

Agriculturally Speaking

Care Of Irrigation Machinery Essential

By L. B. HARDAGE  
Extension Chairman

Irrigating farmers could invest a little of their time now and possibly save themselves several hundred dollars next year when they are getting their irrigation equipment ready to use.

Improper storage of irrigation engines, pumps, pipes, couplers, and sprinkler heads is one of the major causes of irrigation equipment failure and expensive repair bills.

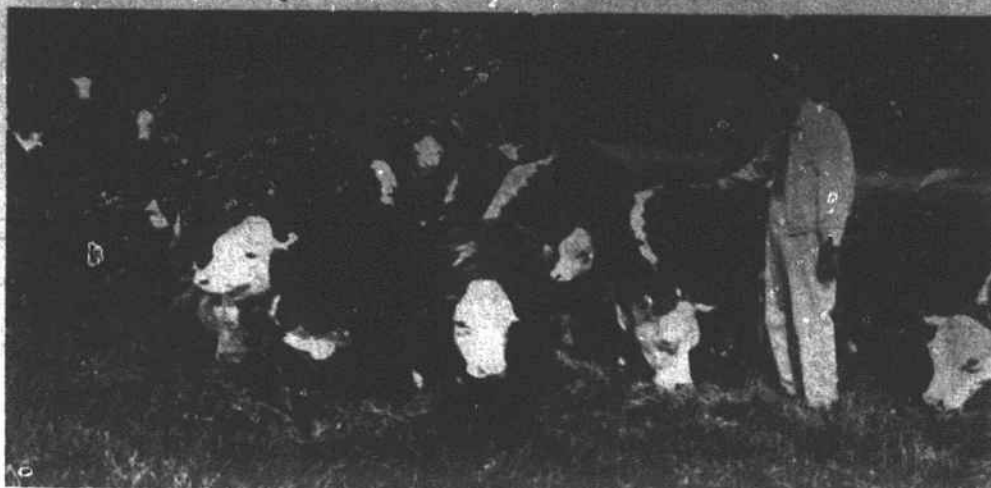
Engines should be cleaned and lubricated, and the crank case refilled with new oil. Radiators and blocks on water cooled engines should be flushed, and drain plugs left open. To prevent valve and piston sticking, remove spark plugs and put a half cup of good motor oil in each cylinder, and then turn the engine over several times to help distribute the oil. Batteries should be changed and properly stored. Cover exhaust and air breathers to keep out moisture. It is beneficial to provide some type of cover for the engine during its off season.

The irrigation pump should be cleaned and lubricated and

then checked for any worn parts, and replacements should be made where needed. Suction and discharge outlets need to be covered to prevent birds, rodents, and trash from collecting in the pump. The pump should also be provided with some type of covering.

The irrigation pipe should be removed from the field and stacked off the ground. Inside storage is not necessary for pipe, but it is suggested that pipe be stored so that it will drain and have at least three supports on the ground to prevent it from sagging. It is important to clean the removable rubber seal gaskets of all mud and dirt, and then store them inside. Rubber gaskets will last several years if cleaned and properly stored when not in use.

The sprinkler head should be cleaned and checked for any wear and damage from prior use, and it should then be stored inside. Unless the sprinkler head has a lubricating fitting, it should never be greased or oiled. The sprinklers are made of a rust resisting material, and any oil or grease will cause the sprinkler head to work improperly.



In photo, Mr. L. C. Davis is looking over his fine herd of purebred cattle that he has on the production testing program in Warren County.



Robert E. Fleming, Emerson Black and Sidney Fleming are shown here counting calves as they pass through weighing and grading lot on the Fleming farm.

and brothers and sisters). DON'TS:

1. Don't forget to identify by notch ear tag or tattoo all animals tested.
  2. Don't make records burdensome by long forms and extensive charts.
  3. Don't forget to record age, weights and grades - a small pocket-sized notebook is valuable for this information.
- Stockmen should be aware of the differences in birth weight, rate of gain, weaning weight and body type as many of these traits are transmitted to the next generation. However, environmental factors must be taken into serious consideration in all production testing programs.

In summary, the greater number of animals available from which to select, the greater the progress that can be made. In other words, for maximum progress, enough animals must be born and raised to permit rigid culling.

Hog Production Calls For Good Business Man

E. W. KOONCE  
Asst. Exten. Agent

Did you know that 14 1/2% of all farms produce half the hogs in our country today? Well, this is true and it has happened with a 15% increase in sow population since 1966.

Hog production is for the business man; otherwise, you wouldn't find such revealing statistics as 1200 sows maintained on 100 acres at the National Swine Farm nor would you hear of 13,000 pigs grown in one confinement operation in Worthington, Minn.

The demand for pigs reached such proportions in Gold-ray, Iowa that 41 hog farmers incorporated to produce pigs at an investment of \$2,000.00 each.

The pigs are sold to stockholders to finish out as market hogs ready for slaughter.

The most progressive hog farmers of today know that management is the key to success. These farmers are committed to the technology that confirms 80% efficiency in hog production yields - 56% profit.

These hog production statistics may seem at a distance but on the other hand with the man, age and ment (management) incorporated, it could be a back door opportunity in Warren County.

Death and taxes are both inevitable, but death doesn't get worse every time Congress meets.

Destruction Of Bagworm Offers Much Difficulty

By L. C. COOPER  
Extension Agent

Several Warren County homeowners have contacted the Agricultural Agents office wanting information on the life cycle and control of bagworms, reported, L. C. Cooper, Agricultural Extension Agent. There seems to be an unusually heavy infestation of bagworms in this year and in some cases they have killed shrubbery in lawns before the people were aware that they had a bagworm problem.

Bagworms feed mainly on evergreens such as arborvitae, red cedar, juniper, hemlock and other evergreens. The bagworm damage is frequently overlooked early in the season when the bags are small. They also camouflage themselves by gluing little pieces of leaves to their cocoons which make them look similar to the foliage.

By the time actual feeding is noted these pests have developed to a stage where chemical control is very difficult. Sprays containing Arsenic of Lead, Ma-

lathion or Dibrom are very effective in controlling the small worms during their active feeding stage. However when larger worms are observed or when they have sealed themselves in their cocoons these chemicals are not very effective, Cooper says.

It is important to remember that eggs are also contained in the sealed cocoons. In this case the larger cocoons and worms should be removed by hand and destroyed and a spray applied to control the worms that develop later.

Any homeowner who has shrubbery that is turning unusually brown should check to see if bagworms are a problem. Bulletins on bagworms and their control are available at the Agricultural Agents office.

Three 19th century astronauts aboard a giant artillery-shell spacecraft named Columbia were fired to the moon from a Florida launch site in Jules Verne's prophetic science fiction fantasy.

Testing Of Beef Cattle Proving Its Worth In Warren County

By JIM D. HEMMINGS  
Asst. Exten. Agent

Much has been said and done in this area about production testing of beef cattle. There are a sizable number of beef producers that are engaged in this type of herd improvement throughout the state. In Warren County, there are two leading producers doing production testing - they are Sidney Fleming of the Vicksboro community and L. C. Davis, Rt. 3, Warrenton. Both these producers are finding it profitable to do this type of beef cattle herd improvement. They are to be commended for their fine work in improving the quality of beef cattle in Warren County.

Selection based on production testing has proven to be the most infallible basis for herd improvement. Once the herd has been established, the primary objective should be to improve it as to obtain the maximum production of quality offspring. In order to accomplish this, there must be constant culling and careful selection of replacements. The breeders

who have been most constructive in such a breeding program have usually used great breeding sires and then have obtained their replacements by selecting some of the outstanding, early maturing heifers from the more prolific families.

Improvements through selection are really two fold (1) the immediate gain in increased calf production from the better animals that are retained and (2) the genetic gain in the next generation. The first is important in all herds, whereas the second is of special importance in purebred herds and in all herds where replacement females are raised. Most of the immediate gain is obtained in selecting the cows, which are more numerous than the bulls; whereas, the majority of the genetic gain comes from the careful selection of bulls. The genetic gain is small but it is permanent and can be considered a capital investment.

Many good cattle breeders consider it a sound practice to make about 20% replacement each year. Under such a system of management, one fifth of the heifer calves are retained each year for each one hundred cows.

Production testing embraces both (1) individual merit testing (sometimes called performance testing) and (2) progeny testing. The distinction between and the relationship of these terms is set forth in these definitions:

1. Individual Merit Testing is the practice of evaluating and selecting animals on the basis of their individual merit.
2. Progeny testing is the practice of selecting animals on the basis of the merit of their progeny.
3. Production testing is a more inclusive term including individual merit testing and progeny testing.

Production testing involves the taking of accurate records rather than causal observation. Also, in order to be most effective, the selection must be based on characteristics of economic importance and high heritability and an objective measure or yardstick should be placed upon each of the traits to be measured. Finally those breeding animals that fail to meet the high standards set forth must be removed from the herd promptly.

In comparison with that of chickens or even swine, production testing of beef cattle is slow and like most investigational work with large animals, is likely to be expensive. Even so in realization that such testing is absolutely necessary if maximum improvement is to be made and the progressive purebred beef cattle breeder will wish to make a start.

Some do's and don'ts in implementing a successful program of production testing are as follows:

- DO:
1. Keep group feed records on the efficiency of feed utilization through feeding together young animals of similar

2. Keep individual feed records on prospective herd sire.
3. Keep up with body-type scores based on the demands and prices of a discriminating market as projected into the future. (In other words, keep your eyes on the cull or mediocre animal as well as the good ones.)
4. Keep records relatively simple.
5. Keep information on the productivity of close relatives (such as the Sire and the Dam

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