

# Farm Waste Problem Grows

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additive. It also reduces the volume of waste.

Composting of poultry wastes has come in for most of the research. The usual method is to expose the wastes in a field and periodically turn the compost heaps.

But researchers have also done some composting in the poultry house itself. They've taken chicken litter and inoculated it with specially selected bacteria which promote aerobic decomposition. The process is relatively inexpensive, odorless, dustless, and fly-free.

In North Carolina, other

agricultural engineers have developed a proto-type machine that speeds up the composting of two agricultural wastes—chicken litter and sawdust—and yields a soil additive that can be used on lawns, greenhouse crops, and even high-income field crops.

The composted chicken litter-saw-dust product looks very much like leaf mold or rich forest soil and it gives excellent results in plant growth studies. The researchers report that tomato plants, for example, showed an increase in dry weight of 400 per cent when grown in a soil mixture containing 10 per cent chicken manure-sawdust compost.

Agricultural engineers have also composted half-ton batches of cow dung and straw bedding. They've ended up with a relatively odorless material 30 per cent smaller in volume and 50 per cent lighter in weight. Further volume reduction can be obtained by compaction and further weight reduction by drying.

### Dehydration

A few very large feedlots have begun dehydrating manure, bagging it, and selling it to home gardeners. However, large amounts of manure have to be handled to justify the investment in machinery and relatively high operating costs.

Dehydration is not too practical for poultry manure because the product reeks when wetted.

### Animal Feeds

According to some animal nutritionists, processed animal wastes may well be worth more as a feed than as a fertilizer. If this is so, the long-discarded farm practice of running hogs behind cattle may eventually be re-enacted with a modern twist.

Here are some highlights of experimental work being done on recycling livestock and poultry wastes as feeds.

—In Alabama one researcher has gotten good feed efficiency with a beef ration containing 40 per cent cattle manure, 48 per cent whole shelled corn, and 12 per cent ground hay.

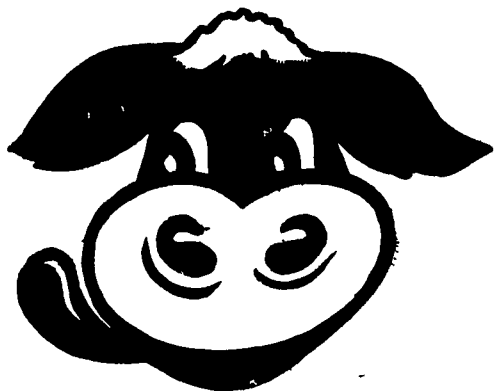
The scientist merely scrapes the manure off the feeding floor, blends it with the hay and corn, and ensiles it in a small bunker silo. According to him, fermentation destroys any pathogens and degrades residues of pesticides, antibacterials, and growth promotants that might be present in the manure.

—At the University of Illinois, agricultural engineers centrifuged hog wastes from an oxidation ditch. They report that the wastes contain up to 75 per cent crude protein (on a dry weight basis) and have up to 10

times as much lysine as normal corn.

—Scientists at several institutions are feeding dry or ensiled poultry wastes to cattle, sheep, hogs, or back to the birds themselves. One scientist doing this type of research notes that caged layer manure contains anywhere from 30 to 45 per cent protein — about half of which is true protein while the remainder is uric acid.

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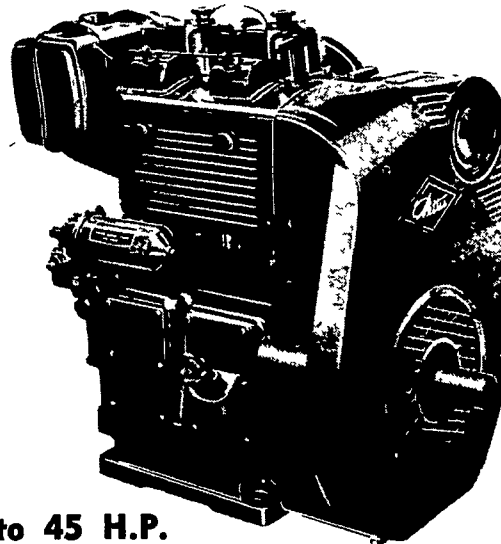
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## Hardin Says Port Strikes Hurting Farmers

A prolonged work stoppage at East and Gulf Coast ports could depress farm prices as much as 25 cents per bushel for soybeans and 10 cents per bushel for corn during the months of October through December, Secretary of Agriculture Clifford M. Hardin said recently.

"This means that soybean growers could lose \$125 million in income, and corn growers could lose as much as \$120 million," Secretary Hardin said. "There would be a further loss of income for livestock farmers, fruit and vegetable growers, tobacco growers and other farmers."

Farmers ordinarily market about 500 million bushels of soybeans and more than a billion bushels of corn during October, November and December, the Secretary pointed out. Ordinarily, he said, export markets would take about 80 million bushels of soybeans and 105 million bushels of corn during this period, and about 80 per cent of these soybeans exports and 75 per cent of these corn exports ordinarily move through East and Gulf Coast ports that are now closed.

"Last year, during October and November alone, the flow of agricultural exports through this same group of East and Gulf Coast ports that are now closed totalled about \$70 million per week," Secretary Hardin said. "While the strike continues, the stoppage of this flow of crops backs clear up to the farm gate. This backup not only results in depressed prices and loss of income for farmers; it also seriously disrupts established export markets that are so vitally important to our balance of trade and our agricultural economy."

The Secretary said that for months bills to deal more effectively with strikes in the transportation industry have been before the Congress - H.R. 3596 and S. 560, The Emergency Public Interest Protection Act.

"President Nixon supports these bills," he said. "In testimony on September 28, before the Sub-committee on Labor of the Senate Committee on Labor and Public Welfare, the U.S. Department of Agriculture strongly endorsed S. 560."

"The threat of grain prices being further depressed, resulting in further loss of farm income, clearly shows the urgent need for legislation of this kind."

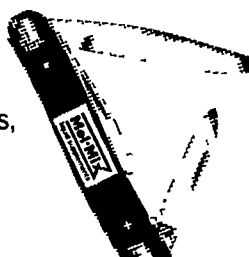
## Raising Veal Calves Is Topic at Ephrata

Robert Cody, Agway calf specialist, will be guest speaker at the Ephrata Young Farmers educational meeting at 7:30 p.m. November 9 at the Ephrata High School vo ag room.

The talk on "Raising Veal Calves" will be followed by a tour of the Norman Leininger operation. Cody will discuss housing, feeding, manure handling and ventilation systems.

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