

Irrigation Might Easily Double United States Crop Production

Progressive rise in soil productivity has been brought about by: (1) Mechanization; (2) Hybrid seed; (3) Chemical Fertilizer; Sprinkler irrigation.

Some of the farmers caught in the current cost-price squeeze are finding their own ways to increase profits by lowering unit costs. Dr. Gerald G. Williams, recently an agronomist at Purdue University, points out the latest wrinkle, he says, is sprinkler irrigation.

These farmers, like their predecessors who traded horses for mules, created revolutions in farming. They befuddle efforts to control production by cutting acreage and upset Malthusian predictions of a starving world.

Now Making Own Rain
First it was mechanization. Then, a couple of decades ago discovered hybrid seed. Then around 1940 consumption of chemical fertilizers climbed upward with farm income and the past four years fertilizer has continued to climb despite the decline in total farm income.

Now, these production-minded farmers are making their own rain. The result? Many produce as much and more per acre as do their neighbors who are in nature to provide enough pasture and other elements to produce a crop.

Dr. Williams, now manager of irrigation research for Olin Matheson Chemical Corporation, predicts that in another decade sprinkler irrigation systems will be commonplace on American farms as combines are today. A decade ago Olin Matheson was supplying irrigation systems because farmers sure of their crop are inclined to use the optimum amount of chemical fertilizers.

Now, irrigation systems are one of the country's major products. They are already measured in mil-

lions of dollars, are expected to increase rapidly as more farmers discover the economics of high acreage yields.

Many Turn to Sprinklers
Flood irrigation for decades has been commonplace in California and other arid states in the West, although even there many farmers are turning to sprinklers.

In the humid East, only the truck farmers used irrigation until the end of World War II; farmers forgot from one year to the next that even in wet years there were periods of drought.

Now, more and more farmers are irrigating corn, cotton, tobacco, pastures and other field crops. They find it pays.

Sprinkler irrigation has spread to every section of the country. In 1946 less than 250,000 acres in a few isolated areas were sprink-

ler irrigated. This year, it is estimated, 35 million acres are being irrigated by this method.

Farmers who try it soon learn to look to irrigation — which they can measure and control — as the basic source of moisture for their crops. They look upon any rainfall as supplementary to it.

Probably for the first time in America, a national sales meeting of irrigation specialists was staged in Little Rock, Ark., this fall by Olin Matheson.

Dr. Williams pulled three working farmers from their fields for a day and let them tell irrigation salesmen what water does for field crops.

Yields Prove Astounding
Riley Allen of Blackshear, Ga., said he produces 3,100 lbs of cigarette quality tobacco per acre by using irrigation. The state average is about 1200 lbs per acre. J. W. Pruett of Inverness, Miss., several times has won the state five-acre cotton contest with yields ranging above four bales per acre. Most cotton farmers in the Mississippi Valley would be

happy to produce one bale per acre.

Don Bezy of Sullivan, Ind., produced 130 bushels of corn per acre on test plots in 1954 by using irrigation supplemented by 12 inches of rain. In 1955 he anticipates producing 114 bushels per acre on 150 acres. His neighbors on similar land without irrigation commonly average half of this.

Talk of 200 bushel and even 300 bushel corn doesn't raise eyebrows among the farmers who have run test plots on heavily irrigated and heavily fertilized hybrid corn, says Bezy.

Protein Primary Problem
Irrigating pastures seems like wasting good water, time and money to the uninformed, says Dr. Williams. But the farmers who are doing it are getting some of the most amazing results of all.

"One of the nutritional barriers of the centuries has been man's inability economically to increase protein content in plants. Now, we've found that by good farm management which includes following a balanced fertilizer program and using plenty of water, we can grow pasture grasses that are much higher in protein content than pastures not so treated," says Dr. Williams.

"This may not sound very exciting unless you're a farmer who has been buying protein meal as a supplemental feed for livestock. Then, the idea of pastures that provide cheap protein takes on meaning with a dollar sign. Ultimately, it means higher protein diets for all of us."

Lancaster County Scores High in Timonium Show

(Continued from page one)

lion's share of awards in Aberdeen Angus bull classes at the Eastern National Livestock Exposition here Wednesday. Grand champion Angus bull was Ankonians 32129th shown jointly by Ankony and Holmby Farms, and reserve bull championship went to Ankony Farms and Millard Farms of Annville, Pa.

In females grand champion was Blue Blood Lady of Ruffy, shown by Heckmere's Highlands, Valencia, Pa. Reserve grand champion female was shown by Kinloch Farms, Supply, Va.

When final Shorthorn results were tallied, three of the four top positions went to the consistent winners, Mathers Bros. of Mason City, Ill., whose Leveledale Critic—a well known winner—topped the bulls as grand champion. Reserve was another Mathers entry and Grand champion heifer also came from the Illinois farm, Leveledale Augusta Lass, while B. Hollis Hanson of Connersville, Ind., scored reserve grand championship in heifers.

Judging of Herefords was concluded Thursday.

Circulation Director



Robert J. Wiggins

Robert J. Wiggins, Quarryville, has joined Lancaster Farming as circulation director, it was announced today by the new Lancaster County farm weekly.

Bob, a native of Lancaster County, is a son of Mrs. Morton R. (Alma C.) Bowman and the late Arthur Wiggins. He was born in Refton, and has lived in that neighborhood as well as on a Drumore Township farm for two years, before moving into Quarryville.

He was graduated from Southern Lancaster County Joint Community High School in Quarryville in 1954, and since his days as a Freshman has been well known in the County as a com-

mercial photographer. During high school, he held the unusual record of being vice president of his Freshman class and president of his Sophomore, Junior and Senior classes. In that time and since, many of his photographs have appeared in the High School yearbook and in dedicatory booklets for elementary schools throughout townships in the Southern End.

Since graduation he has worked for L. H. Warfel in Quarryville as a driver, and as a clerk at Raub's Supply. He attends the Fairview Church of God.

He will be making many calls in Lancaster County, and will be happy to help you in any way he can servicing Lancaster Farming subscriptions.

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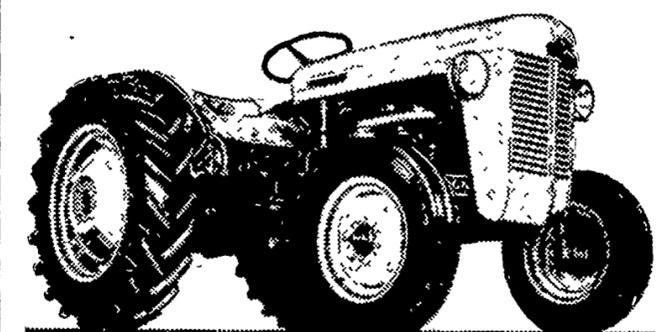
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