

Lebanon Produce Auction To Open

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fool anybody," he said.

The situation can provide benefits to the grower and the buyers, according to Horst. From the buyer's perspective, he can get enough of known-origin produce and eliminate the risk of working with an unknown product.

For the producer, talking to buy-

ers and watching the local market can help him tailor his growing efforts to meet real demand, eliminating a lot of the guess work and waste.

Horst said that from his own experience, he is attempting to provide a facility that he would have appreciated had he still been operating the family orchard and produce growing business.

"I grew up in the produce business. I've hauled truckloads into markets. I never liked that system. You never know really what's going to happen," he said.

Horst said he expects buyers to be grocery stores, restaurants, pizza shops, roadside stands, and bulk-buying family groups. Anyone is eligible to be a buyer.

Quantity sizes to be auctioned

for a specific vegetable or fruit will depend on the buyers needs, and the amount of produce available. He said he doesn't want to eliminate anyone from getting some of the first of a crop, such as local vine-ripened tomatoes, sweet corn, etc.

The produce auction is to operate on a cash-only basis, unless

someone desiring to write checks has a statement from the bank that will cover the check being written. That bank statement will be kept on file.

Paul said he is eager for the start of Thursday's auction, to see people coming together. The sights, the sounds, the smells that are part of a marketplace are hard to forget.

Americans Learn About Hungarian Ag

DENVER, Colo. — James Moench, a lobbying specialist from the North Dakota Farmers Union, and Marilyn Wentz, a communications and media relations specialist from National Farmers Union (NFU), are home after conducting a four-week intensive training program in Hungary. The program is a part of the NFU's Farmer-to-Farmer Program with Hungary which is funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development.

Hungary was once a leading producer of agricultural products for Soviet Block countries, with some 25 percent of its production bound for foreign markets. Then the Soviet Block fell and was replaced with independent democracies. The NFU Farmer-to-Farmer Program is aimed at helping Hungarian farmers and their farm organization make a successful transition from a state system of agriculture to a free market system.

"Hungary has gone through a lot of changes in the past five years and there is still a great deal of uncertainty among farmers," said Wentz. "But there is also a tremendous desire to succeed. The private Hungarian farmers are very creative about finding solutions to their production and marketing problems."

"While we were conducting this program in Hungary, voters went to the polls and elected the former communists back into power — a move that seems shocking to us here in the West," said Moench. "The new private farmers had been working to get credit and find new markets for their products under a government that was supportive of their efforts. The private farm sector is concerned that the new Socialist government will not support their efforts, or worse yet, that it will attempt to again collectivize Hungary's farms."

NFU has been linked with the Hungarian Farmers Circle (FC) for more than a year, first sending groups of farmers to work alongside Hungarian farmers for technical and marketing assistance. During the latest phase of cooperation between the two organizations, NFU staff has worked with FC members to help strengthen the Hungarian farm organization in the areas of lobbying, communications, and media relations.

"The Farmer-to-Farmer Program with NFU is very important to our farmers," said Huba Kozma, president of FC and a former member of the Hungarian Parliament. "We have appreciated receiving practical advice from the NFU representatives, as well as being encouraged to continue in our quest for a vibrant private agriculture sector."

"We emphasized that Hungarian farmers must find a Hungarian solution to their problems and that we were there only to share what had worked in our organization," said Wentz. "The concepts of citizens lobbying their elected representatives and of setting up a comprehensive, non-partisan media relations program were new for our Hungarian counterparts."

In addition to working with FC national staff and board members, the Americans presented two-day seminars to county and local FC leaders in four major centers around the country. "I feel we have had some concrete results already," said Moench. "I believe the leaders of the Hungarian organization have come to understand that they must work with whatever government is in power."

According to Wentz, the Hungarian farm organization has decided to start a national newsletter and will continue to get professional assistance from NFU.

The Americans said there were aspects of Hungarian agriculture that they admired. "The Hungarian producer, in general, has a

much closer link to the consumer," said Wentz. "We saw producers selling their raw products, as well as processed goods in the open markets, the result being that the Hungarian farmers' share of the food dollar is

much higher than that of the American farmer."

Hungary is still a very rural country, with 18-22 percent of its population being farmers.



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