

# Good Morning

## Part III

**ED NOTE:** "Good Morning: 3,336 People Starved Last Night", is taken from a report by George C. Tollis, Manager of the Washington operation of Computer Usage Company, Inc. The report is titled, "Computers And Food".

### Beefing Up

Like the dairy farmer whose food product — milk — is a result of proper diet and breeding procedures, the cattle farmer is "beefing up" on new technology.

As a result the control of cattle feed procedures is another area in which computer usage is spreading. It takes something like eight pounds of grain to produce a pound of beef. And the cost of that grain can make or break the farmer.

Computers are therefore put to work in the "kitchen" figuring what to feed livestock for maximum dollar return. This "least cost" rations calculation requires three kinds of information:

1. Requirements of ration to be formulated.
2. Approximate chemical analysis of available feed ingredients; and
3. Cost of the ingredients at the point of mixture.

While such calculations can be made "by guess and by golly" for small herds, such practices would quickly lead the modern farmer down disastrous paths. For example, meat scraps — ranging from \$5 to \$5.20 per hundredweight — are frequently mixed with soybean meal ranging in cost from about \$4.30 to \$4.50 a hundredweight. Whenever possible, since meat scraps are cheapest when soybean meal is most expensive, the computer determines the least expensive mix that has equivalent nutritional value.

### The Future

"The computer farmer is a manager," says Anthony E. Casino of International Minerals & Chemical Company. "The owner of a farm of the future will no more be out riding a

tractor than the president of General Motors is out on an assembly line tightening bolts."

L. S. Fife sees the farm landscape spotted with television towers used to scan the fields, keeping an eye on robot tractors criss-crossing about in numerically precise patterns.

Mr. Fife has also referred to the development of sensing devices to relay information on fields and crop conditions to a computer which will be able to send back orders to speed up or slow down operations, alter the depth at which seeds are being planted and regulate intensities with which fertilizer is being applied.

These are only some of the areas where computer technology is having an impact on food production, quality, and planning in the U.S. However, the problems of a world power with starving billions at its gates are not likely to be solved through the application of current, limited-objective programs. If Malthus is to be proven wrong—if we're not destined to be decimated by war, famine, or flood — then the key to man's very survival on this planet lies in the application of computer technology to agricultural technology in all the countries of the world.

Recently, Dr. Roger Revelle, Director of the Center for Population Studies at Harvard University, proposed the creation of two government agencies to bring the modernization of agriculture to underdeveloped areas. Dr. Revelle has led efforts to increase food production in Pakistan and India. According to him, "The only way we can be assured of a stable world in which the United States can live peaceably, is to work for a diminution of poverty and misery everywhere."

### It Can Work

Past efforts to aid countries in their farming practices have not been too successful. But the success of the Rockefeller Foundation, whose specialists worked directly with Mexicans on their

## Hatfield Says New Marketing Practices Confronting Dairymen

Acceptance of new marketing practices is one of the most difficult hurdles confronting the dairy industry, an American Farm Bureau Federation dairy specialist told dairy division members of the South Carolina Farm Bureau Marketing Association recently.

corn and wheat production, is an exception. In 1941 Mexican farmers produced 11 bushels of wheat an acre and the country had to import wheat to avoid starvation. Today production is up to 35 bushels an acre and Mexico exports wheat. Mexico has also sent its own agricultural team to India and Pakistan.

Crossbreeding is familiar to every farmer. Breeding in the best of a variety of traits and breeding out weak traits has produced hardier animals and more nutritious crops.

Crossbreeding those technologies having to do with the production, storage and distribution of food is, perhaps, the single most important task facing men today. A vast job of information cataloging and communications has only been started.

The future is being sowed now. And the message is clear. The Director-General of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, Binay Sen, says "Either we take the fullest measures both to raise productivity and to stabilize population growth, or we face a disaster of unprecedented magnitude . . . Problems of hunger and malnutrition which afflict more than a half of the world's population . . . pose a serious threat to peace."

Nothing miraculous will alleviate the present food shortage. The pooling of diverse disciplines represents our only hope to avert the violent upheavals sure to result from world-wide starvation.

Hollis Hatfield, assistant director of AFBF's research and commodity activities division, told dairymen the "butter story will not be repeated if the milk industry adapts itself to the changing marketing structure."

He said that handling of milk in many U.S. markets is largely determined by "vested interests, including labor unions, trying to maintain the status quo."

The dairy industry has only two real choices, Hatfield said: (1) follow the butter route and lose another 25 percent or more of the dairy market to substitutes, or (2) follow the frozen dessert route, meet the substitute competition, and increase dairy product sales.

He explained the recommendations of the AFBF national dairy advisory committee, approved by the organization's Board of Directors, which "are based upon the assumption that the dairy industry cannot compete effectively with substitute fluid milk products by moving further behind 'protective' regulatory and pricing barriers."

"Milk substitutes are here to stay," Hatfield said, in spite of reports that many of the non-dairy imitations have been pulled off the market. "The worst thing that could happen to the U.S. dairy industry is to sit back with a sigh of relief and say 'we told you so.' The absence of non-dairy fluid milk substitutes will be for only as long as it takes the laboratory technicians to remedy problems in their products and to perfect them."

"Fortunately, there is a growing feeling throughout the dairy industry that its approach to marketing is due for a change. The desire to promote the sale of milk and milk products for any use the market demands exemplifies this change in attitude."

Hatfield pointed to laws and regulations which deter or prohibit the sale of dairy products in forms other than the standard types as being a major challenge to the U.S. dairy industry.

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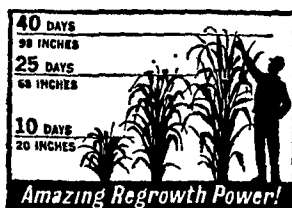
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