



Ditch-weed control

The final step has been taken in the attempt to keep irrigation ditches in south Saskatchewan free of choking weeds. A provincial firm recently completed the design and construction of a ditch-seeder.

The step brings a new and inexpensive means of control within the reach of farmers, who can now easily sow grasses that will eliminate weeds from ditches.

If the irrigation waterways are left untended, they quickly become choked with weeds, which impede and sometimes block the flow of water to crops.

Hans Korven, an irrigation-management specialist at the Swift Current Agriculture Canada Research Station, began to work on the problem five years ago. He found that seeding the ditches to low-growing grasses was the solution. Four grasses (stream-bank wheatgrass, Russian wild rye-grass, creeping red fescue and sheep fescue), he discovered, controlled weed-growth without impeding water-flow.

In tests at Swift Current and at other south Saskatchewan locations, grasses along the bottoms and sides of test canals had previously been seeded by hand — an impractical method over long distances.

The estimated cost of the machine is \$2,500 for the seeder and an additional

\$500 for the offset-arm. The contract cost for the prototype was \$7,500.

The seeder is seven feet wide, with double-disc furrow-openers spaced six inches apart. It can be mounted directly on a tractor's three-point hitch or on the end of an extension arm. A small ditch can be seeded by driving along the top of each bank. Larger canals may need an extra pass along the bottom.

Quota on St. Lawrence redfish

Minister of State for Fisheries Roméo LeBlanc announced recently that immediate conservation measures would be brought into force to protect the redfish stock of the Gulf of St. Lawrence. Scientific assessments indicated, he stated, that the adult spawning stock of redfish had declined to a level of about 100,000 tons, and that further decline might endanger the future productivity of the species in the Gulf.

To conserve the depleted spawning stock, therefore, a 30,000-ton quota has been set for the 1976 Gulf of St. Lawrence redfish fishery (the 1975 catch was 60,000 tons). The Gulf will be closed to all vessels fishing for redfish until midnight April 30. During the closed period, which began March 6, vessels fishing in the Gulf for other groundfish species may not catch more

than 5,000 pounds, or 10 per cent by weight, of redfish on each trip. Mr. LeBlanc said this incidental-catch allowance for redfish might be adjusted if a change was found necessary to permit continued fishing of other species, such as cod and flounder. (The new regulations are contained in the Atlantic Redfish Fishery Regulations.)

New weather forecast service for Canadian Arctic

A new weather forecast service to the Canadian Arctic — said to be the first of its kind in the world — was jointly announced recently by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation and Environment Canada.

This facility results from an original plan devised by the CBC Northern Service, and developed by CBC engineers in co-operation with the Atmospheric Environment Service. Use of the latest electronic devices and engineering developments permits the rapid transmission of up-to-date weather forecasts to northern television viewers *via* two channels of the communications satellite *Anik*.

The weather forecasts are prepared by the Atmospheric Environment Service's Arctic Weather Centre in Edmonton and are relayed automatically to the CBC Television Network Control Centre in Toronto. About six times daily, the weather information is beamed *via* satellite to the Arctic, where it is telecast in the form of printed messages that gradually "roll up" on the television screen.

When necessary, special warnings or revised forecasts will be issued by the Arctic forecaster and transmitted in the next period of weather announcements.

Initially, the forecast regions will cover all of the Yukon Territory, Northern British Columbia, and the Mackenzie Valley from Great Slave Lake to the Mackenzie Delta, as well as the areas around Sachs Harbour, Chesterfield Inlet, Baker Lake, Coral Harbour and Frobisher Bay.

Since the lack of communications in the Arctic has always posed difficulties in distributing timely weather information, the system has been specially designed to meet the unique needs of people living in the North.