

# Farm Management

(Continued from Page A36)

and offered more coverage choices. While these broad product choices are good for producers, the range available requires time and effort to become knowledgeable about each choice. The coverage has expanded from yield only alternatives to alternatives which complement marketing plans.

### Access To Inputs

1) Land rental and land acquisitions arrangements. This is an increasing risk consideration. Some people are concerned that land is often inherited or purchased by people not directly involved in agriculture. However, these people often have a farm background or family connections to the land. This is a way to bring outside capital into agriculture. There is intense competition for land. This raises two issues. If the rental or purchase cost is too high for an individual operation, producers must be willing to pass up the opportunity and select only the situation which will enhance their financial position. Producers must also plan their operation so their labor availability, machinery capacity, management structure and land base are all balanced.

2) Purchasing other inputs. There are two issues here. There is an increasing trend to use more customer operators.

Individual operators have to decide what works in their situation and in their cash flow. There is also the discount house phenomenon of trying to reduce input costs by buying from a so-called discount house which may be some distance from your farm. There are tradeoffs with supporting and maintaining local suppliers and receiving the service that may be provided by local suppliers.

### Contract Production

This is directly related to marketing risk. There will be more contracting in all crops in the future. The advantages are a potentially higher price and an assured market. I see two disadvantages. One is the additional handling facilities that may be needed and the other is the requirement, in some cases at least, to purchase the inputs from the contract commodity buyer. Related to the facilities requirement is the risk of maintaining the purity of the product. Another risk is producing the quality, which sometimes cannot be controlled due to weather, called for in the contract.

### New Technologies

Can you look forward to the introduction of cutting edge strategies and technologies? For any new technology, farmers need to estimate the expected costs and benefits for their oper-

ation and have a set of criteria they use for their decision as to whether they will adopt it or not. Each technology involves an individual analysis for each operation. In all likelihood, risks will be reduced with the new technology but probably a higher level of management will be required.

### Information Sources

Farmers are faced with an information overload. The biggest challenge can be to select the part of the available information that can be used on your farm. Farmer operators need to know the strengths and

shortcomings of the products for individual conditions and farm situation. Growers need help to focus on the details that apply to their operation.

There are a number of different methods to help make decisions and get information for farming. Farm organizations, industry, extension, trade publications and advisory services are some of the ready sources of materials, meetings and ideas.

### Summary

Even though agricultural

producers will continue to have some of the world's best technology for crop production at their fingertips, price and yield risks will be part of their lives. It will be up to producers to manage those risks to the best of their ability, in a way that is appropriate for their situation. As we approach the year 2002 and the end of the current farm legislation, there might not be money in the U.S. Treasury or the will of the people to return farm programs to days prior to Freedom to Farm.

## Grange Pleases With Drought Relief Bill

HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — The Pennsylvania State Grange is pleased that the Pennsylvania General Assembly recently passed a \$65.6 million drought relief bill prior to recessing for the rest of the year.

"We need this money now, when it's important for farmers who are placing orders for seed and fertilizer," said Steel, Pennsylvania Grange Master. "It is imperative that the farmers receive drought relief grants immediately to plan for next year. We decided that we could always revisit the issue in next year's budget if we discover that the drought appropriation was inadequate. In the meantime, we have \$65 million to distribute to those farmers who lost partial or entire crops last summer."

The drought relief package, which passed on a 138-54 vote, earmarks \$60 million in grants to help farmers recoup 1999 crop losses and \$5.6 million in crop insurance incentives for next year. The state money combines

with an estimated \$75 million in federal aid and brings the total for drought relief in Pennsylvania to \$135 million.


With final passage and quick approval by Gov. Tom Ridge, checks could be arriving in eligible farmers' mail boxes by early January, officials said.

"Some agricultural groups were saying that we should wait and hope for more next year," Brenda Shambaugh, Grange legislative director, said. "While that was an enticing carrot to dangle before the Legislature, we convinced our elected leaders

that it was more important to finalize the funding bill now and get the grants to farmers before next spring. This is a huge victory for farmers across the state."

The aid program is available to farmers who can document a crop loss of more than 35 percent. State officials do not know how many of the 25,000 full-time farmers will apply for the aid. The package includes \$15 million in emergency aid for victims of flooding from Hurricanes Dennis and Floyd and \$2 million to help Adams County fruit growers deal with the plum pox virus.

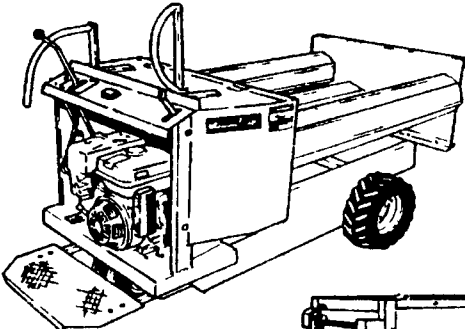




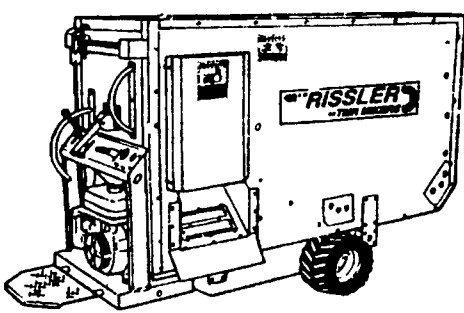
**← I.H. RISSLER™**  
**— MIXERS & FEEDERS —**

### Regional Dealers

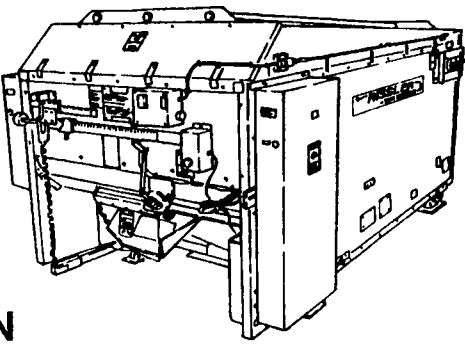
<p>ROMBERGER FARM SUPPLY KLINGERSTOWN, PA 570-648-2081</p> <p>McNEAL FARM SERVICE TOWANDA, PA 570-364-5460</p> <p>R. L. BAUGHMAN &amp; SONS BARN EQUIPMENT TOWNVILLE, PA 814-967-4115</p> <p>CEDAR CREST EQUIPMENT LEBANON, PA 800-646-6601</p> <p>ART DETWEILER DANBORO, PA 215-348-3117</p> <p>FRANKLIN FARM SERVICE LACEYVILLE, PA 570-869-2407</p> <p>HESS EQUIPMENT SALES &amp; SERVICE MIFFLINBURG, PA 570-966-1998</p> <p>LANCHESTER FARM SERVICE NARVON, PA 610-273-9060</p> <p>JOE MARKOVITCH MONTROSE, PA 570-278-3637</p> <p>CEDAR GROVE FARM STORE SHIPPENSBURG, PA 717-532-7288</p>	<p>McMILLEN BROS LOYSVILLE, PA 717-789-3961</p> <p>DONALD NISSLEY WILLOW STREET, PA 717-786-7654</p> <p>ED RISSLER MFG NEW ENTERPRISE, PA 814-766-2246</p> <p>GLENN ZIMMERMAN KUTZTOWN, PA 610-682-2692</p> <p>SOMERSET BARN EQUIPMENT SOMERSET, PA 814-445-5555</p> <p>THOMAS L. ZARTMAN EHRATA, PA 717-733-1050</p> <p>ROVENDALE AG &amp; BARN EQUIP WATSONTOWN, PA 570-538-9564</p> <p>STAR SILO MYERSTOWN, PA 1-800-431-7709</p> <p>VIRGINIA HARVESTORE TROY, VA 800-891-8786</p> <p>DAIRYMEN SPECIALTY CO HARRISONBURG, VA 540-433-9117</p> <p>M &amp; M BARN SALI HARRISON VALLEY, PA 814-334-5452</p>
--	--



ROUND BALE FEEDERS



MIXING CARTS



STATIONARY MIXERS

**STANDARD ON ALL MIXERS**

- \* Poly-Clad Plywood Sides
- \* Heavy-Duty Mixing Chain
- \* Stainless Steel Floor & Trough
- \* Discharge Magnets
- \* Beam Scales

**PRACTICAL IN DESIGN**  
**DEPENDABLE IN ACTION**

**I.H. RISSLER MFG. COMPANY**  
448 Orchard Road  
Mohnton, PA 19540 Phone: 717-484-0551