

THE USE OF

A SELF-FEEDING TRENCH SILO

FOR DAIRY CATTLE

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Some experience with a self-feeding trench silo has been obtained in handling the Oklahoma A. & M. College dairy herd. The silo is shown by the attached drawings. It is being continued in use in order to obtain additional information.

This system of feeding sorghum or corn silage offers good possibilities, but not entirely without limitations.

In a ten-foot wide silo, only three animals can be expected to be fed in from one and one-half to two hours. An average of about 25 lb. silage is consumed per hour of feeding.

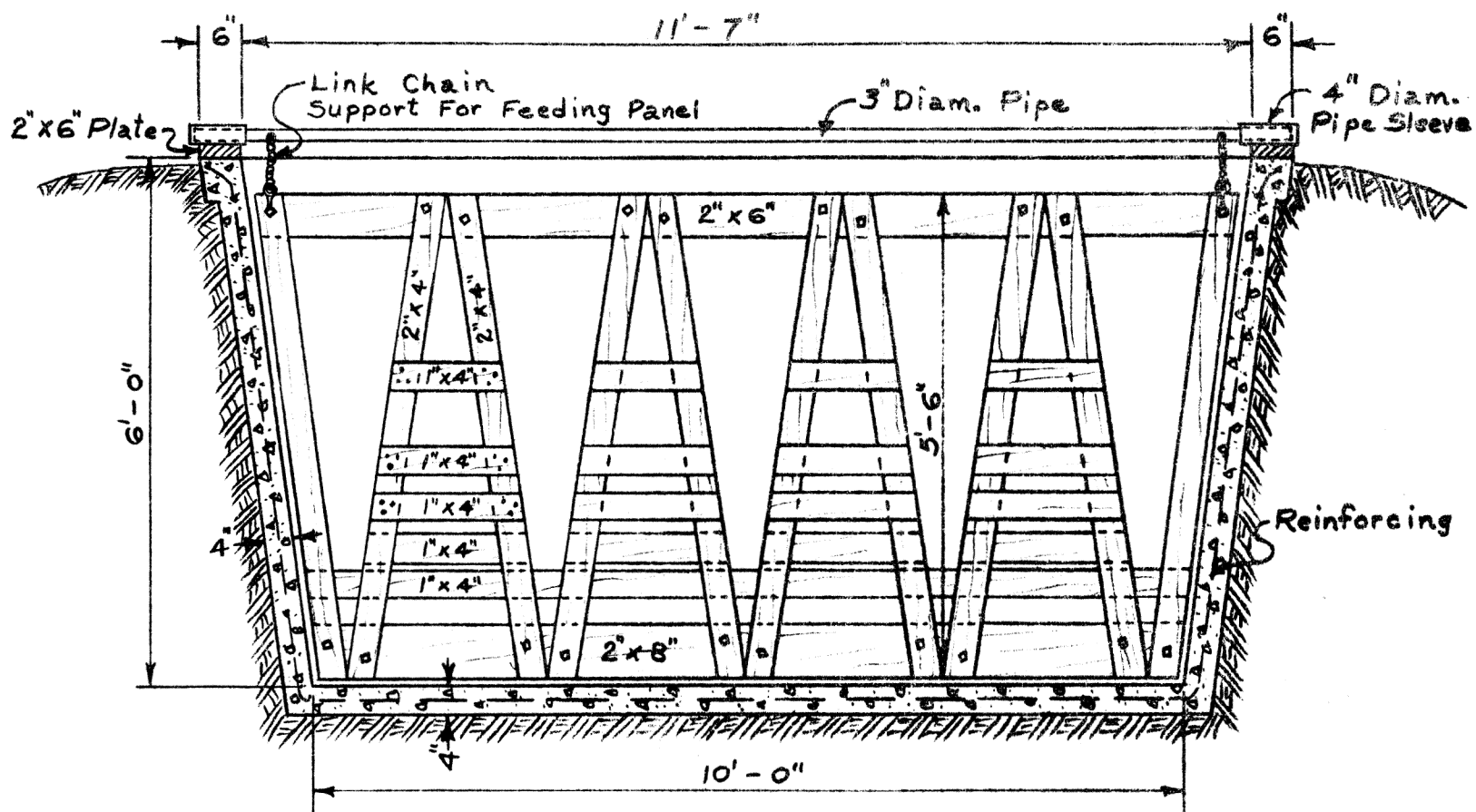
Silage consumption apparently is not uniform between animals. More aggressive "boss" cows may spend as much as 30% more time feeding than meeker individuals. The feeding of hay in addition to the silage decreases competition between animals somewhat. Access to pasture probably would decrease such competition still further.

A ten-foot silo, available for 24-hour feeding of dry stock, will accomodate 36 animals if silage is the only roughage available. With the feeding of relatively low quality hay the animal capacity would be increased to 48 animals. No specific recommendations relative to milking cows can be made as yet.

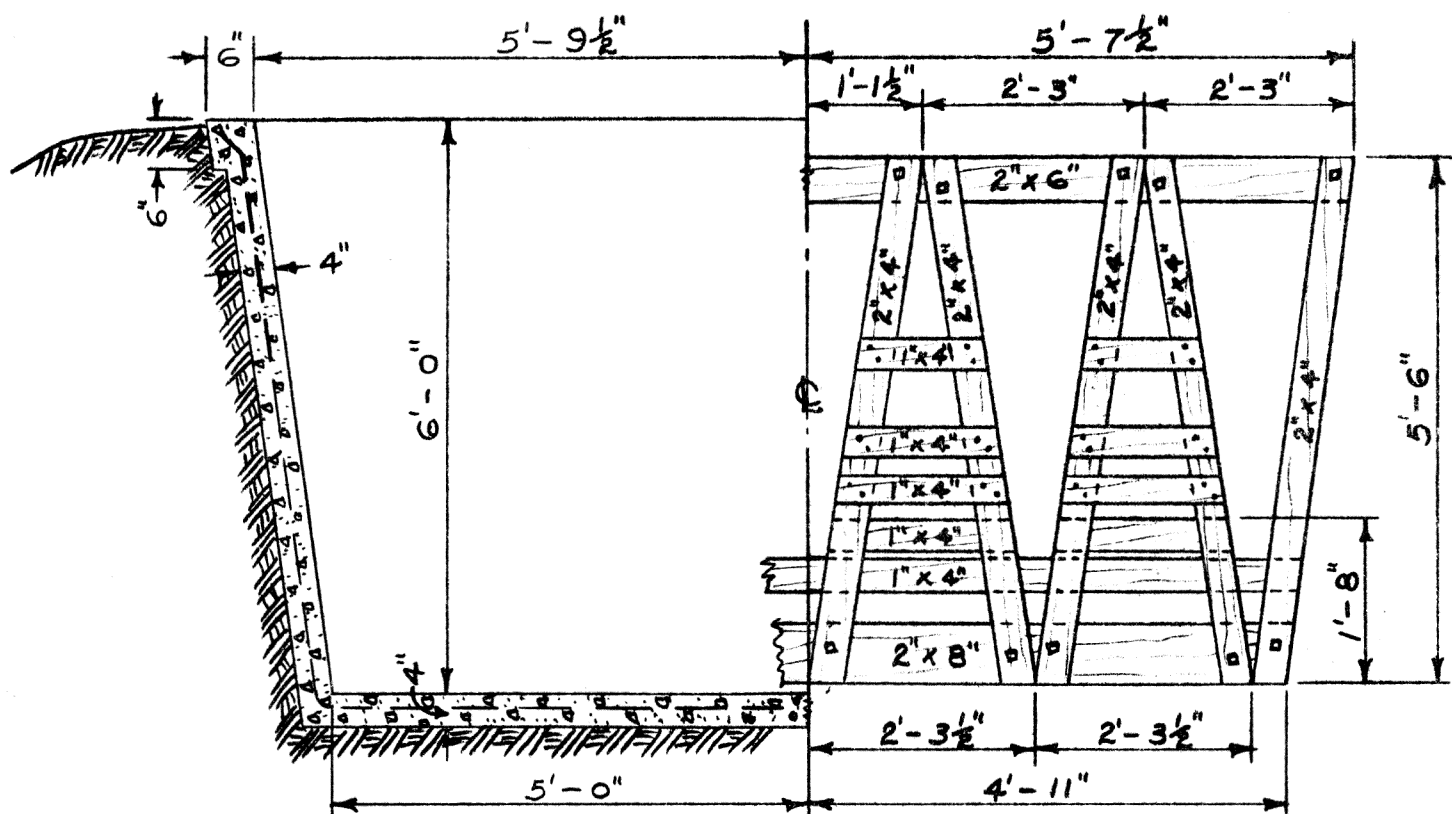
No spoilage of the exposed silage need be anticipated during moderate winter weather. Freezing or rain followed by warm weather may result in some spoilage.

With a properly constructed solid bottom A-frame feeding panel, very little silage is spilled by the cows. The silo should not be over 6 feet deep for best results. More depth will result in caving out of the upper end of the silage pack as the cows feed below.

Only about one-half hour or less labor is required every week to ten days to service the silo. Cleaning off the top spoilage, re-adjusting the gate and scraping away droppings are the only labor requirements.



END VIEW, SHOWING FEEDING PANEL IN PLACE



ONE HALF SECTION TRENCH SILO

ONE HALF VIEW FEEDING PANEL