

York County farmers use alcohol as fuel

LEWISBERRY — With the experience of more than 1000 miles of operation behind them, directors of the York County FUEL Cooperative Monday unveiled a standard pickup truck and tractor which have been operating on straight alcohol fuel.

George Hoke, president of the Farmers Union Energy League Cooperative (FUEL), said engine adjustments were minimal,

and that overall performance of alcohol is at least comparable to gasoline.

"The greatest advantage of alcohol" said Hoke, "is that we can produce it from corn in Central Pennsylvania and OPEC can keep its oil."

FUEL, established in March, 1980, is a non-profit cooperative incorporated under the Cooperative Agricultural Association Act

of Pennsylvania. Since its inception, the cooperative has advocated farmer-controlled production and use of alcohol as a farm fuel.

York County members hope to create a dependable source of domestic fuel for farm operations of members.

Both the truck, owned by Albert Bentz of Thomasville, operated on straight 190-proof alcohol. Bentz' truck, a 1974 Chevy

Cheyenne pickup, has logged almost 1,000 miles on alcohol fuel. The eight cylinder, 350 cubic inch engine has been slightly modified to run smoothly.

Its "alcohol" mileage equals its gas mileage, both at nine to ten miles per gallon.

The tractor operates just as efficiently on alcohol as it does on gasoline, according to Goodlander. He says the tractor starts more quickly and has more power when using alcohol as a fuel.

On hand for the demonstration were Victor K. Ray, vice president of the National Farmers Union, George F. Hoke, president of the York County FUEL Co-op, FUEL members and representatives from the Pennsylvania Farmers Union.

The Denver, Colorado based National Farmers Union has been urging its members to become involved with alcohol fuel experimentation.

Ray, who has coordinated NFU efforts, said he believes farmer-controlled production and use of alcohol as a farm fuel can truly be a "Declaration of Independence" for farmers and for America.

Board members of the York County FUEL Co-op have spent countless hours during the last six months in research and development of the project. The idea of experimenting with alternative forms of fuel came

when farmers, like everyone, were faced with rapidly rising petroleum prices and gasoline shortages.

The cooperative is applying for \$1 million in financing from the federal Department of Energy to construct a million gallon per year alcohol fuel plant.

This amount would account for nearly 40 percent of the total \$2.2 million required to build and operate the facility.

The new alcohol fuel plant would bolster the economy of York County, provide an additional market for grain, and generate a local supply of alcohol fuel.

Appeals court allows pseudo-product labeling

DES MOINES, IA. — Pork producers are disappointed in the ruling from the Court of Appeals in St. Louis which upholds the USDA regulation permitting uncured meat products to look like and bear the names of traditionally cured products such as hot dogs and bologna.

"Our concern for consumer safety is only heightened by the new court decision," said National Pork Producers Council President Bill Buller. "The lower court concluded this regulation would confuse, if not deceive consumers," said Buller, "and we still agree."

NPPC said it challenged the regulation last year out of concern for the public's safety. The industry contended that consumers would be confused by "look-alikes" and would suffer food poisoning as a result of handling the unpreserved products in the same manner they now handle the cured or preserved products.

"People with an active interest in avoiding nitrite may spot the difference between the look-alikes," said Buller. "But what's to happen to the ordinary American consumer who spends little time studying the labels of what appear to be plain old hot dogs?"

In appealing the lower court ruling, USDA argued that it was obligated to provide consumers with an alternative to nitrite cured products since nitrite was believed to be a health hazard. In mid-August

USDA and FDA refuted the study condemning nitrites, saying that there is no basis for regulatory action against nitrites at this time.

"Tuesday's court ruling is especially unfortunate," said NPPC Executive Vice President Orville Sweet, "in that the public is again the loser in this regulatory battle. Individual consumers now face the burden of avoiding botulism poisoning through their own extreme care and preventive action."

The possibility of further appeals or action by NPPC is being studied at this time.

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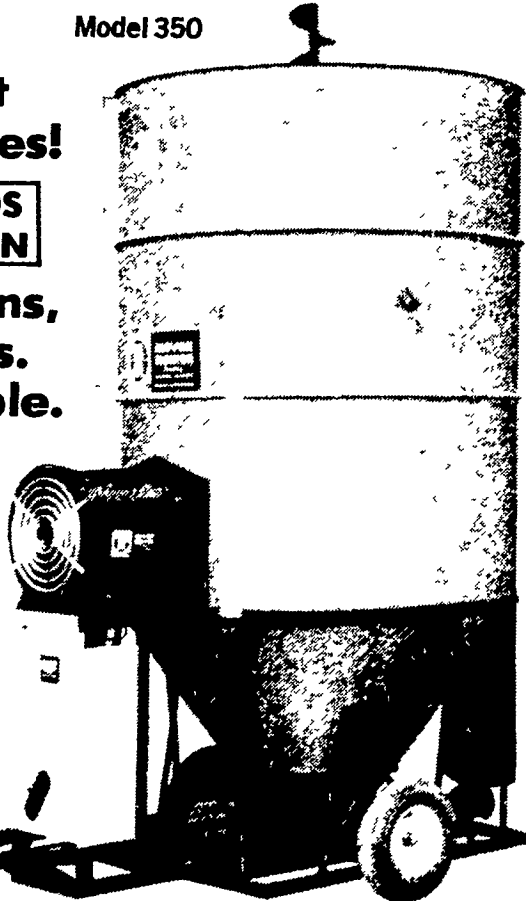


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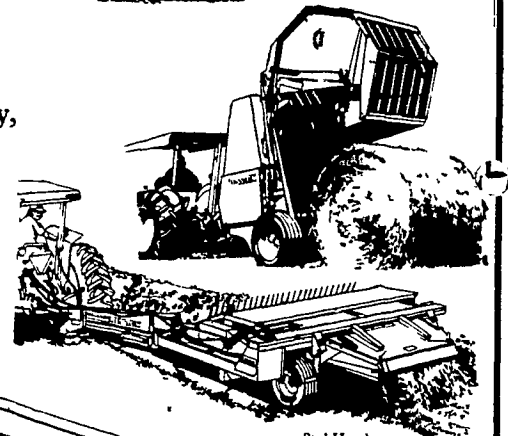
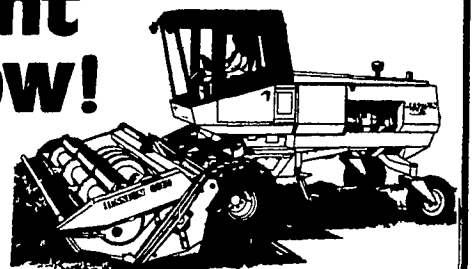
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