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THE ECONOMICS OF PART-TIME FARMING
IN FREESTONE COUNTY, TEXAS



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THE ECONOMICS OF PART-TIME FARMING
IN FREESTONE COUNTY, TEXAS

By
Jerome Snipes

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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, 1961

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The writer wishes to express sincere appreciation to his adviser, Dr. J. M. Coruthers for his assistance in the preparation of this study; also to the farmers in Freestone County, Texas, who cooperated in making the survey.

J. S.

DEDICATION

To my wife, Mrs. Myrtle Lee Snipes, daughters,
Carolyn Joyce Snipes, Rita Dianne Snipes, and son,
Jerrold Glynn Snipes.

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PART I

INTRODUCTION

In the preparation of this study, the writer has endeavored to include all of the materials that will be helpful to teachers of vocational agriculture and part-time farmers of Freestone County, Texas. Part-time farming is a way of life in which the family lives on a small farm, but draws its income from two or more sources, one of which is the farm. The other may be a job in industry, or a profession, or work on other farms in the community. In some cases the outside income is from investments or a pension.

Many people work full-time in a city but live in the country, perhaps doing a little gardening and keeping a few chickens. These people are more properly called rural residents than part-time farmers, but there is no sharp line of distinction between the two.

Soil and man, it may be assumed, are among the most valuable possessions of this nation. Any movement which leads to the better development of either is worthy of consideration. Such a movement is part-time farming as a business for small farmers.

There were more than 900,000 farmers in the United

States in 1939, who worked more than 100 days each off their own farms. Thousands of other farmers supplemented their farm income by a few days of work elsewhere.

Part-time farming is a complex business. Good management is essential to success. Successful management of part-time farming is reflected not only in the lives of farm people, but in the general well being of all people. Low production and poor management practices stand in the way of farm efficiency, increased earnings and resulting human happiness.¹

Statement of the Problem. The writer feels that some consideration should be given to the part-time farmers of Freestone County, Texas, to assist them in maintaining a higher standard of living. Also, this can be done through efficient management and production and some other sources of income.

There are several things a man must decide upon before he decides to become a part-time farmer. Some of these are: (1) How much income is needed to support the family?; (2) how much of this income can be expected to come from the farm; and how much from the outside job?; (3) how much time will he and his family be able to give to the farm?; (4) at what season of the year will this time be available?;

1

United States Department of Agriculture, Farmers Bulletin, Number 1966 (Washington: Government Printing Office), p. 1

(5) what crops shall be raised and what livestock kept?

Purpose of Study. The purpose of this study is to investigate the practices as they are carried out by the small farmers of Freestone County, Texas. Also to suggest areas of improvement.

Definition of Term. Part-time farming is a way of life in which the family lives on a small farm, but draws its income from two or more sources and one source is the farm. The other may be a job in industry. In some cases the outside income is from investments or a pension.

Method of Investigation. A randomized block sample method was used and employed to collect statistical data. One community representative of the same type of farming in a block of four communities, was selected, questionnaires were passed out to the farmers and the surveying begun. Personal interviews with 50 part-time farmers and compilation and tabulation of the findings were the instruments in getting statistical facts.

Written information, thought, and literature in the field have been reviewed. The purpose of this review was to develop a working background and knowledge of part-time farmers, including its nature, activities and objectives. The literature goes into the advantages, disadvantages and in detail on the purposes of part-time farming.

Conclusions were drawn and recommendations were made.

Historical and Related Information

Population Factor. Freestone County is largely a prominent farming and livestock-raising county with mostly rural population, lying along the boundary between black lands and post oak belts in east central Texas. The county has a large population, 18.6 per cent urban; 34.9 per cent nonfarm rural; 46.5 per cent farm rural; 59.4 per cent Anglo-American; 0.4 per cent Latin American; 40.2 per cent Negro. The largest town in the county, Teague, has a population of 2,728. The table following gives other pertinent facts concerning the population of the county.

TABLE I

STATISTICAL INFORMATION CONCERNING FREESTONE COUNTY

<u>Item</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Area in square miles	862
Population 1960	12,525
Population per square mile	14.4
Urban population	2,728
Rural population	9,797
Number of farms	1,711
Average farm acreage	240.7
Number of farm owners	715
Number of farm tenants	168
Income	17,333,000
Wages	3,392,672
Manufacturing value	1,692,000
Tax value	12,815,125

Lying along the boundaries between the Black Belt and Post Oak Belt in East Central Texas, it was created and organized in 1851 from Limestone County. It was named for freestone rock found in all parts of the county. Rolling to hilly, wooded terrain of post oak belt except extreme west part on black land and prairies. It is bordered on the northeast by the Trinity River. Bottom lands, chocolate, dark alluvial soils and sandy soils with dark loams on prairies.

The resources of Freestone County come from timber; pine, ash, mulberry, mesquite, cedar, blackjack, walnut, hickory and post oak. Commercial production; oil (1956) 230,338 bbls.; natural gas, brick and tile from clay near Teague and white sand produced commercially. Large lignite deposits are found here.

Crops are grown on varied soils. Cotton is the leading crop with an average of 7,873 bales. Diversified crops are also grown. Corn (300,000) bushels, vetch seeds (250,000) pounds, watermelons, beans, peas, tomatoes, sweet potatoes, fruit, blackberries are also grown.

Much of the land in the eastern part of Freestone County is rich but unimproved. A large part is devoted to beef cattle, swine, broiler production, dairying, sheep raising and soil conservation program.

The county seat of Freestone County is Fairfield; which serves farming and livestock areas. Income is derived from commerce and tourist who travel over highways. It has several small industries. The furnishing of gravel for the construction of highways and building purposes is also one of the chief industries of the county seat.

PART II

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

This part deals with the analysis of data secured from surveys and personal interviews with fifty part-time farmers. The writer attempts to give all detailed information that the survey called for on part-time farmers in Freestone County.

The writer thinks it is necessary for the purpose of clarification of statistical facts concerning educational status, farm ownership, income, crops and livestock raised, occupational status and type of activities engaged in.

In order to make an analysis of the data collected the writer wishes to present the information in tabular form.

Table II shows the educational status of fifty part-time farmers that were surveyed by the writer in Freestone County. Twenty-four received one to eight years of elementary school training, fifteen received one to four years high school training, and eleven received one to four years college training.

TABLE II
EDUCATIONAL STATUS OF FIFTY PART-TIME FARMERS

Schooling	Years	Number	Percentage
Elementary	1-8	24	48
High School	9-12	15	30
College	1-4	11	22
Totals		50	100

Table III points out the ownership of fifty part-time farmers surveyed in Freestone County. The data collected from the survey indicates the following: Twenty-Two were full owners of farms they operated, sixteen were part-owners, five were cash renters, and seven were share renters.

TABLE III
TENURE STATUS OF FIFTY PART-TIME FARMERS

Tenure	Number	Percentage
Owner	22	44
Part-Owner	16	32
Cash-Renter	5	10
Share-Renter	7	14
Totals	50	100

Table IV reveals that the size of fifty part-time farmers' families vary in number. The average size of the part-time farm family surveyed as revealed in this study is five (5) members. The family size ranged from a low of two (2) to a high of twelve (12) members.

TABLE IV
SIZE OF THE AVERAGE PART-TIME FARM
FAMILY

Number Part-Time Farms Reporting	Number in the Family	Number Who Work on Farm	Men	Women
	<u>Total Avg.</u>	<u>Total Avg.</u>	<u>Total Avg.</u>	<u>Total Avg.</u>
50	250	5	159	3.18
			98	1.9
				61
				1.2

Source: Surveyed 50 part-time farmers of Freestone County, Texas

Women and girls and men and boys are computed to give the total for men and women.

Table V shows the number belonging to part-time farm families not living at home, but receiving support from home, and the number away from home contributing to the family support.

TABLE V

Number of Families Reporting	Number Away from Home Receiving Family Support	Number Away from Home Contributing to Family Support
50	8	14

Source: Surveyed 50 part-time farmers of Freestone County

Table VI shows the size of the part-time farm. The number of acres is the measure most commonly used in measuring the size of farms. This data in the following table will show that the size of farm ranged from (2) acres to (80) acres.

TABLE VI

Number of Acres	Number of Farms Reporting	Percentage
0-9	6	12
10-29	15	30
30-49	14	28
50-69	6	12
70-80	9	18
Totals	50	100

Source: Surveyed 50 part-time farmers of Freestone County

Table VII shows the occupational status of fifty part-time farmers. Also the occupations that fifty part-time farmers are engaged in other than farming their own farms. This data indicates that more part-time farmers in Freestone County, are engaged in brickyard work and work on other farms than any other occupation.

TABLE VII

 OCCUPATIONAL STATUS OF FIFTY PART-TIME FARMERS

Occupation	Number	Percentage
Cotton Gin	3	6
Carpenters	4	8
School Bus Drivers	6	12
Automobile Mechanics	1	2
Brickyard	7	14
Oil Mills	3	6
Truck Drivers	6	12
Janitorial Work	2	4
Working on other Farms	7	14
Professional	3	6
Pensions	4	8
Glass Plant	2	4
Operating Own Business	2	4
Totals	50	100

Table VIII shows the crop enterprises engaged in by part-time farmers over a period of fifteen years. Cotton, corn and gardens led the way for participation. During the war years, gardens were prevalent. This was due to the shortage of food supplies and the part-time farmer resorted to raising part of the home food consumed by the family. Also, there were lots of time consumed in the factories by the part-time farmer and there was little time for any other type of farming except gardening.

Table IX shows livestock enterprises that fifty part-time farmers of Freestone County, Texas, engaged in over a period of fifteen years. The table indicates that the years during World War II and 1950-51 were the highest period when more livestock were raised than at any other period covered by the survey.

Table X shows that the poultry enterprises that fifty part-time farmers engaged in over a period of fifteen years in Freestone County, Texas. The table shows that more farmers were growing laying hens for eggs to be used at home and market purposes than any other poultry enterprise covered by this survey.

Table XI indicates the income status of fifty part-time farmers surveyed for crops over a period of fifteen years. The table also indicates that 1952 was the most profitable year for part-time farmers of Freestone County, Texas.

TABLE VIII

CROP ENTERPRISES ENGAGED IN BY FIFTY PART-TIME FARMERS
OVER A PERIOD OF 15 YEARS
1946-1960

Enterprise	Years														
	1946	1947	1948	1949	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957	1958	1959	1960
Cotton	48	46	46	48	48	44	47	46	48	48	48	46	47	46	44
Corn	48	39	41	40	46	45	45	44	44	45	46	48	48	48	48
Maize	28	24	32	34	35	30	33	23	39	38	38	35	39	40	41
Garden	39	41	48	47	49	45	41	39	40	42	38	39	46	48	49
Peanuts	9	8	8	10	9	9	9	10	10	11	9	9	8	9	10
Oats	16	15	14	16	16	19	20	22	26	28	12	22	22	22	26
Berries	5	5	4	6	8	8	9	7	8	10	10	9	10	10	10

TABLE IX

LIVESTOCK ENTERPRISES ENGAGED IN BY 50 PART-TIME FARMERS
OVER A PERIOD OF 15 YEARS
1946-1960

Enterprise	Years														
	1946	1947	1948	1949	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957	1958	1959	1960
Milk Cows	37	39	43	43	45	47	43	45	45	44	45	46	46	46	47
Beef Cattle	16	17	29	30	33	29	24	28	31	34	38	38	35	37	39
Swine	47	44	45	40	45	45	45	45	48	38	38	41	38	38	39
Sheep	7	11	17	17	20	18	18	18	17	15	11	10	10	10	16
Goats	4	7	10	15	16	13	9	9	7	5	5	6	7	8	9

Source: Surveyed 50 part-time farmers of Freestone County, Texas

TABLE X

POULTRY ENTERPRISES ENGAGED IN BY 50 PART-TIME FARMERS
OVER A PERIOD OF 15 YEARS
1946-1960

Enterprise (To Use at Home or Sell)	Years														
	1946	1947	1948	1949	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957	1958	1959	1960
Turkeys	9	10	11	11	12	11	9	11	12	12	14	13	15	15	16
Broilers	44	45	45	46	45	45	46	47	47	49	46	46	45	44	44
Layers	44	45	45	46	46	46	47	46	46	44	46	47	47	46	46

Source: Surveyed 50 part-time farmers of Freestone County, Texas

TABLE XI

INCOME STATUS OF 50 PART-TIME FARMERS SURVEYED FOR CROPS
OVER A PERIOD OF 15 YEARS
1946-1960

	Years														
	1946	1947	1948	1949	1950	1951	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957	1958	1959	1960
Income	69,591.83	72,084.07	80,059.60	89,593.33	85,596.92	94,086.59	98,112.70	94,058.44	90,059.60	87,608.11	89,181.19	85,611.54	82,798.72	87,031.51	84,889.47

PART III

KINDS OF SUITABLE PART-TIME EMPLOYMENT

This part will deal with the various kinds of part-time employment that a part-time farmer may engage in while not employed on his own farm. The writer has reviewed related materials and is expressing his findings to the part-time farmers of Freestone County, Texas.

A successful part-time farm operator not only selects his main products or enterprises with care, but he also builds up a combination of products which give him a well balanced, efficient business. To do this, he tries to approach certain goals. He strives to produce products of sufficient value to give him a reasonably large income or volume of business. By doing so he reduces the overhead cost per unit of products, as there are more units over which to spread them. Overhead cost includes the items of taxes, interest charges, maintenance of equipment and employment for himself and family.

The part-time farmer plans to have his income distributed through the year as far as possible in order to have funds with which to meet current expenses. He tries to select a combination of products that will utilize labor,

power, and equipment at different times, occupy the land in different states of productivity.⁴

The whole question of fitting together the best set of enterprises to suit the farm and market; the qualifications of the farm family deserve much more thought and care than it generally receives. But, to produce on a larger scale and get a cash income from the farm and some kind of employment that is needed will either allow considerable spare time every day or that has seasonal slack periods that will come at a time when the farm requires attention.⁵

Rural mail carriers, for example, frequently have time to work on the farm. Driving a school bus or milk route are other kinds of work that may leave the worker with a great deal of time for farming; a farm which is considered too small will give the worker an opportunity after other work. Many industries offer seasonal work. Some of these have slack seasons during the time when a person can profitably work on the farm. Cotton gins, oil mills, and brickyards in this locality allow part-time employment in this area.

Part-time farming offers a good opportunity for those who have a small pension or annuity.

⁴Robert R. Hudleson, Farm Management (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1944), p. 47

⁵Bureau of Agricultural Economics, Part-Time Farming, Bulletin Number 1966, United States Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C., 1945, p. 2

How Much Income Can Be Expected. The amount of labor a man and his family are willing to devote to farm work is the chief item that decides the amount of farm income he can expect. This also governs the acreage of land he should get, the things he should raise, and the amount and kind of equipment he needs. The farm income is not always counted in cash; it is a saving on the food bill which in some cases amounts to \$200. Part-time farming in Freestone County, Texas may be anywhere above that figure, perhaps too well over \$2,100 a year.

One advantage of part-time farming is that a man can plan the extent of his farm work to fit his special needs and wishes. If he has a good job and wants to live on the farm because of advantages farm life affords his family and because he likes to do a little farm work, he will limit his activities of farming to fit those farm conditions. On the other hand, if the work on the farm occupies only part of each day, and if it provides less income than is desired, he may plan to spend a large part of his time in farm work.

Much of the farmer's net income will depend on growing a large per cent of high-profit crops, getting good seeds of the right variety. A part-time farmer is using expensive land, tools, horses or mechanical power and man labor. These require the greatest degree of cooperation from crops combined, along with other jobs to make a good

Yearly income. The part-time farmer should be trained in farming. Not only is it necessary that the farmer chooses the kind of crops which will help maintain fertility of the soil and provide suitable cash crops and commercial feed for his livestock, but he must also select and grow the right varieties of these crops for his locality in order to get the highest yield.⁶

Part-time farmers should think of every factor of their cropping system in relation to its influence on net profit and relation to its effect on production.

Profits can be greatly increased on many farms by substituting high yielding crops for lower yielding ones; crops well adapted to feeding farm animals, crops suited for maintaining soil fertility and adaption of a rotation system which makes as nearly as possible an even distribution of labor and equipment available.

Work to Be Done Varies With Expected Income. If a part-time farmer expects his farm to provide only enough vegetables and fruits and perhaps eggs and milk for his own family, not much labor will be needed. Most families have enough spare time during mornings, evenings and week-ends to care for a garden large enough to meet most of their

⁶ Wilbert J. Frazer, Profitable Farming And Life Management (Danville, Illinois: The Interstate Publishing Company, 1937), p. 24

needs for fruits and vegetables and preserve some food and still have a little time left for recreation. If a large garden is cared for properly and some of the produce is preserved for winter use, it will add to the income the equivalent of \$100.00 to \$300.00 a year depending on the size of the family?⁷

Deciding on Products to be Grown. When deciding on crops to be grown, the first to be considered are vegetables and small fruits for family use. One-half to three-fourths of an acre of good land will be enough to supply nearly all the vegetables and small fruits, both summer and winter, for a family of five. A few hand tools, a sprayer, duster, wheel hoe, and perhaps a wheelbarrow are needed for a garden of this size. The annual cash cost of such garden would be from \$20.00 to \$40.00 which would include the cost of having the plot plowed and buying seeds, fertilizers and spraying or insecticides.

A few fruit trees will make a welcome addition to the home food supply if they are well cared for, which would include pruning, cultivating, fertilizing and spraying. About ten bearing trees of different kinds will supply an abundance of fruit for the average family. Unless the owner takes good care of his trees, it is not recommended that

⁷ Bureau of Agricultural Economics, Part-Time Farming, Bulletin Number 1966, United States Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C., 1945, p. 4

they be planted.

Many part-time farmers may want to produce their own eggs, meat and milk. Even with regular employment a man may have spare time to care for some chickens, possibly a hog and milk cow or a goat or two, in addition to his garden. It must be remembered however that livestock require regular care every day of the year and cannot be neglected. If the operator wants to do something else today he may put off gardening until tomorrow and probably not lose much by delay, but livestock require that he follow a regular schedule. Departure from the schedule may bring a sharp decline in production or actual loss of animals. An operator who has his program well arranged where the animals can take care of themselves is more efficient in production.

What Products Should Be Raised For Home Use. About a dozen hens if properly cared for, will provide from 90 to 110 dozen eggs a year, enough for a family of five. The hens will require very little attention and space. An adequate poultry house can be built of materials costing from \$50.00 to \$75.00.

Hogs may be raised for home use. Two hogs will supply most of the meat and cooking fats for a family of five, and many families would not consume this much pork. A couple of weaning pigs bought during the spring would be large enough to butcher in the late fall and early winter.

In normal times, one may secure these pigs for about \$8.00 to \$12.00 each. A small pen, a good shelter and trough are all the equipment needed. Kitchen scraps can be fed in addition to other feeds. About 600 to 1,000 pounds of grain raised on about 2 acres of land will be enough to carry a pig from weaning age to slaughtering stage. With one-half or even one-fourth of an acre of pasture, the feed cost could be reduced by as much as 10 to 20 per cent.

One milk cow will cost from \$100.00 to \$300.00. With good care, the cow should provide about 2,500 quarts of milk yearly. This would furnish a family of five with butter as well as milk for a period of about ten months. Keeping a cow will require a pasture of about one to two acres, about two and one-half tons of hay and 1,000 to 2,000 pounds of grain. Also shelter would be needed.

What Products Should Be Raised For Market. If a man wants to supplement his income with cash, he may grow one or more crops for sale or he may grow livestock for sale. The first step in deciding what to produce commercially is to determine not only the amount of family labor available but also the proportion of this labor that is to be devoted to farm work and its distribution throughout the year.

It might be wise for a man to list the months of the year and place opposite of each month the estimated amount

of time the family will be able and willing to devote to farm work. He should ask these questions; how many hours will my wife and children be available to be occupied with farm work each month?; if he has a vacation he may want to take part of or all of his vacation period as time available for farm work.

PART IV

DECIDING WHAT LIVESTOCK TO RAISE

What Livestock Can Be Raised. Taking good care of livestock is highly skilled work. It requires considerable knowledge and proficiency. Livestock need suitable buildings and equipment even with these, the production risks are greater than with crops. If disease starts in a flock of chickens as among livestock, the owner may lose his entire investment amounting to several hundred dollars.⁸ Helping to maintain soil fertility is one of the more important purposes of livestock enterprises. However, soil productivity can be kept up with green manure crops and commercial fertilizers but these methods have been less popular than the use of livestock. This is partly because green manure crops keep some land each year in crops which yield no direct returns other than organic matter. If cattle or sheep are kept, it is possible to pasture soil building crops part of the time. This yields a direct return at the same time. On most farms, the use of manure and green manure is sufficient to keep up the productivity

of the soil.

Poultry. Chickens lend themselves well to part-time farming. Good returns may be had from a small space. The cost of the flock, buildings and the equipment is not high in relation to returns. The birds respond well to good care and there are facilities almost everywhere for marketing eggs as well as live or dressed chickens. The net returns to be expected from chickens will vary with the cost of feed, the care given them, and the price received. If prices for eggs are unfavorable, some of the hens can be sold or used on the table, and the enterprise can be built up again when conditions are more favorable.

Cows, Hogs and Sheep. These animals are not so well adapted to commercial production on very small part-time farms. All of these enterprises require a fairly large investment. Milk cows and sheep require considerable acreage, as it is usually not economical to buy roughages. Good milk cows need rather elaborate buildings and equipment for themselves and for handling the milk; particularly if milk is sold, for it is usually necessary to meet strict sanitary specifications. Sometimes, these require that the milk house be separate from the stable. Cheap land suitable for pasture is necessary for low cost production. Those farmers wanting to raise these animals should devote a considerable part of their time to farming.

Milk Goats. Milk goats are well adapted to part-time farming because they do not require much space, pasture or feed as cows. They give milk for the family, but in many localities, it is difficult to find a satisfactory market for goat milk.

Rabbits. On some part-time farms rabbits are kept for income which may come from the sale of furs, breeding stock and meat. Beginning with two or three does and a buck, the size of the enterprise can be built up easily. Anyone who intends to get income from rabbits should be thoroughly familiar with raising of rabbits and know what the market opportunities are for this product.

Crops Adapted to the Locality. First, one must learn what crops are adapted to the locality and to the particular soils on his farm. Unless a man is familiar with these crops he should consult an experienced local farmer, his county agricultural agent, the vocational agriculture teacher, or the agricultural college of the state. This is especially important if he is planning to raise crops that ordinarily are not grown commercially in the area. Many crops are sufficiently adapted to justify raising them for family use but do not do well enough for commercial production.

Crops Which Can Be Utilized By Animals. Corn, which is perhaps the most important crop in the agriculture of the United States, forms the basis for most livestock feed.

With typical yields, it furnishes a large amount of digestible feed in a palatable, concentrated, and easily stored form. On the account of its large yield of digestible nutrients, however, it produces a hundred pounds of digestible feed at a lower cost than does any other grain.

Soybeans or cowpeas in the cropping system have become an important cultivated crop in both southern and corn belt states in recent years. They are also grown as a non-cultivated crop on clean soil with methods common to small farms and since soybeans and cowpeas are high protein legumes they supplement the grains as feed crops while aiding in restoration of nitrogen to the soil. When cultivated, however soybeans are competitive with corn in requiring labor, power, and equipment at the same time in the year. As compared to most other legumes, soybeans and cowpeas are not good for soil building because they are annuals and do not form winter sod and leave the surface subject to erosion. This shortcoming is especially pronounced if the crops are cultivated and to some extent accounts for the fact that soybeans have come into favor chiefly in the leading areas where they are well adapted.

Grain sorghums compete with corn. Grain sorghums, being cultivated crops, are directly competitive within the race for land and labor. When drought and hot winds make the production of corn precarious, they nose out this crop. The grain sorghums including kafir, milo, maize and feterita

have been recommended in some sections on soils too thin for successful corn production.

The chief annual grasses used for hogs are sudan and the millets. They have certain properties which fit them to supplement other hays and to fill in when emergencies arise. Being hot weather grasses, they grow well through summer, when some of the other grasses are dormant. They can be seeded in late spring or early summer, when shortage of hay or crop failure are known and still give a large yield of feed. All the hay crops are used for pasture to some extent for the difference between hay stored while in the other it is harvested by the livestock themselves and eaten in the field, usually without curing. In addition to the hay crops already discussed, there are certain other crops important for pasture but rarely used for hay.

Animals That Require Care When The Operator Can Give

It. The functions of livestock in a part-time farming business are:

1. To increase the volume of business
2. To concentrate feed crops into products which are less expensive to ship and more in demand for human consumption
3. To convert into salable form materials which would otherwise be wasted
4. To distribute the use of labor, power, and equipment

over a greater part of the year than can be done by the production of crops alone

5. To distribute production and market risk
6. To promote frequency of sales and receipts
7. To help maintain soil fertility
8. To provide a variety of functions

That livestock enterprises commonly increase the gross income or volume of business is generally recognized. It is only in case of extremely unsatisfactory livestock market conditions that efficiently grown, marketable animals will not sell for more than their feed would cost. This does not mean that livestock are nearly always profitable. There are numerous other costs in addition to the value of feed consumed. To make a good profit from his crops a farmer must be able to market them efficiently, either as cash crops or as feed for his livestock. The individual animals must be efficient producers or they can not make the best use of their feed in returning good production and profit.

Since all farm animals are creatures of habit, they should be fed and cared for regularly. When a satisfactory system is once established, it should be adhered to, as regular care helps greatly to keep the animals in fine condition to produce well. Many times, animals are fed in an irregular manner, both as to time of feeding and kinds and amount of feed given. When animals are fed irregular as to

time, they become exceptionally hungry and over-eat if they have a chance to do so. As a results digestive disturbances are set up which may cause them to go off feed. No farmer can afford to breed up a valuable herd of any kind and ignore measures to keep his flock free from internal parasites, such as round worms and bats, external parasites, such as; lice, mites, ticks and contagious diseases. If such detrimental pests are allowed to infest livestock, they often wipe out the profit that would have otherwise been obtained from sufficient inter-action of all the good production factors present and paid for.

Crops That Require Care When the Operator Can Give It.

The final choice among crops that are adapted to the locality and for which there are markets or marketing facilities will be based on the comparison between the labor they require and the labor the operator can give to them.

If growing and marketing conditions permit, it is generally advisable to raise a smaller quantity of several crops rather than grow only one. A variety of crops will utilize labor better for the time when the most cultivation and harvesting is needed usually varies with different crops. If one crop fails, there may still be income from others. The matter should be considered however, carefully, before any crop is added that will require special machinery or buildings that are not needed for other crops.

Growing vegetables for market fits well with part-time

farming. The yields and returns per acre are high and on small places much work can be done by members of the family, but the tree fruits and nuts have some disadvantages for a part-time farmer. Production is hazardous and complete crop failure is not unusual. Cash cost of care is higher than for most crops unless the place is in an area where much of the work can be hired on a custom basis, the cost of the required spraying and the cost of other machinery may be prohibitive for the part-time farmer.

What Machinery and Power Are Needed. Equipment and power required will depend, of course, on what is raised, the number of acres, and the possibility of having some work done on a contract basis. Production for home use is about as much as one can expect to do with hand tools and even then he will probably want to hire the land plowed. For large acreages of crops some kind of power will be needed for plowing, harrowing, disking and cultivating.

The difficulty of providing power and machinery at a low cost is one of the disadvantages of small farms. With each machine, as the number of acres handled goes down, the per acre cost of the machinery goes up.

A part-time farmer must be careful to avoid investing

⁹William B. Dunjes, A Living From The Land (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1938), p. 109

too much in farm machinery. He should find out if he can hire some of the work that requires expensive and specialized machinery, such as spray rigs, combines, or binders. As most of his equipment will be used only a few days each year, he does not need the most up-to-date models and can keep his investments down by buying good second-hand machinery.

PART V

HOW MUCH LAND IS NEEDED FOR A PART-TIME FARM

This part will deal with the actual operation of the part-time farm here in Freestone County, Texas. The author has tried to give authentic information on setting up and operating a part-time farm.

In this part the writer will deal with the following to the greatest extent of his ability for the benefit of the part-time farmers in Freestone County. These are: land needed; where a part-time farm should be located; selecting the part-time farm, size; adaptation; fitness for the use of the part-time farmer; facilities; neighborhood; reasonably priced; disadvantages of part-time farming; and advantages of part-time farming.

Land Needed. The acreage required for a part-time farm depends on the extent of the farming to be done and the fertility of the soil.

If one plans to raise only fruits and vegetables for his own use one-half acre to one acre of good land should be enough.

A small flock of chickens can also be kept on a plot

of this size, if the feed for them is not to be raised at home.¹⁰

Where Should a Part-Time Farm Be Located. Before selecting a particular farm, it is important to consider the suitability of the general area for part-time farming. Many people have been disappointed in part-time farming, because they settled in communities where there was not enough work to be had off their farms, or not enough of the kind that fits in with their farming programs. However, this is a primary consideration. A farm should be selected that is near good marketing points, if anything is to be produced for sale. Those who plan to sell fresh vegetables or whole milk, for an example, should be close to a city or town.

Transportation is of vital importance to the part-time farmer. Time spent in traveling to and from other work and to and from the market, will be taken from farm work. Moreover, it will cost money to do this travel. If the farm is too far from other work, the cost of transportation may be so high as to effect or offset the earnings from the farm. A part-time farmer should also be located on an all weather road.

Selecting the Part-Time Farm. Having found a suitable

¹⁰United States Bureau of Agricultural Economics, Part-Time Farming, Bulletin Number 1966 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1945), p. 14

area for part-time farming, the exact farm should be selected with great care. It is to be the home for the family as well as a source of income. But, as it will not be the only source of income, every precaution should be taken to see that running the farm will not interfere with other work. Here are some things to consider before selecting a part-time farm:

Size: The farm should be large enough to bring in the amount of income one expects and not too large for the family and the operator to care for along with their other work.

Adaptation to Fit the Use of the Part-Time Farmer.

Is the soil fertile and adapted to the things one plans to raise? The part-time farmer should secure expert advice on this point because many crops are exceedingly particular about their environment. The soil type, drainage, or slope may be responsible for the difference between profitable production and a poor soil may be next to areas that are well suited to that crop. Land speculators have made fortunes selling unfortunate and hopeful farmers unadapted land. The county agricultural agent or other local disinterested specialist will help you to make the right decisions in making the right selection.

Facilities. Are water and other facilities available? The part-time farmer will probably be outside the town. Water mains, sewers, gas lines and in some instances electric lines will not be available to all farms.

Neighborhood. Is the locality in which the family would like to live attractive? Are the houses nearby well kept and attractive? There are rural slums as well as urban slums.

Reasonably Priced. In buying a farm, it should be reasonably priced. Because its value will depend partly on the value of the place to live, he can expect it to sell for more per acre than the going value of the land of similar quality that is farther from town.

Disadvantages of Part-Time Farming. (1) It is confining, if livestock is raised; and it will require the presence of someone on the farm everyday. Even without the livestock, the farm cannot be left for long periods of time, especially during the growing season. Moreover, farming requires a regular routine; the owner cannot do as he wishes on the spur of the moment. His life must be arranged to meet the requirements of the crops and livestock. He must get up early and frequently must work rather late at night. Even a slight change of the work schedule may cut production of his cows or chickens.

(2) It takes hard physical labor, frequently under unpleasant conditions, hot sun and cold and rain. Regardless of how well the work is planned, bad weather or unexpected set-backs will mean extra work to catch up.

(3) The cost of production will be high, land near cities is higher than land of equal farm value farther from town.

Part-time farmers generally cannot buy supplies in large quantities. It may not be profitable for a part-time farmer to own labor saving devices and machines. It will take unusual skill to get as high egg production per hen or as much milk per cow as can be obtained by a competent full-time farmer.

(4) There maybe disappointments as production may fall far below expectations. Droughts, hail, diseases and insects take their toll of the crops.

(5) Jobs cannot be changed freely. A man who is running a part-time farm will have many ties to hold him where he is. To leave may mean a considerable loss of capital because it involves much more than loading the family's household goods on a moving van. Therefore, he may not be able to change his regular job as freely as he might wish.

(6) Farming may add additional burdens, if the main job is lost, expecially if the farm is owned or being bought. The chances to sell part-time farms are likely to rise and fall with the chances for off-farm work in the same area.

Advantages of Part-Time Farming. (1) Environment - A farm provides a wholesome and healthful environment in which to rear children. They have to play and get plenty of fresh air. They can be given chores that are adapted to their age and ability. Owning and caring for a calf, a pig or some chickens develop in children a sense of responsibility for work.

(2) Security - Part-time farming will give a measure of security if the regular job is lost, provided the farm is owned and is free of debts and furnishes enough income to meet fixed expenses and minimum living costs.

(3) Work during retirement years in part-time farming is especially desirable for those whose health require some work or exercises.

(4) Profitable use of spare time - Part-time farming gives one a chance to use profitably any family labor which otherwise would not be used. It can provide work for the entire family, subject to planning and under the supervision of the family itself.

(5) Lower living cost. Generally a family can live more cheaply in the rurals than in the city, without lowering the level of living.

(6) Recreational values - The physical work on the farm is often considered recreational. It is a wholesome change from regular employment and a physical conditioner for many white collar workers.

PART VI

SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary

A study of part-time farming in Freestone County, Texas, made under the auspices of the writer of this thesis furnished interesting data on the survey of fifty part-time farmers. In this analysis, various methods of part-time farming are described. The results obtained from the methods were tabulated and discussed.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the practices carried out by the small part-time farmers of Freestone County, Texas. Also, to study and suggest areas of improvement. Data was collected through surveys and interviews with fifty part-time farmers of Freestone County, Texas. The following is the findings by the writer of this thesis:

1. Data indicate that 24 received from one to eight years of elementary training. Fifteen received from one to four years of high school training. Eleven received from one to four years of college training.
2. Data indicate that twenty two were full owners of their own part-time farms. Sixteen were part owners. Seven were share-renters. Five were cash renters.
3. Data indicate that the average size of the part-time

farm family was five in number.

4. Data indicate that the number living away from home receiving family support were eight. The number away from home contributing to the family support were fourteen.
5. Data show that the size of part-time farms surveyed ranged from two to eighty acres.
6. Data indicate that other employment outside of his own farming employment, working on other farms and brickyard employment led the list of the twelve occupational status of part-time farmers surveyed by the writer.
7. Data indicate that of crop enterprises engaged in by fifty part-time farmers, cotton led the list over a period of fifteen years.
8. Data indicate that livestock enterprises engaged in by fifty part-time farmers over a period of fifteen years covered by this survey, swine led the list of livestock enterprises.
9. Data indicate that poultry enterprises engaged in by fifty part-time farmers covered by this survey over a period of fifteen years, chickens were number one; with laying hens being the most important.
10. Data indicate that the income of fifty part-time farmers covered by this survey over a period of fifteen years, 1952 was the most profitable year; however several other years were close.

Recommendations

The part-time farmers surveyed need to realize the importance of record keeping of the farming business. Out of the fifty part-time farmers surveyed only seven had a fair system of record keeping.

The things listed below are what the part-time farmer must do in order to improve his farm business and increase his annual living:

1. Keep better farm records.
2. Practice improved farming methods.
3. Properly use machinery and equipment.
4. Improve real estate and buildings.
5. Improve on soil conserving methods.
6. Develop a better live-at-home program.
7. Increase production and save money by labor saving devices.
8. Educate his children to their capacity.
9. Improve himself through reading, traveling, and keeping abreast of new inventions in agriculture. Using the aid of agricultural agencies in his locality and others.
10. Take advantage of securing sufficient capital, so as to improve the home and surroundings through our governmental agencies on a low rate of interest and a long period of time to repay the loan.

Conclusion

Part-time farming needs some measure to gauge the profit of a farm. No one standard measure of profit that is completely satisfactory for all purposes has, as yet, been developed by farm management experts.

A part-time farm business is made up of land, labor, capital and management. The combination of these factors differ from farm to farm. It is obvious that all fixed and operational expenses must be met before profits can be realized. The expenses include all supplies purchased, hired labor, taxes, interest on capital, and depreciation and repairs on equipment and buildings.

There is no perfect measure of the proficiency of the organization and management of farms. To determine which method to use, one must decide what he wants to know about part-time farming enterprises.

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APPENDIX

Exhibit A: Survey Used for Gathering Data

QUESTIONNAIRE: RANDOMIZED BLOCK SAMPLE METHOD

The Economics of Fifty Part-Time Farmers of
Freestone County, Texas

Family Economic Status

A. Family Unit

1. Number in family _____ age of individual _____
2. Occupation: part-time farmer, professional
worker, industrial worker, full time farmer.
(circle one) others _____ .
3. Education received: (circle one) elementary
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8, high school 1 2 3 4; college
1 2 3 4.
4. Number of children now in school _____

B. Tenure status of operator: check one

1. Tenant
2. Owner
3. Partowner
4. Farm experience; Number of years _____

C. Farm ownership status:

1. Number of acres in the farm _____
2. Number acres owned by operator _____
3. Number acres you are now buying _____
Value _____

4. Number acres rented _____ cash rented _____
 share rented _____
5. Number acres leased _____
6. Number acres inherited _____

D. Modern conveniences in the home: (answer yes or no)

1. Do you have running water in the home? _____
 Electricity? _____
2. Transportation: (circle one) truck, car,
 tractor, others _____
3. Do you have sufficient water supply for home
 and livestock? _____
4. Is there a source of news in the home?
 (circle one) radio, television, magazines,
 newspaper
5. Is there a bath in your home? _____ washing
 machine _____ deep freeze _____ refrigerator
 _____ gas stove _____ wood stove _____
 electric stove _____ others _____

A Survey of Part-Time Farming in
Freestone County, Texas

List main crops grown for the years indicated in order
of importance based on income derived.

Number of acres farmed _____

Year	Crop	Income
<u>1946</u>	_____	_____
<u>1947</u>	_____	_____
<u>1948</u>	_____	_____
<u>1949</u>	_____	_____
<u>1950</u>	_____	_____
<u>1951</u>	_____	_____
<u>1952</u>	_____	_____
<u>1953</u>	_____	_____
<u>1954</u>	_____	_____
<u>1955</u>	_____	_____
<u>1956</u>	_____	_____

Year	Crop	Income
<u>1957</u>		
<u>1958</u>		
<u>1959</u>		
<u>1960</u>		

List the principal classes of livestock grown for the years indicated below. (List in order of importance based on amount of income).

Year	Livestock	Income
<u>1946</u>		
<u>1947</u>		
<u>1948</u>		
<u>1949</u>		
<u>1950</u>		
<u>1951</u>		
<u>1952</u>		
<u>1953</u>		
<u>1954</u>		
<u>1955</u>		
<u>1956</u>		
<u>1957</u>		
<u>1958</u>		
<u>1959</u>		
<u>1960</u>		

List income not derived from farming for the years indicated below. (List in order of importance based on amount of income).

Year	Source	Income
<u>1946</u>		
<u>1947</u>		
<u>1948</u>		
<u>1949</u>		
<u>1950</u>		
<u>1951</u>		
<u>1952</u>		
<u>1953</u>		
<u>1954</u>		
<u>1955</u>		
<u>1956</u>		
<u>1957</u>		
<u>1958</u>		
<u>1959</u>		
<u>1960</u>		