WHEN television sets reach American farmers, the U. S. Dept. of Agriculture will be ready.

Last week the Radio Service of the department's Office of Information started a TV research project designed to give the radio staff full information on the growth, techniques and possibilities of the visual medium.

Radio service interest in the new medium has been whetted by three network programming ventures. Last Thanksgiving a special program was broadcast over NBC's eastern TV hookup. A similar telecast was staged at Christmas time. Last month a gardening program was carried over the network.

These telecasts convinced Kenneth M. Gagen, assistant director of information in charge of radio and video, that the department should prepare for the arrival of TV on the farm. Funds have been provided for the rest of the 1948 fiscal year.

Two specialists in radio and research will handle the basic research. First to be employed by the department is Tom Noone, of the National County Agent News Syndicate. Mr. Noone previously had been at KFH Wichita, KFI Los Angeles, WBC Washington and the Armed Forces Radio Service.

Cooperating with the department's research work will be the major networks as well as individual stations. The department wants to learn the most effective ways of presenting farm and homemaking subject matter by television. It is especially anxious to learn how to telecast effectively within the cost limits of Federal, State and local agencies.

After program techniques have been studied, the department will study audience reactions in the field. This will include the effect television programs have on the life of rural residents.

Though the department is aware that few TV sets have reached the farm, it is anxious to study the effect of telecasts on urban residents and to analyze consumer problems. Urban and rural consumer problems have many points in common, it is pointed out.

If networking facilities are available as far as Chicago in the autumn, the department plans to take part in telecasts from the International Livestock Exposition and the 4-H Congress.

Radio farm directors from all parts of the country will participate in a TV forum during their April 27-29 meeting at the department in Washington. Mr. Gagen will lead a panel discussion of the subject. Many of the directors will take part in similar panels at the Ohio State Institute for Education by Radio at Columbus, April 30-May 3.

SEEEK VIDEO

DOZEN APPLICATIONS for new commercial television stations were filed with FCC last week, including a request by Warner Bros. Pictures Inc., movie producer and owner of KFWB Los Angeles, for a near-million-dollar video outlet at Chicago.

WKY Radiophone Co., licensee of WKY Oklahoma City and owned by Warner Bros. Co., seeks channel 4 (66-72 mc) in that city, while California Inland Broadcasting Co., members of all Rodman and Tulare - Kings County Radio Assoc. broadcast an interest.

BROADCASTING, March 15) has filed for Channel 5 (76-82 mc) at Fresno, Calif.

Southern Broadcasters Inc., Richmond, Va., licensee of WMV(FM), requests a combined television-FM operation on Channel 8 (180-186 mc) as Richmond affiliate of the Allen B. DuMont Laboratory.

Warner Bros., which seeks aural power of 15.5 kw and visual power of 31.5 kw at Chicago on Channel 13 (210-216 mc), estimates construction cost would $755,000 from studio facilities. First year operating cost would approximate $800,000 with revenue running about $560,000, it was indicated. Transmitter would be located atop the Morrison Hotel. The Warner Bros. application is for the third of the three remaining TV facilities in Chicago.

Principals Involved

The new TV applications, with ownership and other details, include:

Albany, N. Y.-Van Curler Broadcasters Inc. proposes Channel 1 (57-62 mc), first year cost $755,000, visual power of 8 kw, visual 5 kw aural. Initial cost $20,000, first year cost $755,000, annual revenue $560,000. Applicant is licensee of WRCV, a successful AM station.

 Junction, Ill.-Dick Wilson, licensee for Channel 4 (57-62 mc), first year cost $150,000, revenue $75,000. Applicant is licensee of WYBN, an AM station.

Onslow, Ala.-G. W. Wilson (no designations), proposes Channel 2 (181-186 mc), first year cost $10,000, revenue $10,000. Applicant is licensee of WFAA, AM station.

Portland, Ore.-RCR Broadcasting Co., members of the Pacific Northwest Television Broadcasters, proposes Channel 2 (57-69 mc), first year cost $9,000, revenue $5,000. Applicant is licensee of ISN, is an AM station.

Wheelock, Mass.-Richard Wheelock, licensee, plans Channel 3 (180-186 mc), first year cost $12,000, revenue $6,000. Applicant is licensee of WJOP, an AM station.

Two proposals have been made by stations in Los Angeles. Both are expected to be granted by the Commission.

Inland Broadcasting Co., members of all Rodman and Tulare - Kings County Radio Assoc. seeks Channel 2 (181-186 mc) at Fresno, Calif., at $50,000, first year cost $120,000, revenue $60,000.

Southern Broadcasters Inc. seeks Channel 8 (180-186 mc) at Richmond, Va., at $50,000, first year cost $200,000, revenue $100,000.

Applications have been filed in 20 states for the 29 TV channels reserved by the Federal Communications Commission.

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