



DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

2320 South DuPont Highway, Dover, DE 19901

To: Newsroom Directors and Assignment Editors

For Immediate Release:
October 5, 2005

Contact: Anne Fitzgerald
(800) 282-8685 (DE only)
(302) 698-4520
(302) 242-4092 (cell)

Number of pages: 3

Three Families inducted into Delaware Century Farm Program Russell McCabe, State Archivist, was the featured speaker

Three Delaware farms that have been owned by the same family for one hundred years or more were honored, today, as Century Farms by the state Department of Agriculture. The Delaware Department of Agriculture (DDA) hosted the eighteenth Century Farm Awards Ceremony at the Delaware Agricultural Museum and Village at 11 a.m. Russell McCabe, State Archivist, was the featured speaker during the ceremony.

In his remarks, McCabe said, "As the pace of growth and change in Delaware has increased in recent years, interest in our state's history and culture has increased as well. As the landscape of Delaware undergoes its greatest transformation in generations, awareness of the importance of our agricultural economy, past, present, and future, has also grown. Delaware's Century Farms program allows us to look back as we recognize the continuing importance of agriculture in the First State."

The DDA Planning Section presents Century Farm awards to landowners who can document that their land has been farmed by the same family for at least 100 years. Farms must include at least 10 acres of the original parcel, or gross over \$10,000 annually from the sale of agricultural products in order to qualify for the program. To date, including today's honorees, Delaware has 97 farms enrolled in the Century Farms Program, which was begun in 1987. Two families were recognized today:

Tyndall Family of Nanticoke Hundred, Sussex County, Delaware:

- Colonel E. N. Tyndall and Mrs. Tyndall received the award.
- This 150-acre farm has been in the family at least since 1853 when the original 150-acre tract was inherited from Daniel Knowles the Great Grandfather of the present owner to Sarah Tyndall the grandmother of the present owner, Colonel E. N. Tyndall.
- This 150-acre parcel was part of Daniel Knowles total land holding which was then classed as a plantation and took in a large amount of acreage in the area.
- The farm has produced corn, wheat, and soybeans.
- It is currently classified as a tree farm.
- Structures on the farm include: a house, a guest house, a summer house, and a storage building. All of the structures are of recent construction.

Houston-Whitehead Family of Cedar Creek Hundred, Sussex County, Delaware:

- Mrs. Mortimer A. Whitehead and family received both the Century Farm Award and the Historic Structures Award for their farm, "Fairview."
- The original 306-acre parcel was purchased in 1760 from Benjamin Truitt by Robert Houston, the great, great, great grandfather of the current owner's late husband.
- This tract of land was part of the "Houston Plantation," consisting of thousands of acres of land.

-MORE-

- The historic structures on this 245-year-old family farm are as follows: the original farmhouse built in 1760, a slave house incorporated into the farmhouse in the late 1880s, the carriage house that was built in the 1880s, the out building and the shed that are at least 50 years old.
- There is a family cemetery on the farm where Clement and Nancy Houston were buried in 1861 and Mortimer Whitehead was buried in 2001.
- The farm has produced tobacco, peaches, chestnuts, corn, soybeans, and winter wheat. It currently produces field crops.

Roosa Family of Milford Hundred, Kent County, Delaware:

- Jacob H. Roosa, III received the Century Farm award and the Historic Structures Award.
- John J. Rosa purchased the original 89 acres of the farm in 1870 from Joseph Yardley.
- Jacob H. Roosa acquired the farm in 1915.
- J. Heyman Roosa, Jr. obtained ownership in 1956.
- In 1983, Mildred S. Roosa, the mother of Jacob H. Roosa, III, obtained lifetime rights to the farm.
- Historic structures on “Walnut Hill Farm” are: The house, built prior to 1880, the barn built prior to 1880, the apple packing house that is at least 100 years old, and the milk house that was built in 1941.
- The 135-year-old farm now totals 100 acres.
- In the past, soybeans, wheat, corn, and barley were grown on the farm. Today, soybeans are produced.
- Milk cows and sheep were raised on the property.
- John J. Rosa, the first owner of the farm, used an evaporator to dry fruit which he raised on the farm. He built his farming business by selling the dried fruits to wholesales.
- This farm is now being farmed in the fourth and fifth generation.

Farms more than 200 years old:

- The first to top the list is the Nanticoke Indian Tribe, Delaware’s first farmers; they received an award in 1991. Though we have no actual date, we know they were farming, growing corn, squash, and beans, before the colonization of Delaware.
- **Documented farms:**
 - Dr. Mary Emily Miller, 1684, farm in South Murderkill Hundred;
 - William G. Fisher (deceased), 1685, Broadkill Hundred;
 - J. Edward McIlvaine (deceased), 1714, Dagsboro Hundred;
 - Ronald Dodd & Jessie Lawson-Wilkins, 1716, Georgetown Hundred;
 - S. R. Smith, III, 1720, Appoquinimink Hundred;
 - Grier Stayton, 1728, Cedar Creek Hundred;
 - John Dukes, 1730, Blackbird Hundred;
 - Wayne and Patricia VanAuken, 1740, Georgetown Hundred;
 - Elva Warren, 1742, South Murderkill Hundred;
 - Edward W. Cooch, Jr., 1746, Pencader Hundred,
 - Daniel Scheller, 1749, East Dover Hundred;
 - Thomas Loockerman, 1758, Northwest Fork Hundred,
 - Katharine Richards, 1758, Northwest Fork Hundred;
 - Elizabeth Goggin (deceased), 1766, North Murderkill Hundred.

-MORE-

Century Farm release p. 3

For more information about the Delaware Century Farms Program, call or e-mail Cathy Mesick at the Delaware Department of Agriculture: (800) 282-8685 (DE only), (302) 698-4500, Cathy.Mesick@state.de.us.

Pictures of the families can be sent electronically. Please e-mail Anne Fitzgerald at the Delaware Department of Agriculture: Anne.Fitzgerald@state.de.us.

###