

Land Army Makes War On Hunger



ROOKIE REUBENS FINDS MANAGING A TEAM ONE OF THE MOST DIFFICULT CHORES ON A FARM. WORKING IN PAIRS MAKES CULTIVATING EASIER AT THE BEGINNING

DAIRY DUTIES BEGIN AT 4:30 every morning. After cows are milked (either by hand or machine) farmer aides weigh and record poundage per animal. Milk is then poured through a strainer, as below, and kept in huge cans until ready for the pasteurizer in background.

60,000 city women must don denim to help meet record food goal

With many of the experienced farm hands in the armed forces or already migrated to better-publicized defense jobs, the average American farmer is finding life down on the farm tough ploughing. In every case he's working desperately to overcome the critical labor shortage while attempting to comply with the government request for maximum food output in '43.

Farm operators are fast turning to urban folk for seasonal and year-round assistance since this year's goal requires 38 per cent more food than was produced during the 1935-'39 period. To meet this ever-increasing need, the Department of Agriculture recently organized the U. S. Crops Corps, in an effort to sign up every available volunteer: man, woman, boy and girl. One of its units, the Women's Land Army, is currently campaigning for 60,000 town and city women—50,000 for part-time chores; 10,000 for full-year work.

These farmer aides are transported with government help for work on dairy, poultry and truck farms and receive wages comparable to the prevailing local rate. By harvesting, grading, and packing produce; feeding and caring for livestock; and driving tractors, cultivators, plows and hay loaders, girls in the WLA will help U. S. farmers raise the nation's biggest food crop.

Prior to hiring out female farmer aides, the Women's Land Army puts recruits through an intensive three to six week training period. Photographed at a typical instruction center—the State Institute of Applied Agriculture in Farmingdale, New York—the women pictured here prove that girls who hail from desk jobs in metropolitan areas can tackle farm chores successfully.

That inexperienced urbanites with perseverance and good health can be trained as valuable farm helpers was actually determined last year. The entire McIntosh apple crop of Connecticut was saved by a crew of volunteer pickers from cities, schools and factories. And the potato harvest in Baldwin County, Alabama, was similarly kept from rotting in the field. According to a U. S. Department of Agriculture bulletin on the subject:

"It's a story of bankers pulling beets, of schools, stores and big business closed for farm work, of a preacher leading a group of 40 boys in the field, of farmers pooling labor and equipment and of Victory Farm Work days for every able-bodied city person."

Now, as then, it's a story of country-city cooperation, of patriotic people helping to feed their neighbors and themselves. To show the non-rural group of CLICK's feminine readers what getting down to earth means, our photographer visited the Women's Land Army. If after looking at these pictures you're eager to join up and are 18 years or more, the WLA urges you contact your county agricultural agent, U. S. Employment Center, or local OCD.



-the second of four pages-



TENDING A FLOCK OF SHEEP TAKES AN EXPERIENCED HAND BUT CATHIE HARRISON, 19 YEAR OLD WLA WORKER CLAIMS IT'S LOTS SIMPLER THAN FEEDING THE HOGS



WHEN A TRACTOR STALLS, land army women must do their own emergency repairs. Trained to service heavy farm machinery, these feminine farm helpers are excellent for work requiring manipulative speed and finger dexterity. They are proving themselves well-fitted for almost any man-sized farm job.



SPLITTING LOGS HELPS TOUGHEN HANDS unaccustomed to strenuous work. WLA recruits find this necessary build-up makes milking cows by hand much easier. A recent analysis of the assets of women in application to agriculture reveals that female accuracy and patience are a boon to chores on a farm.



ON A POULTRY FARM a new worker can learn many routine tasks such as feeding birds and caring for the brooders and incubators above. **RIGHT: CANDLING**, crating and grading eggs requires the delicacy and conscientious effort that the frailest girls can do well.

MIXING FEED FOR THE ANIMALS is grueling work. Putting aside feminine egos while on the job, farmer aides must wallow in swine pens, run manure spreaders, curry beasts, clean troughs and whitewash barns. Long fingernails are cut short but girls usually insist on polish.



-the last of four pages-



AFRAID TO FEED ANIMALS AT FIRST, CITY GIRLS SOON
LOSE SQUEAMISHNESS; APPROACH BEASTS READILY

CONTINUED ON