



NUTS & BOLTS

... Teachers delivering knowledge that works to North America's Farm and Ranch Families

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Spring 1994

CONFERENCE 1994!

by John Calpas, Conference '94
Publicity Committee

The focus for NFRBMEA this June will shift to north of the 49th parallel. By now, all members should have received their second Conference package in the mail, including the Conference program and pre-registration information.

As we write, we have received a number of registrations to date, but expect a bit of an "avalanche" now, following the second mail-out. Don't put it off-- start planning your Canadian Adventure now!

The snow is long gone in southern Alberta. With the past few days, basking in 55°- 65°F sunshine-- it won't be long before the farmers are in their fields.

Our Canadian dollar is still on the slide so your US currency exchange continues to work in your favor-- now about \$1.30 Canadian for one of yours, or a 30% bonus in purchasing power! Banks usually offer the best exchange rates.

And speaking of purchasing power, by Conference time, Lethbridge will boast the addition of a store from your famous WalMart chain. Just another reason for you to "feel right at home".

John Whitehead recently attended



A sure sign of spring-- a little boy and his lambs. Ted (the tall one in the photo) enjoys summer travels and is looking forward to his trip to Lethbridge in June.

the Canadian Farm Business Management Council's Annual Conference in Ottawa. He reports that the Ontario Agricultural Training Institute displayed some excellent resource materials and was probably the most impressive agency there. They are on our Conference program, so you will have a firsthand opportunity to judge for yourself.

Global trade issues and the great Canadian/US grain debate continue to be in the news. Looks like we are right on track with our Conference theme and tours to help facilitate insights and mutual understanding since Canada and the US are each other's largest trading partners.

Take President Tom Risdal's advice: dig out your 1994 Conference package and get your registration in. SEE YOU IN LETHBRIDGE!



IOWA AND FARM MANAGEMENT EDUCATION

EDITOR'S NOTE: Harold Swanson does not miss a chance to tell the story of Iowa's approach to farm amagement education. You can tell he feels very strongly about their approach.

Harold tells the Iowa story:

I am the only Iowa member of NFRBMEA. I do not work directly with farmers as most other NFRBMEA members do. I am head of Iowa Western Community College's Ag Department. We work with a preparatory agribusiness and farm business management program.

We have a four-semester program which is now in its twenty-fourth year. Sixty-five percent of our graduates start farming. Thirty percent of our graduates go into ag

A special thanks to everyone who contributed to this issue or sent in articles. Please keep them coming in, especially those states outside Minnesota. We want to hear from you, too. --WP

business careers such as sales, management, soil conservation, banking and other services.

National statistics indicate that only twenty percent of present operating farmers have any training past high school specifically for farming. We know that must change. Today, when you combine the graduates of all the commumnity colleges, Iowa State University, and the other colleges which offer some ag courses, we are reaching only twenty percent of new starters in farming. I feel that we need to set a five-year goal to reach fifty to sixty percent of our new farmers with the training we have to offer.

The thing I am most proud of as I near retirement in June 1994 is that ninety-five percent of our three hundred plus graduates that chose the farm operation option

"Give me a man with a good allowance of nose, ... when I want any good head-work done I choose a man -- provided his education has been suitable-- with a long nose." Napoleon

started farming and almost all have been successful.

I have collected thirty-five years of farm record statistics from Minnesota and eight other states. These records show that, when farms are ranked by earnings, the top twenty percent make between two and five times average earnings, and five to ten times the earnings of the bottom twenty percent. This is a ninety-five percent reliable statistic.

This statistic tells me that we have been short-changing students by not moving to intensive programs of two-year duration at community colleges. I hope we can talk more about this during our conference in Lethbridge this summer.



LOOK OUT, PEOPLE READ THIS!

James Kastanek, NFRBMEA member from Albany, MN is a regular contributor to *NUTS & BOLTS*. His articles always catch my eye and one published in last fall's *NUTS & BOLTS* caught the eye of the NVATA's *News and*

Views editor. Jim's article, "Management Tools and Their Worth" was reprinted there and circulated to thousands of teachers throughout the nation. Good work, Jim!

In the same publication, was a note

congratulating the postsecondary staff of South Central Technical College, Mankato, MN, for winning an NVATA Outstanding Ag Ed Program Award. Congratulations to these teachers, many of whom are NFRBMEA members.

Farm and Ranch Review

A Quick Look at a Potential Resource

by Greg Tullis, as told to Wayne Pike



QUICKEN

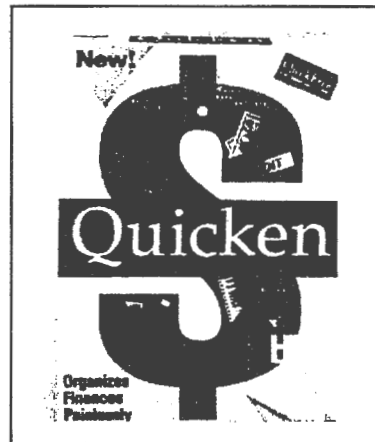
What is "the best" farm accounting software? Greg Tullis and Rick Morgan, FBM instructors at Northwest Technical College in Moorhead, MN, just might give a surprising answer to that question. In fact, their software of choice is listed first among the April 1994 *PC Computing* magazine's top ten best-selling Personal Productivity software packages. It isn't designed for farms, but Rick, Greg and lots of their students make it work.

In a telephone interview, Greg explained that Quicken is the best program for 85% of his computerized students because it gets used. It gets used, first of all, because it gets bought. The purchase price for Quicken should be around \$45 or less by mail order or discount stores. You can't quibble about the price.

Rick and Greg teach Quicken classes in their lab in December. They have developed a list of categories for farm use which they would be glad to share with you. Just call them and ask. The classes give their students enough help on setting up their categories and running the program to get started on the right foot in January. After that, individual effort and on-farm instruction keep records up-to-date and accurate. Intuit Inc., the developer of Quicken, has been very helpful by giving a multi-user site license for classes free of charge. The user manuals are very helpful and the free 800 number user-support is there, the lines are open, and operators are ready to take your call.

Quicken comes with dozens of features only imagined in more expensive software designed for farms. It can

track multiple checkbooks, write checks, and does a fair job of keeping track of multiple employees and the problems that come with a large payroll. Reports can be customized almost any way you want. There is graphing, financial management and calculations, and lots of tax preparation forms. Tax information can be transferred from the Quicken files to other tax preparation programs, if desired.



But-- and for some of us the following is a huge BUT-- Quicken only handles dollars and cents. It can record bushels, pounds and hundredweight in the memo area. Memos can show up on reports, but must be totalled manually. If you are dealing with one or more livestock enterprises while trying to nail down costs and efficiencies, you would have to go to "Plan B" if you wanted to use Quicken.

Quicken has several add-on packages. QuickBooks, QuickPay, and QuickInvoice are just three to choose from if you'd like to get more detailed in inventory, payroll or invoicing. Upgrades are frequent and reasonably priced, usually including a rebate. Quicken does many things very well and very affordably. If recording quantities is not a problem for your students, or if the supplier or buyer does it for them, Quicken may be worth a try. Quicken flies on DOS, Windows and the Mac. Mac users are out in the cold when it comes to farm business software, so this may be one way to reach them.

Call Rick or Greg at 1-800-426-5603 for more information or to get their list of categories. Get the Quicken program from the least expensive mail order outlet or your local computer or discount store.

A MESSAGE FROM TOM RISDAL, NFRBMEA PRESIDENT

Thank goodness for SPRING!!! I can tell it's spring because the kids went out and cleaned the boat. They're as anxious to get fishing as I am.

I just sent off my registration for this year's annual conference. I am excited. John and his crew in Lethbridge have spent a lot of time putting this conference together. Get your registrations in.

I encourage you to bring your family along and take advantage of this conference. The family program looks super. This will be a great time to take a few extra days and vacation in the area. There are mountains, streams (for trout fishing), and national parks within a few hours' drive. I have talked to several instructors from various states and I think we will have a good representation from the United States and Canada.

Our Early Bird session on Sunday is for everyone interested in the mission and direction for the NFRBMEA. Dennis Jackson will be leading the discussion. I have heard some good ideas.

We need your help finding officer candidates. If you are interested in being an officer or if you know of someone who would do a good job, please tell an officer or past president.

We also need names of persons who have been of great service to the NFRBMEA. We would like to recognize them with our Distinguished Service Award. Please give the names to any officer or a past president.

Earlier this year I was invited to meet with the instructors of Missouri. I was treated royally down there and I wish to extend my thanks for their hospitality. They assured me that there would be a larger delegation from Missouri this year.

Well, my good friends, I look forward to seeing each of you this summer, to renew old acquaintances and to meet some new faces. Remember, keep your reels well-oiled, your bait bucket full, and fish in your live-well.



MEMBERSHIP MEMO

We made it! And then some! NFRBMEA membership reached 213. Good job! There is always room for more, and we should all work toward even more members next year.

Our membership year ends May 31. When you register for conference, you also pay dues for next year. If you aren't going to conference, you can still send your dues to:

NATIONAL CONFERENCE '94
Brad Smith
Box 270
Babb, MT 59411

Dues paid after conference should come to your Membership Secretary and *NUTS & BOLTS* editor.

The Executive Committee has dealt with those of you who insist on paying dues two, three or four

times each year. If you pay dues more than once, you will be asked if you would like to donate the amount or take your check back. Our bookkeeping can't stand the strain of multiple future memberships. Thanks for helping your organization run smoothly.



NFRBMEA MEMBER ABROAD

Imagine waking up one morning in 1994 to find that all your students were stuck in the year 1958.

Now imagine that the problems for which you are preparing your 50's era students are 1994 problems. No one your students have worked or lived with knows the answers. No one, in fact, can even seem to ask the right questions.

This daydream was a reality for Doug Wertish for two weeks during November 1992. Doug, farm management instructor for Riverland Technical College, Faribault, Minnesota, was part of a "Trainer of Trainers" course in Czechoslovakia. The "Trainer of Trainers" course was sponsored by U.S. AID funds and administered by Land 'O Lakes. Doug applied for the opportunity and was selected to participate.

The "Trainer of Trainers" courses are designed to help the former communist bloc eastern European countries of Poland, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia and Hungary. All sessions are aimed at helping these countries switch over to a market economy.

The recent history of these countries has put them in the "dark ages" as far as having the know-how and skills to switch to a market economy. Doug explains that agriculture in Czechoslovakia reminded him a lot of his childhood. Much of what he heard and experienced there was reminiscent of growing up on a farm in Minnesota in the Fifties.

The attitudes, machinery, skills and techniques used in farming are at least forty years behind. In a way, time has stood still for them after World War II. Under communist rule there was little economic reason for the people to change and grow to match the rest of the world.

Doug noticed an overwhelming belief among his students that each farmer should be able to make a living from the land. The average farm size after the return of land from the state to the farmers will be from sixteen to twenty-five acres. This attitude is already in conflict with economic reality.

Doug felt he was well prepared for his two-week stint as a teacher in a foreign land. He was always accompanied by two interpreters who were, in general, very helpful. His time there passed much as he had been led to believe it would.

One of the surprises of the job was the previous training and experience of his students. Veroslav, Vratislav, Josef, Vaclav, Pacel, Jiri, Zemanek, Mosmir, Jana, Milada, Alzbeta, Alojz and Elena were some of his students from the ranks of teachers at ag secondary schools, University department heads, farm managers, computer programmers, consultants, agronomists, engineering professors and farmers. Ten of his forty-one students were female.

Doug's efforts were aimed at teaching these teachers how to educate adults the way we do. He noticed that his students were initially expecting to sit and listen to him lecture. Eventually, some got the idea that student participation was expected and invited. These were the breakthrough moments that made the trip worthwhile for Doug.

The course work did get around to farm management the New World way. Doug used farm analysis summary information from southeastern Minnesota to help illustrate his points. Many students did not know that such impartial information existed. All previous information available was provided by the government and was not considered unbiased.

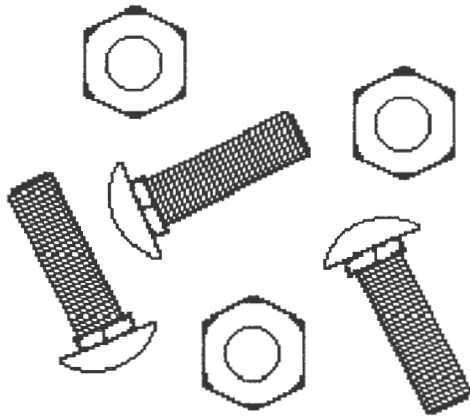
There are many major problems to overcome. Heavy metal pollution has made the soil unsuitable for vegetable production and may make exports of other crops difficult. The infra-structure of ag supplies is also being dispersed. It is worse than building from the ground up because the attitudes of the people must first be changed. Changing those attitudes is the job of the teachers in Doug's classes.

Doug says his experience was fun. The worst part was being away from home for two weeks. He got to do some sightseeing. The food was good, but more potatoes and meat than meat and potatoes, which is another sign of their struggling economy.

Doug would go again and would urge others to take advantage of a similar program.

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