

LEBRET FARM

Background

The Lebret Farm was originally operated by the Oblate Fathers in conjunction with their Lebret Mission. The farm was used to provide food and employment for native people in the Lebret area. The farm received assistance as a welfare project from the Department of Social Services. In 1963, the farm was sold to the Saskatchewan Government and was operated by the Department of Social Services. In 1968, administration of the farm was transferred to Agriculture. The objective continued to be that of training for people of Indian ancestry and a source of employment for people who might otherwise be on welfare.

The farm comprises 3,520 acres of land with approximately 1,950 acres under annual cultivation and 1,000 acres seeded to perennial forage. All the farm land was used to provide feed for livestock operations consisting of a 200 sow farrow to finish hog operation and a 200 cow beef operation with calves finished to slaughter weights.

The farm staff consisted of the farm manager and from 12 to 15 farm workers depending upon the season. Except for the farm manager, all workers were unionized and worked on an hourly basis. Staff turn-over was high and productivity and efficiency low. In recent years, employment was not limited to native people and it was estimated that less than six of the workers were of Indian ancestry.

Training in recent years was limited to a few individuals who wished to gain experience with hogs before undertaking their own hog operations and were hired for a specific time period. As well, the Wascana Institute of Applied Arts and Sciences operated introductory courses in beef and hogs on the farm in the winter of 1978-79.

Existing Farm Operations

The Saskatchewan Department of Agriculture decided to terminate the Lebret farm operations by gradually phasing out the livestock enterprises before disposing of the land. The cow herd of 200 head was reduced to 100 in 1979 and the hog enterprise was completely phased out during 1980. The staff has been reduced to two full time employees and a part time manager. This staff is looking after the 100-head cow herd and operating the land surrounding headquarters. Seven quarter sections of cultivated land have been leased to adjacent farmers for 1981, pending disposal of the farm.

Review of Existing Proposals

Two proposals developed in 1979 were reviewed as follows:

1. Lebret Farm - Farm Business Section of Saskatchewan Department of Agriculture.

This proposal was developed in 1979 by farm management specialists and indicates that a viable farm can be operated using the livestock and crop rotation recommended.

Summary:

Gross Revenue	\$462,900
Less: Cash Costs	170,816
Less: Depreciation	61,135
Less: Labour	<u>162,000</u>
Net Income	<u>\$ 68,949</u>

This proposal would require 7 full-time and 4 part-time employees.

2. Lebret Training Farm - Association of Métis and Non-Status
Indians of Saskatchewan,
September, 1979.

This proposal was developed by a consultant and is dated September, 1979. It does not include a feedlot operation as the calves are sold in the fall at weaning. Less hay and grain are required and therefore fewer acres are sown down to grass and grain is produced for sale.

Only 5 full-time and 2 part-time employees are required.

This proposal shows a viable operation with a net income of \$79,939.

Recommendation:

Two field visits were made at the farm location and the land and buildings were inspected to determine a suitable plan of operation. The previous and present operations were discussed with the Saskatchewan Agologist responsible for the farm operation.

Several combinations of enterprises were developed and calculations made to arrive at a plan of operation that