

MSC TO CONDUCT SHORT COURSE ON MUCK FARMING

Michigan State college will offer a short course in muckland farming during January, 1948. It will be the first time since 1940 that this course has been offered, according to Dr. Paul M. Harman, muck soils specialist at the college.

Approximately one acre out of every eight acres of tillable land in Michigan is muck soil which requires special care and farming practices. Practically all of the celery, onions and mint produced in Michigan, as well as a large proportion of carrots, parsnips, cabbage and other vegetables are raised on this type of soil. Methods of production on muck land and the marketing of the crops are so different from upland crops that special training is highly desirable for the man who is starting this type of farming.

The short course will open January 5 and continue through January 30. Instruction in muck soil management will include courses in muck soil management and fertilizer needs, effects of minor elements on various crops, and prevention of wind and frost injury to crops. Other courses will include plant disease control, control of weeds with chemicals, insect control, horticulture, agricultural engineering and farm management.

Details concerning the course can be obtained from the director of short courses, Michigan State college, East Lansing, Michigan.

Michigan OUT-OF-DOORS

Beginning February 1, the conservation department is shifting responsibility for field activities from its office in Lansing to regional offices in Marquette, Roscommon and Jackson.

Regional administration should provide faster and more efficient service for the public, P. J. Hoffmaster, conservation director, said in announcing the change.

After 37 years' steady development, the department has outgrown its original centralized organization, he said.

Provisionally named as regional chiefs are Dorilas J. Curry for the upper peninsula, Harry L. Aldrich for the northern half of the lower peninsula, and Paul F. Hickie for southern Michigan. Curry and Aldrich now are regional supervisors for the department's field activities in the respective regions, and Hickie is a former upper peninsula game division supervisor who recently resigned as chief forester on the staff of General MacArthur.

Under the new decentralization organization, regional supervisors of the game, fish, forestry, education, land administration and park divisions will be directly responsible to the new regional chiefs. Division chiefs in Lansing will continue direction of overall programs, research, and such field stations as that on game at Ross Lake, Swan Creek and Custon, for fish at Hunt Creek, for forest fire at Roscommon, and the training school at Higgins Lake.

Planning for the reorganization has been underway since June.

When the conservation commission announced, it was modernizing department machinery to meet greater expanded current needs. Among other benefits of the new system, the commissioner believes, will be quicker translation into action programs of the facts learned in years of game and fish management research.

A second snow tractor for winter checking of hitherto almost inaccessible deer yards has been delivered by the conservation department's wildlife experiment station at Cusino.

The second snow tractor is a commercially produced four-passenger job with an enclosed body and 400 horsepower motor. It has been extensively tested in service in western mountain country and at snow sports resorts. The first one, delivered some months ago at Escanaba, is a surplus army motor, a jeep chassis and sidecut axles. It will carry two men. Both vehicles have skis in front and broad tracks behind for travel over snow in open country. When taken over plowed roads, they may be hauled on trailers.

The two vehicles will be thoroughly tested this winter for their maneuverability and dependability in remote deer yards, where winter observation has been limited until now by the slowness of travel on snowshoes.

Hunters with guns killed nearly as many deer on 40 square miles in their 10-day antlerless season as archers killed in the entire country in 75 days of bow and arrow hunting.

The gun hunters got 46 deer on the 23,000-acre crop damage area, while archers bagged 51 up to December 15, the last day of the archery season. A year ago the archers' margin was wider: they took 58 while the antlerless season produced 37, according to conservation department checking station records.

Deer were found more scattered this season because of the different acorns. It is not yet determined whether there were more or fewer animals than there were a year ago.

Of the 300 who won permits to hunt antlerless deer this year, only 46 failed to show up for the hunt. Of the 254 who did register, 141 said they had hunted unsuccessfully for bucks in the regular season.

From an eight-week average of 1,000 fox bounty payments per week, bounties in the ninth week dropped to 763, costing \$2,815, the conservation department reports.

Pineconing oil field seemed destined to be a one-well field for three years after the discovery well was brought in in 1944, eleven more wells were drilled within half a mile of the first, and every single one of them was a dry hole.

But the driller who put down the last four dry ones refused to be discouraged. This month he had his reward: a producer flowing 250 barrels a day under restrictive conditions established for test purposes. The new producer is a quarter of a mile from the original well.

The new Pineconing producer is one of three drilling operations in 1947 that have been of unusual interest to engineers and geologists of the conservation department's geological survey who administer Michigan's well drilling regulations. Another of the three is the West Branch deep test, that is to be the deepest hole ever drilled in Michigan. It is now down to 10,200 feet and may yet go to 12,000. The third, in Monroe county, also is unique. A wildcat begun in 1940, it still is being drilled after reaching 4,667 feet, more than 1,000 feet into the granite.

Leasing of state-owned oil and gas rights in 9,144 acres of wildcat lands at the December auction brings the year's total state land leasing by the conservation department to about \$5,000 acres.

All operators at the December sale bid \$12.13 in bonus above standard rental rates, with interest running highest in lands offered in Pentwater county, Oceana county. Bounties for the year total about \$105,000.

The state now has approximately 450,000 acres under lease to oil and gas operators. State earnings from this acreage, in rents and in royalties from producing oil wells, is expected to exceed \$500,000 this year. This sum, together with the bonuses and about \$25,000 income from gas wells, will boost the state's 1947 income from oil and gas leasing above \$300,000.

In 1946, with more acreage leased, the income was \$715,000. Peak year was 1944, when state land oil and gas leasing yielded \$944,000 for the state's general fund.

The conservation department operates no wells; it simply leases lands.

Development of Puerto Rico Puerto Rico has some traditional old industries, largely based on agriculture including production of sugar, molasses, rum and commercial alcohol. There is also the Puerto Rican fine-necked guitar industry, which ranks among the best in the world. Although the available labor is largely unskilled in industrial operations, the established industries have shown that Puerto Ricans can be trained to a high degree of mechanical and manual skill. Various aids in training labor are available, among them a new vocational school for 3,000 students. Wages, though higher than elsewhere in the Caribbean because of both federal and insular legislation, minimum wage rates, are considerably lower than in the States. Because Puerto Rico is inside the U. S. tariff wall, the island can compete in U. S. trade with the sometimes lower wages of foreign producers.



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WITH PEACE AND PROSPERITY, WE SHOULD ALL BE HAPPIER THAN EVER THIS YEAR. DURING THE CHRISTMAS SEASON, LET'S TRY TO FORGET OUR CARES. FOR OUR PART, WE WANT TO ADD OUR FELICITATIONS TO THE MANY OTHERS YOU ARE RECEIVING, BY WISHING YOU A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS—THE

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Spencer J. Heeney
FUNERAL DIRECTOR



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Christmas! No vaunting phrases can truly carry the meaning of that word, no marching adjectives picture its fulfillment. Its being and expression must ever lie in the simple words of the prophets, in the unpretentious but meaningful phrases of the Man of Galilee:

"ON EARTH PEACE, GOOD WILL TO MEN."

—Sandra's—
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(Next to the Civic Theatre)

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Old days, old times, old friends!

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Holiday Greetings

Our wish for you is that gentle Bells of Christmas echo throughout your home all through this wondrous Holiday Season.

• **HENRY OTIS** •
33015 Grand River Phone 0001

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Greetings, Friends Old and New

May this Christmas bring happiness as true as that we have known in our relations with you.