

Analyst Says Top 10 Megatrends In Agriculture Will Continue

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100,000 today. A sixth trend, he said is the continuing adoption and use of new technology to increase competitiveness, or to break into new fields.

He said crop and livestock production will have continued genetic developments such as the pesticide-resistant soybeans that entered mainstream farming in recent years.

Further, satellite and Internet services and technology, provide opportunities for efficiencies and information. He said that information means profit, if the right information is used.

Being able to filter through the vast amount of information becoming available to find useful information is key to transforming information into profit.

The seventh trend that Henderson said will continue is the growing public demand for environmental and operational controls on agricultural operations, mainly because of urban sprawl. That can be translated to mean increasing regulation, not less.

An eighth trend, he said, is that consumer "taste" may change what farmers produce. Of course,

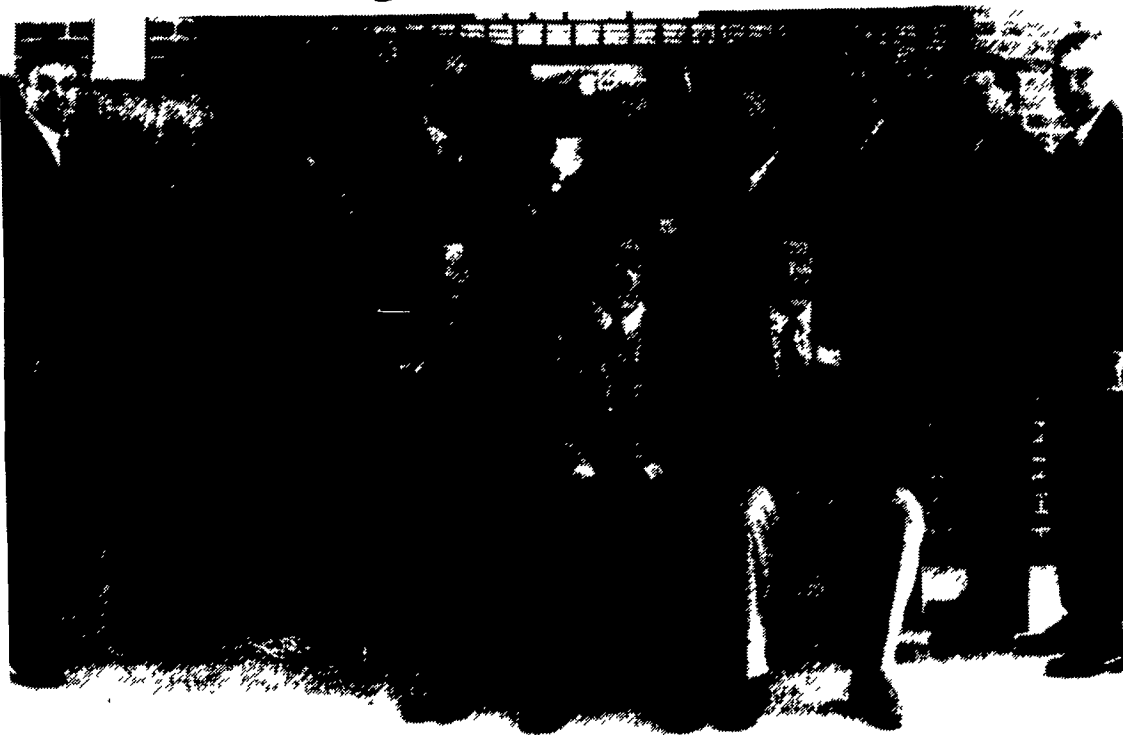
more and more different varieties and lines of produce and animal products are being raised and being made available United States consumers.

People have more choices than they have ever had and that is expected to continue, as demographics change, cultural and food education spreads, and technology allows for the production of value-added crops.

(This theme has been addressed by others, who have discussed the creation of such new food groups, as "nutricueticals" — a term meaning food that provides specific nutritional needs, and provides such nutrition that marketing suggests the foods improve health, and perhaps may reinvigorate an aging population seeking lost youth.)

A ninth trend is that farm owners will continue to become more and more "asset managers" rather than agricultural producers.

More farmer-managers will know better what their true costs of production are and what it means to the bottom line. They will invest more money off-farm to protect themselves in the higher risk farming environment, and Henderson said he expects more farms to diversify, also to limit risk.



Presenters at the 17th annual CoreStates Agri-Education Seminar are, from the left, in the back row, Darvin Boyd, Joseph Del Tito, and F. Barry Shaw with CoreStates, Kate Coler, Charles Hosler, H. Louis Moore, Lynn Henderson, Richard Pottorff, and CoreStates Keystone Market president Lawrence Delp. In the front, from the left, are Kendra Weaver, economist David Kohl and Gerald Boyd.

The 10th trend, Henderson said, is for continuing to farmers and researchers to set even higher levels for production yields.

He said that setting goals to such things as 300-bushel per acre corn yields may well become a reality, as the 100-bushel goal became.

The same with soybeans, he said, adding that perhaps 100-bushel yields will be the new realized top yields.

Also, he asked the crowd, "Why not dairy herds with average pro-

ductions of 40,000-pounds of milk per lactation?" Not so many years ago, a 20,000-pound average was considered high. Today a rolling herd average in the low 30,000-pound range is not that unusual, and production by individual animals has been continually increasing.

Ultimately, however, Henderson said that the entire agricultural industry must be able to present a coordinated front to promote itself.

It is becoming fragmented, and numbers of people involved in the various agricultural enterprises are diminishing.

In order for the entire industry to remain strong against misinforma-

tion and malignant, it must join efforts to present a consolidated face and position on controversial issues.

The industry must also work together to promote American agriculture, because it does produce the safest and most dependable food supply, and is one of the most heavily regulated.

If the public doesn't know the truth about American agriculture, and how it compares to other production systems around the world, then American agriculture is open to attack through distortions and outright lies that can wrongfully erode consumer confidence.

(Continued next week.)

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