

# Beavers Receive Century Farm Award

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It was an important event for all of them as they looked back to the past when the family first started to operate the farm.

In March of 1891 Roy's grandfather, William A. Beaver, and great-uncle, Thomas K. Beaver, purchased the farm. They remained partners for some years, and then William bought Tom's share. Tom continued to operate the general store and post office located in one end of the large home while William and his wife, Emma Troutman Beaver, lived in another part. The T.K. Beaver General Store and Academia Post Office were kept in operation by some of the Beaver family until the late fifties.

The store was a typical old country store with groceries, hardware and sundry items for sale, as well as gasoline after a time. All that remains of the store are some shelves and a few miscellaneous items. The showcases and the post office "pigeonholes" were sold some years ago, but the

original room that held the store is still a part of the home building and is now used for storage.

Roy's father, Jesse T. Beaver, was born and raised on the farm, helping with chores at an early age. He married Pearl Bryner, and they took over the operation of the farm after some years. They raised hogs, cattle, chickens and ducks, in addition to crops of corn, hay, wheat, barley and oats.

A proud moment for Roy at age 15 was when his father purchased a 1941 Farmall H tractor and allowed Roy to drive it by himself from the dealer's place to the farm. Roy has special memories of his grandfather who asked grace at every meal and read his Bible every night. Roy carried drinking water to his grandfather in the field every day at 9:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m., as he was plowing with horses. Sometimes he gave Roy a nickel, a small fortune to the boy. His grandfather liked to go to the barn to see the horses up to the time of his death at age 98.

Roy took over the operation of

the farm in 1961, farming with his father, Jesse, until Roy and Mabel bought it in 1982. Roy chose to eliminate the ducks and chickens and to raise just cattle and hogs. Mabel has helped with farming in every way down through the years, milking cows, driving the tractor and helping to load hay, as well as growing a large garden and canning the results.

As Roy's parents did for them, Roy and Mabel continue to help son Mike with many phases of farming, even though Mike has been operating the farm since 1991. They agree that they would never want to live anywhere but on the farm, and they say there is just nothing like seeing a perfect field of corn or a newborn animal. They live in the middle section of the original farmhouse, next to the end that housed the store and post office. Mike and his wife live in the other end, and so the tradition of two Beaver families living in the big farm home continues.

From the time that Mike was quite small, he knew he wanted to

be a farmer. His playtime was filled with farming, using toy machinery. After graduating from high school, he became a milk tester and still helped Roy with farming, and then saw his dream come true as he took over operation of the farm. He married a farm girl, Marlene Book, who also loves the farm. She had heifers and dairy cattle in 4-H. Although working away from home during the day, Marlene helps with farming chores in the evening and on weekends.


Mike chose not to raise hogs, as his father had, and so he has just dairy cattle and crops. They milk 30 Holsteins and have a lot of young cattle. The farm has 215 acres, with 90 cultivated, and they rent another 50 nearby. They raise the same grains as the preceding generations did, except that they have added soybeans as a crop. Each generation makes its own improvements, such as having added a larger silo, skid loader, larger tractors and a milk transfer system. Where they once had to wait for the threshing machine to come, and have many men come to help to fill the silo, now they have their own combine

and silo-filling equipment. However, sometimes they need extra help in order to get the work done in time to take advantage of the good weather. Jobs that used to take 20 people now take 2.

Roy agrees that things sure have changed since his boyhood when they milked 18 cows by hand, selling the milk to the Academia Creamery located down over the hill from the Beaver Farm. Nearby the creamery was a feed mill which once ground all of their grain. The mill was owned by the Beers brothers and then by Bub Palm. Water for the mill dam was supplied by the Tuscarora Creek which went on a rampage in the 1972 flood, ruining the mill. Thus three generations of the Beaver family witnessed a tragedy which wiped out much of what they had taken for granted all of their lives in the view from the top of the hill.




However there are some constants in the lives of the generations of the Beaver family.

When asked if they have an "official" farm name, Roy replied simply, "Well, not really - it's just been known as The Beaver Farm ever since I can remember."



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## Vegetable Growers To Meet

GREENSBURG (Westmoreland Co.) — Strawberry production will be a new feature at this year's Western

Pennsylvania Commercial Vegetable and Berry Growers Seminar to be held on Thursday, Dec. 8, at the Days Inn,

Butler, from 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Concurrent sessions will be held for farm marketers and, for the

first time, strawberry growers.

Every year growers from western Pennsylvania as well as parts of Ohio and West Virginia meet to learn the latest information and products available to help them grow top quality produce. Excellent speakers from universities and private industry will discuss production practices, marketing, pest management, and other topics.

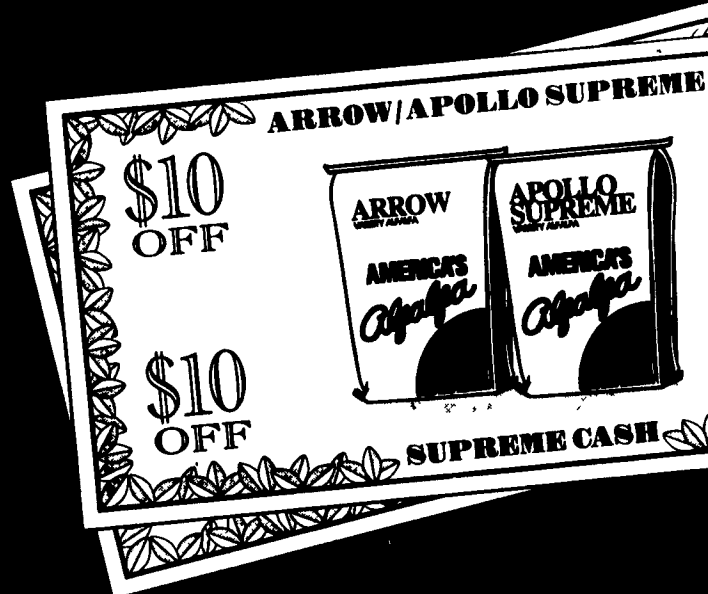
Commercial exhibitors include seed companies, chemical companies, machinery dealers, greenhouse suppliers, and irrigation equipment and distributors of a wide range of products for the commercial grower. Penn State Extension and commercial suppliers are again cosponsoring this event.

Concurrent sessions will be held in the morning on marketing produce and in the afternoon strawberry production with Dr. Barbara Goulart, Penn State professor of small fruit crops.

Weed control specialist Dr. Bradley Majek of Rutgers Research and Development Center, Bridgeton, N.J., will discuss weed control options in cole crops, snap beans, and strawberries. Another guest speaker, Dr. Richard Hassell, Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center, Wooster, Ohio, will tell the results of his variety trials with green and cole crops.

To register or for more information, contact Penn State Extension, Westmoreland County, Donohoe Center, RR 12, Box 202E, Donohoe Road, Greensburg, PA 15601 - (412) 837-1402.

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