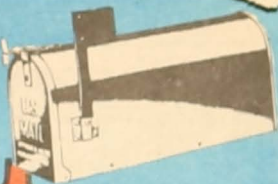


1983

RURAL



Tuesday,
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THE ONLY 100% RURAL ROUTE NEWSPAPER MAGAZINE OF FARMING IN THIS AREA
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On the cover —

'Although erosion rates are high, there is also reason for optimism,' declares Jerry Muff of the Soil Conservation Service in West Union . .

by Ken Schmith
Managing Editor

WEST UNION — "Although (soil) erosion rates are high," says Jerry Muff, district conservationist with the USDA Soil Conservation Service for Fayette County, "there is also reason for optimism."

He lists "conservation tillage, strip tillage, no-till" as "a few names associated with leaving a protective mulch on the soil surface."

Muff told RURAL "Contours and terraces have more than doubled the past few years. I believe this increase is due to a few things such as our larger staff making more contacts and the increased publicity by the media given to the subject of soil erosion."

The head of the Soil Conservation Service for the county continued "Fayette County is a leading county in conservation tillage for several reasons. We are fortunate enough to have other agencies in the county also aggressively promoting it. Dan Burkhardt, Extension director, and his extension associates have been very effective in promoting and initiating the trend. ASCS has allocated much of it's cost-share funds to be spent for no-till incentive payments."

"FmHA, Iowa Conservation Commission, local business, co-ops, Farm Service, Farm Bureau, chemical representatives, church groups and clergymen have financially or in some other way

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Page 3: — This farm wife finds her reward in the responsibility of operating a farrowing house.

— Syndicated Iowa columnist Dean Freed tries to sort out news coverage of the political process. Read his column, "The Farmer's View."

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Page 5: — Rural Delivery spotlights a rural mailbox in the Hawkeye area.

— Julia Ingamells of rural Stanley, in her column "Rocks and Rainbows" writes about the beauty of the Northern Lights and night-time in the country.

Page 6: — The romance and legend of the Old West are still alive in a herd of Longhorns that now calls Iowa home.

— Rural Directory tells about many farm-related businesses.

Page 7: — Rural classified advertising.

Page 8: — Rural was on hand as 4-H members from Fayette County received awards for their efforts over the past year at Fayette. See photos of all the winners.



Jerry Muff

— Photo by Richard Wilkinson

Jerry Muff . . . contributed to the cause of saving our precious topsoil," Muff declared.

"The largest single group to do the most for the advancement of conservation tillage has to be the Fayette County No-Tillers. Officers of the organization have put much effort in continuing the drive. Dan Burkhardt and I work with the no-till committee and we find that not only are these people dedicated, but also enjoyable to work with."

Muff grew up on a rolling farm in west-central Iowa near a small town called Dow City, located between Carroll and Council Bluffs.

His family's farm was primarily a grain producing operation, but they also raised some beef and pork. Jerry's parents and three brothers are still engaged in farming.

Jerry graduated from Iowa State University at Ames with a B.S. degree in agronomy, specializing in soils. Between college years, he worked in two beef plants, which at the time increased his desire to get an education for other employment, he chuckles.

He was employed by SCS as a trainee between his junior and senior college years at Denison. From there he developed enough interest with the work to continue with SCS after graduation.

Mapaketa was my first assignment as a soil conservationist, which is a training position," he recalls. "After one year, I was transferred to Adel in central Iowa, where I became district conservationist."

It was during his time at Adel that he met his wife, Chris, who was originally from Storm Lake but was living in Des Moines when they met.

Chris, a graduate of A.L.B., was an office manager for a dental practice in Des Moines. The couple have been married for five years and have two children: Ben, 1½, and Hannah, six months.

After 3½ years at Adel, Jerry was transferred to "a more active and diversified area," his present location serving Fayette County. Chris worked with the off-campus degree program (COCDEP) for Upper Iowa University at Fayette for a time "until our family began to grow," explains Jerry, adding "Chris now claims to work full-time as a housewife."

Jerry currently is an inactive member in two organizations: West Union Lions and the Luren Singing Society. "I've become inactive with the groups to enroll in an ISU graduate program called Masters of Agriculture," he explains. "It's not yet definite whether I'll pursue the masters degree. My definition of challenge is trying to study with two children under the age of two in the house," he jokes.

Jerry has been with the SCS for about 10 years and explains that the soil conservation effort is a joint project of the federal (SCS), state (Department of Soil Conservation) and local governments.

"As an SCS field office, we are responsible for assisting the Fayette Soil Conservation District (SCD) with a soil and water conservation program," Jerry states.

"The SCD is governed by the five non-paid elected soil conservation commissioners. In Fayette County, they are: James Burack of Arlington, Jonathan Steege of Maynard, Leslie Anderson of Clermont, George Halstead of West Union and Paul Nuss of Hawkeye. We assist them in many ways, such as promoting soil conservation through information and education programs. We also assist landowners by providing recommendations with surveys, practice design layout and check-out of conservation practices."

The West Union SCS office is located on the lower level of the new building at the intersection of Highways 150 and 56 on the south edge of West Union. The building also houses the Production Credit Association and the Federal Land Bank and operates independently from the area office, also located at West Union.

The staff in the SCS office includes Belva Bauer, secretary; J. K. "Bud" Siebrecht and A. W. "Wally" Oxley, soil conservation technicians; Wendell Jones, soil conservationist; and Muff, district conservationist.

Technicians are responsible for most of the field work dealing with conservation application. During the winter months, they do follow-up work, which includes personal contacts with landowners to offer assistance and encourage them to apply conservation practices to their farming operation.

"The soil conservationist position is basically training in preparation for the district conservationist position," Jerry says. "Therefore, he assists the district conservationist with all aspects of the job. The district conservationist manages the office, supervises personnel, works with the SCD commissioners, cooperating groups, agencies and units of government. Another important part of the job is to develop conservation plans with landowners. This provides the landowner with soil loss information and soil conservation alternatives applicable to the farming operation."

"A few years ago, Fayette County was included with other Northeast Iowa counties as being targeted to receive more SCS personnel and cost-share funds to reduce soil erosion because of the high erosion rates here. At that time, our staff and funds doubled," Jerry declares.

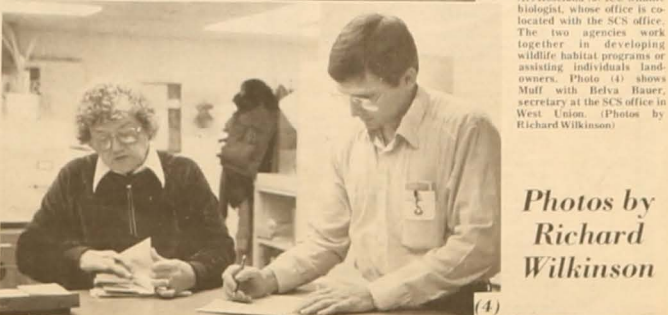
The SCS is now celebrating its 50th anniversary. The agency began with Hugh Hammond Bennett, a USDA soil scientist, developed an interest and began publicizing the menace of soil erosion. Shortly after he completed a USDA soil erosion study in 1933, the Dust Bowl era arrived. It didn't take President Franklin D. Roosevelt long to sign the Soil Conservation Act of 1935 which brought the Soil Erosion Service into being. Local counties organized to form soil conservation districts all over the nation. Soil erosion was occurring at very high rates then and continued in spite of the legislative action.

Jerry told RURAL that "We are probably losing soil by water erosion at a faster rate now than we were at that time, because of intensive row cropping. This also lead to larger equipment which made contours or other practices other than straight rows unpopular."

The soil conservationist says that "Our latest inventory shows the prairie or glacial soils lose approximately eight tons per acre per year (T-A-Y) on cropland. The steeper losses on wind-deposited soils of Fayette County lose approximately 17 T-A-Y on cropland. The overall county cropland average is 11 T-A-Y."

"The acceptable rate of soil loss for most of our soils is 5 T-A-Y."

(Continued on page 7)



Finds reward in responsibility

COTTER, Iowa (AP) — For some farm women, managing a family and a home is all the responsibility they could ever want. Not so for Elaine Baker of rural Columbus Junction. She manages two houses — the family's house and a pig farming house.

Shortly after she and her husband, Bill, were married in 1968, Elaine took on the responsibility of the farrowing house for their fledgling hog operation in lieu of an office job.

Starting with 13 sows, the Bakers have since increased their sow herd to about 60 head in their farrow-to-finish operation. And while Elaine is responsible for what goes on in the farrowing house, Bill takes responsibility for grinding the feed, vaccinating the sows and finishing the hogs for market.

"It keeps you busy," said Elaine. "that and raising two sons." But Bill is quick to note his wife wouldn't be doing it if she didn't enjoy it.

"It's a husband and wife deal," he said. "It's not much different than running a mom and pop grocery store," Elaine agreed.

Elaine, 41, was raised on a farm near Winfield. She worked as a bookkeeper at J. I. Case in Burlington for seven years.

"I had worked myself up to a supervisory position but at that time you couldn't go any farther because you were a woman," she said.

After she married and moved to the Cotter area, she had a similar office job in Washington for about four months. "But in 1969 we had a chance to buy more ground," she said.

Discouraged with the low pay and amount of travel involved with her job, she said, "I was ready to get back into the fields." With an extra 80 acres of farm ground, the Bakers decided they could expand their operation, and Elaine could work as a fulltime farmer.

"I thought I could take my share around here," she said. "She also likes to run the tractor," Bill said, explaining that his wife prepares the fields while he plants their 400 acres of corn and beans.

"Yeah, this year I got promoted — or demoted — to combine," he said, laughing.

She also contributed her strong involvement in their farm to the fact they didn't have children for the first seven years of their marriage.

However, her boys, Scott, 18, and Kerry, 9, haven't slowed her down too much, and they now help her in the farrowing house.

"The boys like to help catch them and also help when I weigh them and give them shots," Elaine said.

"The kids have been raised up around it," she added. "The oldest one, when he was a baby, I took one of those infant door swings out to the farrowing house so I could watch him while I took care of the pigs."

His interest in the pigs continued as he later wanted to ride the "big trucks" when they took the hogs to market.

In addition to the boys' help, Elaine's job became easier and more efficient when they expanded again in 1979. They purchased a new confinement building that includes an entryway outfitted with a refrigerator for vaccines, storage and sink, a farrowing area and nursery.

The Bakers currently market about 1,000 hogs a year with a goal of 1,200. Elaine's farrowing goals are to improve birth weights and litter sizes.

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The Farmer's View

by Dean E. Freed
Syndicated Farm Columnist
Sanborn, Iowa



While I was out harvesting in the field my attention was turned to the many advertisements at this time peddling on the radio as well as the television along with the massive amounts of news confronting us each day. It occurred to me the necessity of us as farmers in this country to very deliberately and carefully sort out and weigh this news coverage.

First of all, how many of you when reading a news periodical or listening to the latest news or commentary on TV or radio critically analyze in your mind what you have just read or heard. I am afraid the percentage is shockingly small. Consequently, during the greater share of the time what enters our minds through our eyes or ears is being considered instant truth without moment's hesitation about what we mentally accept.

The people involved in this country's news media like every other American are human beings; therefore, they too have prejudices. This must certainly be considered on your behalf when reading or listening to the happenings of agriculture as well as every other area of our country's life line. Let us not overreact to the gospel of the media due to our disgust of the direct or indirect ramifications of today's problems.

In various circumstances the media has truly played the leading role in bringing justice to bear in this country, but in doing so the large national media sources have taken advantage of their prestige and are possible overhurling in directing national emotion.

In today's extremely busy society it is easy for all of us to draw conclusions which we consider to be quite valid from only brief and peripheral information. Granted, it is impossible for us to thoroughly study and analyze all of what we read and hear. We must many times accept the findings of the professionals of the media. I guess what I am saying is don't get so reliant upon the instant news and analysis that you stop thinking for yourself and believe everything you hear.

Part of agriculture's problem today is that its newly founded public exposure has most Americans totally unfamiliar with agriculture believing entirely in what they hear on the 4-60 news or read in the morning newspapers. What makes news for agriculture outside the ag belt of this country is surpluses of shortages. In short, it is the price consumers will pay. Therefore, too much emphasis in many cases is placed on short term supply by the media without the media's knowledge of long-term ramifications it might have created for this country's food producers and consumers.

Just as I enjoy the freedom of the press each week in writing this column let each of you be reminded of the freedom of thoughts and utilize it to your fullest capacity. Just the age of instant formulated news distort or replace personal analysis which leads to further investigation of a noteworthy item resulting in a deeper understanding on your behalf.

Don't jeopardize loan by removing stored grain

FAYETTE — Don Carpenter, County Office Executive Director of the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, cautions farmers not to jeopardize the farm-stored loan program by removing grain without obtaining permission.

The program authorizes loans to farmers who hold their grain off the market to benefit from future price increases. The grain under loan is then stored in an approved facility on the farm or in a commercial warehouse.

"Producers who are planning to move farm-stored grain under loan to make room for their 1984 grain must contact our office in advance. Those who plan to commingle their 1984 and 1983 harvests and request a loan also need to check with us first," Carpenter stated.

He said any removal of mortgaged grain before repayment of the loan or receipt of release authorization is considered unauthorized removal and subject to penalty.

"Program regulations require that farmers notify us if they intend to sell the grain, or if the grain is out of condition and needs to be moved."

Unauthorized removal of reserve grain or grain under regular loan will result in the immediate repayment of the loan, plus interest, plus early redemption if applicable, denial of further loans and possible investigation by the Office of the Inspector General.

Advance payments to help cash flow

FAYETTE — To provide farmers with additional cash flow, Don Carpenter, County Office Executive Director, said advance payments are being offered during the sign up for the 1985 feed grain reduction program. Advance payments represent 30 percent of the projected deficiency payments.

Deficiency payments are made to farm program participants when the average market price falls below the established target price for a crop. Carpenter said target prices for 1985 are \$3.03 per bushel for corn.

He said the projected deficiency payment rate per bushel is 47 cents for corn.

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Photos by
Richard
Wilkinson

Hawkeye man runs sweet business, getting honey from bees...

by Theresa Kapler
Hawkeye Correspondent

HAWKEYE (Special)—Cecil Miller, of rural Hawkeye has been in the honey-bee business for 18 years. "I first got into this business by accident," laughed Cecil. "A friend of mine had a hive in his machine shed and the bees were stinging his boys, so he gave the hive to me. A couple years later I bought a couple more swarms, and kept increasing every year. At one time, I had 42 hives," exclaimed Cecil. "That year I sold about 2400 pounds of honey!"

Cecil now has 11 hives. "I've cut back because it's just too much work." Winter-kill, starvation, and wax moths are the worst enemies of honeybees," cautioned Cecil. He has been hit by wax moths already, but this year produced 650 pounds of honey. Cecil Miller and his wife live on a farm three miles north and a mile west of Hawkeye. Along with the honey-producing business, Cecil enjoys gardening. He sells home-grown popcorn, as well as honey to the many persons who travel from far and wide for their winter-stock of his delicious alfalfa-clover honey.

"The process of the honey business begins in the summertime with the catching of the swarms," Cecil explained. "That's what I enjoy the most!"

"When there are too many bees in a hive, they swarm, which means they raise a second queen. One queen takes half of the swarm and leaves. The queen is not an ardent flyer. She cannot fly very far at a time, so the swarm then prepares leave. That is the crucial time. You have to catch the swarm before the queen rests enough to travel on farther. I put each hive in the boxes I've made."

"Each of Cecil's 11 hive-holding boxes contains 10 frames in which the bees make honey inside the combs."

"Each hive produces about 80 pounds of honey a year," Cecil revealed. "When the bees begin to make honey, they first secrete a wax on the outside of their bodies. From that wax they build combs."

When each comb is complete inside the frame, Cecil carries the frames back to his "honey-house." The "honey-house" was converted from an old woodshed 13 years ago and now houses the capping plane, honey extractor, holding tank, and honey jars for Cecil's honey business.

Cecil proceeds to cap each frame, which is extracting the wax (comb) from each side of each frame. The frames are then put inside the honey extractor. Cecil's honey extractor will hold four frames at a time. Cecil hand-cranks his extractor as the honey spins from each frame.

When the honey is all spun-off, the frames are returned to the honeybee hives and the honey transferred to Cecil's 300-pound holding tank.

The honey is stored, to await the onslaught of customers who travel to Cecil's farm each fall to purchase their winter-supply of honey.



HONEY OF A JOB—Cecil Miller, who has been working with honey bees for a number of years, gently removes the lid of a hive (photo 1) in the grove of his farm. Miller has 11 hives. He says that by the time the weather starts to turn cold in the fall, most of the bees have gone down in the hive for the winter. Photo (2) shows Cecil uncapping a frame of honey in his "honey-house," which was converted from an old wood shed. "A capping plane is used to scrape the comb from the two sides of the frame of honey prior to inserting the frames into the honey extractor," Cecil explained as he worked. Cecil uses a hand-cranked honey extractor (3) to spin the honey from the combs. He bought the extractor at a sale years ago for \$5. The extractor holds four



frames of honey at a time. The crank is turned until all honey has been spun from the combs, after the combs have been uncapped. The end result of the work is fresh honey, which pours from a honey-holding tank (4) into waiting jars. The tank holds about 300 pounds of honey and is only a portion of the honey Cecil has derived from his bees this year. He has been selling honey for the past 18 years and is well-known in the area for the delicious taste of his alfalfa-clover honey. "I converted a stock tank heater to use under the holding tank to keep the honey flowing," he explains. "The honey is kept just warm enough to let it run out the spout." (Photos by Theresa Kapler)

Rocks and Rainbows

by Julia Ingamells
Stanley, Iowa

When I was a kid, I loved studying about the stars. I made a scrapbook with drawings of all 88 constellations (got an A+ and the teacher never gave it back).

I wanted to be the first woman on Mars, and I went to college with every intention of majoring in physics and astronomy. My uncle had a reflecting telescope and we spent some wonderful evenings watching the rings of Saturn, the spot on Jupiter and the craters on the moon. Well, dreams fizzle out, but the fascination remains.

Lynn and I tiptoed into Kara's room very softly one night (11:06 she informed us the next morning) to get a better view of the Northern Lights, or Aurora Borealis. I've heard about them, but it was my first experience watching. When I was a kid, my brother and I and some neighbors spent an hour staring at the night sky watching clouds drift over and wondering if we were seeing something.

More recently, a friend told one morning how he had come home late one night to a spectacular show complete with colorful spikes shooting up into the sky overhead. Watching a show like that in the dark stillness of an open countryside must have been a spectacular sight.

We were fascinated as we watched lights shift and move like a gigantic pair of sheer curtains blowing in a summer breeze. The light started out like a huge white rainbow and as the night progressed, brightened and moved, streaks of light shooting up overhead. I could have watched for hours.

I've always been awed by the night sky. Looking out at all those stars, especially on a cold, clear winter's night when the Milky Way looks like diamonds scattered on black velvet. I imagine all the worlds out there. How very, very far away they all are, not only from us, but from each other.

Scientists have learned amazing things about those stars and planets, galaxies and nebulae, comets, black holes. They are incredibly far away and difficult to imagine not only because of the immensity of the distances, but the mystery behind them and their existence.

We seldom think about these things. They don't have much direct effect on our lives. In fact we have little idea what effect they do have on our lives.

Solar and lunar eclipses, meteorites or shooting stars, the phases of the moon are all familiar to us. We accept these and marvel at them.

Out in the country we have a wonderful view of that wide, open sky and everything in it. Lynn likes to turn off the tractor lights when she's working by the light of a full moon just to enjoy the beauty of its silvery light. Farmers feel closer to nature because we are surrounded by it above and below.

Haley's Comet is supposed to make an appearance in 1996. It was here in 1910 causing quite a stir. The earth passed through its tail and terrible predictions that had been made, fortunately did not happen. Only meteor showers brightened up the sky.

Mt. St. Helens has caused a lot of problems lately. Our weather—all these acts of nature are too big for us to handle ourselves and yet we survive. We go on with our day-to-day living in the midst of it all.

We humans are a fascinating phenomenon ourselves. Have you ever wondered how the human race could last for thousands of years? We turn rocks into jewelry, plants and animal hides into fine clothing, ore into computers and transportation and factories. Our world has become a complex mixture of nature and reality.

We still stand so small and insignificant amid the vast expanse of space. It's hard to describe the feeling of watching a beautiful night sky lit up by the moving mystery of the northern lights or the simple beauty of the stars. I always feel awed, humbled and somehow comforted by being part of it.

Quote: All the strength and force of a man comes from his faith in the things unseen.



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ST. LUCAS—Mrs. Ambrose (Delores) Buchheit stands by a unique mailbox at their farm three miles southeast of St. Lucas. The mailbox stand is made from an old gnarled cedar tree found in the couple's timber. "We were walking in the timber when I spotted the old gnarled tree growing out of a rock on the edge of a cliff," she recalls. Delores, who operates a craft shop on the farm, has an eye for unusual things. Although removing the tree from the cliff was difficult, her husband and son, Bruce, completed the job for Mother's Day a few years ago. The tree was snaked out of the timber by using a 40-foot cable connected to a tractor. Ambrose later cut and braced the tree to Delores' specifications and it now makes quite an attraction holding the family's mailbox. (Photo by Theresa Kapler)

Iowa cattlemen should modernize

DES MOINES (AP)—Iowa's cattle farmers need to modernize if they are to compete effectively with giant feedlots in Texas and other states in the West and Southwest, said a study released Monday.

Those states have knocked Iowa from its position as the state's leading cattle-producing state.

"The study shows that the Iowa cattle industry has matured, and it identifies some very positive factors which cattlemen can use to improve their ability to compete with producers elsewhere in the country," Iowa Cattlemen's Association President Russell Christensen said at a news conference called to announce the study's findings.

The ICA commissioned the study to find out why the state's cattle industry has declined.

The study, performed by CattleFax, a Denver cattle marketing and research firm, put much of the blame on the failure of Iowa cattle farmers to keep up with modern management methods.

ICA leaders called the study "a positive step forward for the cattle industry in Iowa," despite its criticism of Iowa cattle producers.

The study found that Iowa cattle producers tend to be older than those in other states and operate small feedlots that are increasingly at a competitive disadvantage with huge feedlots elsewhere.

In addition, the study said Iowa feedlot operators rely "mostly" (Continued on page 7)



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4-H AWARDS — A number of people involved in the Fayette County 4-H program were honored at the annual Awards Night Program held at Upper Iowa University in Fayette recently, with an estimated 200 people attending. In the group above are winners of the Junior Record Book award. They are, left to right in

front, Billi Jo Eckhart, Boyd Drewelow, Greg Schmitt, Nicole Kurenen, Joanna Foy and Amanda Arthur. In the back row are Matt Cunningham, Stephanie Kauten, Trema Blumhagen, Joyce Halstead, Allison Brownell and Brenda Brownell. (Photo by Richard Wilkinson)



MORE AWARDS — Others honored at the 4-H Awards Night Program are shown in the other photos on this page. In photo (2) are members of the Dairy Judging Team, Eric Anderson, coach, at left, and Maurie Kerns. Photo (3) shows winners of the County Awards. They are, left to right in front, Karla Halter of Maynard, public speaking; Matt Kerns of Westgate, dairy; Sharon Goss of Osceola, horse; and Susan Goss of Osceola, achievement. In the back row are Teresa Halstead of West Union, dress review and creative arts; Craig Ingamells of Stanley, best senior record; Maurie Kerns of Westgate, leadership; and Arthur Halstead of

West Union, wine. Photo (4) shows Intermediate Record Book winners. Left to right in front are Christy Wingert and Robert Johnson. In back are Jenny Burke, Tim Malven and Teresa Halstead. Missing was Gail Pleggenkuhle. Photo (5) shows Livestock Judging Team, including, left to right, Coach Don Kracke, Lance Gibson and Kirk Barrack. Photo (6) shows Dairy Production winners, left to right in front, Randy Schlatter and Matt Kerns. In back are Tony Malven, Bruce Lehman and Bucky Cowell. Photo (7) shows Darby Jellings, winner of the Iowa 4-H Beef Production Award. (Photos by Richard Wilkinson)

Farm wives should be involved

GRAND ISLAND, Neb. (AP) — Farm wives should be involved in the management of their farm, according to Allen Gruzdzinski, president of the Federal Land Bank of Grand Island.

Gruzdzinski said women on the farm play three roles: workmate, counselor and decision-maker. He emphasized the role of decision-maker as most important.

Gruzdzinski spoke to a group of women on the topic "The Wife's Role in Today's Ag Economy." He was one of four speakers at a forum entitled "Farm Women Partners in Agriculture," sponsored by the Production Credit Association of Grand Island.

Gruzdzinski said the role of workmate means a woman involved in physical aspects of the farming operation, including moving cattle, driving the truck or tractor and running to town for parts.

Being a counselor, he said, involves being mother, wife, lover

and friend and providing a shoulder to cry on. Gruzdzinski said when things go badly, farmers may find it difficult to talk about their problems, but the one person they can talk to is their wife. Though many of the things a farm wife does to help her husband can't be measured, Gruzdzinski said it's something they do every day.

Though the other two roles are important, Gruzdzinski said the role of the farm wife as decision-maker and partner is most important.

"Though you should continue to be a workmate and counselor, your goal should be to be involved as a partner and decision-maker," he said.

"It's important to be involved in management decisions," Gruzdzinski said.