

Rebuild or Remodel? Some Factors

As modern agricultural pro-tems if they are to remain in a duction continues to change, competitive position. farmers must modernize and This modernization can often improve their production sys- be accomplished by minor

changes or additions to existing buildings or systems, says Ernest W. Walpole, extension agricultural engineer at the University of Delaware.

But eventually a decision may have to be made whether to remodel the existing system or build a completely new one.

Since no two production systems are exactly alike, a decision to remodel or build new must be based on an individual program. Walpole offers a few general guidelines farmers should consider.

Are your existing buildings structurally sound and properly located?

Very little can be done with buildings that have crumbling or sagging foundations or rotted or termite-damaged walls and supports.

Often structurally sound buildings can't be used because they won't fit into the overall design of the new system.

Is the size of your farming enterprise increasing? This may require adding to an existing building or constructing a new larger one. In many cases an older building could be effectively remodeled, but it couldn't be added to.

Will a remodeled building be as efficient as a new one? In some cases it will, says Walpole. In others, a slight decrease in efficiency will enable the use of old buildings and save construction costs. Any decrease in efficiency must be slight, however.

Some buildings would increase labor costs substantially if remodeled and thus should be replaced.

Check the costs of remodeling and building new. Farmers will often find it costs more to remodel an existing structure than to start from scratch. This is particularly true if alternate uses can be found for the existing building.

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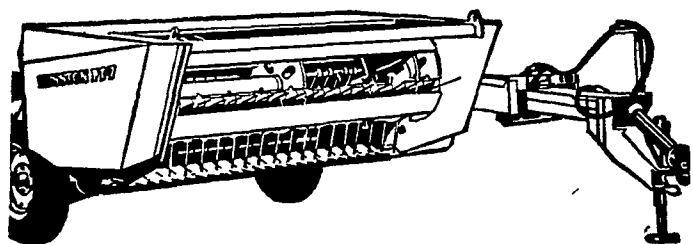
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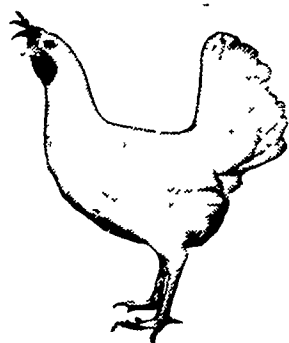
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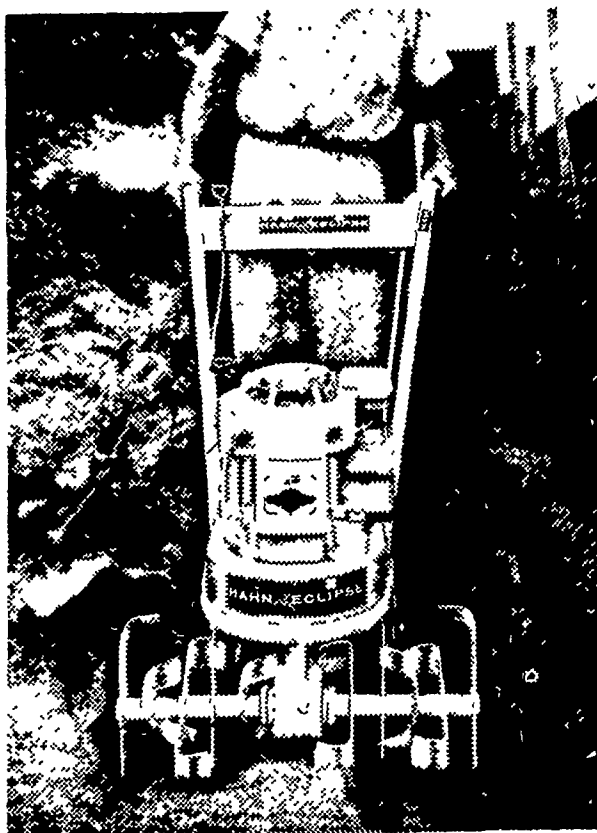
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