

# The American Farmer

(Editor's note: This week begins the first in a five-part series of articles on the American farmer. The articles, furnished by DEKALB AgResearch, Inc., are designed to help increase the public's understanding of the American farmer and the importance of agriculture to our economy.)

One operated 2,000 acres. His neighbor farms one-tenth that amount. One has a master's degree. Another's education is based on experience. One is young. His neighbor is old. One raises corn in Indiana. Another feeds cattle in Montana.

The American farmer ... not an easy man to describe and define. But, for all their differences, they are still alike. Above all else, they are businessmen. Knowledgeable in the dozen or so areas that it takes to be a farmer in the 70's.

This businessman is both management and labor. He's in charge of a physical plant with fixed assets often reaching \$300,000 or more. Although he often feels like it, he can't strike for higher wages.

He's chief purchasing agent, deciding which \$20,000 machine will best harvest his crop during the two weeks out of the year that he needs it.

He's an efficiency expert, always trying to cut his costs and increase his slim margin of



profit. He's an investor — handling each dollar wisely, but putting it in a business that isn't known for its high rate of return.

He's an environmentalist and a conservationist, treating his resources wisely so his land will

still be productive when the next man is ready for it.

He's a speculator, gambling on the weather, insects and disease. And hoping the law of supply and demand — his basic marketing tool — will treat him favorably in the marketplace.

Most of all, he's an optimist — knowing that next year has to be better.

He's the American farmer. And he's the world's most important businessman.

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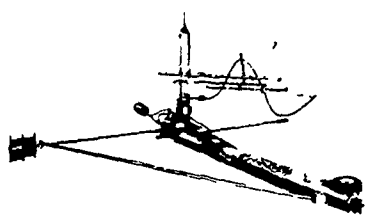
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