

NASS

Agriculture Counts

By Marc Tosiano
Pa. State Statistician

Editor's Note: This is a monthly column from the Pennsylvania Ag Statistics Service (PASS), a field office of USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) in cooperation with the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture (PDA). The Website is www.usda.gov/nass/.

Farm Bill

The newly enacted Farm Bill will be in effect for six years. It is formally called the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002.

Statistics from the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) will be an important part of the development and administration of the commodity programs in Title I of the Farm Bill. The Farm Service Agency, which administers farm programs, has already begun meeting with NASS staff to discuss the statistical needs of the new Farm Bill.

NASS statistics may also be used in evaluating the impact of other Farm Bill titles, too. For more details on all 10 titles in the new Farm Bill, see www.usda.gov/farmbill/.

Here is a list of the northeastern commodities included in Title I of the Farm Bill: dairy, corn, sorghum, barley, oats, wheat, soybeans, minor oilseeds, apples, other fruits vegetables and specialty crops, wool and mohair, and honey.

NASS surveys may directly affect the commodity programs on which growers will rely on during the next six years. Your timely responses to our surveys will help to provide accurate agricultural statistics for the administration of these programs. This is one of many ways that statistics work for agriculture. "Thank you" to all growers that take the time to cooperate on NASS surveys!

2002 Crops And Hog Counts

Over the past many months, drought has received a lot of attention. Ironically, much of the state has received more than normal precipitation since April 1. This has allowed major field crops and pastures to be rated as mostly in good condition.

Although weather always impacts yields, we need to have a good measure of field crop acreage as a first step to understand potential crop production for 2002.

The annual June Agricultural Survey collects data about plantings, and this year it also contributes to the upcoming 2002 Census of Agriculture. The survey also measures grain stocks, livestock, farm numbers, and land values. The quarterly Hog Survey is conducted at the same time and coordinated to reduce additional contacts for hog farmers. These surveys are all under way from late May through mid-June.

The survey includes different phases to keep costs low and quality high. Our interviewers will visit about 200 land segments across the state that are about one square mile each. They will contact all operators within the segment to draw operation boundaries on aerial photographs and account for all land use within the selected area.

Surveys that use these aerial photos will also help the Ag Census to measure what is missing from the census mail list. If you are visited by our staff with these photos, your cooperation is very important because these 200 square miles, plus 100 more in the fall, represent all 45,000 square miles in Pennsylvania.

In addition, we've sampled about 1,300 crop farmers and approximately 300 hog growers from our list of agricultural operators. They will get letters to explain the upcoming survey. They will be contacted during the survey period to answer acreage and livestock questions that don't require using the more complex aerial photos.

These USDA surveys are all completed at the same time nationwide. So it is important that Pennsylvania producers be properly represented among the other states. Crop statistics provide producers with vital information for cash crop farmers and

current and potential feed supplies for milk and livestock producers. Hog growers can review national trends to help with production decisions.

As with all our surveys, by federal law, your name and address and data about your operation are completely confidential. Survey results are published as totals so that no individual data can be discovered or calculated. The same law also protects your data from requests under the Freedom of Information Act.

By law, no one can gain early access to the results of any survey. The reports are available to everyone at www.usda.gov/nass/. Use the "Search" button to find "Acreage" report, June 28 (8:30 a.m.); "Crop Production," July 11 (8:30 a.m.) with potatoes; "Grain Stocks," June 28 (8:30 a.m.); "Quarterly Hogs and Pigs," June 28 (3 p.m.); or "Farms and Land In Farms," every February.

We count on your help to represent Pennsylvania agriculture properly. If you are contacted personally or by telephone, please remember that your response is important so that we can publish the most accurate statistics possible, because agriculture counts!

Floriculture Report Published April 25

A big "thank you" is due to the Pennsylvania producers who helped in this annual effort. The report can be used by growers to evaluate crops raised and average prices in Pennsylvania and surrounding states.

Pennsylvania is the sixth largest floriculture state with \$180.6 million in sales in 2001. This measures only one part of the greenhouse and nursery industry, which is the fourth largest sector of Pennsylvania agriculture, after milk, cattle, and mushrooms (based on 2000 cash receipts).

The Nursery Crops Report is published every other year — the most recent report is for the 2000 production. The reports can be found at www.usda.gov/nass/ by using the "Search" button and looking for "Floriculture Crops" or "Nursery" in the "Commodity" listing.

Biotech Consortium Seeks Broad Improvements

COLUMBUS, Ohio — In recent years, biotechnology has largely been associated with genetically modified organisms (GMOs), genetically engineered organisms (GEOs), or some other form of cross breeding or genetic alteration.

However, for over 70 researchers at 11 universities throughout Ohio, biotechnology embraces a much broader range of scientific study that not only seeks to increase opportunities in agriculture, but have a positive impact on the environment and benefit people as well.

Through research projects ranging from botany to zoology, participants of the Ohio Plant Biotechnology Consortium share information on issues that are important to Ohio's agricultural and natural resources industries.

"The idea was to optimize interaction between scientists with different areas of expertise throughout the state to the end of providing information and potential products that consumers, farmers, and businesses could use," said Terry Graham, an Ohio State University plant pathologist and chairman of the organization. "Research activities are broad, going from really basic research to more applied projects. It is impor-

tant to realize that many projects that fall under the realm of biotechnology don't even involve genetic engineering."

Universities that are part of the consortium include Ohio State, Bowling Green State University, Cleveland State University, Kent State University, Medical College of Ohio, Miami University, Ohio University, University of Cincinnati, University of Toledo, Wright State University and Youngstown State University.

Research projects include controlling disease in chestnut trees; developing new corn hybrids; developing defense mechanisms in soybeans to control insects and diseases; developing new yeast varieties to improve wine making; establishing genomic libraries for crop plants; working with predatory insects to control crop pests; and working to make seed oil more nutritious.

The Ohio Plant Biotechnology Consortium, which has been in existence for two years, is funded by a competitive grant program administered through Ohio State University's Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center (OARDC). For more information on the consortium log onto <http://opbc.osu.edu>.

Farm And Home Foundation Awards Seven \$4,000 Scholarships

LOU ANN GOOD
Food And Family
Features Editor

LANCASTER (Lancaster Co.) — Seven high school seniors planning to pursue ag-related or consumer sci-

gram. He is Cloister Chapter FFA chaplain and a member of the National Honor Society.

The son of Dennis and Sharon Martin, Stevens, Jordan selected Del Val College after visiting the campus.



Recipients of Farm and Home Foundation Scholarships, seated from left, are Katie Nickles and Krista Yoder. Standing, from left, are G. Eldon Miller, Jordan Martin, Justin Risser, and Derick Bollinger.

ence college degrees each received a \$4,000 scholarship Tuesday evening at the Farm and Home Center.

"Since its inception, 396 scholarships have been awarded," Leon Ressler, county extension director, said. The Lancaster County Farm and Home Foundation scholarships are derived from irrevocable trust fund earnings set up by the late Elmer L. Esbenshade.

High school seniors in all Lancaster County schools are eligible to apply for the scholarships. Scholarships are awarded in the amount of \$1,000 each year for four years as long as recipients continue ag- or consumer-science related studies.

This year's recipients include the following:

Jordan Martin — Growing up on a dairy farm influenced Jordan to pursue a degree in ag science at Delaware Valley College. Although he lives in the Cocalico School District, Jordan attends Ephrata High School in order to participate in the ag pro-

gram. He hopes his career choice will enable him to participate in testing at research farms.

Justin Risser — The Gerald and Joyce Risser family milk 175 cows three times a day on their Bainbridge farm. Their 18-year-old son Justin knows the characteristics of every-

"I love working with cows," Justin said. He's headed for Delaware Valley College to study dairy science with the hope of returning to the family farm to help expand it further. The Risser's own 600 acres and have recently expanded the herd and added a free-stall barn with tunnel ventilation.

The second oldest of four sons, Justin helps whenever possible on the farm. He is also quite busy at Elizabethtown Area High School, where he is FFA president, and team member of three career development events that won local, state, and regional awards. His ag salesmanship team competed at the national level.

At school, Justin is also a member of the student council, National Honor Society, basketball team, and Bible study group leader for the Fellowship of Christian Athletes. He was one of 14 selected from the county to attend the Washington D.C. Forum Close Up. At church, Justin is a member of the youth group and an usher.

G. Eldon Miller — Eldon is the second member of his family to earn a Farm and Home Foundation Scholarship. The third of six siblings, Eldon's interest in culinary nutrition was honed through cooking for the family. His mother and older sister are professional seamstresses and Eldon said he was often consigned cooking duty. "At first I hated it, but now I love cooking. It's so much fun to experiment and be creative, especially with desserts," Eldon said.

He enjoys cooking so much that he turned down a science-related scholarship.

Because the 19-year-old can't stand a dirty kitchen, he cleans up after himself.

Eldon will pursue a four-year degree in culinary nutrition at Johnson and Wales University. His goal is to become a chef on a cruise ship.

At Donegal High School, Eldon is a member of the National Honor Society, the Math Honors Society, member of the newspaper staff, and captain of the wrestling team. He also is active in his church youth group.

"I love challenges and anything to improve myself," Eldon said.

Derick Bollinger — Through Derick's prolific involvement in raising steers, sheep, and pigs, his photo is a familiar one in this newspaper. The 18-year-old also works on a neighboring 80-herd dairy farm.

lege. Derick said that he is the first of his family of two older sisters to attend college. He is the son of P. Eugene and Carol Bollinger, Manheim.

Last summer, Derick participated in a six-week Pennsylvania Governor's School of Ag Science at Penn State. But Derick selected Delaware Valley because he prefers a small atmosphere that enables more connection with teachers.

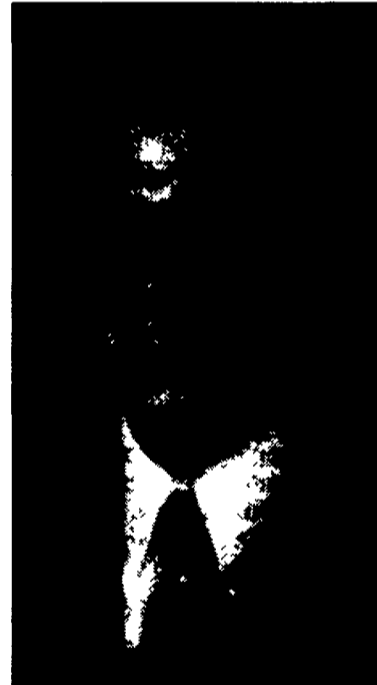
"I don't want to be a number. I'd like the professor to know my name," Derick said.

An FFA student at Manheim Central High School, Derick has been selected as Lancaster New Era's Teen of the Week.

Katie Nickles — Ag science and environmental resource management perked Katie's interest when she studied local and state history last year. The Conestoga Valley class offered students trips to local sites, where Katie's appreciation grew for the county's rich farming history. Katie also participated in an outdoor school at Trout Run Environmental Center, where she taught soil science concepts to middle school students.

Katie is accepted in the Shreyer Honors College at Penn State University's Main Campus. The honors program, based on SAT scores and essay writing ability, enables her to take advanced courses with smaller classes and other perks.

At Conestoga Valley, the 18-year-old daughter of Bruce and Becky Nickles, Akron, is co-editor of the yearbook, a member of the National Honor Society, student council, and the Fellowship of Christian Athletes. Katie plays field hockey and Lacrosse, which she helped to establish at her high school. She is a



Nathan Hoover is also a scholarship recipient.

member of the community Leo Club, affiliated with Lion's Club, and was selected to attend the Washington D.C. Presidential Classroom Conference. Katie is active in her church youth group and has participated in many community service projects.

Katie has also received a \$1,000 scholarship from the Lancaster County Conservation District and another \$1,000 scholarship from ComCast Cable Company.

Nathan Hoover — Agriculture ag business management is Nathan's major at Penn State. The 18-year-old son of Lloyd and Elaine Hoover, Leola, attends Lancaster Mennonite High School.

Krista Yoder — As a member of Lancaster Mennonite High's hockey team, Krista became interested in how to eat healthy and stay in shape. Now she wants to study dietetics. She is especially interested in how eating habits affect cultures.

Krista plans to attend Gordon College, Massachusetts.

"I love the area and it has a good hockey team," Krista said of her choice.

In addition to field hockey, Krista's school involvement includes membership in the National Honor Society, senior class committee, and Campus Chorale. She was president of her church youth group.

Krista and two younger brothers live with their parents, Nelson and Patricia Yoder, in Narvon.