## Dairymen feel straw shortage

LANCASTER, Pa. - The low prices farmers are receiving for wheat may bring joy to consumers in coming months, but dairy farmers in the Northeast aren't smiling much about it right now. Dairymen need straw for bedding for their cows and the low price for wheat has caused less grain to be planted in this area.

area. Many farmers have switched usual grain acreage to corn for silage. An early winter and dry spring have meant a lighter crop on the acreage that was planted. In the heavily dairyoriented areas, like Lancaster County, farmers are looking for alternatives to straw. In many cases cornstalks are being used for bedding

"With straw bringing as much as \$95 a ton, there's no wonder farmers are looking for alternatives," says Paul Martin, owner of a Leola auction where hay and straw are sold. Local farmers say buyers are coming from hundreds of miles searching for good straw. Many of the buyers represent race tracks in Delaware, Maryland and New Jersey, as well as local tracks.

"We can't afford to compete with prices like the race track people pay," said a young farmer watching the auctioneer and crowd moving from truck to truck in the huge lot.

Max Smith, the county extension agent in Lancaster County, says the central Pennsylvania area has suffered from a straw shortage for the last several years and this year's dry weather and reduced wheat tonnage has compounded the problem. He says in some cases straw for bedding is bringing a higher price than hay for feeding cows.

"Chopped corn fodder have a liquid manure system," Smith said.

Again, the self-sufficient Amish farmers may have an edge on their mechanized neighbors. The Amish still use old reapers and binders and thresh their grain with steam-powered threshing machines. They save vitually every piece of straw blown into a huge stack during the threshing process.

But, this year's lighter grain straw harvest will probably affect the Amish as well. They will be baling even more corn fodder for bedding. Horse-drawn balers, rigged with engines for powering the baler mechanism, are being readied for the difficult job

of baling fodder. At the New Holland Sales Stable, a dairyman with 50 milking cows on his farm south of Blue Ball, was successful bidder on a 9,000 pound load of straw that had been shipped in from more than 90 miles away.

"My brother in Ohio has makes a good substitute all the straw I could ever use where the farmer doesn't just going to waste. But it would cost me more than that to have it shipped in from his place. My straw mow looks pitiful. I just have to have it and I have to pay the price to get it," he said.

> An Amish farmer, drawing a map to his farm near Intercourse, so the truck driver could deliver a load of straw, summed up the situation in a few words. "I need straw and these folks have it. I have to pay \$1 more than what the man I'm bidding against thinks it's worth to him."

> Again, the old story of American agriculture's dependency on weather is pointed up in what may happen to consumer prices. Wheat, in abundance in the Midwest, could bring lower consumer prices for wheat products. On the other hand, in the Northeast, the shortage of straw from wheat is forcing dairy farmers to pay more for one of their important inputs.

### Fall clean-up saves Spring flowers

MEDIA - A thorough garden clean-up this Fall may save your flowers and vegetables from insect problems next Summer, reminds McKeehen. The iris borer, for example, is one of the most destructive insect pests of iris. Females lay their eggs on old iris leaves and other plant material in the Fall. These eggs spend the Winter on iris leaves and hatch in April or May.

The iris borer has only a single brood each year, so cutting the iris leaves and other garden refuse during the fall may save your iris plants from serious damage next Summer. Another insect which can attack many vegetables and flowers in the home garden is the common stalk borer. Female moths lay their eggs in the late Summer and Fall on grass, weeds and plant refuse. A single female moth may lay up to 2000 eggs, each of which will hatch into a borer the following Spring. A Fall clean-up of weeds and garden refuse will aid considerably in lessening the number of stalk borers present in your garden next Spring.

## **Crops production forecast**

HARRISBURG - Production of corn for grain in the commonwealth during 1977 is expected to total 101.2 million bushels, announced the Pennsylvania Crop Reporting Service. This forecast, unchanged from a month ago and two per cent below 1976, is based on conditions as of October 1.

Potato production is forecast at 6.5 million hundredweight. A function of 27,000 acres for harvest and yield at 240 cwt., this production would be nine per cent below last year. Acres for harvest are down 1,000 with yield off 15 cwt.

Pennsylvania tobacco production is now forecast at 23.5 million pounds as yield prospects fell during the last month. This is still less than one-half per cent below last year as yield as now forecast at 1,810 pounds is still 60 pounds higher than in 1976.

Alfalfa hay production is estimated at 2.1 billion tons while other hay production should add another 1.8 billion. The alfalfa production would be nine per cent below 1976. Although acres for harvest are up 20,000 to 840,000, yield prospects are off nearly a third of a ton to 2.45. The other hay acres are unchanged while yield is a fifth of a ton below 1976 at 1.6 tons per acre. These put the state's all hay estimated production at 3.9 billion tons, ten per cent below 1976.

Grape production in Pennsylvania is expected to



total 30,000 tons based on bushels) from a month October 1 conditions. This is 48 per cent below the 1976 record crop of 58,000 tons.

Apple production is estimated at 430 million pounds, 19 per cent above the 1976 crop of 360 million pounds.

U.S. corn production is forecast at a record 6,303 million bushels based on conditions as of October 1, up one per cent from the September 1 forecast and one per cent above 1976.

Soybean production, forecast at a record 1,647 million bushels, is up fractionally (3 million earlier and 30 per cent above last year.

All tobacco production is forecast at 1,892 million pounds, 11 per cent below last year, but three per cent above last month.

Fall potato production is estimated at 304 million cwt. in the 25 fall producing states, down one per cent from the record 1976 crop.

U.S. production of all hay as forecast at 128.4 billion tons is six per cent above 1976. Both acres for harvest and prospective yield, at 61.7 million and 2.08 tons respectively, are above a year ago.



## **TUESDAY, OCT. 25, 1977**

1:30 P.M.

Location - 15 miles north of Bloomsburg off route 44 north across from P.P. & L. Lake - next to Niles Sommers Farm. Ouaker State Plantations is offering at Auction App. 70 Acres more or less or prime development land in Montour County, Anthony Twp.

Also being offered the same day at 3:30 P.M. is four lots approx. 6 acres each off Rt. 254 west of Millville, 3 mile turn towards gamelands. Land is located in Pine & Madison Twps. Lots to be sold individually & then in

Terms - 1:30 P.M. Parcel - \$5,000 down day of sale, balance in thirty days.

3:30 P.M. Parcels - \$1,000 down day of sale, balance in thirty days.

Buyer pays all transfer taxes. Statements made day of sale take precidences over previously written material.

Seller:

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