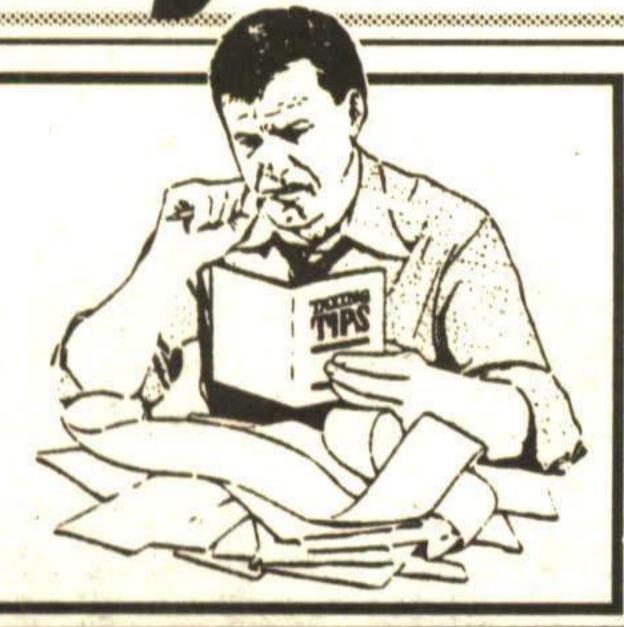
# Money Matters

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Karl Weigt, B.Comm.



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Starting a business?

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## Answer questions before investing

By MARIE McNABB

staff at ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs often get asked about starting a business in Halton and Peel regions.

Since they usually don't know the people and their abilities, they end up asking more questions than providing answers.

Here is a list of questions which a prospective business owner should answer himself before investing his money.

We assume that, like any other business person, this investor wishes to earn all or part of a living from his business as well as get some return on his invested capital.

Is the timing right to establish this business? Consider the natural cycles, interest rates and trends, production patterns and the economic climate of

the country and the commodity.

What are my resources? Look at land and buildings from an incomegenerated standpoint. Do I have enough money (equity) to attract a reliable, low-cost lender?

How many production units (animals, bushels, etc) can the above facilities carry?

What will it cost to improve these facilities in order to generate sufficient income to meet my needs?

Are there ways to improve productivity and efficiency? Look for improvements which increase the net return over operating costs.

What are the factors contributing to profits? List these with the most profitable first and in descending

Are there other ways to invest my money, ability and time to get a better return? AT this point, I should look at alternatives and decide whether this is the best course of action for me.

What recording system will best monitor profitability? I need to know that the business is progressing at all

What system will provide information to determine future course of action? A good manager makes business decisions based on the physical information recorded in his production records. This provides the basis for sound budgeting.

These ten questions give rise to a whole lot of other questions. The wise manager takes time to ask and answer all of these before he spends his money. After all, buying a small business is a really big deal.

Marie McNabb, P.Ag., Business Management Advisor

### The ultimate in credit convenience

By DOUG WOODS

A personal line of credit (PLC) can machines. be one of the most valuable financial tools available to you.

It's there when you need it, it usually has about the lowest interest of any form of debt and it often has about the most flexible repayment terms you could ask for. In fact, it is the ultimate in credit convenience.

The first major advantage to a PLC is that it is there when you need it. Once you establish the limit of your credit line with your bank, you can use it whenever you want and for whatever purpose you want.

Whether it's to cover the cost of home improvements, make an investment or cover your child's tuition fees, all you have to do is write a cheque to use your line of credit. Some PLCs even allow you to withdraw funds at automated teller

And a PLC is a 'revolving' line. That means that as you pay off all or part of the amount you have used, that amount becomes available for you to use again whenever you want.

It is much more convenient than having to apply for a new loan every time you want to borrow money.

The second big feature of a PLC is its low interest rate. Depending on the security you provide for the line, your interest rate could be as low as the bank's prime rate. That makes it much less expensive than credit cards or overdrafts and other convenient forms of credit. Normally, there are no monthly or ongoing fees for a PLC and, of course, you only pay interest on the amount you use.

Another major advantage is the

flexibility you have in repaying amounts you have used.

Usually with a secured line you can choose only to pay the monthly interest on the balance if you want. Unsecured lines have a minimun repayment requirement of as little as 3% of the outstanding balance each

You can even arrange for regular monthly payments to be deducted from your chequing or savings account if you wish. Or you can pay off part or all of the balance at any time without penalty.

To find out more about advantages of a personal line of credit, talk to your banker or feel free to call TD Green Infoline at 1-800-387-2092.

Doug Woods is the manager of the Georgetown branch of the Toronto Dominion Bank.

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