

City boy spends summer down on the farm

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Teenager finds much work involved with farming

by ELLWOOD SHREVE

When most people think of going away for the summer, they usually plan a relaxing stay at a cottage or sea-side resort, or even a visit to another country.

However, when 16 year-old Charles Gils, of Georgetown, Ont. which is near Brampton, planned to spend a summer away from home, he chose a less conventional spot; a farm.

Charles is staying with Murray and Nancy McGill, on their 150 acre

farm at RR1 Glanworth. But here's the kicker, he even agreed to work.

Charles is one of seventeen teenagers that come from an urban area, who have been matched with farmers from Middlesex, Elgin, Lambton, Kent and Essex counties.

These teenagers are taking part in the Junior Agriculturalist Program in conjunction with the Ministry of Agriculture and Food.

However, the program is being funded by the Ontario Ministry of Skills and Development, to help these youths get some work ex-

perience along with developing an appreciation of what it takes to be a farmer.

The deal is a good one for farmers.

Nancy McGill said, "I think it's (Jr. Agriculturalist Program) good because it supplies farmers with help and it lets the city kids see what goes into running a farm."

It is also relatively cheap labor for the farmer, because the ministry pays half the wages for the teenage farmers, who earn \$35 a day through the program.

The McGill's have taken part in the Jr. Agriculturalist Program in the past, and say they have had a few kids get home sick and want to go home.

Charles says he decided to take part in the program because he had nothing to do for the summer. And so far, he said working for the McGill's has been "pretty good."

But he added, "I usually get the dirty jobs" such as pitching manure.

However, it hasn't taken long for Charles to get an appreciation for how much work is involved with farming. His day on the farm starts around 6:30 a.m. and sometimes doesn't end until 9 p.m.

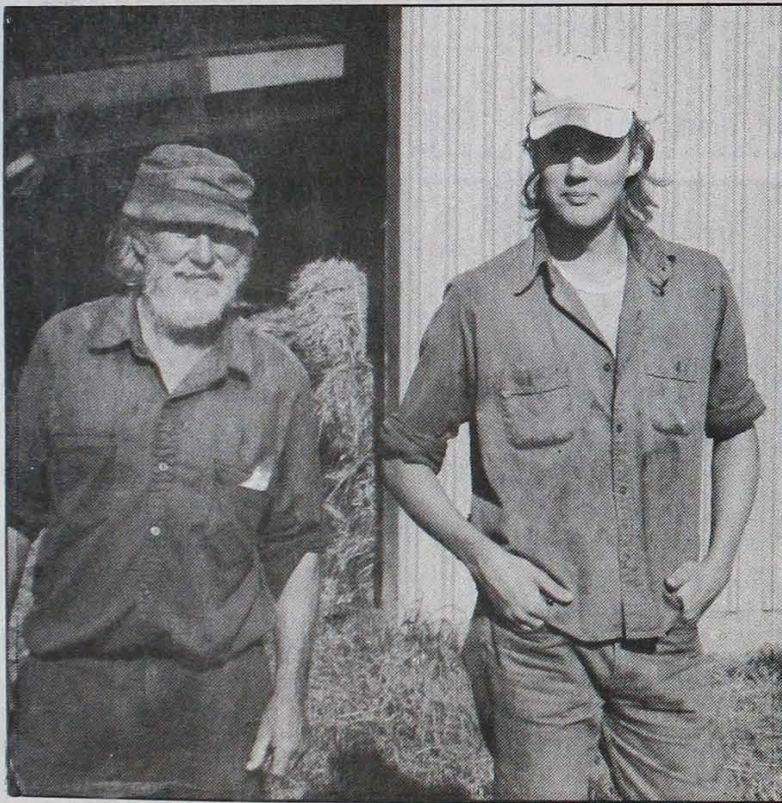
"I'll think twice about being a farmer," quipped Charles, adding that he is used to working long hours now.

When Murray McGill was asked if Charles was working hard he jokingly replied, "We keep him busy, you're damn right."

However, he added that Charles is a good worker and he didn't take long to get into the swing of things.

Charles says he doesn't mind spending his summer out on a farm. And he has even learned a thing or two.

When Charles returns to school this fall, he'll probably be one of the few kids at his school who can say he spent his summer vacation learning how to drive a tractor, milk cows or take off hay.



Charles Gils, 16, of Georgetown, Ont., is taking part in the Junior Agriculturalist Program, which gives urban youths an opportunity to live and work on a farm. Charles has been staying with Murray and Nancy McGill on their farm in Glanworth.