

Vegetable growers to meet

NEWARK, Del. - We've just rounded the corner on a new year, and it's none too soon for commercial vegetable growers to be making some decisions. For this reason, the first annual meeting of the Delaware Vegetable Growers Association will be held January 29-30 at the Sheraton Inn in Dover.

The meeting will cover marketing, packaging, variety selection, and crop production techniques. There will also be an industry Trade Show.

There are two key decisions a growers needs to make now - what to grow, and how to market his crop. Success in terms of a profitable 1979 depends largely on how well these decisions are made, says University of Delaware Extension Vegetable Specialist Dr. Mike Orzolek.

If you're planning to raise vegetables commercially this year, the most critical choice you have to make is where to market your crop. You have several options. Each has its advantages - as well as its drawbacks.

If you decide to compete for fresh-market sales, there are several alternatives, depending on the volume of production, points out the specialist. Wholesale produce centers such as those in Baltimore, Philadelphia or New York offer certainty of sales, but at a market price based on packaging and grade of product. The price you get at these centers can be quite variable and at times won't result in a net profit to you.

Farmers' auction blocks

such as those in Laurel, Del., or Vineland, N.J., are another possibility. These usually bring higher prices for vegetables, but sale of a crop isn't always a certainty, cautions Orzolek. Field run loads of vegetables and/or small volumes can be sold at the auction block. But the price you get will be based on grade and quality. For the grower who is a gambler, auction sales can be quite profitable during the year.

Your other alternative is to sell to roadside markets or at your own roadside market. Prices will be similar to those at auctions or wholesale markets, but volume may be variable from week to week. This could leave you with a surplus and the need to quickly find another outlet.

A grower also has the option of contracting with a processor for one or more vegetables. The contract guarantees you an income from the crop, but at a fixed price per unit. Both high yields and extensive acreage are needed for net profit under this arrangement.

The second decision you have to make now is what vegetable to produce. Knowledge of national acreage, demand and price may help you with this decision. If you're already locked into the production of a certain crop because of investments in equipment and the availability of labor, your main concern may be deciding just how much of that crop to plant this year.

These marketing and cropping decisions can be tough ones to make, admits

Tractor 4-H club to form

ELIZABETHTOWN - On January 25, a 4-H tractor maintenance club will be formed, at Messick Farm Equipment. The meeting will begin at 7 p.m.

Anyone between the ages of 8 and 18 can join. Safety is emphasized and a driver certification program will be offered.

For further information, one can contact the 4-H Extension Office at 717-394-6851 or Bob Bukowski, leader, at 717-653-1781; or Messick Farm Equipment at 717-367-1319 or 717-653-8867.

Messick Farm Equipment is located at the Rheems Exit of Route 283, near Elizabethtown.

the vegetable specialist. For this reason he urges all growers and potential growers in Delaware and

adjoining states to attend the Delaware Vegetable Growers Association meeting.

For further information, those interested in attending the two-day meeting should

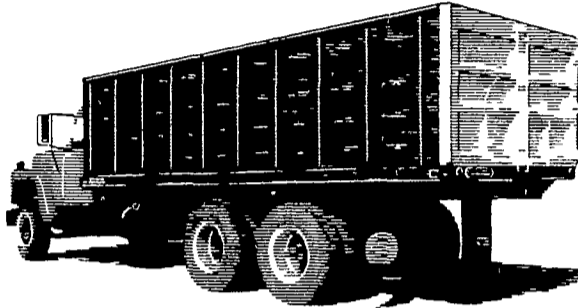
contact Dr. Mike Orzolek at the University of Delaware Substation in Georgetown, Del. (302-856-5250).

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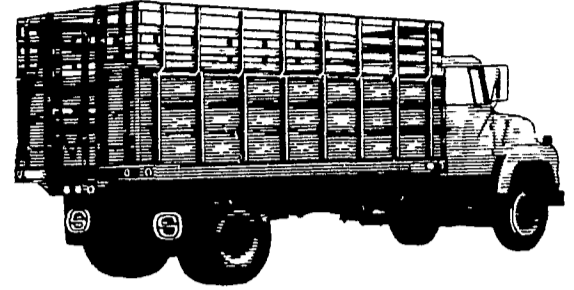
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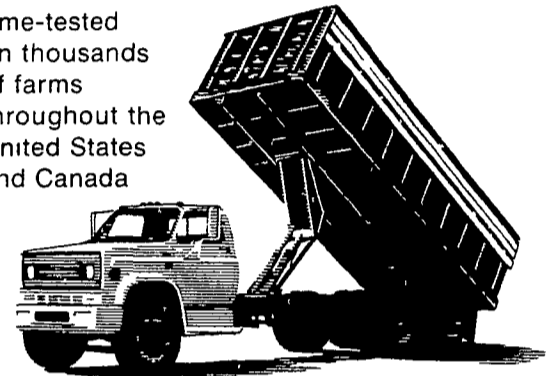
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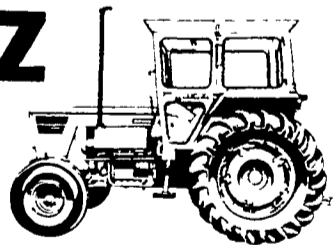


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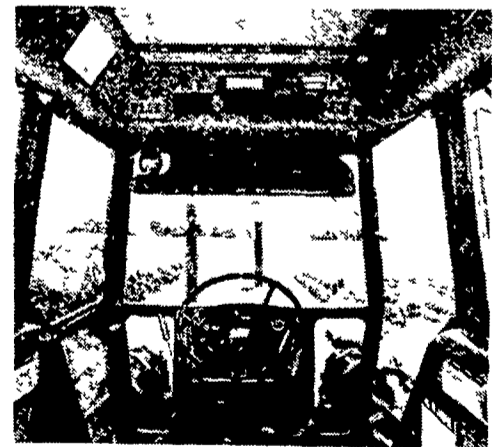
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