

How to protect stored grain

LANCASTER — Farmers frequently lose as much grain in storage as they do in the field. These storage losses may be caused by rats and mice, insects or spoilage.

All of these attackers may be foiled with fairly simple methods, says extension agricultural chemical specialist John McDaniel.

Harvesting machinery, grain wagons, trucks, elevators, and augers should be thoroughly cleaned so that older grain already infested by insects will not be mixed with this season's harvest. This alone could prevent the start of a serious problem.

Another practice which will help prevent the onset of problems is to clean the bins

inside and out. Remove all old grain, cracked kernels, dust and debris. Grain dust and cracked grain hidden beneath false floors and aeration ducts make ideal breeding conditions for insects.

Get ride of weeds growing near the grain storage area. These serve as harborage for rats and mice.

Spray the inside and outside surfaces of the grain storage structure with malathion or methoxychlor about two weeks before storing grain. One gallon of spray should cover 750 to 1000 square feet of surface, depending on whether it is a metal, wood or concrete wall.

Concrete walls should be sprayed with methoxychlor, since malathion is deactivated rapidly under alkaline conditions.

After the cleanup, be sure to store clean, dry grain. Adjust the harvester so that kernels are not broken and most dockage is removed. (Dockage includes weed seeds, dirt, chaff, and other material which is not clean grain. These pieces of trash impede aeration and serve as points for spoilage to start.)

Clean, dry grain stored in a clean storage unit will come out as clean dry grain, McDaniel concludes—the kind that brings the best price.



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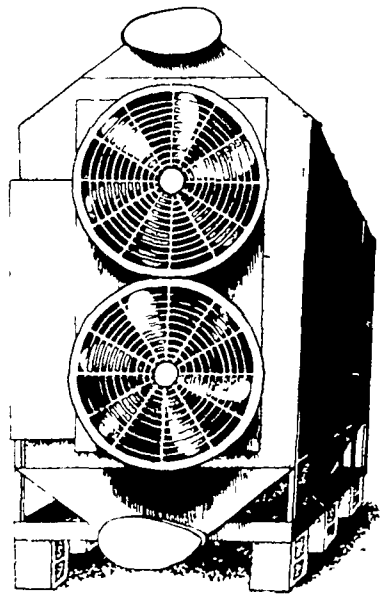
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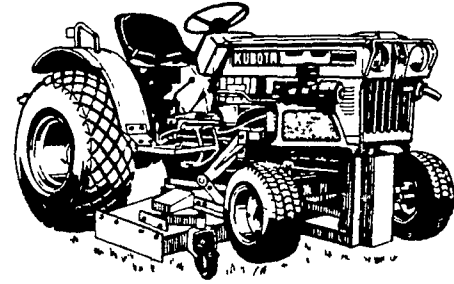


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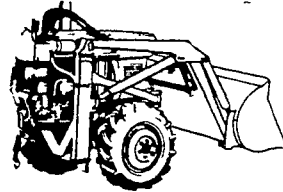
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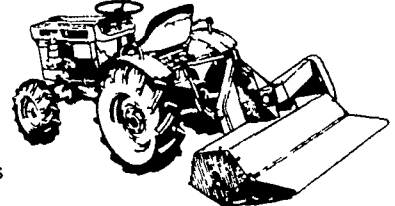
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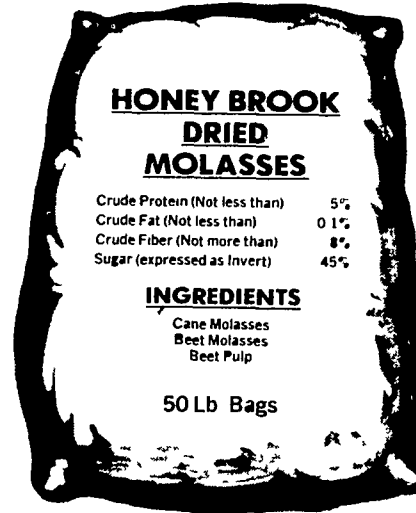


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