

Agriculture Update

Through the knothole

by John Caston

Max and Fay represent the 5th generation of Craigs to farm this Flos/Medonte land since 1819. It has been several years since it attained Century Farm status. This is a genuine mixed farm - livestock, potatoes, grain and woodlot - if its a saleable crop, it has probably been grown here. Sixth generation Neil brings the farm some young concepts - new ventures, as he contributes his ideas.

Visitors will see some splendid buildings constructed of on-site materials - possibly inspire some things to try at home.

A very efficient maple syrup operation, capable of producing

500 litres and more, is being constantly updated.

Ten minutes walk from the buildings brings you to an excellent cedar, hemlock and maple stands of forest. And Max has the usual mechanical toys, the working models of course. And oh, watch your step, those animals are real.

Member Don Atkinson has demonstrated his farm tractor winch at the Huronia Woodlands General Meeting Sunday, June 26. This very versatile tool enables a manager to extract wood from rough or wet terrain to a roadway. This was a useful display at the Craig Farm.

As is our practice on these field trips, if any member has items of

interest, they are welcome to bring them along.

Past Meeting - May 9 saw us meeting at Bob Ritchies Mill. There was an excellent overview of uses and sales of plantation pine lumber. The new mill is a beauty - it was in good working order several days after the meeting - needless to say, Mr. Ritchie is now a much happier man. Forester John Butler discussed thoroughly some insect problems endangering maple forests. This was a very excellent presentation, well researched and some good hands on examples. Since that evening, the tent caterpillar horde has erupted and become a problem. Many maple syrup producers have

engaged in aerial spraying to ensure their tree health and vigor.

Forest Fire Safety - This is a dry, hazardous season - woodland managers are advised to take every fire precaution to prevent fire damage. These guide rules may help your planning:

- Control access by vehicles - avoid those uninvited parties.
- Maintain a fuel free fire break - especially adjoining hazard areas such as highways and railroads.
- Be aware of what your local fire brigade will do for non-structural fires.
- Ensure your forest roads are

unobstructed for fire fighting vehicles.

- Keep simple fire fighting tools in good shape - axe, shovel, water cans, etc.

- If you are absent, entrust a neighbour to watch for emergencies.

- Be careful with any fire source.

Tree Planting - New trees grow better without competition - cut the grass or till, if possible. Now is the time to plan for the heavy mouse and mole population - they love to eat new trees. Investigate the use of zinc phosphide bait stations for the winter.

Agricrews

The Ministry of Agriculture and Food has seven Junior Agriculturalists and two Agricrews now placed in Simcoe County for this summer. Both programs began on June 20 and end on August 19, 1988.

The Junior Agriculturalists are people ages 15 to 24 who have very little knowledge of agriculture but who are keenly interested and willing to learn. They are placed on farms to help with general duties and participate in the farm life. The farm family hires them for \$15.00 a day and provides their room and board. The government also pays the Junior Agriculturalist \$15.00 a day so that the employee actually earns \$30.00 a day for a maximum of fifty days.

The Agricrew programs has two full crews now operating to service the local farmers. The crews, located in Collingwood and Stroud, cost only \$110.00 a day per crew of four. They are hired out to do general farm duties such as painting, cleaning barns, haying, building fences, and pruning trees, but they are not to work with chain-saws, second storey construction, chemicals, or drive tractors on the road.

Because of the number of bookings a third crew is needed and the only thing stopping the operation of this crew is the lack of a driver. If anyone has the use of a car, needs a full time job, and would like to be paid 27.5¢ per km travelled on top of your regular wage, please contact Ann Drybrough at 705-435-5521, 458-9803, or 322-2231, as soon as possible. Bookings are still being accepted for the third crew and/or cancellation and rainy day lists.

Colored beans

The Ontario Coloured Bean Growers' Association has been authorized, under Section 13 of the Farm Products Marketing Act, to collect fees on each tonne of commodity sold, Jack Riddell, minister of agriculture and food announced today.

Effective July 5, 1988, licence fees of \$5 per tonne of commodity sold will be paid to the association by the producers.

The association asked for the authority to collect fees and use the revenue to improve the production and marketing of coloured beans in Ontario. In May, the Ontario Farm Products Marketing Commission distributed more than 300 voter packages to known coloured bean growers. Of the ballots returned, 96 per cent were in favor of designation under Section 13.

In Ontario there are approximately 300 to 400 coloured bean producers with between 15,000 to 20,000 acres in production.

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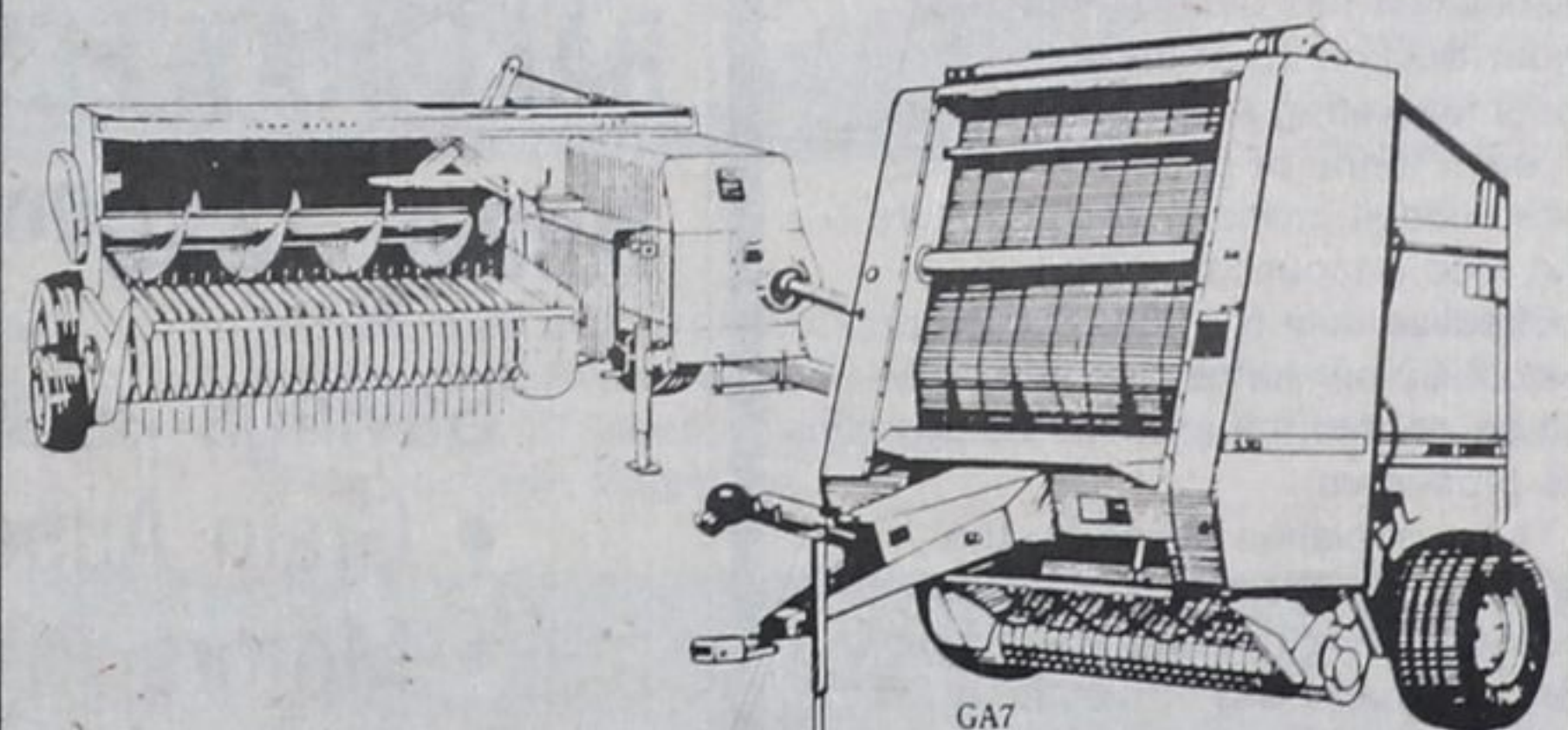
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