



Brockett's Ag Advice

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Take A Look

Most farmers are not yet at the disaster level. Unfortunately many farmers are heading in that direction. What about you? When did you last really take a look at your business? Yes I know that this

is a poor time of the year to ask that question. Most of you are up over your head in planting and harvesting. You really don't feel you have the time to analyze or look at your business. That is one of the problems. When is it ever

convenient to sit down and really analyze your business? Why not right now? What better time is there than when your planting problems, harvest problems, and bill paying problems are all fresh in your mind?

Did you ever stop to think that you may be working your way right out of existence? Did you ever pause to wonder if there was a better way to do something? Did you ever develop a plan of action or as some would say set some goals? Sometimes farmers work so hard that they only get half as much done as they could have "if they had a plan of action then followed

it". Some of the work some farmers do is like feeding grain in the mud to a bunch of pigs. They get some good out of it but the work they put out getting it is out of proportion to the feed they get.

Set Goals

I heard a young athlete repeat some wise old words recently. He told a group of graduating seniors to set goals. He said "you need both long term and short term goals". The long term goals are what you hope to accomplish in a year or a life time. They may change along the way due to circumstances or changes in yourself but then new goals should take place of the old ones. Short term goals should be set so you can work towards the long term goal.

Sometimes the short term goals are self disciplinary in nature. Things such as I am going to do May's records on June 4 or I am going to write down the yields from each field each day. One of the best ideas he proposed was that all goals, both short term and long term, should be put in writing.

One goal you might set would be to properly maintain equipment. Perhaps a calendar for changing

oil, lubricating, checking bolts, etc. would help you do this on a more regular basis. Perhaps this would save time and repair bills in the future. Another goal would be to maximize profits on your cows. Short term goals for this would be (1) periodic forage tests, (2) balanced feeding program, (3) producing top quality forage, (4) better monitoring of your DHIA records so you can reduce grain feed more systematically, (5) better use of available resources - more feeding times or division of animals, etc.

Once you have set some goals and put them in writing, read them fairly often. Check off those you have completed. Believe it or not I do this with my schedule. That is the only way I get my news columns done on time. Recently I wrote these goals down (1) news column, (2) partnership agreement, (3) joint venture agreement, (4) letter about a credit problem, (5) report on a farm visit, (6) clean off desk. I got the first 5 done but set a low priority on number 6 which I guess is why I always have such a messy desk.

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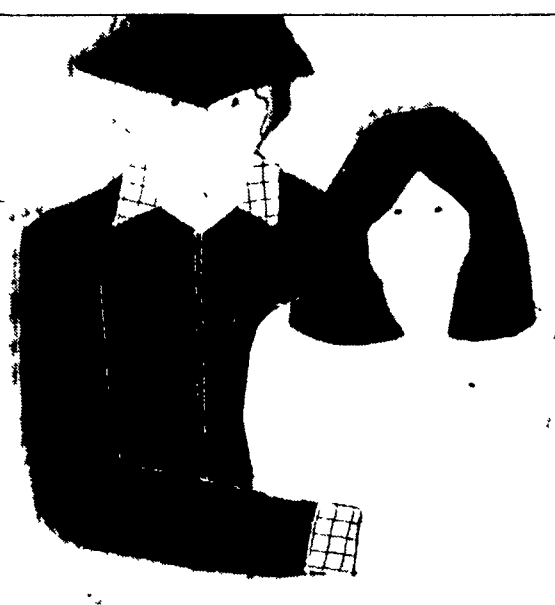
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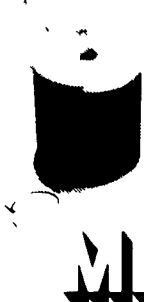
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