

Farm equipment manufacturers predict good year coming

BOCA RATON, FLA. — Farm equipment manufacturers, who saw sales drop sharply earlier this year, expect demand for their products to improve in 1981. In fact they say there already has been some improvement.

Improved farm commodity prices and the strong export demand for U.S. farm commodities were cited as major reasons for a brighter industry outlook in statements prepared for the 87th annual convention of the Farm and Industrial Equipment Institute held here last week.

The Institute is the trade association of the nation's leading farm equipment manufacturers.

"After a difficult first half, we're seeing improvement in some important market categories, such as large two-wheel drive tractors," Roy W. Uelner, executive vice president of the Agricultural Equipment Sector of Allis-Chalmers Corporation and current Chairman of the FIEI, said. "We expect the agricultural equipment market to grow in the late 1980 and that growth to extend into 1981."

"Our expectations for improved retail demand in 1981 are based in large part on the recent strengthening of crop and livestock prices," Chairman William A. Hewitt of Deere & Company said. "Because of the higher prices it now appears farm cash receipts this year will reach a new high of \$140 billion and improve to at least \$150 billion in 1981."

Uelner, Hewitt, and Ben Warren, president of International Harvester's Agricultural Equipment Group, all called attention to the strong exports of farm

commodities. Exports are expected to reach a new record high of \$40 billion this year, up from \$32 billion in 1979.

How much of an increase will there be in farm equipment demand?

International Harvester's Warren estimated retail unit sales of farm equipment in the United States should rebound 10 to 15 percent in 1981 but still be below 1979's high levels.

He said the upward movement in interest rates could slow the rate of recovery. He added that the profit squeeze on farmers "is another factor indicating a more gradual resurgence of equipment demand."

Estimates of next year's improved demand by other key industry executives ranged from five to 15 percent.

James H. Grommersch, assistant general manager of Ford Tractor Operations, said farm tractor sales have begun to recover somewhat from the depressed levels experienced earlier in 1980 and "improved economic prospects for 1981 lead us to expect a recovery in tractor sales of between five to 10 percent next year."

Horace G. McCarty, president of Sperry New Holland, said "we expect farm machinery unit sales to climb nine percent above this year's level."

"How big the rebound will be is anybody's guess, but 10 to 15 percent is likely and possible," R.W. Engle, vice president and general manager of Avco New Idea Farm Equipment Division, said.

Jerome K. Green, president of J.I. Case Company, said that despite considerably improved

tractor sales in the second half of this year, total 1980 tractor sales are expected to be off by 15 percent. He went on to predict, "improved sales levels are expected to continue through 1981 boosting North American tractor sales approximately 10 percent from this year's level."

Howard L. Brennenman, president of Hesston Corporation, said sales next year should be "between the levels experienced in 1970 and the low levels of 1980."

Massey-Ferguson's Darwin G. Kettering, who heads the firm's North American operations, said "We believe the farm machinery market has turned the corner, with sales moving back toward favorable levels during 1981."

Peter Perkins, vice president of FMC Corporation, said "We see the agricultural equipment business as being four to five percent better in 1981 than 1980. General agriculture looks good, not excellent but good for next year."

William J. Jensen, senior vice president of Butler Manufacturing Company's agricultural equipment group, said "higher prices for most commodities will provide an improved cash flow and more optimistic outlook for the agricultural equipment market." He said high grain prices, as a result of drought-reduced production, will cause grain to move out of storage, lowering the demand for on-farm storage. He said drying equipment will experience a similar sluggish demand.

Joseph L. Driscoll, president of The Empire Plow Company, said "the tillage equipment segment of the farm equipment

business for 1981 should be good."

Robert N. Spolum, president of Clark Equipment's Melroe Division, said "the overall outlook for the 1981 farm equipment business is a moderate improvement over 1980."

J.E. Hardy, president of Brinly-Hardy Company, said "we believe farm equipment sales will recover to some extent in the spring of 1981, but unless exports of farm products are increased, we expect surpluses to develop in the fall of 1981 and during

1982." John E. Love, president of the J.E. Love Company, said he expects the second half of 1981 to bring "increased product demand at an accelerating pace that may strain our industry's rapid reaction capabilities."

Local breeders to compete

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — Several local livestock breeders will be traveling to Louisville next month to compete in the 1980 North Americana International Livestock Exposition, scheduled for November 8-22.

Mrs. J.C. Strawbridge, Stewartstown, has entered 13 head of market hogs in the competition.

Two local shepherds will also be competing. Barbara Rohrer, Quarryville, will be showing two head of Southdown sheep, and William J. MacCauley, Atglen, will be showing his entry in the Suffolk division.

Held at the Kentucky Fair and Exposition Center, The North Americana International Livestock Exposition is entering its seventh consecutive year

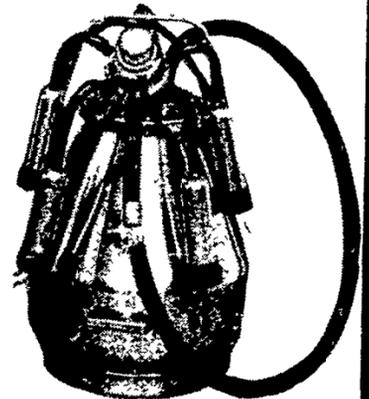
this season. Those who compete will vie for more than \$250,000 in total premiums and awards.

Beef cattle, dairy cattle, swine, Quarter Horses and sheep will be shown during the two-week Exposition, show manager, Harold Workman said entries this year promise to break the show record at 12,000 or more.



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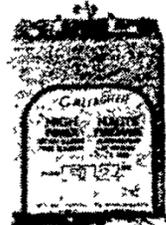


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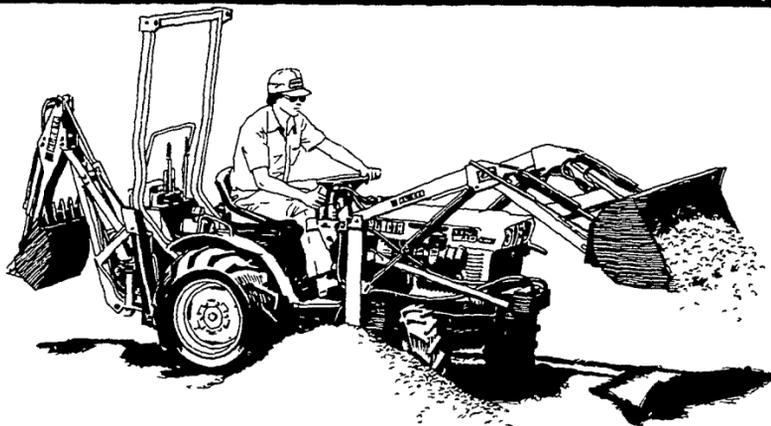
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