***Editorial Views***

*By Dr. Rob Crassweller*

2 SHEL PEACH CRATES

***The Winter Season***

Believe it or not this time of year is actually my busiest season. Traditionally this is the time that I write and submit grants and prepare the reports on last year’s grants. It has become a reality that in order to function at a University, faculty must obtain money to operate. Gone are the days when a faculty member was given enough money to operate a research or extension program independently. I have a half-time technician who as of this year will have been with me for 20 years. Those of you that took Horticulture 432 at Penn State know that Don Smith is

an important cog of the tree fruit program here at Rock Springs, and I have been generating his salary for the past 10 plus years from grants. Up until this summer he worked 20 hours a week for me, but now with the addition of our new viticulturist he is back on full time; half for me and

half for Michela Centinari.

Over the University’s Christmas break I am also preparing for presentations at the Mid-Atlantic Fruit and Vegetable Convention, as well as presentations for the upcoming regional tree fruit meetings in February and March. I hope that you will take advantage of both the meeting at

Hershey and the regional meeting near you to be updated on new methodology in fruit production. Hopefully the weather for travel will be good for the next two months with manageable snowfalls and minimal icy conditions.

Pruning season will begin for us in mid to late February since we do not have as much acreage as some of you. We have already removed the peach trees that took a beating from the winter of 2013-14. As I have said before, pruning peaches in December is not the smartest idea.

Last year the cold snaps in early January took their toll on the peaches and grapes at Rock Springs.

Our new Dean of the College of Agricultural Science, Dr. Richard Roush, will be attending the Mid-Atlantic Fruit and Vegetable Convention. There will be a special reception to meet with him on Tuesday, January 27th at 5:00 PM in Cocoa Suite 6. Dr. Roush has been on the

go since he arrived and has traveled extensively around the state meeting with various agricultural groups and learning about PA agriculture.

Tuesday morning will also be the 9th Annual Mid-Atlantic Cider contest. Entries will be accepted between 8:00 and 10:00 AM in the morning and judging will begin at 10:30. We will announce the winner at the banquet that night. Sorry, but the potential for a hard cider contest at

the Convention was nixed by the Hershey Lodge due to liability issues.