

To farm successfully, know your limitations

NEWARK, Del — It's good to be aware of your opportunities, but if you want to farm successfully, know your limitations as well. This is the advice of University of Delaware extension economist W. T. McAllister.

He describes the Delmarva peninsula as a "land of economic opportunity" for farmers.

Favorable growing conditions and nearness to a vast potential urban market along the Eastern seaboard offer many profitable alternatives in crop and livestock production. But success in any of them requires knowledge, self-discipline and a good business sense.

"When it comes to making the most of opportunities, the greatest limits are those that are self-imposed," explains McAllister. "During my training as an economist and farm management specialist, I heard a lot about maximizing income. The trouble is, most people don't want to discipline themselves hard enough and work hard enough to do this."

Take dairy farming, for instance. This can be one of the most profitable farm enterprises in Delaware. Yet the number of dairy farms in the state has steadily declined because dairying is a 12 to 14 hour a day job, seven days a week. Even with good help this can get to be a drag.

Besides tying you down, there are all sorts of government regulations to deal with when you're producing milk. As a result, unless a farmer really loves cows and needs the income, he's likely to

sell his herd as soon as he gets the mortgage paid off and raise something else instead.

Vegetable growers are another group with a special set of problems.

Instead of manure disposal and routine milk parlor inspections, they've got to deal with seasonal labor and all its attendant regulations and frustrations.

In both cases, how well a farmer handles the limitations is basically a matter of attitude, says McAllister.

"If you're doing what you really want to do, you can tolerate these problems," he says.

Limited knowledge is another self-imposed limitation.

"There are some farmers who already know so much that they aren't using, that they've never bothered to find out that it's out of date," he says. "Farming is a fast moving industry, a fast moving science, and you can be out of date in a year if you don't keep up."

And then there's the matter of management ability.

"If you're a poor manager, heaven help you," he says. "But if you're a good one, you've got lots of opportunities. Poor management is the greatest self-imposed limitation on success in farming."

By management he means the ability to plan, to organize resources. In other words, what combination of resources will enable you to take advantage of the economic opportunities that exist for you today?

It doesn't matter what farm

enterprise you choose, so long as it offers a good chance for profit. It could be a vegetable business or corn and soybeans, it could be dairying, growing broilers or hogs, or almost any other type of local farming.

Whatever you do, it's not going to be worth anything unless you can put it all together.

Summing it all up, the economist says that success in farming depends largely on how you combine and use the resources available to you in a farm enterprise with high profit potential. These resources include land, labor, capital and credit. They also include farming knowledge and skills, a high level of motivation

and personal discipline, and a good business sense including a basic understanding of economic principles as they relate to management decisions.

If you can put all these together, you can succeed as a farmer because the economic opportunities for agriculture are here.

Dutchman FFA scores big

ANNVILLE — Members of the Anville-Cleona Little Dutchman FFA scored big in the State Project Book Contest this year. Medals won by all FFA members from Lebanon County included 25 gold, 9 silver and 13 bronze tops for any county in the State.

The Little Dutchman chapter had won a total of 16 medals. They included gold medal winners Melody Keller, 1st place with sheep breeding, Dawn Dohner, 2nd place with sheep breeder, Ed Hostetter, 1st place with veal, Robert Kreider, 1st place with poultry meat and 2nd place with Two Enterprises, Daryl Balmer, 3rd place with on-farm work and 4th place with Two Enterprises,

Donald Baer, 1st place with tree fruits, Gary Mase, 1st place with Dairy herd, David Bomgardner, 2nd place with Dairy herd and Henry Martin, 2nd place with Home Improvements.

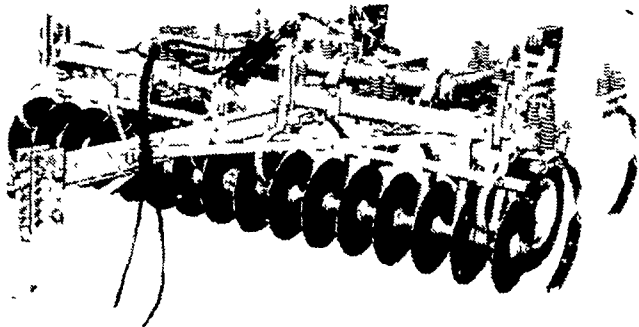
Silver medal winners were Brian Sell, 1st place with veal; and Jeff Reigel, 1st place with poultry

meat. Bronze medal winners were Sam Howard, 4th place with on-farm work; Brian Sell, 9th place with on-farm work; Stuart Lemon, 1st place with skills & tasks and Ag Mechanics Gary Mase got 3rd place in the Interstate Milk producers.



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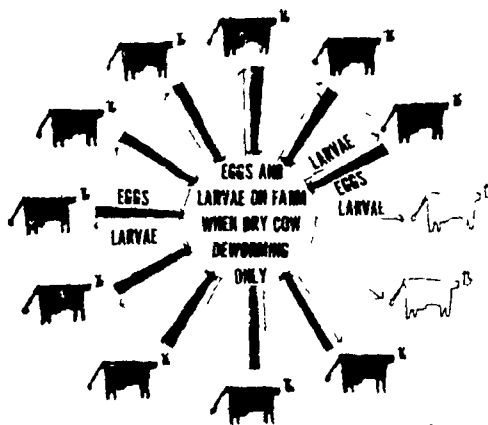
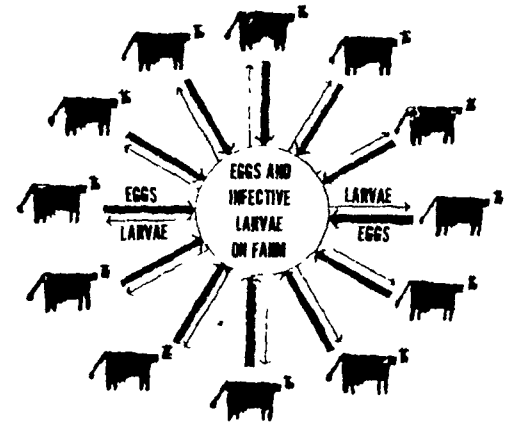
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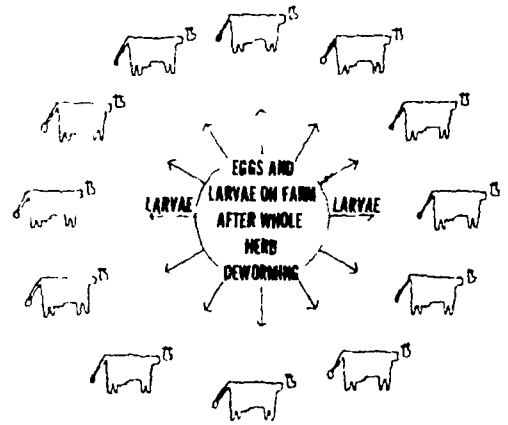
THE LOGIC BEHIND WHOLE HERD DEWORMING

In an unwormed dairy herd, all animals deposit worm eggs on the farm and all animals are subject to further recontamination from infective larvae as herd parasitism continues unchecked.



In a herd dewormed only at freshening, an average of 10 out of 12 animals have not been dewormed. Because egg deposition has not been significantly reduced, and because of infective larvae already present on the farm, all animals are subject to heavy further recontamination.

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