

# USDA to continue modified chicken inspection program

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Because public comment has generally endorsed it, the year-old U.S. Department of Agriculture's modified traditional inspection of young chickens will be continued, Assistant Secretary of Agriculture Carol Tucker Foreman said Monday.

Public comment to USDA has generally endorsed modified traditional inspection of young chickens as more efficient than the traditional methods, Foreman said.

However, not all comments about the program were favorable, Foreman said. The American Federation of Government Employees, which represents poultry inspectors, said the new inspection rates were too high

and might affect the health of poultry inspectors.

The union said the poultry eating public might be injured by modified traditional inspection because the "high" maximum inspection rates could cause inspectors to suffer "line hypnosis" and approve unwholesome poultry carcasses.

However, Foreman said, a USDA test of modified traditional inspection showed that such inspection was fully as effective as the traditional inspection procedure in detecting unwholesome poultry.

Foreman said USDA will continue to study inspection procedures to ensure that they provide adequate consumer protection while avoiding any "undue physical and mental

demands" on poultry line inspectors.

The new procedure eliminates most of the time an inspector spends positioning the carcass for inspection—which can take up to 50 percent of the time under traditional methods. A mirror is used to help the inspector see the entire carcass without turning it

To assure that inspectors have sufficient time to perform the necessary procedures effectively, USDA has set a maximum of 70 birds per minute for the new inspection procedures on a production line with three inspectors.

"This modified traditional inspection procedure

maintains the high level of consumer protection provided by traditional inspection," said Foreman.

"At the same time, it gives industry the opportunity to meet increased consumer demand for chicken without creating the need for additional inspectors. This is in keeping with the ad-

ministration's effort to fight inflation."

The summary of the comments on modified traditional inspection was published in the April 25 Federal Register, available at local libraries.

Poultry slaughtering and processing inspection is required by the Poultry Products Inspection Act.

## Use a little TLC with farm animals

UNIVERSITY PARK — Throughout history, the backbone of the family farm has been the animals that supplied the horsepower for working crops and provided the resources for many edible products.

The family farm, of course, has given way to bigger things and animal

horsepower has largely been replaced by machines, but animals still play a major role in farm life. They also are involved in a large number of accidents says Dennis Murphy, Extension safety specialist at Penn State.

It is "risky business to blunder in handling

animals," says Murphy. He advises that the following safety precautions be adhered to when handling animals:

Leave animal alone as much as possible. Treat them patiently and kindly, but not overtrustingly. Learn to be aware of their every move, or lack of it, when you're around them.

Startled animals may kick first—then look! Approach all animals from the front and side, speaking softly so they're aware of you and are reassured. Never tease them. That's one game you can lose with serious results.

Large animals, such as cows, horses and bulls, can crush or trample you to death if they pin you against a wall, fence, or if they get you down on the ground. When handling them, never allow yourself to be cornered or caught between the animal and any object.

Be especially cautious

around animals, male or female, that are protecting their young, especially newborns; they are tense and will attack intruders. Plan to keep an escape route open. This is true also of sick animals.

Horns on animals are death-dealing weapons. Be extremely careful in handling such animals. "Dehorning" doesn't affect an animal's method of attack—they can still butt or throw you.

Handle a bull only by a staff that's snapped to a ring in his nose; this helps you to keep a safe distance.

Animals carry germs and can transmit many diseases to man, so personal cleanliness is a must. Wash your hands often, especially before eating. Get treatment for even the smallest wound or scratch you receive around animals. If any animal appears to be sickly, attend to it immediately.

## E-town-Donegal Community 4-H Club to organize

ELIZABETHTOWN — The organizational meeting of the Elizabethtown-Donegal Community Club will be held Tuesday, May 12, 7 p.m. at the home of

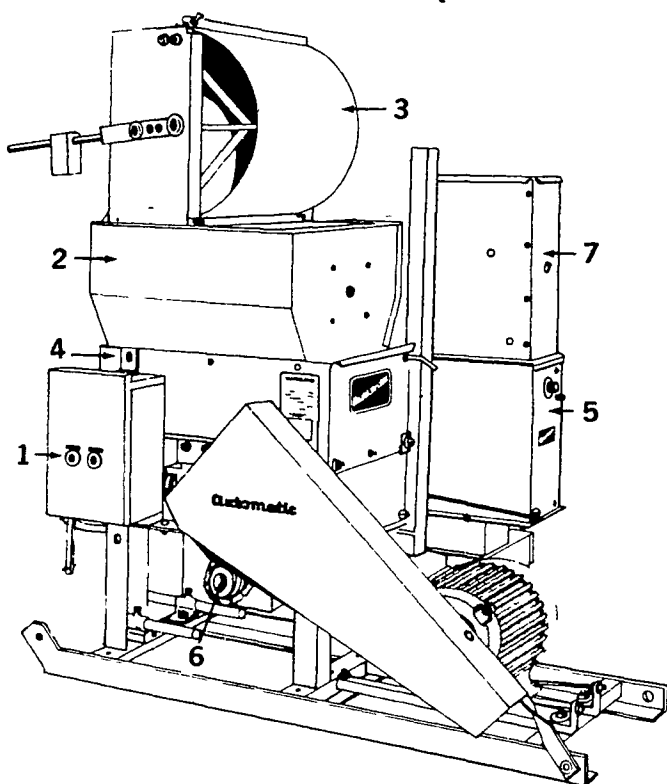
Wilbur Erb.

Projects available for youth ages 8 through 18 years of age as of January 1, 1980 are: tomatoes, vegetables, flowers, strawberries, sweet corn, capons, pigs, veal calves, cantaloupes, potatoes and pet care.

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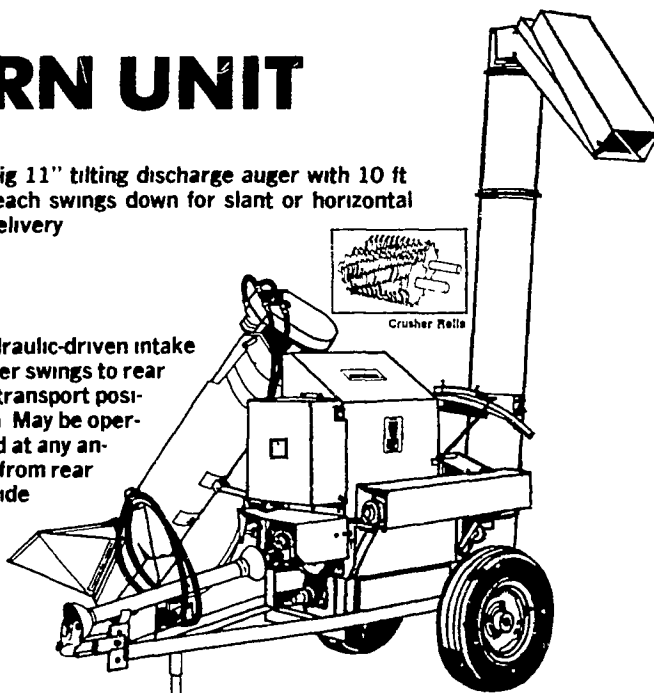
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