

# Farm Talk

Jerry Webb

## Let corporate farms sink or swim

An increasing number of state governments have established laws banning completely, or placing severe restrictions on, corporate farm activity. Almost one-fourth of the states — most of them western and mid-western farm states, have such laws and the list is growing.

If you're fond of the family farm you may applaud these actions. Beware — laws that control entry can also control exit. And something that was set up to control the bad guys may also work against the good ones.

On the surface, a law that restricts the movement of multi-company corporate giants into the corn fields and cow barns of rural America seems like a good idea. But let's look deeper.

In the first place, those big corporations aren't that hot when it comes to farming. Many of them tried it with disastrous results.

They couldn't sell out and go back to town fast enough. A few have stuck it out, but pose no great threat to family farming.

Over the years farming hasn't been profitable enough to attract much corporate money. Beyond that, there are just too many uncertainties. Board members and corporate managers aren't geared to financial loss due to hail storms and flooded fields. They'd rather spend the stockholders money on things that can be counted on. They understand assembly lines, production per man hour, things like that. They don't understand corn blight, dysentery, and wet ground.

Another thing farmers must consider before applauding too loudly for anti-corporation legislation is the direction all agriculture is headed. The word is big. Big farms with big equipment and big money needs will rule

agriculture in the future. In fact, they do already.

While most of these are still essentially family farms, they're organized differently than they used to be. The family farm corporation is commonplace and plans that involve pooling of resources and talent between individual farmers are increasing. Laws now on the books could restrict these kinds of arrangements.

Here are examples of some

corporate farming restrictions:

- North Dakota — all corporations are prohibited from producing food.
- Kansas — no farm corporation of more than 10 shareholders and no more than 5,000 acres.
- South Dakota — no more than a 20 percent increase in acreage in any five-year period.
- Minnesota — five shareholder limit and a majority must live on the land or actively engage in farming.
- Missouri — two-thirds of cor-

poration's income must result from farming.

Obviously, these are the harshest parts of several detailed laws aimed at saving agriculture from big city money.

I guess the point that really upsets me about this concept is that governmental units are deciding who will be allowed to farm. If a corporation can be excluded, why not lawyers and doctors?

Maybe the legal heirs to a farm  
(Turn to Page D34)

## THE Webster LINE

THE WOODEN BODIES

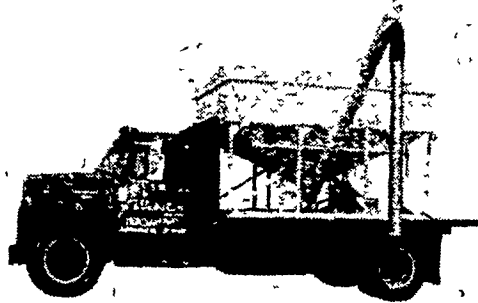


★ 8 Ton Buggy-Spreads damp lime & fertilizer from 100 to 3000 lb.

★ Also used as grain wagon and unloads in 6 minutes

**PLACE YOUR ORDER NOW!**

Used Equipment Available



THE TENDER THAT WON THE EAST

- ★ 5 ton fertilizer spreader
- ★ 5 - 8 - 10 ton fertilizer and grain tenders.

**S.L. WEBSTER & SONS, Inc.**

Federalburg, MD 21632  
301-754-5511

Salesman - Donald O. King

Sealcrete can paint your farm buildings quickly and inexpensively...

Call for Free estimate



HYDRAULIC AERIAL EQUIPMENT



Contact  
Allen B. Shirk

**Seal Crete, Inc.**  
RD2, Ephrata, PA  
717-859-1127

## 30% LIQUID NITROGEN

BY THE TRAILER LOAD OR BY THE TON

To increase small grain yields topdress w/30% Nitrogen solution. Applicators & Application service

- Premium corn starters
- Spreaders & spreading service
- Limestone
- **SALT** - Water softener & feeding salt

**F.H. KREIDER**

2400 Dairy Rd.  
Lancaster, PA 17601  
717-898-0129

## SMUCKER'S SALES SERVICE, INC.

RD #2, BOX 21  
NEW HOLLAND, PA 17557

SALES & SERVICE

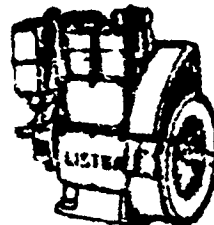
FOR:

**LISTER, PERKINS & DEUTZ DIESELS**

AUTHORIZED DEALER FOR DEUTZ



2 Cyl. F2L-912



We Have SR2 12 h.p. Lister Diesels, as is or rebuilt.

- Good used diesel engines
- New Sputnik wheels and parts

We mount diesels on balers, crimpers, cornpickers, etc.

Bulk Tanks, with something in common...

**PERFORMANCE!**

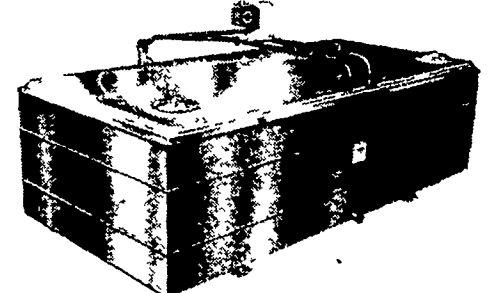
AMBASSADOR  
500 To 6000 Gal

OR

D-4 DIPLOMAT  
200 To 1000 Gal. Sizes



**GIRTAN**  
We do the complete installations.  
12 volts D.C. or 115 - 230 volts AC



- FULLY-FLOODED GIRTAN COLD PLATE
- STAINLESS STEEL CONSTRUCTION
- CAN USE R-12 OR R-22 REFRIGERANT
- URETHANE (FOAMED IN PLACE) INSULATION

FOR PROMPT SERVICE CALL  
717-354-4158 OR IF NO ANSWER  
CALL 717-354-4374