Make Sure Tax Forms Are Complete

Carelessness causes most errors in income tax forms. Paul Hasbargen, farm management specialist at the University of Minnesota, says one of the most common errors is failure to complete the forms properly. Some common errors include joint returns not properly signed (remember that both husband and wife must sign) and the street address or city not shown on the return. In other cases, writing or printing cannot be read so refunds can't be issued.

Many times taxpayer identification such as social security numbers or employee identification numbers is not shown on the return. Hasbargen says many of these errors are simple oversights, but prove to be costly and annoying. The cost to the government is large, and taxpayers are unnecessarily annoyed by delays caused due to preventable errors. Check your returns carefully to make sure they're complete before filing.

Change in Tax Forms

Farmers will have some additional schedules to attach to their 1969 Federal Income Tax Forms. Charles Cuykendall, farm management specialist at the University of Minnesota, says farmers should secure Form 1040 and Schedule F for farm income. In addition, you'll need Schedule A for itemizing deductions, Schedule B for reporting dividends or interest over $100, and Schedule C for business or self-employment income. For more information, get a copy of the 1970 Farmer's Tax Guide from your county extension agent.

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Prevent Early Seedling Disease in Corn

Some Minnesota farmers in localized areas suffered heavy losses from early seedling disease in corn last year. This report comes from Herbert Johnson, University of Minnesota plant pathologist. Johnson says losses were often caused by low soil temperatures. Seed treatment doesn't help prevent all seedling diseases, since the damage sometimes occurs away from the seed. Johnson recommends these steps to help prevent seedling disease.

* Plant corn when the soil temperature is above 50 degrees.
* Use corn hybrids that have a history of good stands and vigorous seed.
* And, plant at the proper depth. Usually the seed should be placed about 2 inches deep. But during dry springs it may be necessary to plant deeper in order to reach moisture.

Thin Forest Stands in Winter

There are many advantages to thinning forest stands when the ground is frozen. Bill Miles, forestry specialist at the University of Minnesota, says there's less damage to remaining trees in the falling and skidding operations because the trees are dormant. In winter the bark is tight, branches snap rather than tear off, and the frozen ground reduces the possibility of compaction or mechanical damage to roots. Also, access is possible to stands in winter which might be inaccessible in summer, reduced foliage allows better visibility, there is less fire hazard, and insects and excessive heat are not a problem. Finally, winter is usually a slack period for the farm woodland owner. Contact your local forester for more information on thinning forest stands.
Radio News Briefs

Peanuts Have High Food Value

With the holiday season here peanuts have become an excellent treat for snacks. Extension nutritionists at the University of Minnesota say peanuts are exceptionally high in niacin and other B vitamins. Among vegetable foods, peanuts rate high in protein too. Peanuts are also a good source of energy.

When storing peanuts, keep them in the refrigerator in tightly closed containers so they'll stay crisp and keep their flavor. Peanuts in the shell keep better than shelled peanuts. Unsalted peanuts keep better than salted peanuts. If you want crisp peanuts in holiday salads and sauces, don't mix them with other ingredients until just before serving, since they soak up moisture readily.

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Freezing Excess Cookies and Candies

If you find you have too much candy and cookies left over after the holidays, freeze them. Mrs. Shirley Munson, home economist in the horticultural department at the University of Minnesota, gives these tips for freezing cookies and candy.

Package cookies in frozen food containers, cookie jars or canisters with tight-fitting covers. On the top of each layer of cookies, place a sheet of saran-type film or aluminum foil. It's best not to store frosted cookies since the frosting dries out. When thawing the cookies, keep them in their original containers. Cookies may be stored 9-12 months.

Almost all candies keep fresh for one year or longer when stored at 0°F. Keep in tin cans or use good moisture-vapor proof wrap over boxes to prevent damage due to condensation when the container is removed from the freezer. Don't remove the wrap until the candy has warmed to room temperature -- about 4-8 hours.

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