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# FARM NEWS

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## Grass and Legume Crops Enrich Soil

Those who look lightly upon the value of grass and legume crops in good soil management need only to recall how the good, highly productive prairie land soils of the United States and other nations were formed.  
Michigan State College soil scientists say our best soils are in the areas where grass was a native crop. Maintaining productivity of good soil is difficult without the use of grass and legumes in a rotation or as a cover and green manure crop.  
The MSC soil authorities contend that the nitrogen put into the soil by the legumes is not the only value. Roots of the legume end grass penetrate deeply into the subsoil structure and improved aeration and drainage.  
By using the right combination of "good farming with good grass," it is possible to build up the soil, reduce erosion, improve drainage and provide good livestock feed. Use of grasses and legumes in all fields at least one year out of five is important in good farming.

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## Give Young People Suggestions On How To Get Started In Farming

Ingredients needed to get started in farming add up to a sizeable package, say Michigan State College agricultural economists.  
A typical 150-acre farm, stocked and equipped, represents an investment of about \$40,000 today. Few beginning farmers can afford such an investment and thus must seek other ways of moving into farming. L. H. Brown, MSC agricultural economist, says that there are also other needs in addition to finances: experience, good judgment, liking for farming—and, he adds, a good wife who also likes the farm.  
The "agricultural ladder" is the way most young people move into farming today and the "first rung" is where the young man gains experience and know-how. Some get it at home, others as hired men.  
The young man who has gained experience may then be ready for another move into such a venture as a family-operating agreement on the home farm or he may rent under conditions where little capital is needed. The 50-50 lease offers the young farmer a chance to make his investment in the farm business. It can require \$10,000 to \$15,000, about half of which might be borrowed.  
A number of lending agencies are available to the good farmer. "Farmers' Banks; cooperative banks like PCA's and the Federal Land Bank; insurance companies; and individuals are typical.  
From the 50-50 lease to farm ownership is a step many farmers make, though lots of farmers, particularly in the better parts of the corn belt, continue to rent on a 50-50 basis most of their lives.  
Two types of farm operating, 50-50 lease and owner-operatorship have many advantages.  
"Getting Young People Started in the Business of Farming" will be the topic of a Farm Finance Clinic at Michigan State College April 16 and 17, when about 500 bankers, county agricultural agents, and farm leaders will gather to discuss the needs of existing young people who wish to farm.

## DISEASE CONTROL EFFECTIVE WITH TREATED SEED

There are several crop diseases that can't be controlled during the growing season—they can only be controlled by eliminating the carrier by seed treatment and crop rotation.  
Ed Andrews, Michigan State College plant disease specialist, points out an example. During 1951, yellow spot caused heavy losses in some fields of wheat. Yellow spot is a fungus disease of wheat leaves and occurred on wheat that was planted in the same field for two or more years in a row.  
Smut, head blight and root rot of cereal grains are other diseases that cannot be controlled during the growing season—seed treatment is the answer. In most years these seed-borne diseases together cause far heavier losses than powdery mildew and the rusts, Andrews says.  
The plant disease specialist said that uniform tests by research workers in many experiment stations have shown that there are several new mercury fungicides now available that are effective. These same tests also show that some materials advertised as seed treatments do not control disease.  
By using the right combination of your disease control problem with your county agricultural agent, the county agent will have a list of proved effective seed treatment materials.  
Increased costs and needs for higher production make disease losses especially costly this year. Seed treatment is one effective method of helping assure good returns from expensive seed, fertilizer and labor.

## Michigan Pheasants Get Through Winter Okay

Michigan pheasants have come through the winter in good shape, conservation department game men report.  
He suggests that you discuss your disease control problem with your county agricultural agent. The county agent will have a list of proved effective seed treatment materials.  
Increased costs and needs for higher production make disease losses especially costly this year. Seed treatment is one effective method of helping assure good returns from expensive seed, fertilizer and labor.

## Fewer Farmers To Feed More People In Future

With little new land to break up, Michigan State College agricultural economists are advised to endeavor to plant with intentions of getting increased yields of crops this year, making full use of fertilizer, good seed, equipment, and disease control.  
In feeding livestock and dairy animals, more efficient production will be even more important than in years when feed supplies were more plentiful, the economists think.

## The Grist Mill

By Ed Aichin  
County Agricultural Agent

This week we have a couple of items of particular interest to Extension cooperators in Oakland County. The first has to do with farm calls and the second has to do with finding the county agent in the office.  
The Extension service realizes of course the importance of personal contact and the help that they can give to farmers at the farm. However, time is the most limiting factor. At the present writing there are eleven days of farm calls lined up with only three days free to make these calls. That makes us pretty well booked ahead. We definitely don't have time to make calls without some reason.  
I guess it boils down to this—if you would like the county agent to call on you, drop a card or call by phone to the county agent's office at Pontiac.  
As for finding the county agent in the office, the Extension Advisory Board has suggested that one day a week be spent in the office. So Friday has been set aside and will be the best day for you to contact the county agent. Any other day in the week calls should be made before 10:00 a.m. to catch me before I leave for meetings or farm calls.

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