

## 6th Wine Conference Held at Penn State

"Penn State is now beginning to achieve the type of research foundation needed for the new wine industry in Pennsylvania," declared Dr. James M. Beattie, Dean of the College of Agriculture at The Pennsylvania State University, during the sixth Wine Conference held recently at University Park.

Dean Beattie said the initial phase of research at Penn State sought to determine what grape varieties could become established to the point of commercial productivity in the traditional grape center of Pennsylvania, Erie County. These experiments were started in 1967.

The second phase of research, he reported, is underway to determine whether certain grape

varieties can consistently produce satisfactory yield with the quality needed to process a top grade wine over a long period of time.

The third phase of wine grape research at Penn State stresses enology, the science of wine making. This science, he pointed out, deals with wine quality evaluation and technology to produce sound, high quality wines consistently from year to year. Initiated in 1970, these experiments have produced some excellent quality wines, Dean Beattie stated.

He addressed a capacity audience at the Wine Conference banquet. Attendance at the two-day event was the largest in its six year history with 150 persons registered in the Keller Con-

ference Center.

The Deputy Secretary of Agriculture for Pennsylvania, Mrs. Jane Alexander, said the United States leads the world in wine research. She indicated the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture made a research grant in 1967 providing \$75,000 over a 10 year period, \$7,500 per year, for wine grape research by the Agricultural Experiment Station at Penn State.

As Deputy Secretary of Agriculture, Mrs. Alexander pledged the cooperation of the Department of Agriculture in

helping to develop the wine industry.

She credited the State Grape Marketing Advisory Council for being the impetus behind the new wine industry of the Commonwealth. The industry was made possible with the passage of the Limited Winery Act of 1968.

Mrs. Alexander said some of the most progressive wine grape producers in Pennsylvania were in Europe with the armed forces during World War II. These people brought back the desire to produce high quality grapes and wines in the Commonwealth.

She observed that some of the

most interesting publications ever developed on the subject of wine making have been issued in the last few years

Dr. Carl W. Haeseler, horticulturist at the Erie County Field Research Laboratory at North East, claimed good management of wine grape vines is the key to high yield and quality fruit.

Dr. Haeseler described experiments to determine grape yields, vine vigor, and fruit quality where grape plant thinning ranged from no thinning to one cluster per shoot. The varieties DeChaunac and Vidal Blanc were tested at two different locations.

With De Chaunac, yields of grapes have been more consistent for the two years of the study where vines were thinned to one cluster per shoot. Clusters were also heaviest in both years on vines thinned to one cluster per shoot. Juice quality was likewise most consistent where vines were thinned to one cluster per shoot.

Plant vigor was highest on vines likewise thinned to one cluster per shoot. Acidity of De Chaunac was not affected by cluster thinning. Dr. Haeseler and associates obtained the same first-year trends with the variety Vidal Blanc as observed with De Chaunac.

## Belt Maintenance for Idle Units

Farm machinery belts will keep their zing only if properly maintained, especially between farming seasons.

Burt A. Dundas, general supervisor, Sales and Marketing Operations, Allis-Chalmers Corp. Agricultural Equipment Division, has some advice about belts. If they are not properly maintained in storage, deterioration will accelerate resulting in downtime at critical production periods. Combines are particularly susceptible to maintenance orientated belt failure, he said.

When the harvest season is over, many of the big combines are parked outside without any cover, exposed to weather. Belts remaining on the unit are under tension and develop flat spots where they contact the sheaves. The once smooth and shiny sheaves begin to rust and deteriorate.

When the combine returns to the field, the exposed belts will most likely perform poorly under load or fail completely. As a belt moves from one sheave to another, the flat spots pound like hammers on the sheaves and bearings. In addition, the rusty sheaves work like grinding compound on the belt sides,

constantly grinding the protective surfaces.

Result: premature belt failure in the field caused by lack of simple preventive maintenance while the unit is idle.

Many of these failures can be avoided by following a belt maintenance program at the end of the season, according to Dundas. Belts have to be properly aligned, run with recommended tension and be on proper sheaves during season. After the season, continued maintenance and proper storage is essential.

Dundas suggests the following four simple maintenance steps at the end of season for added belt life, even if the unit is under cover:

1. Remove all belts.
2. Coil belts in a loose coil so that they are not kinked.
3. Store belts in a dry, cool area.
4. Oil belt contact surfaces on the sheaves to prevent rusting.

The result, according to Dundas, will be prolonged belt life, less chance of downtime and added harvest profitability. The cost: a few hours of your time.

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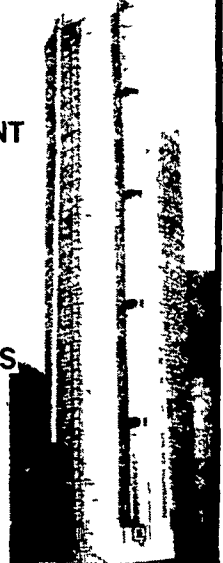
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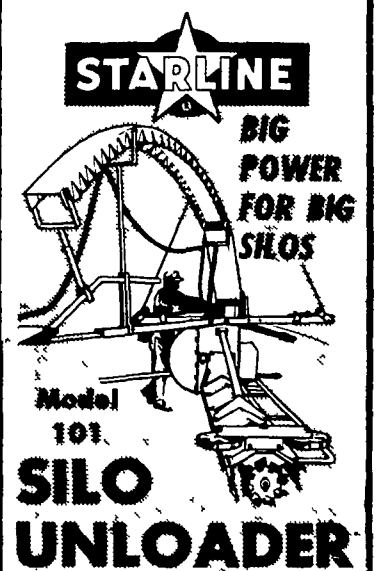
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