

Lancaster Farming

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With the dry, hot weather this week, farmers were making hay while the sun shines, and the barley harvesting continued at full throttle after starting last week. By Sunday, state soil moisture was rated at 25 percent short or very short with only five percent rated surplus by the Pennsylvania Agricultural Statistics Service. But with no rain in sight this week, fields dried quickly, and in many places the corn leaves were starting to curl.

Almost any place you looked farmers were in the fields. The *Lancaster Farming* camera caught up with this machine harvesting beardle barley along Saw Mill Road just off Farmersville Road south of Ephrata. Warren Hoover was running the custom rig and has a bin full of grain as he waits for the truck. Anyone who is really a farmer knows barley makes you itchy all over, and the only place to be in a barley field is in the air-conditioned cab.

Hoover said barley was not running as strong this year in most fields, and he wasn't sure why. The custom rig is owned by Frank Hoover, and they were in the fields farmed by Aaron Hoover. Photo by Everett Newswanger, managing editor.

Hayes Becomes New Ag Secretary At Ceremony In State Capitol

EVERETT NEWSWANGER
Managing Editor

HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) - Pennsylvania has a new secretary of agriculture. Under the bright lights in the governor's reception room in the state capitol building Wednesday morning, Samuel E. Hayes, Jr., took the oath of office from The Honorable Yvette Kane, secretary of state. Hayes was accompanied by his wife Elizabeth.

Hayes is well-known for his leadership in the state house of representatives because he served for 22 years as the representative from

the 81st district of Blair and Huntingdon Counties.

In his introductory statement, Gov. Tom Ridge congratulated Hayes on the appointment to his cabinet and called Hayes not just a friend of farmers but part of the farm family.

"A farmer by birth, a soldier by choice, and a leader by nature, no matter what the challenge, Hayes has the mettle to meet it," Gov. Ridge said. "From a 4-Her to the legislative trenches, Hayes embodies the same spirit and rugged

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Another Flock In Quarantine Area Tests Positive

ANDY ANDREWS
Lancaster Farming Staff
HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.)

—On Tuesday the state agricultural department identified, through a positive presumptive test, another flock with avian influenza (A.I.) in the Lancaster County quarantine zone.

The flock, within the zone where other flocks had already tested positive early this month, comprised 59,000 layers — not the 80,000-bird flock as previously identified in other media.

According to Dr. Max Van Buskirk, director of the Pennsylvania Bureau of Animal Health, a flock east of Mount Joy identified on Tuesday that was confirmed "suspicious" as carrying A.I. was officially confirmed as carrying the H7N2 virus late Thursday afternoon, after serologic tests were complete.

According to Van Buskirk, there have been no condemnation actions taken by the department. The destruction of the flocks have

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Blue Mold Field Spraying Demo Set For Tuesday July 1

EVERETT NEWSWANGER
Managing Editor

LANCASTER (Lancaster Co.) - The subject of blue mold in tobacco plants is not just a local topic anymore. Farmers from Ohio and Maryland say they have it too.

According to Robert Anderson, Lancaster County extension agent,

Lancaster County may have found the mold a little sooner because plants were imported from North Carolina, but the air movement has taken the spores up the east coast this year. According to Anderson, last year the mold moved west of us and on up into Canada.

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Educators View Farm-To-Table Technology

ANDY ANDREWS
Lancaster Farming Staff

READING (Berks Co.) — While some high school graduates have prepared themselves academically, it's clear that most don't have a practical, working knowledge of the food processing industry.

That's the message nine Reading area school superintendents learned during a tour of the Berks Packing Company facility in Reading on Tuesday.

An 18-member tour group, comprised of school superintendents from Reading, Oley Valley, Hamburg, Wilson, Exeter, Governor Mifflin, and other districts throughout Berks County — in addition to several agri-industry

representatives — learned what happens to beef and swine when it leaves the farm. The group saw firsthand how products from the farm are processed into frankfurters, ham, salami, ring bologna, and other items for the table. They also learned more about where the industry is going, and what types of workers it is looking for.

Berks Packing, owned by the Boylan family, Reading, was established in 1933. Ralph Weise, vice president of operations, who has been working for the company 26 years, spoke about what it is like for a processing company to remain in the forefront of a total quality management philosophy that has been in place in the company for 15 years.

"Berks Packing was one of the first of the mid-size regional meat processing plants in the United States to get total quality control acceptance by the USDA in 1982," said Weise.

When Weise started working for the company about the time Tropical Storm Agnes devastated the region in the summer of 1972, the company maintained an in-house analytical laboratory. The laboratory's work has grown to encompass a full array of microbiological food safety work, in addition to a great deal of FDA food safety and compliance monitoring.

The quality control lab is staffed 24 hours a day, through three shifts, helping to formulate correct balances of food ingredients as

well as processing regular bacteria checks on every level of the plant. Those checks include scheduled monitoring of equipment and personnel to ensure the plant's strict food safety regulations are adhered to.

Weise noted that Berks Packing processes between 360-380 line items at different sizes and varieties. The plant doesn't produce fresh sausage, however. All product is cooked. They are now becoming involved with turkey cutting and they do some veal, Weise noted.

The packing plant employees 120 people, including two unions (meat cutter and teamsters). The privately held company does 70

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Office Closed July 4

We celebrate the nation's birthday Friday, July 4, when *Lancaster Farming's* offices will be closed. They will reopen on Monday, July 7, at 8 a.m. Deadlines for the holiday week are as follows:

- Public Sale ads — 9 a.m. Tuesday, July 1.
- Classified, Section D — 5 p.m., Tuesday, July 1.
- Classified, Section C, FE & FE Wanted — 9 a.m., Wednesday, July 2.
- General News — Noon, Wednesday, July 2.
- Mailbox Markets — 9 a.m., Monday, June 30.