

Cow & Machinery Cold Weather Management

Victor Plastow, associate Lancaster County agent, recently offered the following advice on managing dairy cows and farm machinery during the winter. He also offered some general farm management suggestions good anytime during the year.

Drafts help cause mastitis in cows. A cold blast of winter air on a good cow may be all that's needed to trigger a serious case of mastitis. However, do not go to the other extreme and keep the barn too hot. Dairy cows need fresh air and a cool barn temperature — about 50 degrees. But they certainly don't need blasts of cold sub-freezing air from outside, Plastow said.

A barn whose temperature is automatically controlled with a thermostat and fan is the ideal situation, but not always available. So use windows for ventilation. If you keep an eye on things and carefully adjust them according to temperature there's nothing wrong with ventilating by this method.

Farmers can get more for their machinery dollar by following some standard tips:

- 1 — Make sure that you are familiar with the manufacturers' recommended care, operation, and maintenance procedures, and then faithfully practice them on each machine;

- 2 — Replace worn out or obsolete farm machines with newer, more efficient models. They can save you fuel, power, time, and labor;

- 3 — Keep records on lubrication and repairs and other operating costs. Operate your machines at near maximum capacity, which you might accomplish by doing

some custom work. Getting maximum use out of a machine means it costs you less money in the long run;

- 4 — By the same token, you might want to hire some machines on a part-time or custom basis to do some of your work. This is often cheaper than owning machinery;

- 5 — Keep up-to-date on the latest farm machinery developments. Good service and individual features on each machine are just as important as price.

Know what you want, shop around a bit, and buy wisely. Your farm machines should make money for you, not vice versa.

There is a definite trend for dairymen to enlarge

their operations and farm size. Before risking any investment in remodeling or new barn facilities, take stock of your future in the business. Will your added investment be covered by additional income or reduced operating expense? Management ability, as well as the amount and quality of other resources, will influence the answer. To help answer the question, budgets of estimated costs and income should be prepared.

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(Continued from Page 2) to 2.00 lower.

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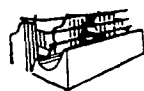


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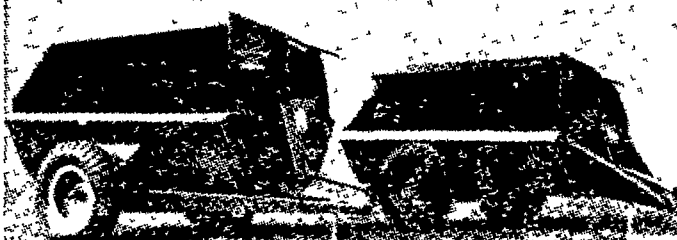
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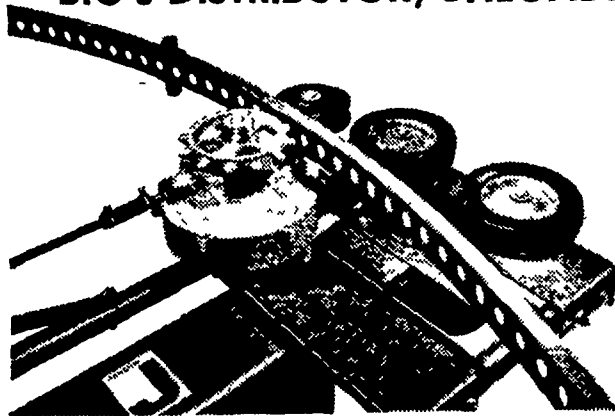
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