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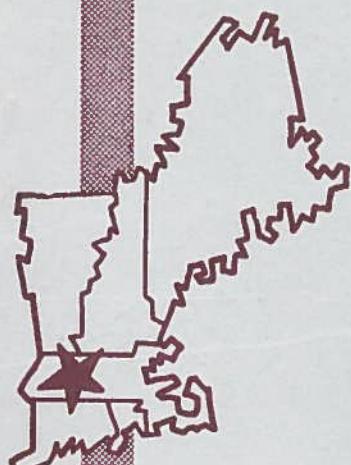
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PROCEEDINGS

NEW ENGLAND AGRICULTURAL ECONOMIC COUNCIL

ANNUAL CONFERENCE

University of Massachusetts
Amherst, Massachusetts

June 15, 16, 17, 1964

RHODY'S RESEARCH IN TRANSITION

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Rather than reporting the research progress made by our Department, or reporting in depth on one or two projects, as my colleagues preceding me have done, I think it will be of greater interest to this group to get some notion of the changing direction of the research program in Rhode Island. The change has been accomplished largely in the past three years, and is the result of imaginative leadership by Rorholm and the strong support from the College and University administrations. We have added Dr. Charles Gratto (Penn. State) in the resources area and Dr. Andreas Hoimse (a Norwegian out of North Dakota and Rome) in fisheries economics so that we can keep the present direction going.

As many of you know, the economic research at U.R.I. was organized along the traditional lines of Farm Management and Marketing. Direct attention was given to problems of producers; problems of improving the productivity and profitability of production and marketing. Shift of emphasis to problems in consumer economics, present and future use of the State's resources, and fisheries economics describes the kind of change that has occurred. It is my hope that a brief summary of the projects underway and an understanding of their objectives will illustrate something of the magnitude of the change.

Farm Management

Rorholm has completed his comparison of costs and returns of alternative forage-crop rotations for dairy farms. As a part of NE-43, he has broadened the base to include three different levels each of labor, crop, and livestock productivity and four price levels. Adding annual versus perennial forages makes for 216 solutions. Modifications of the 24 x 72 matrix produced these solutions, and analysis is underway. The study is an attempt to answer questions of the effect of changing physical productivity on the profitability of using annual forages, the effect of changing price relationships on profitability, and the income effects of changing productivity.

Marketing

Owens and Lampe are winding up the study of the egg procurement practices of large-volume retailers. Here, an attempt is being made to determine the factors responsible for the procurement systems presently followed and the reasons for past and future changes. The study will emphasize the need for institutional changes in the marketing system to prevent loss of market outlets by the local industry.

A study of the Rhode Island food distribution industry was started some time ago by Art Domike, and has been essentially dormant since he left. This project is being revised and will be underway next month. Initial effort will be directed toward determining the resources presently involved in the wholesale and retail levels of the industry.

Consumer Economics

Art Jeffrey has completed a study of the consumption and market potential for meat. The publication is concerned with consumer values and the choice process and is available. Under NEM-28, he has agreed to be responsible for the analysis of regional data on meat consumption, which will be available to all states in the region.

Irv. Spaulding, a sociologist who likes to live with real people, is involved with a determination of the situational and motivational characteristics of consumers that contribute to their responses to meat advertising. He is working with a sample of 200 households, using a structured interview to get relevant attitudes of value orientation to selected products, of response to advertising appeals, and of behavior with respect to the products under circumstances of change within the product-oriented aspect of the value structure and by the influence of advertising. Information aiding the analysis of situational influences and the analytic comparisons of households will be secured.

Resource Use and Development

In the general area, we have three federal and three state projects underway, with Rorholm, Gratto and Jeffrey responsible. In the interest of brevity, I will only list the titles of the several projects and their objectives:

Hatch-125 - Development of Rhode Island Forested Lands

1. Evaluate the potential of Rhode Island forested lands for recreation, for the production of forest products, and for other uses consistent with the optimum development of the State.
2. Develop techniques to facilitate desired land-use adjustment in these forested areas.

Hatch-126 - Economics of Use and Distribution of Fresh Water Resources in Rhode Island

1. Establish the future water resource needs of the State for residential, industrial and recreational use.
2. Develop plans to utilize better the water resources and improve the distribution of water in the State.

Hatch-127 - The Ecological and Economic Consequences of Changes in Employment Opportunities in a Selected R. I. Community

1. Determine the effects of change in employment opportunities and sources upon communities and their inhabitants.

N.F. 106 - Optimal Planning of Recreational Development for South County, Rhode Island.

1. Ascertain the goals and attitudes of the area residents.
2. Determine the social and economic impact of recreational development that could be effected within the local community's desires.
3. Analyze the conflicts between community goals and recreational development.

N.F. 108 - An Analysis of Factors Relevant to the Development of Recreational Resources

1. Analyze the social pattern of recreational activity characteristic of the State and ascertain the potential use of rural recreational resources.

N.F. 110 - Economic Impact of Narragansett Bay

1. Determine and analyze the extent and nature of the economic effect upon surrounding communities of activities associated with Narragansett Bay.

Fisheries Economics

Lampe and Holmsen are responsible for the work in this area. They have the following three state projects in progress:

N.F. 107 - The Structure of Decision-Making in Major Marketing Agencies of Food Fish in the Northeast

1. Determine the variables controlling decisions regulating the purchase, processing and distribution of food fish in the existing market system.
2. Determine the changes in structure necessary to institute various changes in the market process for food fish.

N.F. 112 - Marketing Efficiency in a Cooperative Food-Fish Processing Plant

1. Discover and identify inefficient product handling and processing in a cooperative, multiple-product, food fish processing plant.
2. Develop alternative methods of process and product handling as a means of reducing marketing costs.
3. Analyze changes in plant and equipment that will improve the operating efficiency of a given plant.

N.F. 113 -

The Rhode Island Hard Clam Industry: An Economic Analysis

1. Determine costs and returns in hand-raking and dredging and analyzing the labor return.
2. Examine the operations of dealers and wholesalers, their functions, costs and returns, and marketing margins.
3. Determine the price elasticity of demand at wholesale and ex-vessel by grade and season.
4. Develop costs of alternative methods of depuration and of hatchery program.

In addition, Holmsen is developing a project that will be designed to determine the market potential of the deep sea red crab, presently regarded as a nuisance to the deep sea lobster industry.