

Fresh Corn Draws Crowds To Produce Stand

LINDA WILLIAMS
Bedford Co. Correspondent
BEDFORD (Bedford Co.) — When the Reiff Produce stand opens at 10 a.m., there are already cars full of hungry customers, mouths watering, waiting for the fresh sweet corn.

The busy route 220 highway is a great location and a nice diversion from the hectic schedules of passersby. Sweet scents of fresh fruit or the more earthy smell of new potatoes get the taste buds stirring. One look at the just picked corn and customers are ready for the butter and salt.

"I feel sorry for all those people who don't know what good corn really tastes like," said Ann Reiff, who along with her husband, Norman, owns and operates Reiff's Produce and Greenhouses in New Enterprise.

"There are a lot of people who don't realize you have to eat corn within a few hours of being picked if you want the best flavor."

The Reiffs have about 25 acres of their Morrison's Cove farm in produce. "We raise strawberries, squash, tomatoes, beets, beans, onions, potatoes, canaloupe, peppers, and of course, corn," Ann said. "Strawberries and corn are our biggest sellers."

They also buy fruit from other growers to sell at their stands.

Ann and her daughters raise bedding plants and create beautiful hanging baskets and other container arrangements to add color and variety to the two produce stands. One is located near their New Enterprise farm and the other near the turnpike interchange in Bedford.

During the summer, they sell cut flowers.

"The only complaint we have had about our flowers is several of our hanging baskets were stolen from front porches of customers. I'm really sorry to think that anyone would stoop to stealing flowers," she said.

They have a green house for the bedding plants and for hot

house tomatoes, which they sell until the field tomatoes are ripe for picking.

Once the Reiffs discovered the demand for fresh sweet corn, Norman planted it every two weeks beginning in the early spring. This assures a good crop until Labor Day.

"We use a sugary variety," Ann explains, "and it has a wonderful flavor."

"We depend a lot on the weather and, this year, we have had a nice amount of rain and just hope we continue to have showers throughout August."

To prevent the first crop of young plants from freezing, the Reiffs keep them under clear plastic until warmer weather arrives. "We actually create a corn greenhouse," Ann says.

She said this her family's first experience with retailing. "We started with the local produce auction and advanced into our own produce stands. It has been trial and error. We depend a lot on word of mouth. When someone gets good strawberries or nice flowers at a reasonable price or mouth-melting corn, they like to tell their friends about it, and that is our main source of advertisement."

The Reiffs also do some newspaper advertising and have had refrigerator magnets created to keep their name before customers.

"We open on weekends beginning with Mother's Day," Ann said. After school is over and strawberries are ready, the stand is open full time.

She said, "During corn season, it takes our whole family to keep ahead of the work."

The Reiffs have two daughters and two sons who work on the farm. They hire extra help during the produce season.

In addition to the produce the Reiff farm has 100 head of milking cows managed by the sons.

"We have no trouble sleeping at night," Ann said with a laugh.



Folks are ready to buy when the Reiff's open for business at 10 a.m.

Snyder County Historical Society Conducts Tours, Lecture

BEAVER SPRINGS (Snyder Co.) — The Snyder County Historical Society continues its lecture series on Sept. 2. The History and Art of Beekeeping presented by local beekeeper Steven March, will be conducted at 2 p.m. at the Snyder County Historical Society Building, 30 E. Market Street, Middleburg.

March is the owner and operator of Moosewood Apiaries of Beaver Springs. March has been

a beekeeper for more than 20 years and is a member of the American Beekeeping Federation, the Pennsylvania State Beekeepers Association, and is a lifetime member of the Snyder County Historical Society. He specializes in the production of cut comb, chunk, and extracted honey; as well as beeswax and the removal of bees and honeybee swarms.

The presentation will cover the history of beekeeping from approximately 9000 B.C. to the present. Beekeeping equipment and other beekeeping related items will be on display and

available for inspection. March will also demonstrate and discuss different beekeeping methods and techniques used throughout the world. The presentation will be an interactive event with audience participation and discussion.

Free weekly tours each Sunday continue at the society building from 1:30-5 p.m. now through the month of September. For more information about the programs at the society building, call (570) 837-6191 on Thursday or Friday from 10 a.m.-3:30 p.m. when the library is open for historical research.

Home Canning Questions

LANCASTER (Lancaster Co.) — Penn State Cooperative Extension is the place to go for answers for food preservation questions.

A home economist is available on Wednesdays from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. to answer specific questions on home canning, freezing and drying.

Pressure canner dial gauges may also be checked for accuracy on Wednesdays at the Farm and Home Center. It is recommended that dial gauges be checked yearly. Call 394-6851 to schedule an appointment, only the lid is needed for testing. Pressure canners with weighted gauges do not need to be tested. There is no charge for this service.

Canning For Competition

LANCASTER (Lancaster Co.) — Have you ever wondered what makes the blue ribbon winners at the fair distinctive?

Are you a judge for canned goods and need an update?

Do you want to make your home canned gifts look special?

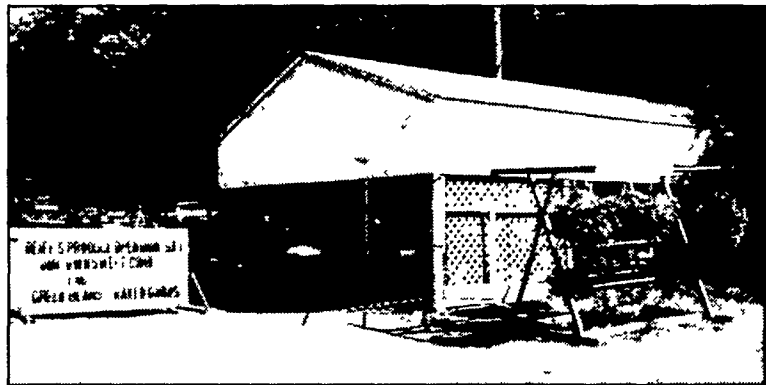
Or, do you just like to know some of the secrets?

Penn State Cooperative Extension is offering a workshop on Canning for Competition. This workshop is for the want-to-be winners and the pros alike.

Information includes an update on judging techniques and canning information. Coordinators of canned goods at local fairs and fair judges will also find the newest information about judging canned goods at fairs.

This workshop will be conducted on Thursday, Aug. 23 from 10-11 a.m. at the Farm and Home Center.

Preregistration is requested. Cost is \$2, which covers demonstration materials and handouts. Call Penn State Extension at (717) 394-6851 for information.



Located along Business Route 220 on the way to the turnpike, Reiffs is a roadside attraction.

Look for the Antiques Center in this section of Lancaster Farming.

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