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*Agriculture - Economic Aspects  
(Pt)*

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# NEW ENGLAND

## AGRICULTURAL

## ECONOMIC COUNCIL



# PROCEEDINGS JUNE 1957

AT THE  
UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT  
STORRS CONNECTICUT

MY GRADUATE PROGRAM AT THE  
UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

Edward S. Micka  
University of New Hampshire

Before I discuss my graduate program at the University of New Hampshire, I would like to review a few of the factors which interested me in the field of Agricultural Economics.

Following my graduation from the University of Massachusetts in general agriculture and a term in the service, I took a position with the Cooperative Extension Service as a County 4-H Club Agent in Coos County, New Hampshire. This is an agricultural area and hence I had the opportunity to observe many of the problems facing the farmers in this area through the work of their children in 4-H. The youths' interests were frequently limited by the financial condition of the family and all too often faulty management was a factor of prime importance causing the relatively poor financial situation of the family.

One of the programs initiated in the Cooperative Extension Service in New Hampshire during the period while I was club agent was the "Farm and Home Counselling Program." This gave me further insights in the problems of farming as I was involved in several family plans. The dynamic changes that were occurring in agriculture and my own interests indicated further education was required as the 4-H motto goes--"to make the best better."

Discussions with the Farm Management Economist working on the Farm and Home Counselling program aided me in deciding to study Agricultural Economics. The University of New Hampshire program in Agricultural Economics emphasizes economic theory and the application of the theory in research. This program met my needs since my background in economic training was limited.

Graduate school is offering me an opportunity to specialize in a specific field of knowledge, to develop a maturity of thought and an attitude toward a professional field so that both my professional and cultural life may be enhanced. I believe I will be better qualified to help farmers solve their problems.

Course work has been taken in advanced farm management delving into the problems, theory and procedure of organizing and operating farms for maximum profit and resource efficiency. Other course work was done in market structure for the distribution of agricultural products and the forces behind consumer demand and prices. Also, problems peculiar to agriculture which are the basis for governmental and private policies in the production and sale of agricultural products were studied. Some appraisals were made of prices, production controls, marketing agreements, conservation measures, and problems of farm credit in relation to their contributions toward price stability and family farm living. Courses outside of the Department of Agricultural Economics have been taken in economic theory and statistics.

Fulfillment of course requirements for my Master's degree will involve courses in the use of statistical tools in measurement and analysis of data, an appraisal and application of relevant economic theory to problems in food production, marketing and consumption; and furtherance in readings and research in Agricultural Economics. In the Department of Economics, my course work will include a study of public expenditures, collection of public revenues, and debt policies of federal, state and local governments. Further study of the monetary and banking system will also be made.

Research technique and methodology is being acquired to a large extent under an arrangement with the Farm Economics Research Division of the Agricultural Research Service. A major portion of my time is allocated to a study of the Economics of Alternative Production Practices on Specialized Market Egg Farms. The objectives of this study are to determine, describe, and analyze the important management problems associated with the production of market eggs as a step in promoting greater production efficiency and influencing producer costs and returns. This research project will also be the basis of my thesis.

Through cooperation with the poultry department a group of 23 specialized market egg producers have been chosen on the basis of size of farm, location in the state, and willingness to keep records. Besides acquiring a specific knowledge of their physical production plant and work methods, they are keeping daily records on production feed inputs and outputs. I hope to develop some production functions for various dates of hatch and strains of birds using these data.

To aid in making an economic analysis of production decisions and alternative management practices, the cooperating farmers are reporting their weekly prices paid and received.

At the University of New Hampshire the number on the staff and the number of graduate students is small. I believe that I am able to receive more individual counselling with the staff and they are in a better position to offer me more assistance to meet my specific needs. I believe these advantages outweigh the disadvantage of being located at a University with many graduate students and more seminar-type classes.