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County up, state down, Ag Census shows

Unlike statewide figures which showed Kentucky farms numbers had declined, preliminary reports of the 1982 Census of Agriculture show that the number of farms in Nicholas County increased from 721 to 793 since the 1978 census.

All land in farms totaled 131,383 acres in 1982, an average of 168 acres

per farm. The Census Bureau defines a farm as any place from which \$1,000 or more of agricultural products were sold or normally would have been sold. Statewide census figures showed 107,706 farms in 1982 compared with 102,382 four years earlier. Land in farms totaled 14.5 million acres, an

average of 140 acres per farm, down from 141 in 1978. The average value of land and buildings per farm in Kentucky was \$14,481, with a per acre value of \$1,049. Total sales of agricultural products amounted to \$1.1 billion.

NICHOLAS COUNTY farmers sold \$13.1 million in agricultural products according to preliminary reports from the 1982 Census of Agriculture. The 1982 sales figure represents an average of \$14,478 for each of the county's farms.

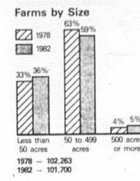
Land from which crops were harvested increased to 22,138 acres since 1978.

The census reports that \$12.9 million or 98 percent of total sales were for crops, while \$0.2 million or 1 percent of the total came from the sale of livestock, poultry and their products. Preliminary data indicate that expenditures for feed for livestock and poultry were \$800,000. Total farm energy costs were \$1.5 million. Fertilizer costs were \$47,000, and seed costs were \$15,000.

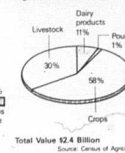
Of the total farms in the county, 118 had gross sales of \$40,000 or more; 361 reported sales of less than \$10,000. Farms operated as sole proprietorships represented 80 percent of the total. In 1982, the average age of farm operators was 51.6 years. The proportion of operators reporting farming as their principal occupation remained essentially unchanged at 58 percent since 1978.

Data in the report for 1978 and 1982 are directly comparable for acreages and inventories. Dollar values have not been adjusted for changes in price levels.

KENTUCKY Farms by Size



1982 Market Value of Agricultural Products



News Briefs

Dems set convention, elect Booth chairman

Democratic convention chairman Joseph H. Custer announced that local Democrats will hold a county convention on March 23, at 2 p.m. in the Council room.

All registered Democrats as of Feb. 15 on file with the office of the Secretary of State are urged to participate. The county convention will serve in place of a presidential primary. Representatives will be elected to attend the Congressional district convention on April 14. Delegates to the 1984 Democratic national convention

will be elected at the Congressional district convention. The national convention will be held on March 20-21 in July 1983. KEMBALL BOOTH was elected county chairman at a called meeting of the Nicholas County Democratic party on Saturday. Booth, a Carlisle native and graduate of Carlisle High School, succeeded Emory Clark Sr., who resigned last month. Clark had recommended Booth as his replacement, subject to the action of the executive committee.

Spring break April 9-13; schools dismiss June 1

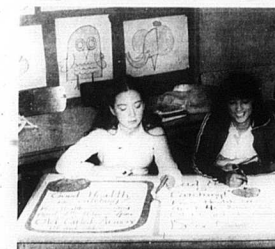
Harring weather had weather Nicholas County schools will dismiss for the summer at conclusion of classes Friday, June 1, according to an announcement Friday by Sup. Don Elder.

Spring break will remain April 9-13, including SEEA Conference April 12 and 13 when schools throughout the state are closed in order that teachers may attend the annual conference.

High school commencement is set for Sunday, May 27. May 21 is a professional day for teachers. Several school days which were made up by utilizing in-service days and school holidays. The June 1 school year closing is approximately one week later than the original calendar target date.

USDA commodity distribution Friday

The Nicholas County Community Day, March 22, between the hours of 9 a.m. and 2 p.m. Persons are asked to bring their own containers.



Health Fair poster makers

Masha Gaddy, Barbara Mayhew and Charles Lutes (left to right), art students at Nicholas County High School, volunteer one of their class sessions to design posters for the April 4 Nicholas County Health Fair. The posters, to be displayed by local merchants, give detailed information on the approaching event.

Fourty-five school districts, including Nicholas County, will be required to levy ad valorem tax rates of 13 cents per \$100 of assessed property value if House Bill 368 becomes law. The measure passed the Senate 20-8 last week and, at present, awaits the governor's signature. The current rate of assessment here is 11.8 cents per \$100 paid into the proposed new rate. Overall, the total rate figures out at 8.8 cents, including the 7 cent paid on bonded indebtedness voted in 1970 at 20 cents per \$100 to build the elementary school. THE 12 CENTS hike on tangible property translates as an increase of \$1.20 per each \$1,000 of assessed valuation. In 1982, the real estate valuation in Nicholas County was \$73,367, according to Rose Scott, county clerk. Under HB 368, school boards in all districts would have to pass property taxes of a minimum rate of 13 cents per \$100 during the next school year or face a cutoff of power equalization funds. Nicholas County schools currently receive \$9,000 from this funding. The state distributes power equalization money to poorer school districts to upgrade their instructional program. SCHOOLS REP. Donald Elder noted that the new law would mean an additional \$1,211 new monies next year, based on 100 percent valuation. "I feel that the local board of education has tried to hold the tax rate to a minimum over the years. The new law leaves us with no choice. We simply can't afford to lose the power equalization money (\$9,000) by failing to comply with the law," he said. Elder noted that he proposed a 1 cent increase here would be very slight compared to some districts, such as Paducah, which has no tax at all. Gov. Martha Layne Collins can veto the bill, sign it or let it become law without her signature. Elder added that an evaluation of current legislation affecting school districts would be forthcoming from his office when it is clear just which measures are adopted. SEN. MIKE MALONEY, Lexington, who sponsored similar legislation in the form of SB 219, urged the Senate to pass HB 368, sponsored by Rep. Joe Clark, D-Barnesville, stating it would do much for education in Kentucky. Opponents argued that it would place an unfair burden on districts that support their schools through other local tax efforts. Unlike SB 219, Clark's bill does not give school districts credit for levying special voted building or permanent taxes. SEN. ED FORD, D-Cynthiana, who voted against HB 368, argued that it would be unfair to penalize districts special voted building taxes of 15 cents per \$100 property valuation and 1-cent property tax rates. Their tax rates would total 20 cents per \$100, he noted. "The Senate version of the bill would have exempted them," Ford said. Rep. Adnan Arnold (D-Mt. Vernon) did not vote in favor of the bill when it



In state competition Saturday

Nicholas County High School Girls' Varsity cheerleading squad won the region trophy during Saturday, March 24, at Richmond Madison School. From left, Melissa Ritchie, Russanna Arnold, Tamila Anderson, Anesvia Hunt

and Tracy Hollar. Kelly Howard was absent when the picture was taken. The squad faces state competition Saturday, March 24, at Richmond Madison School.

\$12,331 for schools if bill becomes law

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passed the House. Clarke said that the 13-cent rate would produce \$14,179 in revenue from the 40 affected school districts. These include: Adair, Allen, Barren, Berea, Berea Independent, Casey, Clark, Cumberland, Fossil, Green, Harrodsburg, Hartsville, Lewis, Letcher, Madison, Madison, Madisonville, Nicholas, Owensboro, Paducah, Rowan, Russell, Simpson, Todd, Taylor, Trigg, Washington, Wolfe, and Wolfe.

Also Butler, Graves, Grayson, Harlan, Henderson, Lincoln, Livingston, Logan, Madison, Marshall, McLean, Ohio, Paducah (which has no tax at all), Berea Independent, Corbin Independent and Greenfield Independents. —ALREADY SIGNED by the governor are the following bills: —HB 317, which allows local school districts to impose more than one of three "permissive taxes." Districts can now choose to levy a utility gross receipts tax, an excise tax on income on an occupational license tax. HB 317 allows them to impose any or all three taxes to support their schools.

—HB 317, which requires the Department of Education to report student achievement test scores by school.

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Bethel man enters race in 74th District

A third candidate has filed for election as representative from the 74th Legislative District, subject to action of voters in the May 29 Democratic Primary. Rex B. Couch, 67, a Bethel businessman and former sheriff announced just before the filing deadline Thursday that he would seek the seat of incumbent Adnan Arnold of Mt. Vernon.

Two weeks ago Carlisle Lester of Carlisle announced his candidacy for the legislative position on the Democratic ticket. In a statewide race former Governor John Y. Brown Jr. announced that he will seek the U.S. Senate seat held by Democratic Senator Dew Holston, a 12 year veteran.

Explosion kindles \$75,000 fire loss

An early morning fire March 17 resulted in an approximate \$75,000 loss to a Nicholas County farmer. A stripping room and workshop belonging to Billy Berry on the Moorefield Road, six miles east of

Carlisle, was totally destroyed by fire. The Nicholas County Fire Department met at 1:10 a.m. and immediately responded to the scene. Saturday, Berry reported hearing an explosion of some type which triggered the blaze.

Mercury Reader Survey

Do you favor the \$224 million tax package Governor Martha Layne Collins proposes to help pay for improvements in education and avoid drastic cuts in state services which she has outlined?

YES NO

Who do you favor in the race for Senator?

Sen. Dew Holston

Sen. Don Henderson

Any comment

Bring or mail to The Mercury Office, 234 Locust Street, Carlisle, Ky. 40311, by 10 a.m. Monday, March 26, 1984.