

FARM FEATURES

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Combining Prime Custom Operation

Combining is one of the most common custom jobs done on Michigan farms, according to B. R. Bookhout and R. W. Christian, Michigan State College agricultural economists.

Their recently completed study of custom work shows that most combining is done on acre bands. Many sizes of combines were reported — from three and one-half to 15 feet in width of cut. Most common rate for combining small grain was \$5.00 per acre for all sizes of combines.

Some farmers reported rates on an hourly basis and the rates varied with the size of the combine. For small combines, under four and one-half feet in width, the usual hourly rate was \$4.50. With five-foot combines, the hourly rate was \$5.00. For combines six feet or more in width the charge was \$6.00 per hour.

The economists report that the custom rates for combining both soy and field beans were most often on an acre basis. The rates were the same as for small grains — \$5.00 per acre. A few special bean combines were reported. The rate for these combines was \$5.00 per acre.

Custom rates for combining clover and alfalfa seed were reported several ways. The most common rate was \$5.00 per acre or per hour for all sizes of combines. Combining alfalfa and clover seed, for a share of the seed was reported by about ten per cent of the farmers who combined their crops. The usual share was one-half, but a few reported a one-third share in cases where the yield was especially high.



CHOSEN DAIRY QUEEN—Nancy E. Kendall, 20, of West Starving Rock, demonstrates her milking technique after winning the title of June Dairy Queen of her state. Miss Kendall is a junior at the University of Massachusetts. The cow, content to be plating the camera, seems to think the whole affair is utterly ridiculous.

EASY TEST FOR GRASS SILAGE MOISTURE GIVEN

Grass silage is gaining new friends each year in Michigan. It's a job that takes a little extra care but the results usually justify the time taken.

J. G. Hays, extension dairyman at Michigan State College, says that it is too risky to ensile a hay crop without making some sort of moisture determination. If the crop goes too dry — under 60 per cent moisture — the whole mass is apt to be affected by molds. If it is too wet — above 65 per cent — evil smelling acid develops. The quality of milk is affected from cows that eat such silage and breathe in its bad odor.


To test the grass to be ensiled, Hays advises squeezing a handful of fresh chopped hay-crop, such as alfalfa-brome. From what happens, the decision can be made whether the crop is right in moisture content to go into the silo.

1. If it won't ball up, it is too dry — add water at once.
2. If it balls up, and slowly falls apart, it's just right.
3. If the ball does not fall apart — stays balled up — the crop is too wet. Let it wilt a while.

Although no claim is made that the test is very accurate, farmers who worked with MSC investigators last year said they like it. Testing by "squeezing" is better than trusting to luck that the moisture content is all right, Hays believes.

Adding molasses, corn and cob meal, dried whey and such preservatives when filling the silo, will counteract the formation of acid.

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4-H GIRLS CAN YEAR-AROUND FOOD SUPPLY

It'll be June in January for Michigan 4-H families when it comes to eating fruits and vegetables next winter. Girls enrolled in the 1949 National 4-H Canning Achievement awards program have learned to estimate family food needs, and have the food preservation knowledge well worked out. They are doing a lot to top last year's national output of 17 million quarts, canned by 4-H Club girls.

In addition to providing healthful, nutritious dishes for daily meals, the canning project cuts food costs considerably. Most of the produce, meat and poultry canned is raised on the home farm. The girls are aware of the importance of fruits and vegetables, and see to it there's a plentiful variety served at the family table. To exhibit prize jars of sparkling jellies, cool green pickles and bright colored vegetables is the ambition of every girl.

Records are kept of amount, kind and value of canned products, giving Michigan 4-Hers an opportunity to qualify for merit awards provided by the Key Glass Manufacturing corporation. Beverly B. Orton, state champion, won the 1948, winning a trip to the National 4-H Club Congress in Chicago. There were 63 county medal winners in Michigan. Besides these, 3200 scholarships are awarded to a national group selected from the state champions.

The Cooperative Extension Service supervises the activity.

Early Hopper Control Urged

Michigan farmers can save themselves a lot of money and work if they fight grasshoppers in the right places, says Dr. Ray L. James, extension specialist in entomology at Michigan State College.

Farmers are urged to kill the grasshoppers while they are still in their breeding places. Watch for signs of first hatching in the field margins, fence rows, ditches and idle lands bordering cultivated fields. The hoppers hatch there and then move out on crop lands.

Farmers can make the best use of their insecticides if they spray or dust the hatching grounds while the hoppers are young. One treatment usually will kill the hoppers in the breeding places. They start to spread out as they move into the crops. By spraying or dusting before they migrate, the farmer can greatly reduce the acreage he has to cover.

Treat the hatching places thoroughly with either chlordane or toxaphene, the two newly developed grasshopper insecticides. These chemicals can be bought at any seed or farm equipment store, or at any place where insecticides are sold.

Map Advised For Farm Tiling Job

When it comes time for a tiling job on the farm, insist that a well-drawn map be made, advise Michigan State College agricultural engineers.

The map should include a complete description of the tiling system, location of tile lines, tile sizes, and areas to be drained. Should it ever be necessary to dig up the tile, the map will be a valuable reference.

Iron Range Research Maps, Reports Ready

Maps and reports on recently active copper mines in Houghton and Keweenaw counties, prepared by the U. S. Geological Survey, are available for inspection at the state conservation department's geological survey division.

The report on the geology of the Pelch Mountain iron range also can be inspected by interested persons.

The effects of old age appear earlier in very hot regions.

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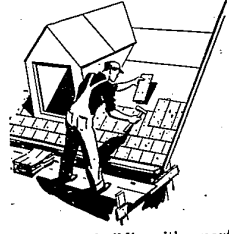
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