



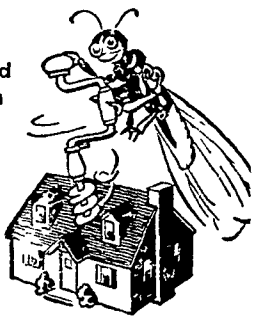
SPACING OF SUGAR BEETS is discussed by Dr Albert S Hunter, Professor of Soil Technology at the Pennsylvania State University, on the tractor, and John Yocum Superintendent of the PSU Field Research Farm near Landisville. Fourteen varieties of sugar beets are being grown on the farm. L. F. Photo

● Sugar Beets

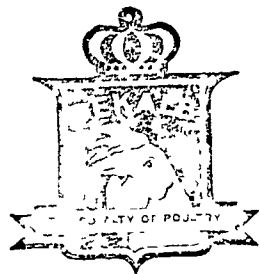
(Continued from Page 1)
 ing a standard commercial vegetable planter seeded the beets on 24 inch rows 35 feet long. Each variety is replicated six times on the plots.
 Seeds were planted about an inch apart to allow for poor germination but will be thinned to about a foot apart later. Mechanical thinners are on the market but for the experimental plots the thinning and weeding will be done by hand. Dr Hunter said. However the Horticulture department at Penn State is experimenting with chemical weed control. Harvesting will also be done

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by hand this year, Hunter said, because the size of the plots and the weighing and sampling of beets makes use of machinery impractical.

"We are pretty sure sugar beets will grow in this area, but we want to find out how well they will grow, how well they will yield and how much sugar content they will have," Hunter said.

He added, "We know beets should be planted early, at least as early as oats, and we know they need a fine, firm seedbed, but we hope to learn a lot more about their culture and fertility requirements."

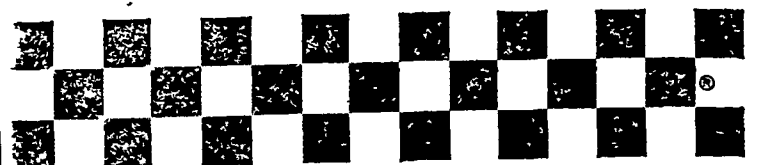
One thing he hopes to learn is what spacing is best in some parts of the beet growing areas, the rows are as close as 20 inches, but Hunter says this spacing would create some

problems with cultivation. It may be that special machinery will have to be developed, he feels.

Dr Hunter believes that the cash crop aspect has overshadowed the important by-products from beets. He pointed out that the tops are fed as green chop or ensiled for livestock feed and the beet pulp is an important ingredient in many dairy and beef cattle rations.

"If we find that beets yield an acceptable amount of sugar, and sufficient farmer interest develops, the next problem will be to find someone willing to build a processing plant," he said.

The county plots are among 15 throughout the state. Four are in York County, one in Lebanon, and one at Hershey in Dauphin County.



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