

## Across the Editor's Desk

### Circular Irrigation

The USDA reports that farming in circles to take advantage of the center pivot irrigation system is quite common in the Great Plains. Each circle is generally about 130 acres.

The machines, which carry the irrigation pipe in a circle like a spoke in a wheel, reportedly work well on shallow sandy soils with high water intake and are good for farmers who have no access to surface water but who do have good ground water. The system works well on rough terrain and is adaptable to sloping ground.

One system can be moved from field to field.

Cost of a 140 acre system runs from \$17,000 to \$25,000 for a self-propelled system, including well pump and motor and pipes. Despite the high cost the systems are reported growing, largely because of the savings in labor and other costs in comparison with other systems.

Perhaps the system isn't suited for Southeastern Pennsylvania which is noted for relatively small farming units and good growing climate but it does show how technology is making it possible for some areas, which don't have the basic assets of nature, to compete in agriculture.

### Reading Fair Open July 17

The gigantic Reading Fair — the fair with family-airy — began Friday night, July 17, and President Lindy Vicari has arranged an attractive free entertainment package.

The Fair will conclude on Saturday, July 25 and, for the first time, two nights of modified stock car racing have been included in the no charge menu.

The modifieds started Friday July 17, and will return on Friday July 24. In past years there was an extra charge for the modifieds but that has been dropped this year.

The list of free events includes an appearance by vocalist Buddy Greco with the San Kenyon Orchestra and that's first-rate entertainment in any book or at any fair.

Also in the free category will be the Buck Owens Show with Susan Raye and the Buckeroos. Two afternoons of harness racing, the Joe Chitwood Auto Thrill Show, the Miss Reading Fair Pageant combined with a rock revival, the Pennsylvania Dutch Classic motorcycle races, ARDC midget auto races and The Brooklyn Bridge and Maitha Reeves and the Vandellas.

And there will be a special appearance of the Cowtown Rodeo. This will be a regular rodeo and not a wild West show.

Preliminary judging in the Miss Reading Fair Pageant was held on July 14 with the finals July 20.



The overwhelming importance of the irrigation systems to some farmers in the Great Plains is shown by this fact: The University of Nebraska experiments got 178 bushels of corn and nearly 1,000 pounds of grass per acre, when the center pivot irrigator was used. Test fields that were not irrigated yielded no grain.

### Tobacco to Eggs

From the June Poultry Tribune: Weary of fighting the uncertainties of tobacco farming, some Lancaster County, Pennsylvania Amish farmers are shifting their cash-crop emphasis to eggs.

New housing in the Amish area will account for about 100,000 layers, according to one observer.

He adds that expansion would be considerably greater "were not the normally conservative Amish concerned with the high

interest rates on construction capital."

A typical Amish cage house holds 6,000 to 7,000 layers. All chores are performed manually, with some exceptions where generators are used to provide water, and sometimes lights.

Density is somewhat less than in conventional buildings since most Amish cage houses are ventilated only by windows and slots — no fans. Again, some exceptions.

### Ag Chemicals Program

The National Agricultural Chemicals Association has launched a consumer communications program to inform the American public about "the contributions of agricultural chemicals to our society, and the deep and abiding commitment of our industry and the agricultural community to safe use of our products in the public interest."

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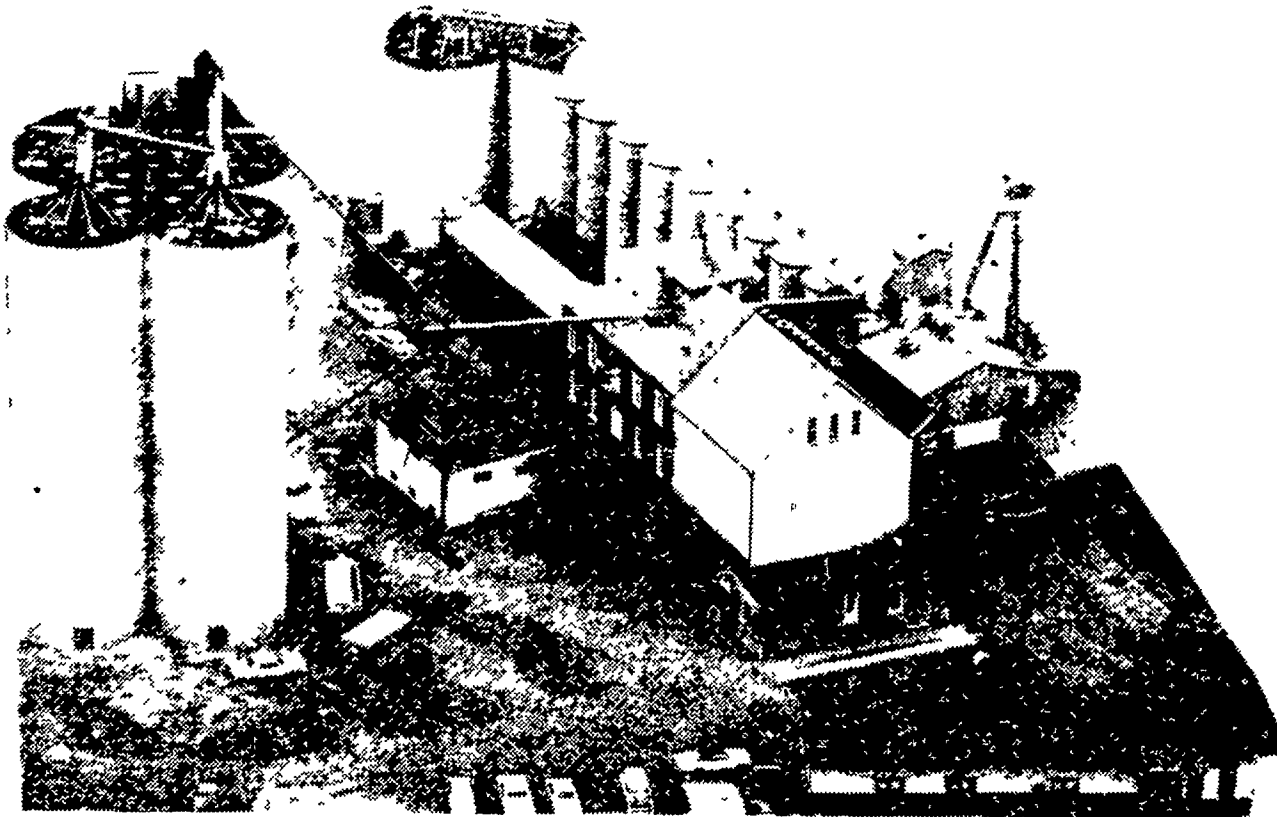
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