

Gross Family Named York Ag Award Winner

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Harold Gross, 81, still resides near the family's 350-acre farm and maintains an avid interest in the business, especially the cattle enterprise. He rarely misses the Monday sales at Lancaster Stockyards and frequently attends other livestock auction events around the region. His late wife, Ethel, was a noted leader in regional agriculture activities and a founding member of American and Penn's Agri-Women.

Their son, Steven, Sr., and his wife, Phyllis, manage the crops and livestock operation, along with their sons, Steven, Jr., 28, and his wife, Becky, and Daniel, 23, and his wife, Tina. Steve and

Becky's sons, Nevin, 5, and Lane, 1, are the eighth generation on the farm started in the 1800s. While the farm's original buildings no longer stand, the main farmhouse was built in 1856 by George Gross; and the farm has been recognized as a Pennsylvania Century Farm.

Along with the land on the home farm, the Gross' own an additional 80 acres near Mt. Wolf and rent another 500. Primary crops are corn and wheat. The farm's facilities provide housing facilities for up to 600 head of feeder cattle, along with the 30-sow farrow-to-finish swine operation.

Though the Gross' are pleased

that their sons have chosen to return home to agriculture, the young men were under no family pressure to take that career direction. Their daughter, Gretta, is in her final year of medical school toward her goal of becoming a physician.

"Both went to school and earned their associated degrees," notes Phyllis Gross of their sons' agriculture training. "We didn't want them to farm as their only career option. They made the decision to return to the farm; it was their choice."

"We make a real effort to sit down and talk about the business," she adds. "They are here because they want to be here. Their wives

are both very supportive and we all sit down together to discuss decisions. It is important that you keep the lines of communication open and give them options."

In addition to their three families actively involved in managing the farm, the Gross' have one full-time employee who is an integral part of the daily operation.

"No one has to be here all the time; everyone knows everyone else's job," explains Phyllis of the management and responsibility sharing of their agriculture production business. "But we are never all gone for any length of time at the same time."

That flexibility makes it possible for the Gross' to remain active in various agriculture and community affairs. Steve and Becky serve on the national Young Farmer and Rancher committee of the American Farm Bureau. Steve, Sr., is on the East Manchester Township Zoning Hearing Board and the Tri-Municipal Board, which includes representation from the boroughs of Manchester and Mt. Wolf.

Central Market Honored
York's downtown Central Market House was honored with the Ag Industry Award given annually to an agribusiness entity.

The historic market was built over a century ago by Baltimore shipbuilders and continues to serve as a farmers' market. Nearly 90 vendors offer customers a variety of fresh produce, meats, poul-

try and dairy products, baked goods and horticulture items, as well as gourmet coffees and ethnic foods.

Ownership of the market is held by 80 stockholders, with a board of six directors. Tony Dobrosky is president, Sam Loucks is vice president and Lester Bentz holds the secretary-treasurer position.

A noted area "must see" site for visitors and tourists, the market is famed for its cavernous structure and cross-section representation of local York County culture. A major renovation project of the roof is currently under way, to refurbish and partially replace the original slate on the venerable downtown landmark.

Century Farm Recognized
Five York County farms were honored as Century Farms under the criteria of the state's program recognizing farms that have remained in a family for one hundred or more consecutive years and on which a family member is currently living and producing agricultural products.

Recognized as Century Farms were:

•The Gerber Farm, George and Faye Gerber, 3885 Davidsburg Road, Dover;

•The Utz Farm, Chester and Margie Utz, 93 Utz Drive, Hanover;

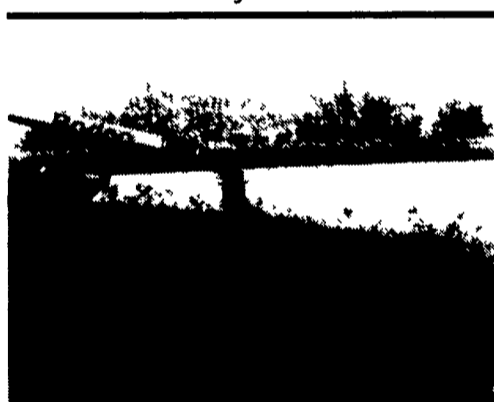
•The Myers Farm, Jane Myers Rhone, Linda Myers Gruber and Wayne E. Myers, Jr., 40 East Ridge Road, Dillsburg;

•The Julius Farm, Donald E. and Willie Julius, 48 Julius Lane, Dover;

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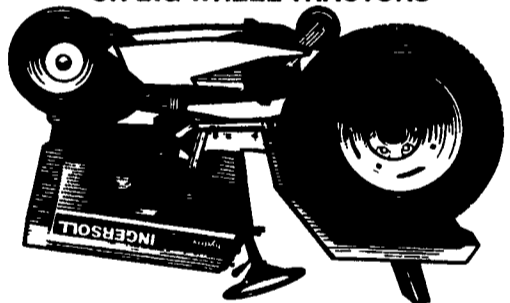
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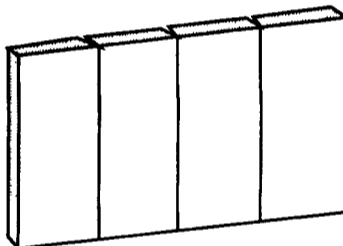


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