

Hoof-And-Mouth Disease Virus Can Be Transported With Ease

There hasn't been a case of hoof-and-mouth in Pennsylvania for more than 50 years, according to L. H. Bull, Pennsylvania Secretary of Agriculture.

But this is no reason to be complacent about this very contagious disease which has resulted in more than 320,000 animals being destroyed in England.

The disease is currently widespread in eastern Europe, Asia, Africa and South America.

North America experienced its last major outbreak about 20 years ago in Mexico where more than a million head of cattle, swine and sheep were destroyed.

There have been rumors that Cuba has hoof-and-mouth disease. A rumor has persisted for some time that Fidel Castro's regime planned to spread the disease to the United States.

Transporting the tiny virus which causes the disease is a simple matter, so simple that there is reason to show concern over the possibility of the dis-

ease reaching the United States and Pennsylvania.

The virus could very easily be carried on the shoes of a traveler. Consequently, travelers who have been on farms in England have had to have all footwear decontaminated on arrival in the United States.

Although it is primarily a disease of cattle and swine, it also infects other cloven-hoofed animals — sheep, goats, deer, antelope and buffalo.

In some countries, animals are vaccinated against foot-and-mouth. It is far from satisfactory since immunity lasts for only a few months.

Where does the disease come from? Animals which survive the disease become carriers. There is also strong suspicion that wildlife serves as a reservoir.

Symptoms include fever, blisters in the mouth, between the toes and on the teats. The first signs of infection are often lameness and excessive saliva.

Death losses are often high in

Grain Handling Is Efficient Farming Technique

Grain handling methods are probably some of the most efficient farming techniques in the country today, says Professor Mark E. Singley of Rutgers University. However, these principles are not limited to grain

very young and very old animals. Major losses among mature animals are caused by abortions and reduced productivity. Newborn calves from sick cows often die because of insufficient milk.

There is no accepted treatment for foot-and-mouth in the United States the custom has been to slaughter and bury infected animals. Photographs taken on English farms show slaughtered animals being buried in deep, long trenches.

Hoof-and-mouth has caused tremendous losses in England where some of that country's best flocks and herds have been wiped out.

It is known that huge losses would be inevitable if the disease should be brought into Pennsylvania.

handling; in most instances, they may be applied to forage handling as well.

Speaking at the University of Delaware's Farm and Home Week February 1, Singley pointed out that grain usually serves as a supplement to forage crops in the beef and dairy ration. A high quality forage ration will lessen the amount of grain necessary in the feed mixture.

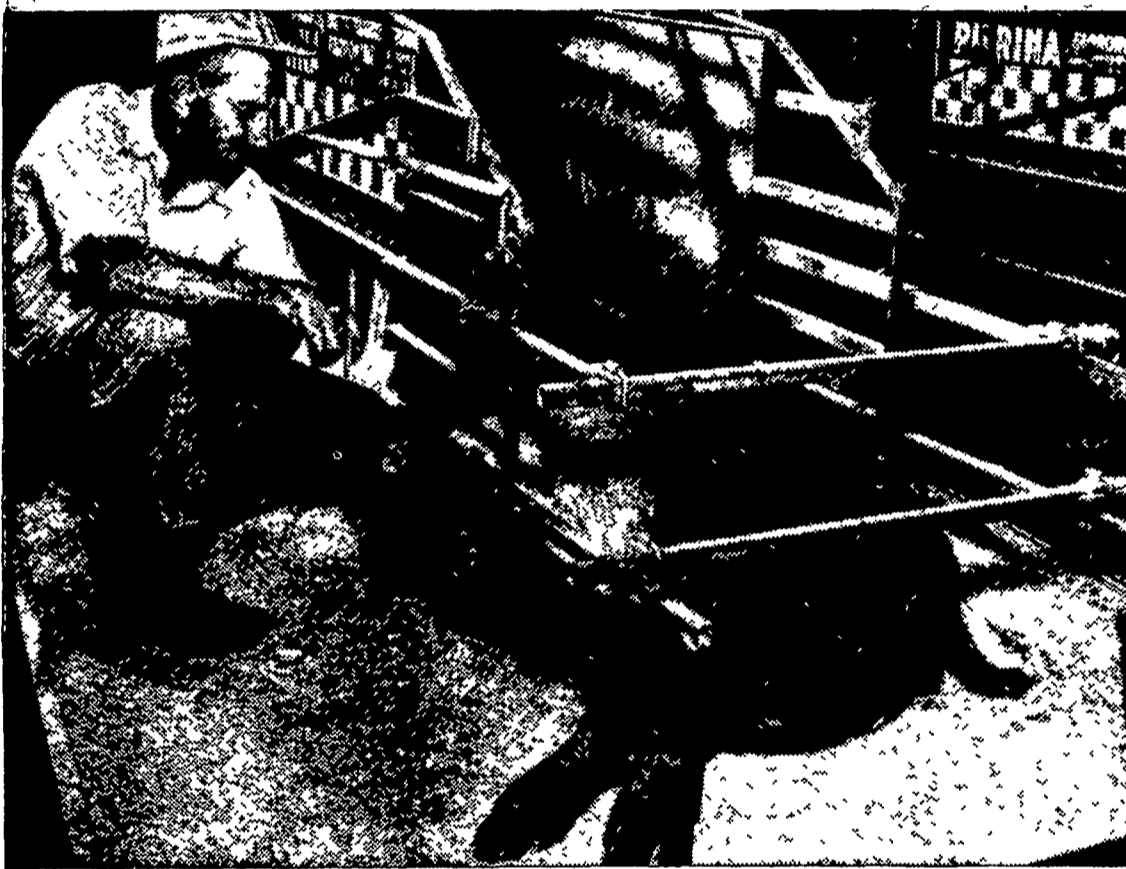
In order to assure quality forage, it must be harvested at the proper time; this, of course, requires new, more efficient handling methods. The key to this improved handling is a drastic increase in productivity per man hour.

The first step in achieving efficiency is to consolidate mowing, curing and raking into one operation, says Singley. Most farmers field cure their hay,

this takes a great deal of time. Research studies have also shown that there may be as much as 35 percent variance in quality between field cured and artificially dried forage. To improve forage quality, then, the farmer must adapt the grain drying concept to his forage crops.

Singley also added that the trend in forage handling is toward smaller packages which are easily handled, easily dried and efficient to store and feed.

"As our population continues to grow, we will have to rely more and more on forage crops for feeding livestock," he said. "This means that more and more farmers will return to raising forage crops. With this trend will come much higher quality forage and improved handling methods."



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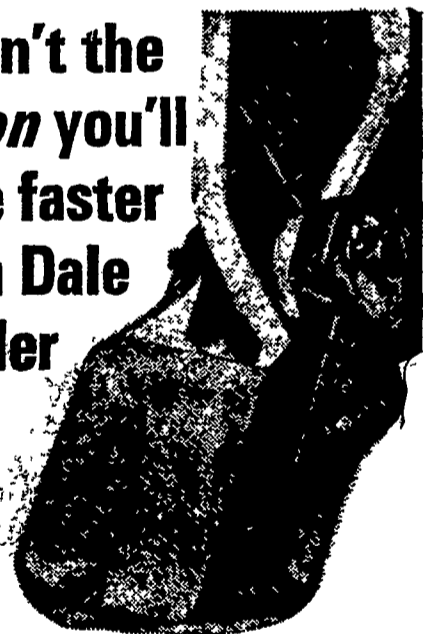
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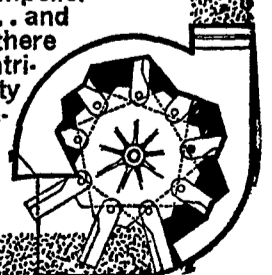
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