

# Lancaster Farming

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## Gov. Ridge Says Farms Must Be Profitable To Be Sustainable

EVERETT NEWSWANGER  
Managing Editor

LANCASTER (Lancaster Co.) — Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Ridge addressed the annual Leadership Conference of the National Rural Development Partnership Tuesday morning at the Holiday Inn Lancaster Host. He said that because 3.7 million commonwealth citizens live in rural places, "Rural Pennsylvania is the 'Keystone' of our state."

Ridge said, "The vitality of our small towns is intimately linked to the strength of Pennsylvania life. Now, more than ever, we must work to strengthen our rural communities."

"In rural Pennsylvania, farms

are businesses. They support rural families, they support rural jobs, they support rural communities. As businesses and as employers, farms are the backbone of Pennsylvania, and they must be profitable to be sustained."

Ridge said that before he was in public office, he, like other Americans, knew what he wanted from the farm: cold milk, ice cream, cheese of many varieties, good beef, vegetables, and other foods. "I took it (the food supply) for granted," he said. "When I started to represent rural Pennsylvanians in my western Pennsylvania district, I got to see what these men and women did day after day to get that food and fiber to our tables.

They overcame enormous obstacles and have a narrow, narrow margin of profit.

"It almost makes me sick to walk into a grocery store today and pay three or four dollars for a box of cereal when I know the farmer, the primary value provider of that box of cereal, may be getting two or three cents for the grain that is in the box. We consumers are paying for fancy TV ads and fancy boxes, and the toys that are in the box. Yet the men and women, families that are slugging it out every day, don't reap the benefit of all that. They are struggling, and we take advantage of that (farmers' situation).

"We have the most productive ag community in the world right

here in this country," Ridge said. "Yet government changes policy every two or three years. We must understand that farmers are operating businesses. They need regulation reform to become profitable, and they desperately need some predictability from government so they can make long- and short-range plans."

The National Rural Development Partnership is a unique, true partnership between 37 governors and the federal government. Each has entered into a memorandum of understanding to create state rural development councils.

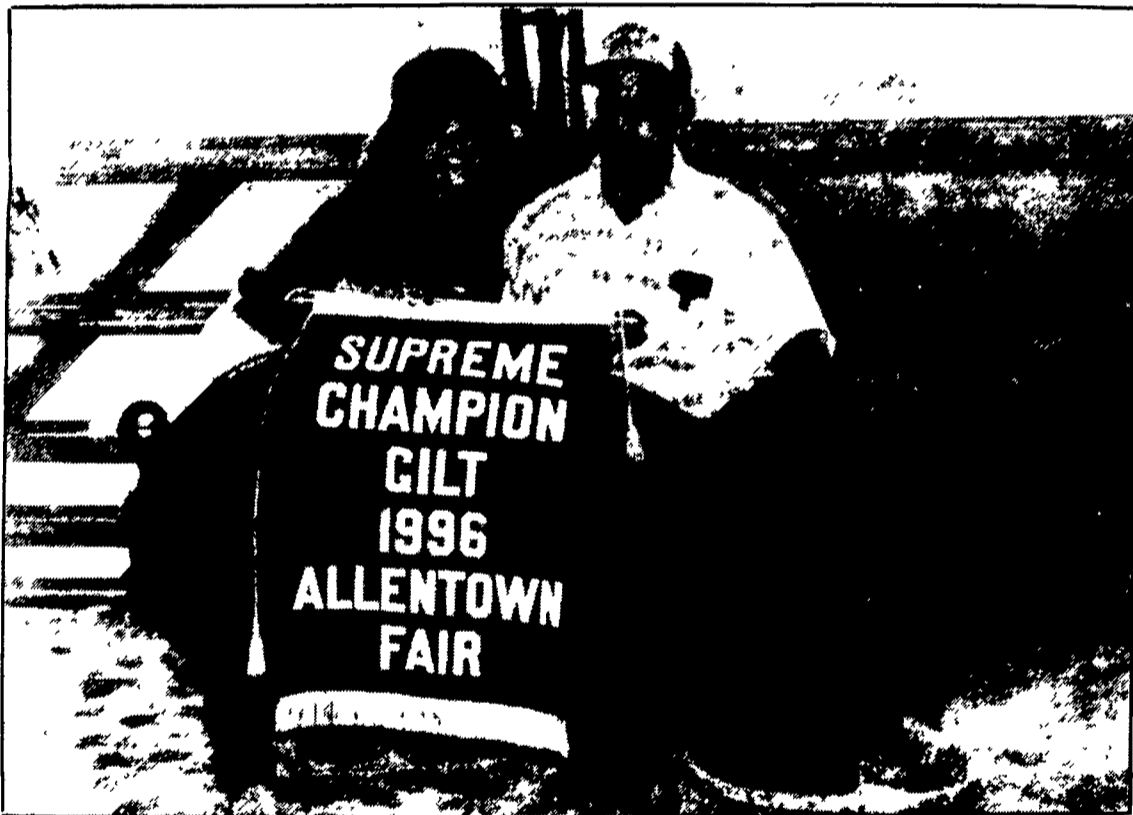
The annual meeting brings together local, state, and federal officials and rural development

leaders to provide practical information and ideas to be used to advance their local communities.

While in Lancaster County, the group toured the Ruben Weaver farm to observe the application of biosolids as a fertilizer for agricultural crops, the Millport Conservancy to see examples of fencing to limit access of livestock to streams, Oregon Dairy to observe a dairy operation using methane from the herd to generate electricity, and the Nelson Rohrer farm to observe composting.

Other tours and workshops centered on heritage tourism, land use planning and growth management, the Pennsylvania Timber Bridge Initiative, rural health care, and the arts and rural development.

## It's Rare, But Poland China Wins Champion Gilt At Allentown



Cheryl Bennecoff, left, won supreme champion gilt on Wednesday at the Allentown Fair. At right is Frank Feeser, show judge.

ANDY ANDREWS

Lancaster Farming Staff

ALLENTOWN (Lehigh Co.) —

"It's rare for a Poland China hog to win supreme gilt here at the fair," said Cheryl Bennecoff, who won supreme on Wednesday at the Allentown Fair.

In the past, said Bennecoff, Landrace, Durocs, and Hampshires have won, but it's the first time in recent memory that Poland China captured the spotlight — and the attention — of the judge, exhibitors, and audience.

Bennecoff, Kutztown, showed a January gilt, Whinney 1-7, from a McWhinney sire out of a Bal Crue dam, for supreme gilt.

Bennecoff said that the sire line she works with on her farm, with husband Todd and family, is a "pretty even and consistent." The Bennecoffs, who have won grand champion gilt at the fair in the past, are showing this week in Syracuse, N.Y. (where Cheryl said they have 24 hogs) and at the World's End Fair in Sullivan. The Bennecoffs are also showing at the Blooms-

burg and York fairs and at the State Hampshire/Duroc/Yorkshire sale. They'll also be showing hogs at Keystone International Livestock Expo (KILE) and next year's Farm Show.

Also on Wednesday, a Landrace exhibited by Grant A. Lazarus was named supreme champion boar. Grant, 18, is the son of Grant and Linda Lazarus of Busy Acres Farm in Germansville. The Northwestern High School graduate will be showing at the Bloomsburg and York fairs in addition to KILE and Farm Show.

Kelly Lazarus, 17, won grand champion market hog on Thursday at Allentown. Kelly, daughter of Wayne and Grace Lazarus, Germansville, is a senior at Northwestern High School.

Kelly showed a 270-pound hog, the heavyweight champion, a Hampshire/Spotted cross. Grant Lazarus, her cousin, said he picked the pig to show at the fair. Kelly said this is the last fair she'll be showing until the county roundup

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## Pennwood Farm Wins Premier Breeder, Exhibitor

VERNON ACHENBACH, JR.

Lancaster Farming Staff

SUMMIT STATION (Schuylkill Co.) — Pennwood Farms, owned by Mary Jane and Harvey Stoltzfus of Morgantown, was named premier exhibitor and breeder of the Southeast Pennsylvania Championship Show, August 24 at the Schuylkill County Fairgrounds in Summit Station.

The judge of the show was Steve Wood, of Pennwood Farm in Littlestown.

The grand champion of the show was a senior 3-year-old, Reu Hel Gabriel Surf, owned by the Geisinger family of Reu-hel Farms Inc., of Mohrsville. It is a home-bred daughter of Fivebrooks Spririt Gabriel.

The reserve grand champion of the show was also a bred and owned animal, 4-year-old Keystone Mascot Scarlet, owned by Donald Seipt owner of Keystone Farm, of Easton.

The junior champion was a summer yearling, Walnut-Hills Stardust Brook, owned and bred by Dianne Glock, of Walnut-Hills Farm in Mifflin.

The reserve junior champion of the open show was also a summer yearling, Brasspoint Skychief Star, owned by Joshua Hushon, of Delta, bred by Melvin Kolb Inc., Lancaster.



From the left, show judge Steve Wood and Bucks/Montgomery Dairy Princess Karen Wolfgang stand with Donald Seipt who shows the reserve grand champion Holstein of the Southeast Pennsylvania Holstein Show, Cathy Geisinger who shows the grand champion, and Berks County Alternate Dairy Princess Tammy Epting.

**Office Closed  
Monday**

Lancaster Farming's office will be closed on Monday, September 2, to observe Labor Day. Both the advertising and news departments will open again at 8 a.m. on Tuesday.

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