



The poultry booth in the food court sold seven tons of chicken and 4,000 to 5,000 eggs during Farm Show week. From far left are Linda Robinson and Laura Strayer from Wengers Feed; Jim Shirk from PennAg Industries; and Geoff Finch and Paul Hand from Wenger Feed.

Food Court Is Favorite Watering Trough For Farm Show Patrons

JAYNE SEBRIGHT

Lancaster Farming Staff HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) - Can you smell the aroma - a mixture of butter, french fries, roast beef sandwiches, fried vegetables, apple cider, and more?

It's the place where most Farm Show visitors stop first and where many of them go right before they're ready to leave. Many spend the entire year in anticipation of a vanilla milkshake and baked potato, while others start at 10 a.m. on their first roast beef sandwich.

Since 1991, the Food Court at the Pennsylvania Farm Show has filled the stomachs of weary Farm Show exhibitors while tantalizing the tastebuds of spectators attending the show.

While some of the stands are run by paid staff during Farm Show week, others are manned completely by volunteers. Some stands donate their profits toward agriculture research and education, while others use the profits for operating expenses.

Each may operate differently, but several things remain the same for all of the stands in the Food Court. They all sell

Pennsylvania products, are operated by Pennsylvania commodities or farm organizations, and serve great food.

One of the oldest food stands at the Farm Show is the Pennsylvania Cooperative of Potato Grower's booth, where they sell baked potatoes, french fries, and potato donuts.

According to Tom Lyon, Harrisburg division manager for the cooperative, the booth has been opened since the start of Farm Show.

This year the cooperative expects to sell 30,000 baked potatoes, 12,000 dozen donuts, and 55,000 cups of french fries.

"The baked potatoes are probably the most famous," said Lyon. "But both the french fries and potato donuts are popular, too."

While the people who help at the Potato Growers' stand are paid, most of them have been working there for 20 or more years.

"We have a waiting list of people who want to help at Farm Show," said Lyon. "It's a time to get together with old friends. We put in a lot of hours and have a lot of laughs."

The potato growers use the profits from the stand for research projects, national dues, and the general benefit of the cooperative.

David Smith, executive secretary of the Pennsylvania Dairymen's Association, expects to sell 70 to 75 thousand milkshakes during this year's Farm Show. According to Smith, the milkshake booth has been opened for more than 30 years at the Farm Show and is run completely by volunteers.

"We partner with the Valley Grange from Lewisberry," explains Smith. "They provide all of the labor, and we give half of the profits to the Grange."

Smith can remember when the milkshakes and baked potatoes were found out in the main exhibit hall, along with food stands run by area church groups.

"One thing I can tell you," said Smith. "People come to Farm Show to get a milkshake."

The Dairymen's Association also partners with the Pennsylvania Dairy Princess & Promotion Services (PDPPS) to run a parfait booth next to the

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Friends and family help each year with the Livestock Association's sandwich booth. From far left are Ron Fouche, Bonnie Wolgemuth, and Annabell Core from Lebanon County, along with Debbie Piper from Cumberland County.

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