



GETTING THE CROP DRYER READY for the first cutting of alfalfa is one of the early spring chores for Galen Crouse, Stevens R1. He uses a converted corn-crib-wagon shed as a drying shed. Up to 1,000 bales of hay can be piled three layers deep on the wooden skids inside. When drying is complete, after about 18 hours, the hay is stored in the barn. Tank in right foreground holds fuel oil for burner. L. F. Photo.

● Hay Champion

(Continued from Page 1) day afternoon.

Crouse converted an old corn crib-wagon shed into a drying barn by building a duct-work through one crib and laying a series of skids on the floor. A fuel oil fired crop dryer outside the shed forces hot air through the ducts and up through the partially cured hay. He has found that three layers, or about 700 to 1,000 bales, will cure in 18 hours unless the weather is extremely damp. Four layers in the shed takes more time and pushes the cost too high, he says.

He estimates that he can finish his alfalfa for about \$3 to \$4 per ton, but he says the worst problem is moving the hay after it is cured. He unloads the wagons in the drying shed, and after the hay is cured he loads it again and moves it to the barn for storage. But this is work that can be done when it is not fit to work out-

side, he points out.

But championship hay does not start at harvesting time. Crouse seeds alfalfa nearly every spring with oats as a nurse crop. He puts on about one and a half bushels of oats per acre and band seeds 25 pounds of alfalfa as early as he can work the ground.

He eliminates competition as soon as the alfalfa is established by making oats silage. Last year he harvested over a ton of alfalfa hay on the first cutting of a new stand. His established stands average better than five tons of cured hay per acre most years.

Crouse cuts his Flemish type alfalfa four times during the season, harvesting as soon as the plants reach the bud stage, or about every four weeks. He topdresses with 0-20-20 fertilizer after the third cutting and spreads the manure from his 100 head of holsteins on the hay fields during the fall and winter. With this care he can usually keep a stand in good condition for about five years.

He has 36 acres of hay, about 24 of it alfalfa and the other 12 mixed — mostly brome, on his 72 acre farm. He makes Rye silage in the spring and corn silage in the fall. With this kind of forage program, he purchases his grain needs.

Earlier in the spring, Crouse turned his 59 milkers out in rye pasture but found they dropped about 150 pounds production per day. When he began chopping the rye and hauling it to them in the barn, production came back to previous levels. He turns the cows out in a 10 acre permanent pasture "mostly for exercise" every morning. They get two feedings of the high quality hay and four feedings of silage every day.

Crouse protects his alfalfa from pests with recommended spray schedules, but this year found that even though he followed directions and sprayed last fall with Dieldrin, he did not get control of the weevils. He plans to spray the stubble as soon as the crop is removed to try to get more time and a better second crop. That's what it takes to make championship hay.

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Farm Women 2 Add 2 Members

Society of Farm Women 2 met at the home of Mrs. Jay Witmer, Manheim R2. Mrs. Marilyn Heiler was assisting hostess. Mrs. Ronald Gordley led the group in devotions.

In response to roll call, each member gave a Bible verse beginning with the initial of their first name. Mrs. Alvin Graybill, president, presided over the meeting and the installation of two new members, Mrs. Laysen Shenk of Manheim R4 and Mrs. Warren Kline of Manheim R2.

Society 2 will be the guests of Society 17 Saturday, June 6 at the Refton Fire Hall. A donation was given to Darwin Boyd, an exchange student to be located in Korea. Donations were also given to two local families.

The Society will have a food stand at an antique sale in Lititz on May 30. Chicken corn soup, beef pot pie and homemade ice cream and pies will be sold.

The next meeting will be held in East Petersburg with Mrs. Sadie Shenk as hostess.

There is no such thing as reforming the mass without reforming the individuals who compose it. — Henry Ward Beecher.