

● **Farm**

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adjustments often require large sums of capital and they affect all components of the farm business. Examples of these adjustments are the purchase of additional land, the construction of new dairy facilities, the installation of an irrigation system, or building a completely mechanized beef feeding system. The high capital requirements of such adjustments demands careful study of the effect of the adjustment on the business before a final decision is made."

For Lancaster County farmers, one management tool that can be used effectively is Linear Programming. "Penn State through the local extension office in the Farm and Home Center, provides a state-wide service that can not be found available on as large a scale in any other state," Crowley said. Linear programming has been described as a management tool

to be used only when farmers face major adjustments which will affect the overall organization of the farm business and thus necessitate the examination of several alternatives. This is because minor adjustments can be evaluated by partial budgeting. But Crowley said, "Suppose a farm operator is not faced with any adjustment problems, is there any way this operator could make effective use of L.P. as a management tool? The answer is yes, linear programming provides an excellent means of depicting an optimum standard against which the operator can compare his present operation. Linear programming may be as useful used for this purpose as when used as a tool to evaluate major adjustments."

To start in the program, data collection sheets are filled out from the farm records. These sheets are divided into essentially five sections which include the farm resources and how they

are presently used; crop activities with the inputs required for the various crops; livestock activities with the inputs needed; capital additions to be considered and the prices paid for inputs such as purchased feeds, etc.

These items are fed to a computer and sorted out and the results enables the farmer to use this advanced technology for planning. The operator must be able to accurately describe the quantity and quality of his resources, to state his objective and specify any restrictions to be imposed.

The plans developed by L.P. are normative solutions and pertain to the stated conditions, restrictions and coefficients which are obtained from the farm operator in the data collecting process. If the data accurately reflects the farm situation the solutions should be very helpful to the operator. They will indicate the most limiting resource, the value of scarce resources

and the optimum organization of livestock and crop activities.

Linear programming will not solve all problems for the manager, but it will indicate areas that offer opportunity for greater profit. It is at the present, one of the most effective tools that the farm manager can use and properly used can show the operator ways to substantially increase his farm income.

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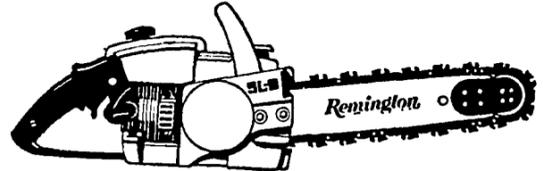
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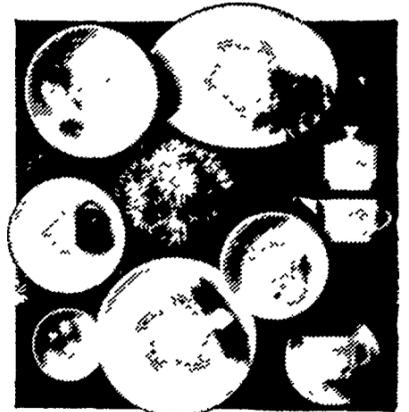
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