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USDA Inside USDA Information

United States Department
of Agriculture

Office of Governmental
and Public Affairs

Washington D.C.
20260

Vol. 2

No. 33

June 27, 1980

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Inventory of food and nutrition information and education materials...a number of GPO announcements...some chitchat from a number of places...and some comments and experiences. All these and more you'll find inside "Inside..."

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FINDING WHAT'S WHAT

For some time, Ted Crane of GPA's Special Programs Center has been developing an inventory of food and nutrition information and education materials...current to the end of fiscal year 1979. If you want a copy of a printout, write Ted.

The material is divided into four major groups: printed materials on consumer subjects; AV materials on consumer subjects; printed materials on nutrition; and AV materials on nutrition. Items are arranged by agency and listed alphabetically by title.

Ted's computer files for the inventory contain more information than appears in the bibliography...data on target audience, size of the audience, portion of the audience reached, cost of production and distribution, specific subjects, media or delivery personnel used for distribution...and the information can be combined or grouped in any way that would be useful to readers.

After you look through his material and if you have comments on ways to make the information more useful, Ted would appreciate hearing from you again.

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DELIVERED BY OX CART

All of us are aware of how vulnerable we are to mail hold-ups when we send out our treasured words of information. Stan Prochaska, GPA, learned firsthand recently. Some folks had fussed at him because it took so long to hear from him, and he had sometimes stewed because it took so long to hear from them.

Well, on a trip to New Mexico the other day, Stan mailed a small envelope of material to his office from the airport at Houston... sent still another envelope from El Paso. Nine days later, after he'd returned home, both envelopes arrived.

On the other hand, we've been intrigued to learn that people who read "Inside..." out in the states often get their copy and call someone here at D.C. about an item only to learn that the issue hasn't yet been delivered internally.

So remember, it isn't news until you read it the first time... you read that here, even if we can't be sure when.

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U.S. DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE
NAT'L AGRIC. LIBRARY
DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

AUG 8 '80

8 00 AM
THRU 4 00 PM

HOW THINGS DO FLY!

On that same trip to New Mexico, Stan's mind wasn't entirely on preparing things to send back to the office. He noted an article on the "Ten Commandments" of computer buying in an airline magazine, then brought it home to share with us.

It contained such nuggets as...the biggest mistakes are not in buying a computer that's bad, but in choosing one that's bad for you...a computer doesn't solve problems, it'll make them worse...a bargain beckons only fools...be patient, it takes a year or more to settle in with a computer. Then there was this one:

"Repeat this three times: 'computers do not make mistakes. People do'."

Which reminds us, typewriters don't misspell words. People do.
* * *

VISIT JOHN BROWN
"COUNTRY"

We got an interesting memo last week from Noah E. Perry, West Virginia Dept. of Ag, announcing the July 27-29 Harpers Ferry meeting of SAIOSDA (that's the Southern Agricultural Information Officers of the State Departments of Agriculture). Noah says the meeting will be held at the Cliffside Motor Inn...everyone planning to attend is to make reservations with Mrs. Mary Gavin at the motel...address is Route 1, U.S. Route 340, Harpers Ferry 25425; phone (304) 725-2066.

Included in the program are several folks from USDA, state reports and tours of the WVU Fruit Research Lab and the National Fruit Research Lab...and a visit to a thoroughbred horse breeding farm.

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WORD YOU CAN USE,
MAYBE

Several GPO (Government Printing Office) announcements should be of interest...including word that on June 1, the Superintendent of Documents started a new program to help customers. It's called the "Standing Order Service." Through the program, you can automatically receive titles in the sales inventory issued on a recurring basis.

To use the service, you must authorize payment for the publications through Master Charge, VISA or a prepaid GPO Deposit Account. Oh yes, a GPO Form 3468, "Authorization for Standing Order Service," must be completed for each item. The forms are available by writing Dept. 40, Sup Doc's, GPO, Washington 20402... and for additional information, call Donald Quaid, Chief, Sales Media Branch, (202) 275-3314.

GPO also has announced that mail rate increases from United Parcel Service and the U.S. Postal Service probably will eventually affect the pricing of publications for sale to the public.

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TO USE OR NOT
TO USE...

In a study in South Dakota, slide tapes and video cassettes were effective self-teaching aids, but the development of an ongoing promotion program was a key to usage...that's an observation of John Pates and Mark Eclov at South Dakota State U.

Another aspect found to determine the use people will make of a self-teaching center was: population of the county and traffic flow in the county office in addition to publicity or promotion of the program material.

Other findings: video cassettes were most popular when people had a choice...but slide-tape presentations were acceptable when only one system was available (90% chose video cassettes when given a choice). Slide tapes cost less to produce, are easier to edit if materials and message become out-of-date and will accommodate larger audiences. Heaviest use of self-teaching centers was between 1 and 4 p.m. Most viewers were willing to spend 10-15 minutes with a program.

John and Mark provided 21 programs...made their conclusions from 253 questionnaires. Content of the programs included 8 on home ec, 5 on horticulture, 3 on agriculture, 2 on youth, 2 on energy and 1 on home repair.

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FROM MEXICO...AND A
JOB OPENING

"Inside..." got a couple of notes from Bob Kern, now with the International Maize and Wheat Improvement Center (CIMMYT) in Mexico. In one, he reported getting a holiday while Mexico conducted its census...he listened to the English language radio station (XVIP) and heard an interview for nearly an hour between a hostess and a couple of folks most of us know--Ken Goodrich and Kathy Ellis of the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. Ken and Kathy were talking about screwworm and Mediterranean fruit fly problems.

The other note from Bob pointed out that Jim Bemis, once in ag inf at Arkansas, Texas A&M and Alaska, will be leaving CIMMYT soon and his post as science writer/editor for maize (corn) will be open by September. Major work is in print--annual and special reports, some international travel, some writing for speeches and papers, and an emerging interest in training through videotape and other AV formats.

If you're interested in applying, send a resume to Chris Doswell, Londres 40, Apdo. Postal 6-641, Mexico 6, D.F., Mexico, and plan to attend the ACE meeting in California next month where Bob will interview and discuss the opportunity with any potential candidate.

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BARE TO BOTSWANA

On other international matters...Tom Bare, radio/television editor, U. of Nebraska, called the other day to say he's joining the U.S. AID Botswana. Expansion Project as an extension specialist. The project is under the leadership of South Dakota State U. If anyone wants to reach Tom, write him at US AID-Gaborone, Dept. of State, Washington, D.C. 20520.

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UP, UP AND STILL
RISING

Get this! Yearbook sales for the 1979 book reached 23,407 as of June 20. That makes it the second fastest selling book ever (of Yearbooks, that is). The 1967 book, "Outdoors USA" sold 26,317 copies in its first four months.

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NOW ABOUT THOSE
OLD FILES

When Ted Hutchcroft, Council for Ag Science and Technology at Ames, Iowa, read our item about the records of the old National Farm and Home Hour, he sent a postscript of advice:

"Many...universities have archives sections...some...even prepared to do some cataloging..." So, Ted suggests that all of us should be concerned about careful recordkeeping...to see that old records get put into the proper hands. "In one sense," he says, "it's good housekeeping...on the other hand good stewardship." (Not a bad idea if any of us has anything worth keeping.)

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HOW ABOUT A FREE LOAN? Comes now a contest. State Farmers Home Administration Director Wallace Brunton of Ohio has started a public inf program to reward county and district offices for the best coverage during the fiscal year. News clippings and reports of radio/tv appearances and speaking engagements are kept in special folders for each office. At the end of the year, an awards committee will review the folders.

Then, "suitable recognition" will go to those who have done excellent work in using the media.

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ASH FROM MT. ST.
HELENS

Jim Johnson, GPA, came back from a farm broadcasters meeting in Portland carrying a bottle of ash from Mt. St. Helens. He swept it up himself. Fine, powdery, but gritty...that's one way of describing it. Also it was gray--or is it grey?

Anyhow...Hugh Cameron and others at Washington State U. are ready to accept aid of any kind they can get to do a study about the availability, reliability and use of information under the unique and extreme emergency conditions of the volcano's eruption. If any of you readers out there want to discuss such a project with Hugh, get in touch with him at (509) 335-2511.

More recently this week, we received the first issue of "Ash and Agriculture." It's a weekly report on the effects of the volcano. Ev Metcalf at Washington State U. says the inf comes from county agents on Fridays by telephone, telecopy material from Soil Conservation Service in Spokane on Mondays. Then the job is run and mailed on Tuesdays. AGNET, the computer network, also is part of the process. Ev promises us more details next week.