

Oklahoma Ups Pork Output

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"We've sold and erected 13 complete environmental units, and we're getting repeat business, which convinces me and those who are using confinement hog facilities that there is money to be made in the hog business," Lindsey said.

Environmental facilities are not cheap and when the price of say, \$32,000 is quoted for a 24-head sow capacity farrowing and nursing house, farmers tend to flinch. That is until they understand what they can do with the equipment.

"It's possible by using this facility 10 months of the year to farrow and wean 2,400 pigs but with a more realistic figure of say, 2,000 over a 10 year period this would amount to about 16 cents building charge against each pig," Lindsey said.

Environmental buildings are not new, Lindsey said, but use of them in Oklahoma for swine is a recent innovation and those who are using them find such buildings are a great aid in management.

"For one thing litter sizes are increased because it is easier to save pigs. Another is that sow upkeep is cheaper. But increased feed efficiency on feeding floors is where hog producers really cash in," Lindsey said.

By controlling temperature

hogs can convert to meat energy many times needed to keep warm or cool as the case may be. "We recently figured a swine setup for one producer, using OSU figures, for a 300-sow complete environmental facility — farrowing,

nursing and feeding — costing in the neighborhood of \$255,000. But the farmer figured over a 10 year period he'd save in feed costs alone \$1,180,000," Lindsey said.

So far hog producer and build-

ing contractor Lindsey has been able to offer a complete package including financing. "However, it's significant that the Farmers Home Administration has money available for such facilities for a 40-year loan period at 6 percent interest," Lindsey said.

Just how far the swine business in Oklahoma will go via the environmental facility route depends upon several factors, one being favorable price. Those who are in the hog business are convinced that if prices decline, it will be the efficient manager who will weather the storm, and they believe efficient managers are those who use the latest techniques and environmental facilities.

With such facilities and prospects of advantages because of waterway transportation, a growing number of Oklahomans are ready to challenge Iowa hog producers for a growing share of the nation's pork production.

Lindsey explained, "Well, look at it this way. It's not unrealistic today to expect a good sow to

farrow and wean 20 pigs a year. Many growers are weaning 40 to 50 pound pigs in 8 weeks and selling them to finishers for \$25 each. That's a gross income of \$500 per sow per year. OK, so maybe that's too high. Reduce it to \$400. Today 400 to 600 pound sows are selling for as high as \$25 a hundred which means she's worth from \$100 to \$150.

"Where are you going to buy a beef cow for \$150 that'll wean off a \$400 calf? Today ranchers have from \$1,200 to \$1,500 invested per beef cow unit; and they're not too unhappy with prices and prospects, when you look at the future, from this angle, hogs begin to look better all the time," Lindsey said.

This makes investment in environmental housing all the more attractive. "This equipment's really big redeeming feature is labor-saving. One farmer can handle several times the number of hogs he could previously — and in many cases, with less time," Lindsey said.

Gov. Shafer Joins Mid-Atlantic Group

The Governors of five Mid-Atlantic states have agreed to collaborate in a regional attack on problems of pollution, crime and transportation.

Governor Nelson A. Rockefeller of New York was named chairman of the new unit, to be known as the Mid-Atlantic Governors Conference. Other members are Governors William T. Cahill of New Jersey, Raymond P. Shafer of Pennsylvania, Russell W. Peterson of Delaware and Marvin Mandel of Maryland.

A sixth governor, Arch A. Moore Jr. of West Virginia may also join the group, a spokesman said.

The group was formed at the winter meeting of the National Governors Conference.

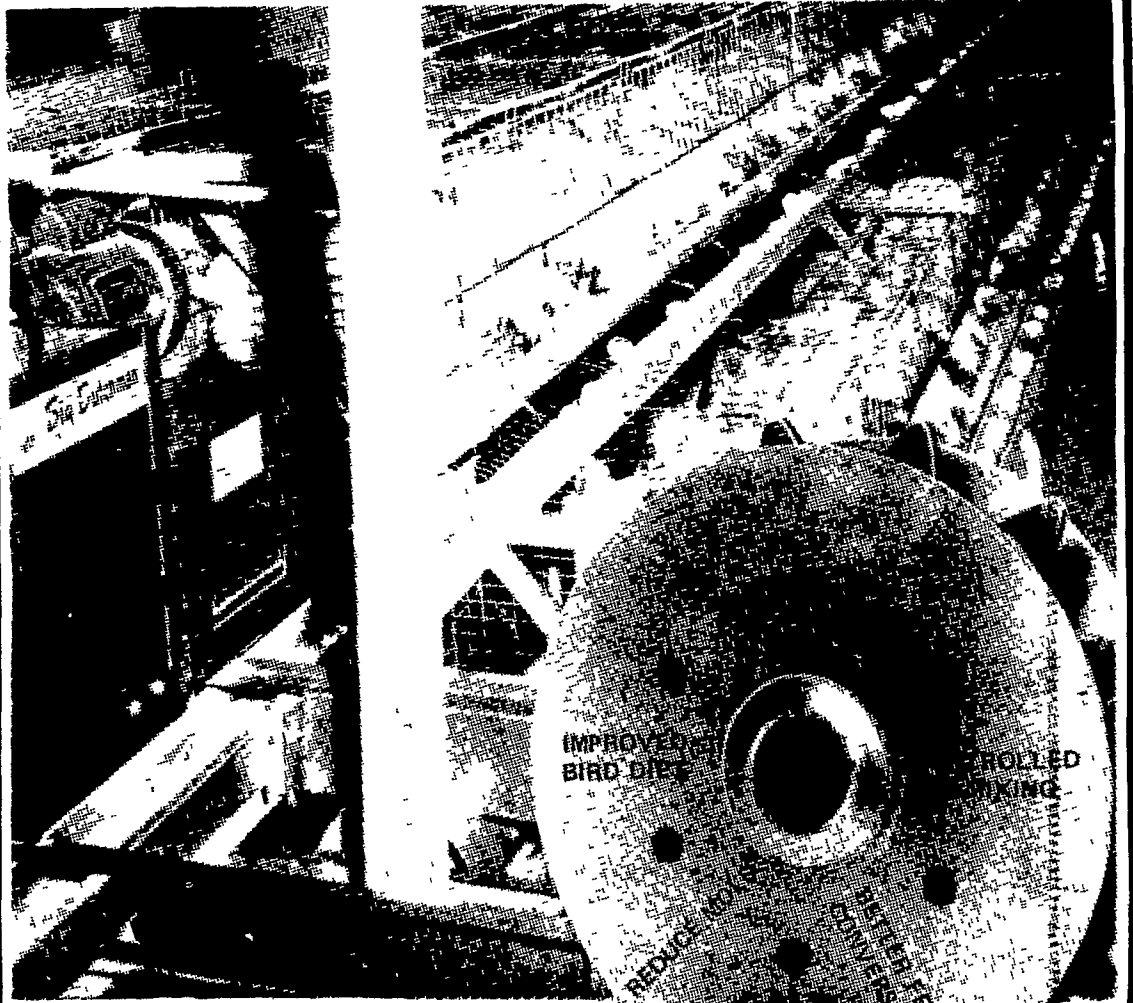
Similar regional governor groups set up in the past in other

parts of the country have been largely social, but the Rockefeller aid said the new Mid-Atlantic unit would not follow that pattern.

"We are going to be sharing data and exchange staff and really working on these problems," the spokesman said.

Tentative plans call for two staff members and two governor meetings each year, with the first meeting of governors to take place this spring.

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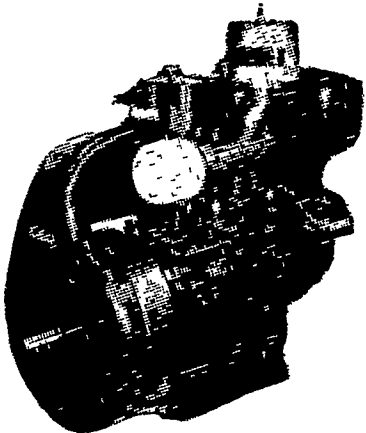
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