

## Ontario County farmers split on union issue

BROOKLIN — About 30 area farmers who attended a meeting in the town hall are split on the value of collective bargaining as endorsed by the National Farmers' Union.

Ivan Allin of Columbus, junior district leader of the NFU in Ontario County, said several men expressed fears the organized food processing and handling system and the government would retaliate against them if farmers tried to use collective bargaining.

"It sounded to me as if there was some fear," he said.

But the majority appeared to support the NFU position, he said, and agree collective bargaining would give farmers power to resist such pressure.

"I honestly think the majority was for us," he said.

Speaker at the meeting, under the chairmanship of Andy Souch of Pontypool, was NFU organizer Jerry Huizefka of Petrolia.

Mr. Allin said Mr. Huizefka reported on his trip to the December national convention of the National Farmers' Organization in the U.S., where 15,000 delegates showed up.

Mr. Huizefka called for better prices to ensure prosperity of the farming communities and small businesses necessary to ensure a continued rural culture.

He said television educated children in the concepts of large-scale consumer merchandising and the colleges educate young people for the needs of big business and industry.

He attacked vertical integration, the tendency for agricultural businesses to group to process the product most efficiently right from the farm to the consumer, as tending to make the farmers employees of the big businesses.

This, combined with the government pressing for cheap food and higher productivity on the farm, has resulted in competition which has decreased the farm population while substantially increasing productivity.

Mr. Huizefka said the undesirable result for the farmer has been a drop in the price of such things as corn and wheat over the years, and an increase in the price of beef and milk that has been slower than cost increases to the farmers.



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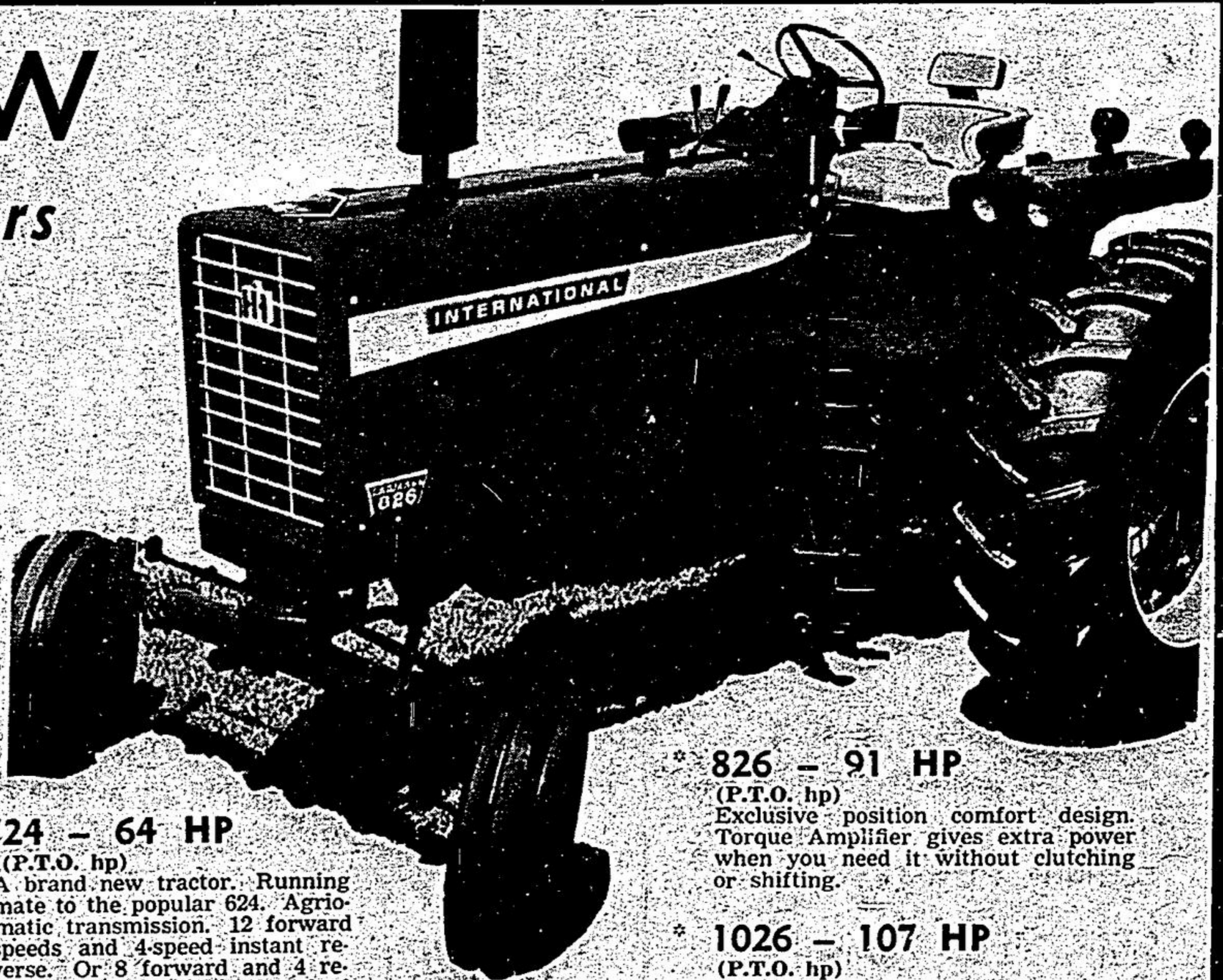
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