

'Woolly' Competitors Make Fashion Statement

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MANHEIM (Lancaster Co.) —

The classy look of wool fascinated the crowd gathered at the Manheim Farm Show Lead Line on Monday night.

Seven young women, dressed in outfits made in 80 to 100 percent wool, led sheep, brushed to show off their woolly best, around the show ring.

Thirteen-year-old Sarah Zurin and her Dorset yearling were named the winners in the senior division after the judges tallied their score sheets. Contestants are judged on appearance, control of sheep, clothing, and the sheep's appearance.

Sarah wore a handmade patchwork vest of navy blue and green-navy plaid and a coordinating skirt. Her long blond hair was pulled back into a matching fabric barrett. Her yearling lamb wore a bow and halter made from matching fabric.

The lamb cooperated by stepping her stately best before the judges and crowd.

Previously, Sarah was named the 1993 Novice Shepherd of the Year for her 4-H involvement. The daughter of Gary and Judy Zurin, Sarah is a sixth grader at Manheim Central Junior High. She and her parents previously lived in Jamaica. Sarah would like to become a physician's assistant and return to the mission field.

In the junior division, Jessica Schmidt and her Dorset ewe took top honors. Twelve-year-old Jessica modeled a brick and emerald plaid skirt and vest with a Scottish flair. She wore a red turtleneck and green stockings. A seventh-grader at Swift Middle School, Jessica, the daughter of Laurie and Pete Schmidt, raises 23 Dorsets on the family's Drumore farm.

Sarah's cousin, Kathy Musser and her purebred Suffolk, Agape, placed second in the senior division. The 13-year-old is the daughter of Kenneth and Linda Musser of Mount Joy.

Kathy wore a 100 percent wool white blazer with a teal-colored skirt. Both she and Agape wore matching wool plaid scarves.

Kathy is an eighth grader at Donegal Middle School.

Third place went to Regina Landis who led her Hampshire, Sophia, around the ring. Regina wore a black felt hat, a wool boysenberry sweater, and gray, pleated Pendleton wool skirt. She wore black wool gloves and wrapped a gray scarf around Sophia's neck.

Regina, 14-year-old daughter of Abe and Dottie Landis of Manheim, is a ninth grader at Lancaster Mennonite High School, where she is active in FFA.

In the sheep lead line, much depends upon the cooperation of the sheep. Contestants may look superb and be capable in handling



Senior Lead Line placings are from right, Sarah Zurin, first; Kathy Musser, second; Regina Landis, third; Jessica Stoltzfus, fourth; and Sarah Strickler, fifth.

their sheep during the majority of the walk. But a sheep that becomes stubborn and refuses to cooperate causes a drastic lowering of scores.

Other contestants included Amy

Haines, 8, who led a Corriedale ewe. She is the daughter of Donna and Stan Haines of Manheim; Jessica Stoltzfus, 14, daughter of Irene

and Frank Stoltzfus of Elizabethtown; and Sarah Strickler, 14-year-old sophomore at Solanco High School.

Part-Time Farming Could Get Greener With Ag Alternatives

UNIVERSITY PARK (Centre Co.) — Jack Plutocrat, wealthy stockbroker, decides to cash in his portfolio and escape the rat race on a 20-acre spread in rural Pennsylvania.

Jill Proletariat, a welder for Conrail, lives on 15-acres of Pennsylvania land she inherited from her grandfather.

What do these two seemingly different people have in common? According to two experts in Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences, Jack and Jill may be perfect candidates to become part-time farmers.

Jayson Harper, assistant professor of agricultural economics, says two-thirds of the farms in Pennsylvania are less than 140 acres and about 25 percent are less than 50 acres. More than half the owners of farms smaller than 140 acres have full-time occupations other than farming.

"During the '80s more people began moving to rural areas from cities, and at the same time, for varying reasons, rural residents began looking for ways to use their land profitably," Harper says.

Harper and George Greaser, a senior research associate in agricultural economics, have developed a set of publications called "Agricultural Alternatives," which outline traditional and non-traditional farming enterprises that can be accomplished on small acreages, on a part-time basis, and with family labor.

Covering topics ranging from highbush blueberry farming to ostrich production, these fact sheets are designed for people who have little background in the specific enterprise.

"Our audience could include a whole spectrum of people, from a retired couple in central Pennsylvania to the lawyer from Manhattan who has \$50,000 to invest in a pair of breeder ostriches," Harper explains. "Extension agents are the first to get questions about agricultural alternatives, so these publications will serve as a refer-

ence for them as well."

The publications' primary focus is on marketing whatever the farmer has decided to produce. In addition, the fact sheets include a detailed cost analysis, sample budgets and estimates of the time and capital required for each enterprise.

"We don't go into a lot of detail on how to grow the crop. The focus is on how to start building a business," Greaser says.

The series includes 17 publications so far and Harper and Greaser expect the final total to be near 60.

Harper says part-time farming in Pennsylvania is particularly advantageous because the state is located within a day's drive of most of the East Coast's population centers. In addition, a small farming operation often can seek out specialized markets. For example, some people of middle-eastern descent prefer lambs raised to 40 pounds that are slaughtered with their tails left on. It might not be economically feasible for a large sheep farmer to target that market, but a smaller operation could fill such a market niche.

Harper says the key to successful part-time farming is researching markets that can be served by a small farm. Whether raising earthworms for the bait industry or boarding horses for owners living in a large city, agricultural alternatives only work if someone wants to buy what you are selling.

"We try to provide unbiased information that gives an accurate picture of what it will cost to enter the business," Greaser says.

"Raising ostriches might have a high profit potential, but it costs up to \$50,000 to buy a pair of breeders. If one of the birds dies, you could be out \$25,000 or more. You can buy a lot of sheep for that kind of money," Harper explains.

The publication series tries to address the needs of a rural resident who is looking for ways to supplement income as well as the desires of those who want to move to the country and recapture the romance of rural life.

"All we are trying to do is point out alternatives to people who have land and want to use it," Harper says.



Lebanon Society 20

Lebanon County Farm Women Group #20 met at the home of Elaine Shuey. Elaine read from John 4 followed by the Lord's Prayer and salute to the flag. Fifteen members answered roll call to the question; Did you ever win in Bingo?

Some of group will be going to Hershey to see the Rock-

ettes. Seven from the group will be going to the Convention Oct. 12, each one is to bring a baby item.

Members played Bingo and prized were won by Carol Heagy, Sarah Funch, Barb Harding, and Mae Stamm.

The meeting will be Farm Women's Day breakfast at Blue Mountain Restaurant.



Junior division champion in the Lead Line contest is Jessica Schmidt, left. Second-place went to Amy Hines, right.



Sarah Zurin and her Dorset yearling ewe are selected as the best representatives of wool promotion in the senior division of the Manheim Lead Line.