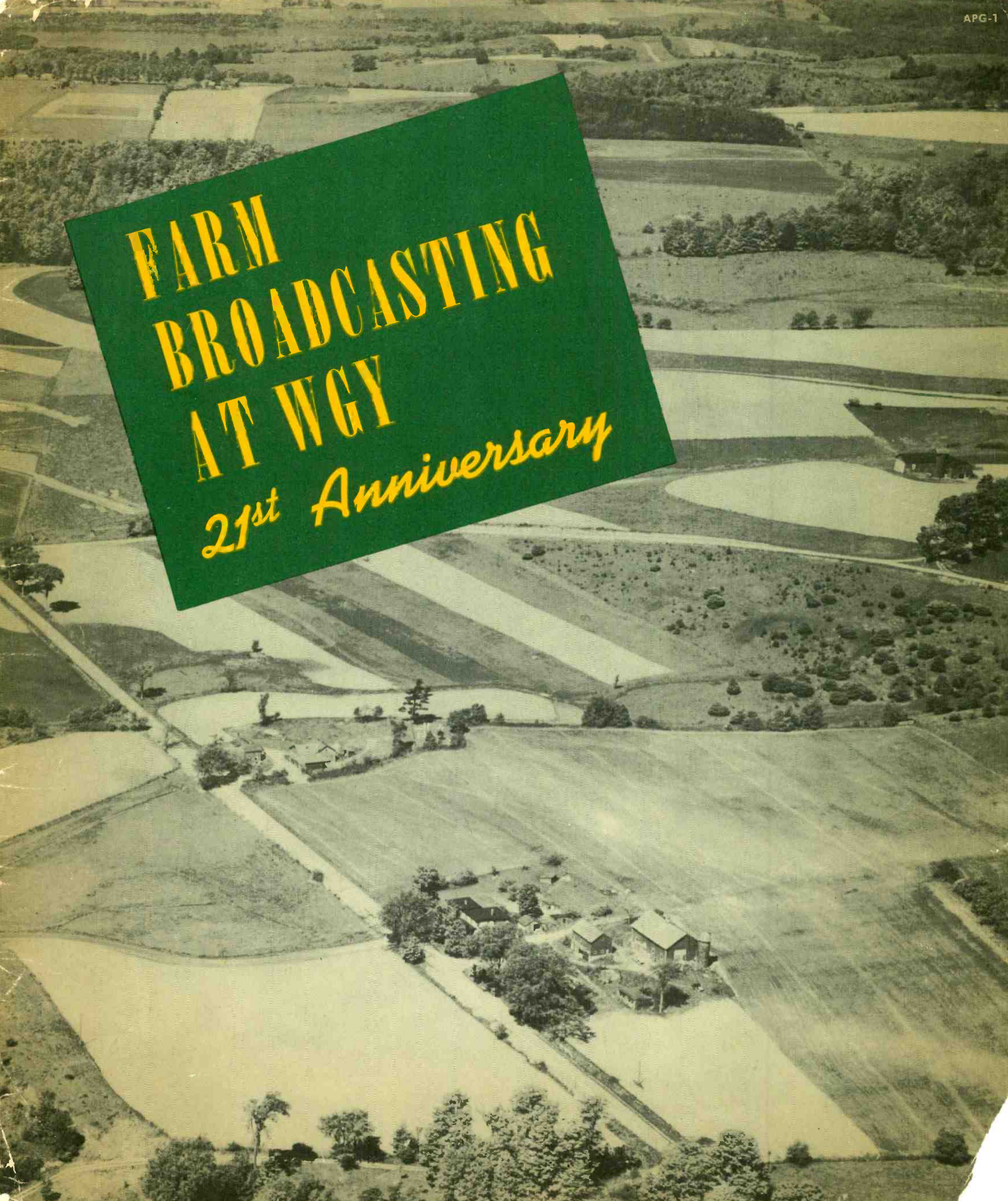


**FARM  
BROADCASTING  
AT WGY**  
*21st Anniversary*



4-

FARM  
BROADCASTING  
AT WGY

*21<sup>st</sup> Anniversary*

# WGY Farm Broadcasting

## *A Service to Northeastern Agriculture*

THIS is the story of WGY's first 21 years of farm broadcasting. It will be told mostly in pictures. But first — to set the stage for those who do not know these programs, and to provide some facts that may be new even to those who are our oldest friends — here's a little background.

Since November, 1925, WGY has broadcast more than seven thousand half-hour programs especially for the benefit of farmers and their friends in what we in Schenectady like to call the Great Northeast. That, incidentally, adds up to close to five continuous months of broadcasting, which may be a marathon record of some kind.

But more amazing, and more important as we go back over the record, are the number and variety of people who have been glad to co-operate in these broadcasts. They have brought to the WGY microphone their knowledge, their experience, their opinions, and sometimes their prejudices to help make the *WGY Farm Paper of the Air* a true and up-to-date journal of farming news and to make the *WGY Farm Forum* a true forum "where modern agricultural thought is voiced."

These two programs, while they have kept abreast of changing farm problems, have over the years maintained pretty much their original form and flavor. The *Farm Forum* is the only evening farm program of its type in the nation; it is broadcast from 8:30 to 9:00 on Friday evenings, in competition with commercial and network shows. Yet a recent survey indicates that approximately 400,000 people choose to listen to this program weekly. It brings noted agricultural and industrial leaders in discussions of new and improved methods of farming, and inspirational and sometimes controversial presentations on broad problems of consequence to agriculture. And since 1928, the last half of the program has been devoted to the WGY Farm Question Box, during which facts of immediate and practical value are provided in answer to questions submitted by listeners — of which more later.

The *WGY Farm Paper of the Air*, often referred to as a radio farm journal, is presented between 12:30 and 1:00 p.m. on weekdays. It has always featured what may best be described as "trade information" — regular reports on weather conditions, planting in-

formation, instructions for the control of diseases and insects affecting crops, and a daily summary of produce marketing information. Like the *Farm Forum*, the *Farm Paper of the Air* has presented hundreds of co-operating authorities from agricultural colleges, farm organizations and farms to discuss topics of current interest.

General Electric has not been content to rest on its laurels gained over 21 years of service to agriculture. As farm people equip themselves with FM receivers, WGFM the frequency modulation station, will have an FM farm radio service to create. Even now, General Electric's television station, WRGB, is developing a program known as the *WRGB Farm Spotlight*.

Synonymous with WGY's farm programs are the people who have been, for years, a part of these programs. Most familiar to the farmers of the Great Northeast is the voice of G. Emerson Markham, who back in November, 1925, conceived the idea of special programs for the farmer. Given the job of developing the programs, in addition to his other duties, he soon found himself head over heels in broadcasting. With the exception of a single year, Mr. Markham has been, until recently, continuously in active charge of Farm Broadcasting. Today, as General Electric Stations Manager of WGY, frequency modulation station WGFM, and television station WRGB, Mr. Markham is still keenly interested in farm programming.

Three years after the inauguration of these broadcasts, a fruit farmer of Stuyvesant Falls, N. Y. and graduate of the New York State College of Agriculture was invited to appear on a broadcast to discuss the control of the codling moth — a then current problem. So popular was his talk that he came back again and again to discuss farm problems and soon became a regular contributor to WGY farm broadcasting. This was Ed W. Mitchell, WGY's familiar farm adviser, who since 1928 has been the answer man for questions of every conceivable nature in the field of agriculture. He has answered literally hundreds of thousands of questions in the past 18 years.

A further addition was made to the Farm Broadcasting staff in early 1942 when Robert Child, young extension agronomist from the New York State College of Agriculture at Cornell University,

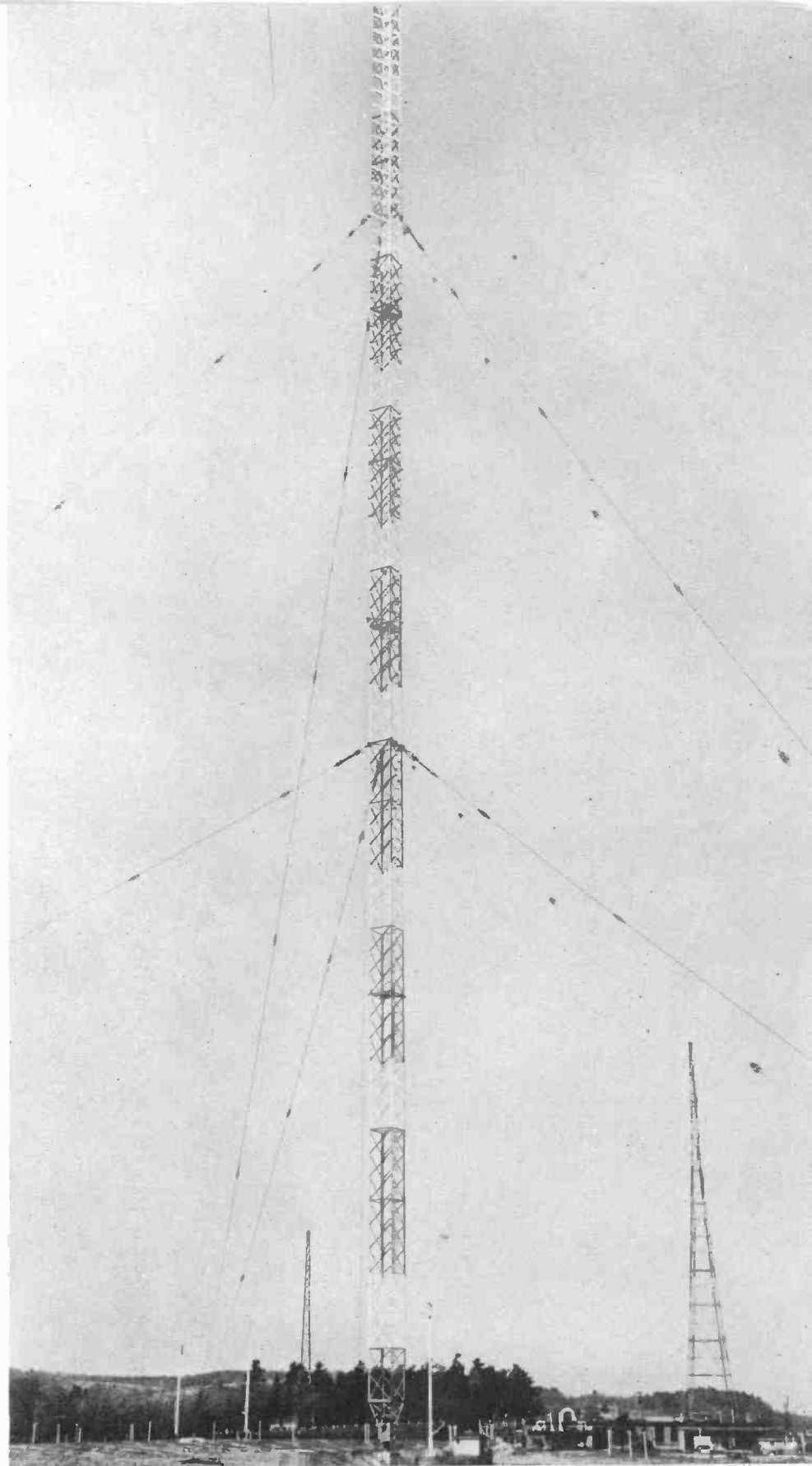
was introduced to the farm audience. Raised on a farm, Bob came to WGY with authority on and understanding of farm problems and now ably fills the post vacated by Mr. Markham.

In the final analysis, however, the greatest contribution to the success of WGY's farm broadcasting has been made by the farm agencies and institutions, and individuals with an interest in farming. Not since the very earliest days of farm broadcasting has WGY had any difficulty in effectively filling the time which General Electric has reserved for these programs. Currently, 23 different organizations are regularly participating to greater or lesser degree in the WGY farm radio service, and no important governmental, educational or agricultural agency in the area reached by the station, which is actively concerned with farming, is without opportunity to contribute to the enterprise. Here is an example of co-operation at its finest.

That the programs have proved highly popular is attested by the fact that WGY farm broadcasts, with an average annual receipt of 20,000 letters, consistently receive more mail year in and year out than all other sustaining programs on the station combined.

Radio is what it is because of people — both those who broadcast and those who listen. So, in the pages that follow, are some of those who regularly face the microphone and some of those who regularly listen. There is a hint, too, of the effect the statements of the first have had on the lives and habits of the second. It is not alone a glimpse of the past and the present — in spirit at least it is entirely suggestive of the future.

WGY's transmitter tower is 625 feet high



The WGY building is modern in design and construction



# WGY'S Farm Broadcasting Section



G. Emerson Markham who inaugurated WGY Farm Broadcasting in 1925 and actively supervised its operation over a period of twenty years



Mr. Markham, now Stations Manager of W3Y; WGFM, frequency modulation; and WRGB, television, with R. W. Welpott, Jr., his assistant



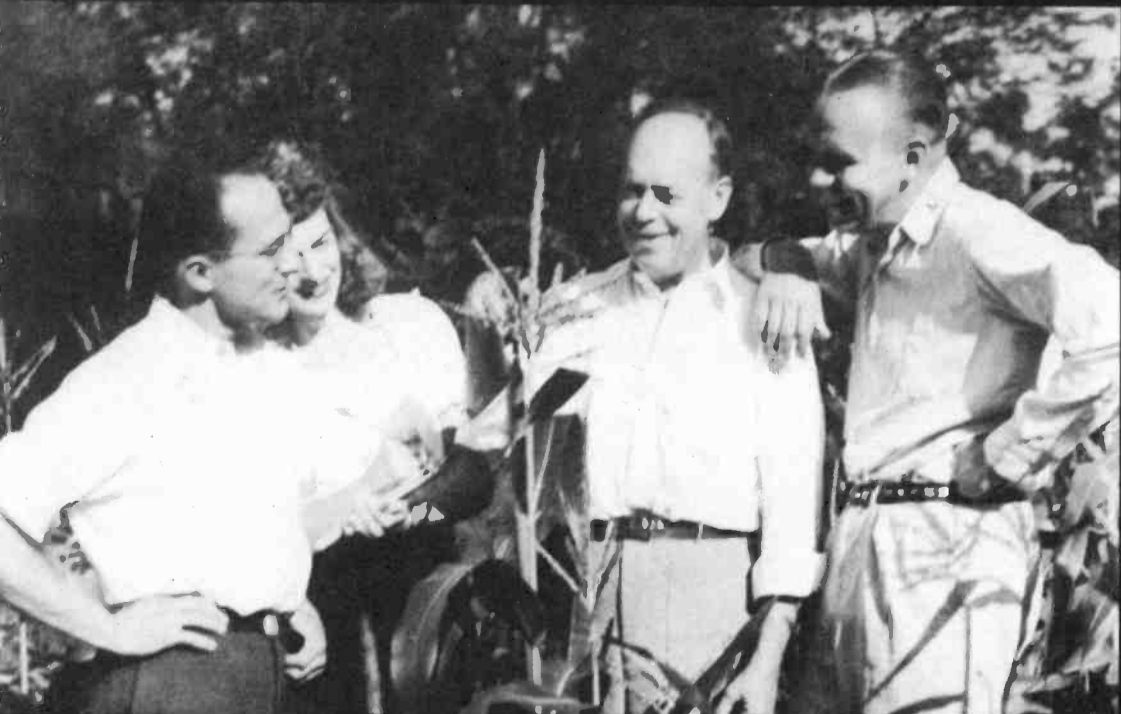
Bob Child who is in charge of Agricultural Broadcasting



Ed W. Mitchell, WGY Farm Adviser since 1928



Farm Adviser Mitchell and a farm section employee find a couple of "hum" bugs in the morning mail



The Farm Broadcasting Section surveys Markham's corn crop



Farm-reared Bob Child belongs to the Farm Bureau and other farm organizations

# A Few WGY Farm Forum Speakers



Franklin D. Roosevelt addressed the Farm Forum while Governor of the Empire State



Albert A. Cree, President of the Central Vermont Public Service Company, and the Honorable Mortimer R. Proctor, Governor of Vermont, on a joint Farm Forum broadcast



President Harry S. Truman addressed the Farm Forum while he was Senator from Missouri



The late Carl E. Ladd, Dean of the New York State College of Agriculture, gave the annual New Year's Farm Forum address for ten consecutive years



Sarah Gibson Blanding, now President of Vassar College, appeared on the Farm Forum while Dean of the New York State College of Home Economics



Wheeler McMillen, Editor of Farm Journal and Farmer's Wife



Farm Adviser Ed Mitchell and Farm Forum Chairman Bob Child discuss letters in the Farm Question Box



Albert S. Goss, Master of the National Grange



Harvey S. Firestone, Jr., President of the Firestone Tire & Rubber Co.



Edward O'Neal, President of the American Farm Bureau Federation



Henry A. Wallace, former United States Secretary of Agriculture, 10th Anniversary speaker

# The WGY Farm Paper of the Air



Jared Van Wagenen, Jr., Farmer, Lawyersville, New York



Bristow Adams, Prof. Emeritus, Cornell University



J. H. Van Aernam, New York Power & Light Co.



James Lee Ellenwood, Executive Secretary, New York State YMCA



V-J Day on the Farm Paper of the Air



Halsey B. Knapp, Director, New York State Institute of Agriculture, Farmingdale, L. I.

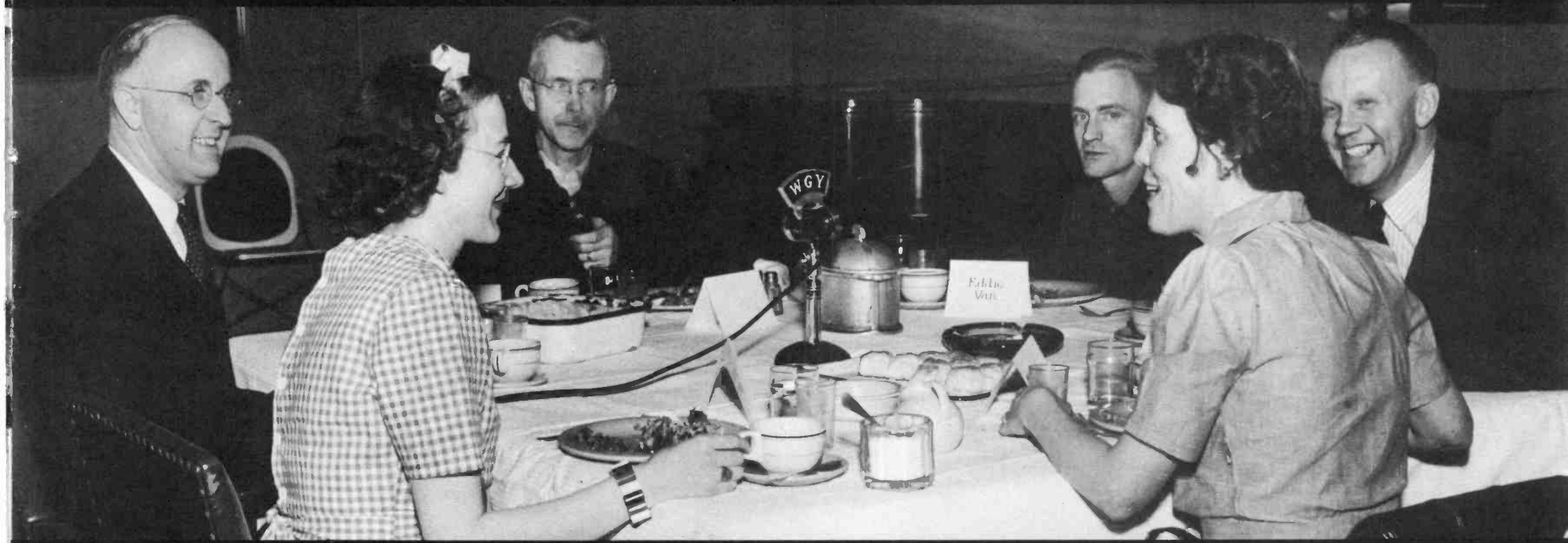


Charles John Stevenson, Editor, Washington County Post



Dcm J. Wickham, Vice President of the New York State Farm Bureau Federation, broadcasts from WHCU on a monthly co-operative broadcast

# One of the Oldest Farm Radio Programs



Dinner with the Bishops



Grange Newscaster Aunt Jane Park



An entire 4-H Club tells about its Accident Prevention Campaign



Many Farm Paper of the Air programs originate outside the studio



Rural Church broadcasts help promote vacation church schools



# Highlights of Farm Bureau, Home



The General Electric wire recorder caught the spirit of 4-H competition and good sportsmanship



WGY creates interest among farmers in the study of soil maps; the County Agent takes over from there



Broadcasts on the importance of selecting cows of high butter fat production lead to future farmers' interest in milk testing



For 26 consecutive weeks in 1946, the Homemakers Council gave WGY listeners urgently needed tips on home remodeling

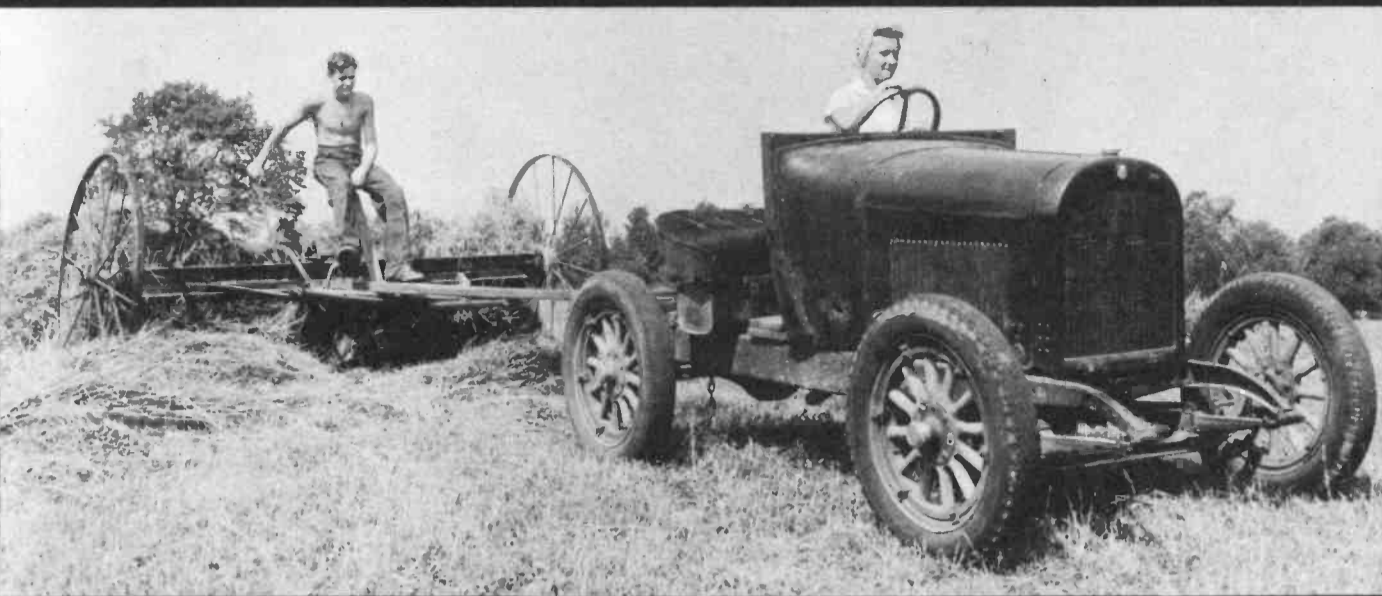


Each Thursday at 12:50 p.m. the Farm Paper of the Air carried news of the fuel supply situation in critical war and postwar months



Home-discussion groups lead to WGY's farm women's programs which stress the importance of world problems

# Bureau and 4-H Club Broadcasts



The WGY 4-H Fellowship gave verbal "Citations for 4-H Service" during the war



The WGY Hop-to-it 4-H Club typifies young democracy in action



Down the Hatch



4-H Girls own Calves, too



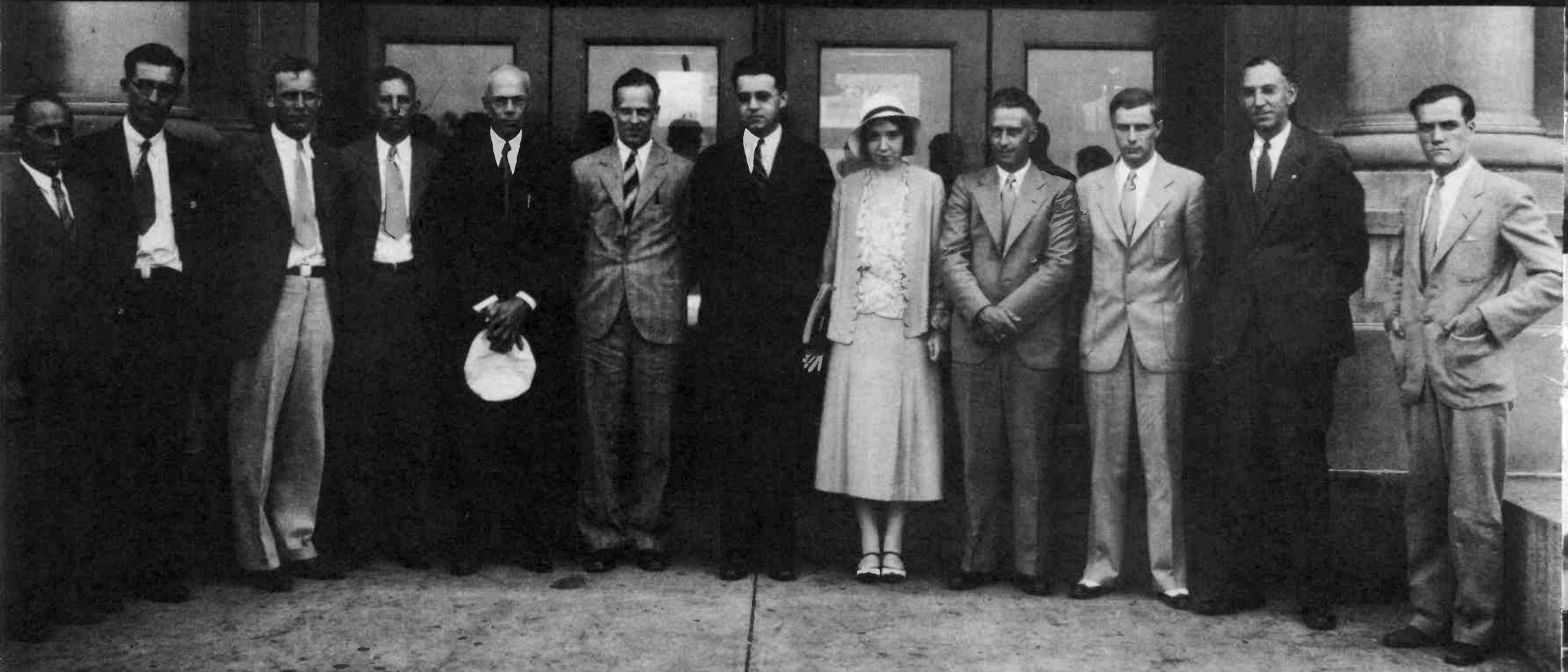
WGY conducted a six-day food preservation radio campaign in 1946

# These are the People who Plan the Programs



A modern Planning Group is made up of representatives from most of the co-operating agencies: left to right: Bob Child, D. Leo Hayes, Assistant N. Y. State Leader of County Agricultural agents; David B. Fales, Assistant N. Y. State Leader of 4-H Club Agents; Henry B. Little, N. Y. State Veterans Service Agency; Ralph C. S. Sutliff, N. Y. State Department of Education (Future Farmers of America); Mrs. Isabelle Harris, N. Y. State Grange; behind Mrs. Harris, Harry Mileham, formerly of the College of Agriculture, University of Vermont; Montgomery B. Robinson, N. Y. State College of Agriculture; Mary G. Phillips, N. Y. State College of Home Economics; Jacob F. Pratt, Dairyman, Schaghticoke, N. Y.;

G. Emerson Markham; Dr. W. S. Stone, N. Y. State Department of Agriculture and Markets; Francis E. Griffin, N. Y. State Department of Education; Miss Orrilla Wright, Assistant N. Y. State Leader of Home Demonstration Agents; Dr. C. E. DeCamp, N. Y. State Veterinary Medical Society; J. H. Van Aernam, New York Power and Light Co.; John B. Clark, Poultryman, Ballston Lake, N. Y.; Rev. Collis C. Blair and Rev. Ralph L. Williamson, Rural Department, N. Y. State Council of Churches; and Howard R. Waugh, formerly with the N. Y. State Department of Agriculture and Markets



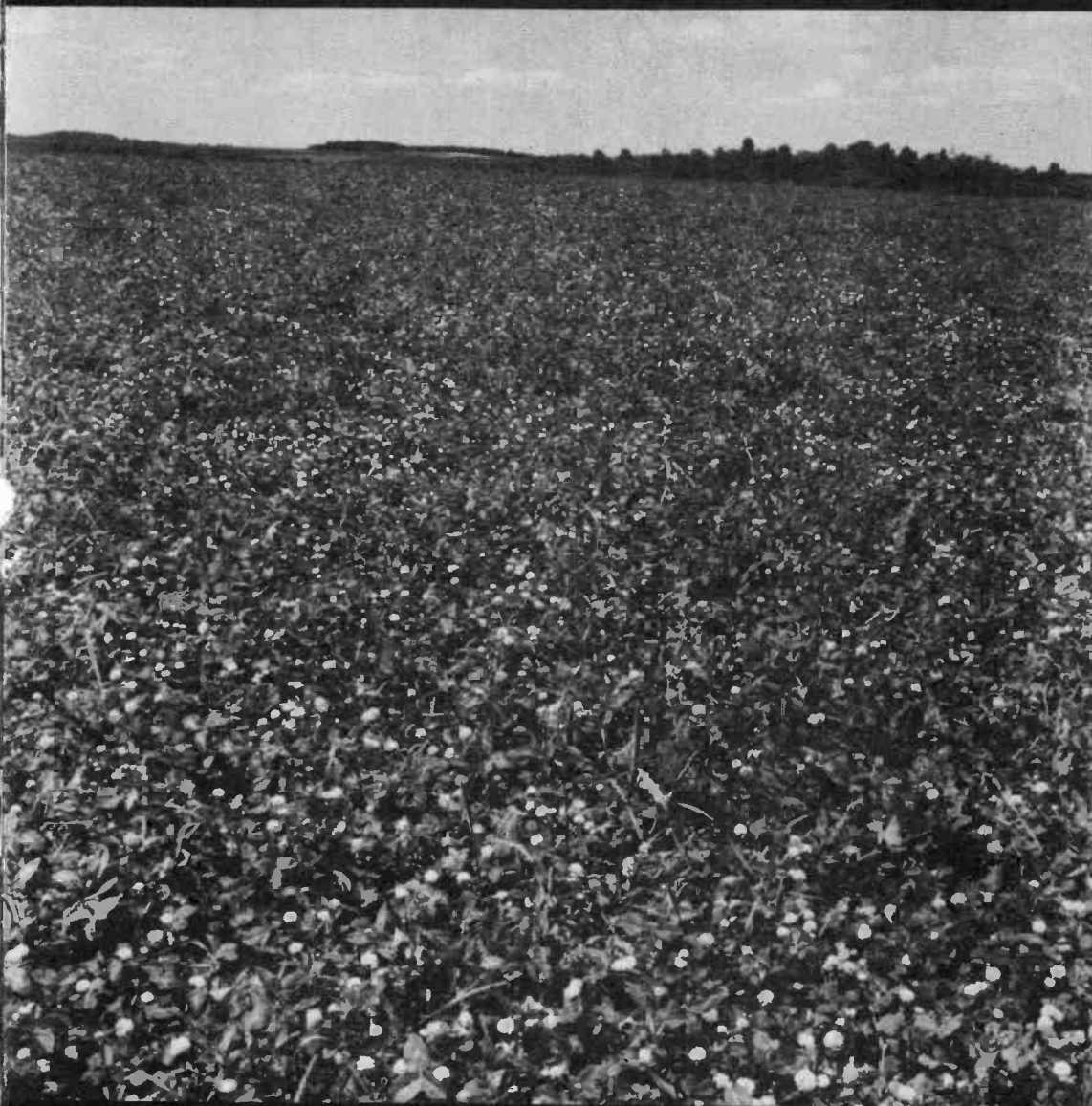
An early planning group: left to right: Bruce R. Buchanan, Windham County Vermont 4-H Club Agent; Earl A. Arnold, Farm Mechanics Specialist, N. Y. State College of Agriculture; Bernard D. Joy, Ulster County 4-H Club Agent; George A. Musser, Orange County 4-H Club Agent; M. E. Robinson, Administrative Specialist, N. Y. State College of Agriculture; Paul Thayer, Albany County 4-H

Club Agent; H. S. Pringle, Agriculture Engineer, N. Y. State College of Agriculture; Miss Dorothy Young, Associate Columbia County 4-H Club Agent; John A. Lennox, Delaware County 4-H Club Agent; Robert A. Dyer, Columbia County 4-H Club Agent; Albert Hoefer, N. Y. State Leader of 4-H Club Agents; and William Corbett WGY Farm Broadcasting Assistant in 1931

# One Objective—Permanent Fertility



At least one Farm Paper of the Air broadcast each month emphasizes the need for lime on typically acid soils in the WGY area



Since WGY farm programs started, leguminous crops on area farms have increased 30 to 50 per cent



Farm Forum discussions encourage joint action by farmers, making large drainage projects possible

# Radio Co-operation With



The WGY Hired Hand Exchange brought city youth to the farm; modern equipment kept them there



Also the Hired Hand Exchange encouraged farmers to utilize out-of-state and out-of-country transient workers



Farmers who have found that strip cropping pays on their own farms tell about it on WGY



A modern soil conservation layout on a Madison County, N. Y., farm as recommended by WGY

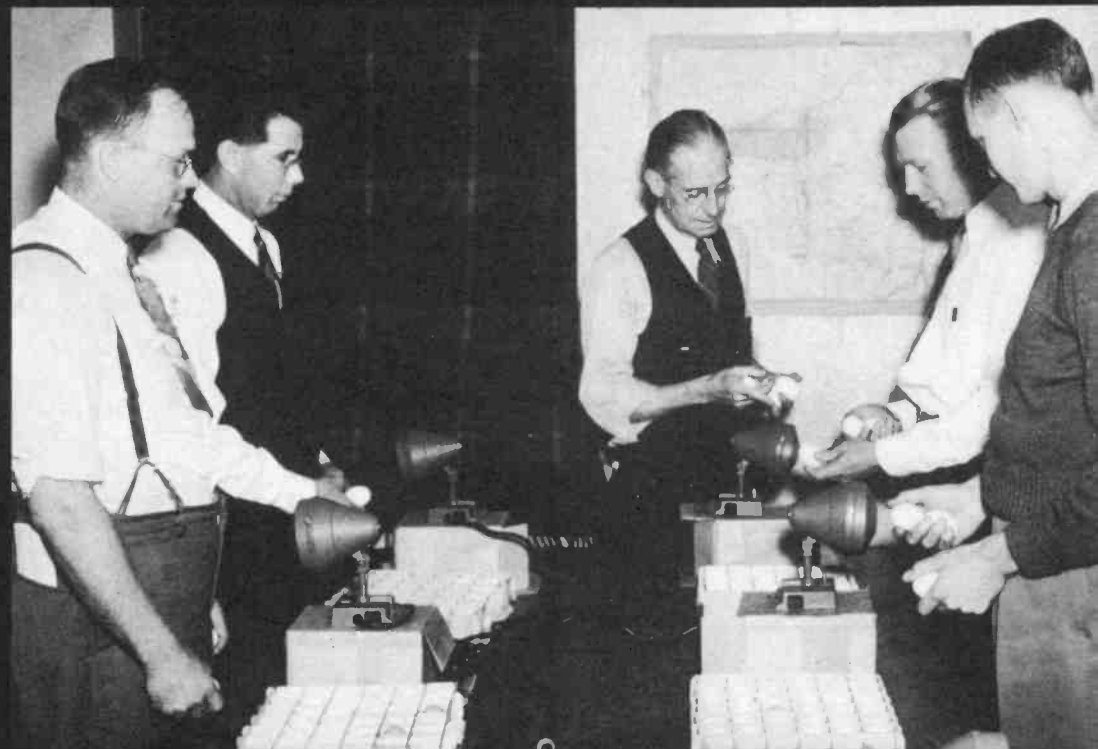


The curved line of beauty is also the practical line of plenty in agriculture today

# State and Federal Agencies



The work of the State and Federal Food inspectors is regularly publicized on WGY farm broadcasts



The consumer is assured of fresh eggs through radio education of the farm producer and produce handler



One WGY broadcast pointed out that the blue stamp on meat is absolutely harmless but an essential key to quality



Publicizing the importance of buying only high quality corn and selling only high quality hay creates goodwill among Northeastern farmers



# Additional Services to Northeastern Agriculture



Each December, Farm Paper of the Air broadcasts encourage farmers to take an annual inventory and put equipment in shape



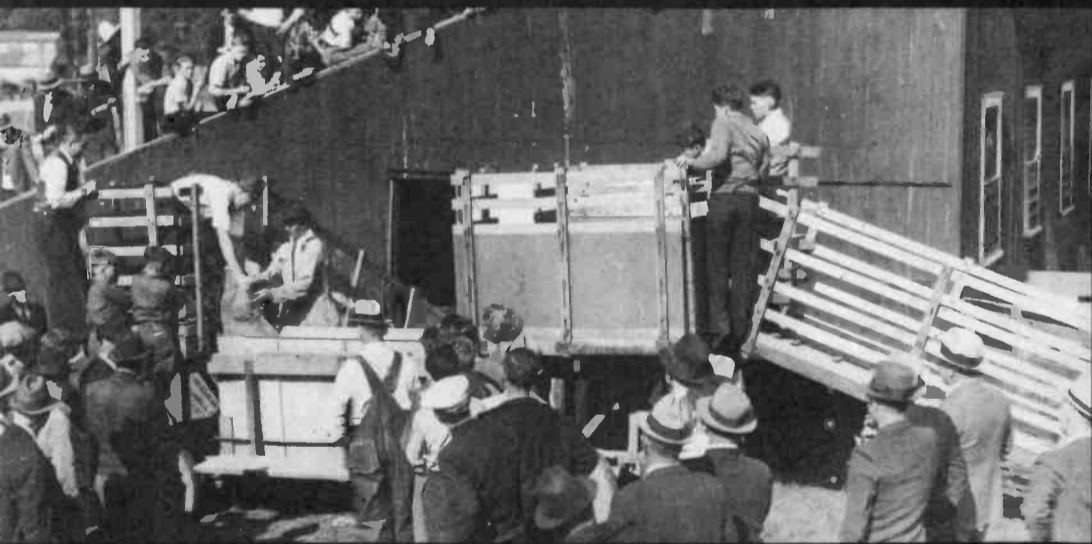
Broadcasts direct from the campus of Cornell University give stories of veterinary surgical help such as the above



Bankers learn how to evaluate farms both by WGY broadcasts and through actual visits to farms



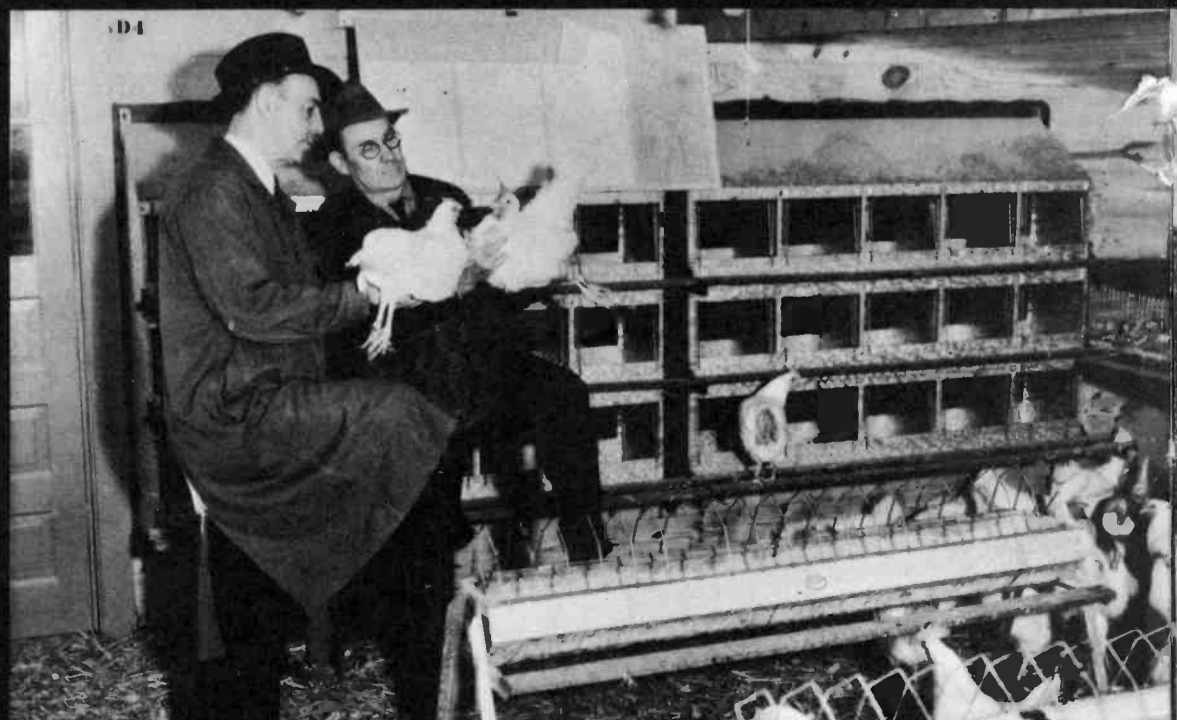
Radio encourages farmers to use preventive medicines for farm animals



WGY farm programs give farmers advance notice of demonstrations such as this one on dipping sheep



State Colleges, like the New York State College of Forestry at Syracuse, are the backbone of service to Northeastern agriculture



College specialists stress the importance of culling hens; county agents offer personal help on the farm

# The Farm Wood Lot



Backaches from the crosscut saw are now eliminated by power-driven chain saws



Some use horses . . .



. . . and some still use oxen where the terrain is rough



Tractors speed up the operation



WGY's farm programs have stressed better farm-to-market roads



Various agencies urge replanting of harvested timber land



# These are the Folks who



A farm family, typical of the 72,000 people who hear the Farm Paper of the Air daily



One of the 400,000 who hear the WGY Farm Forum each Friday evening



In addition to County Fairs, the magnetic wire recorder covers outstanding farm events and meetings of the year



People at this County Fair heard a summary of fair activities on the next day's Farm Paper



Monthly WGY crop summaries forewarned this boy's father that he was not the only one who could hold his entire 1945 apple crop in one hand

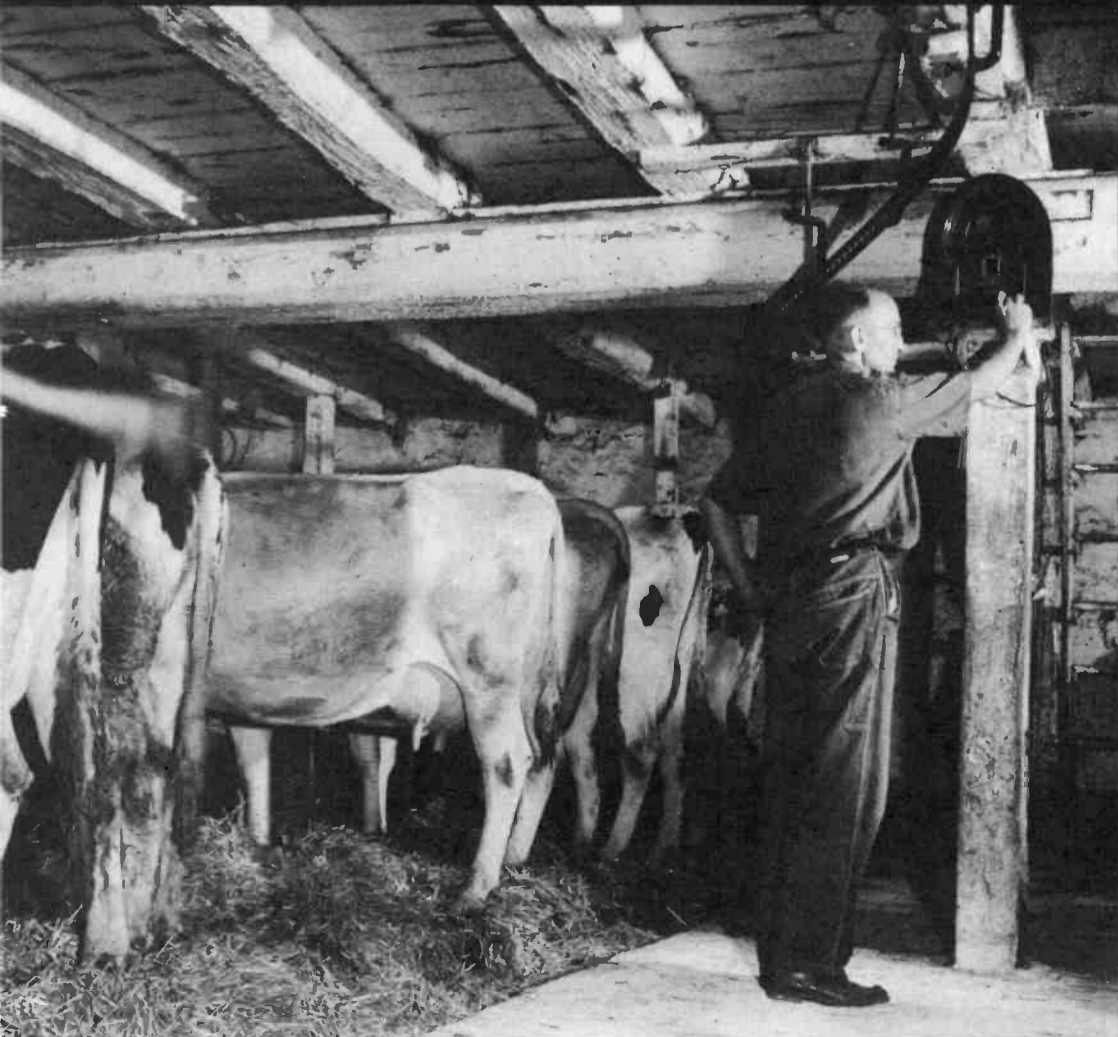


The Mobile Unit always attracts attention

# Listen to WGY'S Farm Programs



Young farmers are interested in learning latest ways to end drudgery



Many a Northeastern farm building has a radio



Daily detailed weather forecasts and special agricultural weather advice help the farmer plan use of every available hour of good weather

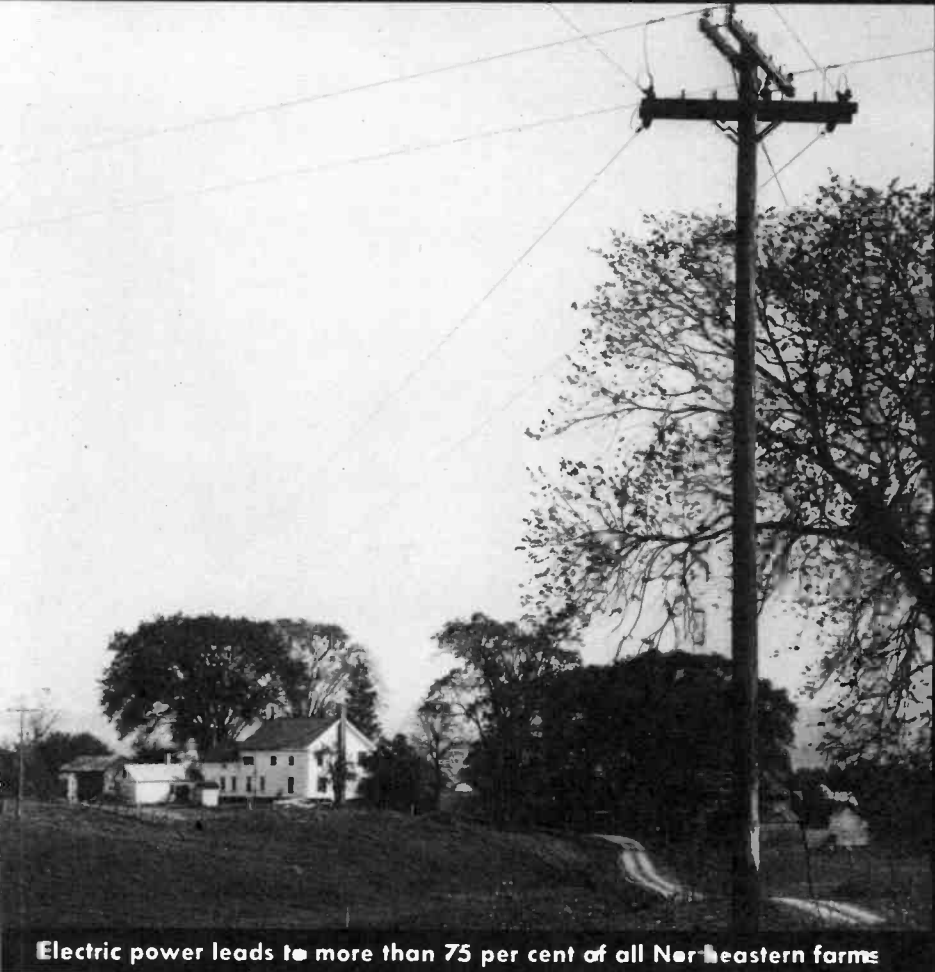


At the entrance of a century-old farm in the WGY area



Three generations work together on this haying job

# The Buildings in which the Folks Live and Work



Electric power leads to more than 75 per cent of all Northeastern farms



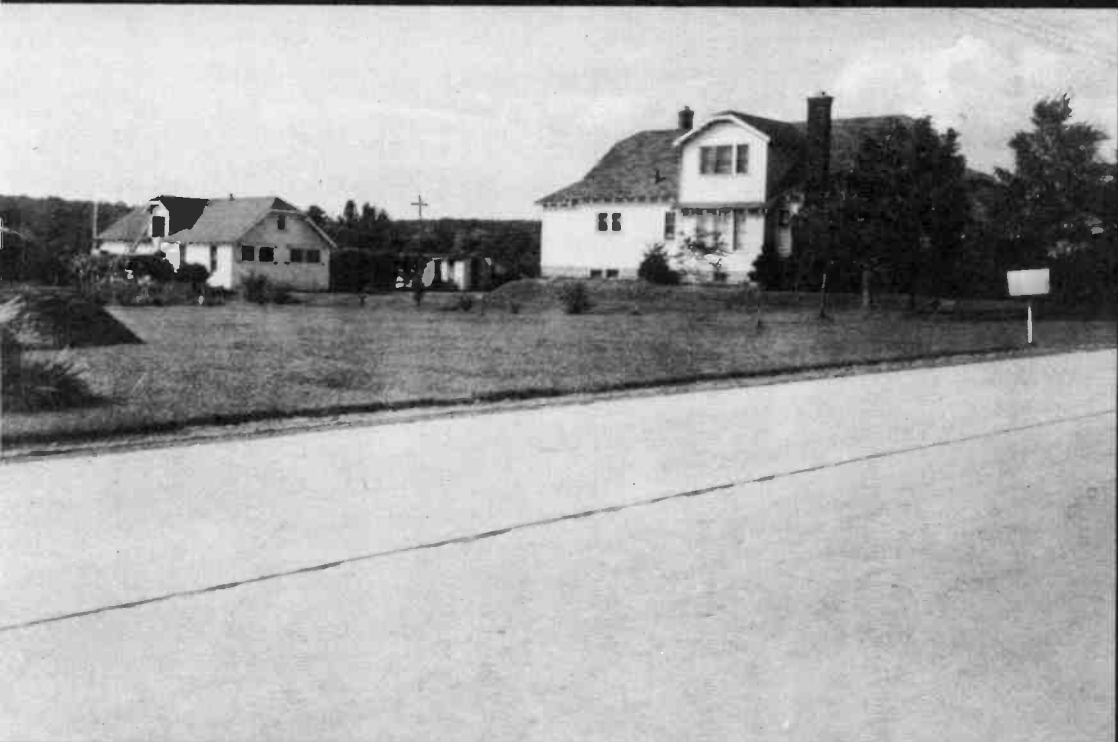
The farmstead can be beautiful as well as practical



A modern poultry house which exemplifies WGY recommendations



WGY programs suggest how many buildings can be improved



The suburban listener is a substantial part of the audience; as a matter of fact, 50 per cent are rural non-farm and city folks



# WGY and Farm Community Organizations



Listeners asked for more rural church programs, and the number was increased



Each Saturday "The Grange Speaks" on WGY



WGY recommends the use of the best educational facilities for farm youth



Farm co-operatives are adequately represented on WGY farm programs

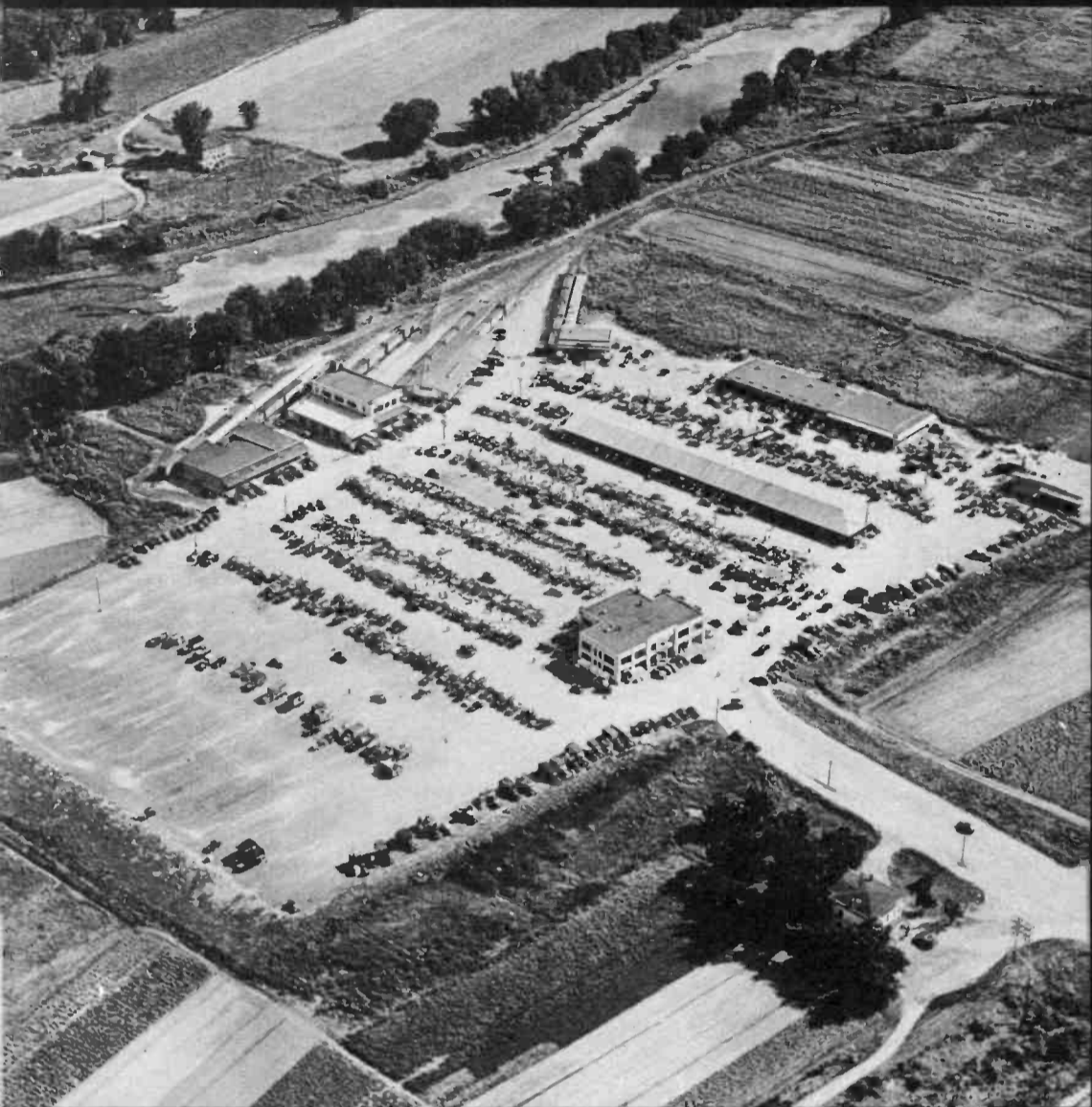


On the first Thursday of each month country milk production conditions and metropolitan milk market conditions are reviewed



The radio in the country store is usually tuned to the Farm Paper of the Air at 12:30

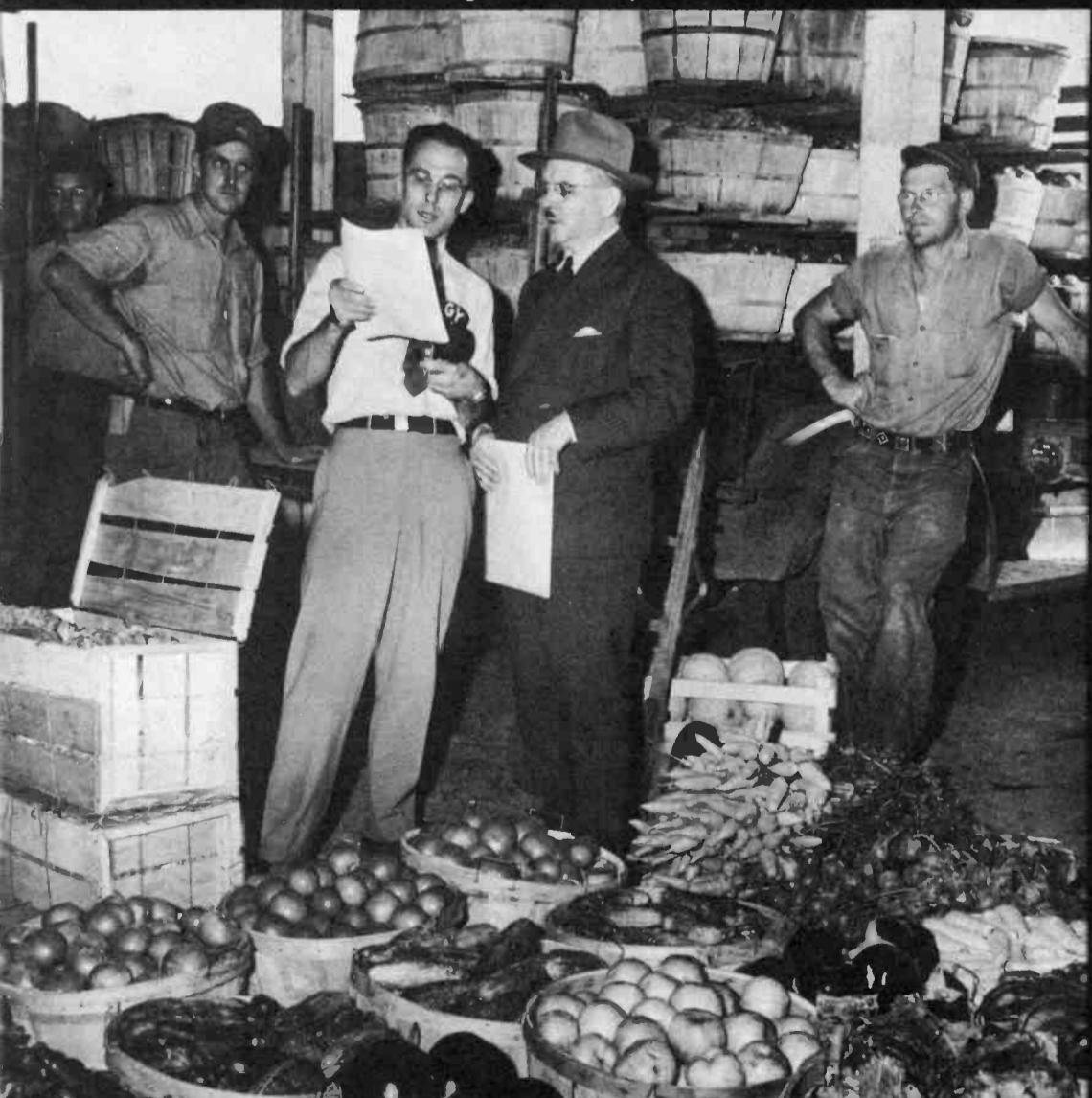
# A Regional Farmers' Market in the WGY Area



A radio picture of wholesale prices paid at the nearby regional farmers' market is given each day at 12:50



Several hundred farmers' trucks appear daily during the peak of the season



On-the-spot reviews of market conditions are often a part of the Farm Paper of the Air



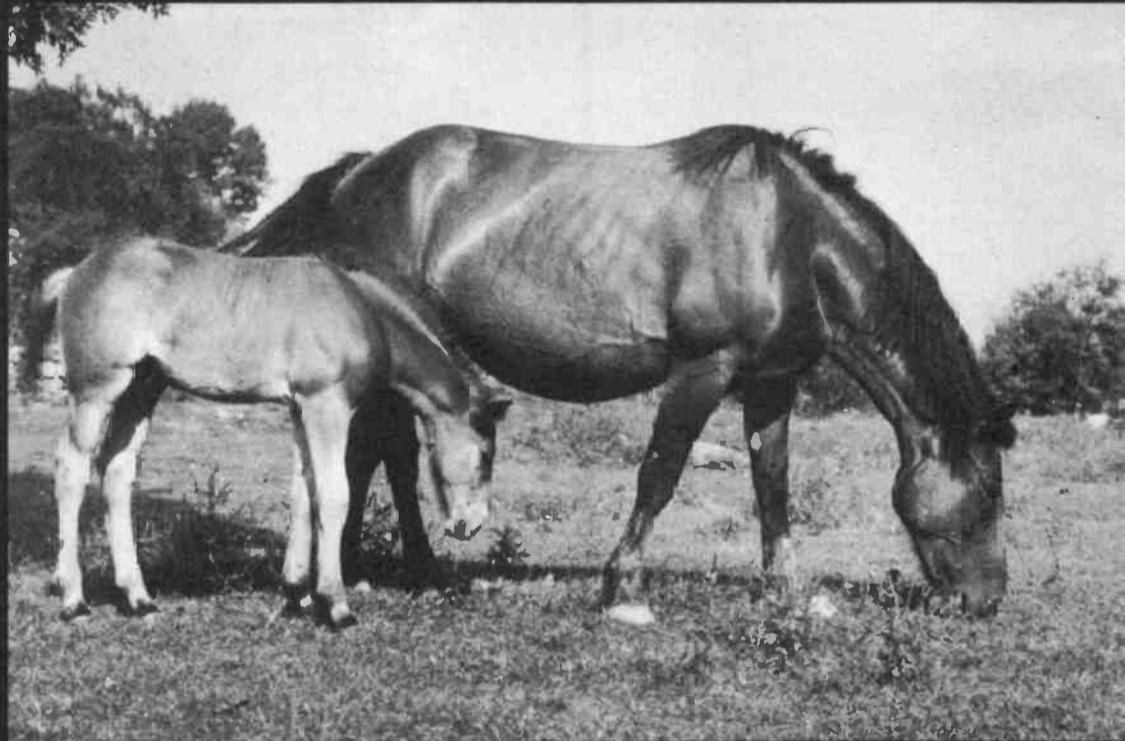
# Northeastern Livestock



Ed Mitchell says that the best way to get water into milk is through the cow



Eggs and chickens together are one of the largest sources of income for Northeastern farmers



Horses will help produce food on Northeastern farms for many years to come



Turkeys are no small part of the area's poultry industry



WGY emphasizes more food on the farm, from the farm

# Some of the Crops Produced in the WGY Area



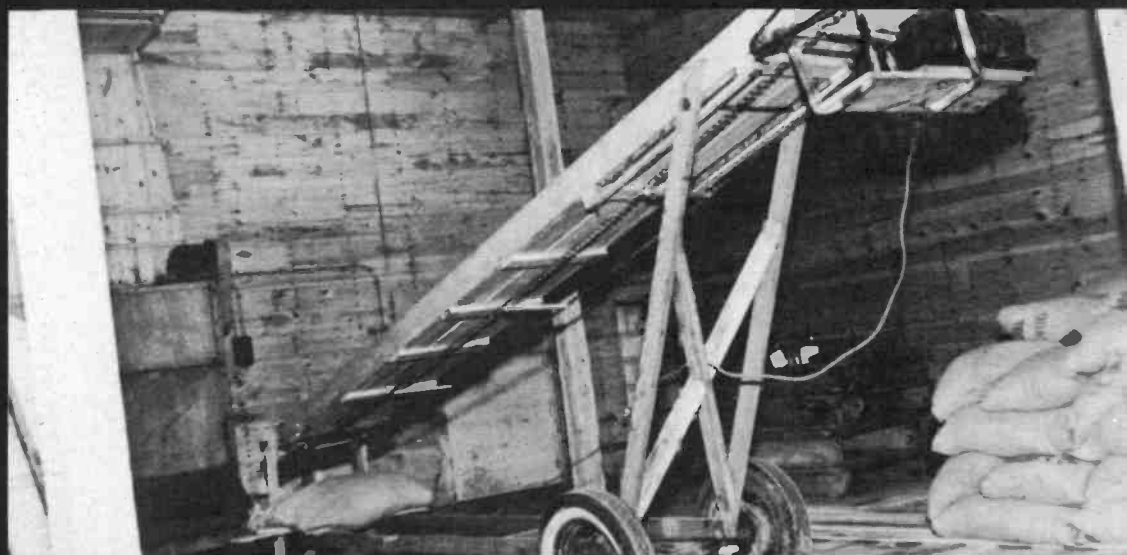
A six-day "Pasture School of the Air" emphasized that pasture is the cheapest feed



More enterprising farmers could have roadside stands like this



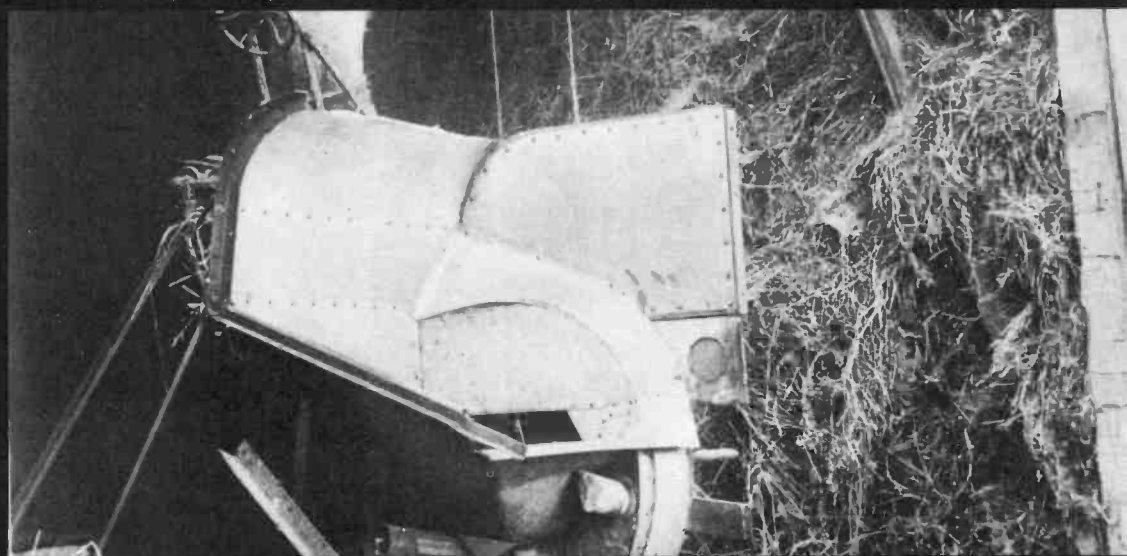
Buckwheat for pancakes



The general purpose motor-driven elevator gets all crops into storage easily



Agricultural weather advice by radio continues throughout the harvest season



The new idea of blowing long hay into the mow was speeded by radio



Peppers and cabbage sold at top prices as revealed by daily market reports



Ed Mitchell packs U. S. No. 1 fruit in his refrigerated storage



Harvest help for the fruit country is recruited by radio

# Some of the Tools and Farm Equipment They Use



Lights in the poultry house boost winter egg production



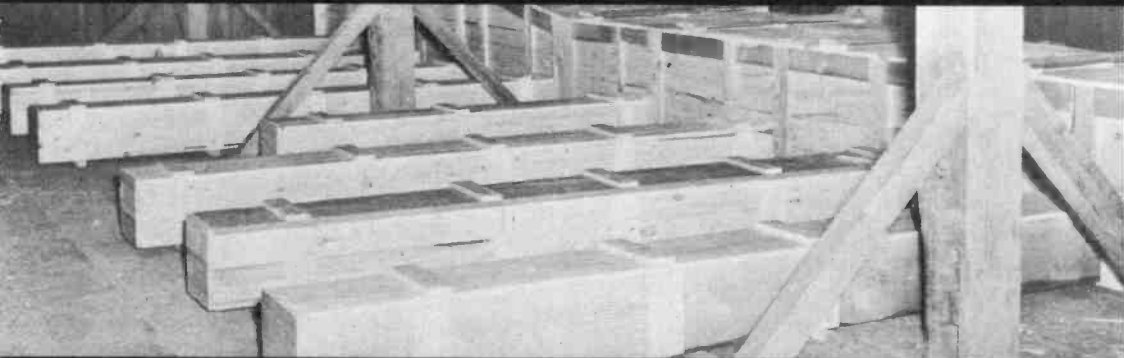
Farmers give radio descriptions of buckrakes they have made



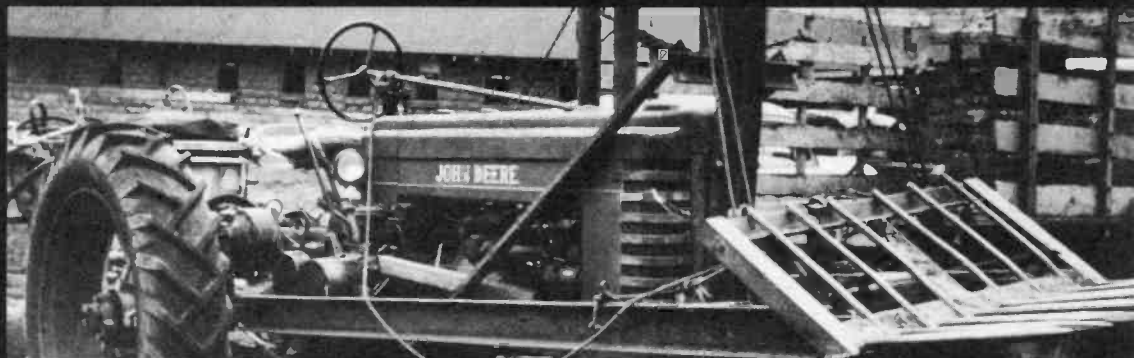
A few silt rake hay like this



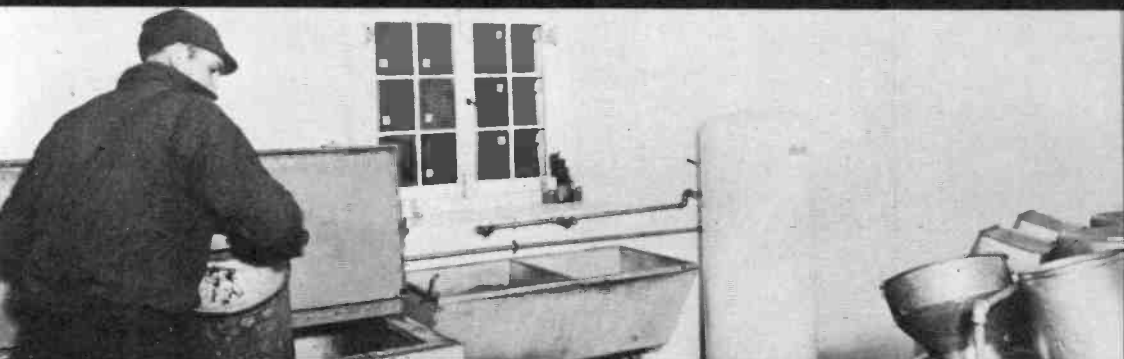
... and many more like this



Ed Mitchell recommends barn hay curing



A home-made power manure loader



Milk coolers, milking machines and water systems are found on Northeastern farms



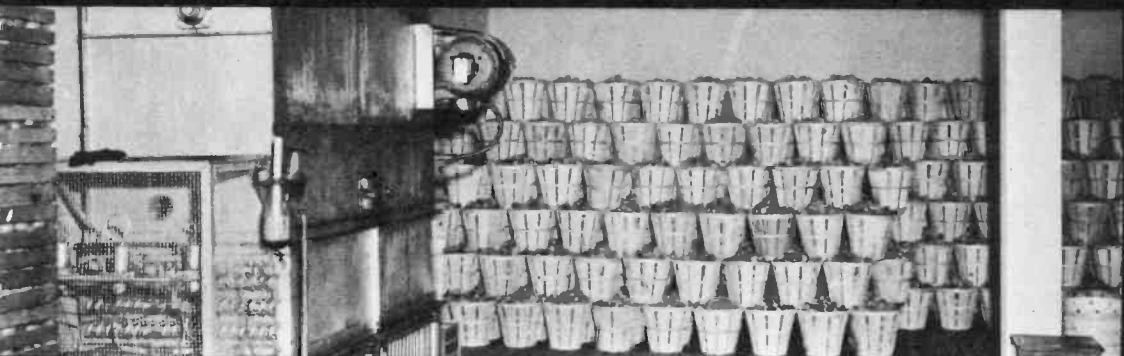
Grading eggs the easy way



WGY speakers explain how to organize custom spray rigs



All phases of the home freezing of food are covered by radio



Electricity permits farmers to refrigerate perishable produce for "out of season" sale



Removing cans of peaches from a retort at a Community Canning Center



# The WGY Microphone away from Home



The magnetic wire recorder picks up highlights at the annual Future Farmers of America father-and-son banquet



A horse race starter at the county fair describes the main event



Broadcasting a horse drawing contest



We didn't get too close to this bear



The WGY microphone was on hand at the opening of this Community Canning Center

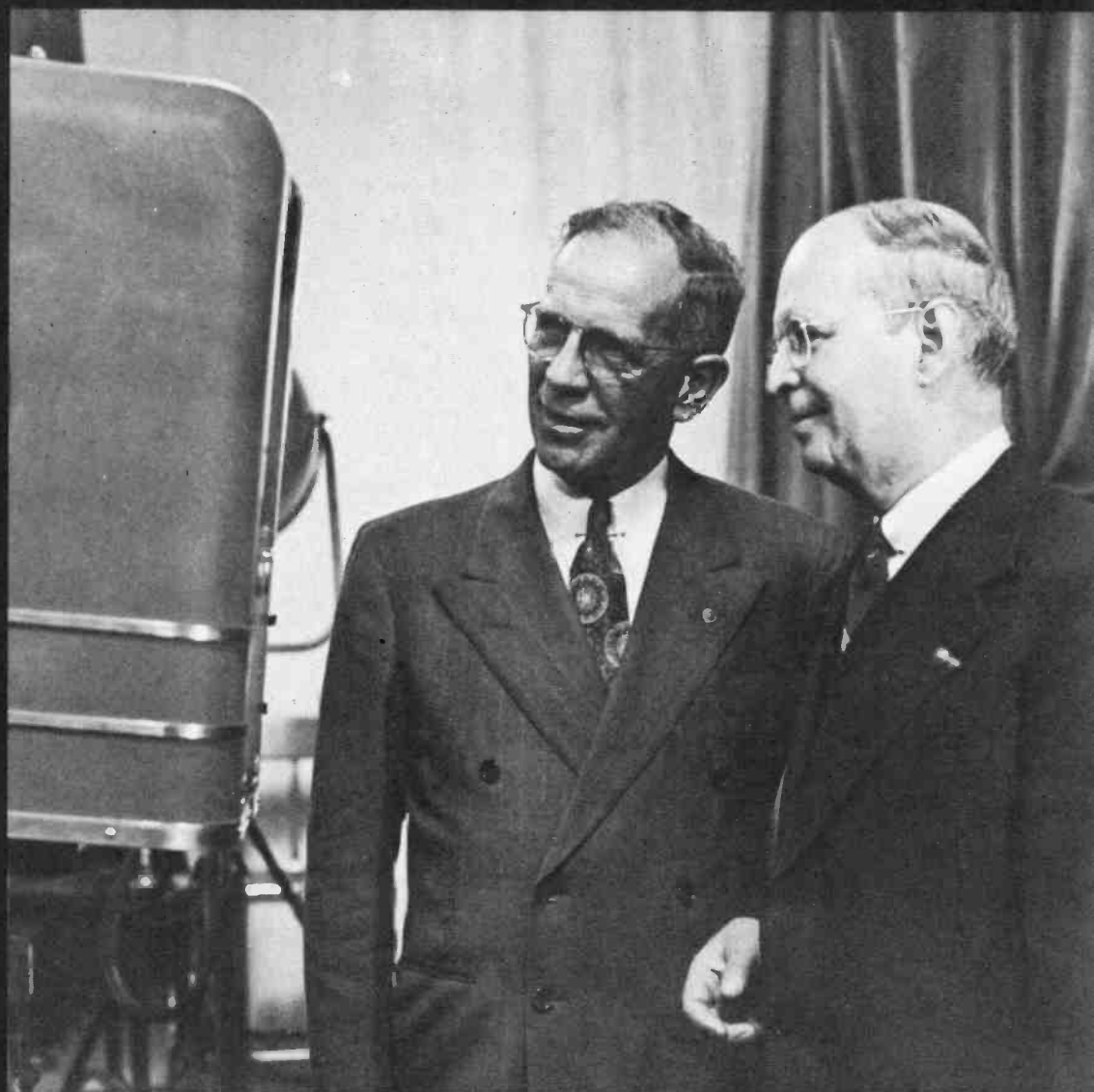


Picking chickens the easy way

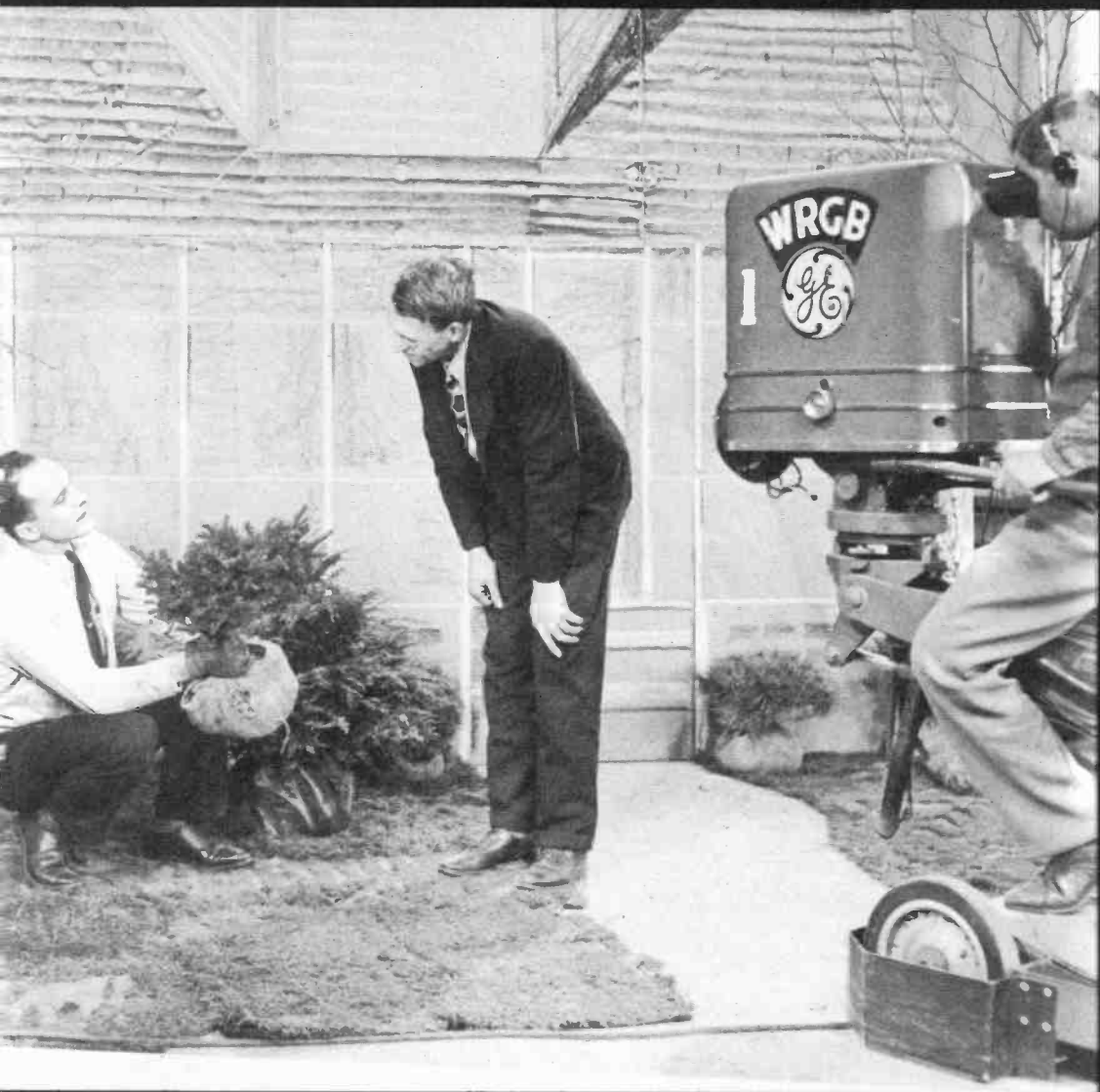
# The WRGB Farm Spotlight



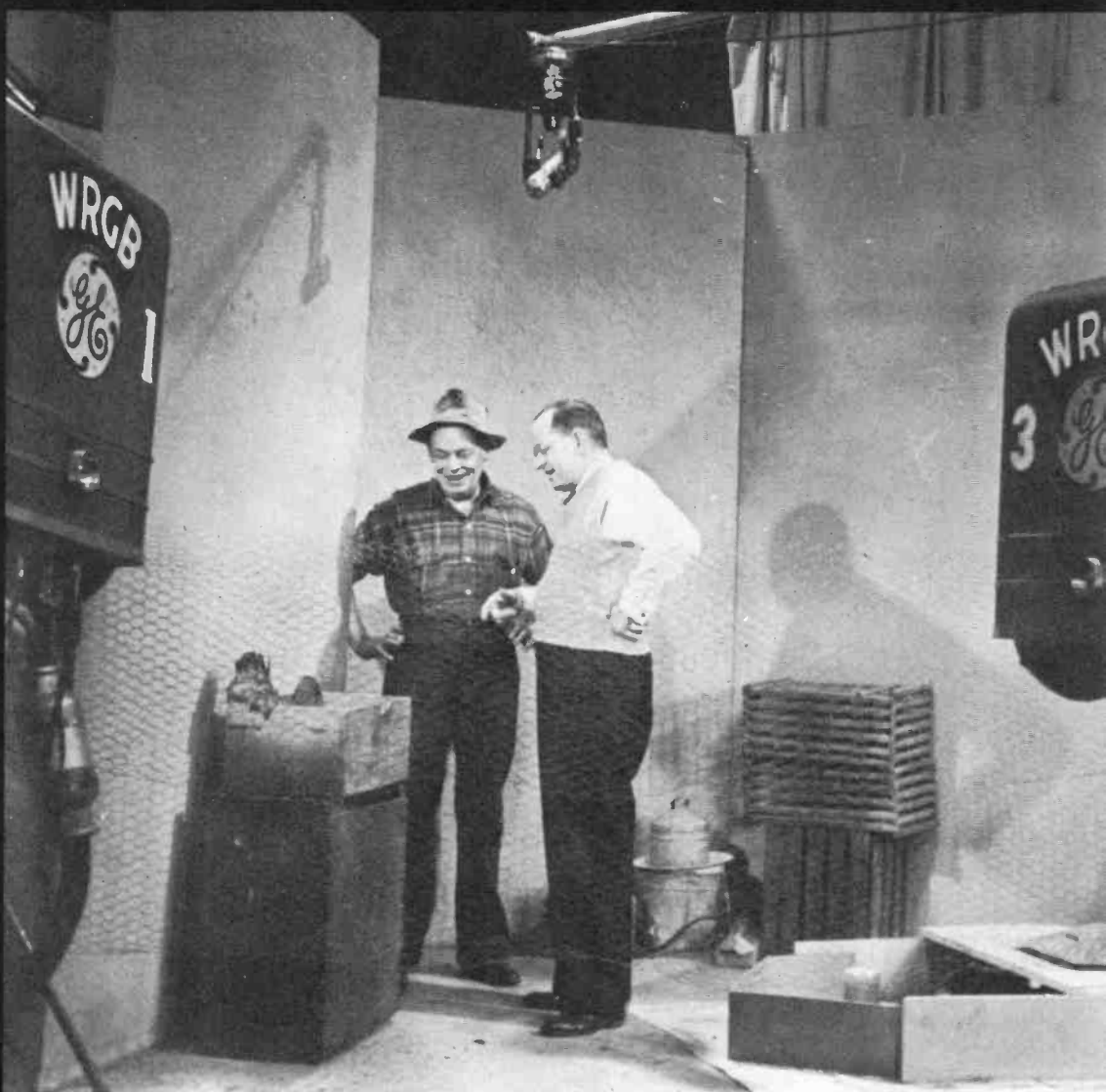
The television camera followed Ed Mitchell every week from the time he spaded this Victory Garden



Vice President Chester Lang of the General Electric Company and former Governor Robert Blood of New Hampshire talk over what makes television work following a Farm Forum Broadcast



Professor J. B. Porter points out to Bob Child and the television audience that landscaping the farm home can be an easy job



Television shows the backyard poultry keeper how to do it

# 15th Anniversary Broadcast Party



Farmers brought more than five tons of produce to the 15th WGY Farm Birthday Party in 1940



C. E. Wilson, President of General Electric, cut the first slice of birthday cake



G-E "House of Magic" showed metal floating in air



Dr. Hugh P. Baker, President of Massachusetts State College, addressed a record crowd which filled a circus tent



Max, the pastry chef, produced 26 birthday cakes



It took more than one circus tent to accommodate 7000 spectators



## A SUMMING UP

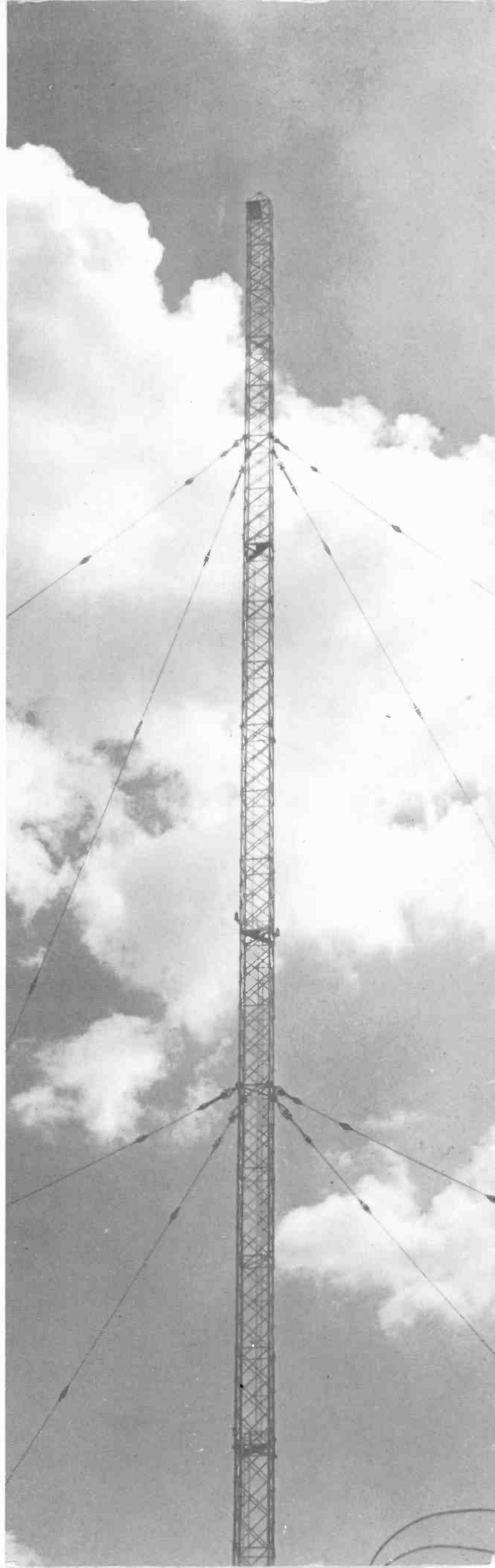
We have told you, in pictures, the story of 21 years of WGY farm broadcasting; now some facts which show the reactions of a cross section of the people who listen to them:

One sure indication of Northeastern farm people's regard for the agricultural programs is the farm-radio listener survey made in November, 1944. In 33 counties, including 22 in New York, seven in Vermont, two in New Hampshire, one in Massachusetts, and one in Pennsylvania, 499 farm people either personally visited or telephoned their neighbors on one afternoon during the week of November 13, 1944, between 12:30 and 1:00 p.m.

Of the farm radio sets turned on in the nine counties closest to Schenectady, 85 per cent were tuned to WGY. Of the farm radio sets turned on in the 33 counties, the percentage tuned to WGY was 57. Assuming that there is an average of two listeners per set, approximately 72,000 people in the 33 counties hear the Farm Paper of the Air each day.

The most recent survey of the listening audience at 8:30 p.m. on Fridays indicates that some 400,000 people hear the WGY Farm Forum each week.

*The following agencies and individuals kindly co-operated with WGY in lending pictures included in this book. The cover picture was furnished through the courtesy of the United States Soil Conservation Service. Many of the other pictures were contributed by agencies and individuals co-operating on the WGY farm programs, including the New York State College of Home Economics, Converse Studios, Inc., 38 East 57th Street, New York City, Manuel Rockwood, Cambridge, N. Y., New York State 4-H Clubs, Preston Hollow Baptist Church, Vermont Extension Service, Agricultural Adjustment Agency, New York State Farm Manpower Service, New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets, U.S.D.A. photographs by Forsythe, U.S.D.A. photographs by Knewll, New York State Bankers Association, New York State Veterinary Medical Society, New York State Agricultural Extension Service, New York State College of Forestry, United States Forest Service, New York Power & Light Co., New York State Grange, Cooperative GLF Exchange, Inc., Dairy-men's League Co-operative Association, Inc., New York State College of Agriculture, and Ed W. Mitchell.*





**GENERAL  ELECTRIC**