

Is water system ready for summer?

UNIVERSITY PARK — If you are in the business of making milk or raising meat or poultry, think about your watering systems before hot weather gets here.

"As temperatures rise, a system that was just barely adequate is bound to fail," says Robert Graves, Penn State Extension agricultural engineer.

If a lot of air comes out of the system or there are times when there is just no water, check your supply system. It may be a loose belt or you could need a new well. Without adequate water for periods of time it is reasonable that growth or production will be curtailed.

If you have plenty of water at your supply but still have empty tubs or slow running water you should check further. Inadequate piping systems, damaged valves, or pipes filled with corrosion or sediment can restrict flow.

Graves says that too often the problem with many farms is the reluctance to provide enough watering space.

"For some reason there is the tendency to skimp on the number of water bowls or the size of water tubs especially in freestall housing or outside lots," he adds.

During the summer it may be a good idea to plan some additional water tubs. Old cast iron bathtubs with appropriate non siphoning float valves makes very serviceable water tubs for summer use.

Remember," says Graves, "if your cows are thirsty because they have to wait in line to drink or because the day's supply of water was used to fill the spray tank, it's costing you money."

Locate watering facilities convenient to feeding and resting areas. They should not be located in bedded areas as there will be a tendency for the area to become messy from spilled water and concentrated animal traffic. Water facilities located too close to feed bunks will become easily contaminated with feed.

Finally be sure you are providing good quality water from a good source and protected from contamination by manure, feed, blowing dust or direct sunshine.

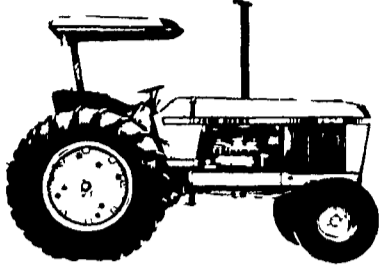
"If the water in your tub isn't inviting for you to drink, perhaps the cows don't like it either," says Graves.



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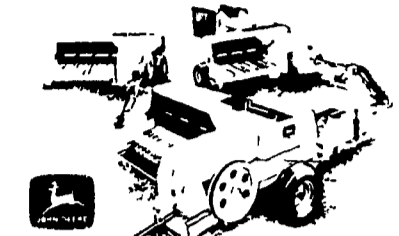
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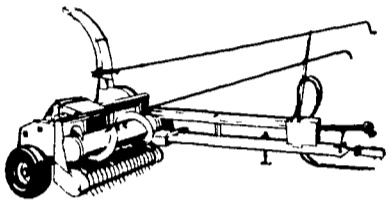
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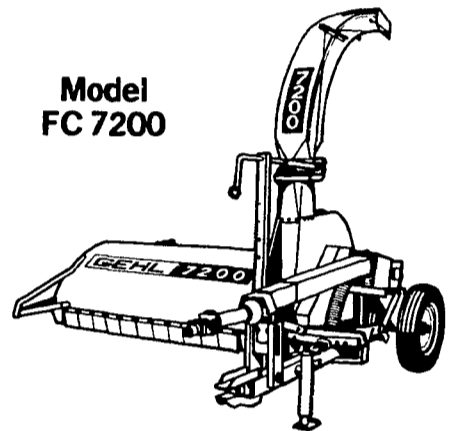
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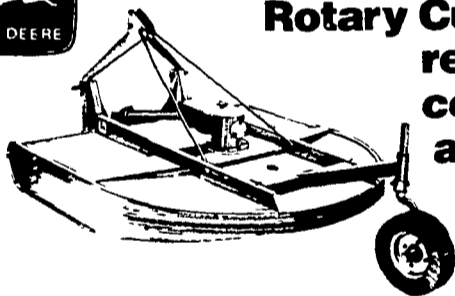
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* Program Expires May 28, 1982



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