



HARVESTING TOMATOES by machine in the field of Harold Martin, Mt. Joy R1, last fall. Martin originated the idea to build the machine around a central power unit and it is now being manufactured by a lo-

cal company. The machine features positive stalk cut-off and soil rejection mechanisms.

● **Harvesting**

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ations here as they do in California where they have flat land and can turn the irrigation system off to get the ground ready for the picking machines," Graybill said. "But last year the machine was used in the field two days after a five inch rain so

**Penn State To Host Livestock Field Day**

Judging contests, tours, educational demonstrations, and a speaking program will be featured at the State Livestock Field Day scheduled for July 24 at The Pennsylvania State University.

The field day is being sponsored by the Pennsylvania Livestock and Allied Industries Association and Penn State Department of Animal Science.

"The program is being developed so that it will be of interest to both large and small livestock producers as well as those who participate in the business on a part time basis," said Dwight E. Younkin, Penn State Extension livestock specialist.

The morning sessions which will start at 10 a.m. are to be located at the various University livestock centers and will feature educational topics concerning the four major species—beef sheep, swine, and horses, Younkin explained.

The swine program will include a tour of facilities at the Swine Center and Meat Animal Evaluation Center, and a judging contest for both juniors and adults.

For the beef cattle enthusiasts, specialists will conduct a discussion of modern beef type and grades of calves. Also included are breeding cattle judging and calf grading contests.

Sheepmen will have an opportunity to take part in a defleecing demonstration, ewe-lamb identification contest, and judging of breeding and market animals. There will be a University flock inspection, tour of the new Penn State Sheep Center, and a sheep dog demonstration. Highlights of the educational horse session will be a type demonstration, western riding and pleasure horse demonstration, and a Quarter Horse judging contest.

The afternoon program will include talks by Dr. Russell E.

we are cautiously optimistic about the ability of the harvester to operate under adverse conditions."

The harvesting operation of the Roma variety of tomatoes on Martin's farm last year included direct filling of pallet boxes from the output of the harvester. While no real difficulties arose with either the localized abundance of weed growth or lack of plant separation between rows, some tomato losses were made due to hilling on the rows. This year Martin has planted his to-

Larson, dean of the Penn State College of Agriculture; Pennsylvania Secretary of Agriculture Leland H. Bull, and Mr. G. G. Conner, of Harrisburg, president of the Livestock and Allied Industries Association. The group will also inspect the Deer Research Center, Soil and Forage Testing Laboratory, and Dairy Breeding Research Center.

matoes in shallow furrows and cultivation will have the rows level by harvest time.

Eight sorters were used on the machine and they were able to handle the output at ground speed of 69 MPH in a field which yielded 16 tons of usable tomatoes per acre. The hand-sorting and delivery conveyor is in front of the operator and delivers to pallet boxes on a wagon along side. Graybill indicates the machine has positive cutoff of stalks and weeds below the ground surface plus soil and trash rejection devices.

Build around the New Idea Uni-System, power unit, the harvester is designed to utilize an electronic color sorter in place of the hand-sorting platform. This sorter patterned after the one developed at Penn State is expected to be available in the near future.

If you are not acquainted with the new variety development, Graybill said, "you will not be

able to understand how a machine can handle the tomatoes. "But the varieties that have been developed for machine harvest tend to stay unspoiled longer and ripen more uniformly. In our experience last year the tomatoes were 90 to 95 percent ripe at the time the machine picked them up."

In Dauphin and Northumberland Counties it has been reported that farmers have found it is best to use only harvesting machines rather than both hand and machine picking. They tried sending migrant workers in to harvest the first picking from fields to be harvested mechanically, but this did not increase production. Hand harvesting disturbed the plants. And where spots were left unpicked by the migrants, machine harvesting took off bigger production than the total harvesting where both machines and hands were used.

Graybill did not disclose the cost of the tomato harvesting

machine but said that a farmer with 30 to 50 acres of tomatoes to harvest could find the machine practical.

So, when you see a machine in Harold Martin's tomato field this fall that looks like a combine or a potato digger, you'll know he is picking tomatoes—succeeding at his new attempt to make tomato picking under local conditions a mechanical process.

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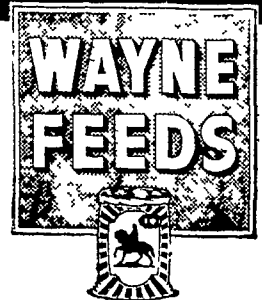


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