



"PEARL" THE MARE owned and exhibited by Neil Gillies of Speyside was a winner at many local fall fairs. This picture, loaned by Goldie Gillies, was taken in 1910.

Want tax based on land productivity

"Darcy McKeough is being led around by the nose by civil servants," says Harold Middlebrook concerning decisions on the tax system. "The sooner we can beat the civil servants, the sooner we can get at the problem," Middlebrook told the Agriculture Committee of Halton County Council at a meeting Tuesday afternoon.

Middlebrook, a Burlington farmer and an active member of the Halton Federation of Agriculture was responding to a letter from Halton MPP Jim Snow. Snow's letter acknowledged a resolution from the committee suggesting further study on the tax concessions for farmers is necessary.

Not solution
The government has promised a 25 per cent reduction in taxes for farmers with the rider that the farmer will repay the

amount of the concession with 10 per cent interest if and when he sold out.

Middlebrook argues this is not the answer. The Federation is asking taxes be based on productivity rather than the

going price of the land being used. Middlebrook uses an example to point out the inequity of a farmer in Wentworth with land near a Halton farm, both producing vegetable crops. The Wentworth farmer pays \$5 an acre tax compared to \$100 per acre tax to the Halton farm. According to Middlebrook if the

tax was based on productivity rather than land value, the tax would be more equitable. County Council's Agriculture Committee has backed the Federation's stand in this respect.

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Minister explains basis of tax rebate for Ont. farmers

By Hon. Wm. A. Stewart
Minister of
Agriculture & Food

The Government of Ontario's "Farm Tax Reduction Program" is part of a major, long-term program of assessment and taxation reform started two years ago. This program has already relieved the municipal taxpayers of Ontario of over \$400 million annually in the costs of such services as administration of justice, municipal assessment, residential property, tax rebates, increased provincial grants to schools, subsidies to urban municipalities for road and street construction and maintenance, assistance in the establishment of new water and sewage disposal facilities.

The Farm Tax Reduction Program is an interim step to ease the tax burden on farm people, pending the completion of this long-term reform.

Inquiries
Since the program was announced on Oct. 6, we have had numerous inquiries about its application, so I would like to explain briefly the basis for the tax rebate and the method of payment.

Under this program the Government of Ontario will provide rebates to all farm operators who reside in Ontario, to the amount of 25 per cent of their net 1970 tax bill. We have arrived at the figure of 25 per cent by determining that approximately 50 per cent of the municipal tax bill is for educational purposes, and about half of the farm assessment is on

land, hence about 25 per cent of the farm tax bill is educational tax against land.

Equal basis
Farm people have told us that they were prepared to pay for the costs of education on an equal basis with other home owners, but they resented the idea of having their land assessed for educational purposes as well. By rebating 25 per cent of the net municipal tax bill in 1970 we, in effect, are refunding to Ontario farmers the educational assessment against their land, leaving them on the same basis as urban taxpayers, and the rural non-farm people who have only a house and a small holding.

This program is being administered by the Department of Municipal Affairs while the necessary funds have been allocated from the budget of the Department of Agriculture and Food. Using the municipal tax rolls as our basis of calculation we are undertaking to mail these rebate cheques directly to rural taxpayers during the month of December. This involves the analysis of all municipal tax rolls to determine the eligibility of farm property owners and the issuance and mailing of the resulting rebate cheques to the individual property owners during the busy holiday mailing season.

Need 11 acres
The cheques will be mailed automatically to Ontario farm residents who have 11 acres or more of land assessed for agricultural purposes.

If their property is less than 11 acres, and is assessed as a farm, the property owner will receive instead of a cheque, an application form. If, upon completion of this form, the property owner can demonstrate that his farm yielded a gross income of at least \$2,000 from farming operations, he too will be eligible for the 25 per cent tax rebate, and this will be mailed to him upon receipt of the completed application form.

If you are a farm operator, a resident of Ontario, and you have not received by early January, 1971 either a municipal tax rebate cheque, or an application form, you should then get in touch with your local municipal office, the regional assessment office, the

office of your local agricultural representative, or the Department of Municipal Affairs.

There is an important proviso to this program. If, at any time, between now and 1980, farm land is converted to other, non-farm uses; in other words if it is converted into residential or industrial purposes; the 25 per cent rebate will become repayable to the Government of Ontario, bearing eight per cent interest. For this reason it may well be that certain property owners, seeing non-agricultural uses for their land to be imminent, might decide not to accept the rebate. This is their prerogative, as it is the prerogative of any tax-payer, and in this event the cheques may be returned uncashed.



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Use winter months for real advantage

By J. Paul Flash
Soils and Crops Specialist

At this time of year most of the crops have been harvested and have been processed or stored or sold as a cash crop. Farmers, however, should be using some of their "slack" time to think about and plan their next year's cropping program. Based on this past year's crop yields and associated problems, farmers should be considering their soil fertility, selection of crop varieties and pest situation.

Soil Fertility
By now most farmers should have taken a soil test of any field on which they suspected a nutrient deficiency. There is no better indication of the nutrient status, presently available, than a carefully taken soil sample accompanied by an accurately filled out information sheet.

As has been clearly indicated in earlier press releases it is absolutely essential that if farmers have not already ordered their corn seed for next year they should do so immediately. The amount of seed-corn of most varieties which is tolerant to the t-strain of the southern corn leaf blight is in very limited supply. Farmers in the area cannot afford to take second choice in the seed, particularly when that second choice is a later maturing variety or seed which is susceptible to southern corn leaf blight.

Farmers also should be trying to obtain some of our more superior barley varieties such as Brock. Again, this seed should be ordered as soon as possible.

Although there have been no definite indications of a short supply yet, it certainly would be advisable to get the desired legume and grass varieties ordered right away.

Examination of Pest Situation
Based on the different types and densities of weeds, farmers should be planning their weed control program this fall and winter so they will be ready to start weed control operations early next spring.

Surveys in 1970 in Ontario indicate that we are going to have a greater infestation of the alfalfa

weevil over a much larger area in the province. Therefore farmers should make themselves more aware about the level of this pest in their area, methods of identification, cutting practices and, if necessary, spray program to control the alfalfa weevil.

Farmers should also make every effort to find out all they can about the leaf blights in corn because we may be faced with these diseases as well as corn borer and stalk rots which all certainly reduced corn yields this past year.

In conclusion, with the intensity of farm enterprises today the farming public must use the next few months to real advantage in the areas of soil fertility, selection of crop varieties and examination of the pest situation.

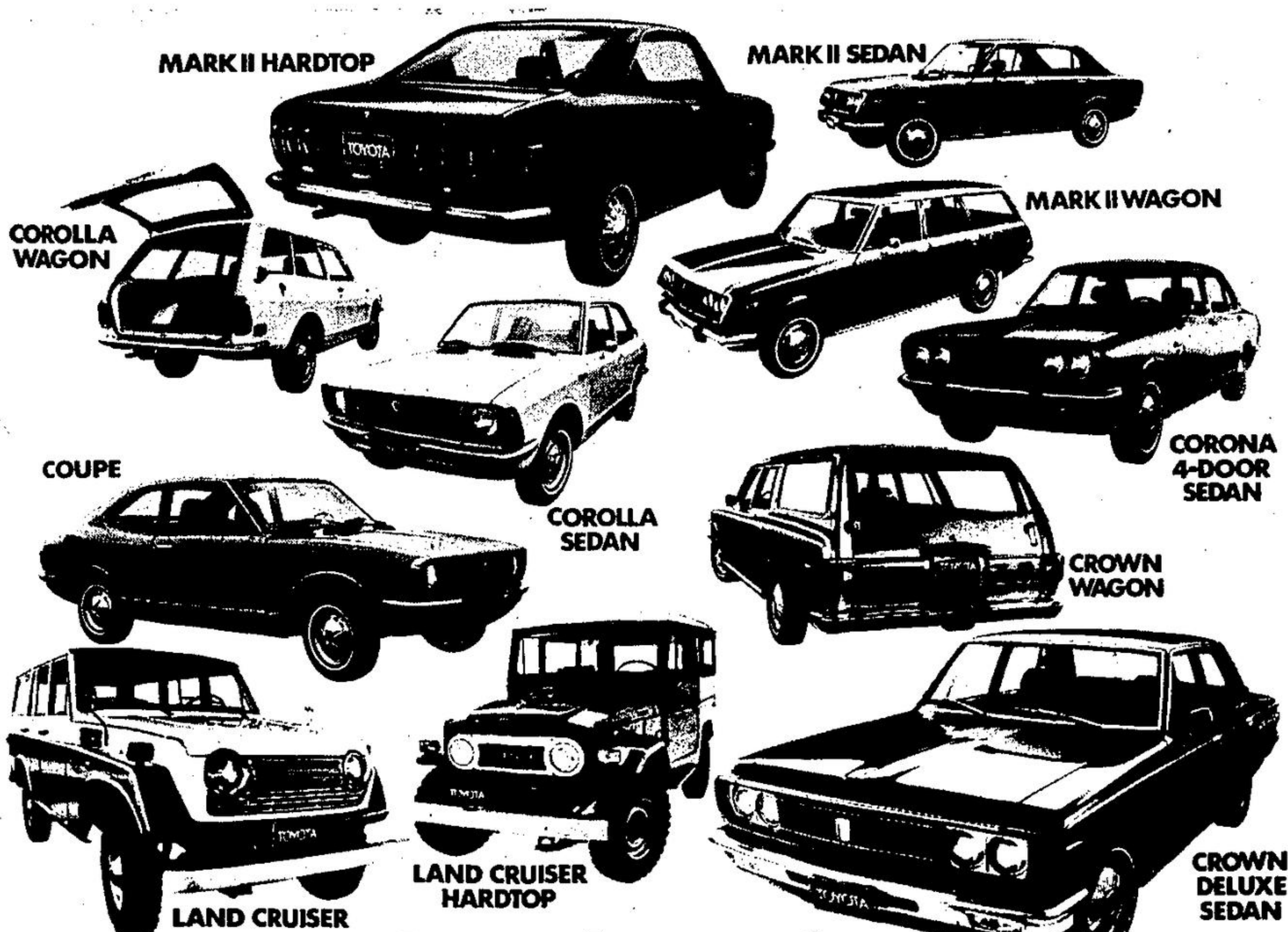
Hunter wins in Dorsets

By H. J. Stanley

Albert Hunter, R. R. 1, Burlington had excellent success at the Royal Winter Fair with his Polled Dorset sheep. In his first year of exhibiting a flock he placed first. His yearling ram was second in its class and the reserve champion of the show. In the yearling ewe class he placed second and third and third in the ewe lamb class.

Mr. Hunter is a leader of the Halton 4-H Sheep Club.

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