

Demo plots to show farmers what's best

Visitors to the plowing match will be able to see the effects of various chemicals and fertilizers on corn, soybeans and alfalfa.

Three acres of crop demonstration plots have been set up on the Bruce Nixon farm, adjacent to the plowing match site. This project was carried out jointly by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food and the Halton Soil and Crop Association.

"The whole idea is to educate the farmers coming to the Match about the effects on crops of various chemicals," said Earl Wilson, Norval, who is in charge of the crop demonstration. He is the past president of the Halton Soil and Crop Association.

In addition visitors will be able to compare the yield of several varieties of corn along with their stalk strength and moisture content.

Several combinations
They used 15 different combinations of herbicides for weed control on the corn among which were sutan-atrazine, lasso-atrazine, bladex-atrazine, bladex and atrazine. These various combinations of herbicides were used on three different types of corn, pre-plants, pre-emergents and post-

emergents. The demonstrations will show the farmers how certain herbicides and combinations of herbicides will control weeds and therefore the quality of the crop.

On display will be 52 different types of corn, five varieties of alfalfa and two of soybeans. There will also be sunflowers, field peas, faba beans and white beans.

As a comparison, there is a demonstration plot which

hasn't been treated with any herbicides or fertilizers to show what happens if a crop is purely organic. The plot is overrun with weeds.

Seeds, which were donated by various agriculture firms were planted in May and June so that the plants are ready now. Much of the work on the demonstration was done by Eric Saunter, a fourth year Agriculture student at Guelph University. Chemicals were supplied by various firms.

Review early match

Just half a century ago, the 1923 provincial match was held near Sarnia and the following newspaper description of the event indicates the spirit of the plowing match is still the same:

"The crowds increased to thousands at the International plowing match, three miles out on the London Road from Sarnia yesterday afternoon, and by to-morrow it is expected to reach record proportions. The different plowmen competing all had their hosts of friends and backers. And the beardless boys and bewhiskered veterans trudged merrily

after their teams, taking the competition in the best of good spirits. There was every kind of a plow, from the latest 1923 invention to the old Jim Gray type driven by Andrew Park of Oil City. Everybody crowded around Park to see this contrivance, with wooden handles, a relic of the olden days when crinolines and slow dances were the rage.

"When one arrives at the spacious farm of William Hillier, where the big event is being pulled off, a wonderful sight greets the visitor. Stretching south for nearly a mile are his ample acres, thickly dotted with plowmen, plows, horses and tractors, and beside each a notable gallery of spectators.

"The white tents of the miniature city are stretched along the highway, spic and span and glistening in the sun, and in these every contrivance known to the farmer is housed. Here and there and everywhere, the engines are snorting, wheels turning in demonstration of farmers' machines taking place. Flags are flying and busy committee men, judges and competitors are flitting about and enthusiasm and smiles are rampant. In the headquarters tent is J. Lockie Wilson and his assistants, and here every detail is attended to so that the international plowing match may go down in history as the greatest agricultural event in Ontario.

"Lambton county industrialists make an elegant display in two huge marquees. There is nothing so acceptable as the capacity of a big tent, but when one gets inside the Lambton tents and notices side by side the big exhibits of Lambton manufacturers one gets a better perspective of the space available.

"Outside the tent there is row after row of every kind of plow imaginable. Tractors are lined up like batteries of howitzers, and everywhere there is motion."



CROP DEMONSTRATIONS will interest farmers attending the plowing match. Demonstration chairman Earl Wilson of Norval is pictured with a

plot of corn adjacent to the IPM site which shows the difference between organic and chemically-treated corn.

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