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FARM NEWS

Dairymen Trim Costs In Squeeze

Who are Michigan dairy farmers doing to face up to the drop in dairy prices to 75 per cent of parity?

They're trimming costs of production as much as possible, says George Parsons, a Michigan State College extension dairyman. Parsons asserts that his talks with farmers at extension meetings have revealed these things:

Farmers are getting more conscious of expenses which may be unnecessary. Some figure they are feeding more grain than necessary. That means more interest in and greater use of high quality silage—brome alfalfa hay with at least 50 per cent of the legume, good quality corn silage with lots of grain or good legume silage.

And the extension dairyman reports, farmers are cutting down on the purchase of protein supplements, figuring that they will be able to furnish all their cows' requirements through good quality hay and home-grown grains.

The expense-conscious farmers also are cutting down on what they believe may be unnecessary mineral buying. They're sticking with standard bone meal and trace mineral salt—either including it in the ration or feeding it free choice. Parsons says he believes that the farmers' cost consciousness with a long way toward easing the price-cost squeeze in the dairy business.

MINERALS NEEDED TO SUPPLEMENT SHEEP RATION

Sheepmen who have only grass hay, like timothy and brome, to feed pregnant ewes and feed lambs should make sure the ration is supplemented with elemental bone meal or some calcium and phosphorus carrier.

That's the advice from L. H. Blakeslee of Michigan State College's animal husbandry department. He points out that the calcium and phosphorus needs of a pregnant ewe are high just before lambing and while nursing the young lambs.

Feeder lambs, he adds, also need considerable amounts of minerals if they are to make good growth and gains. Blakeslee suggests providing the minerals free-choice or mixed half and half with trace mineral salt if grass hay is fed.

If the sheepman feeds enough grain and good quality legume roughages, like alfalfa hay, he won't have to worry about giving feeder lambs and pregnant ewes plenty of calcium and phosphorus.

It's good, sound business to clean up your home, your farm and your community this spring. You can eliminate fire hazards that way, says David G. Steinicker, an MSC extension safety specialist.

Improved Farm Practices Help Cut Production Costs And Boost Profits

Want to cut your crop production costs and boost profits? Michigan State College scientists regard the results of a study this week which showed costs of production can be sharply cut by improved farming practices.

The studies, conducted by Dr. R. L. Cook, head of the MSC soil science department, and C. H. Hoglund of the agricultural economics department, showed these figures on cost cuts:

Improved practices—as compared with older practices—pared the cost of producing a bushel of wheat from \$1.54 to \$1.28, of a bushel of oats from 90 cents to \$1.35 a bushel. And following recommended practices lowered the cost of producing a ton of alfalfa—brome hay from \$16.50 to \$13.20 and a ton of sugar beets from \$11.21 to \$8.19.

The MSC men found that the biggest saving in production costs was through using the recommended rates of fertilizer. But other practices, such as timely planting, use of adapted crop varieties, seed treatment, crop rotation, the right soil management, tillage and weed control, which were cost cutters, too.

Although a farmer using the recommended practices spends

New Cattle Germ Found In Herd

Dairymen in Michigan now have added to their woes a new form of brucellosis caused by a type of the germ never before found in Michigan.

Dr. Forest Huddleson, Michigan State College bacteriologist, reports that it produces a more severe infection than ordinary Brucella disease. There is a holcine-like inflammation and thickening of the skin of the udder, he explains, and this condition might be mistaken for a type of mastitis.

Dr. Huddleson, developer of vaccines for brucellosis, found the organisms in milk samples from one Michigan dairy herd. Called "Type 2" of the bovine or Brucella abortus species, it was found in samples from two of the three milking cows whose milk was checked. The samples were cultured by a new method in the college's brucella laboratory.

A new type of brucellosis was suggested by Dr. Huddleson from the condition of the udders of the cows. At present, cattle in only one herd in Michigan are known to be infected with the new organism but it may be wider spread. He has never found it in foci from a Michigan cow but he recently identified the same type in a culture prepared from a focus at Purdue University.

NEW TEST SHOWS WEED SEEDS LIVE 70 YEARS

How long will weed seeds live? Michigan State College scientists don't have the answer to that question because an experiment designed to give the facts hasn't been completed yet. It has 80 more years to run.

The seeds in the test are dug up from the ground every ten years to determine their viability. O. P. Steinbauer of the botany and plant pathology department reports that the last time they were dug there was a small percentage of viable seeds from 29 species buried 70 years ago. In disturbed soil, however, seeds would have shorter periods of dormancy. But they may persist in a dormant but viable state through several crop rotations. Steinbauer suggests that more information is needed on the most effective ways to speed up germination of the more persistent and harmful weed pests so they can be eradicated easier.

more money per acre, the resulting yields more than offset extra expenses. Dr. Cook and Hoglund found, for example, that the average Michigan farmer spends \$16 an acre to produce 38 bushels of corn. But, by spending \$62.25 an acre—the cost of recommended practices—he would produce 61 bushels of corn per acre.

The studies showed further that Michigan farmers are not, on the average, using enough fertilizer to produce crops most economically. Sugar beets currently get an average of 490 pounds of fertilizer per acre, while the recommended rate is 800 pounds.

If a farmer used the recommended rate of fertilizer on sugar beets, he could cut the cost of producing a ton of beets from \$11.21 to \$9.95. And, if he used other recommended practices along with the increased use of fertilizer, he could reduce his costs to \$8.19 a ton.

FREE FARMING BIG BUSINESS IN MICHIGAN

Tree farming is big business in Michigan, and farms play a large role in the state's timber economy. The total net value of round timber products sold or used each year off farm woodlands amounts to \$28,000,000.

These statements are made in a booklet, "Michigan Forest Facts", now being distributed through the Michigan Forest Industries, headed by Charles Allen. The committee is composed of representatives from wood-using industries and timberland owners in the state.

"Michigan Forest Facts" is a segment of a new Forest Resources Handbook which contains complete information on the nation's timber resources, together with reports on the industry-sponsored Tree Farm and Keen Green programs. Copies are being distributed to newspapers, radio-TV stations, writers, and wood-using industries of the state.

Nearly half of Michigan's land area is now or would be under proper planning—growing commercial forest crops, the handbook points out. A growth-drain chart shows that the Wolverine State is currently growing 295,000,000 cubic feet of timber each year as against an annual removal of 285,000 cubic feet. This is for all trees over five inches in diameter.

"Of course, there is much yet to be done," Mr. Allen said. "For example, sawtimber growth (trees over nine inches in diameter) must be brought into balance with sawtimber drain. This is a challenge. Our progress to date shows what can be done through wise management of our timberlands. It points up the fact that timber is actually a crop and that given some type of management can be produced in ever increasing quantities—on small woodlots, on larger private holdings, hunting clubs and recreation areas in our state. All are potential Tree Farms, given a chance and a plan."

Sugar beets, maturing barley, field beans, soybeans and oats with forage seedlings will be used as wheat and corn replacement crops this year where they are adapted.

Late Spring Makes It Too Early For Planting

Although this is a late spring, some farmers are reporting plowing going on in lighter, sandy soils in Oakland County. One report was made of a field of oats being planted last week. Actually, the soil temperature does not warrant planting, since no germination will take place until soil temperatures are warmer.

When spring planting is feasible, some variety selections of crops that farmers might consider are: oats—Crisp, Kent and Clinton; and for corn—Michigan 250 or 480.

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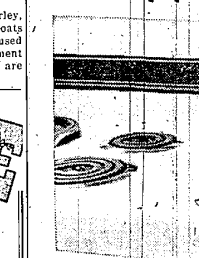
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1 cup shortening
1 1/2 cups brown sugar
1 egg
1 1/2 cups pastry flour, sifted

Time: 8 min.
1 teaspoon baking powder
1/2 teaspoon soda
1 teaspoon salt
1 1/2 cups quick-cooking rolled oats
1 cup coconut

Cream shortening and sugar together. Add egg and beat until light. Sift flour, baking powder, soda and salt together. Add to first mixture. Add oats and coconut. Mix well. Roll into balls, place on ungreased cookie sheet, flatten slightly. Bake. Cool slightly before removing from cookie sheet.

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