



## LIFE on the farm

By DIETER KRIEG

The rumble of thunder broke the silence of the night and I awoke just enough to be conscious of it. I lay in bed still half asleep and listened to the rumbling and the rustling of the leaves on the trees outside. The curtains by the window flowed gracefully in the breeze. Occasional flashes of lightning illuminated the room. Then there was more rumbling of thunder. The breeze continued its noisy flow through the trees without interruption. It was rather pleasant to listen to.

It wasn't until rain tapped against the window that my senses realized what was going on. I had been fooled again! The weatherman had predicted no rain, and here I was, witnessing the brewing of a thunderstorm. I had an investment to protect outside!

Folks in town might get up during the night to roll up the car windows when rain is threatening, but that's not quite the same as having a wagonload of fertilizer parked outside.

Hastily dressed, I rushed out the back door to the tractor and cornplanter which were parked by the gas pump. Both needed to be sheltered pretty quick. Then I grabbed a crumpled-up mass of polyethylene and ran up over the hill towards the

wagon. The dirt lane was already becoming muddy, and my feet slipped in the smeary clay. We did need the rain, but fertilizer which was hardened by rain was something I could do without. Still running, I was hoping that moisture would not yet have penetrated any of the 80-pound bags.

Within a minute or so, the fertilizer was covered with the black plastic sheet. Tucking it under a few bags here and there held it in place at the edges, but not across the middle, where the wind was already starting to play with it. A few rocks should solve that problem.

But that was easier said than done. Every Spring our farm had lots and lots of rocks on it which we picked up and hauled away. Rocks were nearly everywhere. They're always there - that is until you need a few, or even just one. I stepped around in the field, taking a fast look all around every time lightning illuminated the area. The only rocks around were those used to block the wheels of the wagon. It was disgusting to not find a few stones when I knew very well there were lots of them around. Meanwhile I got soaked in the rain.

The mission finally accomplished, I jogged back to the house. What a way to interrupt the night! Whether one likes it or not, it's a part of life on the farm.

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