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FARM NEWS

Cut Construction Costs By Planning

Farm families with plans for building a new home may be wondering how they can cut some costs and still have the home they want. Ted Brevik, Michigan State College agricultural engineer, has some tips that may save many dollars on the job.

First, he advises that the family have a complete plan for the whole construction job even though some items may have to be postponed. This will help to prevent adjustments later on.

Second, find ways to do or buy things at the lowest usual cash outlay. Some suggestions are:

1. Use stock building materials.
2. Use home-grown materials whenever possible.
3. Use farm equipment for hauling, excavating and grading.
4. Do some of the building yourself, especially if you can hire a skilled person to direct the work. The job may take longer if you do a lot of the work yourself but under the direction of a skilled carpenter, a lot of work at a lower cost can be accomplished.

How much should be spent for the house is another problem which sometimes puzzles farm families. Brevik says that the decision should be based on a number of considerations. It is necessary to balance comfort and satisfaction, as well as labor-saving and health, against the problems of financing.

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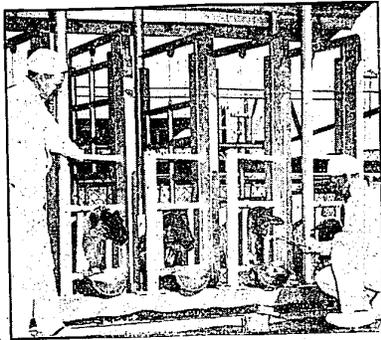
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SHEEP FOR GEIGER COUNTING—These ewes are part of a herd being used in experimental work at the Hamford Atomic Energy works, Richmond. Their diet consists of alfalfa, grain and food pellets, as well as radioactive iodine enabling scientists to determine how radioactivity affects living conditions. A right scientist starts to count sheep—with a Geiger counter.

Hay Crushing Beats Weather

Hay crushing is a having method that is attracting more attention each year, reports R. W. Kleis, Michigan State College agricultural engineer.

Crushing helps overcome several Michigan haying problems, he points out. A large percentage of the hay harvested in the state each year is either completely spoiled or seriously damaged by bad weather while curing. Crushing is one of the ways to speed up the drying process to cut down the time hay is subject to weather damage.

Kleis recently prepared a new Michigan State College extension folder, "Hay Crushing", in which he cites that the general purpose of crushing hay is to crack and crush the stems — especially the coarser ones — so that there will be more surface exposed to the air. Moisture and plant juices in the interior of the stem are brought into more direct contact with the drying air. Both these factors tend to step up the rate of drying and allow stems to dry nearly as fast as the leaves.

Several makes of hay crushers are now on the market. While they differ some in design, they all accomplish the same general purpose in much the same way.

Whether or not the purchase of a hay crusher is justified by the savings in hay and hay quality depends on the operating conditions of each individual farm, Kleis points out. Such things as acreage of hay, value of hay, local weather conditions, hilliness of the fields, and size of the tractor must be considered.

A more complete discussion of hay crushers and their operation will be found in Kleis' folder, "Hay Crushing". It is available at county agricultural agents' offices or by writing to the Bulletin Office, Department of Information Service, Michigan State College, East Lansing.

American railroads used 65 million tons of bituminous coal last year.

Lead Sprays May Poison Livestock

When you're spraying with materials containing lead arsenate, take care in places where livestock feeds. This caution comes from Ray Hutson, head of the Michigan State College entomology department.

Hutson states that spraying trees and pasture or where livestock can feed on forage beneath sprayed trees is risky. Numerous cases of livestock fatalities can be attributed to lead poisoning. He recommends no spraying with lead arsenate in pastures, nor should cattle be pastured in a sprayed orchard if lead arsenate has been used, there.

Many of the newer insecticides are also poisonous to livestock, Hutson says.

Good Care Adds Farm Tire Life

Rubber tires on farm equipment must be given special care these days, says Walter Carleton, agricultural engineer at Michigan State College. He advises that farmers make sure that tires are properly inflated, remembering that the furrow wheel carries an extra load.

Saturday Nights CECIL BROWN and the NEWS

CKLW - 7:55 p.m.

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MAURICE J. BROWN

NEGLECT CAN CAUSE SPRING BREEDING TROUBLE IN COWS

Dairy cows should not be neglected during the rush of spring and summer field work, says George Parsons, Michigan State College extension dairyman.

Breeding troubles are likely to occur if cows are not closely watched. Many times busy farmers do not see the cow when she comes in heat, or may notice her and are too busy to call the inseminator-manager.

Parsons advises getting a breeding calendar to be placed in a conspicuous place in the farm. Keep the records on this breeding chart up to date. Don't wait until next week or when it rains to fill out the record.

A good practice is to spend some time observing the cattle in the morning when they are turned out. More than half of the cows will be noticed in heat at this time of day. It is a good time to observe the condition of the herd.

Parsons advises that farmers watch 30 days after calving before breeding for the next gestation. Keep the heifers growing steadily and breed to freshen about 24 to 26 months of age.

Make use of the breeding record by watching the chart. It is very easy to determine the next heat period if you know the date of the last one. This chart will tell you within one day on all normal heat periods, when to be a little more observant. With a lot of summer work, it is much easier to detect the heat period and determine the correct breeding time if you are forewarned.

Planning on the part of the farmer and a desire to see the breeding plan work will eliminate many breeding problems due to management, Parsons believes.

Sheep shearing time gives a good chance to cut out the poor of animals and to check up on the health of the flock.

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