

The owner of a vegetable firm who includes his crew foremen in regular management meetings where all phases of the business are discussed, provides a good example of continuously developing supervisors on-the-job. Like many effective operators, he also uses other means to keep his supervisory staff as informed as possible about business conditions, plans, and ongoing operating results. He believes the more information they have to work with, the more intelligently they can work.

In conclusion, first-line supervision is extremely important in agricultural operations. Though they are members of management, supervisors deal mostly with working-level employees. They face constant and complex challenges of reconciling the very different frames of reference of those above and below them in the organization. As leaders, they often have to exert influence, and to be effective, they need power beyond that which stems purely from their positions.

Among the many factors that can contribute to supervisory success, the quality of higher level management is probably most consequential. The decisions and actions of farm managers go a long way to determining what supervisors are encouraged, inclined, and able to do for their businesses. Because good supervisors are more “made” than “born,” the effectiveness of agricultural supervisors is inseparable from that of the people who manage them.



## Supporting Teamwork

It is axiomatic that a group of people working together can accomplish more than the sum of what each could do individually. Teamwork is necessary and common in agricultural operations at management, as well as production, levels. Relatively stable work crews and other units defined by the organizational structure may themselves function as a team or include multiple teams. Seasonal changes and the nature of farm and ranch production make it necessary to form teams for one-time or short-term jobs. In virtually all teams, the quality of member relationships affects the work product.

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