

Farming not a lifestyle but a business, manager says

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — Changing economic conditions and the failure of many independent farms to adopt modern business strategies are making obsolete one of America's most cherished institutions, the family farm, according to Walter Russell, vice president of Oppenheimer Industries, a leading agribusiness management and consulting firm based in Kansas City.

"The family farm is disappearing in part because its owners see it more as a way of life than as an increasingly complex business," says Dr. Russell, whose own family has operated a small farm near Emerson, Iowa, for the past 105 years.

"Too many decisions are guided by tradition rather than sound economic considerations," he observes. "Whether it's in cotton, livestock, grain or whatever, the family has established a pattern and that pattern continues no matter how much change takes place in the world outside."

"Sometimes a son learns something about business and wants to try something new. As likely as not his father will resist with the protest, 'This is the way we've always done it.'"

Russell adds, however, that unsophisticated management is by no means the only problem endangering the family farm.

"Inflation and new technology have put the small-scale farmer at an

enormous disadvantage," he explains.

"The new machinery is unbelievably expensive and today's financing costs often make the burden too much to carry. Even worse, an old standby for boosting insufficient revenues — raising livestock — now has become an enterprise that's too expensive for any families to get into."

Only about half of the nation's farms are generating enough profit consistently to fend off insolvency, says Russell, and most of those are larger operations. He also observes that many of today's successful farmers are using rented land.

For young couples planning to buy a farm today, Russell has some blunt advice: "Unless you have a

farming background, forget it.

"Too many city people have a romantic notion of farming, that all it demands is hard work. They have no idea how slim their chances of making a go of it will be, no matter how hard they are willing to work," he says.

For those whose backgrounds do qualify them to buy a farm, he recommends that no action

be taken without professional advice.

"No one would consider buying a factory without calling in outside help, but it is not so unusual to see multi-million dollar investments made in farms without the aid of consultants who specialize in agribusiness."

Accordingly, for those who already are running their own farms, Dr. Russell offers this reminder: "First

and foremost, your farm is your business, not your way of life."

Oppenheimer Industries is one of the largest cattle and ranch management firms. The 69-year-old agriculturally oriented company also specializes in property acquisition, consultancy, leases, brokerage, cattle herds and sales/leaseback options.

SCS tries flexible work week

HARRISBURG — Soil Conservation offices throughout Pennsylvania are trying something new. The employees were recently given the option of what type of work week their offices would follow.

Under Public Law 95-390, they were authorized to experiment with a flexible and compressed work schedule. The trial period is to last three years, after which time the effectiveness of the system will be studied.

According to Graham Munkittrick, State Conversationist, the program seems to be working well. It went into effect in October of this year.

The SCS employees were given the option, as work units, to have one of three types of schedules. One choice was to keep the normal five day, eight hours a day schedule. The other two options were a four day week where the employee works ten hours a day, or the 5-4/9 plan. In this plan,

the employee works 9 hours a day for eight days and eight hours on the ninth day.

What this means to the person who is seeking assistance from SCS is that the hours that assistance can be provided could possibly be from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m.

The work units that chose the four-day work week numbered 25; the 5-4/9 plan came in second with 15 work units; and 9 field offices decided to keep the normal week.

The following is a summary of work schedules for area field offices:

ALLENTOWN (4-Day Week)

Bert M-W & F 6:30-5:00
Burgess M-Th 6:30-5:00
Galanti T-F 6:30-5:00
Yohn M-Th 6:30-5:00

CARLISLE (4-Day Week)

Thrasher M-T 7:00-5:30
Allenbacher T-F 7:00-5:30
Zarichansky M-T 7:00-5:30

CHAMBERSBURG (4-Day Week)

Akers T-F 7:00-5:30

Hoffman M-Th 6:00-4:30
Schaffer M-Th 7:00-5:30

GETTYSBURG

Bentz M-F 8:00-4:30
Hann M-F 8:00-4:30
McCleaf M-F 8:00-4:30

HARRISBURG (4-Day Week)

Myers M-Th 7:00-5:30

LANCASTER (4-Day Week)

Archibald T-F 7:00-5:30
Cantore T-F 7:00-5:30
Custer T-F 7:00-5:30
Eberly M-Th 7:00-5:30
Knight M-Th 7:00-5:30
Lucas T-F 7:00-5:30
Merkel M-Th 7:00-5:30
Petrichenko M-Th 7:00-5:30
Petrus M-Th 7:00-5:30
Tohrer T-F 7:00-5:30
Yaworski T-F 7:00-5:30
Zuschlag M-Th 7:00-5:30

LEBANON FIELD OFFICE (4-Day Week)

Hellerick M-Th 7:00-5:30
Suffian T-F 7:00-5:30
Thomas T-F 7:00-5:30

LEESPORT (5-4/9 Plan)
Blake M-F 8:00-4:30
Dietrich

1st week M-W 7:00-4:30
Th 8:00-4:30
M-F 7:00-4:30

2nd week M-F 7:00-4:30
M-W 7:00-4:30
Th 8:00-4:30

Phsher

1st week M-W 7:00-4:30
Th 8:00-4:30
M-F 7:00-4:30

2nd week M-F 7:00-4:30
Shryock

1st week M-Th 7:00-4:30
F 8:00-4:30
T-F 7:00-4:30

NEW BLOOMFIELD

Balthaser M-F 8:00-4:30
Bistline M-F 8:00-4:30

NORRISTOWN (4-Day Week)

Brzostek M-Th 7:00-5:30
Voyer W-S 7:00-5:30

POTTSVILLE (5-4/9 Plan)

Bobek M-F 7:00-5:30
Off Thurs.

Worrilow M-F 7:30-5:00
T-F (8)

Wagner M-T 7:30-5:00
M-F (8)

WEST CHESTER (4-Day Week)

Barnett M-Th 7:00-5:30
Smail M & W-F 7:00-5:30
Wells T-F 7:00-6:00

High M,T,Th,F 7:00-5:30

YORK (4-Day Week)

Boyer M-F 8:00-4:30
Harwell M-F 8:00-4:30
Kile M-F 8:00-4:30
Swank M-F 8:00-4:30



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If you're feeding hogs from birth-to-market, corn-soy and Vigortone will make you more money. Your figures will prove it.

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At 45 pounds, put your pigs on Vigortone 16% starter ration. Your cost of gain will be lower, because you again prepare it yourself using homegrown feedstuffs and Vigortone.

Keep your pigs on corn-soy and Vigortone right on through growing and finishing. Your hogs are assured the essential balance and levels of amino acids, major minerals, trace minerals, and vitamins.

Make more money this year by lowering your feed costs from birth-to-market. Feed Vigortone fortified corn-soy rations.

Now is the time to compare. See your Vigortone dealer soon. He's ready to compare the performance of Vigortone's low-cost swine feeding programs with any other you name.

*Mecadox is the Pfizer trademark for its brand of Carbadox.

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