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A place where

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 nation, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, farm numbers have
 steadily declined.

Stephenson believes the apparent discrepancy between Bracken's local
 farm census and KASS's 1987 figures may simply reflect "offering detentions
 for what a farm is."

Yet this gain is confirmed by 1990 USDA figures that show the county's
 growers holding 1,052 burley quotas at the start of this tobacco season.
 In fact, there are actually 10 more quotas in Bracken County for 1990,
 according to local records that list 1,062 burley quotas in effect for this
 marketing season.

That figure, by the way, matches the current, local farm census.
 So there are at least as many, and probably more, Bracken County farms in
 operation than there were eight years ago.

Burley is country's "backbone"
 While, then, has enabled these farmers to beat the norm and survive so
 "society".

"Pride in tobacco," says Stephenson. "Our folks know the crop and handle
 it well. Plus, our beef industry has picked up over the last four years."

"The tobacco program," said Judge Executive Jeff. "It's the backbone of this
 county. Why, if the federal government did away with it, there'd be a real
 disaster here. Not to mention in the rest of this state."

And recent production of burley in Bracken County supports these opinions.
 Local officials predict that Bracken's growers will produce "100 percent" of
 their basic burley quota for 1990, or a total of 6.1 million pounds.

And if statistics have meaning, Bracken farmers just may do it again.
 Net marketings of burley in 1989 by the county's growers totaled just over
 5.84 million pounds, Stephenson said. That's about 4 percent shy of their 1990
 goal.

And statewide this season, Kentucky farmers harvested 9 percent more
 acres of burley than they did in 1989, according to the USDA.

Thus, if the competitive Bracken farmers match statewide increases, they'll
 remain true to "Panther" and "Polar Bear" spirits, and burley will continue its
 reign in the county.

**The 1990 Burley Season
 A Special Presentation
 of**


THE CARLISLE MERCURY, INC.

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