

Feeding Cut To 30 Minutes A Day With New Automatic Bunk Feeder

In only 30 minutes each day, a dairyman can set in motion an automated system that will feed 80 dairy cows, a U.S. Department of Agriculture scientist reports.

Now under test at the University of Illinois, the experimental system is operated by a 24-hour time clock, delivering feed as frequently as every two hours or as infrequently as once a day. It is a complex of three silos, four cow lots, a feed processing and storage area, two stall sheds, a housing shed, two feed bunks, a milk room, and a milking parlor.

Agricultural engineer Hoyle B. Puckett, of USDA's Agricultural Research Service, reported work on the system to members of the American and Canadian Societies of Agricultural Engineers, meeting jointly in Saskatoon, Canada. The system, developed in cooperation with engineer Elwood F. Olver and dairy scientist Kenneth E. Harshbarger of the Uni-

versity, accommodates 60 milking cows and 20 dry cows. Feed is proportioned on the basis of milk production and distributed to the four groups of cows automatically.

The system moves various feed ingredients at predetermined quantities and rates from storage. It mixes the ingredients into a ration. And it distributes the ration to each of the four groups of cows. Ingredients handled are grass silage, haylage, corn silage, and concentrate ration, Mr. Puckett said.

Corn silage and grass silage are unloaded from the tops of their respective silos by unloader units supported by cables. Each top unloader consists of an auger that gathers silage to the center of the silo, and a blower that discharges silage from the silo at a constant rate. The third or haylage silo is airtight and unloads from the bottom. Concentrates — ground and blended in a hammermill auxiliary

system — are stored in a tank. Each storage unit delivers feed ingredients to an auger that mixes the feeds while conveying them to an elevator that lifts them 10 feet above ground.

From this elevator, the mixed feed is diverted into another auger, 90 feet long, that runs to the vicinity of the feed bunks. When delivering feed to the first feed bunk, the auger turns backward, operates only the first 10-foot section, and delivers the feed to a smaller conveyor, which dumps it in the feed bunk. If feed is required at the second bunk, the auger motor reverses, and the entire 90-foot section turns.

Safety features include: (1) indicate when the concentrate tank is empty, (2) prevent overloading of motors, (3) show when silage is not being delivered, and (4) prevent the silo unloaders from gathering too much or too little silage. If failure in any equipment develops, controls automatically shut off the system.

Beef Bulls Win Certification At Penn State

UNIVERSITY PARK — Beef cattle producers from various parts of Pennsylvania and the United States are using bulls in sire performance tests at Penn State University.

Five bulls in these tests — one Aberdeen Angus and four Polled Herefords — have just been certified outstanding in ability to transmit high quality beef production qualities, according to Lowell L. Wilson, Herman R. Purdy, and John H. Ziegler of the department of animal science.

The bulls have won Certified Meat Sire Awards from Performance Registry International, a non-profit organization of Denver, Colorado. This organization cooperates with land-grant universities and private beef cattle producers in helping secure accurate, meaningful gain and carcass records on

breeding stock. Such information is essential for the progressive purebred or commercial beef cattle breeder, Purdy points out.

In the experiments, semen from bulls to be tested is used to produce calves in a 200-cow herd at the Rockview State Correctional Institution near State College. Records on the offspring are analyzed to determine a bull's breeding values. The results guide purebred and commercial breeders in selecting bulls and heifers and in using various management systems.

The Certified Meat Sire program includes comprehensive evaluation of carcass and growth characteristics on at least 10 steer or heifer offspring from each bull tested.

Performance Registry International sets relatively high standards of excellence for traits such as carcass weight per day of age, rib eye area, fat thickness, marbling, carcass grade, and the percent of boneless retail cuts in the carcass.



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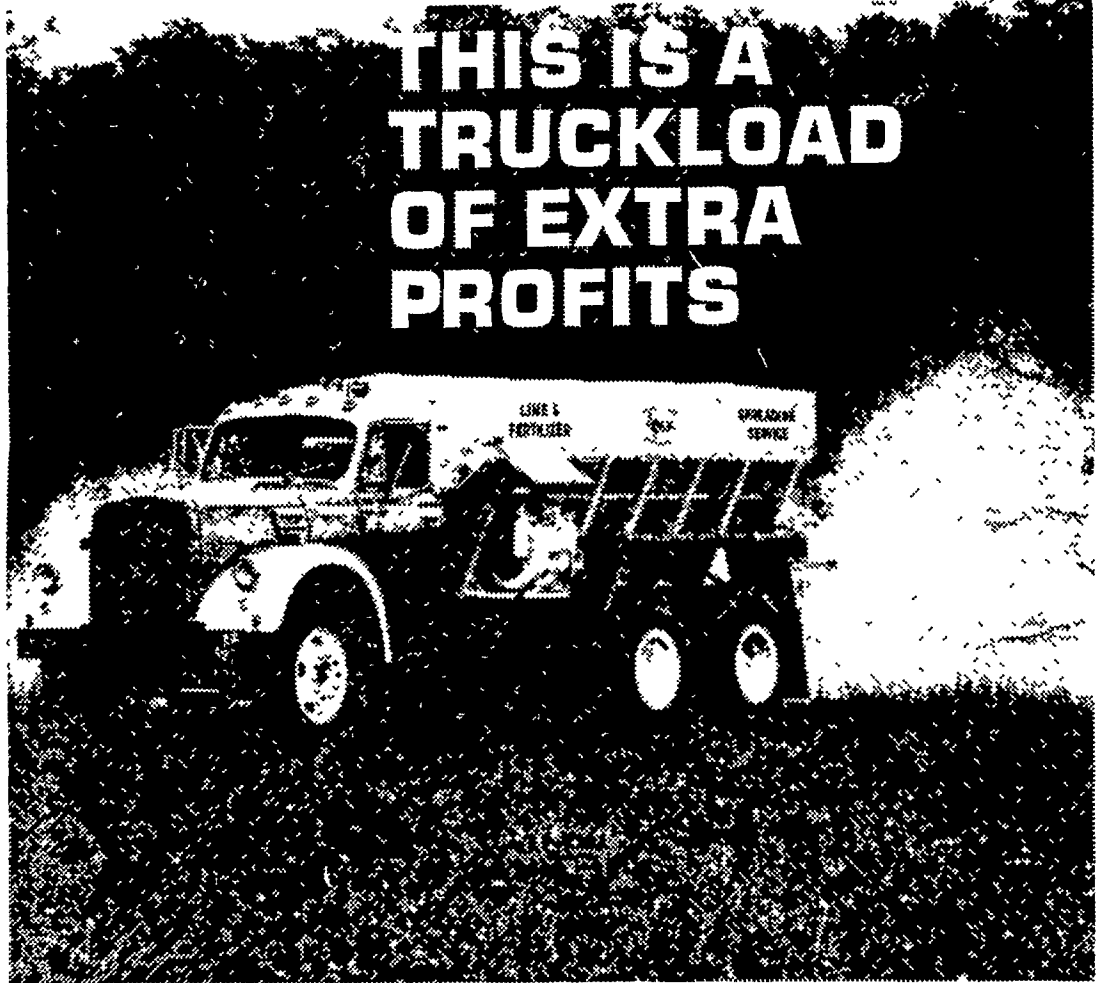
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