

## Vegetable conference

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Shipp added that the use of sewage sludge can be a good practice if the contents are known and the application is done safely and beneficially.

In closing, Shipp praised the Department of En-

vironmental Resources for their rules and regulations concerning the use of sewage sludge. "These people recognize the dangers of using contaminated sludge and they are concerned with public safety," he stated.

"For that, they should be commended."

Another topic covered at the Vegetable Conference was trickle irrigation under plastic. Dr. David S. Ross, Extension agricultural engineer from the University of Maryland, was speaker for the subject.

Trickle irrigation, Ross explained, is a relatively new concept, starting in the U.S. in 1969. It is basically used for crops and tree fruits.

The system of trickle irrigation is actually the slow daily application of water to the plant root zone so that the soil moisture is maintained at the field capacity. It eliminates the problem of having too much or too little water.

There are several advantages to using trickle irrigation. The system wets less area, conserving water by making greater use of a small water source. Energy is conserved for the system works on a lower pressure level.

Trickle irrigation can be used on hilly terrain successfully. Another advantage to the system is that the area between the rows is dry, therefore there are less weeds. Also, while the trickle irrigation system is being used, cultivating practices and harvesting can be done without problems.

Trickle irrigation can be used to apply liquid fertilizer to plants. If the system of irrigation is used, there should be labor reduction, with less weeds, more automation and the application of liquid fertilizer.

As with most things, there are also some disadvantages. Clean water is required for the system, with no solid particles in the water supply. The emitter,

which is the unique part of the system, can clog, and that clogging can be a serious problem. Trickle irrigation must have good filtration to be effective.

On sandy soil, the water distribution may be poor. Also, trickle irrigation problems are created by mice and other rodents chewing the flexible pipes used. There is no frost protection offered by the system. Rust problems are also possible if the system is not in continuing use.

Ross explained that there are four basic types of trickle irrigation, including the in-line type, the insert, the micro-tube, and the double chamber variety. In vegetable farming, the double chamber is the most

used form of trickle irrigation.

When plastic is used, the trickle irrigation emitters are placed under the plastic. Usually the plastic is laid on the ground before planting, and holes are punched in the plastic to put the plants in.

Benefits of plastic mulching are many. There is moisture conservation and temperature regulation as the plastic will hold water and heat. Dark plastic, stopping the light, will aid in weed control. Crops grown with plastic mulching seem to respond better. Root pruning is eliminated with its use.

The main disadvantage of plastic mulching is that the film has to be removed and disposed of.

Ross urged vegetable growers to consider the possibilities of using trickle irrigation.

As vegetable growers look forward to the 1978 season, they expressed concern over problems which they may face. All hope for a good year weatherwise, with conditions which favor the growth of their crop. Market prices was another big concern, with the price each product would bring a question in everyone's mind.

Besides the speakers and demonstrations, the conference also hosted over 100 exhibits where interested industries displayed their products and the vegetable growers could examine at close hand the latest in vegetable farming.

## Tractor club forming

THE BUCK - Wenger Implement, Inc., here, will begin hosting a new 4-H Tractor Maintenance Club, beginning Friday, Feb. 10 at 7:30 p.m.

The club is coming about as a result of considerable interest having been expressed for the formation of such a group, in the southern part of Lancaster County. Ben Wenger of Wenger Implement, Inc., and Glenn Aument, Quarryville R2, will be leaders of the clubs.

A series of six to eight meetings will feature

demonstrations, films, trouble shooting and actual work on machinery. Safe operation of equipment will be stressed. Awards will be made for outstanding work.

Anyone between the ages of eight and 19 who would like to participate in the program is asked to contact either of the above leaders or the Lancaster County Extension Office. Phone numbers are as follows: Wenger - 284-4141 or 284-2229; Aument - 548-2373; and the Extension Service - 394-6851.

## N.Y. packer violates P & S

NEW YORK, N.Y. - G & L Packing Co., Inc., New York Mills, N.Y., has been charged with violating financial and payment requirements of a federal fair trade practices law for the livestock, poultry, and meat industries.

The firm is a meat packer. It purchases meat, meat food products, and poultry throughout New York and in Boston.

In an administrative complaint filed under the Packers and Stockyards (P&S) Act, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) charged the firm with:

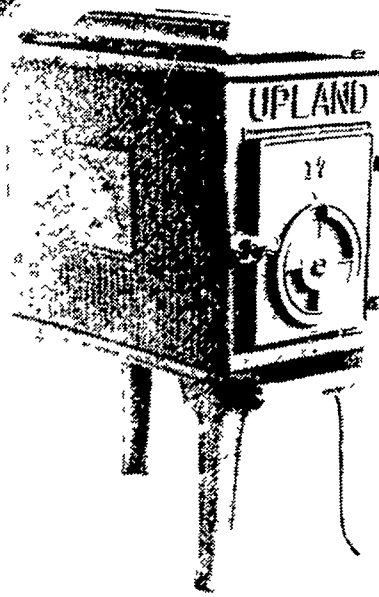
-Operating as a packer while its current liabilities exceed its current assets; and

-Issuing insufficient funds checks and failing to pay, when due, for more than \$146,000 worth of meat, meat food products, and poultry.

G & L Packing Co., has a right to a hearing. If the charges are proven, the firm would be placed under a cease and desist order.

The P&S Act is administered by the packers and stockyards program of USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service.

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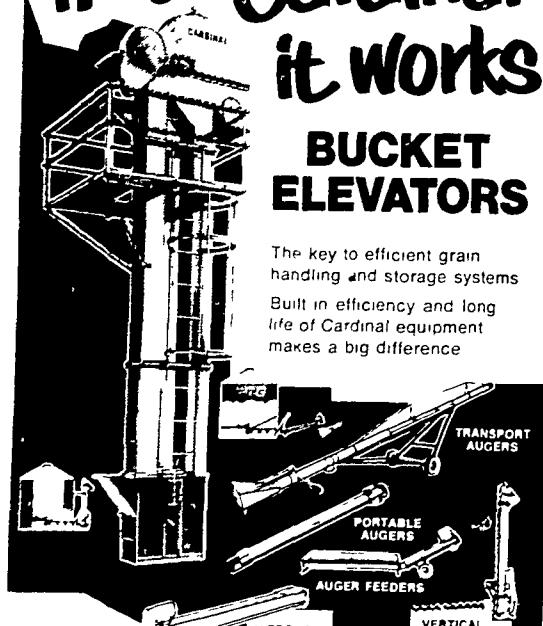
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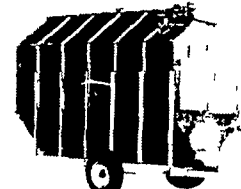
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