

# Farmers report fuel shortages, tight supplies

HARRISBURG - Short supplies of LP gas and diesel fuel were reported by 14 and 29 per cent of farm operators, respectively. Thirty per cent of the reports said gasoline supplies were tight and a few reported deficit supplies.

Pennsylvania's farm operators were treated to the best week for fieldwork in the past month during the week ending June 17. All areas of the state reported six days suitable for fieldwork, which include cultivating, spraying,

making hay a planting corn as well as harvesting green peas, strawberries and sweet cherries.

Soil moisture continued to decline during the week, with only 12 per cent reporting surplus soil moisture. Most surplus supplies were reported in northern areas.

Corn is now all planted, finishing the same date as

last year and normal. Some replanting is still being done.

Corn is now an average of 10 inches high, a week ahead of the seven inches reported a year ago at this time. The crop is at eight inches in the north, nine inches in the central counties and 13 inches in the south. Some northern farm operators report recent growth is slow

and germination is poor on late plantings.

Vegetable crops are progressing well, and reports indicate cabbage and tomatoes are growing rapidly. Sweet corn now stands at 12 to 14 inches tall. Tomatoes are entering the early blossom stage in central and northern regions and setting fruit in the south. Sugar peas are currently being harvested and pod peas are rapidly reaching maturity. The strawberry crop is at its peak with most reports noting excellent quality and yield.

Sweet cherries are ripe in the south and turning color in central and northern areas. Apples are sizing well with only scattered reports of apple scab. Some apples have been affected by fire blight in the south. Pears have been hard hit by fire blight in all areas of the state.

The first cutting of alfalfa is now one-half complete, with a slight bit of second cutting made, about two days behind 1978. Clo-tim is one-third cut at this time. About one half of the reporters rate hay quality good and the other half rate it as fair. Some reports of poor hay quality were received from the north.

Pastures are providing an average amount of feed in most localities.

At 90 per cent planted, soybeans are five days ahead of the 78 per cent pace set last year. Northern counties report 94 per cent, central counties are at 92 per cent and 85 per cent are planted in the south.

Tobacco is 71 per cent planted compared to 67 per cent a year ago. Plant growth so far has been good.

Barley is 10 per cent ripe with another 45 per cent turning. A year ago no barley was ripe at this time. Under five per cent is ripe in northern and central counties, but the south reports 20 per cent ripe.

Wheat, at ten per cent turning, is six days ahead of the less than five per cent turning a year ago. Northern and central areas report under five per cent turning, but the south reports 25 per cent turned and a small amount ripe. Storms have caused some lodging. Oats are 23 per cent headed, a week ahead of the eight per cent last year. The north stands at six per cent in head, central counties are at 24 per cent and the south is at 42 per cent. Cereal leaf beetle is again being reported as a problem.

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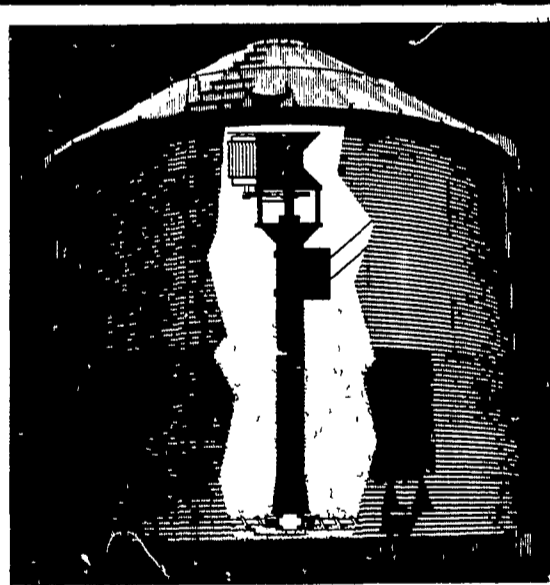
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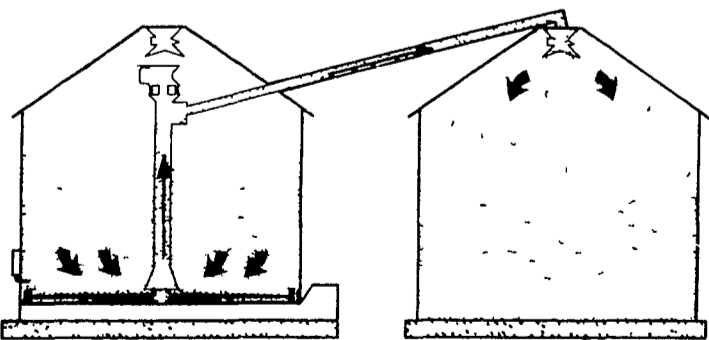
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