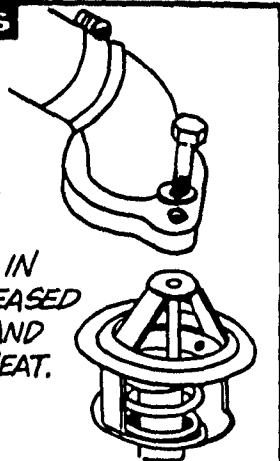


**THERMOSTAT -**  
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SLOW WARMUP, DECREASED  
ENGINE EFFICIENCY, AND  
NOT ENOUGH INTERIOR HEAT.



## Hay taken from median strips

Farmers and ranchers who are short of hay or want low-cost forage might consider harvesting forage from along highways and median strips. Studies by the Agricultural Research Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture show that adding fertilizer to these

areas produces up to three times more forage than similar unfertilized areas.

Other advantages of using this forage are also foreseen by ARS scientists. Scenery is improved for motorists because the fertilizer keeps roadsides greener, longer into the summer. Harvesting the forage would save County and State highway departments time and money spent mowing the right-of-way.

Snow often blocks highways where uncut grass from the preceding summer acts as a natural snowfence for drifting snow. Removing this grass allows the snow to blow across the road rather than collecting on it. Harvesting the hay also cuts down on fires. Harvesting is especially important now that new cars are equipped with catalytic converters. These devices get extremely hot and can start fires if a car is driven onto dry, tall grass areas.

ARS started the research by selecting several plots, ranging in size from 16 by 50 feet to 50 by 104 feet in medians and roadsides along Interstate 90, west of Gillette, Wyo. The fertilized plots received 80 pounds of nitrogen per acre as ammonium nitrate, and 56 pounds of phosphorous per acre while others served as checks and received none. Fertilized plots produced an average of 11,762 pounds of forage per acre at 12 percent moisture. An average of only 639 pounds of forage per acre was harvested from unfertilized plots.

Range scientists Frank Rauzi, says "Much more forage was harvested from areas closest to the highway than areas further away, 2,241 pounds per acre versus 1,306. The rain ran off the impervious surface of the highway and provided more moisture for forage closest to the highway."

Crested wheatgrass was the dominant species with some alfalfa, yellow blossom sweet clover, and miscellaneous grasses and forbs. Wheatgrass was the dominant plant closest to the highway.

Conducted cooperatively with the Wyoming State Highway Department, Cheyenne, and the Wyoming Agricultural Experiment Station, Gillette, the research shows that crude protein of crested wheatgrass increased from 8.4 percent on unfertilized areas to 11.4 percent on fertilized areas. The calcium and phosphorous levels in both fertilized forage were adequate for livestock nutrition.

Soil textures of medians and roadsides varied considerably because of mixing caused during road construction. Some were clays, others loams and sandy loams. Soil acidity (pH) was nearly neutral on all soils except where weathered coal was mixed with the soil fill.

Precipitation during May and June was about 2-3/4 inches, approximately 2-1/2 inches below average. Had it been average or above, forage yields would have been greater.

Anyone wishing to utilize this unused resource should first check with local highway departments and secure a permit, if required.

## Pesticide curbs viewed as peril to food supply

WASHINGTON, D.C. - An agricultural scientist and author said last week that food production will be greatly jeopardized and food shortages are almost certain to occur in the United States "if regulatory officials continue to demand more and more picayunish research."

Dr. Keith C. Barrons, author of the new book "The Food in Your Future" and a development scientist with Dow Chemical Company, said the present regulatory system "threatens to become a bureaucratic monster."

Barrons spoke at the annual meeting of the Agricultural Research Institute. He is a former president of the institute, a current board member of the Council for Agricultural Science and Technology, and has served on a number of committees of the National Academy of Sciences.

"If over-regulation eliminates many of our chemical tools and blocks extended uses of those remaining, research that could help make the next century a time of continuing food abundance will dry-up wither on the vine," Barrons said.

"We have already seen some disturbing evidence of

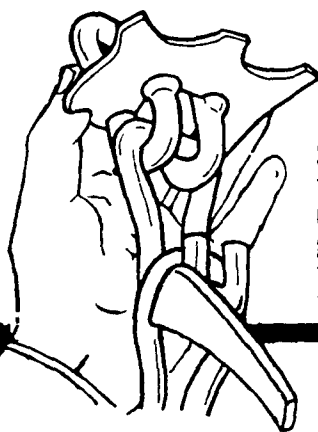
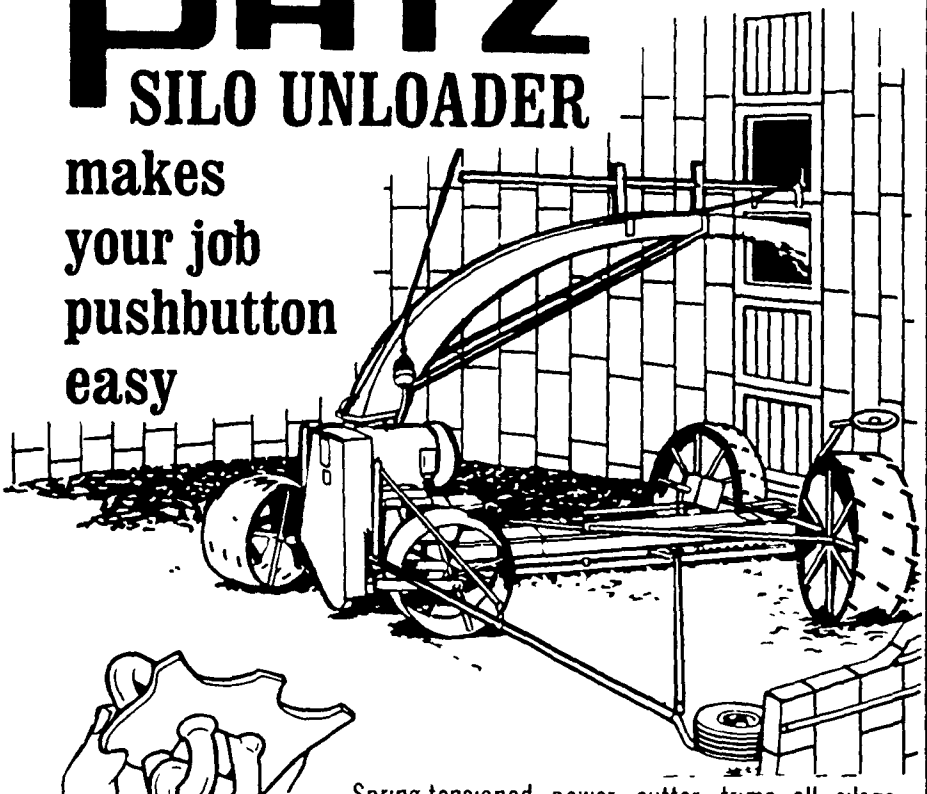
this withering. Is the ultimate price tag on safety-any-cost the greatest cost of all; that is, a shortage of food?"

The Michigan scientist called for "a public reappraisal of what constitutes practical safety and a rethinking of the regulations that are needed to achieve this goal."

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