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Representatives Needed.

Young Executives Urge Greater Consumer Activity

The U. S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) should broaden its constituency and develop a national food policy with consumer interests in the forefront, the 1973-74 Young Executives Committee recommended today in its report, "Consumers: A Restless Constituency."

In calling for a broadening of the constituency, the report says: "American consumers represent a vital client group for the Department of Agriculture. This is the group that buys most of the food in the United States. Consumers must see themselves as beneficiaries, and not the victims, of agricultural programs. Otherwise, other institutions will arise and eclipse the authority now held in the Department as agriculture's political base declines."

The national food policy recommended would include

farm policy. "Farm program would be derived from national food goals relating to nutrition, food supplies and prices, foreign food aid, and agricultural trade, as well as from the needs of farmers," the report says.

Ideas and opinions contained in the report are those of the Young Executives Committee and do not reflect official views of the Department. This committee has been examining the relationship between consumers and the Department, with emphasis on food issues, since last fall.

The Young Executives Committee was established by the Secretary of Agriculture in April 1971 with two stated purposes: (1) to give broad inter-agency experience to young Department employees holding responsible positions and (2) to provide Depart-

ment officials with new insights into agencywide issues. Committee members are selected by the Office of the Secretary to serve for one year while maintaining normal full-time responsibilities in their regular positions. To qualify, employees must hold grade GS-12 or above, be age 35 or under, and have demonstrated potential for further growth and development.

Two broad areas of concern identified by the Committee were communications and the nature of the decision-making process. Based on interviews with numerous people in the Department, Congress, consumer groups, and the general public, the report states that many consumers feel the Department has a credibility problem. "The Public prefers to influence the policy choices of the Department rather than be

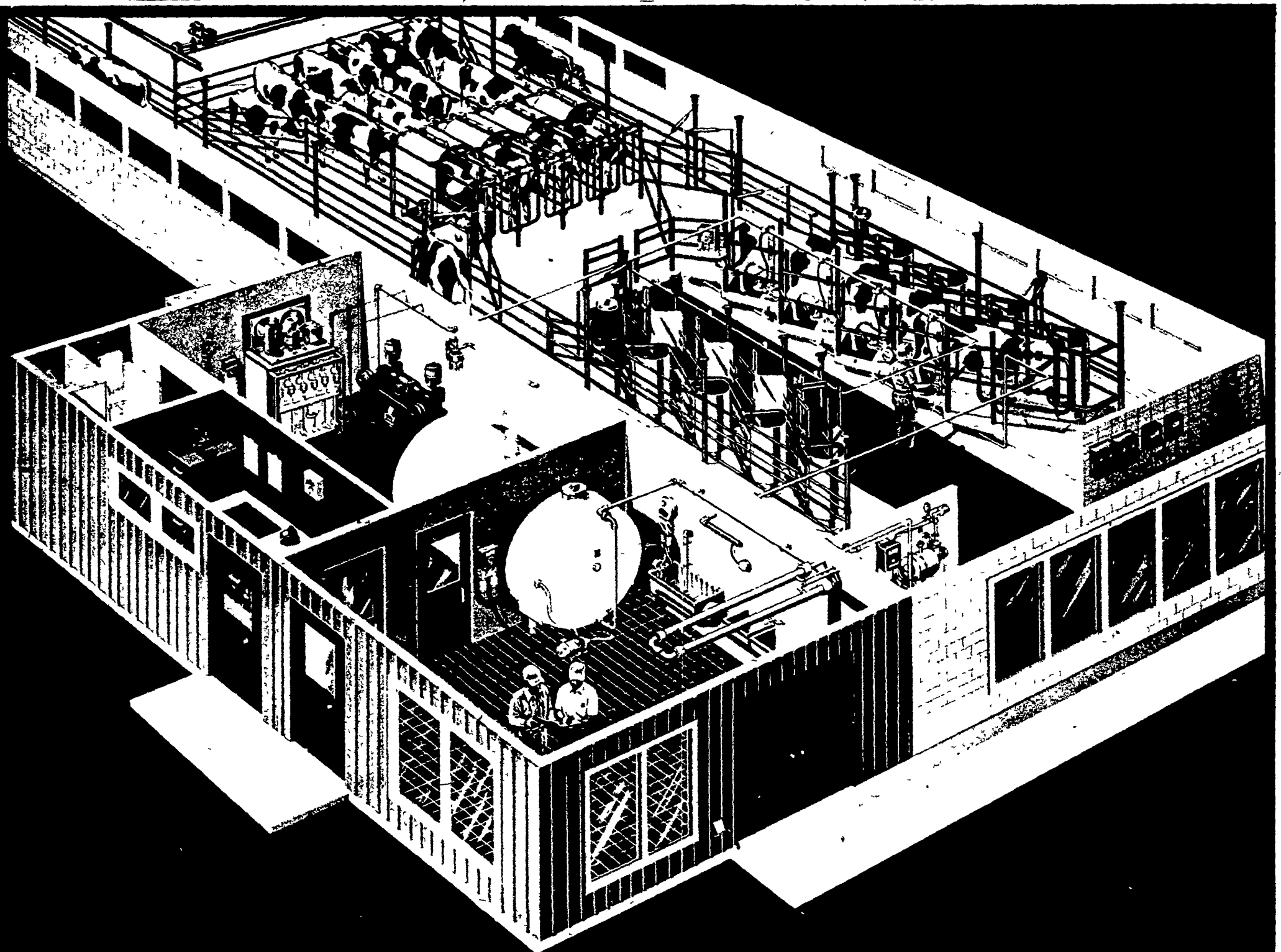
persuaded that the correct choices are being made on their behalf."

The report also makes several specific recommendations which include the establishment of an Office of Consumer Affairs, formation of a consumer advisory committee, and active solicitation of consumer views.

Single copies of the report may be obtained from Press Division, Office of Communications, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250

Cooking Kabobs

Cubes of beef broiled on skewers make for easy and enjoyable outdoor eating. Cubes can be cut from sirloin steak, or from a sirloin tip roast when they are to be marinated. Round steak, cut in strips and marinated also is an appropriate choice for threading on skewers. Try alternating pieces of fruit or vegetable with the beef for variety.



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