

Jim Garber, Lancaster, inspects the 40 gallon galvanized range boilers which serve as the heat collectors of the passive solar water heater. A double-wall fiberglass glazing will cover the "bread box" after plumbing is completed and the tanks are painted black.

## LCCD shows 'how-to's' of solar heating

LANCASTER — Approximately 95 Lancaster Countians attended two solar water heater workshops sponsored recently by the Lancaster County Conservation District.

Four units were constructed at each workshop under the supervision of Mark Whitmoyer, solar home builder and consultant.

The units are designed as "passive" systems, which heat the water before it goes to a back-up electric, gas, or oil heater. Two 40-gallon range boilers collect the solar energy, and the line pressure from the house passes the heated water through the tank.

Passive solar water

heaters have been around since the early 1900's, and in general are more efficient than active systems which use an anti-freeze liquid through a copper collector, a circulator, and a heat exchanger. In addition, a passive system is less expensive and easier to install than an active system, according to LCCD Administrator Tom Johnston.

Those who have built solar water heaters at the workshops have given reports of average water temperature of 110° to 120° F on normal sunny days

Designed primarily to provide for domestic household hot water, the system does have some


applicability, to agriculture, according to Johnston. Johnston said he is optimistic that farrowing houses with hot water heat in the floor, greenhouses, and small dairy operations could benefit from this system. He added he would be willing to work with farmers to help adapt a passive solar water heater to their farming operations.

## Food drying brochure available

YORK — Drying is one of the oldest methods of food preservation. It is still a prime method where canning and freezing are not feasible and where conditions are good for drying out-of-doors

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from the Extension Office at 112 Pleasant Acres Road, York or call 717/757-9657 or send for Drying Foods At Home, USDA - H.G. 217 from the Consumer Information Center, Pueblo, Colorado, 81009. Charge for the publication is 75 cents. You should send a money order or check for this amount.




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## USDA drops rates on loans

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The U.S. Department of Agriculture has agreed to lower rates charged for emergency loans to financially pressed farmers under the Economic Emergency Assistance loan program from 14 per cent to 11.5 per cent, effective Monday, June 16.

The decision is a victory for congressmen who have been pressing for lower interest rates under the program, arguing that USDA was over-charging farmers for the loans

Interest rates under the program are supposed to be pegged to the cost of government borrowing, plus about one per cent to cover administrative expenses. After government borrowing costs began to rise in March, the rate was promptly raised in April from 11 per cent to 14 per cent

The USDA has continued to charge 14 per cent for the loans, even though government borrowing costs have been steadily decreasing since early April. In May, for example, the average cost

was just 10.3 per cent.

Iowa Congressman Tom Harkin said he welcomed the decision, but added he was disturbed that it came so late. "If the economists at the USDA were really looking out for the farmer they would have lowered these rates two months ago," Harkin said.

He said he will continue to monitor the program and will press for further reductions in the interest rate if government borrowing costs continue to decline.

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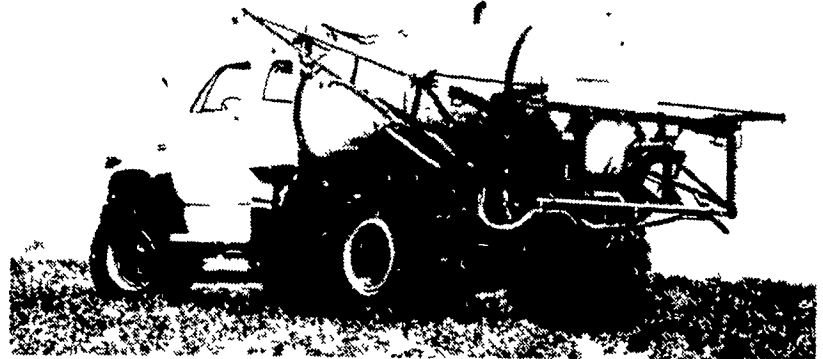
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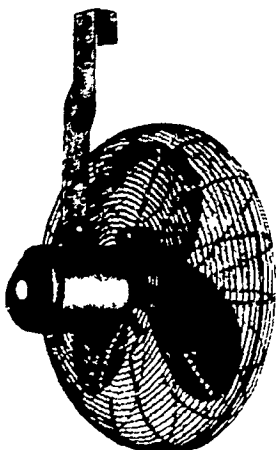
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