

Sept. 4, 1986

Source: Jane P. McKinnon
612/624-9290
Editor: Sam Brungardt
612/625-6797

SOME FALL-PLANTED BULBS ARE NOT HARDY IN MINNESOTA

Each spring, some Minnesota gardeners are disappointed when they find that some of the flowering bulbs they purchased from mail order firms and planted the previous fall did not survive the winter.

Says Jane P. McKinnon, horticulturist with the University of Minnesota's Extension Service, "Although there may be an exceptional site, heavily mulched and completely protected, Dutch and English iris, crown imperial fritillaria, spider lily (Lycoris), oxalis, ranunculus, African corn lily (Ixia), freesia and poppy-type anemones generally are not hardy or do not do well when planted outdoors in Minnesota. Combinations of, or mixtures including, these fall-planted bulbs are suitable only for those fortunate growers who can grow them in a cool greenhouse."

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news

Communication Resources
Minnesota Extension Service
433 Coffey Hall
University of Minnesota
St. Paul, Minnesota 55108

Sept. 4, 1986

Source: Jeffrey D. Hahn
612/624-4977
Editor: Sam Brungardt
612/625-6797

SPRAYING IS NO WAY TO DEAL WITH SPIDERS IN THE HOME

As autumn approaches, more and more spiders will enter homes to seek shelter for the winter. Although spiders are harmless to people (in fact, they are beneficial because they feed on harmful insects), most people consider them a nuisance.

"Control of spiders is normally not necessary," says Jeffrey D. Hahn, entomology educator with the University of Minnesota's Extension Service. "However, if you do find an occasional spider that can't be tolerated, a rolled up newspaper or a broom is all that is necessary to dispose of it."

Finding large, steady numbers of spiders in the home is a sign that an insect or other arthropod is present in sufficient numbers to sustain a spider population. Hahn says that reducing the spiders' food supply will reduce the number of spiders. "You can determine what this food source is by checking their webs or directly underneath them to see which insects are in them," he says. "Spiders will feed on a wide range of insects, including sowbugs, millipedes, cockroaches and silverfish."

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Hahn adds that chemical control is usually not effective. As a rule, spiders don't stray far from their webs. Since they need to come in contact with the insecticide and the residual is temporary, most spiders will not be affected. For the few that are killed, there will be no overall effect on the spider population as long as the food supply remains.

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4,7,I

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Sept. 4, 1986

Source: John True
612/625-9733
Editor: Mary Kay O'Hearn
612625-2741

GIVE MACHINERY A SAFETY 'FACELIFT'

Giving a safety "facelift" to farm machinery is something everyone can do during National Farm Safety Week, Sept. 21-27.

While it may not be possible to bring every farm tractor back to mint condition, it is possible to make sure that safety devices on tractors are in place, says John True, agricultural engineer with the University of Minnesota's Extension Service. "Though farm tractor mishaps are only 7 percent of agricultural accidents in America, they account for half the fatalities," True says, quoting the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), which estimates that simple safety devices on tractors could reduce the number of fatal farm accidents nationwide by half.

It's not always possible in lean times to buy new equipment, but repairing and upgrading safety devices on equipment already on the farm makes good economic and safety sense, says True. The hidden costs of an accident can far exceed the time and effort put in correcting these problems.

Often overlooked on farm equipment is the missing shield on the power line drive. It's apt to be forgotten while a fouled

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spark plug or some other engine malfunction would not be.

Often, tractors lack the master shield or it is so misshaped it can't be used. True suggests revamping the old shield or buying a new one. This could prevent someone's being caught in a turning power take-off shaft. Seldom is it the person who removed the shield who has an accident because a shield isn't in place. Thousands of accidents have happened where open power drives, such as PTOs, chain drives and belt drives, have injured a visitor, child, wife, hired hand, or someone else who had nothing to do with removing the shield in the first place.

Some irrigation pumps have never had shields, but this danger can be corrected. Homemade shields can be made cheaply and are as effective as ones which can be purchased, according to USDA.

Dollars spent on repair seem to tie in with the theme of the 1986 Farm Safety Week, "Be Protected from the Unexpected."

True encourages attention to safety features on farm equipment, especially when it is displayed for youth groups, in vo-ag shops or at fairs and exhibits. Safety devices should be as much a part of a machine as the steering wheel.

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CEO,1,4,U

NAGR1548

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Communication Resources
Minnesota Extension Service
433 Coffey Hall
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St. Paul, Minnesota 55108

Sept. 4, 1986

Source: Marilyn Grantham
612/625-8215
Writer: Jack Sperbeck
612/625-4730

Extension agents: To obtain the tapes mentioned in this release, contact agricultural economist Stanley Stevens at (612) 625-8770.

AG OUTLOOK BROADCAST IS SCHEDULED FOR SEPT. 12

Finally, some optimism in the cattle industry. A new soybean marketing strategy. Watching government farm programs closely to squeeze a few more cents per bushel this year.

These will be some of the things discussed in a television program that will be aired Friday, Sept. 12, on Channel 10, Appleton, Minn. The program will start at 8:30 p.m. and run until 9:30 p.m., followed by a half-hour call-in where extension specialists will take calls on the air.

The show will be hosted by Lynn Ketelsen of the Lindner Farm Network. Extension specialists from the University of Minnesota, North Dakota State University and South Dakota State University will participate.

Portions of the program will be aired by other radio and television stations. County extension agents in Minnesota can request audio or videotapes of the program for ag outlook meetings.

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Communication Resources
Minnesota Extension Service
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Sept. 4, 1986

Source: Earl Fuller
612/625-6760
Writer: Jack Sperbeck
612/625-4730

PRICE FEED AT HARVEST

Consider pricing feed at harvest this fall. "The carrying costs of interest and storage are the only reasons not to price this fall," advises Earl Fuller, farm management economist with the University of Minnesota's Extension Service.

Watch for attempts to cut support prices to hold government program costs down. Once the November election is over, proposals for a 1987 Farm Bill with lower support prices will likely surface.

For 1987, low feed grain prices can mean several thousand dollars of added income for livestock producers. That assumes that they participate in the government feed grains program, place home-produced corn under loan and purchase needed grain at harvest time.

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Sept. 8, 1986

Source: Earl Fuller
612/625-6760
Writer: Jack Sperbeck
612/625-4730

BE VERY CAUTIOUS ABOUT EXPANDING DAIRY OPERATION

Long-run prospects in the dairy business don't justify much added milk production capacity on a typical Midwest dairy farm.

But adding cows can make sense if the added gross margin is enough to cover the added investment and any hired labor. People adding cows must avoid the risks of poor forage quality and lower production per cow, says Earl Fuller, economist with the University of Minnesota's Extension Service.

Expansion must include good cost control and be done as a complete system. Increasing production per cow may be more economical than adding cows. Grouping cows to assure individual attention--especially in early lactation--should be part of the system. When adding facilities, economics of labor and capital use dramatically favor free stalls beyond 100 cows.

It's a gamble to invest in extra cows and facilities just to improve a salable milk base quota. The political mood of the country may not encourage Congress to vote for a milk quota scheme. But anticipation of a quota may now be built into the current \$780 milk cow price, which seems excessive considering

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gross margins for an average cow.

To improve gross margins, it's essential to control costs through forage testing, ration balancing, preventive health care services and mastitis control. Feeding and health care are more limiting than the genetic ability of the typical Upper Midwest cow. Cutting hay early, forage testing and ration balancing are "musts" for quality feed.

The inevitable trend will be more multifamily dairy operations in the Midwest. That means facing new challenges of personal relations, communications and financing. But with some increases in herd size, the Upper Midwest will continue to be a major milk-producing region. It has some comparative cost advantages over other regions.

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AEA,BSS,CEO,1,3,4,D

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Communication Resources
Minnesota Extension Service
433 Coffey Hall
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St. Paul, Minnesota 55108

Sept. 8, 1986

Source: Patrick Cantlon
612/625-5283
Writer: Jack Sperbeck
612/625-4730

HOG PRODUCTION SHOULD BE PROFITABLE WELL INTO 1987

Hog production should remain highly profitable for the rest of 1986 and well into 1987, says Patrick Cantlon, marketing specialist with the University of Minnesota's Extension Service. Producers are encouraged to manage existing facilities intensively.

When expansion will occur is the key question. The September and December Hogs and Pigs Report will bear careful scrutiny by hog producers. Forward pricing for late 1986 or the first half of 1987 doesn't look favorable now. But this could change as more information on hog and breeding herd numbers becomes available.

Hog producers who need feed in 1986-87 should buy corn at harvest--especially if bin space is available. Otherwise, look to futures contracts or call options. Purchasing PIK certificates in order to buy corn under loan may be another alternative. Also consider contracting soybean meal for future delivery.

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Major expansion plans need to be considered over at least a five-year planning period and should not be based on price expectations for the next year.

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Communication Resources
Minnesota Extension Service
433 Coffey Hall
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Sept. 8, 1986

Source: Stanley Stevens
612/625-8770
Writer: Jack Sperbeck
612/625-4730

ONLY AGGRESSIVE SUPPLY CONTROL WILL BOOST FEEDGRAIN PRICES

An aggressive supply control program for next year is about the only thing that could significantly improve feedgrain prices, says Stanley Stevens, marketing economist with the University of Minnesota's Extension Service.

Lower loan rates, export enhancement programs and increased acreage set-asides probably won't balance feedgrain supply and demand in 1986. The USDA estimates exports will expand by 27 percent as U.S. grains eventually become more competitive in world markets and importers resume normal purchasing patterns.

Record yields in 1986 will contribute to a 14 percent higher supply, including carryover stocks. Total demand for feedgrains is expected to fall short of production, with ending stocks increasing by about 30 percent.

Harvest-time prices are expected to be well below loan rates, with little potential for price improvement. The loan rates for feedgrains will probably be reduced another 5 percent in 1987, and the long-term price decline will continue.

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The corn price outlook is for harvest-time lows to average \$1.40 to \$1.50 in Minneapolis, 10 cents lower in Minnesota and another 10 cents lower in the Dakotas. There probably won't be much of a postharvest price rally.

For farmers who didn't hedge or forward contract 1986 corn several months ago or during the Soviet nuclear incident, the government loan is the best marketing alternative. If you're short of storage, you may find it profitable to put corn under loan, use PIK certificates to redeem the grain, then sell in the cash market.

This can also be useful for livestock producers who need the benefits of the farm program and want to feed for their own grain. An alternative is for them to put their own corn under loan and buy feed in the cash markets at lower prices.

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Communication Resources
Minnesota Extension Service
433 Coffey Hall
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Sept. 8, 1986

Source: Michael Boehlje
612/625-0231
Writer: Jack Sperbeck
612/625-4730

CHANCES OF SUCCESS ARE IMPROVED FOR SOME FARMERS

Average farm income doesn't tell the whole story. Some farmers are generating reasonable levels of income while others are suffering large losses, says Michael Boehlje, economist with the University of Minnesota's Extension Service.

Here's an example: In 1985, average profit for the top 20 percent of farms in Minnesota's Southwest Farm Management Association was \$50,151. But the loss for the 20 percent with the lowest income was \$43,474. These wide income differences were for farms of similar size and enterprise mix.

This shows that production, marketing and management skills can make a significant difference in bottom-line performance despite the economic environment and external factors.

Grain farmers and those with high debt loads will continue to be under pressure in 1987. However, livestock producers will probably have wider profit margins and higher incomes due to lower feed costs, the reduced size of breeding herds and lower livestock inventories.

Farmers with very high debt loads with any enterprise mix

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will continue to have cash flow and financial stress problems unless the debt is being used very efficiently. But some changes are occurring that will result in improved chances for survival and success in farming:

--The purchase price of capital assets like machinery and equipment has declined. This allows farmers to get the necessary asset base to operate with lower capital outlays.

--Purchased input prices of seed, fertilizer, chemicals and energy have stabilized and in some cases are declining. This reduces operating costs as well as the amount of operating capital needed to farm.

--Government programs (the 1985 Food Security Act and the multiperil crop insurance program) provide downside risk protection for both commodity prices and crop yields.

--Land rental options and rental rates are becoming more favorable for tenants.

--Interest rates are lower and will be less burdensome if they remain at their current levels or continue to fall.

But more is needed before we have a financially stable agriculture. These adjustments must be combined with either more domestic and foreign demand for agricultural products or reduced supplies.

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NAGR1570

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Communication Resources
Minnesota Extension Service
433 Coffey Hall
University of Minnesota
St. Paul, Minnesota 55108

Sept. 8, 1986

Source: Steve Taff
612/625-3103
Writer: Jack Sperbeck
612/625-4730

DRASTIC SHIFTS IN U.S. AG POLICY ARE NOT EXPECTED

Public agricultural policy looms larger than ever in the eyes of Congress. Federal farm program payments are expected to equal two-thirds of 1987 net farm income.

Expenses from the 1985 Farm Bill have gotten out of hand, says Steve Taff, agricultural policy economist with the University of Minnesota's Extension Service. Estimated payments for 1986 alone have grown from an initial \$18 billion to \$35-40 billion today. Policymakers are expected to do everything they can to reduce federal outlays and shift payments "off-budget."

But not all farm policy action is in the farm bill itself. What Congress does about foreign trade policies and income tax reform, or what state legislatures do about tax burdens or credit assistance may be just as important to farmers.

Major issues that farm policymakers will consider next year include supply management, tax reform and transition (out of full-time farming) assistance.

There may be a lot of talk about mandatory production quotas in 1987, but little action is expected. Secretary of Agriculture

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Richard Lyng has stated his opposition to such controls as contrary to the Reagan administration's market philosophy. What is expected are increased incentives to voluntarily remove cropland from production to better balance supply and demand.

Some of the big farm policy news this year could be the tax bill. Over the long run, how easily capital moves into and out of farming is just as important to the farm economy as are year-to-year commodity price supports.

The big changes from tax reform will come in three areas: (1) capital gains tax breaks will be eliminated; (2) some depreciation schedules will be altered to more accurately reflect useful life; and (3) the investment tax credit will be repealed. The overall effect is to reduce tax-shelter investment incentives and reduce barriers to debt-ridden families getting out of full-time farming.

Under present economic conditions, many farmers with high debt loads or with noneconomic farm units are not going to make it--even with public credit subsidies. "Aiding the exit of resources out of agriculture" is a likely message we'll be hearing--the government can't afford to keep all the present farm population solvent.

This translates to more emphasis on job retraining, relocation assistance, favorable tax treatment for forced sales, nonfarm economic development and other policies to help people leaving full-time farming.

Dramatic shifts in U.S. agricultural policies aren't expected. Instead, present policies and programs will be moved around, geared up, deleted or modified--all to try in some way to improve the nation's agricultural economy.

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AEA,BSS,CEO,1,3,4,7

NAGR1572

Sept. 8, 1986

Source: Stanley Stevens
612/625-8770

Writer: Jack Sperbeck
612/625-4730

ONLY AGGRESSIVE SUPPLY CONTROL WILL BOOST FEEDGRAIN PRICES

An aggressive supply control program for next year is about the only thing that could significantly improve feedgrain prices, says Stanley Stevens, marketing economist with the University of Minnesota's Extension Service.

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Record yields in 1986 will contribute to a 14 percent higher supply, including carryover stocks. Total demand for feedgrains is expected to fall short of production, with ending stocks increasing by about 30 percent.

Harvest-time prices are expected to be well below loan rates, with little potential for price improvement. The loan rates for feedgrains will probably be reduced another 5 percent in 1987, and the long-term price decline will continue.

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This can also be useful for livestock producers who need the benefits of the farm program and want to feed for their own grain. An alternative is for them to put their own corn under loan and buy feed in the cash markets at lower prices.

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Communication Resources
Minnesota Extension Service
433 Coffey Hall
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St. Paul, Minnesota 55108

Sept. 8, 1986

Source: Hugh McDonald
701/237-7441

Writer: Jack Sperbeck
612/625-4730

WHEAT PRODUCERS: WATCH GOVERNMENT PROGRAM CLOSELY

Large wheat supplies and a lower loan rate in 1987 make substantial price increases unlikely over the long term.

With the lower loan rate in 1987, prices may follow a pattern similar to last year by peaking in the fall and declining to the lower new loan rate by the end of the marketing year. Farmers should seriously consider any price above the net loan rate as a pricing opportunity, advises Hugh McDonald, grain marketing specialist with North Dakota State University. The seasonal rise in wheat prices will probably be less than normal this year.

A thorough knowledge of the government program is a key factor in squeezing out a few extra cents per bushel this year. Especially important is how generic grain certificates can be used in conjunction with marketing. Keep in close contact with your county ASCS office and know all the angles.

Farmers should also be alert for wheat policy redirections by Congress and the administration. Possibilities include programs to enhance exports, a marketing-type loan program and further wheat acreage reductions in 1987. Any of these would affect wheat prices this year.

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AEA,BSS,CEO,1,3,4,F

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NAGR1576

University of Minnesota, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and Minnesota Counties Cooperating

Sept. 8, 1987

Source: Stanley Stevens
612/625-8770
Writer: Jack Sperbeck
612/625-4730

CONSIDER NEW SOYBEAN MARKETING STRATEGY

Here's a new soybean-marketing strategy farmers should consider: Seal the soybean crop, redeem with PIK certificates and sell to the market, advises Stanley Stevens, marketing economist with the University of Minnesota's Extension Service.

Use a short-term storage contract if on-farm storage isn't available. This strategy potentially avoids the temptation to build storage. It may also avoid a commitment to prolonged commercial storage contracts and enduring an extended wait for the forfeiture privilege. But you still capture the benefits of the government price support program.

With depressed prices and large supplies, farmers have traditionally stored oilseeds at harvest and waited for the postharvest price rally. But postharvest rallies may not come this year in the new environment of the generic PIK certificate.

Generic PIK certificates release CCC inventory into the marketplace. Traditional seasonal price improvement based on tightening free stocks is much less likely in this new policy environment.

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Communication Resources
Minnesota Extension Service
433 Coffey Hall
University of Minnesota
St. Paul, Minnesota 55108

Sept. 8, 1986

Source: Mel Hamre

612/624-2226

Writer: Jack Sperbeck

612/625-4730

POULTRY HAS BEEN PROFITABLE, BUT THINGS COULD CHANGE

Turkey and broiler production has been one of the few bright spots in agriculture recently. But expansion in the industry could lead to broiler prices that don't meet production costs by the second half of 1987.

Net returns for whole broilers should be very favorable during the second half of 1986. But the old adage that poultry producers can't stand prosperity may again come true if the industry expands too much, says Mel Hamre, poultry specialist with the University of Minnesota's Extension Service.

The turkey industry was profitable in 1985 and forecasts of further demand for turkey meat led to continued expansion. How much consumption will increase in relation to increased supplies will be a factor in market prices. Consumption will also be affected by new product development, competing meat supplies and the economy. Supplies of beef and pork are tightening and these meats are increasing in price, which should encourage continued consumption of turkey meat.

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Sept. 8, 1986

Source: Allan Harris
612/589-1711
Writer: Jack Sperbeck
612/625-4730

SHEEP INDUSTRY IS BECOMING MORE PROFITABLE

Sheep and lamb numbers have decreased during the last four years. This has driven prices up and resulted in higher profits for efficient producers, says Allan Harris, marketing specialist with the University of Minnesota's Extension Service.

Sheep numbers are expected to decrease again in 1987. The U.S. sheep industry is trending toward fewer, smaller and more profitable flocks. Sheep and lamb numbers in Minnesota, North Dakota and South Dakota decreased 15 to 16 percent in each state in 1985. These declines are expected to continue in 1986 and 1987. But the number of farms with sheep may not decrease in the three states; small farm flocks appear to be on the increase.

However, imports are becoming a more important supply factor as domestic production decreases and prices increase. During the early 1980s, imports of lamb and mutton accounted for less than 5 percent of annual supply. But imports doubled in 1985 and are projected to make up more than 9 percent of the total U.S. supply in 1986.

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Favorable slaughter lamb prices should continue for at least another year. Lamb is somewhat isolated from consumer price competition since it enjoys a specialty market.

Profit prospects for ewe flocks in 1987 continue to be high. Projected returns to labor, management and facilities are \$43 per ewe.

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AEA,BSS,CEO,1,3,4,0

NAGR1568

Sept. 8, 1986

Source: Ken Thomas
612/625-7040
Writer: Jack Sperbeck
612/625-4730

MORE DECLINE IN LAND RENTS IS ANTICIPATED

An additional drop of 10 to 15 percent in land rent will be common in the southern two-thirds of Minnesota next year.

But land capable of high yields and with a high corn base will decline less than poorer-yielding land or land in dairy areas. And in northwestern Minnesota, higher returns from sugarbeets will keep rental rates closer to 1986 levels, says Ken Thomas, farm management economist with the University of Minnesota's Extension Service.

The University of Minnesota's Extension Service has developed a computer program called "Rent Minnesota" that can help tenants evaluate land rent situations. The program also evaluates crop share rental arrangements and compares them to cash rent for the farm operator. The computer program will be available in late 1986 at most extension offices in Minnesota.

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AEA,BSS,CEO,1,3,4,7,F

NAGR1574

Sept. 8, 1986

Source: Warren Sifferath
612/463-3302
Writer: Jack Sperbeck
612/625-4730

OPTIMISM IS RETURNING TO CATTLE INDUSTRY

Modest profits have returned to the cattle feeding industry. And cow-calf operators should see profits in 1987, according to Warren Sifferath, marketing specialist with the University of Minnesota's Extension Service.

There's some optimism in the cattle industry due to lower cattle numbers, the lowest feed costs in several years and increasing prices of competitive meats. Cattle feeders have reason to be optimistic due to the supply/demand picture and low-cost feedgrains.

Supply/demand factors should support quarterly average slaughter cattle prices in the high \$50s or low \$60s for the rest of 1986, and at least in the low \$60s for all of 1987. Low feedgrain prices resulting from the 1985 farm bill should give feeders very low costs of gain over the next several years.

Costs of gain (excluding labor, management and facilities) for yearling steers coming off grass this fall are projected at 39 cents or less based on \$1.90 corn. And if feeders can take advantage of locally available low-priced grains (like \$1.14

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barley in North Dakota), backgrounding costs of gain could be as low as 31 cents. These low costs of gain lead to substantial profit projections for retaining ownership of fall 1986 calves and yearlings off grass.

The one factor that would favor selling calves and yearlings off grass this fall is the possibility of having the traditional fall runs of cattle now, with a price run-up this fall. If this develops, prices could increase this fall rather than next spring.

Consumers appear to be placing a lid on cattle prices. Above a maximum level of about the mid-\$90s for wholesale carcass beef, consumers cut back on beef consumption and substitute other meats. That ceiling corresponds to the \$60-65 range for slaughter steers.

Calf prices are determined by expected profits from finishing the calves. Profit potential for feeding cattle may cause a run-up in calf prices. There's even a possibility for calf price premiums like those of late 1978 and 1979.

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AEA,BSS,CEO,1,3,4,A

NAGR1566

Sept. 18, 1986

Source: Deborah Brown
612/624-7491
Editor: Sam Brungardt
612/625-6797

GOOD LAWN CARE IS BEST WAY TO GET RID OF SANDBURS

About this time each year those nasty sandburs make their presence felt. Kids come indoors with them embedded in their pants and socks. Dogs and cats get them matted in their fur. And in many new homes, folks are vowing to do something to stop those 'burs, once and for all.

If you need to rid your yard of sandburs, it will help to know a little about how they grow. "Sandburs are annual grassy weeds that come back each year from seed rather than from overwintering roots," explains Deborah Brown, horticulturist with the University of Minnesota's Extension Service. "By mowing regularly and catching the spiny burs or seeds, you can reduce the number of plants that come up the following year."

Sandburs are most prevalent in sandy, poor soil, or soil that has been recently disturbed. Brown says, "They cannot compete well with a thick, vigorous lawn of desirable grasses. This suggests that any effort spent in improving the lawn will help prevent sandbur seeds from becoming established. Regular watering, fertilizing and overseeding thin areas with a bluegrass/red fescue mix will thicken the lawn and discourage weeds."

I,V4,V7

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NAGR1599

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news

Communication Resources
Minnesota Extension Service
433 Coffey Hall
University of Minnesota
St. Paul, Minnesota 55108

Sept. 18, 1986

Source: William Angell
612/624-6786
Editor: Deedee Nagy
612/625-0288

RURAL HOUSING CONFERENCE WILL BE NOV. 1

"Housing for All in Rural Minnesota: The Religious Community in Partnership" will be the theme of a conference for housing professionals and members of the religious community that will be held Nov. 1 at Green Lake Bible Camp in Spicer.

William Angell, housing specialist with the University of Minnesota's Extension Service, says purpose of the conference is to explore possible partnerships between the religious community, housing providers and rural Minnesotans needing housing. Participants will also learn about the changing housing needs in various regions of the state and the trend toward the religious community viewing shelter as an area of ministry. The Minnesota Extension Service is one of about a dozen sponsoring organizations.

Workshops will focus on rural housing options for senior citizens, housing needs of single-parent families, economic dislocation and relocation efforts, and emergency and transitional housing. Speakers will look not only at new construction, but also at rehabilitation and preservation of a

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precious resource--existing housing, according to Samuel Horowitz of the Joint Religious Education and Research Fund. Doing needs assessments, organizing for action and finding technical assistance and human and financial resources are other conference topics.

Among the speakers will be Bishop John J. McGraith of Owensboro, Ky., and formerly of the Diocese of New Ulm. Bishop McGraith is considered a leader in the rural revitalization movement in the United States.

Registration materials are available from the Joint Religious Education and Research Fund, 122 W. Franklin Ave., Minneapolis, MN 55404, or by phoning (612) 870-3670.

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AEA,CEO,V1,G

NHEC1590

news

Communication Resources
Minnesota Extension Service
433 Coffey Hall
University of Minnesota
St. Paul, Minnesota 55108

Sept. 18, 1986

Source: Jane P. McKinnon
612/624-9290
Editor: Sam Brungardt
612/625-6797

HYDRANGEA PROVIDES YEAR-ROUND BEAUTY

The old-fashioned PeeGee hydrangea has been particularly spectacular this year.

"This large shrub with its enormous trusses of cone-shaped, white flowers has brought late-summer drama to landscapes where most shrubs bloomed weeks before," says Jane McKinnon, horticulturist with the University of Minnesota's Extension Service. "As the summer ends, its flowers turn pink, then light tan. They can be picked for dried bouquets or left for winter interest in snowy outdoor scenes."

PeeGee hydrangea can be trained as a small tree to a single stem, according to McKinnon. It can then develop to a rounded shape 12 to 15 feet tall and 8 to 9 feet wide. It can also be grown as a large, multi-stemmed shrub.

McKinnon says PeeGee hydrangea needs space to grow and a sunny location. She says, "It grows much larger than its shade-tolerant relatives, Hills-of-Snow or Annabelle hydrangeas. Those shrubs can be cut to the ground in spring, but PeeGee hydrangea should be only lightly pruned to encourage lateral shoots. Chopping it to force it into a small space destroys its landscape effect."

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I, V4, V7

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NAGR1602

University of Minnesota, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and Minnesota Counties Cooperating

news

Communication Resources
Minnesota Extension Service
433 Coffey Hall
University of Minnesota
St. Paul, Minnesota 55108

Sept. 18, 1986

Source: Deborah L. Brown
612/624-7491
Editor: Sam Brungardt
612/625-6797

TREE AND SHRUB CLEAN UP IS EXTRA IMPORTANT THIS FALL

Many trees and shrubs in Minnesota have been plagued with fungal leaf spot diseases this year. The primary cause for this was the very cool, humid, rainy weather that occurred last spring, when they were leafing out. In some cases, heavy rainfall later in the season aggravated the situation.

Deborah Brown, horticulturist with the University of Minnesota's Extension Service, says, "While spraying usually is not necessary, particularly for mature, established plants, there is something you can do to help infected trees and shrubs this fall. Be sure to rake up all the leaves so they don't remain on the ground, ready to reinfect new leaves next spring."

Brown adds that honeysuckles infected with witches broom aphid need special attention this fall. "Prune out all distorted growth to prevent overwintering of aphids," she advises. "Spraying will also be needed during next year's growing season, but at least you'll begin fresh, without an insect carryover from 1986."

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news

Communication Resources
Minnesota Extension Service
433 Coffey Hall
University of Minnesota
St. Paul, Minnesota 55108

Sept. 25, 1986

Source: Jane P. McKinnon
612/624-9290
Editor: Sam Brungardt
612/625-6797

EARLY OCTOBER IS GOOD TIME TO PLANT SOME TREES, SHRUBS

Early October is a good time to plant many trees and shrubs. Experienced gardeners and Minnesota landscape nurseries have long known that fall's clear weather may be better suited to creating successful landscape plantings than many northern Aprils.

"As long as soils are warm and moist enough to promote root growth for two or three weeks before cold weather, most leafy shrubs and trees transplant easily," says Jane McKinnon, horticulturist with the University of Minnesota's Extension Service.

Many shrubs can be dug and moved with a ball of soil on their roots with little check in development, according to McKinnon. She says lilacs are especially suited to early October planting. "Shrubs with coarse root systems are more difficult to transplant than shrubs with extensive fibrous roots such as spirea, euonymus, potentilla or azaleas," McKinnon says.

"For best results with either type, homeowners should follow the practices used by experienced nursery people. They cut a generous circle around the base of the plant with a sharp,

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straight-edged spade, then dig away from the stem in order to leave the shrub standing in a straight-sided cylinder of firm soil. The ball is then sliced across the bottom and a length of burlap is slipped under the freed shrub. A 4-foot plant needs a 16-inch-diameter ball at least 12 inches deep."

McKinnon says leafy shrubs less than 3 feet tall can usually be transplanted without careful balling and burlapping, but the less roots are loosened and exposed, the better their chance of a quick recovery. Nursery-grown plants are root-pruned to make digging with a compact ball easier, and some homeowners anticipate moving projects with the same practice.

"Container-grown shrubs, small trees and evergreens are now in good supply at garden centers and nurseries," McKinnon says. "These are the simplest plants to add to home properties. Ask the nursery salesperson to explain how to slip a plant out of its pot without disturbing the root ball. Even paper mache' pots often do not disintegrate quickly enough to allow successful transplanting without removing the pot."

Experienced nurseries will know which plants are best planted in the spring; their guarantees will reflect such restrictions. Birch, for instance, are usually dug and replanted early in the growing season, and roses are not fall-planted in Minnesota.

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news

Communication Resources
Minnesota Extension Service
433 Coffey Hall
University of Minnesota
St. Paul, Minnesota 55108

Sept. 25, 1986

Source: John True
612/625-9733
Editor: Mary Kay O'Hearn
612/625-2741

WARM UP SAFELY WITH PORTABLE HEATERS

With a chill in the air and winter hovering, it's time for portable heaters to come out of storage.

These heaters provide convenient space or auxiliary heat for many locations. But John True, agricultural engineer with the University of Minnesota's Extension Service, encourages extra caution when using them:

- Read and follow all instructions that come with such heaters.
- Install and maintain smoke detectors on each level of your home.
- Never allow children to play near or with a heater; although small, these appliances can cause severe burns.
- Set portable heaters out of traveled paths so people are less likely to trip over them. Make sure they are located far away from curtains, newspapers, upholstered furniture, wood, flammable liquids and other combustible materials.
- Defective or malfunctioning heaters and cords pose extreme risks. Fix or replace any faulty equipment.

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--When using a kerosene heater, make sure there is sufficient ventilation to avoid carbon monoxide buildup.

--Plug electrical heaters into an unused or lightly loaded circuit. If an extension cord is absolutely necessary, be certain that it has a current-carrying capacity at least equal to the appliance rating.

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CEO,G,R,V1,V4,V7

NAGR1582

news

Communication Resources
Minnesota Extension Service
433 Coffey Hall
University of Minnesota
St. Paul, Minnesota 55108

Oct. 2, 1986

Source: Jeffrey D. Hahn
612/624-4977
Editor: Sam Brungardt
612/625-6797

GIVING IRIS A FALL "HAIRCUT" HELPS CONTROL BORERS

The onset of fall is usually the signal that insect problems are over the year. While this is mostly true, there's still work to be done if you have bearded irises in your garden.

Iris are a refuge for a very destructive pest, the iris borer, according to Jeffrey Hahn, entomology educator with the University of Minnesota's Extension Service. He says, "It's the caterpillar stage of the borer that does the injury. After it hatches in early spring, it crawls up the leaves and enters the tissue. As it feeds, it works its way down to the rhizomes, where it eats out the interior. The injury caused by this feeding is severe, but the borer's real impact is in allowing the entry of a bacterium that causes soft rot.

"The borer pupates at the end of the summer and emerges as a moth in the fall. The female lays eggs on old iris plants where they remain through the winter. Cutting the foliage back to 6 inches and removing plant debris after the first frost destroys the eggs and minimizes the number of iris borers that will be present next year."

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Hahn says treatment with an insecticide will still be necessary next spring. Dimethoate is recommended and should be applied when new growth is 4 to 6 inches tall. Also, irises should be checked when they are reset at the end of summer, and any infested plants should be destroyed.

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I, V4, V7

NAGRI600

news

Communication Resources
Minnesota Extension Service
433 Coffey Hall
University of Minnesota
St. Paul, Minnesota 55108

Oct. 2, 1986

Source: C. Ford Runge
612/625-9208
Writer: Jack Sperbeck
612/625-4730

YOUNG, "BEST" FARMERS ARE BEING FORCED OUT

Young, well-educated farmers who may use the newest technology are statistically more likely to be forced out of farming. These farmers bear heavier debt loads and are especially vulnerable to financial conditions "outside of agriculture or agricultural policy."

So says University of Minnesota agricultural economist C. Ford Runge, in his paper, "Technology and Financial Adjustments in American Agriculture: Who Will Quit and Why?"

Monetary, fiscal and exchange rate policies have been the main cause of farm bankruptcies. The 1985 Farm Bill, acting alone, can do little to alleviate stresses on the agricultural sector, Runge says.

Many farmers incurred large farm debts based on forecasts of continued increases in land values. "These forecasts were wrong. Beginning in the early 80s, major devaluations in farm assets and increases in real interest rates created extreme financial pressures for farmers who went heavily in debt to purchase these assets. Many of these farmers are young, well educated and use

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advanced technology," Runge wrote in his paper.

"If current trends continue, some producers who survive may be less indebted, but less technologically efficient than some who quit. If this pattern is widespread, it may contribute to declines in the global competitiveness of American farmers," he says.

Average farm size is not likely to increase substantially--at least in the short run.

"Without renewed strength in commodity prices, financial rewards to farm expansion are likely to remain small. Instead, land will be retired from production through government acreage and conservation set-aside programs," he adds.

Runge does research for the university's Agricultural Experiment Station. Funding for this study, which will soon be published in a book, was from a Northwest Area Foundation grant.

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AEA,BSS,CEO,V1,V4

NAGR1617

Oct. 9, 1986

Source: A. Scott Reed
218/879-4528
Editor: Mary Kay O'Hearn
612/625-2741

WOOD MAKES ITS MARK IN DAILY LIFE

National Forest Products Week, Oct. 19-25, is a good time to remember that Minnesotans use daily many products that come from wood.

A. Scott Reed, forester with the University of Minnesota's Extension Service at the Cloquet Forestry Center, notes that it takes land, air, water, sun and time to grow wood and technology to make the wide range of wood products.

Quoting the American Forest Council, Reed says a cord of wood (a pile 4 feet by 4 feet by 8 feet, or 80 cubic feet of solid wood) will yield any one of the following: 7.5 million toothpicks, 1,000-2,000 pounds of paper (depending on the process), 942 1-pound books, 61,370 business size envelopes; 4,384,000 commemorative postage stamps, 460,000 personal checks, 89,870 sheets of letterhead bond paper, 1,200 copies of "National Geographic" magazine, 2,700 copies of the average daily newspaper, 250 copies of the Sunday "New York Times", 30 Boston rockers or 12 dining tables (each seating 8).

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It takes 20 cords or 10,000 board feet of lumber to build the average 1,800-square-foot home.

Of course, different products require different kinds of trees.

Reed says 20 percent of a cord of wood will probably be bark, which is a source of many chemicals or may be used for mulches and soil conditioners. Vitamins, plastics, explosives, photographic film, toothpaste and pharmaceuticals are among the many wood by-products.

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CEO,T,V4

NCRD1632

news

Communication Resources
Minnesota Extension Service
433 Coffey Hall
University of Minnesota
St. Paul, Minnesota 55108

Oct. 9, 1986

Source: Dale Hicks
612/625-8700
Writer: Jack Sperbeck
612/625-4730

CONSIDER FEEDING CORN THAT GERMINATED IN FIELD

If you have some corn that's germinated in the field, consider feeding it instead of putting it in long-term storage.

The problem of corn germinating in the ear due to wet weather "probably won't get any worse" this fall, says Dale Hicks, agronomist with the University of Minnesota's Extension Service. Hicks says corn ears that germinated "were probably erect during heavy rains. Now ears are hanging down more as they mature."

Also, corn is not apt to germinate at temperatures below 50 degrees--typical for this time of the year.

Hicks says corn that germinated in the ear will have lower test weight and be lower in quality.

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AEA,BSS,CEO,V1,V3,V4

NAGR1629

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news

Communication Resources
Minnesota Extension Service
433 Coffey Hall
University of Minnesota
St. Paul, Minnesota 55108

Oct. 9, 1986

Source: Deborah Brown
612/624-7491

Editor: Sam Brungardt
612/625-6797

FALL IS TULIP TIME

Fall is tulip time. That's right. Tulips must be planted in October for a beautiful display next April and May.

Deborah Brown, horticulturist with the University of Minnesota's Extension Service, says, "Choose a site with well-drained soil and plenty of sunlight for best results. Incorporate bulb fertilizer deep in the planting holes where roots will reach as they grow, then plant the bulbs and water them well. Nature will take care of the rest."

Brown says that bulbs planted near the foundation of a house will need added mulch such as leaves or straw. This keeps them from sprouting prematurely in late winter or early spring. If they sprout too soon, the flower buds run a good chance of being killed by sudden cold temperatures.

Plant clusters of single varieties of tulips together for greatest visual impact in the garden. Brown says, "In Minnesota, early or midseason varieties usually perform better than later ones. Quite often our weather is so warm by the time the late tulips bloom, they open one day, then fade a day or two later."

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I, V4, V7

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NAGR1596

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Oct. 9, 1986

Source: Lewis Hendricks
612/624-2790

Writer: Mary Kay O'Hearn
612/625-2741

RESTRICTIONS ON WOOD PRESERVATIVES BEGIN NOV. 10

Some familiar wood preservatives, including penta, creosote and the arsenic compounds, can no longer be used freely after Nov. 10 due to changes in Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulations.

One alternative for farmers and do-it-yourselfers is to buy wood pressure treated by the manufacturers, suggests Lewis Hendricks, forest products specialist with the University of Minnesota's Extension Service.

If the user has a license to apply restricted pesticides, according to the law, preservatives must be purchased from a distributor or retailer who is licensed as a restricted use pesticide dealer, says Robert T. Seavey, forest products research assistant with extension. Those wanting a pesticide applicator's license need to take a self-study program and score 80 in a test which comes from the Minnesota Department of Agriculture and is administered by county extension offices. Wayne Dally of the Minnesota Department of Agriculture notes that guidelines and

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procedures are subject to change and contacting him closer to Nov. 10 will mean getting the latest information.

Possibly the best alternative is to purchase wood already pressure treated. It is not restricted by EPA, which is more concerned with the application of these preservatives to wood because that's when the greatest pollution and health risks occur. The wood industry has already undertaken a voluntary consumer awareness program to meet EPA's goal of providing users of pressure-treated wood with proper use and precautionary information. Wood treaters must provide a consumer information sheet when they sell or deliver treated wood.

Pressure-treated wood, Seavey says, has a longer service life than wood which is dip-treated or treated with a brush-on application. It is important to choose a species that has a wide band of sapwood, as sapwood is easier to treat than heartwood. Species that have high sapwood content and are recommended for pressure-treated products include southern, ponderosa and red pine.

Chromated copper arsenate- (CCA-) treated wood should not be used for feedbunks or portions of beehives that may come in contact with honey. Penta and creosote are more restricted and best used for high-decay situations removed from people and domestic animals.

Some preservatives for brush-on or dip treatments can still be purchased without a license. Users of copper naphthenate and polyphase wood preservatives have given them good marks. Copper-8-quinolinolate is considered relatively safe and has been used in nonpressure-treated wood containers, pallets and products for use in contact with foods. Tributyltin-oxide is extensively used as a mildewcide in paints and stains.

Dip or brush-on treatments won't provide long-term service in a high-decay situation, Seavey and Hendricks point out. If the wood is in contact with the ground, repeated applications will be needed and even this is not likely to completely stop decay.

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AEA,BSS,CEO,T,V1,V4

NCRD1630

news

Communication Resources
Minnesota Extension Service
433 Coffey Hall
University of Minnesota
St. Paul, Minnesota 55108

Oct. 9, 1986

Source: H. William Schafer
612/624-4793

Writer: Deedee Nagy
612/625-0288

APPLES MAY SPELL "FALL," BUT YOU CAN STRETCH ENJOYMENT

Chomping into a fresh apple on a crisp, fall day is a seasonal treat that has few rivals. Frozen, canned or dried properly, however, apples can prolong the popular taste of autumn well into the seasons ahead.

H. William Schafer, food technologist with the University of Minnesota's Extension Service, says apples for pies and sauces can be frozen as slices, sauce or even as whole apples that will be peeled and cooked upon thawing.

Peeled apple slices may be submerged in a sodium bisulfite solution before they are coated with sugar and packed in freezer containers. Sulfite-sensitive individuals should use the alternative method of soaking the slices in a salt brine and packing them in a sugar solution containing ascorbic acid to prevent darkening.

Whole apples can go into the freezer after being washed, thoroughly dried and placed in airtight plastic bags. When ready to use them in cooked foods, run cold water over them just before you peel them and then use them quickly.

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Apple slices for pies that you don't wish to sweeten prior to freezing can be placed in boiling water for two minutes and cooled in ice water before being sealed and frozen.

Canned apples may be preserved as either sauce or apple pieces. Both require processing in a boiling water bath or a pressure canner. If desired, apple slices to be canned may be treated with crystalline ascorbic acid or a salt brine to prevent darkening.

Apple slices destined for the food dehydrator should be no more than 1/8 to 1/4 inch thick. They also require a dip in a sodium bisulfite solution or ascorbic acid to guard against color changes.

Dried apple pieces should be sealed in plastic bags and stored inside tightly sealed glass jars. The jars should be kept in a cool, dry place away from direct sunlight. Dried foods in sealed plastic bags may also be stored in the refrigerator.

County extension offices have publications available on freezing, canning and drying of foods. Schafer cautions food preservers to follow the advice of the Extension Service or the manufacturer of canning, freezing or drying equipment rather than untested methods outlined in out-of-date cookbooks.

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H, V4, V7

NHEC1625

Oct. 9, 1986

Source: H. William Schafer
612/624-4793
Writer: Deedee Nagy
612/625-0288

DRYING PRESERVES GARDEN HERBS FOR WINTER ENJOYMENT

If you grow and dry your own herbs, you'll have a ready supply of subtle flavorings and aromas to add to meals all through the winter. H. William Schafer, food technologist with the University of Minnesota's Extension Service, says herb drying can be done several ways.

Air drying takes one to two weeks. To do it, tie six or eight stems of herbs together and place them in a paper bag that has had holes punched in it for ventilation. Hang the bag in a dry, airy place for several weeks, Schafer suggests. Leaves can also be dried off the stems by placing them on a cloth-covered rack or a mesh screen. The leaves should be turned or stirred occasionally and they shouldn't be exposed to light, which can destroy their aroma.

Oven drying takes two to four hours with the oven on the lowest possible setting. Leaves should be arranged in a single layer on racks with several inches between racks to allow air circulation. Keeping the oven door propped open will provide ventilation and help control heat.

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When drying herbs in a microwave oven, they should be arranged on paper towels and set on a rack. Check the leaves for dryness after cooking them two to three minutes on a medium setting. If the leaves aren't yet brittle and crumbly, turn the oven on for 30 seconds longer.

Once the herbs are dry, Schafer recommends storing them in small, airtight containers away from light. If kept cool, dry and in the dark, dried whole herbs retain their flavor and aroma for up to a year.

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H, I, V4, V7

NHEC1626

news

Communication Resources
Minnesota Extension Service
433 Coffey Hall
University of Minnesota
St. Paul, Minnesota 55108

MSC
5/27/86

Oct. 16, 1986

Source: George Rehm
612/625-6210
Writer: Jack Sperbeck
612/625-4730

GUESSING AT FERTILIZER RATES COULD BE EXPENSIVE

Fertilizer prices are lower this fall than they've been for several years. That's good news for farmers and makes fall fertilization attractive, provided farmers practice sound fertilizer management.

"Lower prices shouldn't override the need to pay close attention to fertilizer rates," says George Rehm, soils specialist with the University of Minnesota's Extension Service. "Using an adequate but not excessive rate of fertilizer is still a major management tool to improve profits. There's still no substitute for soil testing as the base for fertilizer use," he adds.

The wet fall season may lead farmers to rush from harvest to fertilizer application--and to guess at the amount of fertilizer needed. "This could be a mistake that costs Minnesota farmers," Rehm emphasizes.

"Turn-around time from analysis to recommendations is short for all labs--about three days. A little planning now could save both money and confusion later this fall," Rehm says.

Page 1 of 2

University of Minnesota, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and Minnesota Counties Cooperating

Rehm advises farmers to use a soil testing laboratory that bases fertilizer recommendations on University of Minnesota research. For farmers who choose to send their samples to the University of Minnesota Soil Testing Laboratory, sample bags and detailed sampling instructions are available from county extension offices.

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AEA,BSS,CEO,F,V1,V4

NAGR1641

news

Communication Resources
Minnesota Extension Service
433 Coffey Hall
University of Minnesota
St. Paul, Minnesota 55108

Oct. 16, 1986

Source: Mary Darling
612/624-6286
Writer: Deedee Nagy
612/625-0288

AMERICANS ARE OPTING FOR FRESH, LOWFAT, SWEET FOODS

The quest for healthful foods is leading more Americans to choose lowfat dairy products and fresh fruits and vegetables. We still have a sweet tooth, however; per capita sweetener use has climbed to record high levels.

These are among the food consumption trends evident in data released recently by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Mary Darling, nutritionist with the University of Minnesota's Extension Service, says the food industry has capitalized on these trends by introducing new products advertised as "lite," lean and artificially sweetened with aspartame, a noncaloric sugar-substitute marketed as NutraSweet.

Consumers are increasingly interested in nutrition, Darling says. A survey done in 1983 and repeated last year showed twice as many shoppers claimed to have concerns about fat content, cholesterol and calories when making supermarket selections.

How have our eating habits changed to reflect these ideas?

Darling says consumers are eating less red meat and more poultry and

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fish. They're also eating more fresh and frozen vegetables and fruits and fewer canned ones.

Dairy product eating habits have also changed, possibly in response to concerns about osteoporosis, a bone-weakening disease that affects millions of older Americans. Darling says that while whole milk consumption has dropped steadily over the years, the use of lowfat milk, yogurt and cheese has increased. Yogurt consumption alone has nearly quadrupled since 1970 and our appetite for mozzarella and other Italian cheeses is also on the rise.

Despite weight consciousness, our love of rich foods doesn't appear to be decreasing. The popularity of foods such as premium ice cream, chocolate chip cookies and croissants illustrates the fickle nature of our stated preferences for healthful foods, according to Darling.

She adds that much of the increase in our use of sweetener is due to soft drink consumption. Americans currently drink more than 44 gallons of soft drinks per person each year and the percentage of these that are diet drinks has increased to 20 percent of the total. The use of aspartame accounted for the sugar-equivalent of about 6 pounds per person in 1984 and that is increasing as more products sweetened with the substance are introduced.

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V4, V7, H

NHEC1633

news

Communication Resources
Minnesota Extension Service
433 Coffey Hall
University of Minnesota
St. Paul, Minnesota 55108

Oct. 16, 1986

Source: Deborah Brown
612/624-7491
Editor: Sam Brungardt
612/625-6797

THEN THERE'S THE PUMPKIN THAT TURNED INTO A VASE

Many people think of children and Halloween when they see bright orange pumpkins. But pumpkins also evoke thoughts of bounty and harvest, and the spicy fragrance of pumpkin pie, fresh from the oven on a nippy autumn day.

"How about using small pumpkins for centerpieces on the dining table or to display flowers on a coffee table?" asks Deborah Brown, horticulturist with the University of Minnesota's Extension Service. "Simply cut off the top as you would for a jack-o-lantern, then remove the seeds and pulp. Insert a glass jar of water to act as a vase, and place the pumpkin on a plate or tray to protect the table in case the pumpkin 'sweats.'"

Brown suggests arranging a bouquet of fall flowers, such as chrysanthemums and asters, or other flowers from the garden in the jar. If it's too late for flowers, take slips from houseplants to fill the pumpkin's center.

She adds, "A pumpkin won't last long once it's cut, but you can keep pumpkins stored several weeks before opening them, through Thanksgiving, at least."

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G, I, V4, V7

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NHEC1597

University of Minnesota, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and Minnesota Counties Cooperating

Oct. 16, 1986

Source: Deborah Brown
612/624-7491
Editor: Sam Brungardt
612/625-6797

FERTILIZE IN LATE FALL FOR A LUSH, THICK LAWN

Fertilize the lawn one final time this year, in late October or early November, suggests Deborah Brown, horticulturist with the University of Minnesota's Extension Service. She says, "Even though the grass does not appear to be growing, the underground portions will remain active for several weeks. Late fall fertilization promotes rhizome development, so the lawn should come up thicker next spring.

"Unless you have had a soil test that tells you otherwise, use a fertilizer with a ratio of four parts nitrogen to one part phosphorous and two parts potassium. This ratio works out to 20-5-10, 24-6-12, or something similar. University turf specialists say it's not necessary to get a special fertilizer for fall."

Brown says weed-and-feed products will prove ineffective in late autumn; herbicides are useful only when weeds are growing actively. She says, "If you have some weed-and-feed left, save it for next year. It costs more than plain fertilizer, so why waste it?"

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V4, V7, I

NAGR1598

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Oct. 16, 1986

Source: Jane P. McKinnon
612/624-9290
Editor: Sam Brungardt
612/625-6797

HOMEMADE COMPOST IS INEXPENSIVE, YET VALUABLE

Don't send a single undiseased leaf or grass clipping to the land fill or garbage dump this fall. Composting may not sound glamorous, but improving garden soil in this old-fashioned way is economical, says Jane McKinnon, horticulturist with the University of Minnesota's Extension Service.

She says, "Homemade compost is an extremely inexpensive soil amendment. Although acid-loving plants such as azaleas and blueberries may require decomposed sphagnum peat when grown in soils high in lime or when watered from a well, leaf compost will do just fine for most garden plants."

McKinnon suggests locating the compost pile in a secluded corner. Each layer of leaves, grass clippings and healthy plant residue can be compressed and held down by a shovelful or two of garden soil. Microorganisms that occur naturally in the soil will decompose the material to "leaf mold" or "humus." A sprinkling of fast-acting nitrogen fertilizer over each layer of soil and leaves will speed decomposition and enrich the compost. This combination of soil, organic matter and nitrogen, when

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moistened by rain, snow or water from a hose, will produce an excellent soil amendment for next year's gardening season.

"Compost makes gardening easier in several ways," McKinnon says. "Decomposed organic matter added to sticky, clay soils opens them for better drainage. Well-drained soils allow space for oxygen, which allows plant roots to take up nutrients and moisture. Plant roots die without oxygen. That's why one sometime sees impatiens wilt in a water-logged pot or soggy bed. Sticky soils are also cold, hard to work and slow to dry quickly enough to take advantage of early spring planting."

McKinnon says adding compost each year is almost a necessity for those who garden on sandy, droughthy soils and cannot afford to irrigate frequently. Decomposing organic matter acts as a blotter to hold moisture where roots can absorb it along with the necessary oxygen. It also holds mineral nutrients for plant use and protects them from rapid leaching. Sandy soils that are too hot in the summer are cooled by the addition of compost. All in all, compost is an excellent balancer for extreme conditions.

For more information on compost heap construction, obtain fact sheet AG-FS-1198, "Building a Compost Heap," from your local county extension office.

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Oct. 16, 1986

Source: Lewis Hendricks

612/624-2790

Editor: Mary Kay O'Hearn

612/625-2741

TREAT WOOD-BURNING STOVES, FIREPLACES WITH RESPECT

It's the time of year when wood-burning stoves and fireplaces not only provide extra heat, but give homes a cozy feeling. However, serious fires and burns can result from misuse or carelessness around these heating units, reminds Lewis Hendricks, forest products specialist with the University of Minnesota's Extension Service.

He suggests some cautions for wood-burning stove and fireplace users:

--Wood-burning stoves should be installed according to manufacturers' instructions.

--Keep chimneys, flues and connector pipes clean to avoid dangerous creosote buildup.

--Burn coal only in a stove designed for that purpose, and never burn trash in a fireplace or stove.

--Keep stove fires properly aamped for even heat output, good fuel efficiency and to avoid overheating.

--Always use a fireplace screen to contain sparks.

--Install and maintain fire extinguishers and smoke detectors in your home. Develop and practice a home fire escape plan that even the youngest members of your household can understand.

--Use extra caution with a chainsaw and never work alone if you are cutting firewood. Wear a hard hat, goggles, safety shoes, gloves and hearing protectors to guard against injury.

--Wear gloves to avoid splinters when handling wood. Avoid putting strain on your back by trying to tote large loads.

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CEO,V1,V4,V7

NCRD1635

news

Communication Resources
Minnesota Extension Service
433 Coffey Hall
University of Minnesota
St. Paul, Minnesota 55108

Oct. 30, 1986

Source: Juanita Reed
612/625-9231

Writer: C. M. Sauber
612/625-0223

MINNESOTA 4-H'ERS, 4-H ALUMNI WIN STATE ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS

The University of Minnesota Extension Service's 4-H Youth Development program has announced achievement awards for 52 members and alumni from 35 counties who have excelled in their 4-H activities or contributed exceptionally to 4-H and their communities. The winning 4-H'ers are listed below by county, along with their hometowns and areas of achievement. Most of them will represent Minnesota at the National 4-H Congress in Chicago, Dec. 6-11.

Anoka County: Colleen Wurm, Ramsey, food perservation

Big Stone County: Cecilie Blum, Correll, clothing

Blue Earth County: Connie Fitzloff, Mankato, poultry; Tracy Laird, Mankato, citizenship

Brown County: Brian Richert, Sleepy Eye, swine

Chippewa County: Julie Bosch, Montevideo, leadership

Clearwater County: Ami Steinmetz, Bagley, safety

Crow Wing County: Kimberly Rabehl, Brainerd, foods and nutrition

Dakota County: Michelle Haberle, Lakeville, child care

Douglas County: Brian Eldevik, Alexandria, forestry; Cathy Lueders, Evansville, fashion revue; Brian Van Zomeren, Alexandria, sheep

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Faribault County: David Ripley, Blue Earth, electric
Fillmore County: Laura Matson, Spring Valley, achievement
Goodhue County: Mark Baker, Kenyon, entomology; Connie Stechmann,
Zumbrota, forestry; Jeff Swenson, Cannon Falls, agriculture
Isanti County: Kelly Kitchen, Grandy, dairy goat; Beau Liddell,
Stacy, wildlife and fisheries;- Mike Skiba, North Branch, electric
Kittson County: Michael Dziengel, Kennedy, petroleum power
Lincoln County: Tracy Rosenboom, Verdi, personal management;
Klint Willert, Lake Benton, citizenship
Lyon County: Charles Banks, Lynd, conservation; Karlyn Doyle,
Marshall, needle arts; Sean-David Doyle, Marshall, wood science; Russ
Louwagie, Marshall, dairy achievement
McLeod County: Quint Klopfleisch, Brownton, dog care
Mille Lacs County: Brian Anderson, Foreston, dairy; David DeMars,
Princeton, creative arts; Ruth Frazier, Foreston, dairy
Morrison County: Karie Wolff, Little Falls, achievement
Mower County: Karin Grass, LeRoy, personal management
Norman County: Steven Brant, Ada, plant and soil science
Olmsted County: Ann Marie Bucher, Byron, horse
Pipestone County: Tami Griebel, Pipestone, rabbit
Polk County: Mark Jacobson, Crookston, photography; Tanjya
Kuznik, Crookston, breads

Redwood County: Larry Goelz, Franklin, livestock; Mary Lisa Little, Clements, conservation

Renville County: Craig Brown, Redwood Falls, consumer education; Julie Lynn Novotny, Hector, home environment; Patti Rettmann, Buffalo Lake, bicycle

Rice County: Brenda Thayer, Faribault, health

St. Louis County: Walter Haglund II, Hibbing, horticulture

Scott County: Kim Bell, Shakopee, leadership

Sibley County: Fred Latzke Jr., Le Sueur, beef

Stearns County: Cyndi Landwehr, St. Augusta, dairy foods; Joe Landwehr, St. Augusta, gardening

Stevens County: Melissa McNeill, Morris, veterinary science

Wabasha County: Stacey Martin, Mezeppa, public speaking

Wilkin County--Brent Torkelson, Foxhome, aerospace

Alumni add their experience as 4-H'ers to their teaching and guidance of today's 4-H members. Five alumni were given state awards for their contributions:

Blue Earth County: Larry Peterson, Amboy

Isanti County: Earl Kitchen, Grandy

Nobles County: Lucille Taylor, Adrian

Rice County: Mary Donkers, Faribault; Louis Flom, Nerstrand

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news

Communication Resources
Minnesota Extension Service
433 Coffey Hall
University of Minnesota
St. Paul, Minnesota 55108

October 30, 1986

Source: Blinn and Vogt
612/624-3788

Writer: Mary Kay O'Hearn
612/625-2741

GROWING YULE TREES TAKES MORE THAN A SANTA CLAUS

It takes more than a Santa Claus instinct to grow Christmas trees for a living. And the supply in future years could exceed demand.

So say Charles R. Blinn and Carl E. Vogt, foresters with the University of Minnesota's Extension Service, in their study for the University's Agricultural Experiment Station on the risks involved with growing and selling Christmas trees.

As in any other kind of agriculture, good management and knowledge of economics and business can help lessen the risk involved. Today more than 200 commercial Christmas tree producers in Minnesota supply trees for markets as far away as Florida.

Christmas trees are grown on what are referred to as "plantations." The easy part is harvesting the trees or providing the chance for buyers to cut their own.

A major decision for a grower starting out is what species of tree to plant. Selling price is a consideration, but alert consumers make their decisions based largely on the quality of

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the tree. For the grower, say Blinn and Vogt, there must be thorough knowledge of species characteristics, potential problems, site requirements and a crystal ball to predict consumer demands for both the current and future years. The grower's goal is to produce a tree that has dense foliage, is well formed and is high quality.

But there are months and years of work before that goal is reached. Plantings are staggered so that trees are maturing every year.

Site selection and the soil condition must be evaluated in advance of planting. Nearness to roads is important for removing trees. Some sites can be planted "as is" while on others brush, weeds, stray trees or grasses must be eliminated first because too much competition for moisture can stunt tree growth. Then there is the shaping, basal scaring (to slow down height growth and help to develop a denser crown), stump culture (to allow lower branches on the stump to produce another marketable tree), and fertilizing and control of competition from other vegetation while the trees are maturing. Much of this means long hours of work in late spring. Then there are the unforeseens: losses due to fire, animals, diseases and insects, and trespassers; intruders cutting or damaging trees; and uncertainty in future markets and demand for trees.

Growers selling to retail lots this season probably made those selling arrangements last summer or earlier.

Many growers in 1986 are expanding their production to help fill the perceived shortage in Christmas tree production. New growers are scaling up for the financial rewards that may be theirs, especially in the southeastern United States where growers can produce salable trees within a shorter rotation because of the longer growing season. But demand for Christmas trees is not increasing at a rate that will keep pace with the resulting increase in supply, according to the Blinn-Vogt study.

All this means the risk already associated with marketing Christmas trees will be intensified in the future. In addition to the growing risks, the grower has to be able to keep all the business records required by the government and to keep abreast of changes in the tax laws.

Before being rushed away by the Santa Claus spirit and buying a tree farm, take a cool businesslike look remembering the risks and costs as well as the pleasure and return.

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CEO,T,V4,V7

NCRD1683

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Communication Resources
Minnesota Extension Service
433 Coffey Hall
University of Minnesota
St. Paul, Minnesota 55108

Oct. 30, 1986

Source: Jeffrey D. Hahn
612/624-4977
Editor: Sam Brungardt
612/625-6797

DON'T LET PANTRY PESTS BUG YOU DURING THE WINTER

Although few people associate insects with winter, many different insects can be found in homes during the winter.

One commonly encountered group, according to Jeffrey Hahn, entomology educator with the University of Minnesota's Extension Service, is pantry insects. This group includes grain beetles, flour beetles, some kinds of weevils, and Indianmeal moths, which feed on foods such as flour, cake mixes, cereal, pasta, dried fruits, pet food and sunflower seeds. Indianmeal moths are tough customers; they've even been found on dried plant arrangements and in rat poison.

"Your strategy to eliminate these pests, no matter which you have or where they are, will be the same: keep them away from food," Hahn says. "Accomplishing this is straightforward, but it can be hard work.

"All dried food products should be checked for insects. If you find food that's heavily infested, it's best to wrap it in plastic and throw it away. However, moderately or lightly infested food can be saved by a cold or heat treatment. Most

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infested foods can be put into the freezer for three to seven days, depending on the size of the package. Dried fruit can be placed in cheesecloth and dipped into boiling water for six seconds.

"Once food is sterilized, it should be placed in containers that seal tightly, such as Tupperware or glass jars. Although all the insect parts cannot be sifted out, the food is safe to use. Food that is not infested should still be sterilized and placed in insect-proof containers to avoid problems later."

Pantry insects do not have to have access to packaged food to find something to eat. The crumbs that accumulate in cracks and crevices in cupboards can supply enough food to create an insect problem. This can be remedied by using a vacuum cleaner to remove any food from such places.

Wouldn't it be easier to spray insecticide to kill pantry pests?

"No," says Hahn, "chemical control is neither effective nor necessary. Although insecticides will kill some of these pests, most will be protected inside the food packages. The insects will continue to be around as long as they have access to food. Once there is no source of food, they will soon die or move out."

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H, V4, V7

NHEC1638

news

Communication Resources
Minnesota Extension Service
433 Coffey Hall
University of Minnesota
St. Paul, Minnesota 55108

October 30, 1986

Source: Lewis Hendricks
612/624-2790

Writer: Mary Kay O'Hearn
612/625-2741

WOOD HEATING TAKES ATTENTION TO DETAIL

Failure to leave a required 2-inch clearance space around the chimney has caused house fires that could have been avoided.

The chimney area anywhere could be the violator, but with improved attic insulating in recent years, that may be where it starts, says Paul B. Stegmeir, consultant, who offered some woodburning safety and efficiency tips at home energy consultant training for the University of Minnesota's Extension Service. Stegmeir came at the invitation of Lewis Hendricks, forest products extension specialist.

Insulation is fire retardant and while it won't burn itself, if it is placed close to a chimney it can conduct heat to wood portions of a house and start a smoldering fire. Since 1984 there have been attic insulation shields for adding protection to the 2-inch space which is required for clearance.

"The No. 2 cause of fires in one- and two-family dwellings," says Stegmeir "is related to wood heating appliances." In 75 percent of the cases, misinstallation and poor maintenance contribute to the fires. Individuals smoking is still the No. 1 cause of house fires.

Stegmeir believes the energy crisis of 1973 could repeat itself and notes that many persons building new homes are installing some type of wood heating to give another option on heating sources. "We

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could be returning to energy alternatives," he says if Middle East suppliers change their minds again on price. U.S. oil isn't the energy alternative it once was. He explains that 15-20 percent of the low producing oil wells in the United States have been capped (meaning cement has been poured down them), and that is irreversible.

Here are some of the points he made:

. One-third of Minnesotans use wood for some type of home heating; double this use wouldn't have a negative effect on the state's wood resources.

. Never buy a wood stove at a garage sale and expect it to function properly. Get it from a reputable dealer, preferably one who has a Wood Heating Alliance certificate, and a must is an Underwriters' Laboratories (U.L.) label (or similar listing) on the stove.

. Chimney tiles should be set in refractory cement, not just ordinary cement, as added fire protection. (Alsey is one trade name of a refractory cement product.)

. Don't burn treated or creosoted wood--toxic fumes result.

. Any wood burns well if properly dried and burned. But if you are having to buy wood, oak, maple and hickory are among the better woods because they weigh more and provide more heat per cord.

. Wood use is complex--not easier than handling other heating fuels. Learn the rules to follow for its safe use.

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news

Communication Resources
Minnesota Extension Service
433 Coffey Hall
University of Minnesota
St. Paul, Minnesota 55108

October 30, 1986

Source: Ken Thomas
612/625-7040
Writer: Jack Sperbeck
612/625-4730

(First in a series on farm rentals)

GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS IMPORTANT IN ESTABLISHING FARM RENTS

Size of the ASCS corn or wheat base for a given farm is an extremely important factor in farm rentals. A farm with a small corn or wheat base should rent for much less than one with a high base, say economists with the University of Minnesota's Extension Service.

A farm with a 50 percent corn base may rent for \$54 per acre. The same farm with would justify a rent of only \$45 if it had a 25 percent corn base, say extension economists Ken Thomas and Paul Hasbargen.

. Variation in the normal yield of program crops assigned by the ASCS office can also make a \$5 to \$10 an acre difference in rent paid. Every bushel in additional yield brings in another dollar of deficiency payments for corn and close to \$2 for wheat.

Thomas and Hasbargen list other factors to help determine rental rates:

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--Basis of the rent payment--whether total, tillable or harvestable acres.

--Dates of payment. A single payment in spring should bring a lower rent than one where part of the rent is paid in spring, the rest in fall. The time value of the money and degree of risk facing the owner are major factors.

--Basic productivity of the farm, including soil type, fertility and drainage.

Recent sharp drops in farm income have caused land values and cash rents to drop. Cash rents dropped 15-20 percent in southern Minnesota in 1986. And further declines for 1987 are anticipated, Thomas and Hasbargen say.

More information on cash farm rental rates is available from county offices of the Minnesota Extension Service.

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AEA, BSS, CEO, V1, V4

NAGR1687

Nov. 6, 1986

Source: Deborah L. Brown
612/624-7491
Editor: Sam Brungardt
612/625-6797

PROPER CARE WILL KEEP HOUSEPLANTS HAPPY

The green that houseplants provide is welcome during Minnesota winters. Deborah Brown, horticulturist with the University of Minnesota's Extension Service, offers these tips for keeping houseplants healthy and thriving during the winter:

--Houseplants need all the light they can get during the winter. Dirt and dust build-up interfere with light reaching the leaf surfaces. Keep the foliage clean and dust free by washing plants regularly. Plants with small leaves may be washed in the shower or with a faucet spray attachment. Large-leaved plants can be cleaned by wiping each leaf with a soft, moist cloth.

--Watch closely for signs of insect activity. Many insects multiply rapidly in our excessively dry homes, particularly if the temperature is kept fairly warm. Check the undersides of leaves and the leaf axils, where leaves join the stems. These are the most likely places to find insects, their webs or eggs. If detected early enough, insect infestations can often be controlled with mild soap-and-water washes.

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--Reduce fertilizer frequency and strength. Unless houseplants are growing actively or are under electric lights, they won't respond to the reduced amount of sunlight that occurs with shorter days.

--Try to increase light levels by moving plants near to windows so they will receive direct sunlight if at all possible. Brighter light helps compensate for the shorter winter days. In some cases, fluorescent plant lights are the only answer to providing adequate light. Incandescent spotlights are of some help, but usually produce so much heat that they cannot be used very close to the foliage.

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G,I,V4,V7

NHEC1639

Nov. 6, 1986

Source: Paul Hasbargen
612/625-1226
Writer: Jack Sperbeck
612/625-4730

CALCULATE EFFECTS OF SET-ASIDE PROGRAMS

If you are a Minnesota farmer, help is available from your county extension office if you need to calculate how the government's latest addition to the feed grain program will affect your crop returns.

County offices of the Minnesota Extension Service have worksheets to help you get to the bottom line. Paul Hasbargen, extension economist, says most farmers will find the added 15 percent paid diversion announced by USDA in late October to be attractive.

He says participation in the feed grain program will pay at least as much in 1987 as it did in 1986. Cash rents and other costs should be lower in 1987, so feed grain producers can expect better crop earnings next year.

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AEA, BSS, CEO, V1, V4

NAGR1691

news

Communication Resources
Minnesota Extension Service
433 Coffey Hall
University of Minnesota
St. Paul, Minnesota 55108

Nov. 6, 1986

Source: Ken Thomas
612/625-7040
Writer: Jack Sperbeck
612/625-4730

(This is the second in a series on farm rentals)

HELP IS AVAILABLE TO CALCULATE LAND RENTS

Landowners and farmers renting land can get help to determine cash rents or crop share leases that are fair to both parties.

County offices of the University of Minnesota's Extension Service have publications and computer programs that can help in the calculation of land rents. Farmers renting land should allow for machinery replacement and labor expenses when calculating how much to pay for rent.

Farm management records show that these costs are typically in the \$50- to \$60-per-acre range, according to Ken Thomas and Paul Hasbargen, economists with the Minnesota Extension Service. You can "squeeze" these overhead items for a year or two. But over the longer term, returns must pay for machinery replacement and family labor. They must also cover uninsurable risks, Thomas and Hasbargen say.

Landowners should expect a lower return from cash-rented land, compared to a crop share or custom farming arrangement. That's because the operator assumes all production and marketing risks under a cash lease.

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AEA,BSS,CEO,V1,V4

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NAGR1692

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Nov. 20, 1986

Source: Ken Thomas
612/625-7040
Writer: Jack Sperbeck
612/625-4730

Editors: This is the third in a series on farm rentals

FLEXIBLE CASH RENTS HELP FARMERS, LANDLORDS SHARE RISKS

Land rental agreements that share the risks are becoming more popular with both farm operators and landowners.

Landowners are more willing to share risks of crop production as cash rents decline and risk of collecting the rent increases. A first step in risk sharing involves flexible cash rents, say Ken Thomas and Paul Hasbargen, economists with the University of Minnesota's Extension Service.

A set bushel rate--say, 35 bushels of corn per acre--lets the farm operator share the price risk with the landowner. With a fixed price arrangement, there's a sharing of yield risks. "In either case you must specify whether the landowner shares in any government programs," Thomas says.

If the landowner doesn't share in government payments, his share of the crop must be significantly larger than if he does.

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University of Minnesota, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and Minnesota Counties Cooperating

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A flexible arrangement that considers both price and yield is where the landowner gets a percent of the crop--say, 30 percent--as rent for the farm. In this case, the landowner normally shares in government payments.

The crop share lease is the more traditional risk sharing arrangement. A publication on cash rent, crop share and leases is available from Minnesota county extension offices.

Many county agents also have a computer program called "Rent Minnesota." The computer program will help calculate how much can be paid for cash rents and estimate returns from different share rents.

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AEA,BSS,CEO,V1,V4

NAGR1702

Nov. 20, 1986

Source: Ken Thomas
612/625-7040
Writer: Jack Sperbeck
612/625-4730

Editors: This is the fourth in a series on farm rentals

CROP SHARE LEASES ARE CHANGING

The sharp drop in land values has led to changes in crop share leases between farm operators and landowners.

Shifts from a 50/50 to a 40/60 share have been common, with the higher share going to the farm operator. Crop share leases are a traditional risk sharing arrangement, say Ken Thomas and Paul Hasbargen, economists with the University of Minnesota's Extension Service.

Like cash rental rates, the type of crop share arrangement typically found in an area is determined largely by the productive value of the land. In areas where cash rents range from \$20 to \$40 per acre, the one-third/two-thirds share predominates. This includes most of the northern two-thirds of Minnesota.

The 40/60 share is most common in \$40 to \$65 cash rent land, and the 50/50 predominates in areas with rents above \$65 per acre. (In all cases, higher figures apply to the farm operator.)

If you're shifting to a crop share arrangement or contemplating a change in your rent agreement, this is a good time to determine a fair arrangement under current conditions.

Thomas says a fair crop share arrangement is one where the landowner and farm operator share the crop in the same percentage as they contribute inputs like land, labor, machinery, seed and fertilizer.

To help you in this analysis, a publication on cash rent, crop share and leases is available at Minnesota county extension offices. Many offices also have a computer program called "Rent Minnesota." The computer program helps calculate how much can be paid for cash rents and estimates returns from different share rents.

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AEA,BSS,CEO,V1,V4

NAGR1703

Nov. 20, 1986

Source: Donald Barnes (612/625-4780)
Gary Heichel (612/625-6228)
Craig Sheaffer (612/625-7224)
Writer: Sam Brungardt (612/625-6797)

Editors: Call David Hansen at (612) 625-7290 to obtain color transparencies or black and white prints for use with this feature.

NITRO ALFALFA MAY FOSTER NEW CROPPING SYSTEMS

Nitro, the first commercial alfalfa with specialized nitrogen accumulation attributes, has been released by the University of Minnesota's Agricultural Experiment Station and the USDA's Agricultural Research Service. The new cultivar, developed at the university by a team of experiment station and USDA-ARS scientists, is designed for use in the Upper Midwest as a one-year hay source and a fall plow-down crop.

Nitro has the potential to increase nitrogen inputs into cropping systems and to help stabilize or reduce production costs, according to USDA-ARS research geneticist Donald Barnes. He says, "In developing Nitro, we selected for increased concentration of nitrogen in the roots and for larger roots in which to store nitrogen. Since Nitro is nondormant, it provides four to six weeks' additional fall growth and nitrogen fixation than the dormant and moderately dormant alfalfas now grown in Minnesota and other northern states. Nitro is better suited than all other nondormant alfalfas for single-year forage and nitrogen production in the northern United States.

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"Although Nitro's not a new concept, the concept of maximizing returns in a cropping system from seeding-year alfalfa is new. Some people will find the concept difficult to grasp because we've always measured returns by measuring a crop's yield. We need to look at systems--not only what the yield is the year you grow a crop, but also the crop's contributions in the next year."

Growing legumes, such as alfalfa, for "green manure" was an important practice before inorganic nitrogen fertilizers became available following World War II. Rhizobium bacteria on the roots of legumes have the ability to "fix" atmospheric nitrogen. Legumes use the ammonia the bacteria produce to make nitrogen-rich proteins. When a legume is plowed under, its leaves, stems and roots decay and enrich the soil for subsequent crops.

What part could Nitro play in a corn-alfalfa rotation? In trials at Becker, Lamberton, Rosemount and Waseca, corn grown in rotation with a nondormant, high-root-nitrogen alfalfa yielded an average of 125 bushels per acre. In contrast, corn grown continuously without nitrogen fertilizer yielded an average of 65 bushels per acre.

In trials at the same locations, Nitro planted in late April or early May produced an average total hay yield of 3.4 tons per acre, with high yields of about 5.0 tons per acre for both Nitro and dormant check cultivars. When all cultivars were plowed about Oct. 20, Nitro provided 124 pounds of nitrogen per acre (94 pounds of which were fixed), compared to 85 pounds (59 pounds of which were fixed) for the best dormant cultivar.

An unexpected benefit, brought along though the selection process, was a 7-percent improvement in nitrogen-fixing ability over the lines from which Nitro was developed.

What cropping options does Nitro offer? Craig Sheaffer, agronomist with the Minnesota Agricultural Experiment Station, has looked at the possibilities. He emphasizes that growing Nitro removes the options of harvesting forage beyond the seeding year and amortizing establishment costs over more than one year. That's because Nitro usually winterkills.

Sheaffer says farmers will need to understand how establishment and cutting management practices affect forage yield and quality and residual nitrogen in order to succeed with Nitro. He says a farmer must plant as early as possible and get a good stand to get maximum forage yield. If Nitro is seeded with a cereal, the companion crop should be harvested before it heads. If no herbicide is used, the first cutting should be taken while the weeds are vegetative and make the highest-quality forage.

Not cutting Nitro and plowing it down at the end of the growing season is one option. However, Sheaffer says nitrogen is worth only about 14 cents a pound at present, not enough to justify growing Nitro for green manure.

Another option is removing all the forage and plowing down only the crowns and roots. This would yield three or four high-quality cuttings. Sheaffer says, "Right now, the forage is worth much more than the nitrogen that's produced and this scheme, which utilizes all the herbage produced for forage, is the most profitable. However, putting up hay in late summer

can be risky. It may be better to take three cuttings and ensile or graze the fall regrowth, which would recycle some of the nutrients."

A compromise is to cut the Nitro in the late bud stage, when quality is highest, and to plow down the last regrowth. This should yield three cuttings by early September, yet return a considerable amount of nitrogen, mostly fixed, to the soil.

Nitro produces high-quality forage that can replace corn or soybean meal in a livestock ration. However, the costs of these feedstuffs have gone down, as have alfalfa and nitrogen fertilizer prices. Sheaffer says the economics of growing Nitro may not look as good now as several years ago. "But," he adds, "when fertilizer prices go up again--and they will--farmers will benefit much more from growing Nitro. A nondormant alfalfa can utilize the growth period in late fall, and they'll benefit substantially from the extra nitrogen produced."

Barnes emphasizes, "Our goal with Nitro is to get people to think about alternatives in crop rotation using forage legumes. Nitro's not an end in itself. It has stimulated a number of seed companies to start to develop nondormant alfalfas that will be even better. These should be available in three to five years.

"None of us can anticipate how Nitro is going to be used, but if it's available, producers and agricultural researchers may begin to use their imaginations in considering alternative cropping practices. Nitro will allow us to try some new farming practices in these days of least-cost agriculture."

Nitro is a protected variety, and only certified seed will be sold. Next spring, seed will be available to seed growers. Seed should be available to farmers in spring 1988.

Nov. 20, 1986

Source: A. Scott Reed
218/879-4528
Editor: Mary Kay O'Hearn
612/625-2741

NORTH STAR EXPO VISITORS HAVE DOLLAR IMPACT ON COMMUNITIES

Maybe it's a civic or business group, a church convention or a Sweet Adelines singing competition coming to your community for a couple of days. Besides the good will, exchange of ideas and creative entertainment value, how much does such an event add in dollar flow to a community?

A. Scott Reed, forester with the University of Minnesota's Extension Service at Cloquet, has studied the economic impact of one such event, the North Star Expo, held most recently this fall in Grand Rapids. The event, which is cosponsored by the University of Minnesota's Extension Service and the Minnesota Timber Producers Association, has been held for 33 logging seasons. Reed says, "It is the only exposition of its kind in Minnesota and serves as the timber industries' annual opportunity to see new equipment before starting the busy winter logging season."

Trained interviewers randomly selected and interviewed some of the 100 exhibitors and 2,400 other people who attended this year's exposition. According to Reed, each person who attended

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spent an average of \$68 related to the Expo--in food, lodging, transportation and other items. Total expenditures of those interviewed were \$225,201, compared to \$335,373 when the event was in Brainerd last year and \$189,973 when it was in Grand Rapids in 1984.

Once-spent funds generate other spin-off effects due to re-spending, so Reed estimates that nearly \$.5 million--some \$472,000--was more likely the actual impact on the community.

The interviews showed that attendees, on the average, came 100 miles one way to spend about four hours viewing logging and sawmill equipment, attending an educational workshop or the annual banquet. The reason 98 percent attended was to see the equipment available to the industry, while about 17 percent came to buy equipment. Forty-one percent either entered or observed a loading contest, 30 percent came to the workshop and 25 percent came to attend the banquet. The timber industry turning out for the annual event consisted of 30 percent loggers, 10 percent sawmillers, 10 percent foresters and 43 percent other spectators.

"As the Expo moves around each year, economic impacts are spread across communities located in forested areas of the state," Scott says. "Learning about the North Star Expo is one of the university's contributions to this important educational event."

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T,V4,V6

NCRD1700

news

Communication Resources
Minnesota Extension Service
433 Coffey Hall
University of Minnesota
St. Paul, Minnesota 55108

Nov. 26, 1986

Source: Ken Thomas
612/625-7040
Writer: Jack Sperbeck
612/625-4730

(This is the fifth in a series on farm rentals)

CUSTOM FARMING IS ALTERNATIVE TO LEASING

An alternative to leasing farmland is custom farming--where the landowner supervises the entire operation. The landowner decides on things like fertilizer, herbicides and what to plant, but hires most or all of the labor and equipment.

Custom farming may be the answer if you have the labor and machinery capacity to farm more acres but don't want to lease more land. Or, custom farming may be the solution if you're a farm owner who can't rent the land out at a reasonable rate but doesn't want to invest in a full line of machinery.

"An obvious advantage to the custom operator is that little or no additional operating capital is needed," says Ken Thomas, farm management economist with the University of Minnesota's Extension Service. Fuel, lubrication and repairs are usually the only added costs. In addition, custom farming offers a fixed return. In a good year, profits from custom farming will be smaller than under a conventional lease. This is the trade-off for reducing risk.

Landowners assume most of the risk, so their average returns should be higher than with crop share or cash rent. There will be no lease payments to collect. The owner is usually considered a material participant for tax purposes and is entitled to all government payments.

AEA BSS CEU V1 V4 University of Minnesota, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and Minnesota Counties Cooperating NACB1711

Nov. 26, 1986

Source: Mardi Harder
218/547-3155
Editor: Deedee Nagy
612/625-0288

THOUGHTFUL GIFTS CAN BRIGHTEN THE ELDERLY'S HOLIDAYS

If your holiday gift list includes elderly persons or those in nursing homes, you may be in a quandary over what to buy. Mardi Harder, area family financial management specialist with the University of Minnesota's Extension Service, suggests thinking first about the person's hobbies and special interests. The amount of storage space in a person's home or room may be another important factor in gift selection.

Some suggestions that may be helpful include:

--A comfortable chair. Upholstery should be washable, but not with a flat surface that will not absorb moisture or permit air to move through it.

--A large bag with ties top and bottom to fasten to a walker's crossbars for carrying a purse or other items.

--A bag hanging from a sturdy piece of cardboard. This can be placed between the springs and mattress to provide a bedridden person with easily-reached storage for small items.

--A magic slate for a person who has lost his or her voice or a letterboard for someone who lacks the coordination to write.

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University of Minnesota, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and Minnesota Counties Cooperating

--Hearing aid batteries.

--Games, hobby materials and puzzles (keeping space in the person's room in mind)

--Playing cards. Jumbo-sized ones may aid those with poor coordination or failing vision.

--Large-print books.

--Digital clocks with large numerals and radios with dials that can be tuned easily.

--Padded backrests with arms to provide support for sitting up in bed.

--A tray to fit over the arms of a wheelchair or other chair. This will provide a firm writing base. A writing case with a clipboard could serve the same purpose.

--Postcards or greeting cards to help the person remember others on special occasions. Stamps and address labels are nice additions, too.

--Clothing, particularly when you're sure it's the right size and made of an easy-care fabric.

"For gift recipients of any age, a gift of yourself is probably the most appreciated one of all," Harder adds. "Your presence during the holiday season can be a true gift from the heart."

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Nov. 26, 1986

Source: John True
612/625-9733
Editor: Mary Kay O'Hearn
612/625-2741

ACCIDENT QUOTAS DON'T EXIST

Accidents don't come "one to a customer" or even per family or community. Unfortunately, there can be repeat performances, warns John True and information from the National Safety Council.

"One accident won't provide immunity from the next," says True, agricultural engineer and safety chairman with the University of Minnesota's Extension Service. The importance of safety, of recognizing the fragileness of life and the need to protect it, often sticks with persons for a short time after an accident. There can be a real shiver of fear and added caution each time one gets in that car or uses a certain piece of machinery--at least for a time. But if the accident stage is set and conditions of hazard and error triggering disaster are unchanged, there is no guarantee of immunity just because that accident happened once before and "shouldn't" happen again. The odds just aren't that way.

But stress, worry and hardships, especially those suffered by many farm families in their single-minded efforts to stick with farming, may make them so tied to that set of problems that they

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forget simple precautions that could spare them injury or illness. The last thing a farm needs for its survival is to subtract any member of the farm family from the scene.

Making it in farming depends on the physical and mental health of each of the participants, True says. It's vital to take necessary precautions ahead of the fact, to minimize risk of injury or illness. But health alone isn't enough; hazards and defenses must be known and acted on in time.

According to the National Safety Council, farm hazards sometimes aren't recognized as such. All farm owners and operators should walk their farms to inventory and identify hazards, such as those posed by moving augers and other equipment near overhead powerlines. Then family members and employed workers should be informed of those locations and given steps necessary to safely move equipment in these areas.

The old railroad stop-look-and-listen safety slogan is still a good one for the farm family before starting any activity or engine. Keep the slogan in your head, even make a tune of it and don't let distractions edge it out.

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CEO,V1,V4

NAGR1706

Nov. 26, 1986

Source: Marian Anderson
612/839-3405
Editor: Deedee Nagy
612/625-0288

SHARING HOLIDAY JOYS MAY MEAN SHARING EXPENSES AS WELL

The holidays draw family and friends together for fun, feasting and fellowship, but such get-togethers can deliver a blow to a delicately balanced household budget.

Marian Anderson, area family financial management specialist with the University of Minnesota's Extension Service, says the large meals and special foods associated with holiday gatherings can double or even triple a family's food bill for a week.

"This is an item that families do not think about when budgeting for holiday spending," she says. "When families are experiencing financial difficulties, sharing of the entertainment costs is especially important."

Anderson suggests having family members bring food items to spread both the expense and the labor of meal preparation. Family members traveling from some distance can bring less perishable items or they can contribute cash toward purchase of the meat or other expensive menu items.

"The importance of the holiday season is for families and friends to share with each other," Anderson notes. "This shouldn't be an economic hardship on anyone, and sharing costs can make it more enjoyable for everyone."

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CEO, G, V4, V7

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NHEC1715

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news

Communication Resources
Minnesota Extension Service
433 Coffey Hall
University of Minnesota
St. Paul, Minnesota 55108

Dec. 4, 1986

Source: Ken Thomas
612/625-7040
Writer: Jack Sperbeck
612/625-4730

(This is the sixth and last in a series on farm rentals.)

CUSTOM FARMING: PUT DETAILS IN A CONTRACT

An alternative to leasing farmland is custom farming, where the landowner supervises the entire operation.

Under custom farming, responsibilities of both the landowner and operator must be determined--then put in writing. This written agreement should take the form of a contract where the farm operator is an independent contractor, not an employee or tenant. "This limits the liability of the landowner," says Ken Thomas, farm management economist with the University of Minnesota's Extension Service.

When you're developing the contract, you need an accurate count--and agreement--on the number of acres to be farmed and their location.

You also need agreement on field operations to be performed and a payment rate. Some contracts call for a fixed rate per acre for all operations.

An Iowa study showed these average custom charges for all machine operations to grow and harvest the following crops: corn, \$75 per acre,

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soybeans, \$65, and small grain, \$50. Per-acre charges were less in South Dakota, where yields are lower.

"Use these figures only as guides," Thomas advises. "It's best to make a list of operations to be performed, then use your own cost figures or custom rates for your locality," he adds. The contract should also say when payments are to be made. Example: part of the payment could be made after planting, and the remainder after harvest.

Another section of the contract should say who's responsible for procuring supplies and the procedures for reimbursement, if any. Is the landowner or farm operator responsible for buying things like seed and fertilizer?

Other provisions that might be included:

--Whether the contractor has the right to subcontract.

--Likewise, whether the owner has the right to hire another contractor to do a specific operation.

--Bonus or incentive payments.

--Stipulations on timeliness of operations to give some protection for the owner.

One way to give incentives for the farm operator is to establish a base yield that you expect to achieve, say 9 out of 10 years. This would be something less than your average yield. The contract would then state that the operator would be paid an incentive of one-third for each bushel produced above the base yield.

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Dec. 4, 1986

Source: Marian Anderson
612/839-3405
Editor: Deedee Nagy
612/625-0288

IT'S NOT TOO EARLY TO BEGIN PLANNING FOR NEXT YEAR'S HOLIDAYS

If Christmas '86 is putting a crimp in your family's budget, it's not too early to plan ahead so Christmas '87 is less stressful. Marian Anderson, area family financial management agent with the University of Minnesota's Extension Service, says it can be difficult to think a year ahead, but "planning ahead can mean that you will have money available for holiday spending next year."

Saving a certain amount each month for holiday spending will eliminate some of the stress on the budget next year. Anderson suggests establishing a separate bank account or putting it in an existing account. This makes it more difficult to spend the money.

She also suggests shopping for next Christmas starting on Dec. 26. "It's wise planning to take advantage of clearance prices on such items as gift wrap, cards and decorations," Anderson says.

During the year keep a list of persons you give gifts at Christmas. Anderson suggests making notes on your list as you

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become aware of gifts they could use. Purchase items as you find them on sale. This year-long shopping is easier on the budget because costs are spread over many months rather than one or two.

Anderson adds, "If you enjoy making gifts, it's good planning to begin now for next season's giving. It allows you to enjoy making the item without the pressure of a deadline. A wise consumer can stretch holiday dollars with careful planning throughout the year."

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CEO,V4,V7

NHEC1718

news

Communication Resources
Minnesota Extension Service
433 Coffey Hall
University of Minnesota
St. Paul, Minnesota 55108

Dec. 11, 1986

Source: National 4-H Council
301/961-2894
Writer: Sam Brungardt
612/625-6797

7 MINNESOTA 4-H'ERS WIN SCHOLARSHIPS IN NATIONAL AWARDS PROGRAM

Seven Minnesota youth have received national recognition and won scholarships for their achievements in 4-H. The winners, who were announced during the 65th National 4-H Congress in Chicago, Dec. 6-11, are:

Brown County:

Brian Richert, 19, son of Mr. and Mrs. Donald Richert, Rural Route 3, Sleepy Eye, is a national winner in the 4-H swine program. He received a \$1,000 scholarship from Pfizer Inc.

Isanti County:

Beau Liddell, 17, son of Mr. and Mrs. Michael Liddell, Rural Route 1, Stacy, is a national winner in the 4-H wildlife and fisheries program. He received a \$1,000 scholarship from Jeep Corporation and the National Wildlife Federation.

Norman County:

Steven Brandt, 17, son of Mr. and Mrs. Wayne Brandt, Rural Route 1, Ada, is a national winner in the 4-H plant and soil science program. Brandt received a \$1,000 scholarship from the Quaker Oats Foundation.

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Heidi M. Sip, 18, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Loyal L. Sip, Rural Route 1, Ada, won a \$1,000 scholarship, donated by Edwin T. Meredith Foundation, for her leadership and achievements in 4-H.

Olmsted County:

Annie Bucher, 18, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Larry Bucher, Route 1, Byron, is a national winner in the 4-H horse program. She received a \$1,000 scholarship from the American Quarter Horse Association.

Polk County:

Tanjya Kuznik, 18, daughter of Dr. and Mrs. Anthony E. Kuznik, 300 Stuart, Crookston, is a national winner in the 4-H bread program. She received a \$1,500 scholarship from Fleischmann's Yeast, Inc.

Scott County:

Kim Bell, 19, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Bell, 1948 W. 12th Ave., Shakopee, is a national winner in the 4-H leadership program. She received a \$1,000 scholarship from the Firestone Trust Fund.

National winners in 4-H programs are selected by the Cooperative Extension Service and awards from program sponsors are arranged by the National 4-H Council.

#

Dec. 18, 1986

Source: Mary Darling
612/624-6286
Writer: Deedee Nagy
612/625-0288

FEEDING KIDS SHOULD INVOLVE TRUST, WARMTH, GOOD EXAMPLES

When half of Junior's meat gets slipped under the table to the dog and his untouched vegetables congeal on the plate, parents sometimes become frenzied. Out of their fear of looming malnutrition, they may let the dinner table become a battleground.

Instead, perhaps the worried parents should trust their child's signals about food amounts, timing and preferences. Mary Darling, nutritionist with the University of Minnesota's Extension Service, says eating habits are learned as early as infancy. Research has shown that even newly weaned infants, when offered an array of nutritious foods, will select well-balanced meals in amounts that are appropriate for their ages.

What's important, Darling says, is that infants learn to trust their parents to provide food on demand and that parents learn to read their children's cues about hunger and satisfaction. Even when compliant infants turn into strong-willed toddlers, Darling suggests that children do best at

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mealtime when they have relative freedom backed up by some parental limits on acceptable behavior.

"Feeding kids, whether they're infants or older, takes time to establish trust and good feelings for both the child and the caregiver," Darling says. "Parents sometimes are rushed, and this can lead to impatience and even removing control of food amounts and pacing of meals from the child."

She thinks parents should choose food that is safe and appropriate for the children and offer it in a positive fashion. Children should then be responsible for deciding how much, or even whether, they will eat. Parental pressure tends to backfire, she adds. "Once parents have provided their children with appropriate food in a comfortable setting, they should not have to entice, and they should never force their children to eat."

Parents tend to forget that children's appetite levels vary. Darling says that children who suddenly slow down their food intake are undoubtedly still getting enough to eat. "Children have innate tendencies toward a particular body build, exercise level and energy requirement and the best person to regulate food intake is the child himself," she concludes.

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G,H,V1,V4

NHEC1735

Dec. 18, 1986

Source: Donald E. Otterby
612/624-0872
Editor: Jennifer Obst
612/625-1978

BOVINE SOMATOTROPIN USE POSES NO HEALTH THREAT, SCIENTISTS SAY

Current research indicates bovine growth hormone, or bovine somatotropin, does not endanger the health of dairy cows, dairy producers or consumers, says Donald E. Otterby, dairy scientist with the University of Minnesota's Agricultural Experiment Station.

Bovine somatotropin occurs naturally in the blood of dairy cows. Private industry has developed a way to produce the hormone inexpensively in laboratories and is asking the U.S. Food and Drug Administration to approve its use on dairy farms. In one University of Minnesota trial, cows on optimum dosages of somatotropin averaged a 25-percent increase in milk production.

Three main factors assure the safety of milk and meat from cattle given somatotropin, say Otterby and his colleagues Charles Soderholm and James G. Linn:

1. Somatotropin is normally secreted into milk and has been detected in milk from untreated cows. Moreover, injecting STH does not increase normal concentrations in milk.

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2. Bovine somatotropin is a small protein molecule which is rapidly broken down into peptides and amino acids by the body's protein digestive process.

3. Bovine somatotropin is not active in human beings.

The researchers conclude that "milk from cows treated with somatotropin is not different from milk from untreated cows and appears to be as safe for human consumption as any other wholesome milk currently produced."

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BSS,CEO,D,S,V1,V3,V4

NAGRI743

Dec. 18, 1986

Source: Ellen Schuster
612/625-7272
Writer: Deedee Nagy
612/625-0288

9,000 MINNESOTANS ARE EATING BETTER NOW THANKS TO EFNEP

Better balanced meals and fewer worries about stretching grocery money to last the month are two of the benefits that the University of Minnesota's Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) has brought to 2,700 low-income homemakers in the past year.

The nutrition education program, which operates in 13 Minnesota counties, is improving the diets of nearly 9,000 Minnesotans who are family members of EFNEP-trained homemakers, according to Ellen Schuster, program coordinator.

Schuster says EFNEP enrollment has risen by 20 percent in the past year and the number of participants who complete the educational program within five months has doubled. About two-thirds of EFNEP homemakers receive food stamps.

According to Schuster, a recent analysis of EFNEP programs shows some promising trends. Participants are asked to list all the foods they have eaten for 24 hours when they begin the EFNEP instruction and again when they have completed it. At entry, 11 percent of the enrollees met the minimum food requirements of two or more servings of milk and meat and four or more of fruits or vegetables and breads or cereals. This jumped to 33 percent, and the number whose diets included at least one serving of each of the food groups rose from half to nearly 80 percent.

EFNEP uses small group teaching and one-to-one instruction with low-income homemakers. About one-third of the EFNEP homemakers are minority group members, mostly black, hispanic, native American and Southeast Asian. A number of EFNEP instructors are members of these groups and, in the case of Southeast Asian immigrants, they teach both in English and in the participants' native tongue.

Most of the time, EFNEP instructors conduct the lessons in the participants' homes. Most lessons include food preparation demonstrations and all stress meal planning, low-budget shopping, food safety and storage. The basic curriculum and teaching materials are used in EFNEP teaching nationwide, but instructors tailor their teaching to the special nutritional needs of the low-income homemakers and their families.

Schuster says EFNEP participants are enthusiastic about the program. Here are comments from a few:

"I get very little money and the EFNEP people have taught me how to budget my money and eat the right kind of food."

"With this class I have learned what is a good meal and how to buy food. I am on AFDC and now my food money lasts me a whole month."

"The program has taught me food storage, food equivalents, how to interpret food labels and the importance of nutritional balance. I feel it helped me accomplish my goal of feeding my family more nutritionally and economically."

"It's not easy to shop on a low budget. I've learned that the more nutritious foods aren't always the most expensive. I buy more fresh fruit and vegetables now than before my experience with EFNEP."

#

Dec. 18, 1986

Source: C. Ford Runge
612/625-9208
Writer: Jack Sperbeck
612/625-4730

FARM POLICY BRIEFS

Supply Management Supply management is apt to become a semipermanent feature of agricultural policy if yield increases persist, says C. Ford Runge, agricultural economist with the University of Minnesota's Agricultural Experiment Station. Runge rejects mandatory production controls, but he says some supply management in agriculture is needed in the short run.

Acres removed from production must be targeted for both vulnerability to erosion and productivity, he says. "If we fail to target the right acres to remove from production, we won't accomplish either conservation or supply control," Runge says. "In the long run, we should produce on our least erosive, most productive land if we expect to remain competitive in international markets."

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Farm Program Cuts There must be cuts in farm program spending. The 1985 Farm Bill is very expensive and getting more so as market prices fall, says C. Ford Runge, agricultural economist with the University of Minnesota's Agricultural Experiment

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Station. Cuts will probably come through a combination of acreage reductions, tighter payment limitations and reductions in target prices. There's apt to be a movement towards direct income transfers, Runge adds.

#

Environmental Quality Environmental quality concerns will continue to intrude on agriculture. "This can be an opportunity for both conservation and supply control if we shift production to lower cost, higher productivity and lower input acres," says C. Ford Runge, agricultural economist with the University of Minnesota's Agricultural Experiment Station. Farm program acres must be targeted based on their relative productivity and environmental vulnerability, he says.

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AEA,BSS,CEO,V1,V4

nagr1737

Dec. 18, 1986

Source: Donald E. Otterby
612/624-0872
Writer: Jennifer Obst
612/625-1978

SCIENTIST ASSESSES POTENTIAL IMPACT OF BOVINE GROWTH HORMONE

The use of bovine growth hormone is not likely to have as great an impact on milk production as adopting already recommended management practices, says Donald E. Otterby, dairy scientist with the University of Minnesota Agricultural Experiment Station. Otterby has completed a nine-month trial of bovine growth hormone, or somatotropin, in which test cows on optimum dosages averaged a 25-percent increase in milk production.

"Some people are very concerned about an increase in the milk surplus as a result of the use of bovine growth hormone," Otterby says. "Dairy producers have heard about a potential 40-percent increase in milk production. I think what we will probably see if the hormone technology is adopted is probably right around 15-percent milk increase in actual farm use. If everyone adopted all those other practices we already have, such as ration balancing and a good genetics program, the resulting milk increase would far outweigh all the milk that is going to be produced by growth hormone. Some dairy producers would have a 50-percent increase in milk production, and many would experience a 10- to 20-percent increase."

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Otterby points out that the largest increases in milk production have been brought about by technology already in place: "In 1955, the DHIA average was 9,500 pounds of milk, and 20 years later, the DHIA average for Holstein cows was 15,687 pounds of milk. The dairy industry has had improvements in technology for a long, long time."

However, he believes the growth hormone technology must be pursued to maintain market share. He says, "I don't think we can bury our heads in the sand on this, because if we do, we're going to find that some other country is going to adopt it. If we don't find out as much as we can about it and have the information ready to do what we want with it, we'll regret it later."

One advantage of growth hormone, Otterby says, is it requires little new investment: "The only new costs to the producer would be the labor involved, the little bit of extra feed and the equipment to administer the product, which isn't going to cost very much."

He sees another potential advantage for Minnesota producers: "I've heard remarks from some that the bigger dairy operations are going to have the biggest advantage with this technology. I don't see why that has to be. In fact, in some ways the Minnesota dairy farmer with the stall or stantion barn has the cows very handy and should be able to use the technology very easily. And the fact that it isn't going to cost a whole lot to get into it is another reason it should be as advantageous to the small producer as the large one."

Otterby does not believe growth hormone is going to affect the size of dairy operations. "In the next 10 or 15 years, our herds are not going to get any larger because of growth hormone. They are going to get larger in spite of growth hormone," he says.

The release date for somatotropin has not been set. "I imagine with all of the controversy, the FDA will want to make sure it has the necessary information to assure that it is a safe product," Otterby says. "I would guess that approval might come by the end of this decade. I would be surprised if it were not approved by 1991. I think it is important for both consumers and producers to know that there will be a lot of research done first, not only in Minnesota, but across the country. We will have a lot of experience with this."

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BSS,CEO,D,S,V1,V3,V4

NAGR1742

Dec. 23, 1986

Source: Richard E. Widmer
612/624-6701

Writer: Sam Brungardt
612/625-6797

Editors: Call Richard Widmer (612/624-6701) to obtain a 35-mm color transparency of Rosy Glow to use with this release.

NEW U OF M MUM COULD MAKE GARDENING ROSY IN '87

Rosy Glow is the name of a new garden chrysanthemum that will be available to gardeners for the first time this spring. The new cultivar, which was released by the University of Minnesota's Agricultural Experiment Station, is notable for producing greenhouse-quality flowers on stocky plants.

Rosy Glow produces a full canopy of 4-inch, deep rosy-pink, incurved, double flowers with yellow centers. Plants, which grow 15 inches tall and 18 inches wide, are stocky and spreading, their stiff stems clothed with clean, medium-green foliage. Rosy Glow usually begins to flower in early September in the Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minn., area.

Rosy Glow is adaptable to pot culture, but grows a bit tall unless given short days or chemical growth regulator treatment.

Plants of Rosy Glow will be available from Minnesota nurseries and garden centers this spring.

BSS,CEO,I,V1,V4

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nagr1759

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Dec. 23, 1986

Source: Robert M. Jordan
612/624-6784
Editor: Sam Brungardt
612/625-6797

U OF M SHEEP AND LAMB FEEDERS DAY TO BE HELD FEB. 5 AT MORRIS

The University of Minnesota's West Central Experiment Station and Department of Animal Science are expected to host about 250 sheep producers Feb. 5 at the 1987 Sheep and Lamb Feeders Day. The event will be held at Edson Auditorium on the University of Minnesota, Morris, campus. It will begin at 10 a.m. and conclude at 4 p.m.

Roger Wasson, director of the American Sheep Producers Council, Denver, Colo., will provide the keynote address, "Portents and Promises for America's Sheep Industry." Wasson is on the cutting edge of the sheep industry and is, probably more than any one else, in a position to predict and influence the direction the industry will take.

Wayne Geppert, 1986 Silver Bell Award winner from Lake City, Minn., will present a producer's viewpoint on how to feed, lamb out and keep individual production records on 500 Finn-cross ewes while running a sizeable dairy and swine enterprise. His

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operational plan is exceptional, and he will provide some ideas worth incorporating into a production system, says R. M. Jordan, University of Minnesota sheep specialist and researcher.

Jordan and Richard Vatthauer, superintendent of the West Central Experiment Station, will present research data on feeder lambs, ewe and lamb nutrition and management, and Angora goats.

Research reports will include a summary of 20 years of grazing experiments involving several management systems and forage species; the merits of alfalfa and beet pulp pellets in finishing diets; and using Bovatec and Ivermectin to improve lamb performance. Ewe-lamb studies will focus on energy and protein requirements for ewes nursing twins. For Angora goat producers, there will be reports on increasing mohair production with amino acids and growing out kids.

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BSS,CEO,0,V1,V3,V4

NAGR1757

Dec. 31, 1986

Source: Stanley Stevens
612/625-8770
Writer: Jack Spereck
612/625-4730

EXPORT MARKET FOR FARM PRODUCTS IS DISAPPOINTING

Exports of U.S. grains and oilseeds were poor to mixed during 1986. Corn exports were particularly disappointing, says Stanley Stevens, economist with the University of Minnesota's Extension Service.

The 1985 Farm Bill was designed to re-establish the United States as a competitive force in world export markets. But poor export statistics have put proponents of "new farm policies" on the defensive, Stevens says.

"The latest viewpoint is that our export market has been lost mostly to our traditional customers achieving self-sufficiency through technological change. This argument has been gaining credibility," Stevens says.

"Fewer and fewer people are saying we need to give the new program time to work. The stage has been set for a winter of congressional tinkering with the farm bill.

"Aside from budget considerations, the farm bill could be rewritten in a major way if exports don't respond soon," Stevens says.

A more detailed review of the export market is available by writing Stevens at the Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics, University of Minnesota, St. Paul, MN 55108.

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news

Communication Resources
Minnesota Extension Service
433 Coffey Hall
University of Minnesota
St. Paul, Minnesota 55108

Dec. 31, 1986

Source: Mel Baughman
612/624-0734
Editor: Mary Kay O'Hearn
612/625-2741

TV WOODLOT SERIES FEATURES MINNESOTANS

Minnesotans are featured in several segments of "Great American Woodlots," a 13-part series which KTCA-TV, Channel 2, will begin showing in the Twin Cities area on Saturday, Jan. 17, at 1:30 p.m.

In Bemidji, KAWF-TV will begin the series on Saturday, April 4, at 4 p.m. WDSE-TV, Duluth, and Cable TV in Crookston will run the series at times yet to be announced. Each program in the series is 30 minutes long.

Minnesota Extension Service forest resources specialist Mel Baughman and communication specialist Larry Coyle produced the Minnesota segments, which deal with ruffed grouse, timber marketing, maple syrup production and the Kick Tree Farm near Pine City.

Gordon Gullion, fisheries and wildlife professor at the University of Minnesota's Cloquet Forestry Center, talks in three segments about ruffed grouse in winter, how to manage woodlands for grouse and grouse research.

Featured in the timber marketing segments are A. Scott Reed, extension forester; Tom Kroll, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources forester; Stan Schuette, woodland owner from Staples; and Gordy Petersen, a logger from Kettle River.

Extension forester Carl Vogt is featured in the program about maple syrup production.

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The Waldo Kicks describe planting, management, and harvesting on their tree farm. Kick was twice named Tree Farmer of the Year in Minnesota.

In another segment, John Suffron, with the Minnesota Forestry Association, discusses how woodland owner associations can be helpful in forest land management.

Minnesota was one of 19 states that participated in the production of "Great American Woodlots." Originating with the Maine Public Broadcasting Network and the University of Maine's Cooperative Extension Service, the series is beamed via satellite for free distribution and is also available on video tape. Viewers are encouraged to copy the segments for future use, Baughman says.

Some 8 million private citizens own forested acres in the United States. In Minnesota, there are 130,000 nonindustrial, private woodland owners. Much of the land is small tracts belonging to farmers, clerks, bankers, truck drivers, teachers and retirees, among others. Research has indicated that woodlot owners are largely inactive managers. The premise of the series is that knowledge is missing and this leads to neglected timberland. With enough knowledge and motivation, woodlot owners could improve their properties for timber and wildlife production, for recreation or as an investment for future generations. The series discusses these points as well as improved tree growth, mapping of timber stands, diseases common to woodlot trees and forest ecology programs for children.

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AEA,CEO,V4,Se1Media

ncrd1762

Dec. 31, 1986

Source: C. Ford Runge
612/625-9208
Writer: Jack Sperbeck
612/625-4730

MANDATORY CONTROL POLICIES WOULD 'TURN BACK THE CLOCK'

The Harkin Plan as the major alternative to current farm policy is a "reactionary attempt to turn the clock back," says a University of Minnesota agricultural economist.

Trade, marketing and financial integration are all features of the "new agriculture of the late 20th Century," says C. Ford Runge, a researcher with the university's Agricultural Experiment Station. "Unfortunately, the plan offered by the Neopopulists does not fit well in this world," he says.

One of the Neopopulist movement's founders, Sen. Tom Harkin of Iowa, has for several years promoted a plan in Congress to raise the level of farm price supports and impose mandatory controls on production.

"There's a conflict between increasingly open international trade in agriculture and the inward-looking Harkin Plan," Runge says. "Gains from trade for agriculture and the American economy have been large. They've supported an agricultural sector that would be much smaller in the absence of these export markets.

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"Despite large declines in U.S. farm exports over the last five years, more than half of the corn, wheat and soybeans produced in the Upper Midwest still flows into the international market.

"To shut down production in order to keep domestic prices high means surrendering these markets to American competition in Argentina, Brazil and the European Community," Runge says. For this reason, the Harkin Plan is accompanied by provisions for export subsidies that would make up the difference between domestic and world prices.

"These subsidies, besides triggering retaliation, would be very expensive on a volume basis unless the amount exported was small. It's also doubtful if the Harkin Plan could succeed over the long run in raising domestic prices through production controls, which would be frustrated by yield-improving technology," Runge says.

Runge's research shows that from 1949 to 1984, the most important factors affecting farm income were interest costs, government payments and farm exports. When he analyzed sources of declines in land values, farm income was the most important predictor of these declines, while government payments were much less important.

He says, "I interpret these research results to mean that international trade is a key element supporting farm income.

Increased government payments alone are incapable of supporting this income, or land prices.

"If policies are implemented that reduce U.S. agricultural exports, we can expect continued increases in our overall trade deficit and continued downward pressure on farmland values."

More detailed information is available in a report, "Neopopulism and the New Agriculture." Free single copies are available from the Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics, University of Minnesota, St. Paul, MN 55108.

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AEA,BSS,CEO,V1,V4

NAGR1768

Dec. 31, 1986

Source: Harold Pellett
612/443-2460
Writer: Sam Brungardt
612/625-6797

UNIVERSITY GREETES NEW YEAR WITH 5 NEW LANDSCAPE PLANTS

The University of Minnesota has a New Year's surprise for gardeners: its Agricultural Experiment Station is introducing five new landscape plants. The new releases are Princess Kay plum, Cardinal dogwood, Golden Lights and Orchid Lights azaleas and Freedom honeysuckle. Four will be available this spring from garden centers and nurseries, and one--Golden Lights azalea--may be available by 1988.

Princess Kay, a selection of the Canadian wild plum (Prunus nigra), was discovered in Itasca County, Minn. Its fragrant, white, fully double flowers appear in early May, before the leaves. The flowers 3/4- to 1-inch flowers last 7 to 10 days, a few days longer than those of single-flowered plants of the species. Princess Kay blooms freely at a young age, and flowers best when grown in full sun. It sets very little fruit.

Princess Kay is a small tree, maturing at a height of 10 to 15 feet. Its trunk and branches are covered by dark brown or black bark with large, white lenticels. This plum's bark, dense branching structure and round-to-oval habit add interest to winter landscapes.

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Princess Kay is an excellent choice for a small, ornamental, flowering tree for the landscape. It will be available in very limited quantities in 1987.

Cardinal dogwood is a selection of red-osier dogwood (Cornus sericea). Cardinal, like its namesake, provides color to winter landscapes. In late fall, its twigs and stems develop a bright, cherry red color, which lasts until the plant leafs out the next spring. Cardinal is recommended for corner and mass plantings and background screens.

Cardinal is well adapted to northern climates. It was developed by crossing wild plants that grew near the University of Minnesota Landscape Arboretum, west of the Twin Cities. Cardinal matures at a height and spread of 8 to 10 feet. It is tolerant of poorly drained soils, and can be grown in wet sites, where other woody plants would fail, either in full sun or partial shade.

Golden Lights azalea matures at about 4 feet in height and spread. Flower buds can withstand minus 30 degrees F in midwinter without injury. In late May, the plant is covered with 1-1/2- to 2-inch, golden flowers. Golden Lights is more resistant to mildew than previous Northern Lights hybrid azalea introductions.

Orchid Lights is even more cold hardy; its flower buds can withstand minus 45 degrees. Orchid Lights is a cross between

Rhododendron canadense and R. x Kosteranum. The orchid-colored flowers are 1-1/2 inches across, with bloom occurring in mid-May. The plants are sterile, so no unsightly seed capsules are produced.

Plants of Orchid Lights are compact, with a mature height of 3 feet and a spread of 3 to 4 feet. Orchid Lights is an excellent choice where a small-statured, flowering shrub is needed to provide spring color.

Freedom honeysuckle is resistant to the honeysuckle witches broom aphid, which causes nonresistant honeysuckles to produce unsightly "witches-broom" growths. Since Freedom is resistant to the aphid, no brooms are formed and there is no loss of vigor.

Freedom is a hybrid, closely resembling Lonicera korolkowii. It matures at a height of 8 feet and a spread of 6 to 8 feet. Its foliage is an attractive, blue-green color, and its flowers, which appear in early June, are white, tinged pink. Freedom produces bright red fruits which contrast nicely with the foliage and are eaten by many birds.

Freedom tolerates a wide variety of soils and grows best in full sun. It grows vigorously, and its form becomes quite open without pruning. For this reason, it is considered more suitable for screens and windbreaks than for specimen planting.

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Dec. 31, 1986

Source: James P. Houck
612/625-1703

Writer: Jack Sperbeck
612/625-4730

HELPING POOR COUNTRIES HELPS U.S. FARMERS

U.S. agricultural aid to poor countries is usually a good thing for U.S. farmers, says a University of Minnesota agricultural economist.

"U.S. investments in the agricultural development programs of most low-income countries are not detrimental to U.S. farm exports. They are usually beneficial," says James P. Houck, a researcher with the university's Agricultural Experiment Station.

"A strong case can be made for the idea that advances in agricultural productivity are associated with increases in imports of cereals and other agricultural products. The connection comes from higher income due to general economic development," he says.

The case is "not so clear and probably more controversial for middle-income nations," Houck says. But there's no evidence that improvements in farm productivity among middle-income nations is generally or systematically threatening to U.S. farm exports across a broad international spectrum, he adds.

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There may be cases where U.S. trade displacements in some products by other countries can be associated with agricultural assistance. "However, wider evidence shows that the burden of proof clearly rests with those who insist that agricultural assistance for poor nations is usually a bad thing for American farmers. On the contrary, it is mostly a good thing," Houck concludes.

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AEA,BSS,CEO,V1,V4

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