

Winternationals come to Harrisburg

HARRISBURG, Pa. - The 15th annual Penn Winternationals, the East's only indoor invitational tractor pull, will again feature co-sponsorship by the Kendall Division of the Witco Chemical Corporation of Bradford, Pennsylvania and the Pennsylvania Tractor Pullers Association (PTPA), and the secretary of the executive board of the National Tractor Pullers Association (NTPA).

Sixteen competitors from Pennsylvania will be competing in the event for a share of the \$32,000 purse on January 28 and 29. Five of the sixteen operate the powerful and noisy modifieds, while the remaining 11 drive the potent, but touchy super stock machines.

One of those modified competitors, Lester Houck of Kinzers, will have much more on his mind than how the tractor will run. The 33

year old Houck, the father of two children, is the executive director of Penn Winternationals, the promoter of the two-day event. Houck has been active for some time in the sport, serving as the executive secretary of the Pennsylvania Tractor Pullers Association (PTPA), and the secretary of the executive board of the National Tractor Pullers Association (NTPA).

Another puller that will have more than competition on his mind will be Art Arfons. Arfons will be keeping a close eye on a new device make the spectators life a little more comfortable - a turbine to take care of the smoke created by the super stocks. Anyone who has attended an indoor pull knows that the smoke can get a little thick at times. The new "Smoke Burner" is a small turbine that will burn the smoke that comes from the powerful diesel engines. Previously, two fans and 18 inch flexible hose attempted to vent the smoke outside, but there were often

problems when the hose would come undone. According to Arfons, the machine has performed well in dry run tests to date, but will get its baptism of fire at the National Challenge '77 at the Richfield, Ohio Coliseum on January 14-16. Arfons feels that there will be an added side benefit to the machine, as the heat generated will help warm the arena area.

Tickets for the event will be available at the Pennsylvania Farm Show starting January 10, 1977. The Penn Winternationals booth will be located in the Poultry Barn in Spaces P-30 and 31. Also starting on that date, ticket information is available by calling the Farm Show Arena Ticket Office at 717-233-2060. Ticket prices are \$4.00 for the January 28 afternoon session beginning at 1:00 p.m. The January 28 evening session beginning at 7:30 p.m. and the afternoon and evening sessions on January 29 are priced at \$5.00 per session.

Allotment announced on feed grains

WASHINGTON, D.C. - A 1977 national feed grain allotment of 89 million acres has been announced by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. This figure is unchanged from 1976.

The national allotment represents the harvested acreage that will produce the quantity of corn, sorghum and barley USDA estimates United States will use domestically and for export during the 1977-78 marketing year.

The national allotment does not represent a limit on the amount of feed grain that may be planted. It is used solely as a basis for making payments to producers should the market price fall below the established target prices or should growers qualify for disaster payments.

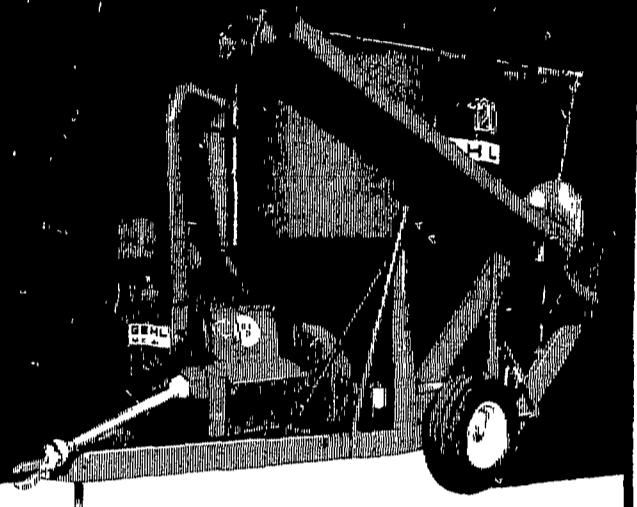
In 1976, producers, responding to the marketplace rather than the allotment, planted about 112 million acres of corn, sorghum and barley. USDA

believes that in 1977 producers will again study prices and demand in planning their farming operations and, therefore, the national allotment and actual acres planted may not coincide.

USDA also announced today that it will not make deficiency payments on 1976 crop wheat and barley. Current legislation provides that deficiency payments shall be made to producers when the national weighted average price received by farmers for the first five months of the marketing year (June-October for wheat and barley) is less than the established target price for these crops.

The national weighted average price received by farmers for the first five months of the 1976 marketing year was \$3.08 per bushel for wheat and \$2.41 per bushel for barley. These exceed the target prices of \$2.29 and \$1.28 for wheat and barley respectively.

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300 bushels per acre possible

UNIVERSITY PARK, Pa. - Applying future science and technology to grow corn, while getting maximum sunlight from silking stage to maturity, farmers some day could produce well over 300 bushels of shelled corn per acre instead of the present national average of 85.5 bushels per acre, declared a crop scientist from The Pennsylvania State University recently.

"The amount of energy

available from the sun for photosynthesis by the crop sets the upper limit for grain production," stated Dr. Daniel P. Knievel, crop physiologist in the College of Agriculture at Penn State. He spoke at the annual Forage, Corn, and Seed Conference held here.

Under ideal conditions, corn plants in Pennsylvania retain enough energy to produce about 11 bushels of grain per day during the

grain-filling period from mid July to early September. This means that a corn hybrid with a 32 day rapid grain-filling period might yield 352 bushels per acre - depending upon the amount of solar energy.

With higher than average light intensities, the maximum yield could be pushed to 435 bushels per acre, he estimated. High light intensities, combined with ideal soil and

management conditions, enables an Illinois farmer to harvest a world record yield of 338 bushels per acre in 1975, it was pointed out.

The Penn State crop scientist said a corn growth model is being used to describe mathematically the complex physical, chemical, and biological processes involved in corn growth. This technique is being used to identify those processes that limit present corn yields to well below the potential maximum. A computer is used with the corn model to simulate grain development from pollination through kernel maturity.

At maturity, a dark membrane called the black layer forms at the base of each corn kernel. This layer cuts off movement of carbohydrate to the grain and ends grain growth, Dr. Knievel explained. Although there are about 50 to 60 days from pollination to black layer formation, most of the grain is produced during a 30 to 40 day period, he said.

At present, only a few processes thought to be important in growing corn are included in growth models. These include photosynthesis, respiration, leaf and stalk growth rate, rainfall, air temperature, and some hybrid characteristics.

Eventually, Dr. Knievel and associates hope to include soil fertility, disease, and insect factors in calculations with growth models.

"It is clear from our results that we do not have an adequate understanding of how time of silking and subsequent pollination is controlled in corn. It is also apparent that this is a crucial factor needed to develop an adequate corn growth model," he said.

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