

Pennfield Develops Computer Program For Dairy Feeding

Computers have been used to formulate livestock feed rations for over a decade, but it's only fairly recently that the mysterious black boxes have been used to build feeding programs for individual dairy

operations.

One of the newest computer programs for dairymen was developed by Dr. Richard Peacock, Pennfield Corp.'s director of technical services. Peacock is both an animal

nutritionist and a computer programmer, and he started work on Pennfield's Computerized Total Ration (CTR) program about four years ago. Computers, in order to solve problems, must be given a set of rules - a program - to follow.

"A lot of the older programs," Peacock says, "aren't set up to consider all the data that might be relevant to a particular dairy operation. The one we've developed is comprehensive and flexible. We can use our program to evaluate all feed ingredients not just on the basis of cost, but on the basis of quality as well."

A computerized feed formula starts with the farmer's own hay and forage. These must be tested, of course, to determine their exact nutritional content, and the feed company in this instance provides two free tests. Once the value of home-grown feed is known, the computer can determine what must be added to the herd diet to maximize production.

The computer determines mineral needs as well as energy and protein needs, and it does so on the basis of average herd production, in the case of smaller herds, and on the basis of cow groups in herds large enough to permit grouping by production. High individual producers being fed the computerized formula can be given extra grain at the farmer's discretion, Peacock points out.

"Programming can help the farmer get the most value for his feed dollar," Peacock says, "and it can help him find weak spots in his feeding system. One rule of thumb in the dairy industry is that 90 percent of the low producing cows are over-fed, while 70 percent of the high producers are under-fed. CTR can help eliminate that problem."

Poultrymen Elect New Officers

The board of directors for the Lancaster County Poultry Federation met Tuesday night to elect officers for the coming year.

John R. Huber, Jr., Lititz RD3, was reelected president of the organization. Others reelected were treasurer, Melvin C. Gehman, 611 E. Roseville Rd., Lancaster, and secretary, Stanley Musselman, 403 W. Stanton Rd., Quarryville.

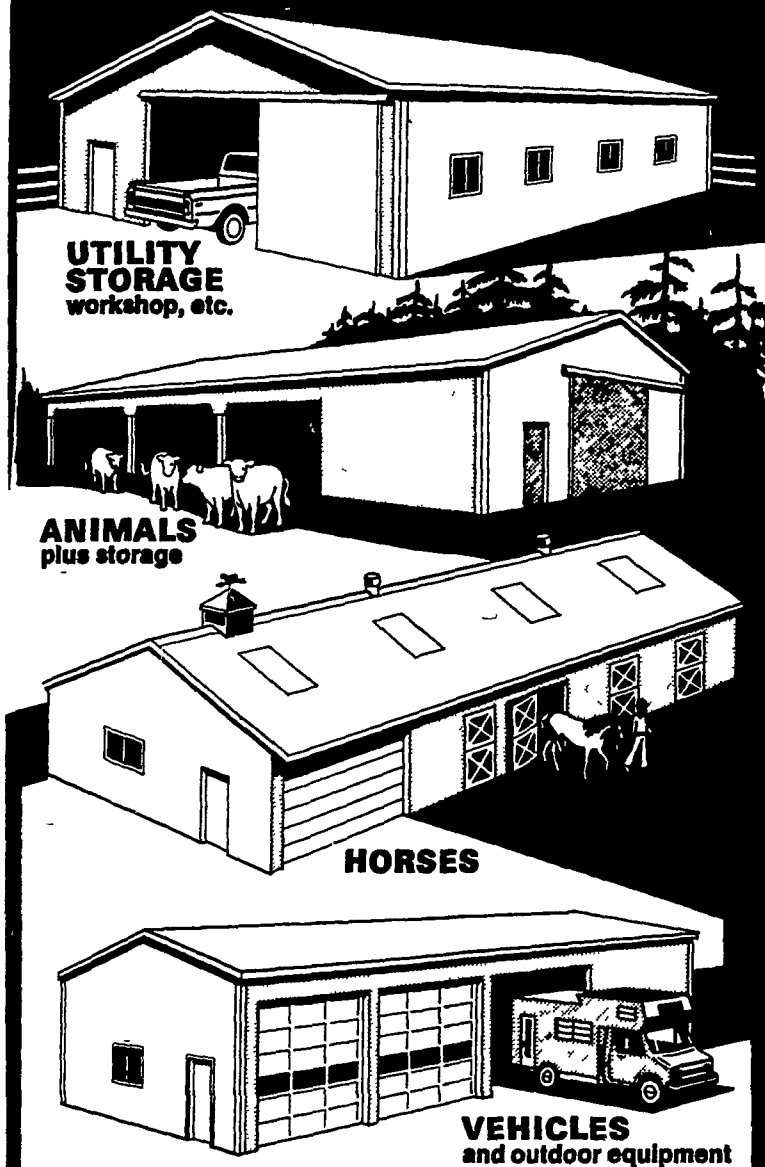
Newly elected to the post of vice-president was Walter Shaub, Stevens RD2.



Dr. Richard Peacock, Pennfield Corporation's director of technical services, examines a computer print-out sheet with instructions for mixing a dairy ration formulated for an individual herd.

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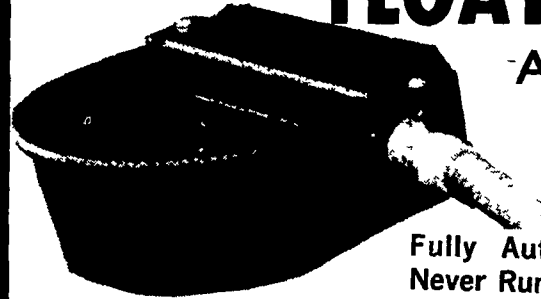
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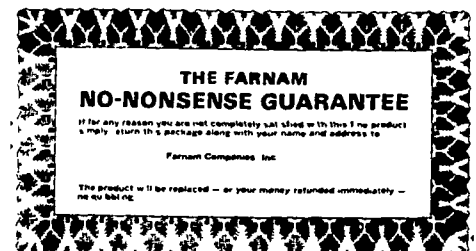


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