



CORN TALK

PENNSYLVANIA MASTER CORN GROWERS ASSOC., INC.

Corn Talk, Lancaster Farming, Saturday, October 9, 1999

Corn Can Be Used For 'Entertainment' Farming, Too

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PARADISE (Lancaster Co.)
— Sometimes corn has a lot more uses than you can imagine.

You know the standard uses — corn flakes, beverage sweetener, alternative combustion fuel, and others.

But there are more uses than you might have read about — and that includes, of all things, entertainment farming.

Why not make a show out of the front five acres? That's exactly what Cherry-Crest Farm, operated by Jack and Donna Coleman in Paradise, did. This year marked the fourth time in a row that the Coleman's put up the "World's Largest Attended Maze," in which every year a new "theme" for the corn maze is selected.

The maze, taking up five acres, was planted in the shape of the Keystone State itself, complete with the four cities making up the corners (Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, Erie, and Scranton-Wilkes Barre). In the center is the shape of the Liberty Bell, along with ribbons along the corn row "paths" of the maze painted a different color to represent a section of the maze (yellow for the Liberty Bell, green for the state outline, red the Paradise Star, and white the stars of the major cities).

The "Land of Liberty" theme proved especially attractive for area tourists. Each day during

the season the maze averaged about 1,200-1,500 visitors. Last year about 50,000 visitors showed up to tour the maze, in the shape of Noah's Ark. The first year the maze was laid out in the shape of a locomotive and the second year, a horse and buggy.

At the top of the maze, north of the "gameboard," was an America flag made up of 14,000 petunias. According to Coleman, the one-third acre flag was planted the third week of May this year, contracted with Good Harvest, Strasburg.

The corn maze itself, which opened July 2, was planted with Pioneer 32K62, a Bt hybrid, full season variety. The corn was planted May 5 in 30-inch rows. The maze theme outline was gridded out and, when the corn was less than eight inches tall, a crew worked a hoe to shape. A few aerial photographs were taken before the final shape could be finished.

The drought emergency this year had an effect on some of the tourists, but luckily, according to Coleman, enough rain had fallen. In mid-July, two irrigations were needed to keep the corn stalks from turning brown and brittle.

The maze employs about 15, mostly youth, from around the region. The Colemans also care for 60 cows on their dairy, in addition to 50,000 broilers under contract with Tyson.

The maze is open Sept. 3 through Sept. 18 Friday and

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The maze included an extensive petting zoo, mini-mazes, hay rides, food, refreshments, gift shop, and weekly special events. This year the Pennsylvania Master Corn Growers Association and Penn State Extension Service also had a corn products stand at the maze. From left, Jack Coleman and right, Del Voight, Lebanon County extension agent, at the stand. Photo by Andy Andrews




Jeff Stoltzfus, Eastern Lancaster County (ELANCO) School District Adult Farmer Program adviser, center, spoke to about 60 farmer and agri-industry representatives in June during the third annual ELANCO Adult Farmer Program Spring Meeting at the Eugene Martin Farm south of New Holland. See story page 3. Photo by Andy Andrews

PENNSYLVANIA MASTER CORN GROWERS ASSOCIATION



Between The Rows

Dr. Greg Roth
Penn State Agronomy Associate Professor



AN END TO A VERY LONG YEAR

I'm sure the 1999 growing season had as many days and hours as previous seasons, but for many of us it sure seemed like a longer than normal year.

For many, Mother Nature threw a few curveballs that resulted in some dreadful

corn crops being produced around the state.

Fortunately, this kind of season is a rare occurrence that we hope does not reoccur for the remainder of your careers.

I thought I might be good to revisit a few of the issues we ran into this summer and

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