

It's Pork Month!

Franklin Hog Farm Manager Takes Progressive Approach

DAVE LEFEVER
Lancaster Farming Staff

MERCERSBURG (Franklin Co.) — In the 11 years Tom Sollenberger has been in the swine

business, he's seen some major changes.

Pig litters from the 2,800 sows Sollenberger manages on Franklin Hog Farm are weaned at 19

days of age, compared to the 28-day weaning cycle he saw on the farms he worked for in the early 1990s.

That's just one example of how the hog industry has been streamlined for top production and efficiency in a relatively short period of time.

Sollenberger was graduated Penn State with a degree in ag science in 1990. In 1992, he took a job with Paramount Feeds, Hagerstown, Md., working with hog farms.

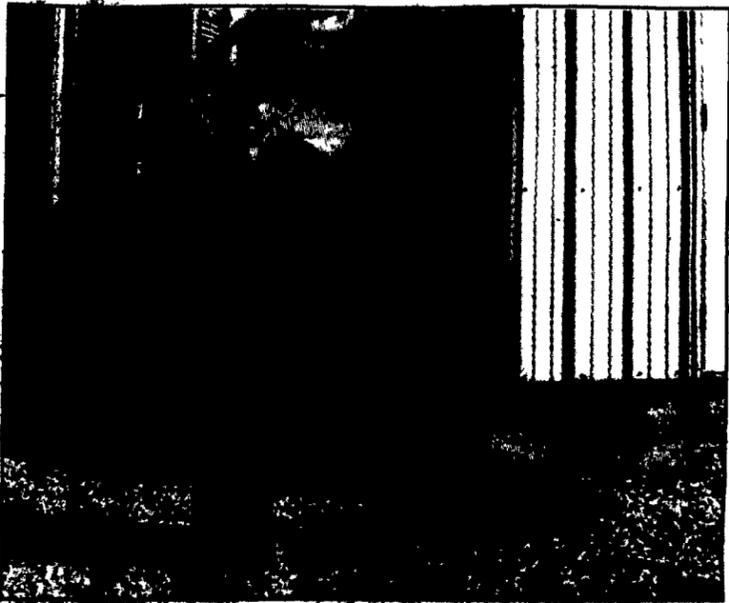
When Franklin Hog Farm was established in Mercersburg in 1996, Sollenberger saw it as a great opportunity to use his hog management skills close to home. The beef and crop farm where he grew up is only two and a half miles away from the farm.

Sollenberger was recently named to the Pork Leadership Academy, a program sponsored by the Pork Checkoff to identify and build leaders in the industry. Sollenberger is one of 20 hog producers from across the country in the new program. The Pennsylvania Pork Producers Council nominated him for the honor.

The group attends four meetings a year that focus on different issues facing the hog industry. The first meeting took place during the World Pork Expo in Iowa this past June.

"That was really neat, connecting with (hog producers) from across the states," Sollenberger said. "There are a lot of different styles and ways people do things."

At that first meeting, participants learned how to deal with



Tom Sollenberger was named to the Pork Leadership Academy earlier this year. He manages a 2,800-sow farrow-to-feeder operation on Franklin Hog Farm, Mercersburg. Photo by Dave Lefever

Get To Know Your Ag Reporter

ANDY ANDREWS
Editor

LANCASTER (Lancaster Co.) — When ag news is sometimes reported in the general daily media, why does it seem to be only the bad news?

How can agribusiness leaders

and producers spread the good news about the importance of the state ag economy?

Journalists who cover agriculture provided some answers during last week's Agricultural Is-

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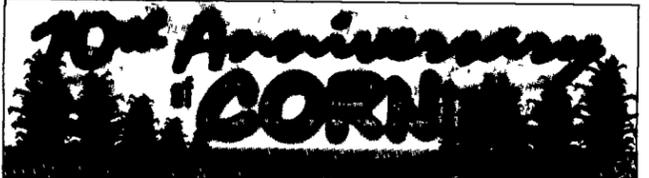
How about buying a pumpkin from these little salespersons? You may at Union Mill Acres, Elizabethtown, where Daniel, 4; Hannah, 2; and Sarah, 6; help their parents Keith and Melanie Martin plant, harvest, and sell more than 20 varieties of pumpkins, squash, gourds, and ornamental corn. Turn to page B2 to read more about the Martins' operation, where family togetherness is top priority.

Photo by Lou Ann Good, food and family features editor

Here Is The 10-Year Anniversary Issue Of Corn Talk



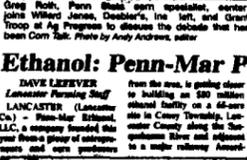
Lancaster Farming • Section E • Saturday, October 18, 2003



Lancaster Farming Celebrates 10 Years Of Corn Talk

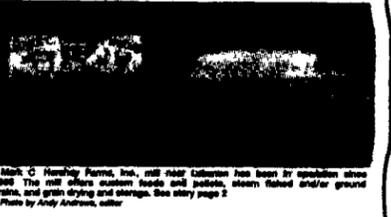


'Founders' Marvel At The Changes In Decade Since
ANDY ANDREWS
Editor
The industry has seen some major changes. Ag Program Days in August this year to talk about the industry in the past 10 years. Corn industry experts gathered at the annual Penn State (Turn to Page A4)



Ethanol: Penn-Mar Project Manager Provides Answers
DAVE LEFEVER
Lancaster Farming Staff
Lancaster (Lancaster Co.) — Penn-Mar Ethanol LLC, a company formed this year from a group of entrepreneurs and agribusiness

from the area, is getting close to building an \$80 million ethanol facility on a 48-acre site in Conroy Township, Lancaster County along the Susquehanna River and adjacent to a major railway. How it will be financed, the project will have the capacity to produce 30 million gallons of the renewable fuel each year from



Mark C. Hensley Farms, Inc. will near Colchester has been in operation since 1999. The mill offers custom feeds and pellets, steam flaked and/or ground grains, and grain drying and storage. See story page 2. Photo by Andy Andrews, editor

What's happened to the Pennsylvania corn industry in 10 years? What changes — and challenges — have growers faced? And what will a new ethanol plant bring to the state's corn economy? For 10 years Lancaster Farming has been publishing *Corn Talk* three times per year as a special section of the Pennsylvania Corn Growers Association. Now, we've included the 10-year anniversary section in this issue, including comments from the "founders" of *Corn Talk*. Also included: a feature on a major mill in south central Pennsylvania. This is a special collector's 10-year edition of *Corn Talk*, a real keeper!

Most Of Pa. Experiences Wettest Year Ever

UNIVERSITY PARK (Centre Co.) — If there was any doubt, Hurricane Isabel washed it away — 2003 will go down in history as the wettest year on record for most of Pennsylvania, according

to a precipitation expert in Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences.

"It started raining last October and it really hasn't stopped," said Bryan Swistock, a water resources specialist with Penn State Cooperative Extension. "We got into a weather pattern where storms moving from the south up

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Cattle Prices Skyrocket

KINZERS (Lancaster Co.) — For cattle producers, these are exciting times.

This week, Vintage Livestock Auction reported cattle prices soaring to record levels — Monday, 40 head of High Choice and Prime steers sold for \$110-124.50 per hundredweight. On Tuesday, 11 head sold as singles at \$130-132.50 with 50 head over the \$120 mark.

Top price at New Holland Thursday was 130.00. For more details, see the weekly summary on page A2.

Inside The Farmer

- ✓ KILE Swine Results page A36.
- ✓ Tune-Up Clinic page A35.
- ✓ Manheim Fair Sale page A22.
- ✓ Rodale Research Results page A32