

# 'Schizophrenic' policy harms farms

By Lise Olsen  
Associate News Editor

The many faces of the government's agricultural policy and its accompanying schizophrenic behavior has contributed to the problems of United States agriculture said the director of a Washington-based news analysis service, which addresses international issues and policies related to economics and agriculture.

Carol Brookins, president and chief executive of World Perspectives, Inc. said the best ag policy would be one that was consistent, predictable and based on individual farmers' needs, rather than crop acreage. She said such a policy should be set for 10 or 15 years and then evaluated and changed, if necessary. Such a stable policy would "give the farmer back his ability to run his own business," she said.

But Brookins said that it would not be enough, in today's highly interdependent world, to design a long-term, stable domestic policy. Foreign markets,

must be carefully considered, especially those in developing nations, where small increases in income can mean a large increase in food imported from the United States.

Brookins said ag policy is hampered by a "crisis management" solutions for long-term cyclical economic problems. Government is "distorting" the market through its attempts to reconcile conflicting priorities; to reduce prices to encourage competitiveness in world markets and decrease subsidies and yet stabilize prices to keep farmers from going broke, she said.

Yet, Brookins said, the current crisis, perceived as severe internationally, may produce the most lasting and effective solutions because internationally, governments will be forced to act together.

Despite her criticisms of ag policy, Brookins was reluctant to criticize the Food Securities Act of 1985, the so-called farm bill, because, she said, a year is not a sufficient trial period.

But government should continue to

revise its priorities because of various cultural changes, Brookins said.

Domestically, fewer farmers will be needed in the future. Already, plans have been proposed for rural areas that would parallel urban redevelopment. Business should be encouraged to relocate in smaller communities, farmers should be retrained and employment of families off the farm should be encouraged.

Internationally, government should work to restructure world debt and increase buying power in developing nations, because the only way the U.S. market could truly grow, would be to give the hungry the economic ability to be able to buy food.

Brookins, is a former vice-president, commodities, of E.F. Hutton and Co., and chairs a state department subcommittee on the third world. Her speech was made at a "Celebration of Agriculture" banquet Wednesday night, sponsored by the Nebraska Council on Public Relations for Agriculture in observance of National Agriculture Week.

# Regents plan hearing on Curtis

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economy. "I understand when you have the budget shortage . . . you have to take drastic measures, but no one wants Roskens' proposal," Siminoe said.

Siminoe said enrollment at the Cur-

tis school usually ranges from 283 to 317 students. But the agricultural crisis and the threat of closing has reduced the enrollment to 158.

The regents will have a public hearing on Roskens' recommendation to cut \$1.245 million from UNSTA's entire budget on April 2 at the Stockman Inn

in North Platte. Roskens; Rudy Lewis, vice president for university relations; and Bill Swanson, vice president of governmental relations, could not be reached Wednesday. Roy Arnold, vice chancellor of agriculture and natural resources, would not comment on the amendment.

# Panel debates sale of Nebraska water

By Stew Magnuson  
Senior Reporter

Beef, corn and popcorn are three well-known Nebraska exports. But the next popular export might be in every home's faucet: water.

A four-member panel Wednesday discussed the possibilities of selling Nebraska's abundant underground water to states like Colorado or Arizona.

The panel at the Nebraska Water Conference on East Campus included Karren Kerr from the League of Women Voters; David Chambers, executive director of the League of Nebraska Municipalities; James Cook, legal counsel for the Nebraska Natural Resources Commission; and Phyllis Lyons, a concerned citizen. They explored questions about pipelining and selling water to drier states. Questions were aimed at the Nebraska Legislature and policy makers in Nebraska.

"Who owns the water? The state, the natural resources districts or the land owners?" Lyons asked. "Who can sell the water legally, and where will the money go?"

Lyons said in Colorado people have been shot arguing over water rights, and jokingly said that he

hoped such extreme measures wouldn't be taken on the Legislature's floor.

Chambers said that rural- and city-dwelling Nebraskans will take different approaches toward the idea of selling water.

The average Nebraskan takes water for granted and wouldn't think of conserving it until its price gets high or the wells run dry, Chambers said. In 16 years of watching water legislation in Nebraska, Chambers said, not much has changed.

Chambers also said he was not optimistic that the idea of selling water would be brought up in the Legislature.

"The groups of senators from the cities just assume the water will come out of the faucet forever," he said. "And the rural senators, no matter how altruistic or sincere they might be, will claim that the water under their constituents' farmland belongs to the (owners)."

Cook questioned the economics of selling water. In the short term, he said, Nebraska won't have a water shortage.

"Will we always have a market?" Cook asked. "Would we be able to sell the water if someone else could sell it cheaper?"

## Shorts

The Nebraska Student Foundation has raised \$39,110 in donations for the 1987 senior gift so far.

Jeanne Bishop, director of annual giving and publication at the foundation, said \$28,160 was pledged during the first week of the call-a-thon from about 475 students.

Bishop said the original goal of \$55,000 for the call-a-thon was a little "facetious" and they would be happy to raise \$50,000 in pledges with two more nights of calling left.

Callers are asking anyone graduating with a bachelor's degree during 1987 to pledge \$10 the first year and \$30 each year for the next three years to a new North American Indian display in Morrill Hall. A majority of students voted on a mail-in survey last month to support the Morrill Hall project.

The Student Foundation raised \$37,000 last year for two endowments to enhance UNL's libraries, and Bishop said that whenever they can raise more money than the preceding year they are doing well.



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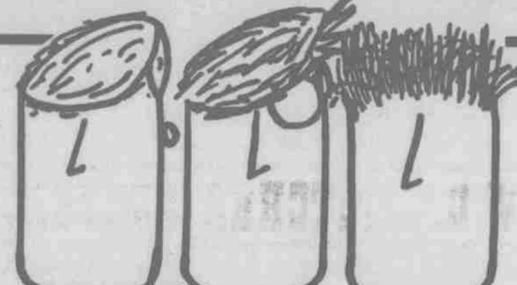
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