

# Tobacco

(Continued from Page 1)

that has all cleared up now because of sucker spraying. Near East Petersburg, Warren Witmer, Manheim R7, also says that most of his crop is "real good," but that he has some spots that got too much water and some with possible pesticide runoff from the corn. He has not begun cutting as yet, but expects to start shortly. "It used to be early to start cutting by the 10th of August," he remarked. "Now some people have started in July." There are some farmers who are not ahead of schedule, however. One farmer in the Mt. Joy area reported that the replanted crops were coming along fine, but that topping was still in the future because replanting had set him back 2-2½ weeks. Besides the early hail which damaged all the plants during the second week of June, there are other problems to contend with. "We think now of early frost," he said. Not only that, but heavy rain has washed some sprays from the corn into the plants. Luckily, there has been little problem with aphids, black shank or tobacco etch.

The Rohrers finished topping last Monday, and the acreage that was cut had been topped three weeks before. Rohrer said that the weather in his area was excellent this year. There was only moderate rain with never more than an inch and a half at a time, and no hail. He also mentioned that they never had rain that washed, either. While it has been reported that the etch virus is the

biggest problem this season, Rohrer did not have a particular problem with it. Nor has his crop had black shank disease or a large amount of aphids. He reported that this year's crop did have some aphids, but spraying for suckers eradicated that problem. Overall, he predicts that he'll get about a ton to the acre this year. According to John Yocum, manager of the Penn State Southeast Field Research Laboratory at Landisville, this estimate is conservative for the area. Yocum thinks crops should yield about 1800 pounds to a ton (per acre) this year.

Further east in the county around Witmer, cutting has also been going on, but the condition of the crop is quite different.

"Not too great" is the term one person used to describe the hail cut, wind blown tobacco that was being harvested last week.

Just as some farmers in this area were ready to start harvesting, on July 29, a vicious storm with pea-sized hail swept through the area, depositing almost three inches of rain in an hour. This left the tobacco in poor condition.

Farmers are hoping that the smaller tobacco will recover, and that a good harvest will be possible a little later on in the season.

Near Strasburg, the same storm minus the hail hit the area but left only slight damage. The worst problem was that it caused a little of the tobacco to stand crooked, but with good weather ahead, the sun should be able to draw it up again.

One farmer near Strasburg reported a severe problem with aphids at the beginning of the season, but



Lamar Huber gets into the swing of tobacco spearing at the farm of Wilmer Rohrer, Lancaster R2. Rohrer started cutting on July 28 and had five acres put away in a week's time.

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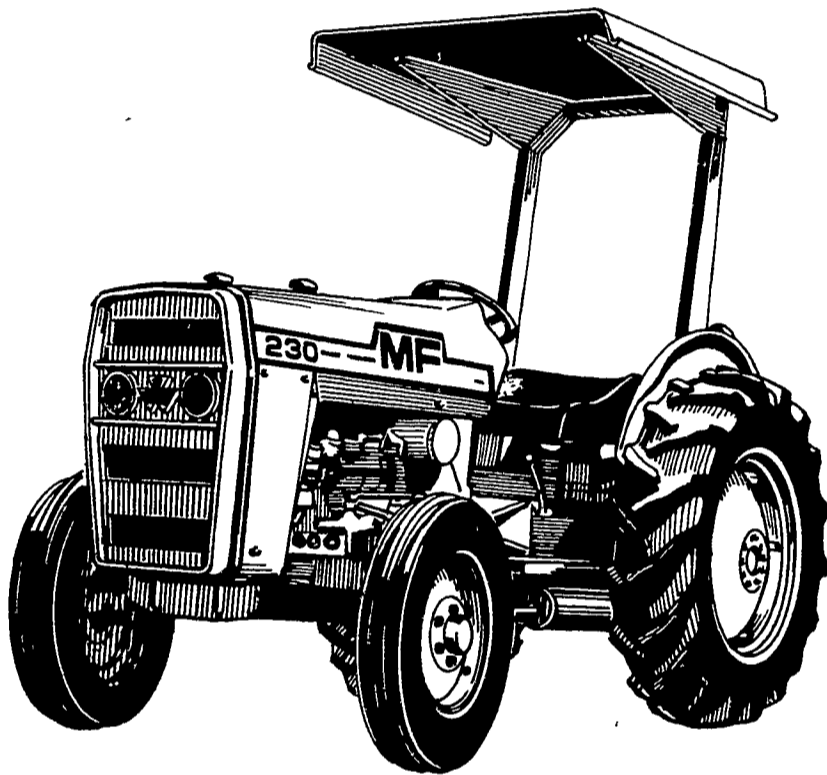


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