



THE ALLEY CATS romped home with the championship in the Mixed League bowling championship last week when they bested their opponents in the five pin league. Pictured above the champions front row, left to right: Ruth Hulford, captain Harry Rogers and Betty Brown. Back row, Sophie Oehrich, Leo McGilloway and Ivy Martin.

Farm Extension Specialist Reviews Hay Conditioners

By W. Ross Milne
 Practically every implement dealer in the county has a number of some type of hay conditioners in stock. I think this reflects the interest that farmers in the county showed last year in this type of machine.

Many farmers are asking whether a hay conditioner is worth the approximate price of \$700 to \$800 or not and whether they will do all that is claimed for them. Let us examine some of the facts and figures.

Over two tons of water must be evaporated to produce one ton of dry hay. The sun is the best and most economical source of heat to do the job but too much sun certainly can result in low quality hay.

Improves Quality
 Keep in mind that conditioning the hay improves quality only to the extent of reducing the damage from bad weather or too much sun. Feeding trials have shown no difference in feeding value between alfalfa hay cut with a mower as compared to that cut with a mower and conditioned when both lots of hay were cured under ideal weather conditions.

The reason that hay exposed for too long a time to the weather goes down in quality, is that the stems contain much more moisture than the leaves. When you leave the hay long enough to cure the stems, the leaves are too dry and have probably started to shatter.

The leaves contain most of the protein, carotene and vitamins, so it is important that they be saved. The conditioner helps cure the hay by crimping or crushing the stems so that they will dry as fast as the leaves.

Aid Drying Time
 Tests have shown the crimper type and the roller type aid the drying time of the hay about the same amount. Roller types perhaps do not give as uniform crushing as the crimping type.

Some owners have had difficulty with bunching in front of the rollers with the type that have smooth rollers. Crimper types generally operate at higher average speeds with less stoppage than the crusher type machine.

Conditioners are not hard on horse power. The crimper type machine requires 3 to 5 h.p. (maximum) and the crusher or roller type 8 to 10 h.p. (maximum). This varies somewhat with the crushing pressure and density of the crop.

Cuts Down Curing Time
 In our line of weather, a conditioner should cut down the time the hay is curing in the field by 20 to 40 per cent. Many farmers save a day, cutting one day and baling the next, even when the hay is cut early.

What does it cost to operate? It will cost \$1.50 per ton for a man with 100 tons of hay a year and \$1.00 a ton for a man with 200 tons. This includes depreciation on the machine, tractor and labor.

This can be reduced considerably by driving the conditioner with a P.T.O. attachment straight through the mower and drawing it behind the mower. This eliminates a second trip over the field.

These are some points that might be helpful if you own a conditioner or decide to buy one:

Useful Hints
 1. Adjust roll pressure according to the type of hay Springs should be tight enough to crush the stems. The rollers should just run wet rather than squeezing out all the juices. Tension is not as important on the crimper type.
 2. Hay should be conditioned within 20 minutes after mowing. This is another advantage for having the conditioner attached to the mower.
 3. Mowing should be done at a high ground speed to give a uniform swath.
 4. Hay can be over conditioned. Leaves will shatter if conditioned twice, especially with crimper type. It doesn't pay to recondition after a rain since about all you can do is shake the rain off.
 5. Hay should be raked AFTER the top of swath is dry, not at time of conditioning.

Will it pay me to buy a hay conditioner? I think the answer is yes, if you take off more than 30 acres of hay. It does eliminate some of the hazards of bad weather and our weather is often fairly catchy in the early part of haying when the best hay is made.

Carotene level has been found to be 30 to 50 per cent. higher in bales of conditioned hay after five months than uncrushed hay, since the leaves were not as badly weathered. It does reduce the field curing time up to 30 to 40 per cent. or even 50 per cent.

In a heavy livestock county such as this, good hay is important. Conditioners are an excellent aid to making good hay and should receive your consideration.

HALTON COUNTY WEED CONTROL NEWS
 by V. E. McARTHUR, COUNTY WEED INSPECTOR

"Yellow Rocket" a Bad Weed?
 We must admit that Rocket is spreading at an alarming rate in Halton County. While it belongs to the mustard family it differs from "Wild Mustard" in that it flowers nearly a month earlier, has several roots and smooth leaves. "Wild Mustard" has a single tap root and quite hairy leaves.

Many of our farmers are concerned about Yellow Rocket and try to keep it pulled when it first appears but when it becomes established they try to cut it before seeds open and in some cases the infested fields are used for grass silage. By these practices plants are kept in check but Yellow Rocket being a perennial continues to persist. When it appears in meadows consisting of grasses only it can be killed quite readily by applying 8-10 ounces of 2,4-D acid per acre, but in sod fields containing alfalfa or certain other clovers this method cannot be used as this amount of 2,4-D per acre will damage the clover.

Do not underestimate this weed if it appears on your farm because once it gets started it will spread rapidly.

Yes "Yellow Rocket" is a bad weed and is recognized as such by the Field Crops Branch of the Ontario Department of Agriculture who have it listed on the noxious list of the Ontario Weed Control Act.

Yellow Pickerel Season Opening
 May 15 saw the opening of the season for yellow pickerel in Southern Ontario (south of and including the French and Mattawa Rivers and Lake Nipissing); May 23 in the north and west (excluding them). Creel limit is still six per day, there has been no minimum length since 1955.

Highly regarded by anglers, the pickerel is no fighter and relatively easy to catch. It's plentiful, takes lures or live bait and during May and June and again in October and November provides more sport to the average angler than many game fish.

The fish is found throughout Ontario and is particularly common in the Great Lakes basin. In Northern Ontario it is incredibly abundant. The range of the species has been greatly extended by stocking.

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