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Vol. 47 No. 26    www.lancasterfarming.com    Four Sections    Saturday, April 27, 2002    \$34.00 Per Year    75¢ Per Copy



**WERNERSVILLE (Berks Co.)** — With recent warm weather, pastures are greening up nicely, including this 3-acre paddock of orchardgrass, fescue, ryegrass, clover, and alfalfa on the farm of Forrest Stricker. Stricker manages an 83-cow herd of Holstein, Jersey, and Jersey-Holstein crossbreds and farms with wife Barbara and two sons, Greg, 18, and Jeff, 15. Stricker's organic dairy herd's milk is shipped to Horizon Organic.

According to the Pennsylvania Agricultural Statistics Service, for the week ending April 21, unseasonably warm temperatures coupled with precipitation resulted in considerable improvement in pasture and wheat crop conditions. The warm temperatures helped to establish 4.1 days suitable for fieldwork. Soil moisture was rated 2 percent very short, 19 percent short, 66 percent adequate, and 13 percent surplus. Principal farm activities included spring plowing, planting oats and alfalfa, fixing

fences, machinery maintenance, cleaning barns, spreading lime and fertilizer, hauling and spreading manure, pruning fruit trees, and spraying herbicides and pesticides.

Spring plowing was 57 percent complete, 34 percent more than the previous year and 13 percent more than the 5-year average. The showers and extremely warm temperatures helped to improve pastures. Only nine percent of the pastureland was rated poor to very poor, down 11 percent; 77 percent fair to good; and 14 percent excellent, up 11 percent from the previous week. According to the Pennsylvania Capitol Region Crop Report, begin grazing short stature grasses (bluegrass) after five inches of growth, tall grass (orchardgrass, brome grass, etc.) after 10 inches of growth, and warm season grasses (switchgrass) after 18 inches of growth, to manage forage supply, weed growth, and stand longevity. *Photo by Andy Andrews, editor*



Pictured are students from the Conococheague FFA chapter of James Buchanan High School, Mercersburg. A nine-member dairy judging team recently took first place out of 412 FFA chapters from across the country in Hoard's Dairyman magazine's annual cow judging contest. See story on page A38.

## New Trust Director Brings Vision To Farmland Preservation

**DAVE LEFEVER**  
*Lancaster Farming Staff*  
**LANCASTER (Lancaster Co.)** — When Tom Stouffer announced he was leaving his position as executive director of the

Lancaster Farmland Trust, Heidi Schellenger didn't exactly jump at the chance.

She was already working with  
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Heidi Schellenger, new executive director at the Lancaster Farmland Trust, combines administrative duties with farm visits. *Photo by Dave Lefever*