

# Mexico Students Find Hershey Tour, Garden Spot Enticing

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*Lancaster Farming Staff*  
**NEW HOLLAND** (Lancaster Co.) — Three teen-agers from Mexico have some memorable experiences to take back with them, eventually, to their home country.

Part of a cultural exchange arranged by the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture through the Honorable Guillermo Gonzalez Zamacona, municipal president (mayor) of Capulhuac, Mexico, several students continue as guests of Lancaster County residents.

In return, three Lancaster County students, all FFA members, will experience life in Mexico for 10 weeks.

All three Mexican students are from Capulhuac, a small town west of Mexico City.

Traveling to the states has proved memorable for one guest, Gabriela Rodriguez. Gabriela, 15, in the 10th grade, smiles when she thinks of her favorite experience so far — taking a tour of the Hershey Chocolate Factory. With her friends Rosa Maria Rodriguez and Esthela Ramirez, some happy memories will be the sweet smell of cocoa and sugar and watching Hershey Kisses arrive on the conveyor belts.

Gabriela said it was a "neat experience." Her parents, fluent in English, will host Rachel Day, daughter of Cliff and Anna Day, New Holland, during the next 70 days.

Amanda Sauder will be hosted by the parents of Rosa Maria Rodriguez. Rosa Maria is being hosted by Kathy and Karl Zellefrow and their three children in Narvon.

Esthela Ramirez said the experience has been "good for

me." Esthela, 16, is the daughter of Esthela and Thomas Ramirez and in the 11th grade at the high school in Capulhuac. Sabrina Hoffner, daughter of Roger and Bonny Hoffner of New Holland, will be hosted by Esthela's parents in Capulhuac, Mexico.

Rosa Maria found tours of Pennsylvania Amish country around Intercourse "interesting." Rosa Maria, 17, is a senior at Capulhuac and the daughter of Georgina and Albino Rodriguez.

Gabriela's mother is a teacher and her father is an engineer with Pemex, on the border of U.S. and Mexico.

Rosa Maria's parents are candy factory workers in Mexico.

Esthela's father is a medical doctor and her mother is a homemaker. Esthela is staying with Joan and Pablo Perez Padilla and their two daughters in New Holland.

The three will visit Penn State and Philadelphia.

Late last week was the first time they saw snow in their lives, according to Sam Hayes Jr., state secretary of agriculture. The students will be also touring the New Holland plant in New Holland. Also, the three students from Lancaster County, all Garden Spot students and Grassland FFA members, will tour New Holland in Queretaro, northwest of Mexico City.

Hayes said the students were invited to the United States because of an ongoing trade mission. Part of the mission, Hayes noted, was to build relationships with youth, because we "live in a global marketplace," he said. "These six people will define the 21st Century."



Teen-agers from Mexico and Lancaster County were at Garden Spot High School to speak about their experiences recently. From left, Chris Herr, deputy secretary of ag; Don Reed, Garden Spot High School principal; Sabrina Hoffner; Esthela Ramirez; Rosa Maria Rodriguez; Amanda Sauder; Gabriela Rodriguez; Rachel Day; Cliff Day; and Sam Hayes Jr., state secretary of agriculture.

The area where the three students live in Mexico is a valley surrounded by a lot of mountains, dry most of the year, with temperatures consistently in the 70s. There are many small farms with a few goats and sheep, pigs, and some donkeys in Capulhuac.

There are slaughter plants for the sheep and lamb industry nearby.

Gabriela and friends noted how different the food is. They eat beans, quesadillas (tortilla-like bread rolled up with chicken and cheese), mole (sliced cactus that is fried or boiled), nopales (cactus, eaten like tomatoes), tortillas, gorditas, barbacoa, and others. They drink water that is boiled with fruits, including lemons and oranges.

Beans are eaten ground up, a mashed-potato like "chocolate pudding," noted Gabriela.

Most visitors to Mexico have to be aware, though, of the "can-

dies" served. The candies, known as "Tamarind," are not what you think, according to Kathy Zellefrow, one of the host parents. Tamarind are fruits made of salt and hot chili pepper, though they consider them a candy. To Westerners, Tamarinds can really "water the eyes" with their high seasoning.

Barbacoa is sheep or goat meat.

But Gabriela assures the visitors that there are plenty of fast food places, including McDonald's, Burger King, Pizza Hut, and others, in Mexico.

The visiting students from Lancaster County will help present the ideologies of the largest rural youth organization in the world — FFA — to Mexican families.

And they will also tour cultural exhibits, the slaughter plants, Mexico City, and of course El Toro — "the bull" — the traditional bull fights, of which many rings exist.

Gabriela noted she would be willing to come back, simply because of the uniqueness of the area and the families, whom she considers so friendly.

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