

Good soybean management avoids sudden water stresses

ATLANTA, Ga — Supplemental irrigation can reduce soybean losses from water stress, ac-

ording to U.S. Department of Agriculture soil scientist Morris G. Huck. Adequate water, available at

Proposal to reduce lunch program paperwork

WASHINGTON, D.C. — A proposal to cut paperwork in local school lunch programs has been issued by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

"The proposal, part of the administration's drive to provide regulatory relief, would ease federal record-keeping and reporting requirements for school food authorities and give states more flexibility in administering school nutrition programs," says Mary C. Jarratt, assistant secretary for food and consumer services.

The proposed rule would cut down on paperwork by eliminating the requirement that schools maintain separate cost accounts for their school breakfast, school lunch and other nonprofit school food service operations.

Schools would be required to

maintain only the revenue and expenditure records to document the use of funds and the nonprofit status of their food service programs.

Once the proposal is effective, it will be up to state educational agencies, which are responsible for administering school lunch programs in each state, to determine the best system for monitoring the financial records of local schools.

The proposed regulations were issued under the Omnibus Reconciliation Act of 1981. Public comments should be sent by June 8 to Stanley C. Garnett, school programs division, Food and Nutrition Service, USDA, Alexandria, Va. 22303.

critical times, allows the plant to utilize more of its resources in seed production and less in development of the extensive root system needed for insuring a steady water supply under the uncertain conditions of water supplied from natural rainfall alone.

"Root systems are much more extensive under water-stressed plants," the Agricultural Research Service scientists says. "When water is limited the soybean plants must divert sugar and other resources into root growth to insure survival. If an adequate water supply is available, the plant senses less of a need for root growth and top growth is accelerated."

Huck, speaking at the American

Society of Agronomy meeting recently, said that because soybean roots are of value mainly to assure availability of water during dry periods between rains, an assured, steady water supply will relieve some of the requirement for developing an extensive root system.

"However," he said, "if a sudden water stress is imposed on a large plant with a small root system (resulting from irrigation early in the growing season), pod losses and final seed yield are greatly reduced. If a limited amount of water is available for irrigation, it should be applied later in the growing season."

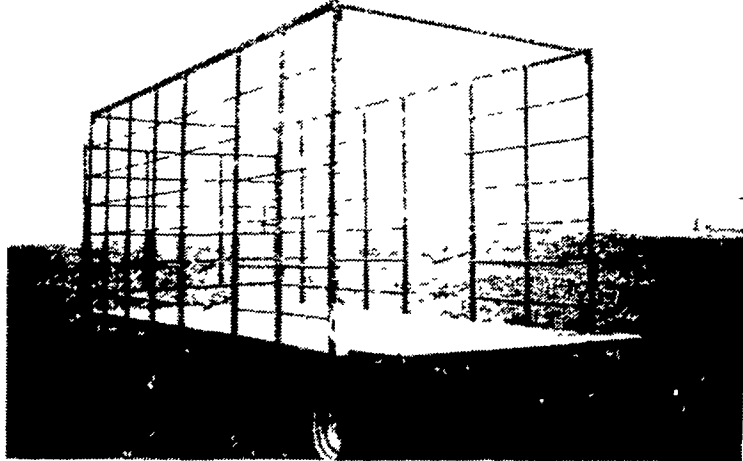
Because soybeans are very sensitive to water stress,

especially during late July and August blooming and pod fill, USDA launched a cooperative research program with the Department of Agronomy at Auburn University to grow soybeans under environmentally controlled conditions. Those soybeans grown in sandy soil, with only natural rainfall as a water supply, suffered severe water stress. The plants that were watered by trickle irrigation to insure an adequate supply of water throughout the growing season thrived, Huck reports.

Working with the ARS team leader were Auburn University agricultural engineer C.D. Busch and botany professor Curt M. Peterson.

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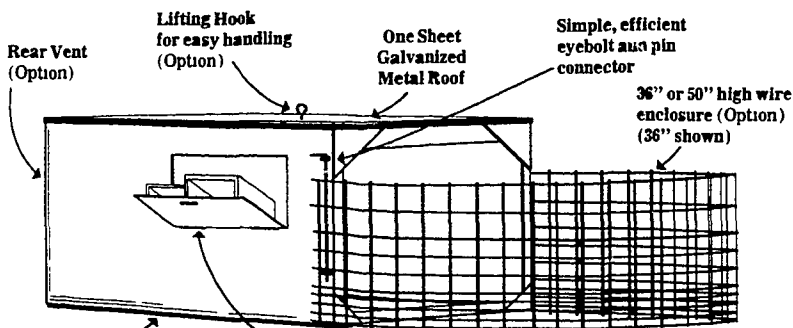
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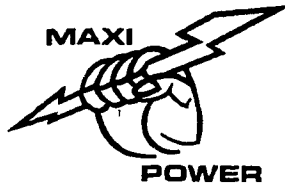
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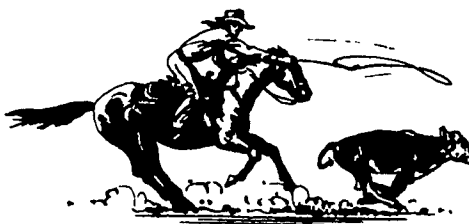
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