

National

Help with management decisions

Computers benefit farming

United Press International
Jack Scarth and his son, Pat, wanted to plant sunflowers on 260 acres of their Panhandle farm last year but a microcomputer told them soybeans would be better. The computer's decision made them an extra \$20,000.

"We could have run those figures up with a calculator but we probably wouldn't have," Scarth said. "And it wouldn't have been with the same speed or accuracy the computer provided."

Rising production costs, which mean smaller profit margins, and the fluctuating prices for agricultural products have placed an increasing importance on managerial skills for Texas producers. And farmers are finding out more and more that such skills can be ac-

quired with a computer.

"Without our computer, we'd have grown sunflowers instead of soybeans last year," said the younger Scarth. "Sunflowers looked like the best crop for those acres, but using the crop budget program, the computer said soybeans would bring \$88 an acre more than sunflowers."

After less than a year, the Scarths have saved far more than the cost of the \$7,000 computer.

The Scarths' computer, which is linked to an agricultural computer network established by Texas A&M University, includes a video display terminal, a printer and information storage capabilities.

The family purchased their computer after seeing a demonstration by Dr. Ray Sammons, a

Texas A&M extension service economist from Amarillo. The pilot program developed by Sammons has paid rich dividends to the Scarths, who farm a 2,000-acre grain and livestock operation at Texline and Stratford in the Texas Panhandle.

Sammons is now conducting "hands on" computer demonstrations for farmers and developing programs to help them in their management decisions. The programs include crop, livestock, irrigation and land price budgets, which enable producers to predict profits or losses on the basis of current information about his or her own situation.

"Agriculture produce prices were fairly stabilized until the mid 1970s," Sammons recently told a group of farmers gathered in Lubbock for his demonstration. "But since 1975, prices have started to fluctuate and can change more in one week than they would have over several years."

He told the group that to maintain a standard level of living, pro-

ducers must grow faster than inflation and that better managerial skills could be attained through the use of computers.

He told the group that farmers in the future will use electronic transponders to locate animals implanted with special sensors and that the computer will "flag" an animal that has not moved for several hours — pointing it out for special attention.

He said computers will measure the amount and temperature of milk obtained from dairy cows and — by recognizing each cow by a neck chain — develop a feeding schedule based on each cow's production.

"A computer is a good place to play the 'what if' game," he said. "You can find out what will happen if prices go up or down, or if there's a drought or flood."

Sammons said farming had changed drastically since the last generation and that "with different times, you need different tools."

Sadat's death reminds first lady of own tragedy

United Press International
WASHINGTON — First Lady Nancy Reagan told aides as she watched the reports of Egyptian President Anwar Sadat's assassination, "It brings it all back."

Mrs. Reagan, who tried unsuccessfully to reach Sadat's widow, Jihan, Tuesday before it was known that the Egyptian leader had died from his wounds, Wednesday called the wives of two of the three Americans who were wounded in the shooting as they sat on the reviewing stand in Cairo.

The first lady was able to reach Helen Agenbroad, the wife of Marine Maj. Jerald Agenbroad stationed at MacDill Air Force Base, Fla., and Lil Loney, wife of Air Force Lt. Col. Charles Loney stationed at Bolling Air Force Base in Washington, D.C., an aide said.

She was attempting to reach Patty Ryan, the wife of Air Force Capt. Christopher Ryan stationed at Stuttgart, West Germany.

Sheila Tate, Mrs. Reagan's spokeswoman, said the first

lady talked for a few minutes to each woman "to express her concern and relief that they were okay."

"She said one of the women told her, 'I really identified with you yesterday.'"

The comment was a reference to the March 30 attempt on the president's life.

Mrs. Reagan, who watched televised accounts of the tragedy Tuesday, told her aides, "You tend to relive your own experience" as the events unfold.

"It brings it all back."

Haig warns foreign powers against intervention in Egypt

United Press International
WASHINGTON — Secretary of State Alexander Haig Wednesday warned foreign powers against attempting to intervene in Egypt's political affairs in the uncertainty created by the assassination of President Anwar Sadat.

During a nationally broadcast news conference, Haig reaffirmed the commitment of the U.S. government to working with Egypt in seeing the Camp David peace process successfully implemented.

In the absence of Sadat, who signed the accords with Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin in 1979, Haig said the United States will maintain its role in the peace process and its full support

of the Egyptian government.

Haig characterized Sadat's killing as an isolated assassination plot by Islamic "religious fanatics" within the Egyptian military rather than a broad-based coup.

However, he warned other nations against exploiting the political instability that might exist in the aftermath of the killing.

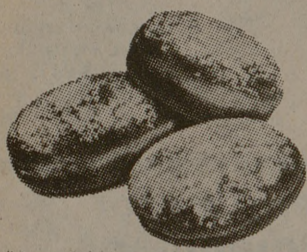
"We view with great concern at this juncture any effort by an external power to manipulate the tragic events of the last 24 hours," he said.

While he did not specify any nation or political faction that might seek to profit from the assassination, the Reagan administration, like Sadat, has been con-

cerned about the designs of neighboring Libya and its radical leader, Col. Moammar Khadafi, in northern Africa.

Only last week, Sadat sent his vice president and likely successor, Hosni Mubarak, to Washington for high-level talks that included discussions of a building confrontation between Libya, Egyptian forces and U.S.-and Egyptian-backed Sudanese troops along the Sudanese border.

Haig said U.S. efforts to achieve a lasting peace in the volatile Middle East "must not ignore the threat of forces inside and outside the region, forces whose interests are antagonistic to every country in the area."



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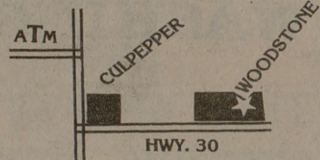
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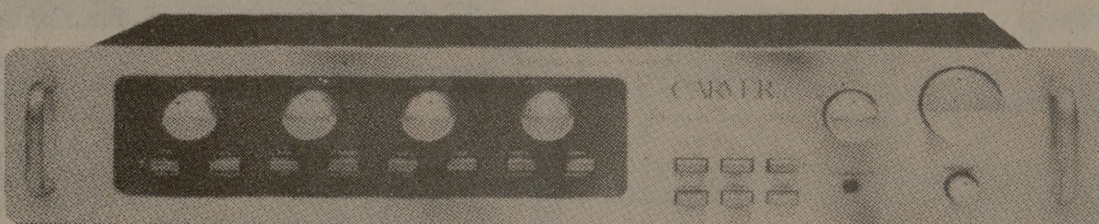
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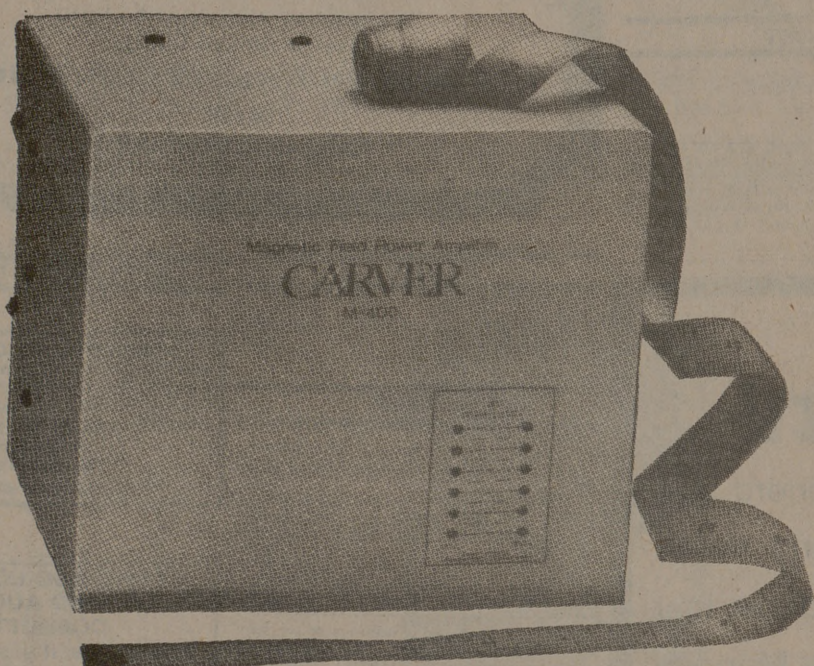
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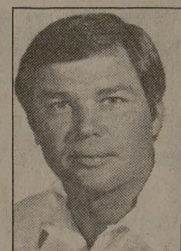
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