



NUTS & BOLTS

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John Hest, Editor



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THE PRES REVISITED

You'll recall that Gene Francis, the president we picked to head our organization at Red Wing last summer, began an article in the last issue on what it means to be a farm and ranch business management education instructor.

Gene's insight gained from his teaching career, spanning over 3 decades, gives newcomers to the profession some ideas on "why I'm here." He gives old timers like me, and quite a few of you, some fresh ideas. So....let Gene take over in the final installment of his writings on the subject:

TO ME, THE LOCAL INSTRUCTOR

1. Working with families who are constantly SEEKING WAYS to IMPROVE, reorganize or enlarge their operation. Families with a positive attitude toward their business, their family and life in general.
2. BEING A CATALYST. Creating an awareness in the families with whom you work, of new ideas and concepts in each phase of farming. Successful operators must evaluate and utilize the more worthwhile concepts as soon as possible.
3. LISTENING CAREFULLY to the family. Serving as a sounding board or resource person as new concepts are gathered and contemplated. Assisting the family to evaluate the usefulness and adaptability of any practice in light of their own particular situation.
4. BEING UP-TO-DATE and aware of many resource materials that provide basic management information that can be used by the family to formulate the most profitable plans.
5. TAKING THE LONG VIEW and helping the farm family to develop the ability to see their business as a whole. Each phase of the farm business must be viewed in relationship to maximizing returns for the total operation, if greatest returns are to be experienced.
6. BEING SINCERE. Your relationship with a family must be built on mutual confidence if it is to succeed and endure. A strong advance buildup of a farm management program without follow-through in practice can only result in failure of the entire program over a period of time.
7. BEING ORGANIZED yet FLEXIBLE. A high degree of organization is essential if a business management program is to function properly. Group instruction and individual consultation visits must be scheduled and correlated. The individual instructional phase must be extremely flexible. Each farm business presents its own set of problems, unique to that particular family and business.
8. MAKING A SCHEDULE. A very large share of consultations with member families should be scheduled ahead of time. A scheduled appointment allows the family some time for preparation. They have an opportunity to up-date accounts and to assemble questions and facts on areas where they may desire assistance. They also have an opportunity to arrange their work schedule in order to give their full attention to the problems at hand.
9. A REWARDING WAY OF EARNING A LIVING. An opportunity to REACH, TEACH, KNOW and UNDERSTAND families that few professions allow. It means an exciting, ever-changing profession, with each farm operation presenting a new challenge; a different problem; another opportunity.

ENTRIES WANTED

Wally Payne informs me that he's received only two entries in the Logo contest that he kicked off in the August 1990 issue of NUTS & BOLTS.

He's urging anyone and everyone to enter this contest to come up with the best design to replace the plow over the open record book logo that's been

used by several states for the past several years. "Why not have the Commercial Art department in your school sponsor a local contest," says Wally, "that \$100 prize money should look good to some young person."

Look back at your last issue for the rules. If you lost yours, holler. I can probably rustle up another set. Submit your entry to:

Wallace Payne
Paynesville High School
Paynesville, MN 56362

AH HA, A TEACHING IDEA

When I began as editor of NUTS & BOLTS in 1987 I promised that I'd publish some ideas on how to teach or be a better teacher. So far we haven't had many of those because you people haven't shared them with me. Finally, in my mail came an envelope from Lynn Carlson. Incidentally, Lynn began his farm business management career teaching in South Dakota. He moved to Minnesota a couple of years ago. Here's his tidbit:

To Keep Me Straight
Lynn Carlson
Adult Farm Business Management
Henning, MN

A few years ago I began the practice of keeping a daily journal of my activities as an adult farm business management instructor. Let me relate to you why I began that practice and still do.

When I graduated from college in 1982 and had earned my right to teach agriculture, I interviewed for a farm business management job at a small school in Minnesota. I didn't know much about teaching that subject but I was interviewed by the school superintendent. It didn't take me long to find that he didn't know much about the job description either. I didn't get the job but returned to the same school and was interviewed by the same man when the job opened up a year later.

During that year that had passed by he had gained a knowledge of what a farm business management teacher did on a daily basis. The instructor who had filled the position for that year had supplied a daily log indicating visits made, the nature of the visits and a summary of other work and activities accomplished. I was impressed by the fact that the superintendent had progressed from knowing nothing about the subject to being quite knowledgeable and all within a year's time. I didn't get hired by him that time either.

Eventually I got a job teaching farm management and remembering my interview experience, began to keep a daily journal right away. I've kept one since. My administrator gets one copy and my area coordinator gets one too. In my journal I note the visits I make each day and a sentence about the nature of the visit. For instance I may have made a visit to the Swenson family that day and we worked on a long-range budget. Some days I make three visits, some days, none. In that case I indicate the nature of the things I've been working on in the office whether it be doing the monthly newsletter or my calendar, or closing out records in the office. I also indicate classes I teach and whatever other activities with which I'm involved.

This does several things. It helps me be a little more mindful of the things I do accomplish or work at each day. I then have that information to communicate to others (and to me) that I'm indeed accomplishing something. In my view, keeping my administrator informed makes his job easier. If he needs to back me up or justify my position, he has something concrete to talk about.

In our state, like most I imagine, we have to fill out a statistical report at least once a year. On it we have to enumerate the visits made, the classes taught, students recruited, records closed out, etc. Thank goodness I've had my journal because all the facts were there and it takes just a few minutes to add up the various categories.

As I see it, a journal can be very beneficial. It can be a personal management tool and a resource for later use. It improves communication and relationships with one's administrator and coordinator, and a big assist in compiling statistical reports. I encourage each of you to consider adopting this practice. It's especially good if there isn't a direct contact with the administrator on a regular basis.

HOW TO GO

Denny Kluver, co-chairman of our 1991 conference in Washington state, sent me a copy of the Amtrak timetable book. In looking it over, I can see where people going to Cavanaugh's in Kennewick, WA, can easily go on a train ride in June. The route, if I were to jump on in Fargo, ND, would take me to the station in Pasco which is right next door to Kennewick. This angles right across MN and come out just below the U.S.-Canada border. It looks real handy for lots of folks in Minnesota and North Dakota.

Using a different route, one could get on in Omaha, and many points west and into Colorado before going across Utah and angling up toward Seattle. This also hooks up with a train to Pasco if I read the map right. Denny tells me that Amtrak has some deals too if one buys and reserves before the end of March. Mmmm? Maybe Ma and I should try that instead of driving.

NEW AND FRESH

It isn't too often that a brand new idea comes down the pike, but when my friend and neighbor, Mike Lockhart, told me about an innovative way to feed dairy animals I listened. I didn't have to listen very long before I told him to sit down at the terminal of his computer and type out his ideas. If any of your cooperators milk cows you may make them some money by spreading Mike's gospel. So, here it is:

Sunflower Seeds For Cows?
Mike Lockhart
Farm Business Management Instructor
Ulen-Hitterdal-Mahnomen, MN

Yes, the title is right. Several of my cooperators who milk dairy cows have found that using sunflower (oil) seeds in the ration puts dollars in their billfolds.

A couple of years ago I noticed an article written by Dr. George Marx, a dairy researcher stationed at the University of Minnesota Experiment Station at Crookston, MN., who had used oil-type sunflower seeds in dairy cow rations successfully.

Some of the people who milk cows for a living in my farm management program discussed the subject with me and decided to try it. After their success, the idea has caught on with neighboring dairy farmers. The best return was a 14 pound milk increase per day by feeding 5 pounds of sunflower seeds. With the present price of milk and sunflowers, that's over a 3:1 return. In all cases, feeding the seeds put additional profit in the farmer's jeans.

The cows are started on the ration by feeding two pounds per day, one in the morning and one in the evening. The sunflower seeds are fed whole, not ground and not rolled. As the milk goes up in the bulk tank, the seed feeding is increased accordingly until the maximum amount of five pounds per day is reached.

Does anything else happen as sunflower seeds are added to the ration? Yes. Forage consumption will go down and the butterfat test may drop. To bring the fat test up, cottonseed meal (if available) can be substituted for 1/2 the sunflower seeds. According to Jim Linn, a University of Minnesota dairy scientist, keeping the feeding at less than three pounds per day can prevent most of that problem, however.

Why does it work? Researchers have known for several years that ordinary alfalfa hay-grain rations are too low in energy. Adding oil to a cow's ration increases production but some oils create a palatability problem. Such is not the case by using sunflowers.

One farmer, who began feeding sunflower seeds in October 1989 has increased his herd's rolling average from 17,100 to 19,300 pounds of milk. He feeds only about two pounds per day and figures that at current prices he nets about \$36/cow/month because of feeding sunflower seeds. His butterfat percentage has decreased only about .1%, dropping from 3.6 to 3.5%.

Because of the feeding of the seeds, some of my cooperators have begun to raise sunflowers again. Figuring the additional net profit from the feeding, makes raising the crop profitable once more. The conversion rate that's been experienced makes a net profit of over \$900 per acre possible and probable.

ONE OF OURS

I received a letter the other day from Allen Graner, one of the farm business management instructors in Rugby, ND (our treasurer a couple of years ago) and he tells me that one of our members is running for the presidency of the American Vocational Association (AVA).

Harvey Link, who is now dean of Arts and Science at the North Dakota College of Science in Wahpeton, ND, is a former high school vo-ag teacher, post secondary and adult teacher in the college's ag division, and has been a member of our association for several years. He has been to several NFRBMEA conferences.

Allen feels that Harvey would make a good representative for our profession as president of AVA. He has been very involved in that association for several years in all of its facets.

RIGHTS OF ANIMALS?

It seems to me that this issue is coming to a head all over this country, and as I read some of the European press too, the movement has really taken over on that continent. As representative of farmers and the agriculture industry, it behooves us to stand up and say something about this issue that's not going to go away by itself.

Ron VanNurden, who responded to my plea and has been sending copies of his newsletter to me for some time, wrote a piece on the subject in his August 1990 issue that I thought was pretty good. Here's Ron's article:

Animal Welfare vs Animal Rights
Ron VanNurden
Adult Farm Business Management Instructor
Owatonna, MN

There is a vast difference between the phrases animal rights and animal welfare. As battle lines are drawn, it's important to understand that difference.

Animal welfare advocates have been around a long time. A big segment of that group is made up of livestock producers. They believe animals should be treated well. They understand if they mistreat their animals, the animals will be less marketable.

Animal rights advocates are another story. They go beyond wanting proper treatment of animals. They attribute human-like emotions and feelings to animals and believe animals have the same rights as humans.

As fewer people live in rural areas, the general population has less contact with animals. They can only relate to animals as pets, puppets or cartoon characters. They don't understand the care which farmers give their animals or the vital part that animal industry plays in our lives.

There is some good news in all of this. A recent survey by the Animal Industry Foundation found that 80% of the public feel livestock producers do treat their animals humanely. Animal rights activists, however, are working feverishly to increase that 20% minority. That's where we all come in. We must work feverishly too; the other way.

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