



Real Auction helped Klingensmith set a record for land prices (\$2,315 per acre) in his area.



Feeders automatically drop feed into two piles for floor feeding each pen.

THE "REAL AUCTION" METHOD

New "Top Dollar" Way To Sell Farm Land

by Lonnie Stauffer, Associate Editor

If you're thinking about selling any farm land, you may want to look into Real Auction, a new computer-assisted method of selling land that, according to those behind it, offers key advantages to both buyer and seller.

Under the "old" or conventional auction method, land is parceled out and each parcel is bid on separately. Then, the tract is bid on as a whole unit. Whichever method receives the highest total price is the one used to sell the farm.

The new Real Auction method goes a step further. Combinations of two or more parcels can be bid upon, too. What's more, the entire farm, or any part of it, is available for sale at all times until the last bid is in, as determined by the auctioneer. Since bids on 10 or more combinations of parcels can get confusing, a computer is used to keep track of them and to determine which combination of bids is bringing the highest total return.

"Real Auction allows buyers to bid on exactly what they want without getting something they don't want," explains Howard Sturm, general manager of a Real Market system in Cannon Falls, Minn. "For the seller, Real Auction offers greater assurance of getting top-dollar return."

"The real key here is not the computer, but the professionally trained people who set up a Real Auction land sale," notes Sturm. "From four to nine Real Auction associates help recruit bidders, determine the best parcelization boundaries and consult with bidders during the actual auction."

At the auction itself, there is no auctioneering cry. Instead, buyers give their bids to auction associates who record the amount of the bid, time of bid and the parcel bid upon. Then, the bid is announced to the auctioneer and recorded on the com-



Computer keeps track of high bid combinations.

puter, which gives an instant readout of what the highest combination is at that point. The highest bids on each parcel are posted on a board near the auctioneer.

Working with an auction associate is essential, so the bidder knows where he stands at all times. However, the associates represent only the seller, so trust between bidder and associate is vital, Sturm explains.

He notes that the Real Auction method generally brings higher prices to the seller, but not all farm land being offered for sale is suited to the new method of selling. "If we feel a tract really lends itself to Real Auction, we'll tell the seller and suggest using the method. If we don't think Real Auction is the best alternative, we'll suggest other conventional alternatives for selling it."

Real Auction was developed by Des Moines, Iowa, realtor Ken Erickson. He has been promoting Real Auction by working on a consulting basis with other realtors.

Erickson says Real Auction has had a slow start but is now starting to catch on. "Most people don't know what it is when they first see it, and can't believe it when they do see it, but it does work."

New Auto-Drop Feeder Floor Feeds Your Hogs

If you've considered "floor feeding" for your hogs, you'll want to check into the new Auto-Drop feeder from Henn-Rich, a subsidiary of Hurst Equipment, Napoleon, Ohio.

Floor feeding has been gaining popularity in some areas because it can lower maintenance and labor costs, while feed efficiency and waste remain at the same level as other feeding systems, according to Hurst.

The Auto-Drop precisely controls feeding times and the quantity of feed dropped. A conventional time clock can be set to control feeding times or a manual system can be used. "Our fieldmen have been recommending feeding 8 or 9 times a day," reports Henry Dehnke of Hurst.

Feed is run into the hoppers through a Chore-Time Flex Auger at rates up to 45 lbs. per minute. It is flexible enough to go around corners and building obstacles. "Each hopper is filled with as much feed as you determine your pigs need. This amount should be changed frequently, depending on how fast your pigs are growing," according to Dehnke. Each hopper features individual quantity adjustment for feeding pens of varying weights or ages.

When the timer determines it is time for feeding, the bottoms drop out of the hopper and allow feed to be dropped into two piles. This helps to discourage hogging of the feed by aggressive pigs. The timer also closes

the hopper and starts the auger to fill the hoppers again. The feed stays in the hopper until the next feeding. Since hoppers refill while the hogs are eating, they don't fight and jostle from anticipation when they hear the feeder kick in.

Hurst recommends the feeders be hung 4 to 5 ft. above the floor so that they are away from the pigs and corrosive materials. However, they must be low enough to prevent the feed from scattering and being wasted. Most any type of feed can be used with the system.

Most farmers have been installing the Auto-Drop indoors on solid floors or partial slats, but there are a few being set up outside, according to Dehnke. He stresses that the Auto-Drop requires a good manager who is capable of recalibrating the feeder often to keep up with the particular needs of the pigs as they grow.

List price varies depending on the individual package needed. One control drop per hopper costs \$60. Each drop hopper costs \$55. 40 ft. of auger will cost about \$686, and one drop control panel (including timer) lists at \$825. All of these components will be set up according to your individual needs.

For more details, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Henry Dehnke, Hurst Equipment, P.O. Box 389, Napoleon, Ohio 43545 (ph 419 599-9560).

Higher land sale prices, in many cases, are the chief advantage of Real Auction, according to Erickson. He says some farms will bring up to 15% more money with Real Auction over private treaty sales.

Commissions for a Real Auction vary, says Sturm, noting that "we have to be competitive, obviously."

At a recent Real Auction in Buffalo Lake, Minn., Sturm and his associates Lake, Minn. Sturm and his associates set a record for land prices paid in

that area. Says LaVerne Klingensmith, owner of the 120 acre parcel sold: "I think a properly prepared auction like this is the only way to go. Rural people are generally prone to liking auctions, so they feel comfortable bidding. I'm well pleased with the way it turned out."

For more details, contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Real Auction, Ken Erickson, Suite 24, 2400 86th St., Des Moines, Iowa 50322 (ph 515 270-0159).