

# Every Four Years, 4-H Livestock Team Experiences Dream Season

**ANDY ANDREWS**

**Lancaster Farming Staff**

**LANCASTER** (Lancaster Co.) — Almost like the workings of a fine clock, the team has been consistent.

This decade, the Lancaster County 4-H Livestock Judging Team, with different members, has won the statewide championship in 1991, 1995, and again this year.

Some would think: Four years apart. Time and again.

But they've done even better than that. Since Chet Hughes has been the county extension agent, teams have also gone to nationals in 1984, 1987, and 1989.

But time is well spent as the team makes final practices for the national competition at the North American International Livestock Expo in Louisville, Ky., Nov. 16.

In the meantime, when they can, the team is preparing for the competition. They have been practicing their judging on the three species — swine, sheep, and beef — noted Chet Hughes, livestock agent. Hughes assists Wendell Landis, team coach.

Members include John Hess, 18; Geoff Rohrer, 16; Jessica Schmidt, 17; and Kevin Pfautz, 16.

The typical age to begin competing on a 4-H team is 12, noted Hughes. "Some of the early birds start at 10 or 11 or so, but can't compete until they're 13."

For years, the Lancaster team has battled Lebanon County's team, a fierce rivalry, but this time, in the summer, Lancaster took state prize.

The team members met for more practice, noted Wendell Landis, himself a member of the statewide

1991 champion team from Lancaster. Wendell, a graduate of Lancaster Mennonite High School and 1999 Penn State animal science graduate, has seen this before.

Practice, and learning to focus, are key, he said. The team has to be able to "see as many different breeds within the species and provide reasons" during competition, Landis noted. There are 12 classes in the day-long competition later this month, beginning at 8 a.m. and lasting until about 4 p.m., including providing detailed, articulated oral reasons on four of them.

Team members must place animals and provide reasons to back up those placings.

Why compete? According to Landis, in 1991, when he competed as a sophomore in high school, there were 35 teams in the national contest in Louisville. Landis noted he sees people he knows and meets a lot of new friends.

"It's a good experience and it builds a lot of character," he said.

According to team member Jessica Schmidt, the experience allows her to practice her public speaking and get more confident at it.

Geoff Rohrer will present his experiences on the trip to Louisville to the school board. Geoff said he used to be "really shy," but the experience has given him poise and self-confidence.

Landis noted that for some, the experience has helped them build careers. Some take their knowledge of placing animals and providing reasons and used that experience to judge county fairs around the state.

Hughes noted the team will make several stops when it leaves for Louisville Nov. 4. The team will stop at Penn State to receive instructions from Keith Bryan, instructor in dairy and animal science. From there, it will head to western Pennsylvania, then to eastern Ohio, near Columbus, then travel to hog farms in western Ohio.

While in Lexington, Ky., the team will stop and judge cattle on several farms. There's even time for a stop at the Corvette museum in Bowling Green, Ky.

The team that last went to Kentucky in national competition from Lancaster placed sixth overall but high in individual sheep judging in 1995.

But the experience then, as now, is good for building friendships, noted Geoff Rohrer. "You get to see different places," he said.

The events give the team members an opportunity to attend social events and meet with people, Hughes noted.

Jessica Schmidt is the daughter of Laurie and Pete Schmidt, Drumore. She is a senior at Solanco High School. Jessica brought her Dorset March ewe lamb, Adelida, to practice Monday evening at the Farm and Home Center.

Jessica raises Dorsets and Montadales. She said her favorite are Dorsets because "they are calmer and gentler."

Jessica traded a pig with Bud Stillman, a neighbor, for her first Dorset, now 10 years old, named Madeline. She has 20 Dorset brood ewes and five Montadales.

When judging champion sheep, breed judges want to see them

"tall, broody, feminine, and long," said Jessica.

Jessica also raises Angus, including two cows, Lassie and Fancy, and two steers.

Jessica said she needs to practice more on providing accurate and detailed reasons.

John Hess, son of Bob and Deb Hess, Mount Joy, raises Herefords. John is a senior at Elizabethtown High School. He also enjoys raising sheep. John said he needs more practice in judging and providing reasons on hogs. Often, he noted, it is hard to tell what differences exist between hogs in the show ring.

Geoff Rohrer is the son of Dudley and Beth Rohrer, Manheim. Not long ago, Geoff, who plans to graduate from Manheim Center in

2001, decided to give up on hog production and expand the sheep flock. He has about 120 ewes and 350 market lambs, mostly Dorset and Dorset-Polypay crossbreds.

Geoff noted he needs to practice more on beef judging. He said he has more experience on the smaller animals, because hogs and sheep are about the same size.

Team member Kevin Pfautz, son of Rick and Sue Pfautz, Lititz, couldn't attend the meeting Monday because of other commitments. He plans to graduate from Warwick High School in 2001.

What other kind of preparations are called for?

"We're going to have a typical, traditional light McDonald's breakfast before the contest," said Chet Hughes, livestock agent.

## Ag Journalist To Speak At Agriculture-Industry Banquet

**LANCASTER** (Lancaster Co.) — Max Armstrong, one of America's best-known and most widely followed agriculture journalists, is the featured speaker for The Lancaster Chamber of Commerce & Industry's 23rd Annual Agriculture-Industry Banquet Tuesday, November 23, 5:30 p.m., at the Lancaster Host Resort.

Armstrong, who grew up on a farm in Southwestern Indiana, has conducted daily broadcasts with colleagues Orion Samuelson on Chicago's WGN AM Radio 720 for more than 20 years. The two also can be heard each day on roughly 500 radio stations through their Tribune Agri-Voice broadcasts, the Farming America radio

show, and the National Farm Report programs.

John M. Blanchfield, from the American Bankers Association, will serve as the evening's emcee.

The George C. Delp Award, honoring someone who has given outstanding contributions to agriculture and agri-business, will be presented at the banquet. Families receiving the Century Farm Award also will be honored.

Tickets for the banquet are \$40. To make a reservation or for information regarding sponsorship opportunities, please contact Brent Landis at 397-3531 or e-mail at blandis@lcci.com.



## Independent.

Working for the things we want — Better yields. Technology that pays. And the chance to go on calling our own shots.

Call District Sales Manager Harvey Doyle at 724-459-8580 or see one of these NC+ Dealers.

ALEXANDRIA  
J CLETUS RHODES • 814-669-4705

CANTON  
ED PEPPER • 717-364-5242

EAST EARL  
IVAN ZIMMERMAN • 717-354-5826

ELLIOTSBURG  
WAYNE FREEMAN • 717-582-2397

HALIFAX  
BECHTEL FARMS, KENNETH BECHTEL  
• 717-896-8314

KINTNERSVILLE  
WAYNE LITZENBERGER • 610-847-5563

KUNKLETOWN  
JEFFREY BORGER • 610-381-3785

LEBANON  
CLARENCE MULL • 717-865-2037

LEWISBURG  
AARON MARTIN • 717-524-2952

LEWISBURG  
URIE YODER • 717-524-7739

LITITZ  
ELVIN HURSH • 717-733-3538

MANCHESTER  
ANIMAL MEDIC • 717-266-5611

MANHEIM  
ARTHUR AUKER • 717-665-6627

MOUNT JOY  
VINCENT MUMMAU • 717-653-5991

RICHFIELD  
SAMUEL KNOUSE • 717-463-2885

SALEM  
DONALD EMEL • 609-769-1577

THOMPSONTOWN  
ROGER SANER • 717-535-5307

WOODBURY  
GREGG CARBAUGH • 814-766-3696

WYALUSING  
ANDY CAMPBELL • 717-363-2133



### Plant These Top Performers from NC+:

**NC+ 3448**

107 Days

The yield pacesetter in the 105-107 maturity zone.

**NC+ 4646**

111 Days

Defensive yield performer for higher-stress environments

**NC+ 5445**

114 Days

The proven leader in 114-day yield and agronomics.

**NC+ 4648M**

111 Days

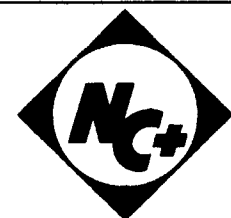
CLEARFIELD™ (IMI) version of NC+ 4646

**NC+ 5778**

115 Days

High-performance 115-day companion to NC+ 5445.

**9%** Cash Discount  
Through  
December 4



America's  
down to earth  
seed company