Grower & Marketer

Promoting The Eastern Vegetable, Fruit, Nursery, And Direct Marketing Industries

Lancaster Farming, Saturday March 9 2002

Grafting Helps Speed ... Bigger Life

MICHELLE KUNJAPPU
Lancaster Farming Staff

AKRON (Lancaster Co.) – Variety is the spice of Eric Habegger's life.

Several varieties – no, hundreds of varieties of produce spring to life on his backyard orchard each year.

A Switzerland native, Habegger has been in the U.S. for 48 years, but still looks back to the small farm where he grew up.

[Turn to Page 3]

"I probably have 140 varieties of apples. I may have 10 varieties on one tree, made possible by grafting. I wanted to taste a lot of different apples."
—Eric Habegger
Akron Orchardist

Eric Habegger, Akron, grows a large variety of fruit trees on his one-acre orchard. In the past five years he has introduced the "Espalier" method of pruning and training trees, which trains the trees flat against a wall or framework. These trees still produce abundant amounts of fruit but are easier to care for.
Photo by Michelle Kunjappu

World Tobacco Disease Problems Considered ...

ANDY ANDREWS
Editor

HERSHEY (Dauphin Co.) – How does a grower produce a bigger tomato?

Researchers noted here at the annual Mid-Atlantic Fruit and Vegetable Convention in late January at the Hershey Lodge and Convention Center.

First select the right tree fruit genetics – it can make a big difference, according to Dr. Richard Marini, tree fruit researcher at Virginia Tech.

Marini who provided the first ever Ernie Christ Memorial Lecture in honor of a world-known researcher at the convention also noted that pruning can also improve fruit size. "Trees pruned more severely have bigger fruit," said Marini.

"One of the ways to get bigger fruit is to do a better job of pruning," he said. It's easier to cut off the flowers or buds with shears than to go and remove the fruit by hand.

And keep water available at the right times, especially in the early stages of growth and the last stages of development.

Marini pointed to research in various places, mainly in Texas, that pointed out, during warm conditions in season, "each tree uses about 17 gallons of water per day," he said.

[Turn to Page 4]

ANDY ANDREWS
Editor

HERSHEY (Dauphin Co.) – Tomato growers gathered here during the Mid-Atlantic Fruit and Vegetable Convention in late January and were rewarded for their efforts.

The annual Tomato Awards Luncheon at the convention allowed growers to "talk to each other and adopt methods for their own operation," noted James Kohl, vice president of Furman Foods. This provides recognition to those high yielders."

But Kohl noted that even so slowly producers are inching toward that goal of 50-tons-per acre yield.

Kohl held up the $100 bill the Ben Franklin he said that would be, he promised, given to the grower that reaches that average. It's going to happen, said Kohl.

Eric Charles Lane was close this year winning recognition for having a 39.22-ton per acre average. So close. At least Lil Ben the Franklin another year, Kohl said.

The Master Grower Award for 2002 was presented to Clyde Kreider. Washington Boro The Industry Recognition Award was presented by Kohl to John Everett Allen, Wood

The annual state champion Tomato Growers Club annually recognizes growers

[Turn to Page 6]

Tomato award winners. From left, James Kohl, who presented the awards, Clint Charles; Eric Charles; Randy Kreider; Clyde Kreider; Roger Revenaugh; and Aaron Hawbaker. Photo by Andy Andrews, editor

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Lancaster Farming, Saturday January 26 2002

Mountain Of Mums' Draws Customers To Ott's

ANDY ANDREWS
Editor

SCHWENKSVILLE (Montgomery Co.) – What do you do with a mountain of soil?

Create the Mountain of Mums, of course.

That's what happened beginning back in 1961 when earth was moved into a pile to build some greenhouses for Ott's Exotic Plants on Rt. 29 near Schwenksville.

The story goes Godfrey Ott told his children, Godfrey II and Clarke to go pull some weeds out of a pile that had been unsightly, said Godfrey II. Ott said that the weeds being an eyesore were replaced by some mums and then pansies in the spring, for customers to appreciate.

So why not make a hill of yellows the color of lemonade from an unsightly lemon?

We made the dirt pile with plants, said Ott. And

[Turn to Page 3]

Visitors can scale up the "Mountain of Mums" at Ott's Exotic Plants, Schwenksville. About 40,000 individual blooms light up the mountain on a dazzling fall day. Photo by Andy Andrews, editor

Garden Grows In Philadelphia

Urban Farm Connects With Community, Rural Producers

DAVE LEFEVER
Lancaster Farming Staff

PHILADELPHIA – Farmers wanted.

That's the rallying call of The Food Trust, a farmers' market association operating in the Philadelphia area.

The Farmer's Market Trust – as the organization is known until recently – was started 10 years ago at Philadelphia's Reading Terminal Market according to Dionne Perry, founder and executive director.

"The goal was to create farmer's markets operating in community settings," Perry said.

During the 2001 growing season, the nonprofit organization operated 10 markets in eight locations within Philadelphia and its suburbs.

Set up in a variety of settings such as sidewalks and parks, the markets are attracting a growing number of urban people who care about the sources of their food, said Perry.

There's a really wide group of consumers interested in connecting with farmers, he said.

Twenty-seven farmers in 2001 supplied a wide array of agricultural products to the markets from baked goods, cut flowers and conventionally grown fruits and vegetables to organic produce and specialty items such as high end salad greens.

[Turn to Page 8]

Food Trust Watch Farmers Mkt. Customers, Local Communities

DAVE LEFEVER
Lancaster Farming Staff

PHILADELPHIA – Mary Corboy lives in downtown Philadelphia and bikes regularly to the farm she manages.

From her home the farm is a few dozen blocks away on an abandoned industrial or brownfield site in a rundown neighborhood on the east side of the city near

Route 95.

It was just a trash dump, Corboy said of the 3½-acre site before she took it over in 1998 and established the Greensgrow Philadelphia Project.

Made possible through a lease agreement with the local community development corporation the project was started from scratch. No plumbing, electricity or useful structures existed on the site – except for a metal ware fence around the perimeter of the property.

Originally started as a hydroponic operation for growing lettuce, Greensgrow has since expanded to include methods for cultivating a wide variety of crops including many varieties specialty vegetables and flowers.

Mary Corboy of the Greensgrow Philadelphia Project with spinach grown on raised beds built out of clean fill, compost, and horse manure. Crushed stones and PVC piping serve as a drainage system underneath the beds. Photo by Dave Lefever

GROWER and MARKETER

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