

# Modern Silage Making Demonstration at Waimate West Farm, South Taranaki

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**S**ILAGE making in the past has always involved heavy manual labour and a high labour requirement. This limited the popularity of this method of surplus pasture conservation, but modern machinery is rapidly reducing the work involved.

About 1500 south Taranaki farmers had an opportunity to observe modern mechanical methods of silage making at Waimate

West Demonstration Farm early in November, when a field day was organised on behalf of the farm committee by officers of the Department of Agriculture in close co-operation with the farm staff and local farm machinery firms.

The object of the field day was to try out the latest equipment available in the district under similar conditions in making stack or silo silage, consideration being given to the speed and efficiency in gathering and stacking the material and the labour required for each method, with final judgment deferred until the stacks are opened up.

**METHOD 1—5 men, stacker, engine, winch, hydraulic pitch-control sweep**



Engine and winch replace horse in working boom stacker, and a modern type of hydraulic pitch-control sweep gives faster bringing in.

Four methods of silage making were demonstrated:—

1. Stacking by use of a stacker with engine and winch and gathering with a hydraulic pitch-control sweep. This required 5 men.
2. Buckrake stacking by use of the clamp method of stacking, 2 men being required.
3. Stacking with fore-end loader with 2 men.
4. Forage harvester with 2 trucks and blower apparatus for filling silo, with 3 men gathering and carting and 3 men at the silo.

In the conventional method of stacking, the special winch in place of the horse or tractor for lifting the crop saved 1 man, but 2 men were on the stack to cope with the speed of gathering resulting from the use of the improved pitch-control sweep. With 5 men the crop was harvested as fast as it was by the best of the other stacking methods used. However, labour requirements were still high.

