

Rural Phone System, Electrification Shows Record Financial Performance

WASHINGTON — (USDA) — The Nation's rural electric systems — once little more than a pair of copper lines supported by wooden poles and Rural Electrification Administration loans — celebrated their coming of age in 1956 with an improved ability to serve their communities and a record financial performance, the U. S. Department of Agriculture reported today.

Increasing attention to sales promotion and management practices, together with an influx of non-farm residents and small industries moving from crowded cities, pushed total operating revenues past the \$500 million mark for the first time in the 21-year-old program. In 1955 the systems reported \$449,625,487 of operating revenues. Total net margins — after deductions for expenses, depreciation and interest — rose more than 25 per cent over the previous year and reached a record \$73.3 million.

"The 1956 report shows how far rural electrification has come since the early days of just lights in the farm home," REA Administrator David A. Hamil commented. "Electricity, properly applied, now is one of the most profitable and economical tools the farmer can use. In many areas the transformer bank has replaced the big barn as the symbol of a farmer's success.

"Even more impressive are the indications of growing maturity

and financial stability to be found in the 1956 reports from our borrowers," Mr Hamil added.

REA's preliminary 1956 figures reflect the expanding use of electric power for farm production. Average monthly consumption of all residential consumers, including farm users, rose 12 per cent over 1955 to 269 kilowatt hours, but the extra power came at lower cost. As a result, consumers paid an average cost of only 2.86 cents per kwh, or 4 per cent less than the 1955 average of 2.98 cents per kwh. The average monthly bill in 1956 was \$7.69, compared with \$7.20 a year earlier.

The REA-financed systems sold an estimated 22 billion kilowatt-hours of electricity, almost 15 per cent more than in 1955. REA borrowers generated 3,608,000,000 kwh (11 per cent increase) and purchased 21,126,000,000 kwh from other power suppliers to provide a total system input of almost 25 billion kwh, or 14 per cent more than required in 1955.

To help its borrowers keep ahead of growing rural power loads, REA approved loans totaling \$229 million in 1955, electric loans totaled \$180 million. More than a third of the 1956 total, or \$77.6 million, was earmarked for generation and transmission facilities. One of these 1956 loans is to provide the conventional facilities for a generating unit designed to use nuclear fuel.

Borrowers continued their excellent repayment record, paying more than \$118 millions on principal and interest during the year. Two borrowers paid off their loans ahead of schedule, and borrowers made advance payments of nearly \$11 million, bringing total payments ahead of schedule to \$102,100,000. The electric systems have now repaid \$533 millions of the \$2,842 millions advanced to them on rural electrification loans. In addition, they have paid more than \$265 million as interest. On November 30, 1956, only eight borrowers were in arrears more than 30 days on debt payments, amounting to \$390,449. A year ago 17 borrowers were delinquent on payments totaling \$539,809.

The 1956 report covers 982 active electric borrowers operating from beyond the Arctic circle to subtropical Puerto Rico. Together they serve 4,357,000 rural consumers — 106,000 more than a year ago — over 1,384,000 miles of line. The smallest system, in Nevada serves only 96 consumers. About 70 systems serve more than 10,000 consumers each, with the largest, in Louisiana, serving over 24,000.

Thousand of rural subscribers received new dial telephone service during 1956 as a result of the REA telephone program. REA telephone borrowers placed in service an estimated 271 new dial exchanges and completed an estimated 27,700 miles of line during the 12-month period. Since the start of the REA telephone program seven years ago, some 250 individual borrowers have placed in operation 990 dial exchanges with the aid of REA financing. These borrowers also constructed 81,800 miles of telephone line.

The total number of REA telephone borrowers passed 500 during the year and was expected to reach 508 by December 31. This is an addition of an estimated 93 new borrowers during the year. Telephone loans for 1956 are expected to total \$82 million which will bring the total loans under the program to \$351 million by the end of the calendar year.



Reese Unloads 1956 Tobacco Crop

TOBACCO BEGAN moving into the warehouses this week. Here Melvin Reese, R3 Quarryville, unloads part of his crop in

Lancaster. His leaf made two pounds to the lath and about a ton to the acre. (Staff photo)

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Many poultrymen are falling down on the way they rear their pullets. Pullets should be started in a house that has been scrupulously cleaned well in advance, disinfected and allowed to dry out before the litter is put in. The house should be ready for the chicks several days in advance. Chicks need one sq. ft. floor space per chick for the first 8 weeks and 2 sq. ft. floor space per pullet from 8 weeks until they start to comb up if they're to be raised inside.

Allow some fresh air but do not let the chicks get so cold that they pile up or huddle. Cold chicks won't eat and drink properly.

The average electric brooder will take care of a maximum of 250 chicks. Same goes for gas and oil brooders. Perhaps 300 chicks could be put around a coal stove. So far as I know, there is no such thing as a 500 or 1000 chick size brooder that will do a good job on chicks up to 8 weeks of age. This is in spite of what the manufacturer says about them.

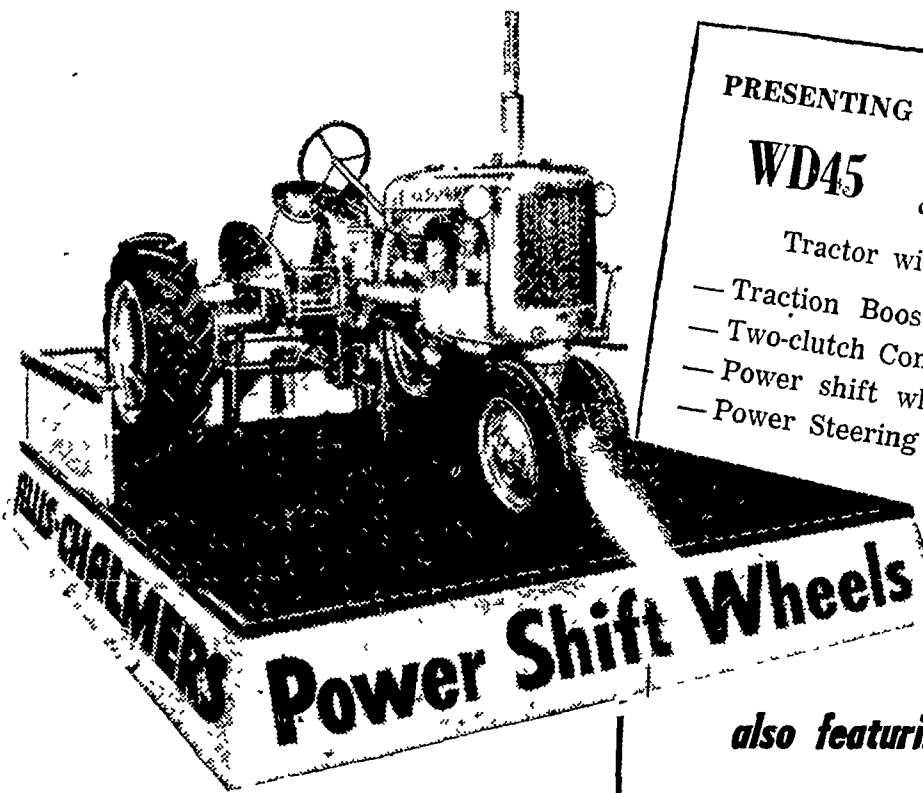
Babcock's 1957 literature tells you how to rear your chicks and how to feed your layers. Also it describes Babcock Bessies - America's Really Fine Commercial Egg Producers.

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