

Seed and Fertilizer Supply Seen Short

Short supplies of fertilizer, grass and forage seed will present a dilemma to farmers in 1974, a team of agricultural specialists pointed out at the recent Forage and Seed Conference held at The Pennsylvania State University.

"We have a 5 million pound shortage of alfalfa seed and this

actually is a worse situation than it appears," said W. Alan Hick, of Northrup, King, and Company, of Albany, Oregon.

These figures, he noted, represent all alfalfa seed. The farmer in the Southwest does not want seed that isn't adaptable to his area. The only way we are going to be able to correct this

situation is to pay growers a price for alfalfa seed which will return an equal or better price than the crops they are now growing in dollars per acre, or we will have to find new areas of production.

"I do not see any relief from short seed supplies of alfalfa, red clover, western-produced forage and turf grasses until at least after the 1975 crop," Hick emphasized. "This relief will come if we are prepared to pay the price."

James A. Wells, an official of the Tennessee Valley Authority, pointed out that United States inventories at the end of the 1973 fertilizer year are at an all-time low. Nitrogen product inventory is at 40 percent of the average monthly production rate. Stocks of ammonia are at 50 percent of the same production index. Supply levels for phosphates are

not as critical as those for nitrogen.

Wells predicted that the U.S. fertilizer industry will likely respond by making at least an additional 350,000 tons of the major fertilizer materials available to the domestic market during this year and 1.1 million tons during the remainder of the fertilizer year.

"Fertilizer firms will probably start construction of new facilities and speed up current building programs," he said. "With industry and agriculture asking the federal government to raise priorities on natural gas feedstocks, an increase in operating rates of ammonia plants can be expected, adding to nitrogen supplies."

Feed grain production is likely to be a record 211 million tons and the livestock industry can

"breathe a little easier" than a year ago, H. Louis Moore, Penn State Extension agricultural economist, told those attending the conference.

"The combined winter and spring wheat crops exceeded last year's record, corn production is up 4 percent from a year ago, and soybean production is the largest ever," Moore said.

He added that the elimination of the set-aside program promises to increase grain production in 1974 which will be good news for the livestock industry. Wheat farmers increased their fall acreage by 7.7 percent.

If farmers plant more corn, as currently planned, the 1974 corn crop should reach 6.3 billion bushels, up nearly 9 percent over last year.

Moore said that crops of this size would tend to make livestock feeding more profitable than selling grain.

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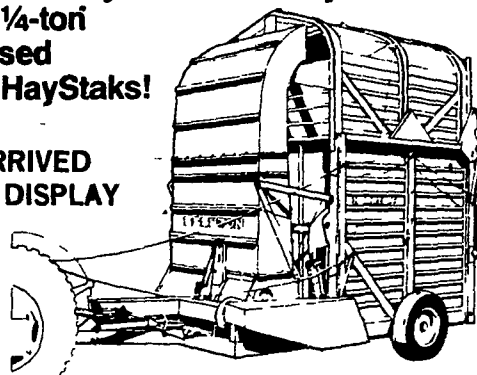
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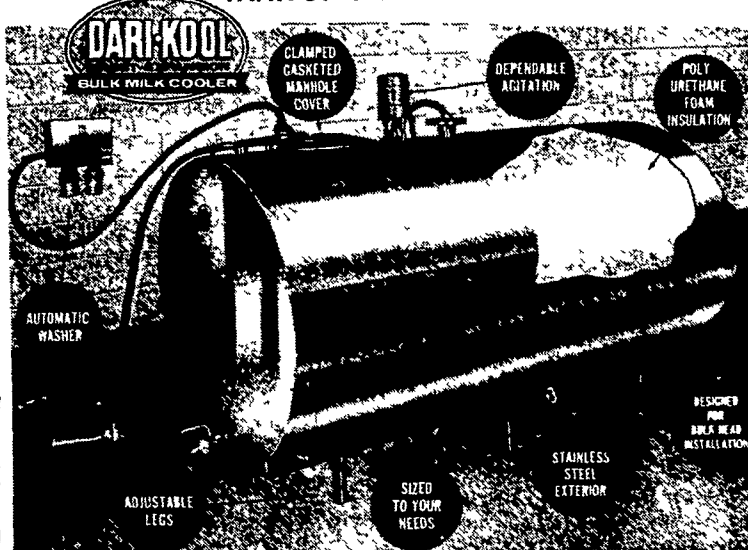
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Garden Spot High School Plans Welding Course

An evening arc welding school for farmers and other interested persons will begin Wednesday, January 16, at 7:00 at the Garden Spot High School Vocational Agriculture Department. The School will be conducted one night a week for five consecutive Wednesday nights. It is designed for beginners and others interested in improving their welding skills.

Robert Woods, Vo-Ag teacher at the high school, will teach welding in the various positions, on different kinds of metal, welding cast iron, hard surfacing, cutting, and brazing with an arc welder.

Everyone who attends will receive a certified diploma if they attend all five sessions. A fee of \$5.00 will be charged for the course and all materials needed will be provided free of charge.

The course is based on instruction developed by the Lincoln Electric Company who makes arc welding equipment and has been conducting welding schools since 1917. The Farmersville Equipment Company will sponsor the course.

The welding school will be limited to 20 persons. Anyone interested in the course should contact the Agriculture Department of the Garden Spot High School by Friday, December 21. Persons interested in taking the course should call the high school between 8:00 and 3:00.

Low Meat Prices Offset High Milk

The November 15 Index of Prices Received by Pennsylvania Farmers was one-half percent less than mid-October according to the Crop Reporting Service.

Lower prices for meat animals and feed grains more than offset higher prices for milk, milk cows, turkeys, potatoes, apples and hay. The index was 33 percent above a year ago.

Nationally, the Index of Prices Received by Farmers decreased one and one-half percent. Contributing most to the decrease since mid-October were lower prices for cattle, calves, upland cotton, broilers and soybeans. Higher prices for milk, rice, potatoes and tomatoes were only partially offsetting. The index was 38 percent above a year earlier.

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Last year about 60 percent of the national nursing home bills were paid by public sources (Medicaid, Medicare, and the like) according to the American Nursing Home Association. Of the total \$3.5 billion expenditure for quality care, only \$1.37 billion came from private funds.