

County Is Losing Its Crown Of Maize

By W.W. EDGAR

Once known as the richest and most productive sweet corn area in America, that section of Western Wayne County embracing Canton and Plymouth Townships, extending as far as Salem and South Lyon, is fast losing the identity.

The population explosion in Canton and the rush of developers to meet the housing de-

mand has taken one farm after another from the landscape. "When this goes," Wilford Bunyea, the husky Plymouth "corn king" remarked, "it will be the end of farm land in Wayne County."

A recent survey shows that more than 3,500 acres are being removed from what was termed "sweet corn" land for the past several decades.

"We just can't afford farming anymore," Bunyea explained. "With taxes going up, along with government controls and all the other things that require payment, the farmers are now getting rid of their land."

"Along with the taxes, we have such things to pay as social security for the help, workmen's compensation and even unemployment insurance. Add that up and you'll

see why the farmers are turning their back to the soil. Bunyea is one of the many "sweet corn" farmers who are turning to other things. "I've just about quit sweet corn. Instead I am raising about 200 acres of field corn as food for the steers and the market."

"I've taken another 140 acres and put it into wheat. Now, I find that the field corn is getting to be a drag on the market and some of last year's crop isn't even harvested."

Bunyea is not alone in turning away from corn. Denver Cockrum, who used to grow about 800 acres of sweet corn at 10-Mile and Napier Roads, is cutting back to 50. He dealt mostly with chain stores and no longer can keep up with fluctuating prices.

The Warren Palmer farm at West Warrn and Beck Roads that used to produce 200 acres of sweet corn has quit entirely.

Another is Elmer Schultz at Beck and Proctor Roads. He has about 300 acres, and now sweet corn will be just a memory.

The same goes for Ray Schultz on Lilley Road, just south of Ann Arbor Road. He has cut back to the point where he raises just enough

to meet the requirements for his roadside fruit and vegetable stand. "Don't forget Bud Cavin," Bunyea cautioned. "He was one of the biggest producers with his farm at North Territorial and Got-

fredson Roads. I understand he's just about ready to quit entirely. "Then there's the Wilkie farm on Cherry Hill Road. That's another 200 acres that will be taken from the so-called sweet corn land."

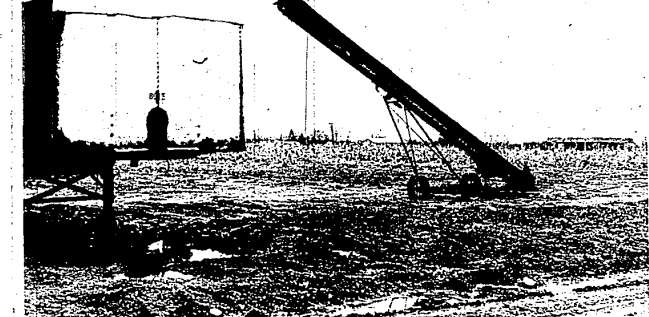
Along with these there's the Korte farm and the old Campbell Dairy Farm on

Canton Center Road near the school house where corn raised a year ago has not been picked. As Wilford totaled the lost sweet corn acreage he commented: "When a fellow's taxes jump up to \$25 and \$30 an acre all because of the state equalized valuation, this is drawing the line too fine."

Then, shaking his head, he sighed. "We're no longer the sweet corn country - let Iowa, where they boast their tall corn, have the honor."



WAYNE COUNTY CIRCUIT JUDGE Thomas J. Foley of Plymouth (center) congratulates three of the court's probation officers upon their appointments at court executives. Joining in the ceremony was Robert H. Weaver (second from left), deputy director of field services for Wayne County Circuit Court. Newly named executives in the probation department are Timothy J. Sullivan (left), head of the Livonia branch; Thomas J. Fox Jr. (second from right), downriver branch director, and Mrs. Doris S. Hall (right), supervisor of the Wayne-Westland office. All are graduates of the University of Detroit most-ter's program in corrections.



WHAT A CHANGE: -- Here's an example of what is happening to the area once known as the sweet corn capital. This is a view of the field at Ann Arbor and Napier Roads where last year's crop still is unpicked and left for the birds. (Observer photo by W. Edward Wendover)

Esch Bill Aid Handicapped

U.S. Rep. Marvin Esch (R-Ann Arbor) has introduced a bill to upgrade and continue current vocational rehabilitation programs for the handicapped at a reduced cost.

The bill, which is co-sponsored by Rep. John Erlenborn (R-Ill.), includes many provisions of the act vetoed by President Nixon such as provisions for expanded and improved vocational rehabilitation services, research and training.

It will also help unemployed handicapped persons who are presently excluded from vocational rehabilitation services.

"It is essential that legislation be designed which allows the president to effectively run the program," he said. "My bill emphasizes my strong commitment to the handicapped and to vocational rehabilitation programs across the nation. It does not discriminate among groups - in fact, the strength of my proposal lies in its flexibility."

Youtheater Show Is Built On Musicals

DETROIT A program with a special appeal for teenagers on up will be presented Saturday, April 14, in the Detroit Institute of Arts Youtheater.

Not recommended for younger children, the program is entitled "The Gospel According to..." and features singers George Tipton and Lorice Stevens. They have capitalized the song and spirit of five of the recent musicals - "Hair," "Purlie," "Jesus Christ Superstar," "Godspell" and "Fiddler on the Roof."

Tickets are available at the institute ticket office.

Metro Airport Gets Grant

The Federal Aviation Agency has approved a grant for more than \$1.4 million for improvements at Detroit Metropolitan Airport, Romulus.

The money will be used to widen the airport entrance road; construct and light the new international terminal, with roadway and service road; reconstruct, mark, and light the taxiway; install safety fencing, and purchase a lightweight crash-fire rescue vehicle.

The grant was announced by U.S. Rep. William D. Ford (D-Taylor).

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PETER EICHINGER, of 25755 Kilreigh Ct., Farmington, has been named manager of the Farmington office of Metropolitan Savings Association. He joined the company in 1972 as a management trainee.

Bill Introduced On Juvenile Delinquency

An Institute for Continuing Studies of Juvenile Justice would be created under a bill introduced by U.S. Rep. Marvin L. Esch (R-Ann Arbor).

Esch said the bill provides a three - pronged attack on juvenile crime. It would provide training for local and state officials who work with juvenile crime problems and serve as a clearing house for new information about the treatment of juvenile offenders and about successful reforms in justice systems across the country.

The institute would also conduct in-depth research into juvenile problems and make appropriate recommendations for changes in both federal and state juvenile justice programs.

"Juvenile crime has increased by 187 per cent over the last 10 years," Esch said. "It is tragically clear that our present programs are not doing an adequate job of stopping juvenile crime."

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