

## Lack of Moisture Hits High Corn Populations Hardest Tests Show

The effect of lack of moisture on high corn populations was illustrated graphically in the results of hybrid corn test conducted Tuesday on the farm of J. Wade Groff, R7 Lancaster.

Yields of corn in the plot planted to 18,000 stalks an acre were only eight-tenths of a bushel higher than the yields in the population of 14,000 stalks an acre.

Last year, the higher population plots produced 10 to 11 bushels an acre more in the annual tests.

The test was the first of three made in controlled plots in the county. It was conducted by Associate County Agent Harry S. Sloat and James Eakin, extension agronomist from Penn State.

Average yields at the Groff farm were 89.1 bushels an acre for a population of 14,000 stalks. In the 18,000 stalk plots, the average yield was 89.9 bushels an acre.

The yields were determined on a moisture basis of 15.5 per cent for dry shelled corn.

Eakin explained the adaptability of the 30 types of hybrid corns planted in the test plot and their resistance to diseases, insects and drouth.

Sloat said that the sharp decrease in the yield differences was probably caused by the drouth. Corns which ordinarily produce well in higher population planting failed to yield because of the lack of rain.

Fertility was no limiting factor in the Groff plants. Organic

matter in the plot area tested 3.2 per cent which compares with the .6 to .8 per cent average for the county. In addition enough ammonium nitrate and mixed fertilizer was added to give enough available plant food for a yield of 175 bushels an acre.

Eakin had some advice for the planting of corn here. Corn planting in the county, he said, is generally done after what he called "over-preparation of the soil."

The agronomist said he would like to see Lancaster County farmers plow a field for corn and disc once to make the ground level enough to cultivate.

This, he explained, would give the plant roots room to spread and breathe. Over-preparation causes the field to cut as fine as talcum powder which turns to putty after the first rain. "Roots won't go through putty," he warned.

He also advised pre-emergence spray for weeds.

The practice, he said, allows corn to reach a height of five to six inches before the weeds begin to take hold in the row. In such a case, he said, the cultivator throws dirt over the weeds covering the corn.

He again emphasized the importance of soil tests before planting corn. "You can't guess at fertility," he said.

Complete results from the three test plots will be available next week.



WEIGHING CORN IN THE FIELD Tuesday were J. Wade Groff, R7 Lancaster, left, and James Eakin, Penn State agronomist. They found that the drouth severely

crippled corn production where stands of 18,000 stalks had been established. Where 14,000 stalks were planted, corn averaged 89.1 bushels an acre. (LF Photo)

## 'Post-Mortem' Shows Drouth Effect Lasting

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of the highest averaging sales ever held in the state.

The hay market is still unsettled. Most farmers are waiting to buy until the late winter months. Thus no buying or selling pattern can be established. A carload of good quality alfalfa brought in into the county recently was quoted at \$48.80 a ton.

The current price quoted for 80 per cent alfalfa-timothy hay shipped in from New York State is \$47.70.

It should be noted that the summer drouth extended only in a narrow strip on the Eastern Seaboard from Northern Virginia to the upper part of Pennsylvania. Thus, it would appear, hay will be available at reasonable prices from outside this area during the winter and spring.

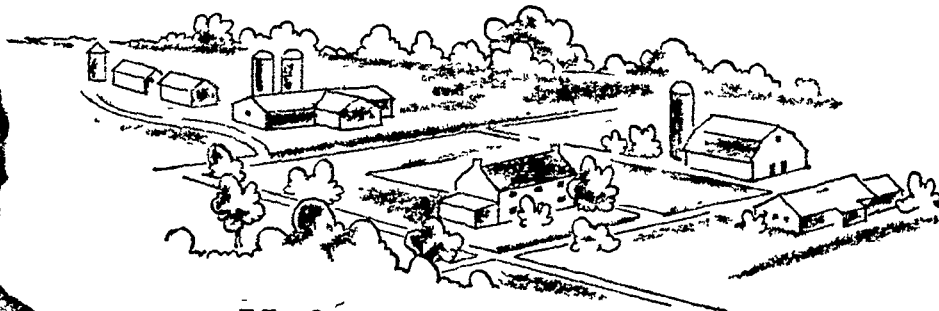
One item that certainly has not been hurt by the dry weather is the value of farm real estate. Prices now are, if anything, higher than a year ago. Part of this is a general rise in farm value throughout the Commonwealth and the nation. The other factor probably is the eternal optimism of farmers that the next year will bring better conditions than this year and that they will not be hit by a drouth two years running.

In the County, a recent tabulation shows that the population has increased by some 15,000 persons in the past few years. These added people, with their requirements for housing and the attendant services, tend to cut into the already crowded good farm land of the county.

### More Poultry Being Processed

— During July of this year, a total of 16,008,000 pounds of poultry, ready-to-cook weight, were used in canning and other processed foods, compared with 11,323,000 pounds processed in July of 1956. This year's output consisted of 12,383,000 pounds of chickens, 3,585,000 pounds of turkeys, and 40,000 pounds of other poultry.

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