

# Forage research 'badly needed'

COLUMBIA, Mo. - Research is "badly needed" to improve forage quality, a nationally prominent animal scientist said here earlier this year at the annual meeting of the American Forage and Grassland Council.

Noting that high-quality forage is usually "the lowest cost source of energy for dairy and beef cattle," J.T. Reid cited four areas that need research attention:

- Ways to improve the rate of consumption and net energy concentration.
- Improving forage

production per acre at a minimal cost of energy.

- Improving culture, harvesting, preservation, storage, processing and feeding.
- Developing technology to put greater reliance on grazing forages.

Reid, of Cornell University's Animal Science Department, told experts attending the American Forage and Grasslands Council meetings that forages would be very important to future animal diets because of the energy crisis.

He noted that forages produce a less expensive protein than that provided by any other source. Legumes, for example, produce their own nitrogen, thus saving on fertilizer costs to the farmer.

Also, perennial forages usually tend to be replanted less than once every four years, while corn and soybeans can be harvested only one time for each planting. Thus, said Reid, "the energy cost of tillage, seeding and cultivation of forage crops is considerably less than that of grains."

Advanced improvements in grazing efficiency, because forages are harvested by animals rather than by fuel-driven machinery. This makes pastures the most efficient source of digestible energy among the forages."

Reid and about 150 other members of the American Forage and Grassland Council devoted three days to the discussion of how far farmers could go with forages to increase meat and milk production. On Wednesday morning, they toured the University of Missouri-

Columbia's research facility. Then they installed as their president A.G. (Jerry) Matches, USDA Agricultural Research Service agronomist at UMC.

Reid, who gave the AFGC keynote address, said the main limitation of all-forage diets even at today's highest quality, is that cattle cannot consume enough energy to produce milk or meat at a high rate of output."

However, he was optimistic that research could "make it possible for ruminants to obtain a higher proportion of their nutrients from forages than they do now."

He noted, for example,

that beef cattle may be fattened as effectively an all-forage diet as on a conventional high-grain diet.

"It will usually take these animals 30 to 300 days longer to reach slaughter weight, depending on the quality of the forage and whether it is finely ground and pelleted. But there seems to be little doubt that forage-finished cattle are acceptable to the consumer."

He cited reports from six experiment stations which found that such characteristics as tenderness, juiciness, flavor, "eating quality" and cooking losses were "equal to or better in forage-finished cattle than in grain-finished cattle."

## Cherry industrymen elect board members

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Appointment of four members and their alternates to the Cherry Administrative Board was announced by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, recently. This board operates under a federal marketing order for red tart cherries grown in Michigan, New York, Wisconsin, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia, and Maryland.

Malvin McGaha, chief of the fruit branch of USDA's agricultural marketing service (AMS), said a major function of the board is to analyze supply and demand conditions and to recommend to USDA the per cent of the crop that may be marketed at any time and the per cent that should be held in reserve under the marketing order during a season. This helps to stabilize supplies and to prevent market shortages and gluts.

The board consists of six grower members, six handler members, and a non-voting chairman. The marketing order specifies a

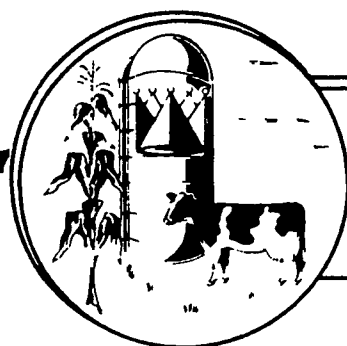
three-year term of office, with terms of about one-third of the members expiring each year.

Two New York growers were named to represent other growers on the board. Those two individuals are: Ronald R. Orbaker, Williamson, N.Y., as member, and Francis D. Kirby, Albion, N.Y. as alternate.

For further information on the marketing order contact: Malvin McGaha, USDA-AMS, Room 2532 South, Washington, DC 20250; or Delbert Rasmussen, manager, cherry administrative board, Box 639, Watervliet, Mich. 49098.

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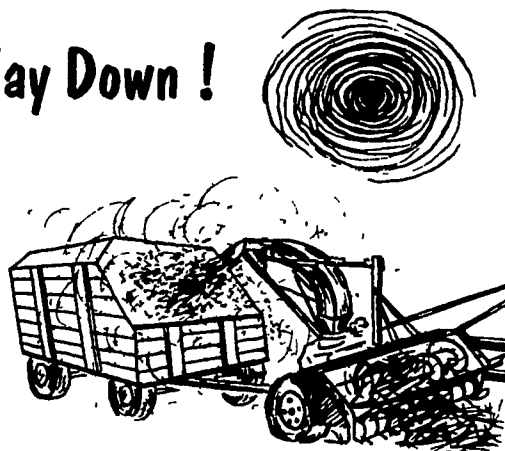


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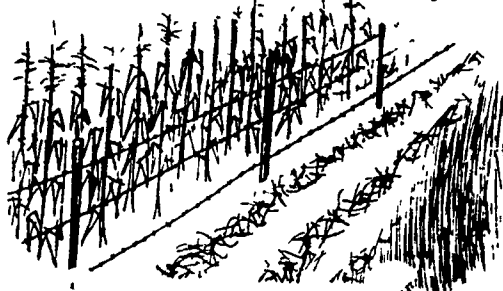
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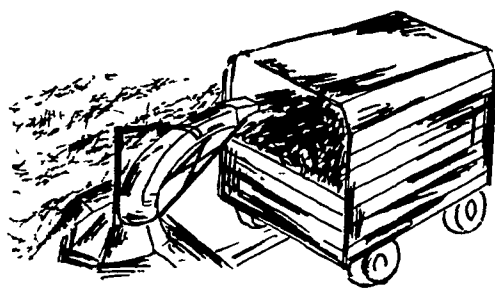
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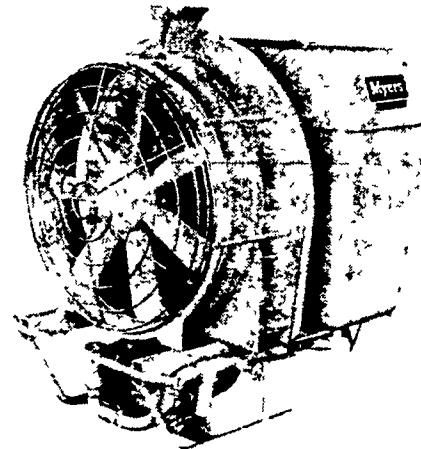
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