

**Smörgåsbord**



Harold Johnson  
Editor

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"Could FARM SHOW help us settle a continuing friendly argument at the local cafe," asks a Wisconsin reader. "Which company sells the most seed corn — Pioneer or Dekalb — and how do the other major companies rank in sales?"

To find out, we contacted Lee Tawes, research analyst for Goldman, Sachs and Co., a stock brokerage firm headquartered at 55 Broad St., New York, N.Y. Here's the picture as he saw it in his most recent report "The Seed Industry: Review and Outlook" published earlier this year and which does not reflect 1977 performance.

Based on his estimated "share of market" for 1976, Pioneer and Dekalb together accounted for 50% of total industry seed corn sales (about 21.8 million bags which generated an estimated \$560 million in total revenue) with Pioneer solidly in first place.

"In 1976, Pioneer and Dekalb gained 2.5 and 3.0 percentage points to 28% and 22% of the seed corn market, respectively. Pioneer continues the upward market-share momentum begun in 1972, and Dekalb regained much of the share lost in 1975 as a result of weather-related supply problems. The medium-sized companies generally held market share, and the smaller, local companies are believed to have dropped five to six percentage points," Tawes reports.

Rounding out his "top six" ranking are Funks,

with 8.8% estimated "share of market" for '76, Pfizer Genetics (Trojan) with 5.5%, Northrup King with 5%, PAG/Cargill with 4.3% and "all other companies" selling the remaining 26.4%.

"The 1976 data shows evidence of a continuation of the pattern of the past 15 years, interrupted in 1975, of gradually increasing concentration in the industry," Tawes points out. "For example, during the 1969-1976 period, Pioneer increased share of market by an average of nearly one percentage point annually, with particularly strong gains during the last five years. Dekalb expanded its market share by two percentage points in the same time frame despite the serious setback in 1975. During the 1960s, both companies also increased market share, with Dekalb showing the greatest momentum to approximately 20% of the market from 12%, and Pioneer gained an estimated four to five percentage points. In the past 15 years, the two companies have increased their combined market share about 20 percentage points," Tawes points out. "We believe each company now has a stronger marketing and research organization relative to the industry than in the past. Moreover, the successful Missouri-Nebraska hybrid developed by the USDA and university research and marketed by many small companies in southern Iowa and central Illinois is now three years old and should be at its peak. Both major seed companies will have improved hybrids for the region in 1978. Thus, we believe Pioneer and Dekalb will continue to increase market shares at their historic trendline rates over the next several years."

According to Tawes, industry seed corn sales increased about 9-10% in 1976 to a record 21.8 million bags, following relatively flat sales in 1975. Looking ahead, he feels that the total market for seed corn will probably decline from the current level: "Most farmers have reached optimum populations with current hybrids, except in areas where irrigation is increasing . . . We believe that a reasonable projection for the total seed corn market in 1980 is 20.0-21.0 million bags, or about 5% less than the 1976 level. This amount of seed will plant 80 million acres of corn, which is sufficient to meet projected 1980 demand of about 6.5 billion bushels. This assumption is based on normal growth in corn demand of 3-4% annually from the current level of 5.8 billion bushels, an average yield per acre of 90 bushels during the 1977-80 period (compared with 87 during the past five years) and a slight increase in plant population per acre."

**Heard about the new offering plate for churches?** The ingenious invention receives gifts of a dollar or more on a plush cushion with silent graciousness. But when half dollars are dropped in, it rings a bell; when quarters are given, it blows a whistle; when dimes are slipped in, it fires a shot. But when someone refuses to give, it takes his picture!

**FARM SHOW reader Shirley Danielson, Belview, Minn.,** sent us the following translations for the benefit of relatively new farm wives who aren't yet familiar with "farmer-husband" language:

"Could you help me for a couple of hours today?" (Translation — He has two days of plowing he'd like you to do.)

"It's been a rough spring. I've put in long hours on that planter, but I'm caught up on the work now" (Translation — His neighbor buddies want him to go fishing with them this weekend.)

"If that tractor gives me trouble just one more time!" (Translation — You'd better forget about that new refrigerator.)

"You certainly have a way with animals, dear, especially the little ones." (Translation — He wants you to help give the baby pigs their iron shots.)

"That wind really picked up this afternoon. It was darn near a gale." (Translation — He was burn-

ing cornstalks and burned off most of the fence posts before he finally got the fire under control.)

"You always were a whiz at math and bookkeeping, weren't you, honey?" (Translation — He's got the record books in a mess and he needs you to straighten them out.)

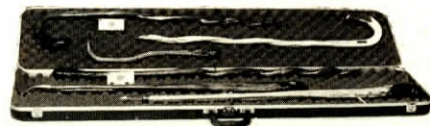
"The cattle seem to be off-feed lately. I'll have to watch them pretty closely for the next few days." (Translation — That trip to your mother has been called off again.)

"Why don't you just take the car and go shopping today." (No translation needed: Better pack your bag and head home to mother. You'll probably never find out what he's done . . . but you can be assured it must be serious!)

**In covering a show recently,** I made a routine stop at a booth displaying attractive but otherwise quite ordinary looking canes. Picking one up, I noted that "This is a pretty fancy cane. Is it Hickory?"

"Nope," answered the attendant. "It's Hereford".

It wasn't a put-on. W. J. Mackey, president of International Biologics, Inc., explained how his company had made the cane, using the entire and intact reproductive organ of a bull as the raw material. The company's "secret" preservation and



dehydration process had converted it into an attractive, functional, handcrafted cane and one of the most unsuspecting conversation pieces I've encountered in a long while.

"How do most people, who innocently and unknowingly pick up and admire the cane, react when they find out what it's made of?" I asked. "Are they surprised, offended, flabbergasted or what?"

"Despite the basic nature of the raw material, the canes and other items we make are in no way offensive," answered Mackey. The typical reaction, he noted, is — "THE WHAT OF A BULL!" "You've got to be kidding!"

In any event, Mackey's firm is doing a booming business with the unusual product. "We sell a lot of them to persons looking for an unusual gift for retiring officers, ace salesmen, in-laws, bowling league champs, or for the person who has everything." Cost of the hand crafted canes is \$64.50. Other items, all made using the reproductive organs of bulls as the raw material, include a back scratcher (\$39.50); golf putter (\$79.50) paperweight (\$59.50) or walking stick (\$62.50).

If you'd like more details, contact: W. J. Mackey, International Biologics, 531 9th St. N.W., Suite F, New Brighton, Minn. 55112 (612 636-9172).

**FARM SHOW salutes** corn grower Roy Lunn, Jr., of Schoolcraft, Mich., who this fall harvested a record corn yield of 352.6 bu. per acre, calculated on the basis of No. 2 corn at 15.5% moisture and confirmed by the Dekalb Yield Masters Club. The previous known record yield is 388 bu. an acre, produced in central Illinois in 1975. Roy, who farmers 1,000 acres with his father, Roy, Sr., made the record yield on 1.089 acres which was part of a 10 acre irrigated field. The entire field averaged more than 300 bu./acre. Roy planted Dekalb's XL-54 on April 26 in 30 in. rows and at the rate of 36,700 kernels per acre. The corn was irrigated 11 times and received a total of 32 in. of water (irrigation plus rainfall) from planting to harvest. The fertilizer program included 380 lbs. of nitrogen per acre, 100 lbs. of phosphorous, 192 lbs. of potash, one quart zinc and one pint magnesium. Weed control was provided by Lasso and AATrex 4L. Furadan and Dyfonate were used for insect control.