

# Wheat trade found lucrative

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recent years and there was a need for someone to handle commodities.

Last year he handled 250,000 bushels of grain, most of which went for export. He buys grain (mostly corn, wheat and barley) within a 50-mile radius of his home and then relays it to brokers in Baltimore.

Asked to comment on foreign trade, particularly with the USSR, Hostetter predicted that the export agreements with the Soviet Union will tend to stabilize prices. He also noted that "if you're going to sell grain to foreign countries, it should be of good quality or they'll

go elsewhere for their grain." He favors a federal grain inspection system for export, "to protect our future business with other countries." But beyond that, he'd just as soon have the government out of exports.

Hostetter expects current trends in the grain business to continue - more foreign sales, favorable prices, and expansion of acreage. This year should turn out to be an interesting one, as bumper crops are predicted for most parts of the country, and even the world. "The grain price will be determined by the weather," the grain dealer commented, "if the crop turns out to be as big as

expected, then prices will be somewhat lower."

With 450 acres of his own, Hostetter raises a good bit of corn himself. But very little of it is sold. He had 110 head of milking Holsteins, 100 heifers, and last year fattened 380 hogs in partnership with his oldest son, Bill. He and his wife, the former Joyce Landis, have four sons. All of them have expressed interest in continuing the family operation,

which is a part of the reason for the father's search for diversification.

A director for the past seven years of the Farm Credit Association and local school board, Hostetter believes strongly that each farmer should become involved in his community. He figures it's a way of keeping the farmer's activities and views before the public thereby increasing the chance of their realizing the costs of operating a farm.

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Mr. and Mrs. Wilmer Hostetter, Oxford R1, began farming on their own 17 years ago with little more than lots of love for the business. Dairying is the main theme on the farm, but grain marketing is beginning to take up more and more of Hostetter's time.

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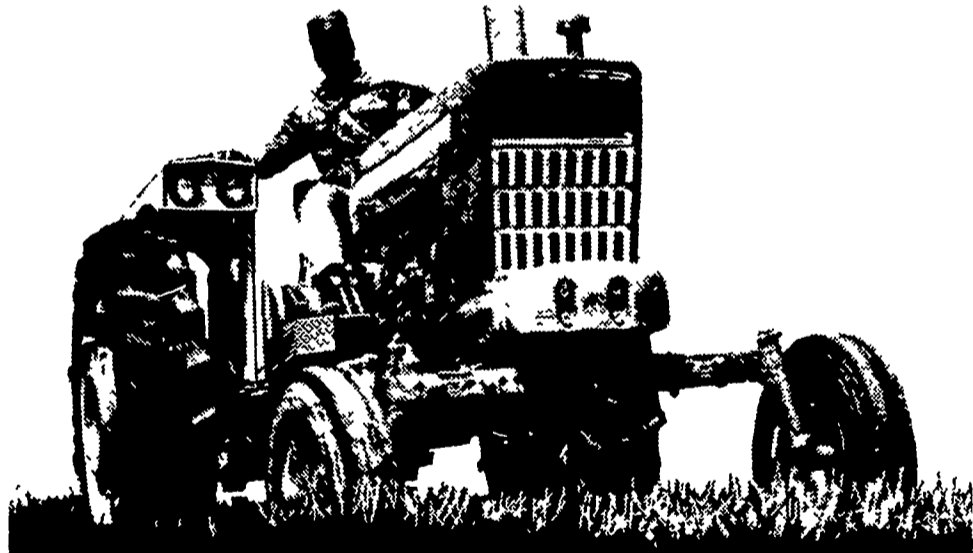
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