



State Champion Tomato Growers, from left, Ike Martin, Cliff Charles, Camerer Farm representative, Dale Peters, and Orville Schultz. James Kohl of Furman Farms presented the champion growers with jackets instead of the usual plaques.

Top Tomato Growers Receive State Awards

LOU ANN GOOD

Lancaster Farming Staff
HERSHEY (Dauphin Co.) —
Cliff Charles of Lancaster County
knows how to raise tomatoes.

Not just any tomato, but the
highest quality and lots of it.

Not only does he harvest 2,835
tons annually, but most of those
are top grade.

In recognition of Charles' con-
sistent production, he received the
first-ever Master Grower of the
Year Award at the Tomato Awards
Luncheon last week during the
Mid-Atlantic Fruit and Vegetable
Convention in Hershey.

"He is consistently in front for
several years," said James Kohl of
Furman Foods, which with the
help of Pennsylvania State Univer-
sity Cooperative Extension Ser-
vice sponsors the awards.

The State Champion Tomato
Growers' Club annually recog-
nizes growers who produce out-
standing yields of tomatoes for
processing.

Winners are determined by
reports submitted by processors
based on the growers' entire
acreage that has been measured by
the fieldman or representative of
the extension. Total yield is the net
weight of usable tomatoes deliv-
ered to the processing plant and
does not include the weights of
culls.

Awards are broken into catego-
ries based on the amount of
acreage devoted to tomato
production.

In addition to being named
"Master Grower," Charles also
received the Grower Award for



Master Grower of the Year is Cliff Charles, left. James Kohl, who presented the award, said Charles was selected for consistently producing top quality tomatoes on 80 acres.

those competing in the 60- to
100-acre category. After grading,
the Charles farm yielded an aver-
age of 24.06 tons of grade A fruit
per acre.

Of his accomplishment, Charles
said, "I guess it's paying attention
to details — spraying at the right
times and stuff."

He also attributes the dry weath-
er of 1988 to producing healthy
tomatoes.

Ike Martin, in charge of the
fields for Furman Farms, topped
the 100-plus acreage category.

"It's not a one-man operation,"
said Martin, who oversees a team
of workers that harvested 5,918
tons of tomatoes on 219.2 acres.
After grading, Furman Farms

yielded an average of 15.48 tons of
grade A fruit per acre.

Camerer Farms, Inc. located in
Jersey Shore, Clinton County, won
the award for the highest tomato
yield in the 45 to 59-acre division.
They harvested 202.3 tons of fruit
on 53 acres for a 37.8 tons per acre
average yield. After grading,
Camerer Farms yielded an average
22.37 tons of A grade fruit per
acre.

Another Clinton County farm
took first place in tomato yields.
Ramm Farms of Lock Haven
placed first in the 30- to 40-acre
division. They harvested 1,474
tons of tomatoes on 38 acres for a
38.8 ton per acre average yield.
After grading, Ramm Farms
yielded an average of 21.6 tones of
A grade fruit per acre.

Clinton County must have the
soil and conditions conducive for
tomato growth. Another Clinton
countian, Dale Peters, took first
place in the 15- to 29-acre division.
He harvested 1,131.5 tons of toma-
toes on 28.4 acres for a 27.15 tons
per average yield. After grading,
the farm yielded an impressive
27.15 tons of A grade fruit per
acre.

Orville Schultz of Danville,
Montour County, took first place
in the 15-acre and less category.
Schultz harvested 482.1 tons on
14.4 acres for 33.48 tons per acre
average yield. After grading, the



James Kohl of Furman Farms congratulates Elvin Stoltzfus who receives the Industry of the Year Award.

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