

Crops catching up with good weather

HARRISBURG — State Agriculture Secretary Kent Shelhamer said this week that crop development is rapidly catching up to last year's progress as a result of good growing weather in the state.

weather roundup of the Pennsylvania Crop Reporting Service, Shelhamer said that the week ending July 3 provided five days suitable for working in fields. Soil moisture levels are now rated adequate statewide

with only a few reporters in southern counties indicating dry soils.

At 16 inches, the state corn crop is now only four days behind the 20 inches recorded last year. Corn is now 12 inches high in the north, 18 inches in central counties, and 22 inches in the south. The largest gains during the week occurred in southern counties where the crop grew 10 inches through the week.

Barley, now 20 per cent ripe, is seven days behind the 42 per cent ripe a year ago. Ripening is at seven per cent in the north, 12 per cent in central counties and 40 per cent in the south. Harvesting is reported in central and southern areas.

Wheat is 49 per cent turning, three days behind last year's two-thirds. Turning stands at 28 per cent in northern, 43 per cent in central and 80 per cent in southern counties. A slight amount is beginning to ripen in the south.

Oats are 59 per cent headed, eight days behind the three-fourths reported last year. The crop is 42 per cent headed in the north, 70 per cent in central areas and 73 per cent in the south. Southern counties also report a small amount of turning.

Alfalfa first cutting stands at 88 per cent, eight days behind last year's 91 per

cent. Alfalfa second cutting is now at 18 per cent, about the same as last year. Clover-timothy is 74 per cent cut the first time, some seven days behind the 82 per cent cut last year at this time. The overall quality of hay throughout the Commonwealth was rated fair to good during the week. Pastures are now providing average amounts of feed with some southern reporters indicating above average amounts.

Only a few fields of soybeans remain to be planted in southern counties. Farmers report that, where emerged, the crop is in good condition. Tobacco is now 93 per cent transplanted with only a few fields remaining unplanted in southern counties. Harvest of strawberries, asparagus and sweet cherries continues across the state. Pears and apples are sizing well as June drop progresses into final stages. Grapes are also reported sizing well with good set.

Early sweet corn is in silk with some corn borer activity reported in southern counties. Potatoes are now blossoming, but some farmers report problems with the Colorado potato beetle. Cantaloupes and early cabbage are now forming:

Treat for bagworms now

UNIVERSITY PARK — The Bagworm larvae is not always visible; the one to two inch long, spindled-shaped cocoons or "bags" are if this insect is present. Last year's bags may still be present, and housed with eggs inside.

Bagworms are voracious foliar feeders of many kinds of evergreens as well as deciduous trees and shrubs. Eggs hatch in early to mid-June and because of their size, the caterpillars go unnoticed. They feed on foliage and begin constructing small bags of their own. The caterpillars then live inside their portable homes which enlarge as they feed and move about. The population can be reduced by picking and destroying the overwintering bags. If the eggs have hatched, spray immediately for best control using one of the following recommended insecticides: Bacillus thuringiensis (Dipel Thuricide, BT, etc.), Carbaryl (Sevin), Malathion or Diazinon.

UNIVERSITY PARK — Homeowners wishing to control the growth of pine trees may follow the same procedure as commercial producers follow in shaping their trees. New growth on trees this year is somewhat slower than normal, so shearing pines should be done in the period from middle June to August 1, after the new branches finish growing. Spruce and fir may be sheared in late Summer, Fall or Winter. In general, McKeehen recommends that pine trees be sheared for the first time when they are two to three feet high. This is usually the third year after planting. Then they need yearly treatment. A sharp hedge shears with eight- or nine-inch blades is an efficient tool for shearing pine trees. A new tool now being used is a light meat slicing knife with 12- to 14-inch blade and razor edge. Special safety precautions must be taken when using this tool.

The top leader of the tree is usually cut to 10 inches in length, at a 45 degree angle, this eliminates spindly growth at the top. If there is a double leader, remove the weaker one or cut back far enough to suppress its growth. Other top branches, called top laterals, should be cut five inches long. New branches over the rest of the tree are sheared back so that the taper of the tree is about half as wide as it is high. For the homeowner wishing to limit the growth of a tree more closely, cut the top leader back to six inches, top laterals to three inches, and new side branches to two inches. Don't make the beginner's error of shearing only the upper branches: this makes a squatty tree, too wide and sparse at the bottom.

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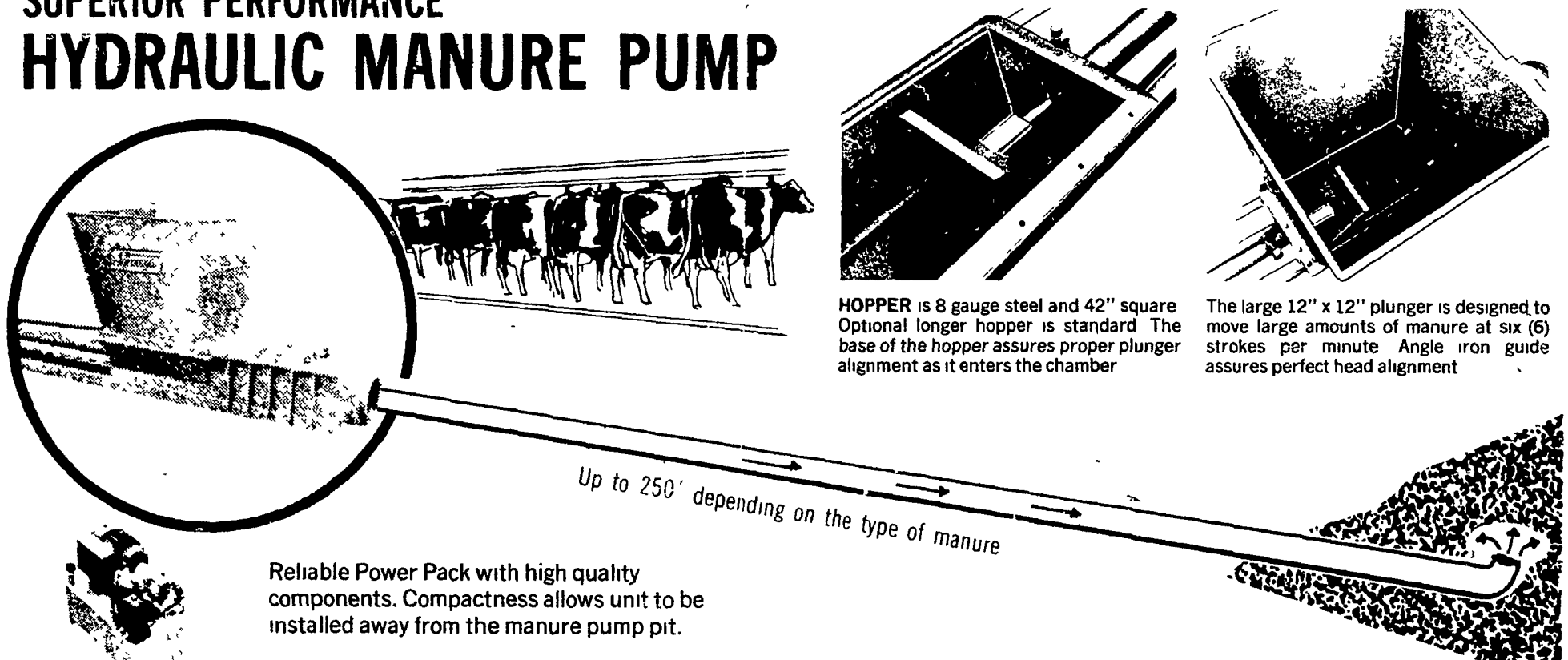
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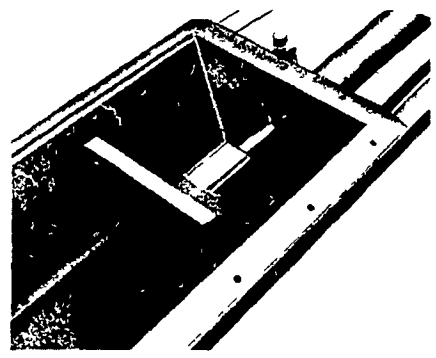
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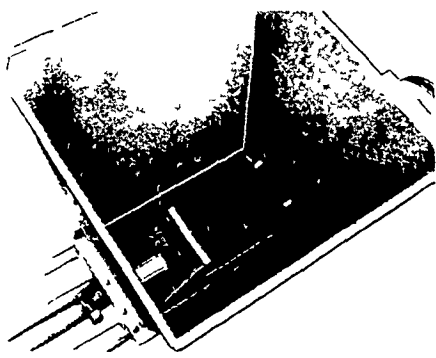
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HOPPER is 8 gauge steel and 42" square. Optional longer hopper is standard. The base of the hopper assures proper plunger alignment as it enters the chamber.



The large 12" x 12" plunger is designed to move large amounts of manure at six (6) strokes per minute. Angle iron guide assures perfect head alignment.

Reliable Power Pack with high quality components. Compactness allows unit to be installed away from the manure pump pit.

12" SQUARE CHAMBER

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- No bushings or oil seals common to round plungers.
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- 10" PVC Pipe, not 12"; by going from a 12" square chamber to a 10" round, assures even pressure on manure to eliminate the chances for sediment to accumulate.

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