

Veteran Lancaster Farming Reader Wins Ice Cream Freezer

EAST BERLIN (York Co.) — Sherman Grove has been subscribing to *Lancaster Farming* since 1966.

This loyal reader from York County received a bonus from the paper last week when his name was selected as winner of a handcrank White Mountain ice cream freezer.

Grove had dropped his name into *Lancaster Farming's* ice cream freezer drawing boxes at both the Pennsylvania Farm Show in Harrisburg and the Keystone Farm Show in York. It was the Keystone entry that paid off for him.

Although his favorite *Lancaster Farming* department is the mailbox markets, his perusal of the newspaper doesn't stop there.

"I look at all of it," the native said.

As a former swine and beef producer, Grove said he used to run several ads a year in mailbox markets.

Now that he is no longer farming, that rate has slowed but he still looks forward to the paper every week.

His current subscription is good until 2004.



Sherman Grove of East Berlin received this ice cream freezer after his name was selected in one of *Lancaster Farming's* farm show drawings last week.

Equine Conference Will Be Conducted At Penn State University

STATE COLLEGE (Centre Co.) — A weekend workshop will be conducted at Penn State University at the University Park campus on March 15-16. Friday evening will start off with the Pennsylvania Equine Council Board of Directors Meeting, chaired by Walt Jeffers current President of the Pennsylvania Equine Council.

This weekend program will be held in Penn State's Agricultural Sciences and Industries (ASI) Building, and feature topics and issues facing the state's equine industry. Some of the speakers and topics to be included are: Senator Mike Waugh, "Working with your Legislator", Mike Peckarg, Farm Bureau "Current Legislative Issues", Gene Wood, Clemson University, "University Best Management Practices on Trail Use", Jerry Fruth U.S. Equine Trail Collision, "The Big Picture Across the Country on Trail Use," Ann Swinker, Professor Equine Science, Extension Horse Specialist, "Best Management

Practices and Manure Management', and a panel presentation Multi-Use Trail Issues.

Come to this conference and have many of your equine questions answered at this educational Pennsylvania equine industry workshop, hosted by the Pennsylvania Equine Council and Penn State University, Equine Science Program.

In addition to speakers, there will be educational and promotional booths, Equine Council committee and regional directories interaction groups and round table discussions. If you are interested in getting involved with the Pennsylvania Equine Council, plan on attending this worthwhile event.

If you want to become a director in your county, it would be a good time to come see what it is all about. Find out how you can get involved, support and protect your horse industry.

The registration fee is \$15 for PEC members and \$25 for non-PEC members. The registration fee includes all costs of instruc-

tion and instructional materials, beverage breaks, and lunch. Walk-in registrations will be accepted as space allows. Space is limited.

For More information, contact: Dr. Ann Swinker, (814) 865-7810.

Swenson Urges Swift Action On Farm Bill

WASHINGTON, D.C. — National Farmers Union (NFU) President Leland Swenson, in speeches to the Utah Farmers Union and Kansas Farmers Union state conventions this weekend, issued a passionate call for Congress to act swiftly to pass a new farm bill that provides an adequate safety net in order to avert further economic strife in rural America.

"Congress must act immediately upon reconvening Jan. 23 to pass a farm bill with a significantly improved safety net," Swenson said. "The passage of the farm bill is equal in priority to the consideration and passage of any other type of economic stimulus package."

USDA To Offer CRP Contract Extensions

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The USDA has announced that Conservation Reserve Program contracts expiring this year may be extended for another year. Participants with contracts expiring on Sept. 30, 2002 have from Jan. 14 to May 31 to apply for the one-year extension. Some 30,000 contracts are affected.

"The expiration affects 1.8 million rural acres now protected by the CRP. This action will help ensure the continued safeguarding of this sensitive land as a new farm bill is developed," said Agriculture Secretary Ann M. Veneman.

Local offices of USDA's Farm Service Agency are currently notifying eligible CRP participants of their option to modify and extend their CRP contracts. The deadline to apply for an extension is May 31.

The extension option applies to CRP participants with contracts scheduled to expire on Sept. 30, 2002. The original contract with extension must not exceed 15 years.

The extension will not change participants' rental rates. All or a

portion of the acreage under contract may be included in an extension, but no new acreage may be added. Obligations and responsibilities under the original contract continue to apply to contracts that are modified and extended.

USDA is not planning to offer a general CRP sign-up in fiscal year 2002. However, producers may continue to enroll relatively small, highly desirable acreage, such as filter strips and riparian buffers, in the continuous CRP at any time at their local FSA office.

Producers enrolled in CRP receive rental payments and other financial incentives to remove lands from agricultural production for a period of 10 to 15 years. CRP participants plant native grasses, trees, and other vegetation to improve water quality, soil, and wildlife habitat. About 34 million acres are currently enrolled in CRP.

For more information on the CRP program, contact your local FSA office or visit the FSA Website at: <http://www.fsa.usda.gov/dafp/cepd/crp.htm>.

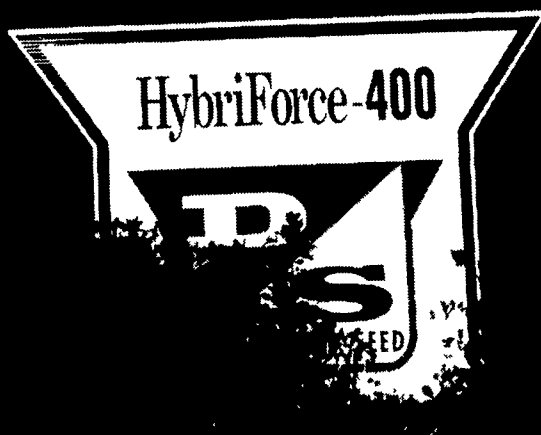
USDA's Economic Research Service (ERS) issued a report Jan. 7 in which the 2002 net farm income forecast was revised from the \$49.3 billion forecast in 2001 to \$40.6 billion, a decrease of \$8.7 billion.

"The recent net farm income forecast spells continued economic disaster for rural America without changes in existing farm programs or emergency supplemental assistance," Swenson said. "Farmers must have a safety net that relates to what they are producing today and the yields they are getting today, not based on yields of 15 to 20 years ago."

The USDA-ERS report also forecasts a decrease in off-farm income and an increase in debt, although the debt increase is expected to be offset by a rise in

farmland values. The report also predicts that agriculture's contribution to the national economy, through added net value, will be 10 percent lower than in 2001 and the lowest since 1995.

"The economic devastation facing rural America extends well beyond the individual family farmers and ranchers operations," Swenson stated. "The increase in bankruptcies and declining rural populations results in the deterioration of the whole rural infrastructure. Its impact will be the continued loss of rural businesses, increased consolidations of schools, loss of health care services and facilities and the loss of rural transportation services. The ultimate results will be greater concentration and a contract production agriculture system."



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