

On being a farm wife - And other hazards Joyce Bupp



Hooray for the members of the most recent space shuttle crew. I'd like to recommend that they be made honorary farmers.

Consider this: A multi-million dollar communications satellite is launched. In spite of the most up-

to-date technology, engineering and computerism, the equipment refuses to operate. Astronauts rig together a make-shift swatter device, fashioned of plastic notebook covers, to attempt to flip a switch believed to be the culprit.

While it didn't do the trick, and the problem proved more complex, give 'em a hand for creativity under duress. Like farmers, they tried to make a repair with simple things at hand.

What they probably should have had was a length or two of baling twine.

Farms today, by necessity, are often worth (on paper) upwards of a million dollars—and probably mortgaged for just about that. Still, in spite of push button planting, computerized feeding and digital-read-out seeding, most-I suspect—are basically held together by one of the greatest and unrecognized resources of rural America.

Used baling twine.

It's handy, cheap, recyclable, biodegradable, versatile, and pollution free, a magical answer to everyday farm fix-it problems.

The door on the heifer pen that needs propped to facilitate air flow on a hot day? Tie it back with baling twine. Same goes for the windows at the end of the old bank

barn.

A new calf in the calf barn occasionally escaped through the pen front, taking a nose dive out through the feed and water access opening, and heads off adventuring. I've seen calves do that three or four times in five minutes.

Baling twine, strung horizontally across the opening for a couple of hours until Junior settles down, makes for a safe, and secure, temporary door closure.

Fastening gates is big baling twine business. This proves especially true on gates frequently moved from here to there, or devoid of permanent hinges because no one ever got around to installing them—since the twine does the trick.

When a cow slips her metal necklace for stall tying, a length of baler twine easily suffices. Probably warmer in the winter, too, though perhaps less stylish.

Just a cut above the mundane everyday uses are the intricate works of baling twine art woven hereabouts by a certain individual. These macrame-designs are divided at those unhandy gaps between fences or gates, where a more slippery-than-usual heifer can manage to sneak out.

Spiders have been known to crawl out from the barn walls, to gaze in awe and envy at some of

these majestic web-like baling twine masterpieces.

Elsewhere, the twine is tapped for such backyard uses as tying up newspapers and tomato plants, marking a row of onions, hanging baskets for the back porch, even snatched by resident barn birds for feathering their nests.

A certain offspring with hunter tendencies used to tie baling twine to cardboard boxes, prop the boxes at an angle, and put "bait" under the catching for cats, while he yanked the long twine from a hiding place in the distance. The cats, for the most part, lined up for the chance to get "caught" and snag a tasty bite of the bait of the day.

For far too long, the baling twine farm resource has gone unheeded and unappreciated. It's high time that census officials, farm financial analyses, balance sheets, and cash flow statements recognize the inherent worth of those stacks of dusty, curled up twine remnants.

In the interest of future national space security, and potential needs of our astronauts, I'm considering shipping a donation of used twine to NASA.

What worries me, though, is that IRS might then wake up to its value, and figure out how to slap some tax on it.

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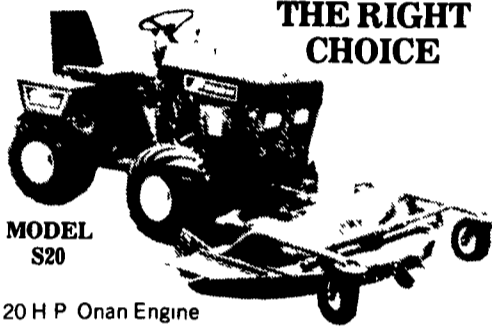
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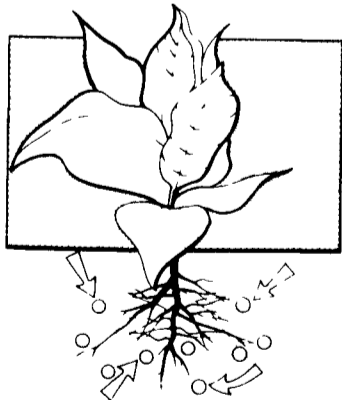
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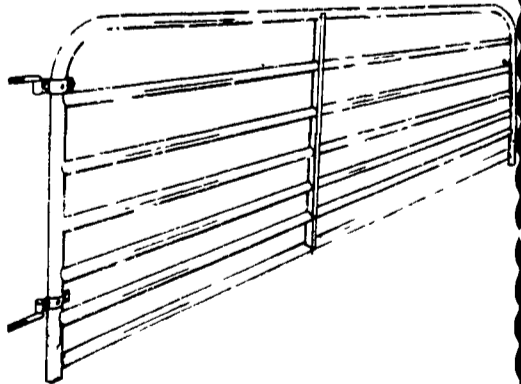
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never married and whose parents or guardians are engaged in farming, or if the young lady is the owner of at least one dairy animal is eligible to compete for the title.

The winner of the Pennsylvania Dairy Princess Pageant receives a \$500 cash award. The first and second runner-up will receive a \$300 and \$200 cash award respectively. The state title is honorary and there would be no interruption of school or regular employment plans. The state pageant is coordinated through the Pennsylvania Dairy Promotion Services, Inc.

Young women interested in entering the Lycoming County Dairy Princess Pageant in June should contact J. David Jarrett, R.D.1, Linden, Pa. or Mrs. Helen Barto, R.D.1, Montgomery, Pa., by May 15, 1985.

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