

Lancaster Farming

SECOND SECTION

Role Of Corporate Farms Small In U.S.

The fact that corporations control only a small segment of U.S. agriculture was further substantiated today in the release of the second half of a U.S. Department of Agriculture study on corporate farming. Principal findings in the latest report, covering 25 States, coincide very closely with those in a 22-State study issued last year. A final report will be issued later including the results from Alaska and Hawaii and from a special survey being conducted in California.

The current survey by USDA's Economic Research Service reports 4,850 corporation-designated farms operating 13 million acres in the Northeast, Appalachia, Southeast, Delta, and Southern Plains.

These corporate enterprises represent less than 1 percent of the commercial farms, work less than 5 percent of the land, and take a 6 percent share of gross farm product sales. Findings are nearly identical with those in the study of Corn Belt, Lake, Mountain, and Pacific Northwest States, where corporations were responsible for less than 1 percent of commercial units, less than 7 percent of the acreage, and sold about 4 percent of the agricultural commodities.

Nearly two-thirds of the corporate farms in today's release were family-owned, 15 percent individually held, and 21 percent run by other types of corporations. The first study found 71 percent controlled by families.

Today's report indicates live-

stock was favored over crops by corporate farms, especially in the Southern Plains and Northeast. Cattle feeding was frequently noted and operations, while relatively small except in Texas, tended to be larger than typical farmer-feeder units nationally. Corporations operated large-scale poultry farms in most surveyed States but concentrated in the Appalachian and Southeast regions. Of the crop land held by corporations in the Delta States, 80 percent was in soybeans, cotton, and sugarcane. Corporations handled large sugarcane acreages in Florida and Louisiana.

Agricultural production was the most important business activity for more than two-thirds of the corporate farms in the 25 States. And, while the remaining corporations had other interests, most such ventures were tied to agriculture manufacture and sale of feed and fertilizer and other agribusiness activities.

The 25-State study shows about (Continued on Page 26)

Conservation Corner



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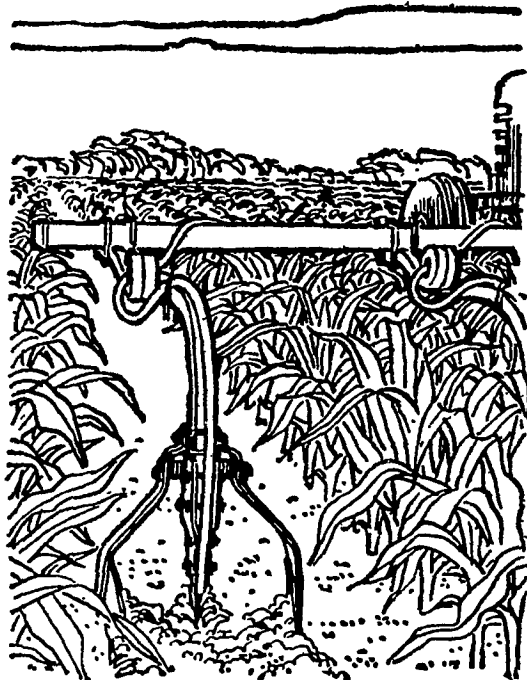
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The Elm and Penryn 4-H club held their meeting May 5 at the Penryn Fire Hall. There were approximately 30 members present.

Each member gave a report on the progress of their projects. The month of May was talent night.

Doyle Heisey and Cathy Schell played the piano and Cathy Miller played the Violin.

The next meeting will be held June 2.

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