



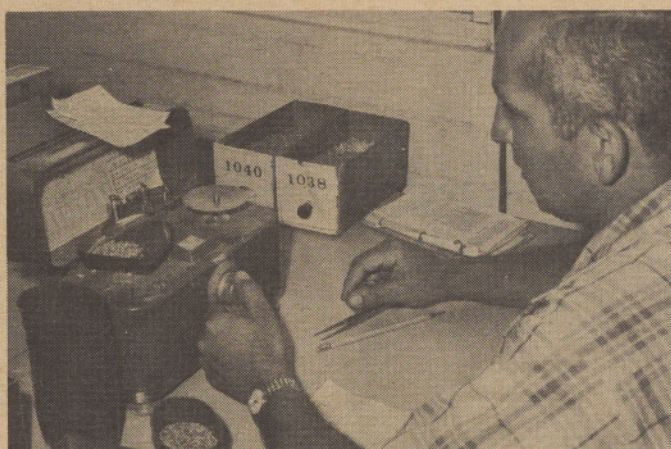
Paul Ehrlich places an identification tag in a wheat sample while Henry Teigland saves a portion of the sample for the owner.



Ed Rippet pours the wheat sample through a divider which apportions the grain into equal parts for inspection.



Weighing the sample is the next step in the inspection process. Howard Campbell, who has been with the division 14 years, checks the scale.



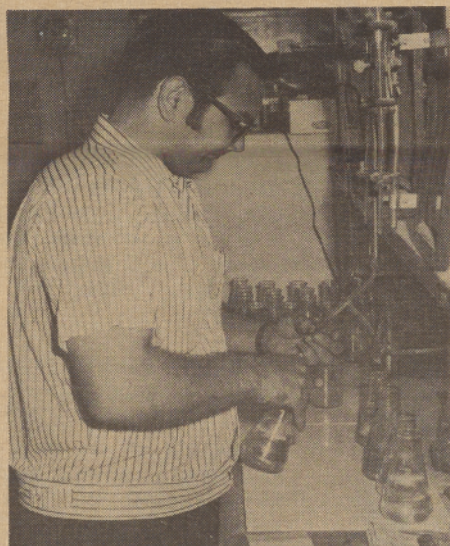
Tiny portions of the sample are weighed again on a delicate scale that measures weight in grams. Karl Heimbuch is operating the scale.



After it is weighed, Heimbuch pours the small portion of the sample onto the table for closer inspection.



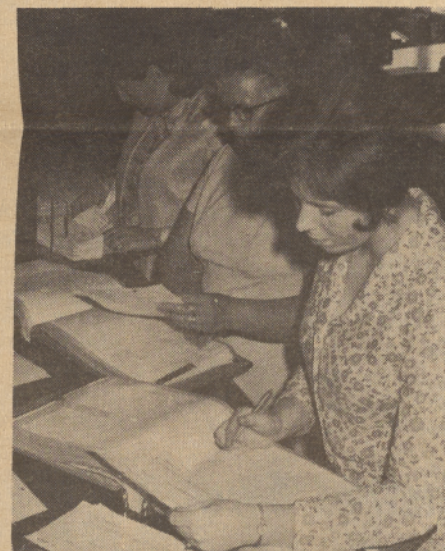
"Dockage", or chaff, as well as shrunk and broken kernels, heat damaged kernels and other foreign material is removed and weighed.



Chemist Bill Calzaretta analyzes the protein content of the wheat. Chemical analysis is made upon request of the grower or dealer.



Inspector Ron Wray examines a handful of wheat in the shipping galley of the Louis Dreyfus Corporation's huge grain elevators.



Pat Averill, Mary Emerson and Diane Cerotsky are part of the clerical staff who back up the men in the laboratory.

Grain Employees Have Large Responsibility

Over three million tons of grain—mostly wheat, barley, oats, corn, rye and grain sorghum—were shipped to Portland and Astoria by Pacific Northwest farmers and grain dealers last year. The grain was worth an average \$50 a ton, or roughly \$150 million.

Like a lot of other commodities, the price of grain depends to some extent upon its quality or grade. And when you're talking about that many tons and that many dollars, you can see that the people who determine the grade have a very large responsibility indeed.

The people who sampled, weighed, inspected and graded the three million tons of grain that passed through Portland and Astoria last year were state employees working for the grain division of Oregon's Department of Agriculture in Portland, Astoria, Pendleton and Merrill.

The department's grain division is older than the department itself. It was established in 1917 to serve grain growers and the grain trade. The department didn't come into being until 1931.

Its chief is genial Al Plummer, a man who has worked his way up through the ranks as chemist, inspector and assistant chief in nearly 22 years with the division. Most of its present staff of 78 are weighers, samplers and inspectors, who Plummer says are "the guys who do the work; they are the most important part of our operation." It employs two chemists, a laboratory technician and clerical staff. Most of the employees work in the division's Portland headquarters.

H. E. "Buster" Bedgood, who has been with the division 40 years, initiates the inspection process by dispatching crews to collect grain samples from railroad boxcars, trucks, barges, ships or warehouses. The samples are sealed in moisture-proof sacks and brought to the division's laboratory at 606 S.E. Ninth Ave. in Portland.

Each sample is given an identification number. A portion of the sample is set aside for the owner. To determine the grade, inspectors must remove "dockage" or chaff, shrunk and broken kernels,

heat damaged kernels and other foreign material from the grain. Each is analyzed and weighed. The division also analyzes the grain's protein content when requested by a grower or dealer.

All grain exported from Portland and Astoria is inspected. That included some 2.6 million of the three million tons arriving at the two ports last year. The 1968-69 year was not a banner one; wheat shipments were off substantially from other years, including the prior one. Prime reason was fewer sales to Japan which has been a good cash customer of wheat from Oregon and other states which ship through Oregon ports.

The division also has the responsibility of doing the sampling and chemical analysis for a new Pacific Northwest Wheat Quality Survey which started with the 1969 harvest. Dale Stuart of the department's agricultural development division is project leader. Before this special work is completed, about 5,000 samples will be collected and run through the grain division laboratory.