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Lancaster Farming

Vol. 45 No. 40 Four Sections Lancaster Farming, Saturday, August 5, 2000 \$32.00 Per Year 60¢ Per Copy

Careful Selection Breeds Results For Coldsprings

MICHELLE RANCK
Lancaster Farming Staff

Editor's Note: Recently Marlin Hoff of Coldsprings Farm was selected to receive the National Dairy Shrine's Distinguished Dairy Cattle Breeder Award for 2000. The award is given annually to a breeder who has proven, through successful genetic and business management, that he or she is forward-thinking and working to improve cattle breeds. Hoff will be honored at the National Dairy Shrine's 51st Anniversary Awards Banquet in October in conjunction with World Dairy Expo in Madison, Wisconsin.

NEW WINDSOR, Md. "For forever I've been looking for the complete cow," said Marlin

Hoff, echoing the sentiment of every dairy farmer. This quest for the complete cow has led Hoff to build a herd of quality genetics and has garnered the farm national recognition.

As a recent recipient of the Dairy Cattle Breeder Award, Hoff is doing his part to improve the Holstein breed.

"If cows have changed in the last 50 years, they've lost substance and gotten smaller. I don't think that needs to continue," he said. Hoff continues to look for "the cow that produces well and lasts a long time."

Bulls, of course, play an important role in the farm's program. Hoff uses top AI bulls. "Probably the best rule of thumb is bulls with high TPI, which in-

(Turn to Page A40)



Marlin Hoff, of Coldsprings Farms in New Windsor, Maryland, received the Distinguished Dairy Cattle Breeder Award for 2000. His experience on a judging team gave him an eye for good cattle ... and began his quest to find or breed the perfect cow. Photo by Michelle Ranck

Empire Farm Days' Program Expands, Hosts Youth Event

ANDY ANDREWS
Lancaster Farming Staff

SENECA FALLS, N.Y. — More than 100 acres of agricultural displays will fill the site of this year's Empire Farm Days, scheduled Aug. 8-10 here at the Rodman Lott and Son Farm.

Since 1988, the farm has been the site of New York's largest agricultural showcase event, billed by some as the Northeast's largest farm show.

According to show manager Melanie Wickham, the exhibit area has been expanded on the east side of the show.

Wickham, who spoke to *Lancaster Farming* Wednesday, noted the demonstrations used

to be located farther north and east of the exhibits, but are now closer.

"The ability to have the field demonstrations close to the exhibit area is a plus for the show," she said. "We were able to expand without a major disruption to the demonstration acreage."

For the first time, Empire Farm Days serves as host to the New York State FFA and New York 4-H Tractor Operators Contest. About 100 young students from across the state will compete Thursday, Aug. 10, in the contest at the southeast corner of the exhibit area.

Empire Farm Days, with its

67th annual show, features more than 600 exhibitors and highlights new ag technology, improved and enlarged timber, construction, and livestock displays, and some of the largest ag machinery and equipment displays east of Louisville, Ky.

The show, on more than 300 acres, also features dairy profit seminars, an antique tractor display, and field demonstrations.

The field equipment schedule includes corn/hay chopping 10 a.m. daily, hay mowing 11 a.m. daily, tillage 1 p.m. daily, and hay (raking, baling, and handling) at 2 p.m. every day.

About 75,000 farmers and agribusiness representatives attended last year's event. This year Wickham noted that it is difficult to predict how many will attend, but the organizers

expect a good crowd, with numbers reaching from 75,000-100,000, she told *Lancaster Farming*.

Following are some show highlights:

• Demonstration Tent. This area at the south end of the demo field will be used again this year as a headquarters for

(Turn to Page A42)

Disaster Relief Final Payments

HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — This week at the Lebanon Area Fair Agriculture Secretary Samuel E. Hayes Jr. presented a symbolic check to Lebanon farmers. This presentation comes on the heels of the recent announcement that final payments under the Crop Loss Program have been made, bringing the 1999 drought disaster relief program to a close.

"By responding to the overwhelming need created by last year's drought, the Common-

wealth clearly led the way over any other Mid-Atlantic or Northeastern state," Hayes said. "I am very proud of our producers for managing through a very difficult crop year."

Hayes commended Gov. Ridge and Pennsylvania lawmakers for the quick response with the \$70.6 million assistance package, which made a real difference in helping farm families across the Commonwealth.

"With the initial \$5 million, Hay Assistance Program in place to lead the way, followed soon thereafter by the \$60 million Crop Loss Program, and continuing with the \$5.6 million for Crop Insurance, Pennsylvania farmers had a way to help manage one of the toughest droughts in recent history," Hayes said.

To date, the area consisting of Lebanon, Lancaster, Berks.

(Turn to Page A44)



The second year for the 4-H goat show at the Lebanon Area Fair showcased young talent and quality animals for the North Mountain Market Goat Club. Travis Dresch, 10, right, took home grand champion honors with "Cyrus" and Katie Eckert, 10, won reserve champion placing with "Andy." Dr. Robert Herr of "Nix Besser" farm judged the event and donated hats to the two young exhibitors. Full report on page A32.

Test Your Ability To Predict Beef Quality

Can you accurately determine feeder cattle value by eyeing up a steer? Guess ribeye area? Approximate Yield and Quality grades? This is your chance to test your skills. Recently Lancaster County cattle feeders had the opportunity to try the "Fantasy Beef Quality Challenge," a contest which highlighted the difficulty of predicting cattle value by visual appraisal only. Turn to page A36 to find a full report plus pictures and a score card to participate in the contest.



Kyle Fleener, right, won supreme champion hog Monday at the Lebanon Fair. Henry Holloway, left, judged the show. See story page A28.