

# Farmers Take Keen Interest In County Rural Fire Control

By N. C. ANDERSON

Morrow County Rural Fire Control committee members meeting last week expressed a lot of satisfaction with the interest that Morrow county farmers are taking in fire control. This interest extends into being more fire conscious, thereby preventing fires as well as having equipment available for quick control of fires that do get started, as well as cooperation in controlling fires in their community.

The group agreed to continue to encourage more communities to develop a well-organized fire control program and to spend the remaining funds in their 1962-63 budget for two additional tank-pump units for communities lacking in fire control equipment. These units have proved successful when placed in communities with an individual who agrees to have it ready and on call in case of a fire. The new units will be added to four now placed with Jerry Brosnan, Buttercreek community; Don Helker, West Lone community; Harold Wright, Ruggs community; and Kenneth Peck, Clark's Canyon, Social Ridge community. Repairs and improvements on equipment was authorized on mobile units which consist of a Jeep with pump, stationed at the Roy Martin ranch in the North Lexington community; another Jeep at the Bob Rietmann ranch in the North Lone community and a large six-wheel drive pumper unit at the Walter Jacobs ranch. Discussed to some extent were ways of improving communications relating to fires. Two main communication problems exist. First, that of getting persons to route calls for equipment through the designated leader in each community and second, a follow-up report to these persons who have been asked to provide equipment when the fire is controlled. Many times lack of this latter report will result in additional equipment being sent to a fire when it is already under control or completely out.

The committee asked the county agent to get out a news letter urging individuals in areas where fire control units were inadequate to consider building such units, and to stress having available equipment ready when the fire season arrives. They further asked that everyone with such equipment list it with the county agent's office. A survey was made three years ago but other has been added. This, then, can be added to the fire equipment map located at that office which is used in calling out needed equipment in an area.

Member Ralph Crum reported

some excellent units in the lone area, among them individuals, Verner Troedson, Sam Crawford, Franklin Lindstrom and Sons, Herb Ekstrom, Fred and Norman Nelson, and D. O. Nelson, who now have good fire fighting equipment. He pointed out that this was only a partial list and there were others that had equally efficient equipment ready in case of a fire. The group agreed on a \$250.00 budget for the new fiscal year which will be used for maintenance of existing equipment, feeling that most communities were now quite well served. Attending the meeting were Andy Van Schojack, Frank Anderson, Ron Currin, Charles Ruggles, Heppner; Roy Martin, Lexington; Ralph Crum, Walter Jacobs, and Don Helker, Lone.

### Room for Few More On Cattle Day Junket

If you are interested in attending the Squaw Butte Experiment Station Beef Cattle Day on Monday, March 25, there is still room for a couple more in a carload that are going over early that morning and returning that evening. The morning session starts at 10:00 a.m. and will be held at the Polson Creek Grange hall, two miles east of Burns on Highway 78. The afternoon session is a tour of research at the station. This is seven miles south of Burns on Highway 205. The program for the day looks interesting, if you didn't get one, we have extras at the office. Those who plan to pool transportation are Ebb Hughes, Ralph Beamer, Terry Thompson, and Dick Wilkinson.

### Jerry Rood Reports Taking Coyote Dens

Jerry Rood, genial Morrow-Umatilla trapper-hunter, reports taking two dens of coyotes on Wednesday and Thursday of last week. Jerry reports that this is quite early for finding new-born coyote pups, in fact about two weeks earlier than usual. The past year was evidently a good breeding season for coyotes, as was the case for domestic livestock as these first two dens contained litters of nine and 12. The 12 pup litter was found under a tumble weed in a scooped-out depression in the soil. Jerry reported that the litter looked just like an old hen's nest when he came across it. Jerry says that hunters in neighboring counties have reported taking several litters of bob cats, finding litters of eight which is quite unusual. Hunters, Jerry Rood and Carl McDaniel, are keeping coyote numbers down very well and few complaints of livestock losses are received of late.

### 'Gopher Getter' Works; Dogs are Baffled

Kenneth Palmer, Willow Creek rancher and the second to use the new "Gopher Getter" machine purchased recently by the Heppner Soil Conservation District, was in the office last week and was quite happy with the results. He had just finished irrigating the first field baited. While he was happy, he reported that his dogs were a bit baffled as to where all the gophers had gone. Usually they kill a dozen or two each day during irrigation, as they are drowned out. This year after baiting, only two were killed by the unhappy dogs. The baiting machine has been kept quite busy at this writing is now being used by Harlan Crawford at the Hermann Ranch near Jordan Elevator.

### Booklet Tells Research On Diverted Acres Crops

A new OSU bulletin, "The Potential of Oil Crops on Diverted Wheat Acres," came to my desk this week. It discusses research at experiment stations in the Columbia Basin in hopes of finding a new crop that could be grown on diverted wheat acres. Crops that have been tried are seed flax, Safflower, rape, castor bean, sunflower, soy bean, Cape Marigold, and Crambe. Seed flax and Safflower have been more promising for an area such as ours. Ray Dolven, Lexington, has a seeding of winter flax and is putting in some spring flax varieties for comparison.

We are going to watch these

for yield and adaptability. Approximately 700 acres of Safflower have been contracted by a half dozen ranchers, mostly in the lone area. Safflower has been grown on several occasions here and has not been too favorable as far as income per acre. However, with the good soil moisture conditions in the summer/fallow now, and with the 1963 feed grain provision which allows Safflower to be grown on diverted acres, income could be much better. Figuring the average diversion payment which would be lost by growing Safflower on these acres, plus variable costs of tillage, seed and seeding, and harvest, we've estimated that the investment would about be \$13.50 per acre.

At the Pendleton Station average yields of Safflower under a 12 inch rainfall showed an average yield of 725 lbs. for an estimated gross return per acre of \$27.00. This means that that it would be possible to net \$13. or 14. an acre in addition to qualifying your remaining barley production for the incentive payment. The only drawback is that March 22 is the final date for signing up for the feed grain and wheat programs. If you want further particulars on these provisions see the local ASC office. We have contracts and particulars on safflower production.

### Smouse's Soil Tests Bear Out Research

Kenneth Smouse, Lone, has for many years, followed a program of having soil tests taken periodically, at least twice a year, to determine soil moisture and nitrogen in both stubble and summer fallow. It was interesting to see results of these tests which were taken in February. Of particular interest was the difference in soil moisture in the stubble, comparing a field worked last fall with other fields that had not been disturbed. While there were 6 1/2 inches available moisture in the first three feet of the stubble land, there was three inches less in a field that Kenny had worked late last fall to get rid of a thistle cover. This bears out research done at our experiment stations that fall tillage opens up the ground and is not a moisture conserving practice.

### Referendum 'No' Vote Threat To Bank Loans

The Food and Agriculture Act of 1962 offers wheat growers a choice of two programs in 1964; one with a limited acreage of wheat, price support at a \$2.00 per bushel average for most wheat marketed, and payments for reducing wheat acreage; the other with almost no limits on production or marketings, and with virtually no effective price support. The choice will be made in a referendum to be held this spring. A "Yes" vote by two-thirds or more of the growers voting in the referendum would put the first of these programs into effect, and it would apply to all wheat growers. A "No" vote by more than one-third of the referendum voters would put the second program into effect, with participation voluntary.

The basic two-level system of price support with a bushel limit on marketings by any wheat grower at the higher support level; does away with the minimum national allotment; and provides payments to farmers for retiring part of their wheat land.

The USDA estimates that there will be 1.6 million allotments concerned in the forthcoming wheat referendum. In the 1962 referendum there were only 578,000 allotments. The figures differ because this year the 15-acre grower is eligible to vote in the referendum, which was not the case last year. For every allotment here were one and one-half eligible voters in 1962. The fractional votes being those of the farmer's wife, tenants and operators who having interest in the allotment were eligible. This year with the 1.6 million allotments, \$14,000 wives, operators and tenants could be voting one-third of the total number of potential voters 24 million.

Morgan Beatty of NBC reported on his news program Wednesday evening, March 6, than an official of the Independent Bankers Association, representing a



## FARM NEWS



**OREGON'S Betty Crocker Homemaker of Tomorrow is Delores M. Overman of Ontario high school, Ontario. She will receive a \$1,500 scholarship from General Mills for gaining the highest score in the state in a written homemaking examination.**

## New OSU Bulletin Discusses Farm Cooperative Needs

Farmer cooperatives need to grow in size, performance, and in ability to meet changing needs, reports an Oregon State University agricultural economist.

Dr. Gerald E. Korzan says he believes that formation of new cooperatives in years ahead will be few and far between—not only because the cost of starting a new cooperative is so high, but also because cooperatives already exist in most lines and in most areas. He says the need for cooperative enterprise may be greater than ever, but it must be met by existing rather than new cooperatives.

His statements summarize research findings reported in a new bulletin available to Oregon residents. Copies of "Farmer Cooperative Performance in a Changing Economy" are available at county extension offices or from the OSU bulletin clerk, Corvallis.

The bulletin includes reports from research projects in several Western states. Among the conclusions reached is that many cooperatives in the west are too small to be efficient. Inability of small cooperatives to measure up to the members' expectations results in farmers taking their business elsewhere.

The study shows that mergers could solve some problems by reducing unit costs and improving service. For example, an Oregon study shows how five farmer cooperatives in a 20-mile area, doing a volume of business of from \$950,000 to \$1,700,000 annually, could merge and save \$15,500 each year in centralized bookkeeping alone. Another problem—but without a simple solution—is that farm density is too small in some sparsely settled areas to support a cooperative.

large segment of American bankers, warned wheat farmers that a "no" vote in the 1964 wheat referendum threatened to shut off future farm loans for needed farm purchases. The association is seriously concerned that a rejection of the '64 program would slice the '64 income in half and leave him without the means to repay his bank loans.

## Crop Forecasting Advance Noted By Meteorologist

OREGON STATE UNIVERSITY—Highly accurate forecasts of crop maturity and yield are now possible and crop quality forecasts will come in the near future, according to a nationally-known agricultural meteorologist who is a visiting professor at Oregon State University.

The forecasts will be possible early in the season—perhaps as early as 12 to 20 days after planting, says Dr. Jen Yu (David) Wang.

Revised yield forecasts have to be issued later in the season depending on the current weather but maturity and quality forecasts can be made quite accurately without using long-range weather forecasts, he insists.

Wang has been in charge of crop forecast research at University of Wisconsin since 1957. Crop maturity date forecasts made 12 to 20 days after planting in 1961 proved to be 85 to 95 per cent accurate for sweet corn and peas.

Last year, his forecasts covered yields as well as maturity date. For peas, the accuracy of these forecasts ranged from 75 to 99 per cent at various test sites and from 89 to 97 per cent for sweet corn.

He expects to add quality forecasts to maturity and yield outlook within five years. There aren't many crops that can't be forecast, he says.

Such forecasts are of tremendous value to the canning industry and to other agricultural interests, Wang pointed out.

Wang's methods combine the ancient science of phenology with the latest electronic measuring and recording instruments to give almost minute-by-minute information on the crop and environment.

Phenology, a science dating back to ancient China, is the use of plants or animals as indicators of weather conditions, he explains. More formally, it is a study of the relationships between various physical environmental factors and periodic changes in growth and development during the life cycles of plants and animals.

A basic concept is that all plants have a certain minimum air temperature necessary for growth depending upon the environmental conditions. A certain number of these temperature "units" are required for crop maturity, depending upon species and varieties.

Air and soil temperatures and a number of other factors are considered the significant elements, Wang says, and the planting-to-seeding stage as the significant period.

Eight years of work at University of Wisconsin indicate that soil temperature at the early stage is the predetermining factor for maturity of sweet corn. Similarly, night temperature is the significant element at the reproductive stage of sweet corn, according to Wang.

Wang uses electronic recording devices to keep an "eye" on soil and air temperature, evaporation, precipitation, etc. Findings are plotted, predicting equations developed and worked out on computers.

Wang came to OSU to conduct a special series of seminars on agricultural meteorology. He was earlier a Weather Bureau Meteorologist and teacher in China and Formosa before coming to this country for graduate work at University of Chicago and Wisconsin.

Two books by Wang have been published the past year. One is

Mr. and Mrs. Bob Gasser and family drove to The Dalles Friday to spend the week-end with Gasser's folks, Mr. and Mrs. Fred Gasser, and Mrs. Gasser's aunt and uncle, Mr. and Mrs. George Lewis. The Bob Gassers returned to Irrigon Sunday.

The Rev. Mr. and Mrs. John Kenney, Mrs. Myrtle Markham, Mrs. Eugene McCorkle and Barbara, attended the all-day District Fellowship meeting of the Assemblies of God churches held in Milton-Freewater Monday.

Mr. and Mrs. Chet Collins went to Springfield, Ore., Friday and visited Mrs. Collins' three sons and their families, Mr. and Mrs. Richard Knights and family, Mr. and Mrs. Harold Knights and family and Mr. and Mrs. Elgin Knights and family. They returned to Irrigon Tuesday, after stopping in Redmond to visit friends.

Mr. and Mrs. Enoch Morgan of La Grande, were week-end guests at the home of Morgan's brother and sister-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Rees Morgan.

Mrs. Helen Mulkey is convalescing at her home, after spending 10 days as a patient in Good Shepherd hospital, following surgery on her foot.

Mrs. Jessie Cosner's granddaughter, Miss Nancy Lee Rayborn of La Grande, was recently chosen as Union County Dairy Princess.

Golden-Age Club members from Irrigon attending the Tues

day meeting at the C. R. C. building in Hermiston were: Mr. and Mrs. C. A. Miller, Mrs. Rea Morgan, Mr. and Mrs. Frank Smailey, Mrs. Marguerite Houghton, Mrs. Mary Adams and Mrs. Sedelia Dexter. Mr. and Mrs. Roy Penney showed colored slides of their trans-continental trip through Canada, Washington, D. C., and the New England states. The Methodist ladies of Hermiston served a free luncheon to the group.

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**Notice of Sale of State Farm Lands**

Sealed bids will be received by the Oregon State Board of Control Mental Health Division at its office, Room 20, State Capitol Building, Salem, Oregon, until 9:30 a.m., April 9, 1963, and then publicly opened for the sale of nine hundred twenty (920) acres of land, more or less, being a part of the Eastern Oregon State Hospital, Reith Ranch, situated in Umatilla County, Oregon, including certain water rights on Birch Creek, Umatilla River and McKay Reservoir.

Minimum price to be considered for the property is \$103,500.

Bid forms and further information may be obtained from Dr. E. I. Silk, Superintendent of Eastern Oregon State Hospital, Pendleton, Oregon, or C. D. Conrad, Board of Control Farms Administrator, Room 20, State Capitol, Salem, Oregon.

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