

B.C. MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE & FISHERIES

Lorne Owen, Farm Management Specialist

Succession Must Start Early

Editor's Note: This article is Part 2 in a series of 3, focussing on having your children involved in your farm or business. Part 3 will appear in the March/April edition of the F.A.N.

Nurture Your Child's Self-esteem

Of all the values a farm couple should strive to instill in their children, probably the most important is a healthy sense of themselves, their ability and their worth.

To succeed in today's competitive marketplace, farmers need a lot of 'hutzpah' and self-confidence. In the fiercely competitive marketplace of the future, their successors will need even more.

Fostering a child's self-esteem is challenging, especially when you're as pressed for time as most farm couples. One of the easiest, most effective ways of building a child's self-esteem is to get him or her involved. Giving children real responsibilities and a chance to contribute to the business boosts their self-worth and self-confidence, in addition to teaching them the skills they'll need to run the business. As they work, give them all the encouragement you can. Be just as lavish with your praise, whether they succeed or not.

Never leave them wondering about or wanting your approval. Be careful not to crush children's rebelliousness. After all, rugged individualism is a prerequisite to success in agriculture. Let them know you love them unconditionally.

Having Fun Makes Farming Fun

Lita Salanski

At a time when the average B.C. farmer is 50-60 years old and ready to retire but has no heir interested in taking over the family farm, Grasmere rancher, Lita Salanski is the envy of her peers. All four of Salanski's children help on the ranch, for free. All seven grandchildren pitch in when necessary.

"In many families, children walk away and

have no intention of ever coming back to the farm," acknowledges Salanski, past-president of the B.C. Cattlemen's Association. "I feel very lucky."

Salanski's children and their families are putting their heads together to try to come up with a way to diversify the 100-head cow/calf operation so it's economically viable for all of them to be involved in the business when Salanski, who has no intention of retiring, moves on to other interests. Salanski's children each left home and pursued a career outside ranching. Gary, 42, is a planer supervisor, Susan, 40, is manager of a duty free shop, Daryl, 36, is an engineer, and Shelley, 26 is a school teacher. But, one by one, each of them is moving home. "They're all very interested in this place and this way of life."

What's Salanski's Secret?

FUN!

Right from the time Salanski's children were young, the family always did "little fun things" together. Swimming, ball games, and picnics were favourites.

"We made every occasion we could think of special," she recalls.

"Little fun things" and family gatherings and outings continue to be at the heart of the Salanski family's values and traditions. The family gets together every Sunday for a big family dinner. Of course, Christmas is a special family time. Salanski routinely takes time to have coffee with her daughters. If there's a special event going on in the community, they'll all go together. Even if nothing special is going on, the family still gets together most weekends.

"You have to have fun," says Salanski.

"It's little fun things that keep people together" and, many would argue, make farming attractive to the next generation. It took a lot of hard work to clear the land and build the ranch after the family was displaced by the River Dam. Salanski's children grew up sharing the work and the joy offered by a rural way of life.

Salanski was widowed 12 years ago when

her youngest was 14. She decided to continue ranching in case one of her children wanted to take over when they got a little older.

"I've always enjoyed ranching and thought this place was pretty special," she says, "I tried to make sure my children had lots of good times and lots of love. It's nice to see those values and traditions being carried on."

Give Children a Choice

Taking over the family farm; neither an obligation nor a birthright.

Kelowna poultry producer Margaret Speitelsbach is a single mom in charge of three teenagers, 60,000 laying hens, chickens, and broilers, and an organic fertilizer business.

Like most farmers, she hopes that one day her children will be interested in taking over the farm. From a "very young age" she taught them the skills they would need to know to run the farm.

"They know how to operate our farm. They could quite easily take over," she says. But right now none of her children, ages 15, 18, and 19, are interested in making a career out of tending chickens and collecting manure to make into fertilizer. That doesn't worry Speitelsbach.

"I know what can happen." Speitelsbach's brother Jake, "could hardly wait to get off our parents' farm." He left and became an electrician. After a few years away from the family, he decided chickens weren't that bad after all.

"He bought a farm and has become a very good poultry producer. The grass always looks greener on the other side of the fence," continued Speitelsbach.

But when most teenagers get out into the real world, "the grass at home all of a sudden looks pretty good."

It's important that children feel free to pursue their own dreams and do whatever they want.

(cont' on Page 5, See CHOICES)

(cont' from Page 4, CHOICES)

"We've all got to spread our wings," says Speitelsbach. "There's no sense forcing children into getting involved in the family farm," she stresses. The best parents can hope to do is show their children that farming "is a viable option." Children should never feel taking over the family farm is an obligation. Non-family managers can be hired or the farm sold.

Taking over should be presented as a career option. A parents' message should be: "This is interesting, exciting, satisfying work. You might wish to consider this field of endeavour when you're deciding what you want to do with your life."

On the flip side, no child should feel taking over the family farm is a birthright. Just because a child is the eldest son, for example, he is not automatically entitled to take over the family farm, regardless of his aptitude, attitude or ability.

The mantle of leadership has to be earned. A successor must be qualified. Capability and competency must first be demonstrated. Ideally, decisions about who is taking over the family farm should stem from interest and enthusiasm on both parties' part.

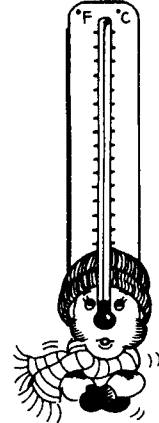
Both push and pull are required, says Speitelsbach. Parents have to show their children that farming is an option and invite them in. At the same time, the children can request that he/she should be the sibling that can manage the duties. □

So, You Think It's Cold This Winter?

(Or, everything you ever wanted to know about record cold temperatures)

Not taking anything away from those that make a habit out of complaining about our Winters and the "low" temperatures that come with it, all Canadian Provinces (including B.C.), have seen temperatures plunge to record lows over the years. Here then are the record low temperatures posted in each of Canada's Provinces:

British Columbia	-58.9°C	Jan. 31, 1947
Alberta	-61.1°C	Jan. 11, 1911
Saskatchewan	-56.7°C	Feb. 1, 1893
Manitoba	-52.8°C	Jan. 9, 1899
Ontario	-58.3°C	Jan. 23, 1935
Quebec	-54.4°C	Feb. 5, 1923
Nova Scotia	-41.1°C	Jan. 31, 1920
New Brunswick	-47.2°C	Feb. 2, 1955
Prince Edward Island	-37.2°C	Jan. 26, 1884
Newfoundland	-51.1°C	Feb. 17, 1973
Northwest Territory	-63.0°C	Feb. 3, 1947

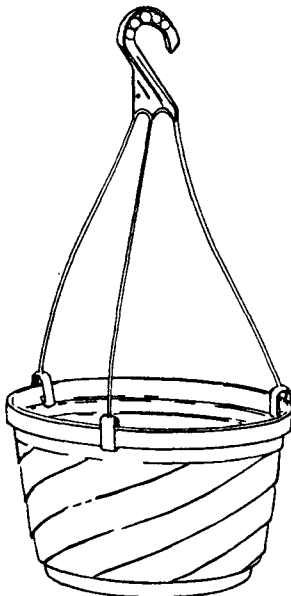


The dubious distinction of having recorded the absolute lowest recorded temperature in a Canadian city belongs to Whitehorse in the Yukon Territory where the mercury has dropped to 52.2° Celsius below zero on January 31, 1947. The next lowest was recorded in Yellowknife in the N.W. Territories, reporting a balmy 51.1° Celsius below zero, not surprisingly, on the same day.

For anyone enjoying cold Winters, and would like to see it extended, may we recommend the town of Alert in the Northwest Territories. According to the Canadian Almanac, Alert enjoys an average of five days of above-freezing temperatures annually. Its last frosty day in the Spring occurs around July 14th, while the first frost of Fall appears around July 19th. **Brrr....**

Makes you most thankful to see crocus blooming in January in our fair Province, even if that means having a bit of rain to put up with from time to time. □

Time to order Dillen Eurobaskets!



Dillen Eurobaskets are grower proven to make you Money by saving on Labour!

The attractive swirl design, and increased soil capacity of the Eurobasket adds value to your products. Reversible, plastic clip-on hangers cut labour costs in half, and the hangers are easily detached without breakage. The plastic basket hangers are designed to prevent lateral movement, so the investment in your hanging pot crop is secure! Traditional baskets with saucers are also available. Eurobaskets are available in 6", 8", & 10" sizes.

Call your local JVK Territory Manager today to place your order for Dillen Eurobaskets!

Bob Moore
Phone: (604) 944-4811
Fax: (604) 944-6311



Richard Visser
Phone: (604) 888-2713
Fax: (604) 888-2793

Western Distribution Centre:
Unit #6, 1080 Cliveden Avenue
Delta, British Columbia V3M 6G6
Phone: (604) 526-5851 Fax: (604) 526-2312

Head Office, Central Distribution Centre
P.O. Box 910, 1894 Seventh St.
St. Catharines, Ontario L2R 6Z4
Phone: (905) 641-5599 Fax: (905) 684-6260