

Which Comes First—Forms or Farms?

More and more—records and forms—long forms—in triplicate—witnessed and notarized.

Every farmer knows the problems—application forms, government program forms, tax forms, soil test forms, endless records to keep—sometimes the FORMS are more trouble than the FARMS. A frustrated farmer wrote a book entitled, “Do You Want Me To Do All That and Plow Too?” Humorous, but serious also.

An old man helps me in the yard once or twice a month. Simple enough, huh? No way! I must file and pay social security and Medicare. Also forms for unemployment insurance and workman's compensation. And a 4-page form for the state department of labor must be filed. I am now an “employer” and must describe my “business” or “establishment” in detail—whether I am in Retail Trade, Finance, Construction, etc., and my “trade name.” Finally, a 7-page form dealing with illegal aliens, even though he was born in this country.

Much easier to do the yard work by myself, but the helper needs the money. Of course, he could “incorporate” but that's beyond him.

A one-day stay as an outpatient in the hospital recently called for much punching of computers by staff in five different offices, plus signing fourteen forms. One almost forgets why he came in. At least one learns patience.

On the farm, in the home, in the schools, everywhere—forms and records. Such a waste of time, talent and money. Where will it all end? No wonder farm operations, government programs, and hospital visits cost so much.

J. Fielding Reed

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