

● **Cows In DHIA**

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 improvement rate of about 121 pounds

U. S. dairy cows not in DHIA increased their average production more slowly—4,519 pounds in 1940 to 6,780 pounds in 1961. This was about 103 pounds of production improvement a year.

It is more difficult to improve high-producing herds than low-producing herds, according to Dr. J. Frank Kendrick, head of the Dairy Herd Improvement program for the USDA's Agricultural Research Service. He says improvement in the better herds requires better planning, feeding, and management. Record keeping helps DHIA members meet these requirements.

The DHIA program is growing. Latest figures show that on Jan. 1, a total of 2,727,

274 cows—15.7 percent of the U.S. dairy cow population—were enrolled in the DHIA. Only about 11 percent were in the program three years ago.

Enrollments are increasing in two of the three record-keeping plans offered by DHIA.

Nearly 2 million cows are now enrolled in the Standard Record Keeping Plan, about 5 percent more than in 1961, nearly 700,000 cows in the Owner-Sampler Plan, a 6.5 percent increase; and about 69,000 cows in the Weigh-a-Day-a-Month Plan, a 3 percent decrease from 1961.

Because Weigh-a-Day-a-Month was designed to introduce dairymen to record keeping, Dr. Kendrick says the decrease means that farmers start in this plan then shift to one of the others. Thus the introductory plan is serving its purpose.

● **Hay Drying**

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wagon to load conventional bales, the time needed to load a ton was 28 man-minutes. When two men were put on the wagon to load bales, the time consumed per ton of hay loaded jumped to 35 man-minutes.

But the difference does not end there. The cube bales can be stored in the mow in random stacks by one man who throws the bales from the wagon into an elevator. Conventional bales need two men at the barn—one to unload the wagon, and one to stack in the mow.

When compared in the University trials, the saving in labor was 65 percent for the cube bales. "What this means," McCurdy said, "is that it required only 35 percent as much labor to handle the cube bales."

Disadvantages listed for the small bales include difficulty in handling if the hay is to be sold. Difficulty in building a load if the hay is to be moved from one barn to another, about a third more twine will be needed—but lighter string can be used, and there will be more string to remove at feeding time. Random packing of hay will cause more side pressure in the barn, but if the barn is strong enough to hold loose hay, it will probably hold random packed cube bales, he said.

Keener said he had used the bale thrower and random packing only one season, but he would not like to go back to the conventional size bale.

He said he felt heat drying made his hay crop more uniform. It didn't seem to make much difference whether it was second, third or fourth cut-

ting, the cows ate it well. "We thought we would have enough hay this year but when you have good hay, they eat more, and of course they give more milk," Keener said. "There is more than \$5.00 difference in the value of a ton of heat cured hay."

You have to learn when to bale the hay, Keener and McCurdy agreed. If the baling is done when hay is less than 35 percent moisture, there will be shattering of leaves, but if the hay has more than 45 percent moisture, you will run into baling problems. "The old twist and squeeze method is still the best way to tell when it is ready," Keener said. McCurdy said he believes it takes a farmer one season to learn to use the heat drying method.

County agent M. M. Smith suggested that farmers use rotation fertilization practice. That is, he said, put as much emphasis on fertilizing the sod in the rotation as you do on grain crops.

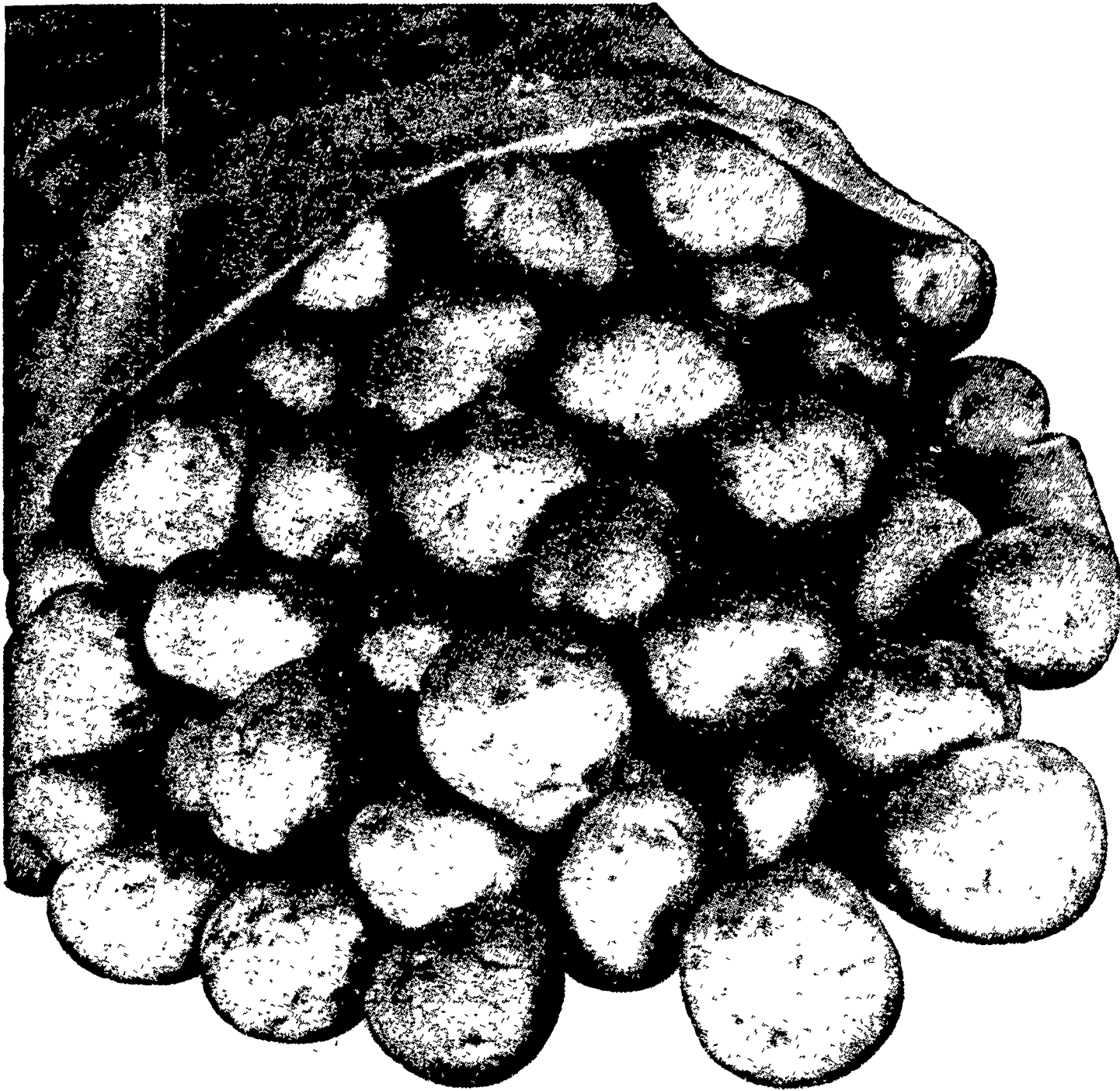
He said, corn-after-corn programs appear to be "getting by" but he believes a good sod crop is the basis of a sound rotation.

He said the fertilizer can be applied to the corn in the fall, before the first cutting or before or after the second cutting. Fertilizer can be applied at any time—even when there is considerable growth—but Nitrogen and Potash will burn the crop if there is moisture on the leaves.

The second of the two hay drying meetings was held Thursday afternoon at the farm of James Kleider, Quakertown, Pa., where a natural air system with ducts through the mows was examined.

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