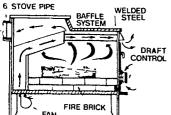
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# The Dairy Business By Newton Bair

#### "It'll Be Different Next Year

Call it faith, hope or just plain perseverence, next year is the essence of last year's expectations for this year. Now, this year looked fine last year, etc., etc In short, the progress of mankind has always been tied to the future.

We don't need to wait for 1980 to end in order to start thinking about another year A good exercise for September is to admit to ourselves that we probably made a few mistakes in planning for this year, and we surely don't want to repeat them

A close look at this sum-

mer's crops can help you decide what worked and what didn't Examine varieties, weed control, fertilization and cultural practices Then, begin to formulate your decisions about next year, while there is still plenty of time.

Look at your favorite varieties. Did they perform as well as you expected? Did the small grain lodge, or stand straight for harvest? Did your varieties head out well, or was there evidence of scab, smut or rust? Was it the fault of the weather, variety, or fertility of the soil? Wheat varieties are changing, and you may want to try one of the newer

bearded varieties this fall.

There are many commercial Hybrid corn varieties with as many characteristics you like or dislike such as stalk height, ear height, easy husking, standability, drought resistance, and of course, yield. Compare them in your own fields, as well as your neighbors. Visit some commercial demonstration plots, and request a copy of the 1980 corn variety evaluations from the Extension office.

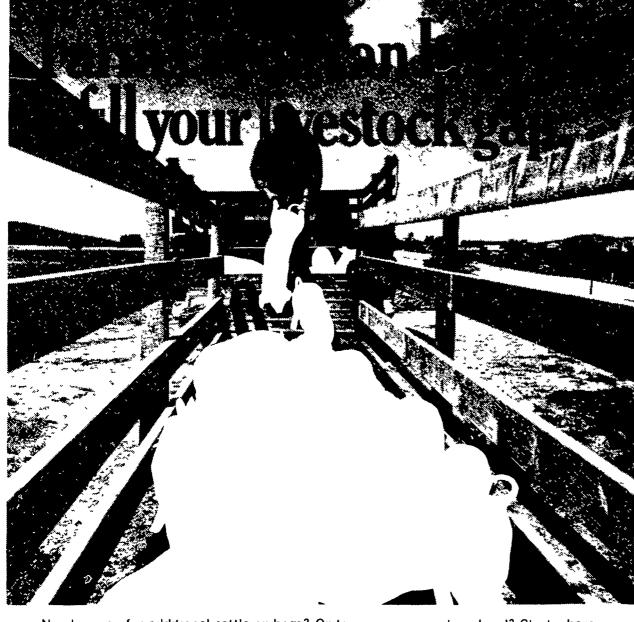
How was your weed control? If you have a field or two that is too weedy, be sure to identify the weed problem. If it's grass, is it mostly fall panicum, foxtail, barnyard grass or Johnson grass Broadleaved weeds are more easily identified, but there may be several bad ones that your herbicide program missed. Knowing what your weed problems were this year will make it a lot easier to put together the right program to control them next year.

We can always blame the soil for some of our crop problems. Of course, physical problems like compaction, drainage, eroded areas or thin shales are usually spotted very easily Moisture, either too much or not enough, is also very obvious Nutrient fertility, or the chemical status of the soil is less easily diagnosed, except by laboratory test. By all means, have your soil tested. Make sure that the soil sample represents the whole field. Use a soil probe and gather samples from at least 20 spots, mix them well, sift, and submit about a cup full to the laboratory. Then follow the recommendation for lime and fertilizer. Consider the nitrogen supplied by previous crops and by the manure you apply. You'll save money and avoid ground water pollution.

Now while you are at it, take a good look at your other management practices. This is an ideal time to resolve to test your forage (hay, silage, haylage) and build a least-cost ration around your available supply One test won't be enough for the whole season. The forages you feed will vary greatly through the season, and adjustments must be made as the forages quality changes. Weigh, measure and push a pencil. Good "eyeball" feeders are rare these days.

One more bit of advice. Take time to attend some information meetings this fall and winter. The Extension Service will offer a series of meetings designed to keep you informed on a variety of useful subjects. The time spent in learning may be your wisest investment

Don't wait until New Years Day to make your resolutions for next year. Your assessment of this year is clearer and fresher now than it will be January first.



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