

Squeezing The Juice

The Rev. Charles Eakins is shown squeezing the juice from a handful of grapes into a glass at the "blessing of the grape" ceremony Saturday. The ceremony will kick off the 1984 grape harvest. There are some 1,500 acres of grapes in the area to be harvested to supply Duplin's

two wineries — the Duplin Wine Cellars and the Carolina Winery. The ceremony took in the partially completed building of the Carolina Winery just north of Rose Hill. The Carolina Winery is North Carolina's largest winery.



The World's Largest Frying Pan

The World's Largest Frying Pan doing its thing, frying chicken. Ray Sanderson is shown using a king-size fork,

forking it out. . . golden fried and delicious. The big pan is always a favorite of photographers.

Yields Expected To Be Down

Comparing last season with the corn crop this year are two totally different extremes. Corn yields this season are expected to drop 10 bushels per acre, according to the Duplin County Agricultural Extension Service.

Duplin farmers averaged 85 bushels of corn per acre last season and J. Michael Moore of the county agricultural extension service said averages are expected to drop to 75 bushels per acre this year.

"The reasons for the drop include the PIK (Payment in Kind) program," J. Michael Moore, Duplin agricultural extension service agent, said. "With the PIK program, a lot of the marginal land was left out. Just the best land was planted and farmers had a good growing season which produced a high yield."

"This year the farmers planting earlier were caught in a bad weather situation," Moore said. "The corn crop was hit by a month of severe heat in June which was followed by rain in July. The continued rain in July ran down the shucks and caused rotting just as the ears of corn had filled out."

"Farmers have also been faced with problems from the corn ear worm destroying the crop," Moore said.

Even with the expectation of a reduced yield, Moore said farmers should continue to watch weather conditions until their corn is harvested. Potential tropical storms, common this time of the year, can also reduce corn yield by blowing down the crop in the field.

"Harvesting early is encouraged to prevent loss of yield," Moore said. "Men with their own drying system are encouraged to harvest their corn crop at about 21 percent moisture."

"Men without a dryer system may find it helpful to negotiate a

marketing contract prior to harvest," Moore said. "Contracting ahead for a fair price allows the farmer to leave the grain in the field longer to dry without the threat of a low market price for a late harvest."

Regardless of harvest time, Moore encourages all farmers to disk their fields immediately after picking in order to reduce next year's weed population. Soil samples should also be taken soon after harvest while yield and production information is still fresh on the farmer's mind, he pointed out.

For a third season with the county, the Duplin County AES and the state extension service in conjunction with the N.C. Corn Growers Association are sponsoring a corn contest. To enter at the local level, Moore said farmers should phone the Duplin Agricultural Extension Service in Kenansville. Winners on the county level participate in statewide competition. Local winners are furnished plaques.

"To enter, farmers should call the extension office at least 24 hours ahead of the day they plan to harvest," Moore said. "I will come to the field and help measure at least one acre. I watch it being harvested and dumped into an empty truck. We then take the truck to the mill and verify dry weight."

Last season the contest was won by Jerry Jackson of Calypso with 175.89 bushels and second place, Raburn Houston of Potters Hill with 173 bushels. Entries doubled last year over the first contest year, Moore said. Last year 22 entries were made in the county corn contest.

To enter this season's corn contest, phone Duplin AES at 296-1996. Entries must be marked by Nov. 15 and winners are announced each year at the annual Duplin Corn Production meeting held in January, Moore said.

Enrollment Down

Duplin County schools enrolled 7,794 students Monday of last week, the first day of the 1983-84 school year, said Alice Scott, assistant superintendent in charge of personnel.

This was about 200 fewer than on

the first day last year, she said Tuesday. "It appears that the greater discrepancy would be in grades seven to 12," she said. She attributed this to a rush in farm work, particularly in tobacco.

The average daily attendance last year was 8,377 students. She said

about 500 students enrolled during the first 20 school days last year.

The key day is the 10th day of classes, Sept. 10 this year. Dr. Scott said the state computes financial aid, including the state-paid teacher allocation, on the enrollment on the 10th day.

First-day enrollment by grades was: kindergarten, 566; first, 649; second, 642; third, 587; fourth, 583; fifth, 614; sixth, 619; seventh, 643; eighth, 681; ninth, 556; 10th, 496; 11th, 514; and 12th, 462.

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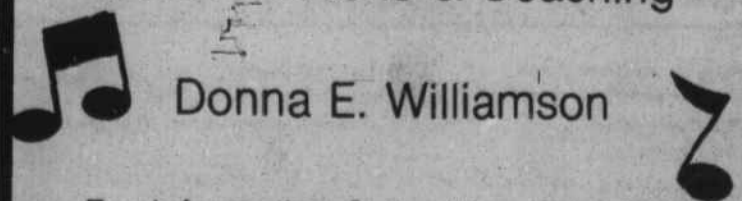
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