

Mechanized Farming Started At Time Oregon Became State

Corvallis—Mechanized farming was born just about the time Oregon became a state, so the two have grown up together. And they're still sharing growing pains this Centennial Year in development of machines to harvest certain crops mechanically.

Oregon was an early booster of machine farming. But due to the nature of some of her more prominent crops, the state's agriculture still is not completely mechanized, J. B. Rodgers, head of the agricultural engineering department at Oregon State college, noted.

Aside from the sickle and plow which date back thousands of years, there was little farm mechanization until the mid-19th century. The age of animal power came into its own in the 1800s. Steam engines flourished from about 1870 until World War I, gradually waning until they were supplanted by the less bulky, more maneuverable general purpose tractor powered by the internal combustion engine.

Found Going Rough
Early developers of farm equipment found the going rough for a time. Horse and mule associations spouted intense anti-tractor propaganda, "it isn't economically sound to invest in power that doesn't eat oats."

Early reapers and threshers not quite perfected often got out of kilter much to the delight of last-stand farmers who were adamant that what had been good enough for their fathers was good enough for them. It took courage for a farmer to invest in an early model tractor. He risked taunts of his neighbors when it wouldn't start and he risked his arm every time he cranked it.

But eventually—aided by World War I—progress triumphed. The shipment of draft animals to the Western Front and labor shortages at home created a demand for farm implements.

Gigantic Impact
Farm mechanization has made a gigantic impact on agriculture. One hundred years ago, a farm worker could support only 4½ people. By the time he fed his family, there was little to spare. So 85 per cent of the population was needed to produce food and fiber for the country. Today, less than 13 per cent do the job.

In early, sparsely-settled Oregon, eastern manufacturers avidly advertised their farm equipment. And by the late 1880's, local manufacture of agriculture implements was getting under way.

A proud day in Oregon's farm mechanization history occurred in 1932. "Old Tusk," the first diesel-powered tractor to operate in the Pacific Northwest, set the world's plowing record near Arlington. That record still stands. It is estimated that it would have taken 360 horses to plow the 6,880 acres in the time the tractor took.

Mechanical Pickers
Mechanical pickers are still needed for some of Oregon's top crops. Pole bean pickers are in their early infancy. In fact, there's only one in the whole country. And bush bean pickers need further development in order to handle Oregon's bushier variety of beans, Rodgers reported.

Attempts have been made to develop a strawberry picker, but so far, haven't been successful. A raspberry picker is being used on an experimental basis.

Handling of tree fruit after it's picked has been successfully mechanized, and efforts are being made to develop machines to pick the fruit. So far, the closest anyone has come has been a device which elevates the human picker and moves him around the tree. Some day, the picking itself will be done by machine, Rodgers predicts.

Farm equipment often is dreamed up by unlikely persons. For example, the manure spreader was invented by a school teacher who disliked having his students miss school several days a year to stay home and help spread manure by hand. So the teacher challenged himself to find a better way. He did, too, just before the turn of the century.



WRECKING TWO OFFICES and fire chief's car, three bombs startled Little Rock, Ark., center of anti-integration turmoil. This is damage to office building containing private offices of mayor. School Board buildings also suffered extensive damage. No one was injured.

Bridge Bids To Be Opened Sept. 29

Bids for construction of Thompson Creek bridge in the Medford district, bureau of land management, will be opened at 2 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 29, by the bureau of public roads in Portland.

The bridge is located about eight miles southeast of Selma in Josephine county. A trip to review the project with prospective bidders is planned by the district engineer Monday, Sept. 14, from the Medford district office.

Plans and specifications are available at the district office, Highway 99 and Barnett rd., Medford.

Killer Released On Self Defense

Ontario — (UPI) — Crescencio Chavez, who claimed self defense in the fatal shooting Sunday of Santiago Martinez, has been released from custody.

Chavez claimed he was only defending himself from a beating. A coroner's jury had absolved Chavez of blame.

The first theater in the United States was located in Williamsburgh, Va., in 1716.

Details of GM Small Car Revealed

Detroit—(UPI)—General Motors has revealed details of its new Corvair and became the first of the big-three auto producers to announce prices for their new small-car entries. The Corvair price range, not including excise tax, will run from \$1,810 to \$1,920.

Dalai Lama Asks For Help From UN

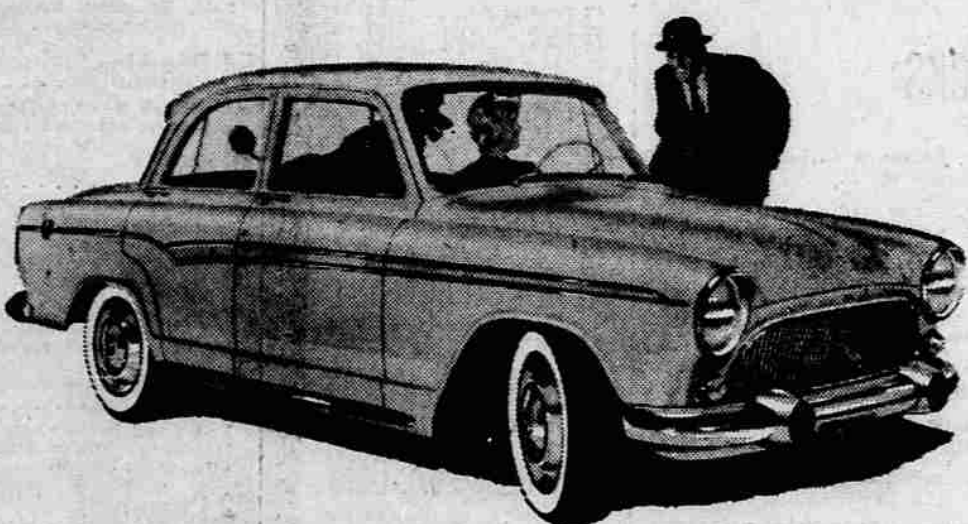
United Nations, N.Y.—(UPI)—The Dalai Lama's urgent appeal for immediate intervention to stop Communist China's "wanton and ruthless murder of my people" lay before the United Nations today but no member state was eager to pick it up.

The 23-year-old god-king, from his exile in India, cabled Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld Wednesday night to ask for help from the General Assembly.

He said Red Chinese forces had massacred thousands of innocent Tibetans and were sterilizing the men and women of Tibet in a drive to exterminate the race.

Table Mountain, the flat-topped peak at the Cape of Good Hope, rises 3582 feet.

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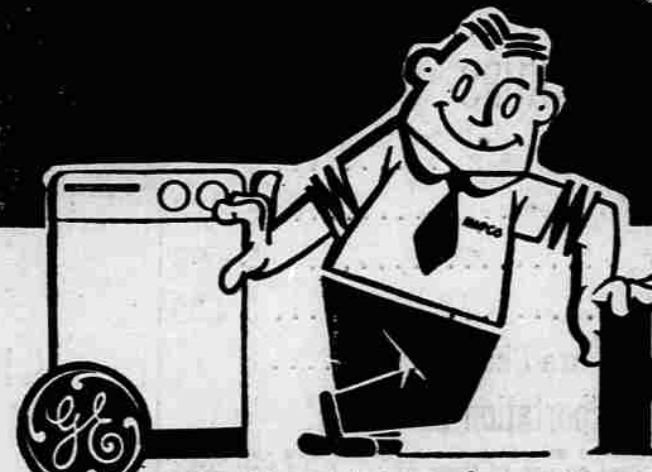


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