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EFFECTIVE TIME MANAGEMENT FOR POULTRY PRODUCERS

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Each of us are facing pressures to "do more with less." Many of us bought fancy computer systems to

do more work for us and save us time.

Years ago people were forecasting that the work week would decrease to 35 hours or maybe as low as 30 hours. After the investments in computer systems and many systems of automation to improve efficiencies, we find that the work week has actually increased. What happened?

I am not exactly sure, but effective time management will help us regain some of the hours that are stolen from us each week because

of inefficient management of time. An anecdote is told about a woodsman who bought a new ax. With his new ax, he was able to chop 20 trees per day. After a while he found he was working more hours per day and chopping fewer trees. Finally it got to the point where he was only chopping 10 trees and working 16 hours per day. When someone asked him why he didn't sharpen his ax, he responded, "I'm too busy; I have to chop down more trees."

We probably cannot identify one single thing to do that will significantly decrease the demands on our time. However, there are many small incremental changes that we can make to increase the effectiveness of our time utilization.

For example, saving just 30 seconds every five minutes translates into saving one hour for every ten-hour work day. Such time savings are indeed significant!

The first essential requirement to use time more efficiently is to create a neat, efficient, organized work environment. Spending modest amounts of money to create an organized work environment is money well spent if you can save several hours of time per week.

With many demands on everyone's time, it is easy to lose sight of

the really important things that need to be done. Often we find we are spending our time "putting out brush fires." Developing and using a master "to do" list is very effective. At the end of each day, create a "to do" list for the next day, with the items of highest priority at the top of the list.

Undoubtedly, there will be days when not everything is completed on your list; however, it is important to start each day with a clear vision of your priorities for the day rather than just diving into the work.

Each of us knows our individual prime time of the day. For some, it may be the period before sunrise until breakfast. For others it may be from 7 a.m. until 11 a.m. or in the late afternoon. The night owls might find that their prime time is from 8 p.m. to midnight.

Do the most important work in your prime hours since this is when you are most alert, most efficient, and most productive.

One of the worst enemies of effective time management is procrastination. I find it hard to say that no one should procrastinate

when I realize that I waited until the last minute to prepare this article for *Lancaster Farming*. Developing and using "to do" lists will reduce the tendency to procrastinate.

Often when a procrastinated job is finally completed, we wonder why we put it off so long because it wasn't a nearly as difficult task as we thought it would be.

Another effective way to reduce the tendency to procrastinate is to set completion deadlines for ourselves and to stick with the deadlines as firmly as though the deadlines were appointments with other people.

With effective time management, we really can "count our chickens before they are hatched" because there is a guarantee that effective time management will yield several hours per week of additional time available. The new-found hours can be enjoyed by spending more time with family, indulging in some hobbies, or relaxing with any activity.

In short, we need to take command of our work and our chickens rather than letting them take command of us.



HAPPENINGS

4-H Horse Show

The Gloucester County, N.J. 4-H is looking for crafters to participate in our horse show and craft show to be held Sunday, April 4, at the 4-H Fairgrounds, Mullica Hill, N.J.

Three buildings are available for crafters with 10-foot x 10-foot space. Two of these buildings have a concrete floor and the other building does not.

We will register crafters on a first-come first-serve basis. Electrical hookups are available. You must bring your own table. The cost of the space is \$20 for the day. Deadline for registration is March 25.

Adams 4-H Potato Team

The Adams County 4-H Potato Judging Team placed first at the annual state 4-H Potato Judging competition held at the 1993 Farm Show.

The A Division team members were Jennifer Coleman, New Oxford; Catherine Coleman, New Oxford; Sadie Bucher, New Oxford; and Debbie Wilkinson, Gettysburg.

Adams County had four B Division teams which placed fourth, seventh, eighth, and ninth. The fourth place B team members were Sarah Almoney, New Oxford; Denise Green, Gettysburg; and Greg Young, Biglerville. The seventh place B team members were Matt Linebaugh, New Oxford; Mitchell Brannen, Cashtown; Beth Green, Gettysburg; and Heather Hawkins, New Oxford. The eighth place B team members were Jessica Dayhoff, Gettysburg; Helena Yelovich, Orrtanna; Zeb Eckert, Gettysburg; and Shanda Whistler, Gettysburg. The ninth place team members were Dustin Whistler, Gettysburg; Carrie Young, Biglerville; and Ronnie Young, Biglerville.

The individual placing for combined Divisions are as follows: Catherine Coleman was first place individual with 461.5; Jennifer Coleman was second place individual with 459.65; Sadie Bucher was fourth place individual with 454.75; Debbie Wilkinson was tenth place individual with 441.75; and Denise Green was eleventh place individual with 441.4.

The teams have been practicing for the contest for the last 12 weeks. The contest consists of:

- Deciding if each of 100 potatoes is either in or out of grade - a time and accuracy relationship.
- Identifying 20 potato defects on 40 potatoes.
- Placing 2 classes of 4 plates of potatoes.

The 4-H judging process is designed to help youth develop decision-making skills. Decision-making skills are related to the character of the individual for the rest of their life.

4-H Beekeeping Club

A new 4-H club to study beekeeping and honey production is forming in Huntingdon County. An organizational/information meeting was held Tuesday, February 2, at the Huntingdon County Vo-Tech School in Mill Creek.

For more details, contact the Huntingdon extension office at (814) 643-1660.



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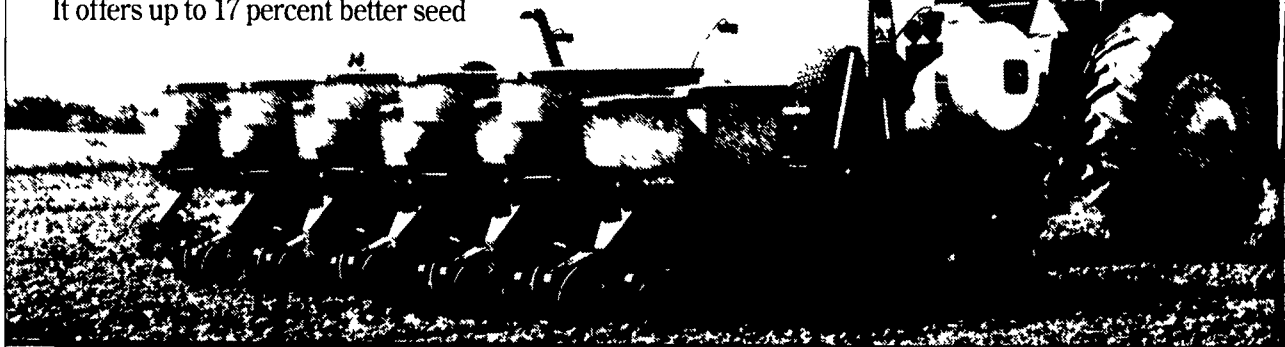
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