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FARMPARK IS A LAKE METROPARKS FACILITY.

Farmpark's mission is to help our urban society understand how farmers raise food, fiber, and other products that sustain and enhance human life.

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FROM THE HILLTOP

Energy on Our Farms

BY ANDY BAKER, FARMPARK ADMINISTRATOR

In the past Almanac article "Our Agricultural Dilemma", I mentioned some of the issues raised by the new use of corn as an energy source. This past fall, during our Fall Harvest Festival, I had the opportunity to talk with visitors about the transition from horse power to tractor power. The number of horses and mules in the United States peaked in 1934. In Ohio, the peak oat production occurred in 1928. Hay production reached its peak in 1916. Today, Ohio farmers only raise 55,000 acres of oats compared to 2,374,000 acres in 1928. When you tie these statistics together you realize that in some ways we are returning to the days when farmers produced horsepower on the farm. We need to keep in mind that energy production by farmers is not new even though the form is different. Whether the new forms of energy, such as ethanol and biodiesel, are better than old fashioned horsepower is another issue. At Farmpark though, you can see both the old form of horsepower and the new and decide for yourself.

