

## Chemically cured grasses studied

Chemically curing meadow grasses and field grazing in winter may be an alternative to the traditional cut, stack and feed-out operation, says a USDA research scientist for the Oregon Agricultural Experiment Station.

"With soaring operational costs of putting hay up, chemical curing of grasses 'on the stump' looks promising for wintering beef animals in the Great Basin region," said Forrest Sneva, a research scientist at the Squaw Butte Experiment Station, Burns.

Grasses are chemically cured with the herbicide Paraquat at the time the meadow would normally be cut for hay. The chemical rapidly dries the plant and prevents nutrients from translocating.

Sneva pioneered the research with range grasses during the 1960s. In his early work, he showed that the average daily gains of yearling grazing crested wheatgrass which had been chemically cured with Paraquat were 0.60 pounds higher than the control group grazing untreated crested wheatgrass in late fall.

During those years, some investigative research with meadow species was also completed because of low haying costs and hay, the economic advantage for chemical curing was not good. Times have changed that.

Last July three pastures at the Section Five winter headquartering unit of the Squaw Butte Station were marked out. One section was cut and baled, one was sprayed with one-half pound of Paraquat per acre and the remaining pasture was left to cure naturally.

During 67 days of testing, the mature spring-calving cows used in the test (which were fed a full ration of baled hay) gained approximately 87 pounds per head. Those grazing chemically cured hay lost 16 pounds and those on naturally cured meadow lost 30 pounds per head.

Broad cows coming off range in good flesh are normally fed to lose some weight during the winter. The rate of loss by cows grazing the chemically cured forage had it continued for the winter season, is believed to be acceptable. However, the more rapid weight loss of those cows grazing naturally cured forage, had it continued, is unacceptable.

"Protein and energy supplements for those cows, had treatment continued, would be necessary to maintain the animals," said Harley Turner, the station's animal scientist.

In 1974, baled hay in the stack and costs of feeding it out later were estimated at \$40 per acre. These fields, which had been fertilized, were producing nearly two tons per acre, thus the cost of baled

hay was \$20 per ton. Costs for chemical curing were estimated at \$13 per acre, or \$6.50 per ton. No costs were involved for the naturally cured grass used in the experiment and costs for fencing and water supplies were not included.

The experiment station scientist is optimistic about the future of Paraquat-treated grasses.

"Chemical curing for winter grazing of standing meadow hay appears to be both practical and economical for replacing a portion of the traditional cut, stack and feed-out hay," he said.

However, he cautioned that there will always be a need for some stacked hay for emergencies like bad weather conditions.

Whether chemical curing will become a widespread practice depends to a great extent on the levels of residues in the forage and in the animal and the chemical's impact on other environmental factors.

In that regard, Paraquat has been intensively researched and much is already known about the interactions of the chemical with the environment.

More trials of the chemical are planned for later this year.



The distribution of leadership and scholastic prizes and awards at Washington State University's annual Agawards banquet was handled this year by William Jepson of Heppner, OR. Jepson, a senior in agronomy, is president of WSU's Associated Students of the College of Agriculture. The banquet is held each year to honor the faculty and students of the college. Jepson also won a \$500 scholarship. He is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Robert H. Jepson of Heppner.



First place winners in the Blue Mountain Bowling League are Ted Toll and Ernie McCabe, right. Toll won a trophy for his high series during the league and McCabe is standing near the first place team trophy.

## Hearing set on inspection fees

Continually increasing costs of providing inspection, grading and weighing of grain and other commodities have forced the Oregon Department of Agriculture to propose an increase in most of the fees charged for these services.

The proposed increases will be presented at a hearing Wednesday, May 28, 1975, at 2 p.m., at the Portland Grain Exchange, in Suite 220, 200 Market Street, Portland.

The services offered through the department's grain division are among those administered by the department that are supported entirely by fees or licenses. Department proposed amendments to regulations covering those inspection fees would:

Increase all hourly base charges by \$2.00.

Raise the overtime rate paid in addition to the published unit fee from \$6.00 to \$8.00.

Increase the sediment test fee on grain from \$3.00 to \$5.00 and the charge for falling numbers analysis from \$1.75 to \$2.00.

Set the charge for determination TCK smut spores at \$8.00.

Increase from \$4.00 to \$5.00 each the fees for railroad boxcar grain inspections; the hopper-type cars sampled by USDA-approved mechanical belt, spout or leg-type samplers at plant; hopper-type cars sampled by other methods would increase from \$8.00 to \$10.00; and reinspection of all rail boxcars and hopper-type cars on basis of file sample.

Raise fee for official sample lot inspection and weighing of truck from \$5.00 to \$6.00.

Increase to \$2.50 from \$2.00 the fee on sample inspection of

grain for official certification of grade or for official certification of factor information only.

On inspection and certification of ships as to condition for cargo loading, raise minimum charge for those at dockside from \$35.00 to \$70.00, and those at anchor in river from \$50.00 to \$70.00 and set charges per hold for both at \$14, which is double the present fee for those at dockside and an increase of \$4.00 for those at anchor in river.

In hay inspections, minimum charges for complete or part lots would double to \$10 and per ton fee increased from 50 cents to \$1.00.

Grade certification of beans, lentils and similar commodities, including sampling minimum charges,

would double to \$10.00, bag inspections increase from 2 cents per hundredweight to 3 cents; inspection on bulk commodity at inspection points increase from 12 cents per ton to 15 cents per ton; and submitted sample inspection increase from \$5.00 to \$6.50.

Mileage rates charged from office and return increase from 10 cents per mile to 15 cents per mile and per diem allowances will be the sum allowed state employees instead of presently set maximums.

Persons unable to attend the hearing may submit data or evidence to Allen G. Plummer, administrator of the Grain Inspection Division, State Department of Agriculture, 600 S.E. 9th Avenue, Portland, OR 97214.

## First aid regulation date for farmers near

A reminder that June 1 is the deadline for the new statewide first aid regulations of the Oregon Safety Code. As of that date all employers must have someone on the site who holds a first aid card.

If only one employee has such a card, and that employee leaves the site while others are still present, the employer is in violation of the law. The only exception is a "lone employee," who need not have a first aid card, and a lone employee was described as one who does not come into contact with other employees.

A person working alone is considered a lone employee, whether he is working by himself on one of a number of

multiple farms owned by one employer, or whether he is on location on a farm where he does not have contact with other employees.

If the employer has several groups of employees working at different sites, as might be the case with a wide-spread operation, there must be at least one employee in each even with a first aid card.

The only exemption from the ruling would be if personnel are registered on a waiting list to receive first aid training.

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## Singspiration well attended

The Heppner Christian Church was completely filled last Sunday evening for the May Singpiration service and a special appearance of the Covenant Players.

Doreen Grace lead the singing and Kathryn Hoskins assisted at the piano. Rev. Sikes presided at the evening's program which was sponsored by the South Morrow County Ministerial Association.

The four talented Covenant Players put on a series of short playlets based on inspirational themes.

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