

# Plan A Successful New Year In Agriculture

NEWARK, DE — The new year offers the chance of a clean slate in terms of farm management practices. But an important first step, strategic planning, is often hard to take.

"Planning is important for any business," says Jay Windsor, University of Delaware Sussex County Extension agricultural agent. "But it's often the hardest job we have. The very act of planning can be unsettling. It forces us to face the fact that the goals we have in mind may not be realistic."

To help farmers improve farm financial management, including strategic planning, county Extension offices in Delaware have available a series of video tapes that cover the principles of farm management in easy-to-understand, step-by-step format. Windsor says the video tapes, originally produced by Cooperative Extension in the Mid-West, are based on sound practices that

are applicable to this area. Strategic planning is the subject of the first video in the nine-part series.

"It's tempting to avoid planning," the agent says. "By planning we're reminded that the future is risky. Planning takes time that could be spent on tasks with more immediate results. And it may cause conflict to surface within your family as you set priorities."

Strategic planning starts with some fundamental questions. Try to include your family in the planning process so that everyone will pull together for a common goal, the agent explains.

First ask yourself if you are in the right business. Second, what are your goals? What does it really cost you to produce your crop? Will interest rates go up or down? Will land value increase?

These questions have a real impact on your future.

Windsor says strategic planning

involves seven steps and related questions.

1. Identify your goals. What do you wish to accomplish?
2. Inventory your resources. What do you have to work with?
3. Analyze your business performance. What have you done in the past?
4. Assess the future environment. What would you like to do?
5. Decide on a plan. What will you do?
6. Implement the plan. How will you get to your goal?
7. Evaluate your plan. Is it working?

"Because it involves a lot of self-evaluation, strategic planning's not easy," Windsor notes. "Long-range planning specifically compels us to ask for help when we realize we don't have all the answers. It is action oriented and forces a person to make decisions when they need to be made. Your plans should be long-range, but also flexible."

"Strategic planning does not guarantee success," Windsor says, "but it certainly improves the chances."

In addition to the initial tape Strategic Planning, the series

includes Identifying Farm/Ranch and Family Goals, Selecting and Implementing Farm Record System, Preparing a Balance Sheet, Preparing an Income Statement, Analyzing Financial Performance, Preparing a Cash Flow Statement, Analyzing Business Adjustments: Whole-Farm Budgeting, and Analyzing Business Adjustments: Partial-Farm Budgeting.

Windsor suggests that the video tapes be viewed one at a time in order. To borrow a tape, call the county Extension office in Newark: 451-8965, Dover: 697-4000, or Georgetown: 856-7303.

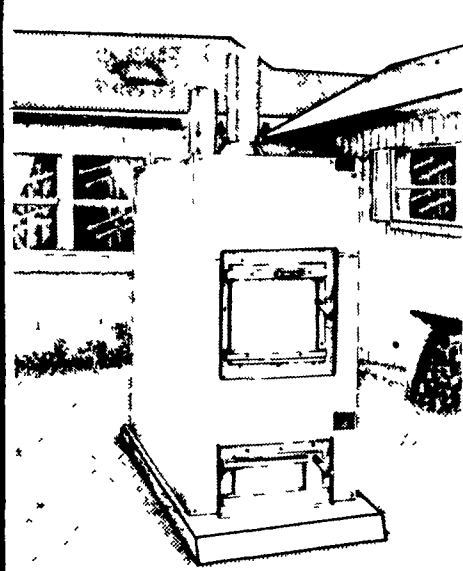
## Limousin Feeder Calf Directory Lists More Than 109,000

DENVER, CO. — The 1988 North American Limousin Feeder Calf Directory has reached an all time high of 109,744 steers and heifers. This list contains feeder cattle for sale from cattleman from 38 states. The directory has grown rapidly over the past three years from a start of 30,000 to 80,000 to the current 109,744 head. The directory contains information such as sex, weight, month the

calves are available, name and address of the owner, and the percentage of Limousin blood.

The directory is available at no charge to feedlots, order buyers or any interested person wishing to purchase Limousin feeder cattle. Also, if you would like your Limousin feeder cattle listed, contact the North American Limousin Foundation, P.O. Box 16767, Denver, Co., 80216 or call 303/296-8835.

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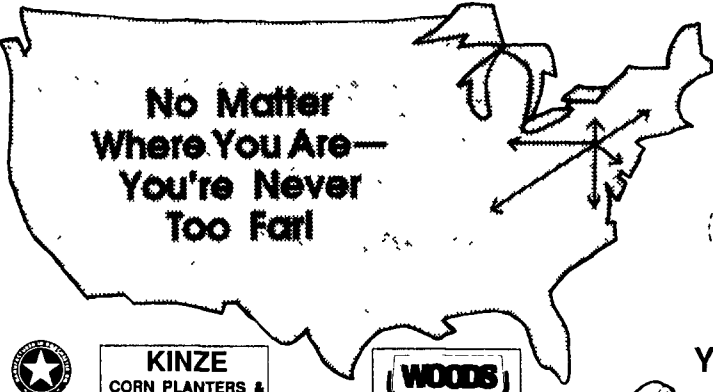
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