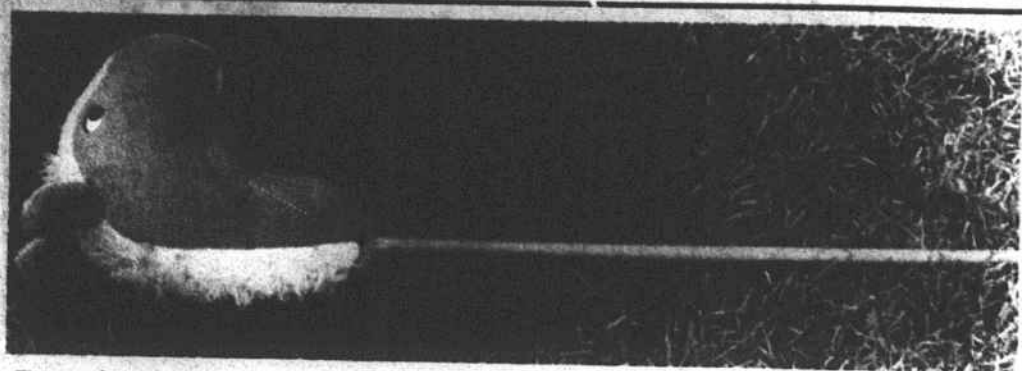


Lifestyles



End of summer
Summer is over, and this discarded horse might not get another ride for a while, now that children are putting down toys and taking up the books for school.

Answering dinner question could be difficult to do

Answering the question "What's for dinner?" can be difficult. It is sometimes hard to come up with something which is new to the family, reasonably priced and not full of extra calories.

Now you can get just such a recipe over the telephone. The N.C. Agricultural Extension Service offers a special "recipe of the week" on Extension Teletip. Dial toll-free 1-800-662-7301, and ask for tape number 5.

These are taste-tested economical and nutritious recipes. Another tape you may want to ask for is tape number 1101 on good food buys every two weeks.

Here is one recent recipe of the week. This one takes advantage of garden-fresh vegetables.

French-styled Vegetable Stew
1 cup chopped onions

On the Front Burner
Alice Pettitt
Home Economics Agent



2 small zucchini, thinly sliced
1/2 cup salad oil
3 tablespoons flour
1/4 cup catsup
2 teaspoons vinegar
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 medium green pepper, cut into thin strips
1 medium eggplant, pared, cut into strips
4 medium tomatoes, peeled, cut into eights
2 teaspoons oregano

In a Dutch oven, saute the first four ingredients in oil until onion is transparent. Coat the eggplant

strips with flour, add with tomatoes to sauteed vegetables. Combine catsup and remaining ingredients. Pour over vegetables. Cover, simmer 30-35 minutes, stirring occasionally. Yield: 8 to 10 servings.

Melon Cooler

1 cup diced honeydew or cantaloupe melon
1 tablespoon light corn syrup
1 cup lime sherbert
1 cup crushed ice
Juice of one fresh lemon

Combine melon and sherbert in blender. Blend a few seconds. Then add ice, syrup and lemon juice. Blend until smooth. Garnish with lemon slice or melon ball. For a deeper green color, add a drop or two of green food coloring. Yield: 2 eight-ounce servings.

Farm overhead needs defining

Most farm enterprise budget guidelines show a bottom-line figure named "returns of land, overhead and management."

It's important to understand what overhead is composed of.

Accountants broadly define overhead to include business costs that are neither direct labor or direct "material" used in producing a product.

In agricultural production, overhead is similarly defined as "those costs which are not distinctly related to a single enterprise or portion of an enterprise" (Earl O. Heady, 1962).

Certainly, such variable costs as fertilizer, chemicals, seed, feed, and vet fees are distinctly related to individual enterprises and are not overhead.

If analysis is made of equipment and labor requirements for each product (enterprise), then these services, represented by labor costs, fuel, lubricant and repair expenses, should be added to other direct materials and services since they have a direct association with production of each crop or livestock product.

To fully evaluate the enterprise, the fixed costs of equipment ownership (depreciation, property taxes and insurance) or lease should also be allocated to the enterprise as a direct fixed cost, based on the proportion of annual hours of use in the enterprise.

So what's left to classify as farm "overhead?" Obvious categories are accounting fees, supervisory hired labor (indirect labor), minor supplies, property insurance, and depreciation that cannot be

Extension News
Willie Featherstone Jr.
County Extension Chairman



simply have a "broader" definition of overhead and must be aware of this when comparing their actual results with more refined published enterprise budget guidelines.

It should be noted that regardless of the precision in cost allocation, overhead includes cost components that are both variable (varying in direct proportion to production volume) and fixed (unaffected by production volume, at least within a range of production volume).

Some costs may be "mixed" costs. Utilities expense, for example, often has a fixed component (such as a flat monthly charge) and variable component (rising with increased production of crops and livestock).

If you hear a farm management advisor using the terms "overhead" and "fixed costs" interchangeably -- you should correct him.

I once heard a farmer say, "If it weren't for overhead, I'd make a fortune." The business challenge is to discover the combination of resources and enterprises that "contribute" (sales less direct variable and overhead variable costs) the most to covering fixed costs.

Cost analysis can show the path to earning higher net (taxable) farm income. You may have to make substantial adjustments in enterprise and resource combinations (and your accounting system) to improve business income. Some overhead expenses can be controlled by careful observation and analysis during the year.

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