

Consuming Thoughts

by
Fay Strickler

Penn State Extension Home
Economist For Berks Co.



Did you know that you literally have to look a fish in the eye to tell whether it's fresh. The eyes should be clear and bulge a little. Only a few fish, such as walleye pike, have naturally cloudy eyes.

When purchasing a fish look for firm and shiny flesh in either whole fish or fillets. Press the fish with your finger; if it leaves an indentation, it's not the freshest. Dull flesh may also mean the fish is old. Make certain there is no darkening around the edges of the fish or any brown or yellowish discoloration, especially if these areas appear dry and mushy.

If you're still uncertain about how fresh the fish is, ask that it

be rinsed under cold water—and then smell it. Fresh fish should have no fishy or ammonia smell.

The shells of hard clams, mussels or oysters should be closed, or should close when their shells are tapped. The necks of steamer clams should twitch when their shells are tapped. Crabs should move when touched. Lobsters' tails should curl under their bodies when (carefully) picked up.

When buying frozen fish, select packages that are not open, torn or crushed on the edges. Avoid packages that are above the frost line in the store's freezer. If the package has a transparent cover, look for signs of frost or ice crystals. Crystals

could mean that the fish has either been stored for a long period or thawed and refrozen. Also, there should be no evidence of drying out, such as a white or dark spots, discoloration or fading of red or pink flesh.

One other point. Don't buy cooked seafood like shrimp, crab or smoked fish if they're displayed in the same case as raw fish. They're good candidates for cross-contamination—and a bellyache.

Nose around—even at home—Ben Franklin said that "fish and house guests begin to smell after three days." He should have said two days—at least for fish, for it's unwise to keep unfrozen fish any longer than that. In fact, those fresh fish that are subject to scombroid poisoning—for example, tuna, bluefish and mahi-mahi should be used within 24 hours of purchase. Here are some other points to consider.

- Refrigerate or ice fish as soon as it is caught or brought home and keep the fish at 32 to 37 degrees Fahrenheit.

- Before refrigerating, remove the fish from its package, rinse under cold water, and pat dry with paper towels. To

keep cleaned fish more than 24 hours, place the fish on a cake rack in a pan, fill the pan with crushed ice, and cover tightly with plastic wrap or foil. Rinse the fish daily, cleaning the rack and changing the ice.

- Throw out fish with a strong fishy or ammonia smell.

- If you intend to keep the fish more than two days, freeze it immediately after it's been caught or purchased. Rinse it under cold water, pat very dry with paper towels. Wrap tightly in plastic then in aluminum foil before putting it in the freezer. Plan on using the fish as soon as possible for best quality.

- Always thaw frozen fish and seafood in the refrigerator.

- Store live oysters, clams

and mussels in the refrigerator. Keep them damp by covering with a clean, damp cloth or moist paper towel, but don't place them on ice or allow fresh water to come in contact with them. Never place in an airtight container because it will kill them.

- Keep freshly chucked oysters, scallops, or clams in their shells and store them in the coldest part of the refrigerator. It's also a good idea to surround the package with ice.

- Store live lobsters and crabs in the refrigerator in moist packages (use seaweed or damp paper strips), but not in airtight containers, fresh water, or salt water. Lobsters should remain alive for about 24 hours.

Maryland Dairy Princess Search

FREELAND, Md. — The Upper Chesapeake Dairy Princess Committee is searching for contestants for its annual pageant. The Upper Chesapeake region covers Baltimore, Harford, and Cecil Counties.

To enter the regional contest, candidates must be the daughter of one of the following: a dairy far-

mer, a dairy farm manager or herdsman or someone employed in a dairy-related industry (farm store, dairy cooperative, DHIA supervisor, feed supplier, veterinarian, milk inspector, etc.) Or candidates may also be employed as one of the above or the owner of at least one dairy animal or enrolled in dairy foods project in 4-H or FFA.

Contestants must be between the ages of 16 and 22 years by Dec. 31 of the contest year. The dairy princess selected will make school and grocery store promotions, speak to farm and non-farm groups, sporting events, fairs, and appear on radio and television. Regional princesses participate in a training seminar in July and compete at the state pageant later that month.

Dairy maids between 13 and 16 years of age are also needed. With the exception of age, dairy maids must meet the same requirements as a princess.

For more information or an application, contact Sarah Bedgar, P.O. Box 66, Freeland, MD 21053. Phone (410) 357-4296, scb@wam.umd.edu. Application deadline is May 1.

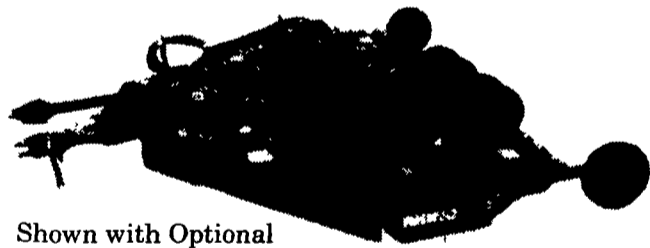
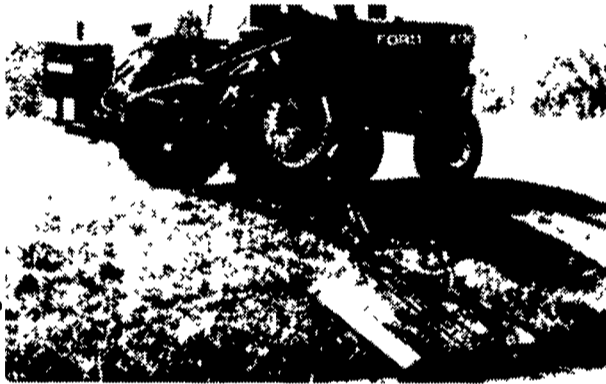
SERVIS-RHINO®...

Some Things Are Just Built Tougher Than Others!

SERVIS 2160

Versatile Boom Rotary Cutter!

60" Cutting Width; 21' Maximum Horizontal Reach; 22-1/2' Maximum Vertical Reach; 190 Degree Range of Head Movement; Independent Hydraulic Drive; 60 Gallon Oil Capacity; Pan Blade Carrier; 1/2"x4" Updraft Blades; 540 or 1000 RPM; 18,850 FPM Blade Tip Speed; CAT II-III Quick Hitch or Three-Point Hitch; Rated for 2" Diameter Material on an Intermittent Basis; 100 HP Tractor Recommended (Min.); Safety Deflectors Standard; Not Intended for Commercial Contractor Use.



Shown with Optional
Front and Rear Chain Guards

SR15

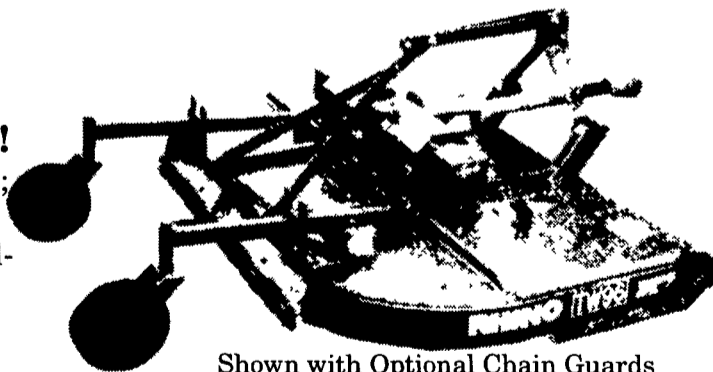
Medium-Duty Cutter with Heavy-Duty Features!

15' Cut; 540 or 1000 RPM; Cat. 5 Main Driveline; Cat. 4 or 5 Wing Drivelines; 180 HP Divider Gearbox; 140 HP Center and Wing Gearboxes; Pan Blade Carriers; 6" Blade Overlap; Mechanical Level-Lift Axle; 10-Gauge Deck; 1/4"x10-1/2" Side Skirts; Heavy-Duty Clevis Hitch; Replaceable Skid Shoes; Wing Operation 90° Up and 22° Down; Rated for 2-1/2" Diameter Material; Fully-Shielded Drivelines; Safety Deflectors Standard.

TW96

Medium-Duty Cutter with Heavy-Duty Features!

97" Cut; 90 HP Outboard Gearboxes; 120 HP Center Gearbox; Pan Blade Carriers; Updraft Blades; Cat 4 Driveline; Slip Clutch Protector; CAT II-III Q.H., CAT II Semi-Mount, or Pull-Type Hitch; 540 or 1000 RPM; Replaceable Skid Shoes; Rated for 2" Diameter Material; Safety Deflectors Standard.



Shown with Optional Chain Guards

Call 1-800-356-6282 or Contact Your Nearest Servis-Rhino Dealer or Visit Our Website at www.servis-rhino.com For More Details!

ALLENWOOD EQUIPMENT, INC.
Allenwood, PA 17810
FORRESTER FARM
EQUIPMENT, INC.
Chambersburg, PA 17201
NORTHEAST DIST. &
EQUIPMENT
Clifford, PA 18413
BROWN FORD TRACTOR
SALES, INC.
Culpepper, VA 21701

CERESVILLE FORD NEW
HOLLAND IN FREDERICK
Frederick, MD 21701

J&M MACHINERY CO. INC.
Greensburg, PA 15601

CHARLES H. SIEPIELA, INC.
Honesdale, PA 18431
DUGAN TRACTOR, INC.
Mansfield, PA 16933

ERB & HENRY EQUIPMENT
INC.
New Berlinville, Pa. 19545

SMITH'S FARM EQUIPMENT
Newport, PA 17074

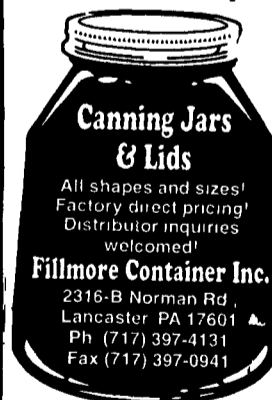
BEVERAGE
TRACTOR/EQUIPMENT INC.
Stuarts Draft, VA

S G LEWIS & SON INC.
West Grove, PA 19390

BINKLEY & HURST BROTHERS
INC.
Lititz, PA 17543



An Alamo Group Company
P.O. Box 712, Seguin, Texas 78156
830-372-3080



Canning Jars & Lids

All shapes and sizes!
Factory direct pricing!
Distributor inquiries
welcomed!

Fillmore Container Inc.
2316-B Norman Rd.
Lancaster PA 17601
Ph (717) 397-4131
Fax (717) 397-0941

Mothers
Across The
United States
are Earning
\$100,000 A
Year Working
From Home!
You Can Too!
Free Information
24-Hr.
Request Line

888-
446-5793