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A STUDY OF APPROVED PRACTICES ADOPTED BY NEGRO
FARMERS FROM 1945-1955 IN THE GIBBONS INDEPENDENT
SCHOOL DISTRICT, WITH RECOMMENDATIONS FOR
THE USE OF THESE PRACTICES

GOVAN

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A STUDY OF APPROVED PRACTICES ADOPTED BY NEGRO FARMERS FROM
1945-1955 IN THE GIDDINGS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL
DISTRICT, WITH RECOMMENDATIONS FOR
THE USE OF THESE PRACTICES

By

Reuben Shannon Govan

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Science

In The

Graduate Division

of

Prairie View Agricultural and Mechanical College
Prairie View, Texas

August, 1957

DEDICATION

Sincerely dedicated to my wife, Mrs. Zenobia Govan, and my mother, Mrs. Emma R. Govan, who through the years, have given me courage and inspiration to complete my education. To them, I am grateful and appreciative.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The writer wishes to express deep gratitude to Dr. E. M. Norris and Mr. J. R. Powell, for having contributed their time, thoughts, and helpful criticisms in the preparation of this study.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF TABLES	vi
Chapter	
I. INTRODUCTION	1
Statement of Problem	
Scope of Study	
Purpose of Study	
Definition of Terms	
Methods of Collecting Data	
Review of Related Material	
II. HISTORICAL FACTS CONCERNING THE GIDDINGS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT	6
Analysis of Problem	
III. PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA	11
IV. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS	25
Summary	
Conclusions	
Recommendations	
BIBLIOGRAPHY	30

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
I. GENERAL FARM PRACTICES	11
II. CORN	12
III. SMALL GRAIN	13
IV. LIVESTOCK	14-15
V. CATTLE	16
VI. HOGS	17
VII. POULTRY	19
VIII. POWER AND MACHINES	20
IX. GENERAL	21
X. CROPS	22
XI. LIVESTOCK	22
XII. POWER AND EQUIPMENT	23
XIII. BUILDINGS AND FENCES	24

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In a farming business, much of the success depends upon management. Farming is a complex business. Successful management of farms is reflected not only in the lives of farm people, but in the general well-being of all people. This study deals with the importance of and the improvement practices in farming that make for increased earnings.

Low production, and poor management practices, stand in the way of farm efficiency, increased earnings, and resulting human happiness.

This study approaches some of the problems of good farm practices from the standpoint of what is actually happening on the farms of some of the successful Negro farmers of this community. The vocational agriculture teacher, county agent, Agricultural Stabilization Committee, or any agricultural agency cannot always point out any one farm practice and say "This is it."

What might be called good farm practices now might be outmoded within a year. One practice may be desirable under some conditions and undesirable under others. However, there are many practices that are generally recognized as desirable, under enough conditions to make checking on them a useful procedure in analyzing the business on any farm.

Statement of Problem. The study is being attempted in order to contribute to the needs of the Negro farm families in the Giddings Independent School District for the following reasons:

1. The Giddings Community is purely rural and is dependent entirely upon an agricultural economy.
2. The Giddings Community is located in Lee County, near the heart of central Texas, has poor sandy and pancake soil, as far as Negro farms are concerned, with, of course, the bottom lands which are always a risk because of the many floods that come most of the crop season.
3. Since these facts are true, it becomes necessary that the farmers follow the best practical methods of approved practices.
4. It is a part of the writer's responsibility to provide leadership for these farmers, which encourages a knowledge and use of the best farming practices.

In order to best serve the community, it will be necessary to offer probable solutions to the following problems:

1. To determine the extent to which Negro farmers use approved practices in their farming programs.
2. What approved practices should be used?
3. What are the possibilities of using these practices?
4. Do farmers possess the necessary facilities for carrying out these practices?
5. Do farmers who use approved practices profit more than the farmers who do not? To what extent?

Scope of Study. This study is based upon data received from a survey of fifty farmers in the Giddings Independent School District, but

covers more than two hundred farmers living in the district. The study will be limited to the confines of the Giddings Independent School District and the more than two hundred farm families living within its boundaries.

Purpose of the Study. This study was made to establish the financial relationship between farmers who follow these practices and those who do not follow approved practices. It is also made to determine the extent to which the Negro farmers are profiting from using the best practices available as given by the various agricultural agencies.

The study is also made to encourage farmers in the Giddings Independent School District to use extensively the better practices available which will mean a better standard of living.

Definition of Terms.

1. The Giddings Independent School District. This is determined by the writer to mean only the area served by the writer as vocational agriculture instructor.
2. Good practices. Practices proved by agricultural agencies to be valuable in a farming operation.
3. Management. Judicious use of means to accomplish an end, skillful treatment.
4. Increased earnings. This term carries with it the well-being of a family, and income that is outstanding.
5. Farm. The census defines a farm as "all the land on which some agricultural operations are performed by one person, either by his own labors or with the assistance of members of his household, or hired employees." Farms vary in size from three acres, or even less if \$250.00 worth of agricultural products are sold from it, to several thousand acres.
6. Stack bottoms refer to organic residue after hay and fodder have decayed.

6. Approved Practices. To have or express a favorable opinion, to approve his choice, or to display actually or practically.¹

Method of Collecting Data. The materials for this study were collected by the use of survey forms sent to seventy-five farmers who reside within the Giddings Independent School District. Only fifty of these farmers' survey forms were used in this study. Extensive use was made of The W. R. Banks Library.

Documentary materials were obtained from county offices, including Soil Conservation Service, Agricultural Stabilization, Farmers Home Administration, Agricultural Extension Service. Personal interviews were held with several leading farmers in the county, a portion of which will be found in the body of this thesis.

Review of Related Literature. In order to make a worthwhile contribution to the well-being of the people, not only in Giddings Independent School District, but over the universe, we must find the trouble and do something about it. We are struggling for existence and will continue to do so if we do not employ the best available farm practices.

Luther T. Hayes states that, "Without intelligently planned research and more efficient production, people in the United States could be faced by widespread crop failures in the not too distant future. Farmers are feeding and clothing more people than ever with fewer people working at the job of farming. We are taking all kinds of risk with our resources so as to attain big production."²

Each farmer is continually searching for a new and better way to

¹Lynn S. Robertson, and Ralph H. Woods, Farm Business Management (New York: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1946), p. 7.

²Luther T. Hayes, "Some Empirical Practices Among Negro Farmers in Marion County, Texas," (Unpublished Master's thesis, Prairie View Agricultural and Mechanical College, Prairie View, Texas, 1956), p. 18.

improve his farm. There is not much opportunity for him to observe the progressive methods of other farmers doing their work, because all farmers are busy doing a similar job at the same time.

CHAPTER II

HISTORICAL FACTS CONCERNING THE GIDDINGS INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

The Giddings Independent School District so far as agriculture is concerned, has for some time been without agricultural leadership. In 1922, a Vocational Agricultural program was started. In 1933, the Vocational program was discontinued, and resumed in 1951. The Giddings Independent School District was without agricultural leadership between the years 1945-1951. Practically the same thing took place with the Extension Service. From 1945 to 1950, there was no county agent, also during a part of 1955 to the latter part of 1956, the district was without a county agent.

Inasmuch as some type of leadership is needed in order to induce the farmer to institute good practices, we must sense him into the importance of these practices.

Some of the communities that are now served by the Giddings Independent School District have been without vocational agriculture for a number of years. At the present time, there is only one vocational agriculture teacher serving six rural communities.

Analysis of the Problem. Factors influencing efficiency, crops and livestock combinations, should vary from farm to farm because of variation in conditions. The forty acre farmer would soon be out of business if he attempted a grain farming system with large machinery on his acreage. The three hundred acre tenant cannot follow a hog system of farming because he has enough work for himself and family without the hogs and because the farm is not fenced for hogs.

There is an infinite number of possibilities in combining crops and livestock and a variety of conditions among farms that each farm has

a separate problem. A family may struggle hard for years without financial success because a system of farming is being followed that is not adaptable to the farm.

Another farm management principle is, that if a farm is to be successfully operated over a period of years, the combination of crop and livestock enterprises and the equipment used with them, must be suited to the conditions under which the farm is operated.

A farm can be managed with some degree of success, in a variety of ways. If a group of the best farmers in the community were to meet and work out a detailed plan for operating the farm, they would not likely decide on the same method of management to be followed.¹

Although there may be no one best method of operating any farm, there are few farms being operated so efficiently that some improvements are unnecessary. Success in farm management is influenced greatly by the farmer's ability to analyze a farm problem and to make a decision as to what changes should be made. A poor paying farm needs diagnosing just as a sick person.

Any practical method of analyzing a farm business to tell what is wrong involves some judgment. Farming is too complicated for any farmer without experience and ability to attempt the role of an efficient expert in diagnosing its weakness.

The more a farmer understands the principles of good farm practice, management, and the practical points of farm organization, the more opportunities he has to observe various methods and results under local conditions, the better prepared he is to analyze a farm business. Regardless of his background, he needs detailed information of the farm to make an effective analysis.

¹Robertson and Woods, op. cit., p. 90.

Production Practices. It is the intention of the writer to point out the fact, that returns, from any one farm enterprise may vary. Knowledge of the reasons listed below is very valuable and prove to be keys to successful management. All of the conditions influencing the earnings from a farm may be grouped into six classes, as follows:

1. Soil. Productivity, water holding capacity, topography, and ease of operation.
2. Climate. (a) rainfall (amount and distribution), (b) length of growing season, (c) amount of summer heat and winter cold, (d) winds.
3. Prices and market conditions.
4. Governmental relations. (a) taxes, (b) regulations, (c) subsidies or protection.
5. Chance
6. Management. (a) organization, (b) operation.¹

Some conditions are outside of the farmers control, especially the first five, but he has it within his power to adjust his farming business to the conditions as they exist. The manner in which he does this is reflected in the sixth condition--management.

Soil. Nature had much to do with the natural fertility of the soil. For any given farm, the basic soil conditions were established long before the land was farmed. However, a farmer can influence the extent to which the natural fertility is maintained or restored. Given adequate moisture, he can even improve on natural productive conditions by heavy fertilization, by liming, or by drainage. There are limits to the contributions of these operations.

Climate. Rainfall in the latter part of June and July is more

¹Ibid., p. 22.

effective than the same amount of rain, either earlier or later. For small grain crops which mature earlier the summer rain is less important.

There are several methods by which a farmer may combat unfavorable weather conditions. For example, a farmer can add organic matter to his soil so that it will hold more moisture. He can sow shelter crops to control wind erosion. Irrigation is, however, becoming a means to aid the farmer in overcoming the water problem. He can adapt his farming system and methods to the climate situation prevailing in the region in which he operates.

Prices. Regardless of how efficiently a farmer operates his farm, he cannot avoid considerable year-to-year fluctuations in his income. The amount of this fluctuation that is unavoidable, varies more with the type of farming. Specialization usually varies more than an unspecialized farm. The kind of product sold from a farm influences the variation in income, because some farm products are subject to much greater fluctuation in prices than others. Climatic conditions may be favorable for one type of crop and unfavorable for another. The individual farmer can have no significant influence on these factors which influence average prices.

Many farmers with excellent ability in crop and livestock production fail at farming because of price changes which they do not foresee or to which they do not adjust. Prices of various farm products and of items purchased by farmers are constantly changing in their relation to each other. The changes are particularly great during war periods and the periods of adjustment after wars. That is one of the reasons for confining this study to the years 1945 - 1955. "Knowledge of the price

changes and of their causes is of great value in the business of farming."¹

To properly appraise the effectiveness of different methods of measuring farm earnings, one needs to understand the procedures, the limitations, and the advantages of the different methods.

"Most of the efficiency factors measure results rather than practices. If an efficiency factor is low, it shows a weakness. Another method of analysis is directly from the causal side. What practices are being followed on the farm? Which of these are desirable practices and which should be changed? This method of analysis supplements other methods and helps determine what to do when a weakness has been discovered, or it may be used independently."²

One limitation of this method of analysis is that it does not point out the comparative importance of the various practices. Another is the difficulty, in many cases, of listing practices that are good under all conditions. One practice may be desirable under some conditions and undesirable under others. However, there are many practices that are generally recognized as desirable under enough conditions to make checking on them a useful procedure in analyzing the business of any farm.

Any information that supplies facts for intelligent thinking in regard to the farm is valuable in analyzing the business.

The tables in the following chapter are computed to give an idea how the Negro farmers in the Giddings district are finding the sore spot in operations.

¹Ibid., p. 21.

²Lawrence Bradford, and Glen L. Johnson, Farm Management Analysis. (Chicago: John Wiley and Sons, 1953), p. 24.

CHAPTER III

PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

Tables one through nine show the conditions existing on fifty Negro farms concerning approved practices on crops that will not require any extra cash. These practices will cover crops—general, (which will cover questions on the most important cash crops), corn and small grain, livestock, cattle, hogs, poultry, and power and machines.

TABLE I

GENERAL FARM PRACTICES

RECOMMENDED PRACTICES	'NO. FARMERS' ' SURVEYED	NO. PRACTICES' ' CARRIED OUT	PERCENTAGE ' POSITIVE	'PERCENTAGE ' NEGATIVE
1. Spread all manure including stack bottoms	50	30	60	40
2. Have a large part of tillable land in higher profit crops	50	32	64	36
3. Keep corn and small grain grounds free from weeds before planting	50	34	68	32
4. Prepare solid seed bed for legumes	0	0	0	0

The data in Table I show the status of the farmers participation in approved practices in general farming. The farmers surveyed showed that thirty, or 60 percent spread manure including stack bottoms. Twenty-two

out of fifty, or 64 percent have a large part of his tillable land in higher profit crops. Thirty-four out of fifty, or 68 percent kept corn and small grain ground free from weeds before planting.

"Organic matter must be maintained. Soil cannot be in good condition unless it contains the proper amount of organic matter. Organic matter can be obtained from barnyard manure or vegetable matter, such as grass, legumes or plant residues."¹

The writer found that an overall average of the percent of farmers following the practice was 64 percent, or more than half.

TABLE II

CORN

RECOMMENDED PRACTICES	NO. FARMERS SURVEYED (Percent)	NO. FARMERS CARRYING OUT PRACTICE	PERCENT OF POSITIVE ANSWERS	PERCENT OF NEGATIVE ANSWERS
1. Use of high yield hybrid variety adapted to the area	50	50	100	0
2. Protect seed corn from dampness and severe freezing	50	50	100	0
3. Plant full-season varieties of corn at early to medium date	50	50	100	0
4. Give careful attention to proper placement of fertilizer (hill or row application)	50	10	20	0

¹Texas Agricultural Extension Service, Soils, and How to Improve, Bulletin No. B-189 (March 1950), p. 14.

Table II shows that 50 out of 50 farmers use hybrid varieties or 100 percent, 50 or 100 percent protect his seed corn from dampness and freezing, 50 plant full season varieties of corn at early to medium dates, and 10 out of 50, or 20 percent give careful attention to proper placement of fertilizer (hill or row application).

The use of the hybrid strains is coming into wider use, but indications are that the Negro farmers are not carrying along a fertilizer program.

TABLE III

SMALL GRAIN

RECOMMENDED PRACTICES	NO. FARMERS SURVEYED (Percent)	NO. CARRYING OUT PRACTICE (Percent)	PERCENTAGE POSITIVE	PERCENTAGE NEGATIVE
1. Use known high yielding strains	50	20	40	60
2. Use pure varieties of grains	50	30	40	60
3. Test seed for germination	50	0	0	0
4. Fan and grade seed	50	0	0	0
5. Treat seed for smut and other diseases	50	0	0	0
6. Sow oats and barley early	50	50	100	0
7. Use known productive acclimated strains	50	50	100	0
8. Insure freedom from bad weed seeds	50	50	100	0
9. Under doubtful conditions use mixture of grasses to insure some pasture	50	34	58	42
10. Provide a long pasture season by making full use of the various pasture crops	50	29	42	58

Table III show data on the recommended practices in small grain and indicates that twenty out of 50 farmers, or 40 percent use known high yielding strains; 30 out of 50, or 60 percent used pure varieties of grains, no one test seed for germination and no one fanned and graded seed. None treated seed for smut and their diseases. Fifty out of 50 farmers, or 100 percent sowed oats and barley early, and 50, or 100 percent used known productive, acclimated strains. Fifty, or 100 percent used insurance against bad weed seed in grain, and 34 out of 50, or 68 percent used a mixture of grasses under doubtful conditions to insure some pasture. Twenty-nine out of 50, or 58 percent provided a long pasture season by making full use of the various pasture crops.

The survey showed that farmers did not follow several practices due to the following reason: (1) They did not test seed for germination because they confided totally in the dealers.

Small grain plays an important part in the farm program. Approved practices aid immensely in increasing income on the farm.

TABLE IV

LIVESTOCK

RECOMMENDED PRACTICES	NO. FARMERS SURVEYED	NO. CARRYING OUT PRACTICE	PERCENTAGE POSITIVE	PERCENTAGE NEGATIVE
1. Cull out and kill badly crippled or deformed pigs, lambs, and chicks soon after birth	50	50	100	100
2. Remove animals from herd or flock immediately when symptoms of disease are noticed	50	15	70	30

TABLE IV - LIVESTOCK (continued)

RECOMMENDED PRACTICES	'NO. FARMERS' 'SURVEYED'	NO. CARRYING 'OUT PRACTICE'	'PERCENTAGE' 'POSITIVE'	PERCENTAGE 'NEGATIVE'
3. Make a thorough examination and act immediately to prevent the spread of any disease	50	22	44	56
4. Examine pastures for poisonous plants and remove such plants or prevent stock from getting to them if found	50	38	76	24

The data in Table IV show that on livestock, 50, or 100 percent indicated that they culled out and eliminated badly crippled or deformed pigs, lambs, and chicks soon after birth. Fifteen out of 50, or 70 percent removed animals from the herd or flock immediately when symptoms of disease were noticed. Twenty-two out of 50, or 44 percent made a thorough examination and acted to prevent the spread of any disease. Thirty-eight out of fifty farmers, or 76 percent would take time to examine pastures and removed poisonous plants or prevented livestock from getting to them.

Field crops should be balanced with one or more animal enterprises. An analysis of facts given in Table IV shows that more care should be exercised in order to prevent disease and balance the livestock program with the crop program.

Table V contains data of how the recommended practices on cattle were carried out. Out of 50 farmers surveyed, 50, or 100 percent disposed of non-breeding or irregular breeding cows. Fifty out of 50 or 100 percent has cows tested for tuberculosis and 50 or 100 percent tested breeding stock

for abortion. Thirty out of the fifty farmers bought tuberculosis and abortion free cattle into herd, and twenty out of 50 kept production records on dairy cows.

TABLE V

CATTLE

RECOMMENDED PRACTICES	NO. FARMERS SURVEYED	NO. CARRYING OUT PRACTICE	PERCENTAGE POSITIVE	PERCENTAGE NEGATIVE
1. Dispose of non-breeding or irregular breeding cows	50	50	100	0
2. Test breeding stock for tuberculosis and dispose of reactors	50	50	100	0
3. Test breeding stock for abortion and isolate or dispose of reactors	50	50	100	0
4. Bring only tuberculosis and abortion-free cattle into herd	50	30	60	40
5. Keep production records on all dairy cows	50	20	40	60

Through personal interviews the writer found that many of the cattle are bought through the auction ring accounting for the low percentage in question 4. The low percentage is accounted for in item 5 because of the lack of dairy herds in the Giddings area.

Table VI shows that 50, or 100 percent of the farmers selected healthy well developed gilts from large litters. Twenty-five out of fifty, or 50 percent fed young gilts a growing ration, and twenty-five out of the 50 farmers, or 50 percent had sows in a growing condition at breeding. Fifteen out of 50, or 30 percent fed a balanced ration to pregnant sows.

TABLE VI

HOGS

RECOMMENDED PRACTICES	NO. FARMERS SURVEYED	NO. CARRYING OUT PRACTICE	PERCENTAGE POSITIVE	PERCENTAGE NEGATIVE
1. Select healthy well developed gilts from large litters	50	50	100	0
2. Feed young gilts a growing ration	50	25	50	50
3. Have sows in a growing condition at breeding	50	25	50	50
4. Feed balanced ration to pregnant sows	50	15	30	70
5. Avoid injury to sows by narrow doors, high sills, or crowded pens	50	5	10	90
6. Use guard rails in farrowing pens	50	0	0	100
7. Clean sows before farrowing	50	0	0	100
8. Clean farrowing pens with hot lye and water	50	0	0	100
9. Haul sows and pigs to clean pasture	50	12	24	76
10. Keep pigs in clean pasture until at least 70 pounds of weight	50	50	100	0
11. Casterate male pigs at two to four weeks of age	50	25	50	50
12. Feed balanced ration to growing pigs	50	25	50	50
13. Feed balanced ration to fattening hogs	50	50	100	0
14. If spring pigs were farrowed before April 1st, they were marketed before Sept. 15	50	50	100	0
15. Feed full ration spring pigs born before April 1st	50	35	70	30

Five out of 50 farmers, or 10 percent of the farmers avoided injury to sows by the use of narrow doors, high sills, or crowded pens. None used guard rails in farrowing pens; none cleaned sows before farrowing and none cleaned farrowing pen with hot lye water. Twelve out of the 50 farmers surveyed, or 24 percent, hauled sows and pigs to clean pasture; 50 or 100 percent kept pigs in clean pasture until at least seventy pounds in weight. Twenty-five of the 50 farmers, or 50 percent castrated male pigs at two to four weeks of age, and twenty-five out of 50, or 50 percent fed a balanced ration to growing pigs. Fifty out of the 50 farmers surveyed fed a balanced ration to fattening hogs, and 100 percent of farmers said, "if spring pigs were farrowed before April 1, they were marketed before September 15. Thirty-five out of the 50 farmers surveyed, or 70 percent fed a full ration to spring pigs born before April 1.

The survey shows a tendency toward negligence on the part of some farmers, also the lack of integrating a good livestock program into his farming program.

The data in Table VII show that fifty of the 50 farmers surveyed indicated that chicks are hatched early. Fifteen out of fifty, or 30 percent raised chicks from disease free flocks, and 50 out of the 50 farmers surveyed, or 100 percent saw that the ground was disease free. Fifty out of the 50 farmers surveyed, or 100 percent kept brooder houses clean, and 20 out of 50 provided three to four feet of floor space in winter per hen. Ten out of the fifty farmers surveyed, or 20 percent used a balanced laying mash all year round, and 20 out of the fifty farmers, or 40 percent culled the non-layers out of the flock.

TABLE VII

POULTRY

RECOMMENDED PRACTICES	'NO. FARMERS SURVEYED	'NO. CARRYING OUT PRACTICE	'PERCENTAGE POSITIVE	'PERCENTAGE NEGATIVE
1. Hatch chicks early	50	50	100	0
2. Raise chicks from disease free flocks	50	15	30	70
3. Raise chicks on disease free ground	50	50	100	0
4. Keep brooder and poultry houses clean	50	50	100	0
5. Provide three to four feet of floor space for each hen in winter	50	20	40	60
6. Use balanced laying mash all the year	50	10	20	80
7. Cull non-layers out of flock	50	20	40	60

Out of the important practices, some of the farmers neglected the most important from an economical standpoint. Forty percent failed to cull non-layers out of the flock and 60 percent did not have enough space for the layers. To feed non-layers and not have enough space is a economical loss.

The data in Table VIII of the recommended practices on power and machines show that out of the 50 farmers surveyed, 10, or 20 percent overhauled and repaired machines during slack season. Fifty, or 100 percent kept machines oiled and greased, and 50, or 100 percent kept cutting edges sharp. Thirty out of the 50 farmers surveyed, or 60 percent disposed of machines no longer needed, and 5 out of 50, or 10 percent kept wood parts painted.

TABLE VIII

POWER AND MACHINES

RECOMMENDED PRACTICES	NO. FARMERS SURVEYED	NO. CARRYING OUT PRACTICE	PERCENTAGE POSITIVE	PERCENTAGE NEGATIVE
1. Overhaul and repair machines with farm labor during slack seasons	50	10	20	80
2. Keep all bearings oiled and greased	50	50	100	0
3. Keep cutting edges sharp	50	50	100	0
4. Dispose of machines no longer needed	50	30	60	40
5. Keep wood parts painted	50	5	10	90
6. Practice Timeliness	50	20	40	60

The data in Table IX show that out of the fifty farmers surveyed, thirty had odd jobs done before rush seasons in field work or with livestock. None planned livestock breeding and feeding so they will not interfere with important field work. Fifty of the farmers surveyed, or 100 percent kept livestock adapted to consuming crop by-products. Twenty two out of the fifty farmers surveyed, or 44 percent kept a farm record, and twenty-two out of the 50 farmers, or 44 percent, practiced timeliness in all operations.

Practices 1 and 2 has a similarity, because of the planning in order to utilize to the best advantage all available man hours, however, the percentages do not coincide. Forty percent of the Negro farmers in the Giddings area did not keep a record of farming operations.

TABLE IX

GENERAL

RECOMMENDED PRACTICES	NO. FARMERS SURVEYED	NO. CARRYING OUT PRACTICE	PERCENTAGE POSITIVE	PERCENTAGE NEGATIVE
1. Have odd jobs done before rush seasons in field work or with livestock	50	30	60	40
2. Plan livestock breeding and feeding so they will not interfere with important field work	50	0	0	100
3. Keep livestock adapted to consuming crop by-products	50	50	100	0
4. Keep a farm record	50	22	44	56
5. Practice timeliness in all operations	50	22	44	56

The following Tables are practices that involves some additional cash expenses.

Data in Table X shows that 15 out of the 50 Negro farmers surveyed or 30 percent, used limestone where needed. Twenty-two out of 50, or 44 percent of the farmers surveyed, used fertilizer where needed and profitable. Twenty out of the 50, or 40 percent, keep tillable land occupied by growing crops all of the crop season, and 5 out of the 50 farmers surveyed, or 10 percent, prevent erosion by use of brush, straw and seeding lespedeza, grass, or some other crop.

TABLE X

CROPS

RECOMMENDED PRACTICES	NO. FARMERS SURVEYED	NO. CARRYING OUT PRACTICE	PERCENTAGE POSITIVE	PERCENTAGE NEGATIVE
1. Use limestone where needed	50	15	30	70
2. Use fertilizer where profitable	50	22	44	56
3. Keep tillable land occupied by growing crops all the crop season	50	20	40	60
4. Prevent erosion by use of brush, straw and seedling, lespediza, grass, or some other crop	50	5	10	90

TABLE XI

LIVESTOCK

RECOMMENDED PRACTICES	NO. FARMERS SURVEYED	NO. CARRYING OUT PRACTICE	PERCENTAGE POSITIVE	PERCENTAGE NEGATIVE
1. Use productive high grade or purebred cows, sows, ewes, and hen	50	0	0	100
2. Use good quality purebred sows from high producing individuals	50	5	10	90

Table XI of recommended practices that require some additional cash, shows that none of the 50 farmers surveyed use productive high-grade or purebred cows, sows ewes, and hens. Five out of the 50 farmers surveyed use good quality purebred sires from high producing individuals.

The data shown in this table indicate that most cattle used by Negroes in the Giddings district were scrubs, or no purebred cattle are used.

TABLE XII

POWER AND EQUIPMENT

RECOMMENDED PRACTICES	'NO. FARMERS 'SURVEYED	'NO. CARRYING 'OUT PRACTICES	'PERCENTAGE 'POSITIVE	'PERCENTAGE 'NEGATIVE
1. Use modern hitches for heavy field work	50	50	100	0
2. Keep machines protected from weather when not in use	50	5	10	90
3. Protect machines from livestock and poultry	50	5	10	90
4. Make full use of heavy machines by doing custom work or through cooperative ownership	50	10	20	80

Table XII show data relating recommended practices in power and equipment in which 50 of the farmers surveyed, or 100 percent use modern hitches. Five out of the fifty farmers surveyed show that 10 percent keep machines protected from weather when not in use, which indicates sheds are built. Five out of the 50 farmers surveyed protect machines from livestock and poultry. Ten out of the 50 farmers make full use of heavy machines by doing custom work or through cooperative ownership.

TABLE XIII

BUILDINGS AND FENCES

RECOMMENDED PRACTICES	'NO. FARMERS ' SURVEYED	'NO. CARRYING ' OUT PRACTICE	'PERCENTAGE ' POSITIVE	'PERCENTAGE ' NEGATIVE
1. Keep windows, doors and gates in repair	50	6	12	88
2. Keep foundations well drained	50	10	20	80
3. Keep foundations in repair	50	50	100	0
4. Keep roofs in repair	50	25	50	50
5. Carry adequate insurance on buildings	50	15	30	70
6. Provide for ventilation (not too expensive) in buildings housing livestock	50	50	100	0

Table XIII show that 6 out of the 50 farmers surveyed, or 12 percent, keep windows, doors and gates in repair. Ten out of the 50 farmers keep foundations well drained, and 50, or 100 percent keep foundations in repair. Twenty-five out of the 50 farmers surveyed, or 50 percent keep roofs in repair. Fifteen out of the 50 farmers carry adequate insurance on buildings, and 50, or 100 percent, provide for ventilation.

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The purpose of this study is to determine what ways a farmer can produce more efficiently and economically the products for which there is the greatest demand. If this is to be attained, the farm operator in the Giddings Independent School District must put into practice and perform the most important task within his ability that will give him the best possible income. Good income is associated with opportunity to enjoy a higher standard of living. Much of the wide variation among farmers' income is the result of variations in what they do to meet the problem of producing cheaply the products which are most demanded.

The writer found that in making this study of the recommended practices in general farming, less than fifty percent of the farmers followed the practices listed. The recommended practices for corn were followed one hundred percent with exception of fertilization practices which fell to a mere twenty percent, indicating the fact that fertilizer is too high to buy.

Small grain practices show that the high yielding strains were used by only sixty percent of the farmers surveyed, and the fact that the farmer usually buys his seed brings about a tendency to buy the cheapest seed available, as shown by the number that used a pure variety which was forty percent.

However, livestock production averaged less than fifty percent on most of the important practices.

The writer's findings were very favorable on the recommendations given for cattle with exception of bringing only cattle into the herd that were disease free, and sixty percent of the farmers carried out this practice. From interviews, some farmers did not carry out the practices

due to the fact that cattle were bought from the auction ring and used as breeding stock.

The findings concerning hogs in a majority of the cases were unfavorable as was indicated in Table VI. There were no sanitation practices followed. The feeding program practices for hogs had in most cases less than fifty percent cooperation.

The recommended practices on poultry were favorable as far as sanitation is concerned, but the feeding program came short of fifty percent participation. Poultry housing had forty percent participation.

The findings as far as power and machines are concerned were favorable only in two aspects, they are easiest to follow. Twenty percent followed the important practices of keeping machines overhauled and wood parts painted during the season when field work was not pressing.

Forty percent of the farmers kept records, which is the most important recommended practice in the general practices.

It was also found by the writer that where a matter of cash is involved, many of the practices were neglected. For example, only thirty percent used time, forty-four percent used fertilizer where profitable. Only forty percent kept a crop growing all of the crop season, and ten percent did nothing about erosion.

No purebred or high grade livestock was used in the farm business.

Ten percent of the farmers took proper care of farm machinery so far as protecting it from the weather and livestock. Twenty percent took full advantage of savings that could be realized from making full use of heavy expensive machines or through cooperative use. One hundred percent used modern hitches because most of the farmers, regardless of how small the acreage, own a tractor and most of the equipment that belongs with it.

Farm buildings and fences were not properly kept because only twelve percent kept windows and doors in good repair. Twenty percent used proper drainage of his foundations and fifty percent kept the roofs in good repair.

Conclusion

Information gathered in this study indicates that the majority of the farmers did not use approved farming practices in the operation of his farming business. There is no perfect criteria however, for evaluating the organization of a farm. A farmer must study his individual farm thoroughly and make decisions for himself.

The farmer using the largest number of approved practices appeared to be making the most progress, and had the largest income from his farm.

Crops grown most extensively were cotton, corn, peas, peanuts, with a small amount of small grain. Livestock was not grown extensively, and there are no large cattle ranches.

Recommendations

Farming management specialists vary in their listing of the efficiency factors affecting farm returns. Part of this variation is a matter of judgment, but part is a result of variation in conditions and types of farming. A rather broad classification, such as the following, is used for some purposes in another section of the country, has a rather general application. This grouping expresses the factors in terms of eleven principles which follows.

1. A large volume of business is necessary for profitable farming.

2. Good yields tend to reduce the unit cost of producing farm crops.
3. A large portion of land in the higher profit crops means larger profits.
4. Livestock production as a way of marketing crops makes for larger farm income.
5. Efficient feeding and handling of livestock materially reduce cost of production.
6. A well organized system of crop and livestock production help make good use of available man labor.
7. Cost is reduced when the supply of horse and mechanical power fit the farm needs and is economically handled.
8. Buildings, machinery, and other equipment expense must be kept under control if low production cost is to be obtained.
9. A good farm layout and a well developed farmstead make for economical operation.
10. Diversity of crop production helps to insure longtime profits.
11. Production planned in accordance with market demands makes for a larger margin of profit.

The factors affecting farm earnings that are largely matters of management may be grouped in other ways than under the heading of volume of business, type or system of farming, and practices followed. These three factors are ways in which management is expressed rather than the results of management. For the purpose of analyzing and studying the farming business, it has become customary to list a group of efficiency factors influencing the income. Most of these factors are results, rather than expressions of management. Among these factors are: (1) crop yields, (2) rates of livestock production, (3) efficiency in the use of labor,

(4) economy in machinery and equipment, (5) economy of operation, (6) combination of enterprises, and (7) volume of business.¹

On the basis of the above information taken from tables one through thirteen, the writer recommended the following:

1. Specialized farming should be practiced where local conditions may permit.
2. Prepare solid seed-bed for legumes.
3. Better practices of purchasing livestock; refrain from buying from the auction rings for foundation stock.
4. Better sanitation practices in the breeding, feeding and raising of hogs.
5. An increase use of loan agencies so as to allow for more approved practices to be carried out by the farmers studied.
6. Use of more soil erosion preventive methods, such as strip cropping, preparing terraces, planting cover crops and winter legumes.
7. An increase practice of farmers to integrate a good livestock program into his total farming program.
8. Better general up-keep of farm machinery during the slack season as well as during the busy season.
9. Greater use of purebred or high grade livestock in the farm program.
10. The writer believes that on a whole, farmers studied are attempting to become more efficient in his total farming operation; however, it is recommended that more direct contact be made with agricultural agencies.

¹Robertson and Woods, op. cit., p. 33.

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