

Georgetown substation gets new computer

NEWARK, Del. — The university of Delaware Georgetown substation has purchased and installed a TRS80-Model 16 Radio Shack Microcomputer for use by research and Extension personnel. The unit also is available to Delaware residents through county Extension agricultural, home economics and 4-H agents.

According to Extension farm management specialist Don Tilmon, the new computer can help farmers and consumers make decisions on a wide range of topics. "We now have about 65 programs and are acquiring more all the time," he says. These are ready and running on the machine.

"We have obtained programs from a number of land grant universities including Clemson, Mississippi State, Oklahoma State and Penn State, he says.

There are programs for analyzing grain storage decisions, formulating dairy cow rations, and keeping swine reproductive records. One called "Crops" compares double-cropping soybeans to growing them full-season. Two farm records programs are available. A third, which Tilmon developed on the University of Delaware's main frame computer, is now being transferred onto the TRS80.

Programs for young people include "Teen" from Clemson University which establishes a budget routine for teenagers. Another analyzes the cost of driving a car.

For Taxpayers there are programs on income tax estimation and estate tax planning. A program called "Speedy" is for family budgeting.

Since the advent of the microcomputer several years ago, extension specialists at land grant colleges across the country have been busy developing such programs to help both farmers and nonfarmers.

Tilmon considers the TRS80 among the most powerful of currently available microcomputers in terms of computing speed and data storage capacity. The machine is described by its manufacturer as a small business computer. The all-in-one unit includes a built-in 12-inch black and white video screen, 8-inch floppy disk drive (its memory system)

and a detachable keyboard similar to that of a standard IBM typewriter. There is also a high quality printer.

A single 8-inch diskette costs only \$5.50 and can store information equal to what would be produced by typing 70 words a

minute nonstop over a 24-hour period. Home computers like this now cost less than half the price of a pick-up truck.

There is no service charge for using the new computer at the substation. "It is available as an educational tool," Tilmon says. A

comparable unit is already in place at Newark.

Delaware residents interested in using either of these TRS80 units should contact the county extension office in Newark 302-738-2506, Dover 302-736-1448 or Georgetown 302-856-5250.



Extension farm management specialist Don Tilmon checks out new microcomputer acquired for use at U. of Del. Georgetown substation. Computer can help farmers and other Delaware residents with decision-making tasks.

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