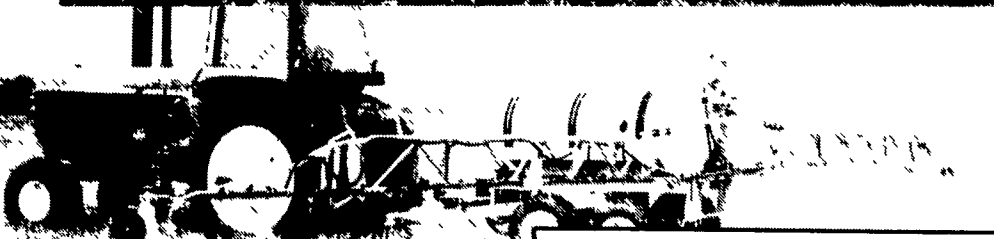
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