



Just five years after planting the trees, there should be a "wood crop".

## FAST-GROWING FUEL TREE MOVES NORTH

# Heat Your Home With Only An Acre Of Trees

By Dick Yost

There are all kinds of uses for an acre of land. If you're someone like Kurt and son Jim Carlson, of Roseburg, Wash., you can use the acre to try to supply all of your home heating needs.

"We heat our entire home with firewood," Karl says, noting that increasing scarcity of wood and increases in wood permit costs led the Carlsons to do a little experimenting on the pastureland near their house.

"I read an article in *Sunset Magazine* which recommended planting maples for firewood," Karl notes.

"I thought that might be the answer to our heating problems and so I called Bob Logan, our extension forestry specialist. Bob suggested I try planting eucalyptus, which is a very fast grower."

Although neither Logan nor the Carlsons have any information on the BTU or heat content of a cord of eucalyptus, they know several things that might make the tree suitable for solving the fuel needs of many households in the Northwest and South.

The 230-plus trees the Carlsons planted as knee-high saplings in September of 1981 already tower 20 or more feet high — quite an impressive increase in biomass in two years. Unlike pine and the other soft woods that produce more ash than heat, eucalyptus is a medium-hard wood and so, the Carlsons hope, should be an economical heat source.

From what the Carlsons have seen, eucalyptus are also an extremely

hardy tree — an advantage when faced with the extremes of the hot and cold, wet and dry climate of the Cascades.

"We planted the trees in a low lying, part of our pasture," Jim explains. "That first winter we had severe flooding. That whole end of the pasture and the trees were under water for several days; and then it froze. So we really didn't think the trees would make it, but they did."

The Carlsons plan to let their cattle back into the tree planting this year as the trees will be large enough that the cattle won't be able to damage them.

The two then plan to start thinning and using the trees two years later — five years after the initial planting.

"We really don't know yet how big the trees will be by then," says Karl. "But what we've planted should get us through at least a couple of winters."

Replanting their timber will be the least of the Carlsons' worries.

As Jim explains, each time a tree is cut two or three new trees will sprout from the original root stock.

"With proper management our wood lot should be able to sustain our heating needs year after year," Jim points out. "Of course, we have to see how the wood burns and how much we need to get through the winter, and then, if need be, expand our planting."

(Reprinted from the *Washington Farmer-Stockman*)

# Ohio Corn Stalk Tops World Record

If you grew your entire corn crop like Anthony Casale grew one stalk last year, it wouldn't take many acres to fill your silos.

Casale, of Wickliffe, Ohio, grew his towering stalk to a new world-record height of 20 ft., 1½ inches, topping last year's record-setting 19-ft., 8½-in. stalk grown by Howard Johnson, Anita, Iowa, who this year grew the second place stalk, measuring in at 19 ft., 9 in.

The Tall Corn Contest is sponsored by Cornnuts, a California snack food company whose product, Cornnuts, is derived from a Peruvian corn hybrid. The tall-corn seed and prizes for the contest are provided by the company.

Casale first read about the contest in a local paper and entered the contest in 1982, winning the state competition with a 16-ft., 5-in. stalk.

He entered the contest again last year, planting nine seeds on May 5. He carefully tended the seeds by first giving them a commercial fertilizer and then, as the seeds grew, applying a special brew of horse and cow manure "tea". He fed the "tea", manure diluted in water, to the plants about twice a week.

For continued good stalk growth, Casale says he cut the bottom ears off as they formed so nutrients would go to the stalks and not the ears. "However, when five ears formed near the top of the stalk, I left them because they were too high. The ears didn't pollinate well but I did get some seeds from them. One of his other stalks grew to be about 17½ ft. tall while another one topped out at just 4 ft."

Casale grew the prize-winning plant near his house. He put a support pole next to the stalk after a wind storm nearly flattened it. The final measurement was taken on Sept. 1,



Casale watered the stalks with "tea".

when he crawled on his house roof to record the record-breaking height.

Casale, one of more than 4,000 tall corn growers, received \$1,000 and a trip to San Francisco for growing the record-breaker. The contest is open to residents of Ohio, Indiana, Iowa, Nebraska and Kansas. Cash prizes were given for the first, second and third place winners in each state.

A spokesperson for Cornnuts reports that the contest will be held again this year in the same six states.

For more information, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Cornnuts, P.O. Box 476, San Francisco, Cal. 94101.

# Leave The Lights On For More Milk

Leaving the lights on in your dairy barn 16-18 hrs. a day can boost milk production 5 to 10%, according to experiments conducted recently by Oregon State University and Michigan State University animal scientists.

Object of the tests was to see if milk production would increase if a cow's day was artificially lengthened during the winter months when there are fewer natural daylight hours.

Lloyd Swanson conducted the tests at OSU using high-pressure sodium vapor lights in a high-ceiling free stall barn that was open on two sides. His tests showed a 7% milk production increase when the cows had 18 hrs. of continuous lighting.

At MSU, H. Allen Tucker says his tests boosted milk production 5-10%.

The MSU tests were conducted in a completely controlled environment, exposing the animals to 16 hrs. of light a day using fluorescent lights. Cows in all stages of lactation increased production.

Both scientists concur that the reason for the increased production is that the cows eat more and thus produce more. They also agree that 24 hrs. of continuous light offers no further advantages. It only uses up more electricity.

Tucker notes that he's also tested heifers and bulls and they both show improved weight gains with increased light periods. However, he was unable to duplicate the test results with steers.