

# Farm Talk

Jerry Webb

Henry Ford gained fame and fortune as the first industrialist to mass produce automobiles. His Model-T Ford put America on wheels and allowed the common man to own his own automobile. But that's not all he did.

Considering overall value to mankind, Henry Ford may have made an even more important contribution

to agriculture. For not only was he the first to mass produce automobiles, he was also the first to mass produce farm tractors. In fact, according to the Ford Motor Company founder's autobiography, he spent considerable time tinkering with farm tractor ideas before he turned his attention to highway transportation.

Having walked "many a weary mile behind a plow" Ford decided it was a tremendous waste of human time to have to follow a slow moving team of horses. He successfully designed several steam-powered tractors, but all were too big and too expensive for the average farmer. And he felt that producing big tractors for big farmers was not worthwhile.

So Ford temporarily sidelined his tractor tinkering in the early 1900's and got busy producing Model-T's.

He continued experimenting with farm tractors in his spare time, however, producing as many as 50 experimental models before arriving at one that seemed right and before the turn of world events forced him into production.

That was in 1917 and the World War I German

blockade was causing Great Britain to have grave concern about its food-producing capabilities. That country was importing 70 percent of its food supply and many food-laden ships were falling victim to enemy gunfire.

According to Ford's autobiography, Britain's Lord Northcliffe contacted Ford and asked him to build tractors for Britain's farmers - tractors that would boost that country's food producing abilities in a hurry.

The first of 7000 mass produced Fordson tractors rolled off the assembly line October 8, 1917. In seven months the entire British order was filled. Not until 1918 did the American farmer have a chance at Ford's marvelous farming machine.

Within three months after its introduction to the

American market, Ford had accumulated 13,000 orders. Between 1917 and 1928 the giant car company produced almost 740,000 farm tractors. And during some years in the 1920's, Fordsons represented 75 percent of all farm tractors built in the U.S.

How times have changed! Those very first U.S. Fordsons sold for \$795. But due to mass production economies the price dropped to a low of \$395 in 1922.

The Ford Motor Company transferred its tractor manufacturing to Ireland in 1929 and later to England where Fordsons continued to be built through the 1930's. By then other manufacturers were improving on Ford's idea and by the late thirties Fordsons were not a big factor in the American farm tractor market.

Other makers, notably International Harvester and Allis Chalmers, had made improvements that left the Fordson looking awkward, unwieldy and slow.

By the beginning of World War II Fordsons were little more than relics of an agricultural past. Their steel

wheels, cantankerous clutch mechanisms and hard hand cranking left them in disfavor with most farmers. They chose instead the electric start, rubber-tired Farmalls that are still quite evident on the American farm scene.

But as the advertising line goes, Ford had a better idea, and indeed they did when they introduced the 1939 Ford tractor with the Ferguson system. That was the first U.S. tractor with three-point hitch and hydraulic control system.

It allowed farmers to raise and lower attached implements through the use of hydraulics, thus eliminating back-breaking hand labor. That system, which is now universal, still ranks as one of the most important agricultural developments of this century.

Although Ford never regained its position as the nation's leading tractor maker, it has continued to make significant contributions to agriculture through a complete line of Ford tractors and implements.

Things are tight, but Massey comes through for you!  
Take your choice of . . .

# \$8,000 REBATE

Make your best deal on any eligible new MF tractor, combine, hay tool or implement and then GET CASH BACK from Massey-Ferguson. Up to \$8,000 with no trade. Or up to \$6,000 with a trade-in. Take as a rebate check from MF, or reduce your purchase price. Regular MF financing available. Not all units qualify for rebates, so see us for details.

# OR 13.75% (ANNUAL PERCENTAGE RATE) FINANCING

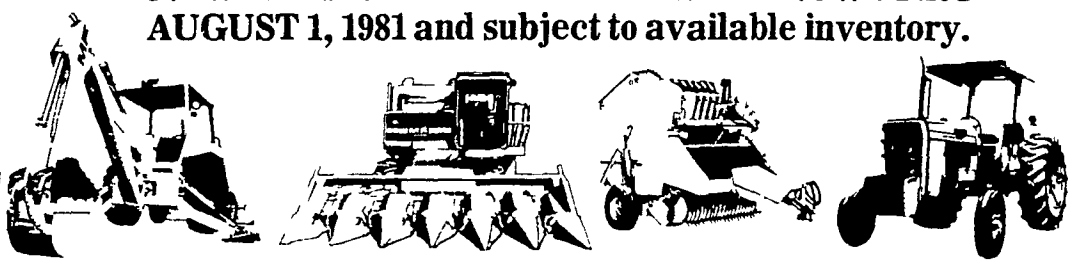
With money hard to come by even at high interest rates it's hard to beat this annual percentage rate through Massey-Ferguson. Use it to get the new MF equipment you need. Qualifying credit and down payment required.

# OR NO FINANCE CHARGES until March 1, 1981

on selected new and used MF tractors

Buy eligible new or used MF tractors now and finance through MF Credit Corporation and we can offer waiver of regular finance charges for as long as eight months or until March 1 1981. Offer may not apply to certain units so ask us about it now.

Come see us for details. OFFER GOOD NOW THRU AUGUST 1, 1981 and subject to available inventory.



## YOU'VE GOT WHAT IT TAKES WITH MASSEY FERGUSON

Personalized MF Financing, Parts, and Service Available.

**PETERMAN FARM EQUIPMENT**  
225 York Road  
Carlisle, PA  
Ph (717) 249-5338

**S. G. LEWIS AND SON**  
West Grove, PA  
Ph (215) 869-9440  
869-2214

**MARLIN W. SCHREFFLER**  
Pitman, PA  
Ph (717) 648-1120

**N. H. FLICKER & SONS, INC.**  
Maxatawny, PA  
Ph (215) 683-7252

**ARNETT'S GARAGE**  
Rt 9 Box 125  
Hagerstown, MD  
Ph (301) 733-0515

**M. M. WEAVER & SON**  
N Groffdale Rd  
Leola, PA 17540  
Ph (717) 656 2321

**LEBANON VALLEY IMPLEMENT CO.**  
700 E. Linden St  
Richland, PA  
Ph (717) 866-7518

**ABRACZINSKA'S FARM EQUIP. INC.**  
RD 1, Catawissa, PA  
717-356-2323  
(South on Rt. 42)

## State firewood

### permits now \$4

HARRISBURG — The price of a permit for cutting or collecting a cord of firewood on state forest land is \$4, effective on July 1, according to the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources.

Announcement of the increase, the first in seven years, was made by DER Secretary Clifford L. Jones.

Jones said the permit price has been \$3 per 100 cubic feet (1.5 cords) since 1973 and the increase is necessary to keep up with inflation and the administrative costs of the program.

Firewood always has been available in the state forests and until last year most was dead and downed material which could be picked up along forest roads with little or no effort, Jones said.

But, with the sudden surge

in people out collecting firewood, most of the easily accessible material has been removed, he said.

According to Jones, in 1979 more than 33,000 firewood permits were issued, compared to 18,975 permits issued in 1978.

As a result of the increased demand, the state Bureau of Forestry is forced to make more green wood available. Consequently the bureau must add the expense of marking trees to be cut, along with the forester's salary and transportation expenses, to the cost of the program.

Despite the price increase, Jones said the public-service program still gives energy-conscious people interested in conserving fuel the opportunity to use firewood to cut down on their heating bills.



## Old Guard

### Mutual Insurance Company

"Friend of Farmers since 1896."

We do a better job of insuring all your farm needs because we have over 80 years experience in doing it. Our number one purpose is to provide insurance coverage for the Pennsylvania farmer. See our agent in your area.

**THE HOXIE AGENCY**  
55 West Ridge Dr., Leola, Pa.

**LOOMIS INSURANCE AGENCY CORP.**  
Adamstown Pa.

**JACOB N. MARTIN**  
RD #2, Lancaster Pa.

**C. GORDON ERISMAN**  
RD #2 Franklin Rd. Columbia, Pa.