

Look for Pa.'s fresh produce

HARRISBURG — Although actual crop damages from April's rainy, cold weather have been low, "The fields are still wet and the delay in fieldwork is still a concern," according to State Agriculture Secretary Penrose Hallowell. "The Pennsylvania Crop Reporting Service reported soil moisture as surplus in 83 percent of the state for the week ending May 11."

Fruit and vegetable damage was held to a minimum. "Very little damage was reported according to the Crop Reporting Service," said Hallowell. "In fact, Pennsylvania's fruit farmers may benefit from the poor spring weather. The snow and freezing temperatures had little affect on the commonwealth's fruit crop, but southern states were not so lucky. They reported higher frost losses, giving Pennsylvania farmers a potential advantage in late summer fruit markets."

"Pennsylvania vegetable farmers may not be as fortunate economically. Other Eastern coastal states have delayed vegetable planting because of the weather. Southern states usually

plant vegetables first and harvest intervals are established, keeping the supply steady for consumers. But this year, planting and harvesting may come at the same time in most Eastern coastal states causing an overabundance of mid-summer produce."

Hallowell said that consumers should look to their local farm markets for the freshest produce as it comes in season. "You can't beat the taste of fruits and vegetables picked the same day," he said. "As harvest season begins for Pennsylvania vegetables, help yourself and save by patronizing Pennsylvania farmers and stores with fresh Pennsylvania produce."

The crops most likely to be affected by fieldwork delays are spring oats and feed crops such as corn. "The later planting date for spring oats could decrease yield because a shorter growing season results," said Hallowell. "Corn and other feed grain yield may not be as affected by the delay because of the PIK program. The PIK program has farmers planting less acres and, if the rains have stopped, with less acres to work, it could all even out."

Deere reports mulch tiller

Moline, Ill. — Crop producers can turn heavy trash into a moisture-absorbing, soil-saving mulch immediately after harvest with a new one-pass conservation tillage tool from John Deere.

The new 712 Mulch Tiller consists of a front gang of coulters, or disk blades if preferred, and three staggered ranks of chisels. The coulters cut and size the residue. If disk blades are substituted for coulters, an aggressive soil and trash mixing benefit is added.

Further mixing is achieved with the three ranks of chisels which may be equipped with rigid or Tru-Depth spring-trip standards and 3- or 4-inch shovels. The 3-inch shovel is twisted and concave for better performance in medium to heavy soils with plenty of trash. The 4-inch shovel features the same design and is used in lighter, sandy soils or for maximum trash in-

corporation. The Tru-Depth standard has an initial trip force of 1250 lbs. This keeps the standard in the ground for deep tillage even in heavy soils.

Vertical clearance of 32 inches provides plenty of room for heavy trash flow.

Weight brackets are available for the 712 to hold up to a ton of tractor front-end weights. The

weight increases penetration, in those extremely tough soil conditions, but can be removed when not needed to conserve fuel and horsepower.

New John Deere 712 Mulch Tillers are available in rigid sizes from 11 ft. 3 inches to 16 ft. 3 inches; folding models are available in 18 ft. 9 inch or 21 ft. 3 inch widths.



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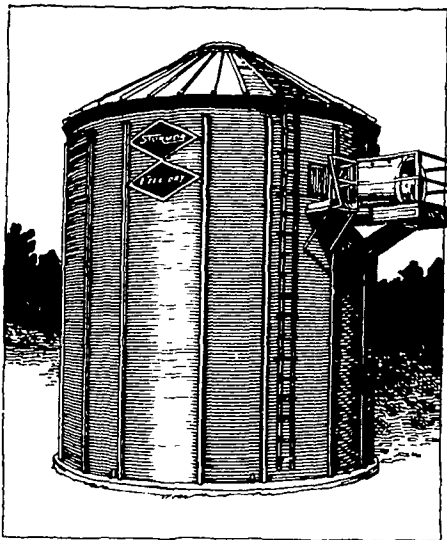
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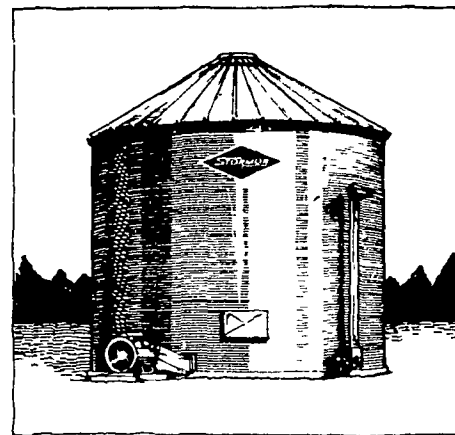
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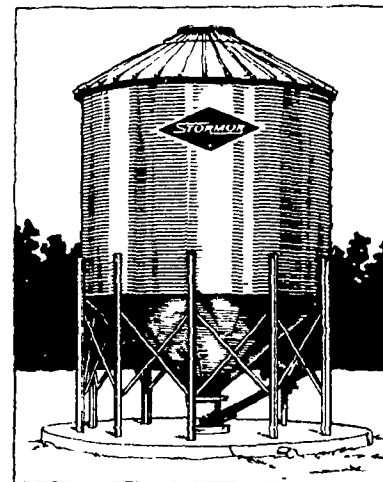
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