

# Delaware extension to offer farm record keeping service

MIDDLETOWN, Del. — Starting January 1, 1981, the Delaware Cooperative Extension Service will be offering a new service for farmers—a record keeping program.

The system makes use of the University of Delaware Computer and can be accessed through terminals located in county extension offices. To begin with, the service will be available to farmers in both New Castle and Sussex counties. (The Kent county extension office

doesn't have the necessary terminal yet).

To acquaint farmers with the new service its developer, extension farm management specialist Don Tilmon, will be holding two meetings in December.

The meeting for Sussex county farmers will take place Thursday, December 4, at 7:30 p.m. at the university's Georgetown Substation.

The New Castle county meeting will be held at Chris

Wick's Lazy Boy Farm on Route 896 near Middletown on Monday, December 15 at 7:30 p.m.

The meetings are intended to introduce farmers to the system and run through procedures for dialing up the computer, signing on and running through a typical program.

The new record keeping service will make it possible for farmers to keep records on every major crop grown in the state, plus broilers,

dairy cattle and hogs. It will keep track of on-farm grain storage as well as depreciation on field machinery plus any facilities that are involved in livestock enterprises.

It will also keep a labor summary on all these enterprises.

The program will also permit growers to keep continuous record of some of their farm management practices, such as how much fertilizer they apply or the

plant population of a particular field.

Eventually Tilmon hopes to expand the model to include irrigation enterprises as well, including irrigation expenses and depreciation on equipment. This information would probably be prorated across fields where water is applied.

A computer can do anything you can do with a paper and pencil, says Tilmon, stressing that there's nothing miraculous about the service which will be provided. It just does it a lot faster.

It can also store, recall and update large amounts of information.

A farmer who uses this service can save several hours a week, he says. On a large-scale farm, it could even save you the full-time services of someone. The system requires just a few minutes a day for filling in data on an input form. Then once a month you would spend about an hour updating this information on a terminal in your county office.

Information stored would be strictly confidential. Each user would have a secret number and password, though the extension service would like to

be able to use certain data on general yields and management practices in determining statewide averages.

Nominal cost to use the service will range from \$75 to \$100 for an average size farm. The amount of time you're connected to the computer largely determines the cost. The telephone bill is the biggest expense, says Tilmon.

Each month each participant will get a readout that provides an update on all information stored to date for that particular account. At the end of the year there will be a final printout. This becomes your formal record of financial transactions for the year.

Basically, the service provides the means for keeping your farm records much more efficiently and thoroughly, and much faster.

Information from the program can be used as an aid in developing a budget. In time, you'll also be able to take the information from an individual field or farm and analyze it for trends that may help improve your management there.

Interested farmers are encouraged to attend these meetings.

## Grange hosts Farm-City activities

TRAPPE — The Annual Farm-City dinner program was held at Keystone Grange last Wednesday. Grangers filled the hall to capacity.

A delicious roast beef family style dinner was served by William Gotshall and his committee.

The dinner prayer was offered by Mrs. William McCoy, Chaplain of the grange.

Mrs. Franklin Blank, Master, gave opening remarks and welcomed everyone to an evening of

fellowship.

A short business meeting was held after dinner. It was announced that the annual Corn-Husking Bee and candlelight tour at the Peter Wentz Farmstead was a success in spite of the cold rain that night. Winners were Paul Neumann and Mindy Wismer and Betsy Wismer and Dale Nice.

Director of Montgomery County Parks Robert Rothenberger announced the Farmstead is looking for a middle-aged person to be keeper of the stock on a part

time basis and perhaps growing into a fulltime position with living quarters.

Entertainment for the evening was Miss Rosemary Campanova of Worcester who sang "My Favorite Things" "I Could Have Danced All Night".

Also performing was Mrs. Maryann Knarr of Gilbertsville. She performed a melodious collection of patriotic and secular music on the marimba.

Main speaker was Deiter Kreig of Lancaster County. He told his life story of his family's escape from East Germany in 1955. His father

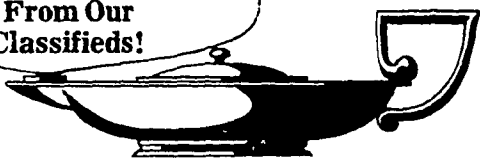
now has the largest dairy operation in Florida with over 1500 dairy cows. He spoke of the perils of the family and how they all stayed together thru it all. He was well received and entertained a standing ovation.

Remarks were heard by Master of the Pa. State Grange, Charles F. Wismer and Pomona Master F. Robert Zimmerman, who invited all 5th degree members to the quarterly Pomona meeting, Dec 13 at Valley Grange Red Hill.

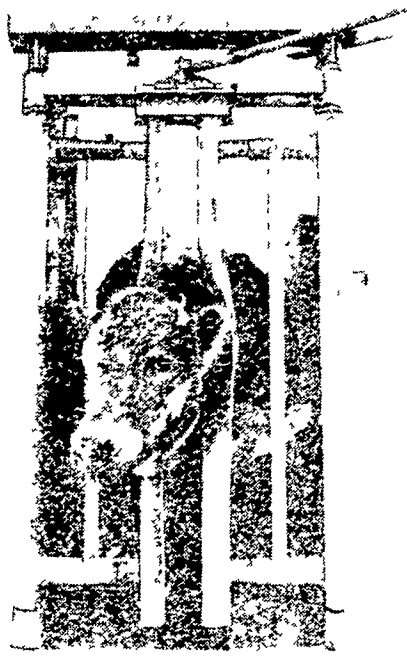
The program closed with group singing.

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