## Family Living **Focus** by Laurie Weinreb-Welch Clinton Co. Extension

**Capturing Your Family's** Holiday History, Traditions

Over the years, most families pass down their own special holiday traditions.

Some of these traditions are fairly recent, but what about the ones that go way back?

Wouldn't it be great to sit down with the older relatives and find out what the holidays were like for them when they were growing up?

Many older relatives have very clear memories of the past and would like to share them with interested family members. These stories are unique treasures, but they will be forgotten if they are not recorded. One way to keep these valuable memories alive is to record your older relatives answering questions about their past holiday experiences.

Here are some tips on how to capture your family's holiday his-

Decide which relatives you would like to talk to. You could interview older parents, grandparents, aunts, and uncles.

Decide if you are going to talk with individuals or in a group.

Decide how you will record the interview. Audiotapes are simple to create and easy to play back and store. Video recordings can capture facial expressions and gestures. Use whatever you feel most comfortable with.

Ask specific questions, but open-ended questions might result in more expansive answers.

Allow the interviewee plenty of time to answer.

Be sensitive, but don't necessarily shy away from sad or painful memories. They can be important part of somebody's holiday memories and teach us a great deal.

Try to have some background information about the history times and places your relative will be talking about.

Have a questioning strategy. You might want to start with the subject's earliest memories and work forward or do it the other way around.

Here are some examples of questions you could ask:

What are your earliest holiday memories?

What kinds of foods did you or vour families prepare and eat during the holidays?

Are their any special decorations you remember from your earlier years?

What was shopping and giftgiving like when you were grow-

How are the holidays today different than they were years

Capturing holiday history through interviews can be interesting and fun for the entire family as well as a way of preserving holiday traditions for generations to come. Remember that your relatives are part of who you are and how you celebrate your holi-

Adapted from: Holiday Survival Guide 2000, University of Kentucky Extension Service.

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From left: Dr. Jason Phillips, West Chester University, and Dr. Diane Phillips, Saint Joseph's University, visit with Carolyn Eaglehouse, dairy farmer at the Chester Springs Creamery, about the concerns of young farmers.

## **Marketing Educators Surveying Young Farmers**

PHILADELPHIA — Research shows that Pennsylvania farmers are getting older and that fewer young people are interested in becoming farmers

Dr. Diane Phillips, associate professor and chair of the Department of Marketing at Saint Joseph's University, and Dr. Jason Phillips, assistant professor of marketing at West Chester University, have been awarded a \$50,000 research grant from the Center for Rural Pennsylvania to understand the needs and concerns of young Pennsylvania farmers.

As part of the study, a full-scale survey is being mailed to young farmers throughout the state. The project, entitled "The Future of Farming in Pennsylvania: An Investigation into the Needs and Concerns of Pennsylvania's Young Farmers," is a 14-month study that began in January 2003.

We believe that if the State of Pennsylvania is to maintain its heritage as a rural state, it must find ways to encourage young farmers to continue farming, as well as promote farming as a personally and financially rewarding occupation to other young people," said Dr.

"The findings will be provided to The Center for Rural Pennsylvania to be distributed to key audiences, such as state legislators, nonprofit organizations, and farm advocates," she added. "Our policy recommendations will focus on access to capital, the use of direct marketing opportunities, and responses to increasing land values in Pennsylvania that make it difficult to buy land."



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The input of every young farmer (18 to 35 years of age) in Pennsylvania is critical to the success of the project. Young farmers who participate in the survey will provide valuable information to researchers who can then offer practical recommendations for farm policies and programs. Farmers who have not yet received their survey should contact Dr. Diane Phillips at (610) 660-3232 or via e-mail dphillip@sju.edu.



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