

FARM MANAGEMENT

EMPLOYEE SUPERVISION

By Bruce Kreider
Farm Management Agent

Every farm manager who wants a productive work force must learn the art and diplomacy of worker supervision. This column will look at the qualities needed for this task, and some of the practical keys to good supervision and evaluation of workers.

Qualities of Supervisors

A survey of farm employees, as reported in Cornell University's Human Resource Management letter #4, reported that workers expect the following qualities from their supervisor:

- Knows the employee's job
- Understands the worker's perspective
- Is fair - no favorites
- Is patient, sincere, firm, considerate and tactful.

James Tappan, an Arizona dairyman, spoke about authority in a presentation at Cornell's Large Dairy Herd Management Conference in 1985. He pointed out that a supervisor's effectiveness is based

on the following components of supervisory authority:

- Authority of Competence (they know the job and the worker)
- Authority Of Position (a clear chain of command and delegation)
- Authority Of Personality (will listen and communicate well)
- Authority Of Character (are fair, patient, etc.)

The supervisor with these qualities develops rapport with the workers as they learn to trust and respect the "boss". This all sounds great in theory, but what are some practical ways of developing supervisory rapport?

Keys To Supervision

Let's look at the two basic questions that every worker needs to answer. What is my job? How am I doing? Obtaining these answers is the major task of the worker's supervisor, whether there are 2 or 200 employees. It can be a difficult or embarrassing job and many of us try to avoid it at all costs. However, it is an important job that must be done regularly to help workers to be productive.

1. The employer must clearly

define the job. This should be written as a job description - truly a rare item among farm employers. This job description should specify tasks, hours, performance standards and who the employee must answer to.

In many cases, the employer is either not sure of the specific tasks to be done, or is unwilling to tell the employee all of the jobs which will be assigned to him. In other cases, the employee must answer to two or three bosses - an impossible position.

2. The employer must communicate the job description clearly to the employee. It is not enough to have a good job description. Both parties must understand it, agree to it and follow it.

3. The supervisor must provide guidance and training initially, and establish the lines of communication. If a worker can talk with his/her boss, and the boss listens, the worker will have a more positive attitude. Many employers will need to set up a regular schedule to ensure that this communication does take place. Otherwise, the only time these discussions occur is in a hostile setting when there is a grievance.

4. Good work deserves approval and praise - poor work requires constructive criticism. The goals and standards from the job description create the basis on which to judge work performance. Try to catch them doing something good! The training, guidance and communications should iron out the minor misunderstandings, leaving only larger problems for disciplinary action.

5. A good supervisor provides opportunities for employees to increase their responsibilities as worker skills improve. If this involves more training, for the benefit of the business, the supervisor should encourage and support the effort.

6. Increased employee responsibilities require that increased authority and increased rewards and incentives be offered to the worker. A supervisor has a diffi-

cult job that involves the use of many interpersonal skills. It takes planning and intentional effort to successfully supervise employees. However, the rewards of a good supervisor are great, both professionally and in their personal relationships. After all, the skills of a good supervisor are also the skills of a good parent and teacher.

Next week: Salary and Incentives

Granger Lanius

Nominated For PMMB

HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — Donald E. Lanius, a member of Red Lion Grange #1781, York County, appeared before the Senate Agriculture Committee on Wednesday, September 27, 1989 to voice testimony for his nomination to serve on the Pennsylvania Milk Marketing Board, (PMMB).

Lanius has been nominated to serve as a member of the PMMB for a term of six years. He served previously on PMMB from November 10, 1976 to November 17, 1982. Lanius has been a dairy farmer his entire life. He and his wife operate a 193-acre farm in Windsor Township, York County. "As a result of my previous opportunities, I bring to this position 6 years of service to the Commonwealth," he said.

A few of his honors include: Past president of the Pennsylvania State Association of County Fairs,

past chairman of the Federation of Fairs, past president of the Pennsylvania Poland China Swine Association and a charter member of the York Township Lions Club.

"I seek this PMMB position because I feel I can bring experience, a strong desire to serve and a life-long commitment to agriculture and the dairy industry," said Lanius.

The Pennsylvania State Grange is a family farm organization representing 42,000 farm and rural Pennsylvanians.

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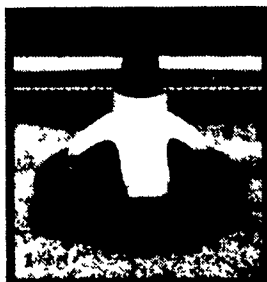


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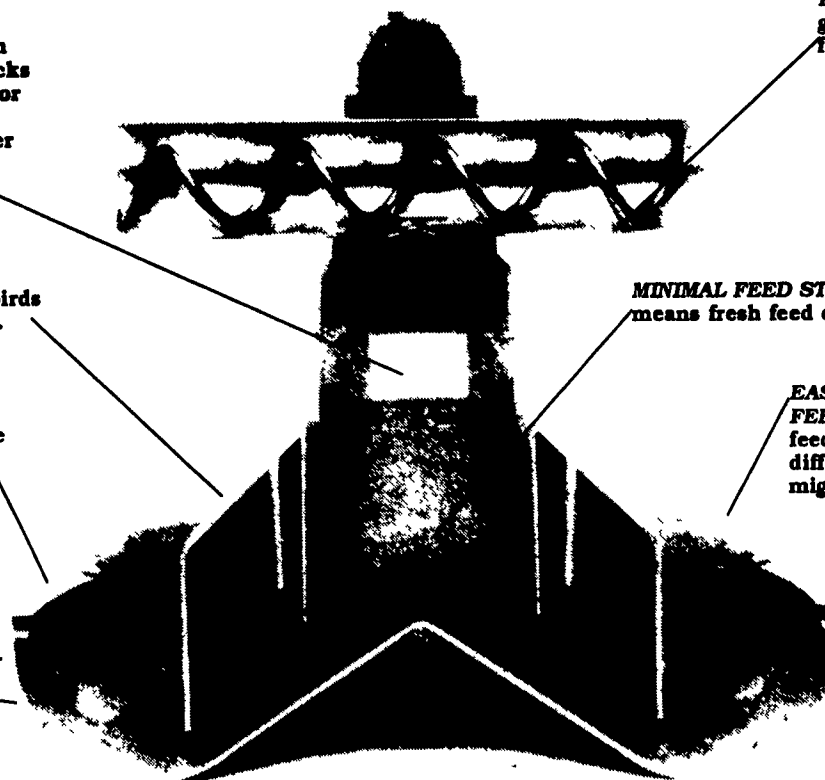
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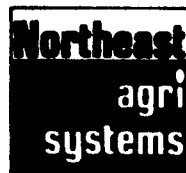


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