Home and Garden

Bits and Pieces

The price of a pretty smile

by Margaret Schmale
special writer

There is a saying, "Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned." I'll bet the person who wrote that never had a teething baby.

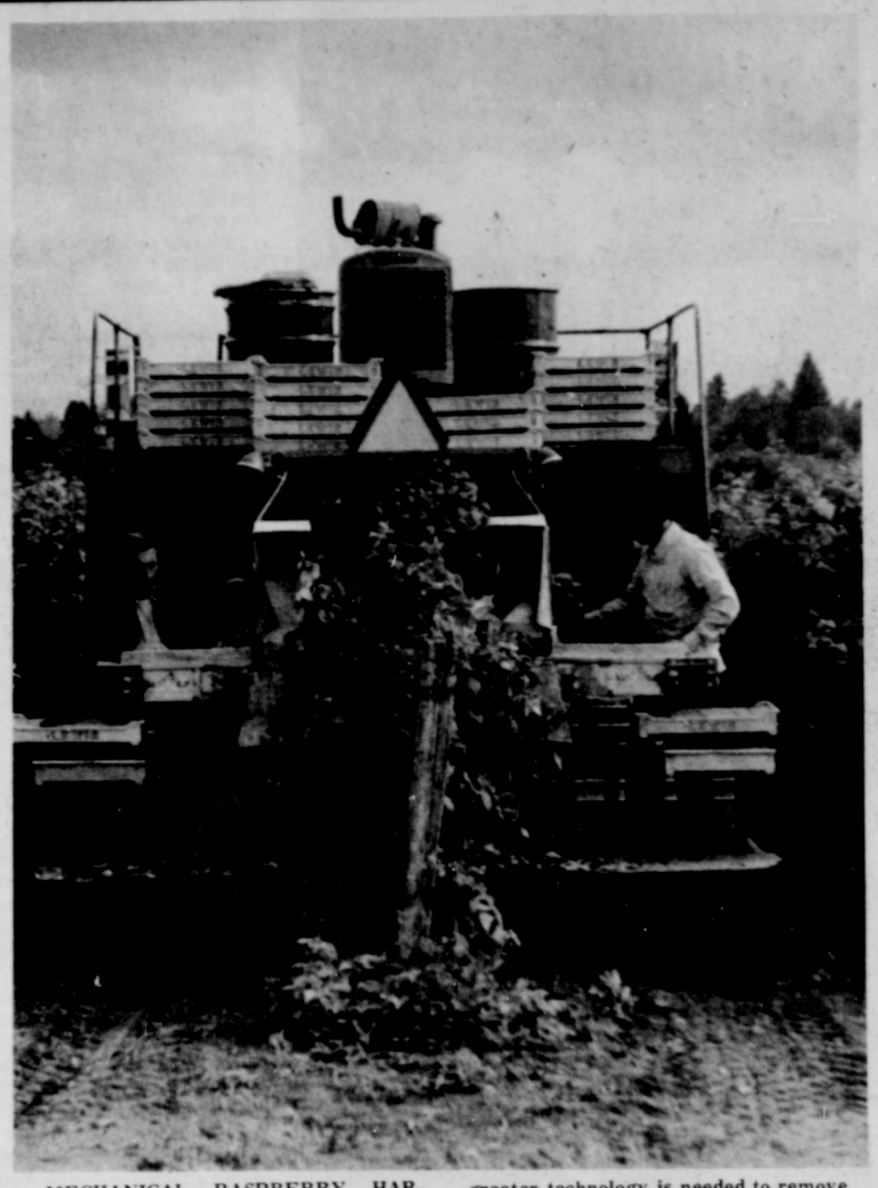
I have been waiting three long nights for the eruption of one tooth and it looks as if a fourth night is coming. A stuffed up head, fever, and bad disposition: are these symptoms of a crabby baby or those of a sleepless mother? The advent of a small piece of bone can turn a one time cuddly child into an anguished, aching baby who has no idea of what is happening.

When you stop to think about it, our teeth are a lifetime of pain. They are nothing but agony when they come in to both mother and child. We endure shots, drills and all sorts of metal devices at the mercy of the dentist to extend the life of our teeth. We spend years in braces to straighten them for beauty's sake. Then sometimes despite the thousands of dollars poured into our mouths, Mother Nature decides to reclaim her gift.

So in the autumn of our lives we battle loose uppers and floppy lowers. There is also the added pain of listening to endless commercials about toothpaste, denture creme, denture adhesive, water picks, sugarless gum recommended by 9 out of 10 dentists and electric tooth brushes in the shape of Mickey Mouse. I'd lay you odds the Tooth Fairy never knew she'd be getting involved in such a mess.

Childless couples and maiden aunts may wonder why parents and grandparents always make such a big deal out of a baby's first tooth. Anyone that has suffered through the long nights knows exactly what the big deal is. It's that the tooth has finally come in!

These people will, of couse, miss the fun of chipping teething rings out of the ice cube trays. They probably won't hear the clock chime at 3 and 4 a.m. as often as those with babes. Nor will they know the ecstasy of seeing that new tooth shine through baby's drooly morning grin.



MECHANICAL RASPBERRY HARVESTERS are in operation already. Strawberry harvesters are still in the experimental stages, however, as greater technology is needed to remove the stems from the berries. Raspberries are easily separated from their stems when ripe.

Mechanical harvester picks fruit and stems

The shortage of pickers in the strawberry fields this year has led to renewed interest in a mechanical strawberry harvester. But mechanical pickers developed thus far have one major flaw: They can't distinguish the berries from stems and leaves.

Oregon State University's work on the prototype mechanical strawberry harvester has led to development of a mechanical strawberry cap and stem remover in an effort to combat the harvester's lack of discrimination.

OSU agricultural engineer, Dale Kirk ahs been working on the mechanical capper-stemmer in various forms since 1970, the same time OSU began work on the present version of the strawberry harvester.

There are two newly constructed capper-stemmers in operation. One is at the Stayton Canning Company plant in Stayton and the other is in the Claremont West processing plant near Hillsboro.

If the mechanical strawberry harvester is to help solve some of the labor and harvesting problems in the field, its harvested fruit must be usable for the processor, Kirk noted. And that depends on the successful removal of caps and stems from the berries.

The capper-stemmer has a sloping set of soft neoprene rollers under jets of water. Berries are moved from a water-filled settling containe, where dirt clods sink and berries float, to the rollers.

Water jets clean the berries and force stems between the rollers like the clothes wringer of an old washing machine. As the stem is pulled through by the wringer action, the stem and cap pop off and the berry rolls down the slope to the next processing phase.

"Fruit processors are accustomed to receiving ripe, red fruit with the caps removed in the field," said Kirk. "What you see in a processing plant that has received a load of mechanically picked fruit is very different. Processors are watching the progress of the capper-stemmer very closely. Everyone realized it is one of the keys to success of this project."

This is the first time all phases of the mechanical strawberry harvesting experiments have been brought together in a commercial setting. The project was funded by the Northwest Regional Commission, headed by governors of Oregon, Washington,and Idaho.

"The idea of this project is to coordinate the whole system," explained Lloyd Marin, OSU horticulturist and superintendent of the OSU North Willamette Agricultural Experiment Station at Aurora.

"There are many factions involved," Martin explained. "A group of Stayton area farmers has developed a harvester; there is a harvester fom Blueberry Equipment Incorporated of Michigan working here, and there's OSU's stemmer-capper.

There are five varieties of strawberries, including Linn, which was specially bred for mechanical harvesting, Martin said. All these factors are being coordinated and evaluated in this project.

Everything in the project depends on at least one of the other segments. The harvesters depend on plant breeders to come up with a variety the harvester can easily and economically pick. Processors depend on the mechanical cap and stem remover to get rid of extra plant and earth material the harvester brings. And the whole project depends on consumer acceptance of the fruit after it has passed through the various mechanical phases.

OSU food scientist, George Varscueld conducts tests to make sure the strawberries are palatable to consumers.

"We conduct a minmum three-year test program for processing characteristics and consumer acceptability," said Varsveld. "Sensory evaluation panels must rate the new berries as good or better overall than existing varieties, or we don't work with them anymore."

The Recipe File

Seasonal salads

COLE SLAW

4 cups shredded cabbage
1 medium green pepper, seeded and finely diced
½ cup carrots, grated
1 ounce onion, finely diced
½ cup canned crushed pineapple, no sugar added
¼ cup cider vinegar
1 tablespoon plus 1 teaspoon vegetable oil
½ teaspoon poppy seeds
¼ teaspoon dry mustard
⅛ teaspoon garlic powder

In bowl combine vegetables with pineapple. In separate bowl, combine remaining ingredients and pour over vegetables. Refrigerate at least one hour. Makes 4 servings. Divide evenly.

Each serving is equivalent to:
1¼ cups Vegetables
¼ ounce Limited Vegetables
¼ serving Fruit
1 serving Fat
⅛ serving Something Extra (⅛ teaspoon poppy seeds)

MACARONI SALAD

2 and two-thirds cups cooked enriched elbow macaroni
¼ cup diced pimento
¼ cup mayonnaise
2 tablespoons plus 2 teaspoons white vinegar
2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley
2 teaspoons dehydrated onion flakes reconstituted in 2 teaspoons water
Salt and pepper to taste
4 lettuce leaves

Combine all ingredients except lettuce in mixing bowl.

Refrigerate at least one hour. Serve on lettuce.

Makes 4 servings. Divide evenly.

Each serving is equivalent to:
1 serving Choice Group
1 tablespoon plus 1½ teaspoons Vegetables
3 servings Fat

Grant awarded for seed field burning

The possibility that grass seed field burning may become a non-annual event for some field will be studied by Oregon State University researchers under a Department of Environmental Quality grant.

The $75,000 DEQ grant will fund a cooperative research project of OSU and the U.S. Department of Agriculture Science and Education Administration. The funds will come from burning fees paid by grass seed growers.

David Chilcote, OSU crop physiologist, and Harold Youngberg, OSU agronomist, will work with John Hardison, USDA plant pathologist, and Orvid Lee, USDA weed specialist, on the project which could run five years.

"What we are looking at is the long-term effect of crew cutting the straw instead of burning and the long-term effect of non-annual burning," said Chilcote. "It is basically a two-part project but each part, ultimately, is dependent on the other."

Crew cutting is a process of mechanically removing as much stubble and residue as possible from the harvested field.

"With crew cutting, we try to mechanically simulate removal of the straw and chaff as if it were burned," said Chilcote. "It looks very promising on test plots near Corvallis but we need to test it in commercial operations. Because of differing seed crops and soil types, we anticipate varying results."

The research plots will be carefully controlled areas established in commercial operated fields. Two acres will be utilized in various 2½ by 11-meter plots.

"We are going into what are now considered problem fields as far as pest are concerned," said Chilcote. "These fields enable us to get valid results quicker. If we started in a clean field it would be hard to tell what we were accomplishing and what was naturally there. Crew cutting has to work under these conditions or it might not work for the growers."

The non-burning procedure will be assessed on fields of annual ryegrass which makes up nearly half the grass seed grown in the Willamette Valley. It has the greatest potential for use of non-annual burning because weeds — not disease — seem to be the most important pest.

In all, the cooperative Agricultural Experiment Station-USDA project will try to evaluate every potential mechanical solution and combination of mechanical solutions in terms of straw removal and pest control in grass seed fields. Burning, flail chopping with a commercial flail chopper and crew cutting with a specially designed machine will be tested in as many conceivable conditions as possible.

Extension Calendar

July 8 — Christmas tree tour, Kirk Braun's Skyhill Farms, Viola, 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

July 10 — 4-H Horse Judging Contest

July 11 — 4-H Home Economics Committee

July 13 — Forest Herbicide use tour, Marquam, 7:30 p.m.- 9 p.m.

July 19 — 4-H Horse Advisory Committee

July 19 — 4-H Camp Committee

Year mixed for state crops

It looks like a mixed year for Oregon crops, according to the Oregon Crop and Livestock Reporting Service"s June acreage survey.

Farmers plan to harvest 1,060,000 acres of winter wheat, in 1978, six percent less than last year's acreage. Spring wheat, on the other hand, is forecast at 130,000 acres which is nearly double last year's total of 70,000.

Rye is also on the increase this year. Farmers forecast 9,000 acres to be harvested for grain, an 80 percent increase over last year.

Other crop harvest increases are forecast for sugar beets at 8,500 acres (up 4 percent) and hay at 10,000 acres (up 1 percent).

Crop decreases are forecast for barley at 185,000 acres (down 3 percent), Oats at 75,000 acres (down 6 percent) and corn for grain at 10,000 acres (down 17 percent).