

● Sugarbeets

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Penn State University and their guests toured the sugarbeet research plots at Hershey and in Lancaster County. Dr. Clarence S. Bryner, extension agronomist from P.S.U., stated at that time that individual beets should weigh between two and three pounds, and desirable yields would total 18-20 tons per acre. Assuming a four-year rotation, Bryner said, it would take about 120,000 acres of beets to support a refinery. This would mean there must be 30,000 acres of beets under cultivation each year. That amount of beets could then be processed over a four-month period by a local refinery. Beets can be harvested anytime until the ground freezes hard; the longer they remain in the ground, short of freezing, the better, according to the P.S.U. scientists.

At the Neff farm during the tour in September, the effects of the fertilizer treatments were noted. There was little visible difference between the plots receiving 500 and 1000 pounds of fertilizer, but the plots receiving 2000 pounds per acre were noticeably greener.

Final analysis of tonnage yield and sugar data showed that the three fertilizer treatments on the Neff farm didn't effect sugar percentage. Yield in tons per acre, however, was significantly effected. At the 500-pound level beets were harvested at the rate of 13.9 tons per acre; 1000-pound level yielded 15.5 tons, and 2000-pound level yielded 17.1 tons. For each additional 500-pound unit of 8-16-16 fertilizer tested an increase in yield of 1.6 tons was obtained. When analyzed statistically the 1.6 ton increase was not considered to be significant. But the difference between the 500-pound and the 2000-pound levels, 3.2 tons was considered highly significant according to the final project report.

This one-year study would seem to show that sugarbeets is a crop that could be con-

SUGARBEET PROJECT IN REVIEW — PLANTING TO HARVESTING



Upper Left — Dr. Albert S. Hunter, professor of soil technology, Penn State University, and John Yocum, superintendent of P.S.U. Research Lab. near Landisville, discuss the sugarbeet seeding operation during the first week in May, 1964. Upper right — John Neff, farmer, and M. M. Smith, Lancaster Agri. Agent, examine a sample beet pulled in September, 1964 at the Neff farm. Lower left

— At harvest time a 12-beet sample for sugar analysis was taken from each plot and carefully brushed free of dirt. Lower right — Technician Bob Dreibelbis demonstrates how beets are "lifted" from the ground with a special tractor attachment for harvesting. Another man follows behind and rakes beets into piles. L. F. Photo.

sidered for Lancaster County. It is a crop that appears to require a normal amount of rainfall and good fertilization to reach profitable yield levels. Dr. Hunter believes that its value as a cash crop has overshadowed the important by-products that beets offer. He pointed out that the tops may be fed as green chop

or ensiled for livestock feed, and the beet pulp is an important feed ingredient in dairy and beef cattle rations. Sugarbeets are susceptible to cyst nematodes, and therefore must be grown in three or four-year rotation. The USDA recently reported that beets work out particularly well in rotation with legumes.

The legumes appear to reduce the nematode larvae population in the soil. The scientists suggest that an alfalfa-sugar-beet three-year rotation works very satisfactorily.

● Farm Calendar

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Engle, Big Dutchman, Inc. — 7:30 p.m. Central 4-H Tractor Club at Keener Equip Co., Manheim Pike, Lancaster.

— 8 p.m. Manor Young Farmers at Penn Manor H.S. Subj. "Coin Production," speaker from Geigy Chemical Co.

Feb 17—1:30 p.m. 4-H Tailoring Class

— 7:15 p.m. Corn Growing Meeting at Lincoln Independent School, one-half mile north of Martindale. Arnold Lueck, Associate Agri. Agent will be discussion leader. Field Seed representatives from Agway, DeKalb Pfister, Pioneer, and Reist will be on hand. Plow planting and limited tillage will be discussed.

— 7:30 p.m. Atlantic Breeders Coop annual District 4 meeting, northern Lancaster County, at Brunnerville Fire Hall.

Feb 18—7:30 p.m. Atlantic Breeders Coop annual District 5 meeting, Lanc. Co. south of Rt 30, at Solanco HS.

9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Tobacco referendum for location of polling places see "Type 41 Tobacco Referendum 18th" page 1 of this issue.

Feb 20-27—National Future Farmers of America Week.

**MARK your Calendar!**  
**FEBRUARY 24 and 25**  
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