

Overseas Shipping Tests On Poultry

Ways to expand foreign markets for American poultry products -- by such techniques as improving packaging and reducing shipping cost -- were studied by U. S. Department of Agriculture marketing researchers last week when 30,000 pounds of frozen poultry was shipped from the United States to Europe.

Marketing researchers of USDA's Agricultural Research Service and Foreign Agricultural Service studied the poultry during all phases of the shipment, which left Port Elizabeth, N. J., on Saturday, April 23, and docked at Bremen, Germany, on May 3, after first stopping at Rotterdam, Holland. The Institute of American Poultry Industries, Chicago, Ill., cooperated in the study.

Rockingham Poultry Marketing Cooperative, Broadway, Va., prepared about 32,000 pounds of chicken backs and necks, 1,000 pounds of cut up chicken parts, 500 pounds of whole broilers, and 1,000 pounds of whole turkeys, all frozen, for the experimental shipment.

The poultry was placed in a 35-foot van container at Broadway and trucked to the Sea-Land Service's marine container terminal at Port Elizabeth, where the van was removed from its wheeled chassis and loaded aboard ship. The van container can be handled and stacked like a large box. It has a self-contained refrigeration system that is powered by a propane-electric motor during highway transport and by the ship's electric system during ocean transport. At Bremen, the van was lifted off the ship and placed on another wheeled chassis for inland delivery to Hamburg, Germany.

Individual poultry packages were not handled from the time they left Virginia until they reached the customer's warehouse in Germany. Researchers reported from Hamburg that satisfactory temperature control was maintained throughout the trip, with poultry and containers arriving in good condition.

ARS researchers are studying costs and potential savings that might be obtained by transporting agricultural products in van containers. These tests may show whether the vans afford greater protection to poultry than do other shipping methods, both against adverse temperatures and rough handling. Also, pilferage, time, labor, and other cost factors are being studied in comparison with conventional modes of shipment that involve rehandling individual packages many times.

Two kinds of shrinkable polyethylene bags holding 7 to 9 pound turkeys were tested. Three shipping containers of different test strengths, each holding 6 turkeys, were included in the study. In ad-

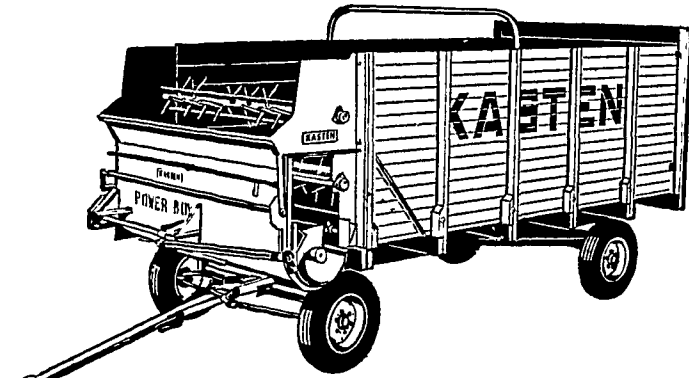
dition, two containers of various test strengths, holding 12 chickens each, were compared with a third container holding 24 chickens.

The study may indicate whether lighter and cheaper boxes are practical for overseas shipments in van containers. Tests were made with

and without strapping to determine whether strapping is necessary, or just a convenience to receivers of containerized cargo. Strapping apparently reduces pilferage of conventional cargo, besides giving structural support to the containers.

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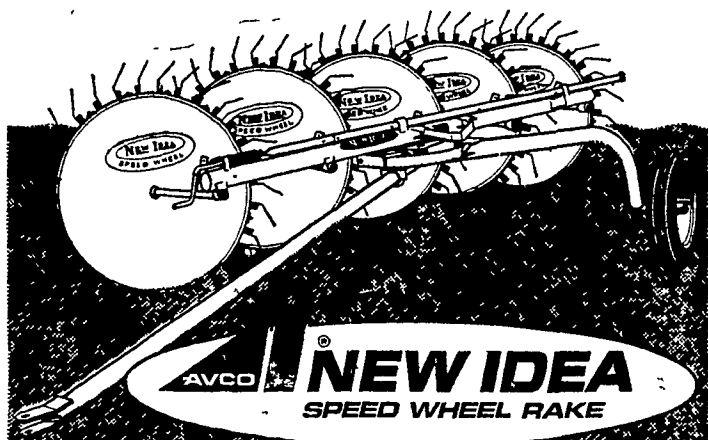


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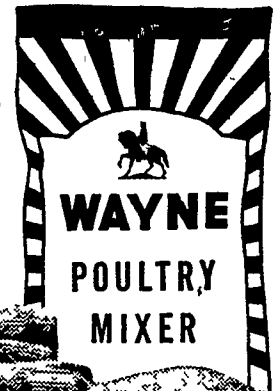
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