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### The Grist Mill

By Ed Aloin  
County Agricultural Agent

The recent warm, dry weather has put farmers in a favorable position to start plowing and getting their corn ground fitted. I have been a little afraid that the temptation to put corn in early might be great. The usual planting date for corn is between the 20th and 25th of May and I would certainly recommend that you hold pretty well to those dates. We could still get a damaging frost in early planted field corn. Play it safe and don't take unnecessary risks.

It may be true that your neighbor may have his ground ready and started in planting corn, and it may also be true that he may get by without any damage by a frost.

But weighing the risks of planting now or during the week of May 19 indicates that the week of the 19th would be the best time to plant corn.

Average last frost dates for the spring in this area usually have been the week of the 12th of May.

### Predict Good Year For Potato Growers

"Chances for another good year for Michigan potato growers are good," M. E. Cravens, Jr., Michigan State College agricultural economist, says.

Reports that they intended to plant ten per cent fewer acres than in 1951. Even with yields equal to the highest on record, the intended acreages would not be enough to cause a ruinously low price.

"With yields equal to or less than those of last year there is the probability of prices equal to or better than those for the 1951 crop," Cravens warned that this does not mean that all Michigan potato growers will make money in 1952.

Among limiting factors is low production. He said that farmers who got an average of 180 bushels or less per acre did not make much money on potatoes in 1951, and they aren't likely to do so in 1952.

"With costs even higher than in 1951, some growers may try to cut costs by using less fertilizer, by using seed of questionable quality, or by spraying less," Cravens said. He warned that such cost-cutting procedures will prove unwise if they seriously affect the yields.

He summarized by saying that "for the grower who can expect to get yields well above the state average, 1952 looks like a good year to expand potato acreage."

The military is now engaged in bringing heavy shipments of American coal to its installations in Europe.

### Grass Silage Economical Way To Preserve Forage For Cattle

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### EARLY POTATO PLANTING GIVES BIGGER YIELD

Date of planting potatoes has an important effect on the yield, reports Willard E. Bosserman, Assistant County Agricultural Agent. This fact was proved by yield figures from a date of planting demonstration conducted last year on the Oscar Overholt farm near Lapeer.

Three plantings were made: on May 15, June 6 and June 21. Potatoes were grown in a field under the same conditions and were harvested the same. Three varieties were used in the test: Russet Burbank, Sebago and 125-4 Seedling. All three varieties showed much higher yields from the earlier date compared to the two June plantings. Russet Burbank planted May 15 made 61 bushels to the acre, those planted on June 6 made 103 bushels and the June 21 planting yielded only 275 bushels to the acre.

The earlier planting of Sebago yielded 566 bushels, the June 6 planting yielded 483 bushels and the June 21 planting made 330 bushels to the acre. The 125-4 Seedling produced 611, 433 and 330 bushels respectively in order of planting dates, with their May 15 date proving most profitable again.

### Check Shows Fertilizer Used Related To Yield

An examination of fertilizer records kept by 163 farmers in central Michigan was made by Michigan State College agricultural economists. They found that the amount of fertilizer used was closely related with crop yields. John C. Doneth, one of the agricultural economists, says that the records showed that farmers who used the most fertilizer also had higher machinery expenses per acre and bought most feed. Also, net farm earnings tended to be higher on farms where fertilizer usage was reasonably high.

### Grass - Legume Mixture Gives Best Forage

Experience of farmers the country over and trials at agricultural experiment stations have all shown greater yields and continued productivity of forage and greater livestock gains for grass-legume combinations as compared with either a grass or a legume sown alone. Increases of from 40 to 60 per cent in forage and gains in live weight of animals are not uncommon.

Mixtures should vary according to the purpose intended and the prevailing soil and climate conditions. Under most conditions simple mixtures of 2 to 4 species are preferable but sometimes more complex mixtures containing 5 or more species are desirable.

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### MSC Home Ec Alums To Gather On May 17

Approximately 200 persons are expected to attend the fourth annual Michigan State College Home Economics Alumni day on the campus May 17. In addition to reunion sessions and tours of the campus, three national authorities will give talks on the latest developments in the field.

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