

City Slickers And Farmers Profit From Farm Stays

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Food And Family
Features Editor

AVELLA (Washington Co.) —
 "Farm Stays give farmers a
 chance to meet people from all

like Tudor does, but that isn't a
 requirement for Farm Stays.
 Bonnie Schubert said, "I home-
 school six children and it's
 enough to get them fed without
 cooking for guests."

walks of life
 and make
 extra money
 on the side,"
 said Marcy
 Tudor.

As the
 president of
 the Pennsylvania
 Farm Vacation
 Association,
 Inc., Tudor

is a vocal advertisement of the
 program that offers city and sub-
 urban residents a chance to leave
 stress behind and escape to the
 peace and quiet of the country.
 She, her husband Dale, and son
 Nigel operate a 104-acre farm
 where guests from around the
 world get a taste of a working
 farm.

"This is a way to help the
 farmer keep the farm," Tudor
 said of the financial benefits of
 the Farm Stay program.

But even more satisfying than
 monetary rewards for Tudor and
 other farm owners participating
 in the program are establishing
 friendships with guests from
 around the world.

"I get to travel the world with-
 out leaving my breakfast table,"
 Tudor said.

Tudor compiles remarks about
 guests' farm visits. Typical of the
 remarks are some version of the
 sentiments, "my best vacation
 ever," and "perfect place to es-
 cape the maddening crowd."

Each of the 24 farms listed in
 the Association's Guide offer
 their own unique flavors. Some
 places offer hands-on petting
 zoos, others require visitors to
 watch farm activity from a dis-
 tance. Some serve a full breakfast

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Marcy Tudor
President of Pennsylvania
Farm Vacation
Association, Inc.

So visitors at
 Hummerhaven
 Farmstead, Juni-
 ata County, are
 on their own for
 breakfast but
 quite involved in
 day-to-day activi-
 ties. It's difficult
 to discern who
 enjoys the Farm
 stay program
 more — Bonnie,

her husband Gary, and their six
 or the guests.

"I tell them to plan to get dirty
 and bring their old clothes,"
 Schubert said. Their 127-acre
 farm is a child's paradise. Lla-
 mas, mini donkeys, babydoll
 sheep, dwarf goats, bunnies, kit-
 ties, and even potbelly pigs are
 their for petting and snuggling.
 Fish in the pond, canoe or pad-
 dleboat down the river, explore
 woodland trails "to lose the
 world and find yourself."

Not all places cater to little
 ones or are a working farm.
 Charlie and Bunny Yinger op-
 erate the Strawberry Patch Bed
 and Breakfast set on 10 acres in
 Lebanon County. The recently-
 constructed log home with six
 large guests rooms, private baths,
 fireplaces, and Jacuzzi tubs offers
 a large tea room to hold wed-
 dings, special events, and re-
 treats. The Yingers boast the
 largest collection of Strawberry
 Shortcake items anywhere. Bun-
 ny said it took insurance app-
 raisers two days cataloging their
 collection. They also have every
 strawberry-related item imagin-
 able.

"If there is another one any-
 where, we aren't aware of it," she
 said.



Life couldn't be more fun for these four kids riding in a wheelbarrow. Scenes such as these are typical for Farm Stay visitors at Cedar Hill at Spruce Creek Bed and Breakfast.

The Yingers also market their
 own house dressing and straw-
 berry jelly to guests. A portion of
 the profits from the Strawberry
 Patch are donated to the Make A
 Wish Foundation.

In addition to typical bed and
 breakfast lodging, Barry and
 Linda Vance offer special events
 such as bicycle weekends and
 even murder mystery weekends.

Linda said their 1820 stone
 farm home has been the site of
 wedding receptions, and retreats.
 Located on 42 acres within easy
 access to Penn State, Raystown
 Lake, antiques, caves, trails, and
 amusement parks, there is plenty
 to do. The Vances welcome help
 with morning chores. Gathering
 eggs, checking bee hives, and
 putting away hay are some of
 guests' favorite chores.

Tudor said that farm visits
 have been brisk since Sept. 11.
 "People see rural areas as safer
 places to go."

The Tudors raise Hereford cat-
 tle, a small herd of Scottish High-
 land cattle, a flock of registered
 Southdown sheep, and Araunca-
 na and bantam chickens at
 Weatherbury Farm. To help
 guests understand about farm
 life, Tudor published a booklet
 "Everything You Have Always
 Wanted To Know About Weath-
 erbury Farm."

The booklet offers a bit of in-
 teresting history, activities, possi-
 bilities, and farm safety rules. A
 chapter on "Farming Spoken
 Here" defines such words as cow,
 bull, yearling, steer, and ag ter-
 minology such as crossbreeding and
 polled.

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The renovated 1820 farm house at Cedar Hill at Spruce Creek Bed and Breakfast is surrounded by breath-taking views guests can savor year-round.



The Schuberts six children mingle with guests at Hummerhaven Farmstead.



Charlie and Bunny Yinger bottle their own strawberry dressing and strawberry jelly to capitalize on their Strawberry Patch Bed and Breakfast operation.

Guide To Farm Stays

Agriculture and tourism are the top two industries in the state. The Farm Stay program encourages farmers to combine the two by opening their farms to visitors. The Pennsylvania Farm Vacation Association has lots of expertise to help farmers get started. In addition to information, membership provides a brochure listing member farms. About 40,000 brochures are distributed at various shows and welcome centers. Each participating farm is entitled to a web page on the association's Website www.pafarmstay.com. For more information, call Nadine Fox, secretary/treasurer, at (888) 856-6622.

For a copy of the Guide to Pennsylvania's Farm Stays, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to PA Farm Vacation Association, Inc., 1344 Negro Mountain Rd., Warfordsburg, PA 17267-9667.



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