

Deutz-Allis: Farm Equipment Sales To Accelerate In 1989

MILWAUKEE, WI. — Economic recovery in the farm sector will resume in late 1988 and accelerate through 1989, resulting in 5 to 10 percent greater farm equipment sales by the end of next year, predicts Dave Maaske, Deutz-Allis manager of market economics.

"We feel very positive about the agricultural outlook in 1989," Maaske said. "We see very strong sales gains in large farm tractors and self-propelled combines, and significant gains in tillage and hay tools."

The 1988 drought, which squelched a brief sales recovery in mid-season of 1988, should prove only a brief interruption in the upward economic trend that began in late 1987. According to a pre-drought report by the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago, January 1988 marked the seventh consecutive month in which tractor sales improved over year-earlier figures, while combine sales increased for the fifth consecutive month in January.

Industry sales in 1988 are expected to rise by 5 percent compared to a year ago, including the effect of the drought.

Barring an encore of last season's drought, increasing export demand for North American grain and favorable crop prices should spur the farm economy recovery beyond earlier forecasts, accord-

ing to Maaske.

Realized gross farm income is likely to rise by 4 or 5 percent in 1988 and 1989. And government farm programs may likely encourage acreage expansion in the 25 to 30 million-acre range. Farmland values in the Midwest have risen an average of 12 percent during the past 12 months, according to a recent survey.

"Farmers are entering a recovery phase in the farm business cycle with a fleet of machines showing the highest average age in 20 years," Maaske commented.

"The size and condition of tractors, combines and other implements that have been in service since the 1970s may not be adequate to handle over 25 million more crop acres. Couple that with the

fact that new technology generally reduces per-unit production costs and many farmers are more financially secure, and you have a favorable environment for equipment retail sales," he added.

Industry inventories are the lowest in years, too, which will work toward the benefit of both farmers and equipment dealers. But prudent farmers will place orders ahead of the heavy-use sea-

son to lock in the best price, selection and guaranteed availability, he said. Deutz-Allis has specific marketing programs in place to meet this need.

"Farm equipment suppliers that have emerged from the restructuring of the past decade are leaner, stronger and better able to adapt to changing market conditions," Maaske said.

Abbott & Cobb Holds Annual Sales Meeting

FEASTERVILLE, PA — Abbott & Cobb, Inc., nationwide vegetable seed distributors, held its annual sales meeting in McAllen, Texas.

President Arthur C. Abbott led discussions during four days of meetings at the McAllen Airport Hilton Inn. Attending were A&C nationwide seed consultants, branch managers and staff members.

Seed industry guest speakers included Hank Hayes and Jim McConnell of Petoseed Co.; Glen Kaufmann of Royal Sluis, Inc.; Hideo Takahashi and Angel Aguilar of Sakata Seed America; and Bob Munger, Gene Hookstra, and Ed Hefley of Sunseed Co. There was also a special video presenta-

tion made by Steve Springer and John Nelson of Northrup King and Co.

The meeting concluded with a banquet at which many employees were commended for service to Abbott & Cobb in 1988. Special recognition went to Pete Suddarth, Salesman of the Year, of Palmetto, Florida; Mike Key, Regional Manager of the Year, of McAllen, Texas; and Earl Hess, Employee of the Year, of national headquarters in Feasterville, Pennsylvania.

Abbott & Cobb, Inc., is the largest independent distributor of vegetable seed in North America. Its national headquarters are located in the Philadelphia, PA, area; the company also maintains branches in California, Florida, Michigan, Texas and Mexico.



Abbott & Cobb's national seed consultants gathered recently for their 1988 annual meeting in McAllen, Texas. Some who attended are, from left, front row: Pete Suddarth, Bryant Long, Hector Leal Lacavex, George Humes, Dennis Burrell, and Frank Moore. Middle row: Joe Rucker, Brian Nungesser, Keith Peterson, Louie Valdivia, Buck White, Ignacio Cepeda Castaneda, Tommy Seal, Robert Elliott, and Mike Key. Back row: Gene Bumbera, Charlie Massie, Atlee

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