

Corn Demonstration

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up with corn yield increases ranging from 15 to 30 bushels to the acre.

Test plot supervisors stuck a tire iron straight down into the soil to the soil to demonstrate ground compactness in the sub-soiler test section. Where the ground had been loosened in the row, the iron was easily

sunk in to a depth of about a foot. Between rows, however, the soil was solid and difficult to penetrate. Since the test plot had received only four inches of rain from the May 10 planting date through August 15, researchers credited the innovative tillage method with maximum retention of the scarce Summer moisture.

Conservationists estimate that the equivalent of six inches of topsoil on four million acres is lost annually. Stressing the wise use of this precious resource, the plot supervisors set up side-by-side areas comparing Spring plowing, chisel plowing, disking and no-till.

The Dekalb researchers recommend that the soil acidity level be as nearly correct as possible when planting no-tillage corn, or herbicides will not perform

properly. Under a pH level of 6.5, some weeds, notably fall panicum grasses, will not be controlled. Volunteer corn stalks remain a problem in no-till, too.

One comparative test section depicted corn growing results from planting the seed at two depths; one plot was planted at one and one-half inch depth, while the other was put down three inches in the soil. The shallower planting was noticeably taller.



"This is our exotic plant breeding material," explained Dean Edwards, 1625 East Market Street, York, the regional manager for Dekalb AgResearch, Inc. And, exotic it was, with plants ranging from 12 feet tall to knee high, some with striped leaves, some with six ears to the stalk, and some with all leaves but no ears.

Specialists overseeing the planting depths urged farmers to contact their local weather bureaus and obtain the date of the last Spring frost for the past five years. Those dates should be averaged to obtain a general

frost-free date, and farmers are advised to then schedule corn planting about two weeks ahead of that average. Another recommendation was to insert thermometers at different levels of the soil early in the morning, and then compare the temperature differences at noon.

Researchers see the main advantage of early planted corn as hitting the most advantageous pollination period. According to tests, the longest day of the year is the most successful time for corn to pollinate. Late Summer weather usually becomes too hot and dry for the best results, as well as being a time of more concentrated insect infestations.

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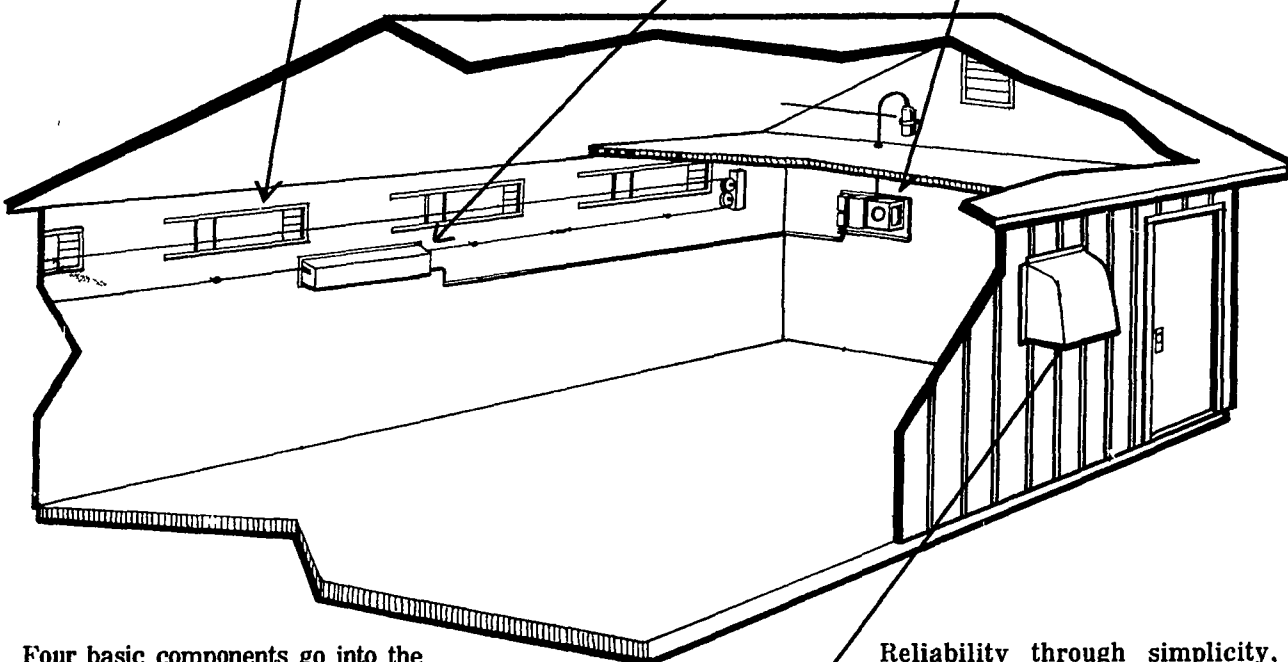
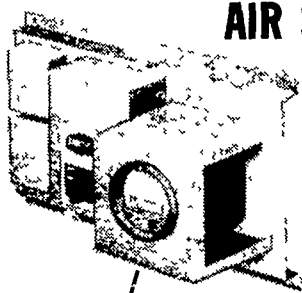
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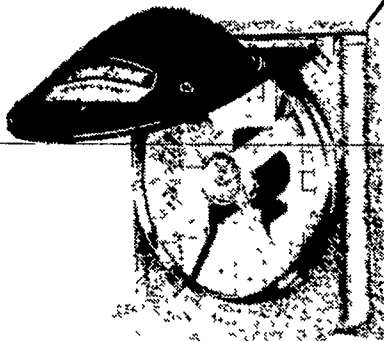
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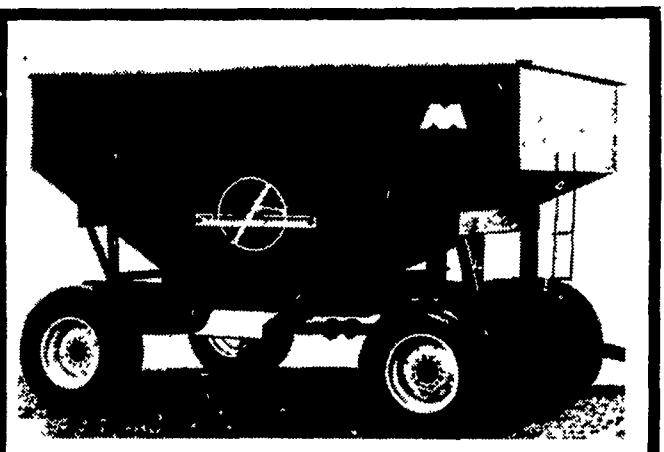
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