

Rotary Member Pays \$255 For Prize-Winning Berries

LOU ANN GOOD

Lancaster Farming Staff
LANCASTER (Lancaster Co.)
— Ten years of weeding, picking, and hoping culminated in a grand finale for Jimmy Mullen, Wakefield, on Wednesday.

In his final year of 4-H before heading off to college, Jimmy picked the most luscious, picture-perfect berries to capture first place in the annual 4-H Strawberry Roundup at the Farm and Home Center, Lancaster.

The prize-winning two-quarts of berries topped \$255 when auctioned at The Lancaster Rotary Club dinner following the competition.

Timothy Peters of Warfel Construction Company paid the hefty price as an investment to encourage young people in business endeavors. And, he said, "Because I'm hungry and in a charitable mood."

After Peters claimed the berries, he said that he was counting on his wife to bake him a strawberry pie.

Jimmy was ecstatic. He credits his win to "lots of TLC (tender loving care)," and with the roundup coinciding with peak picking time in the berry patch.

Jimmy arose at 5 a.m. to pick the Red Chief berry variety.

"Normally, I'm up much earlier to milk cows," the 18-year-old said of his job at Shady Birch Farms, Tanglewood.

"I think this is a great way to end

my last 4-H year before heading off to Alfred State in New York," Jimmy said. He plans to study animal science and dairy herdsman-ship.

A graduate of Solanco High School and the FFA, Jimmy has a plethora of ribbons for his many 4-H and FFA projects. He considers his most rewarding achievements were placing first in public speaking during state competition in 1995 and in raising the champion berries.

This year, first-time exhibitors' judging was separate from those with more experience.

First place in the first year's exhibitors division went to Dawn Winters, Manheim. Samuel Altdoerffer, Lancaster, paid \$150 for them.

Second place in the senior division went to Kenton Bucher, Manheim. His older brother showed the grand champion berries several years ago. Kenton's younger brother Kristofer showed the second-place berries in the first-year exhibitor's division this year. Each of the Buchers care for 50 plants in the strawberry patch.

The most difficult job, according to the brothers, was to keep the birds from eating the berries before they were ripe for picking.

Kenton's berries sold for \$115 to Rodney and Tracy Host, Lancaster. Kristopher's berries were purchased for \$65 by D.L. Peters Construction (no relation to



The annual Strawberry Roundup sponsored by The Lancaster Rotary climaxed Jimmy Mullen's 10th and final year when his grand champion berries sold for \$255. High bidder was Timothy Peters. Kenton Bucher's reserve champion berries sold for \$115 to Rodney and Tracy Host. From left are Kenton Bucher, Timothy Peters, Auctioneer Harold Keller, and Jimmy Mullen.

Timothy Peters).

This year, auctioneer Harold Keller had help from his son in enticing higher bids from Rotary Club members. Other than the top winning berries, Rotary paid

between \$45 and \$100 to eight first-time 4-H members and 11 veterans entering the annual roundup on June 9.

Berry patches do not produce berries the first year so that 4-H

members need to wait two years before receiving berries for the rewards of their labors. To encourage first year members, The Rotary Club donates cash awards for well-kept record books.

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