

# Groff Heads Lancaster County Poultry Association

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Lancaster Farming Staff

**MANHEIM (Lancaster Co.)** — "We've faced some big obstacles with salmonella, the avian influenza scare, and cholesterol," Nelson Groff said of the poultry industry. "Now the big challenge to sort out is animal welfare."

Groff is poised to take over the presidential reins of leadership for the Lancaster County Poultry Association at its annual banquet next Tuesday evening. Joining him in leadership are Jay Shannon of Keystone Farm Credit, vice president; Andy Bradford of Wenger Feeds, secretary; and Becky Petit of Hy-Line International, treasurer.

Groff works as the technical services representative for Heritage Poultry Management Services, Annville.

As head of the Poultry Association, Groff sees the importance of educating the non-farming public about agriculture. For this reason, he wants to explore additional opportunities with the Farm To City Day held annually at the North Museum.

The Farm To City Day began two years ago. The Poultry Association showed an informative video and sold poultry sausage

overseeing these events, and it's a matter of them continuing their good work."

Groff said that the annual banquet held for Lancaster and surrounding county family living teachers has proven to be a success.

"For the past several years, we have had some outstanding poultry ambassadors and the newly appointed ambassador Rijelle Kraft is highly qualified, and I believe she will do an excellent job," Groff said.

The Ephrata Fair Booth is the Association's main fundraiser. "That has been a success mainly due to the dedication of Clair and Shirley High who have taken care of the annual event," Groff said. "Unfortunately they want to be relieved of the duties so we need someone to step in and take over."

Of benefit to producers is the organization's Poultry Day. Groff would like to see every producer attend in become involved in the association.

Although many animal rights protest large poultry operations and a fringe cries for organic eggs, Groff does not see that becoming a mainstream demand.

"The fact is that farmers are

over production of eggs in the midwest, which then dump their eggs in the east causing low prices.

Groff who has a ready laugh and easy-going management style, said that the poultry industry is a good fit for him, although it originally wasn't the career direction he had planned.

He said that his parents moved off the farm when he was six years old, but he worked on a farm from ages 13-19.

After high school graduation, Groff attended an electronic institute for one year until enlisting into the Army during the Vietnam War. During his three years in the Army, Groff worked in electronic communications, mostly stationed in Thailand.

When he returned to the county, the electronic job market was stagnant from all the electronically-trained veterans. Groff worked for Alcoa in machine setup. He soon married Arlene, and they will celebrate their 25th wedding anniversary soon. Arlene's brother-in-law owns Melhorn Sales and Service and offered Groff a sales job with that company.

Groff loved selling chicks, but after 13 years of traveling from state to state he was ready to cut



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**The annual Lancaster County Poultry Association banquet is planned for Tues., Oct. 24, at Willow Valley Convention Center. Tickets are available from board members or by calling Dr. John Schwartz, extension director, at (717) 394-6851.**

sandwiches, chicken nuggets, and mustard and red beet eggs.

"This year, I'd like to give away mini omelets to promote the product and public relations with the non-ag community," Groff said.

"I believe we (the association) have already laid the ground work for many worthwhile projects," Groff said. "We have some members who are committed to

working with small margins. The cost per dozen for organic eggs doubles the cost of commercial eggs, and I don't see the average consumer ready to pay those additional costs," Groff said.

"People need to realize that farmers do take care of their chickens. If you want to stay in business, you must take care of them," Groff said.

Groff is also concerned with

back on travel time.

About six years ago, Groff took a job with Heritage. In that position, he works with contract and independent flocks.

In the 19 years associated with some form of the poultry industry, Groff said that has seen lots of changes, especially many small farm disappearing and feed companies consolidating.

"We have less processors but bigger production," Groff said.

## Lawmakers Secure \$1.1 Million For Plum Pox Research In Pa.

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** — Senators Rick Santorum (R-PA) and Arlen Specter (R-PA) and Congressman William Goodling (R-PA/19) announced their successful attempt in securing \$1.1 million for plum pox research in Pennsylvania.

The funding was approved by a House-Senate Conference Committee as part of the FY-2001 Agriculture Appropriations Bill.

The Agriculture Appropriations Bill must still be approved by the full Senate and House of Representatives before being sent to the President.

In Pennsylvania, the stone fruit industry is suffering from an outbreak of the plum pox virus, the first known case in North America. Santorum, Specter and Goodling, along with the commonwealth of Pennsylvania, the National Peach Council, and other groups have been working to combat the virus, and this funding is crucial for this effort to continue.

"Since learning about the discovery of the plum pox virus in Pennsylvania, I have been committed to combating this devastating plague to our stone fruit industry," said Santorum. "I am please that the conference com-

mittee recognized the importance of funding to rid Pennsylvania of this harmful virus."

Specter said, "I'm delighted my colleagues saw fit to put these vital funds into the battle against this devastating disease, and to provide some relief for victimized farmers."

"There is no question this money is critical to help contain the spread of this disease which has wreaked havoc on Pennsylvania's fruit growers," said Goodling. "Along with these research funds, we must continue to push for fair and equitable compensation for our affected growers."



Kenny, center, has lived with his Uncle Nelson and Aunt Arlene Groff from age 2. One of the Groffs' favorite activities is watching Kenny play football for Manheim Central High School.

## ASA Celebrates PNTR Signing For China Legislation

**SAINT LOUIS, Mo.** — The American Soybean Association (ASA) recently applauded the signing by President Bill Clinton of legislation authorizing Permanent Normal Trade Relations (PNTR) between the U.S. and China.

Passage of PNTR for China has been a soybean industry legislative priority for more than two years. For U.S. soybean producers, PNTR for China is the

cornerstone of trade relations that will facilitate exports of U.S. agricultural products to China.

"PNTR for China is the single most important piece of trade legislation that the ASA has backed in the last 10 years," said ASA President Tony Anderson, a soybean producer from Mount Sterling, Ohio. "ASA and our state affiliates mounted an all-out grass-roots policy campaign earlier this year that was instru-

mental in securing passage of PNTR in the House. We were extremely pleased that the Senate then provided strong support for this legislation, and that President Clinton has now signed the bill into law."

Passage of PNTR for China protects current U.S. soybean and soy product exports worth \$1 billion, and makes possible future soy exports that could double in the next five to 10 years,

according to industry estimates. Soybeans represented more than 7 percent of the total value of all U.S. exports to China in 1999.

Patrick Steel, associate administrator at the Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS) of USDA, said, "China is the largest growth market for U.S. soybeans and PNTR puts in place a system to preserve that growth market and opens the market for soybean oil and soybean meal. This is an important agreement for U.S. soy-

beans and is in the best interest of America."

U.S. soybean producers, who have been promoting their soybeans in China since ASA opened its Beijing office in 1982, were well positioned to supply product to China when economic and political changes made imports feasible. ASA opened a second office in Shanghai in 1993 to further expand market development activities for U.S. soybeans in China.