

Brockett's Ag Advice

By John E. Brockett
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THINK!
Farmers are inherently ingenious people. They can usually devise all types of things to make work easier, do an impossible job, or beat the system. I wish a good farmer or two or three would come up with a way to painlessly help a person think things through.

If farmers would spend as much time and effort thinking about financial management as they do about developing that nifty gimmick, there would be no farmers in trouble.

I have always admired the farmer who is enough of an engineer to send ideas into farm magazines. Many of the ideas should be patented because they are so practical and take quite a lot of thought and trial and error.

If I could only find a way to harness that tremendous creativity. I would then throw out all of the management stuff from the colleges and think tanks. I would start from scratch and get those creative farmers to develop a record system that was foolproof, easy, practical, and usable.

Then I would challenge them to develop a system to analyze the information from those records. They could do it, too.

Finally, I would beg them to come up with a way to use those records and analysis to project "what would happen if—" This last item would probably cause them the most trouble because of the imponderables in our imperfect society. Even so I would have confidence that they would reach that goal, too.

There is nothing that farmers cannot do if they really put their minds to it. That is why this country has the best farmers in the world.

If you are a farmer, you also have the capability to think and think constructively. It does not take a college education to be a thinker. It is not necessary to have a PhD to be a profound thinker. You do not have to have a lot of spare time to be a thinker.

You do have to have the desire to improve, to change for the better, to make something work, or to develop something that others have said was impossible. All of these things farmers have been doing since this country of ours was settled by free farmers who had to "make do" with whatever there was available.

No one ever promised those farmers a free lunch. They made their management decisions the old fashioned way — they worked them out or starved.

Would Quotas Work?

Every time we have economic problems, some people bring up the idea of having quotas. This occurred back in the 50s and 60s. It is happening again today.

Those who already have a high base of course are the most in favor of a quota. Unfortunately there are a lot of questions that would have to be answered.

- Who would own the quota base? The individual or the farm or the county or the state?

- Who would set the value of that quota in the event it was sold?

- How would the base be set? The same for everyone, historical production for the farm or in-

dividual, amount per county or state to be divided among active farmers.

- What about price of product? Using cost of production or price the market would pay or an annual negotiated price.

- If cost of production, whose cost would be used and what factors should be figured into that cost? Using an average cost of production would mean some people would still be operating at a loss. Should they be subsidized? By whom? You or general tax revenues (which include you).

- Would anything prevent you from being bought up by one or two syndicates and then moved to another area or state? It takes a certain amount of farm business in

an area to maintain farm service and supply businesses.

- What if a farmer was in a deficit area and was offered a higher price for an unlimited

amount of the product upon which there was a quota? Who would rule on whether he or she could sell that product?.

Dauphin benefit auction scheduled Apr. 5

HARRISBURG — The Gratz Fairgrounds will be the location of the Second Annual Ag Center Consignment Auction on Saturday, April 5. The auction will benefit the future Dauphin County Agriculture and Natural Resources Center that will be located near the intersection of Routes 225 and 325 in Middle Paxton Township. Commitments from anyone

interested in donating or consigning farm equipment, new and used tools, lumber, household goods, lawn and garden equipment, antiques and collectables are now being accepted.

Those interested in donating items should contact the Dauphin County Conservation District, 558-1090, or the Cooperative Extension, 652-8460.



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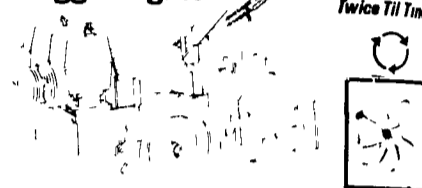


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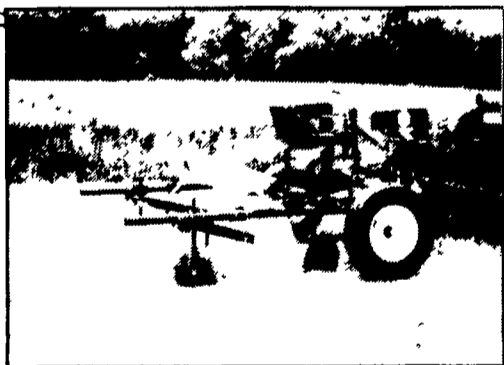
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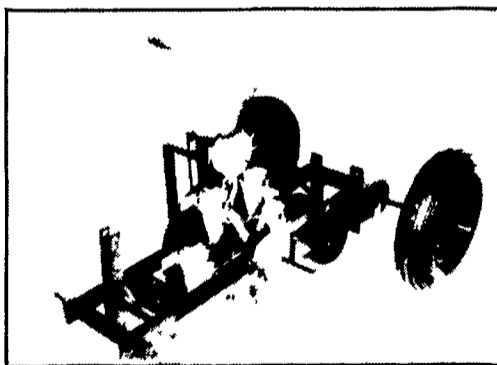
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