

# Guessing On Farm Prices Is Still Far-Distant From Exact Science

By PETER EDSON  
NEA Washington Correspondent

WASHINGTON—(NEA)—Once again the economic farm prophets have proved themselves not as smart as they thought they were. This time they have had to show red faces on their hog calling. Two seasons in a row, now, there have been official cries of alarm that the farmers were producing too many pigs. There have been dire warnings that the market would be glutted and that prices would go below the farmers' costs of production. The only alternative offered to save this situation was that the government would have to go into a big hog-buying program to support the market.

A year ago, when there was considerable fear of a big surplus spring pig crop, the situation was saved by the purchase of many million dollars' worth of pork for Great Britain and other Marshall Plan countries. That took the surplus pig population off the market. While the Brannan farm-income support plan was before the last session of Congress, there were again predictions that a bumper crop of pigs would glut the market this fall. The prospect of the government having to support hog prices was freely predicted as likely to cost the taxpayer as much as \$250,000,000. This was cited at the time as one good reason why the Brannan plan was better than the present farm price-support program.

### Two Factors Responsible

But matters haven't worked out that way at all, and the experts have been confounded. Two things seem to have happened to prevent the catastrophe so freely predicted last summer. One factor is that consumer demand for pork has been heavier than anticipated. With a big corn crop making feed available at reasonable prices, and with plenty of pigs in the pens to eat it up, the supply of pork has been good and prices have been relatively lower than for other meats.

The second factor is that farm-

ers this fall have been marketing their hogs at lighter weights. Instead of fattening to 300 pounds, they have sold more hogs at 200 to 225 pounds. This practice has been in accord with Department of Agriculture suggestions to market hogs with more lean meat on them and not so much fat.

The result of all these practices has been that hog prices have been from 15c to 1.20 a hundredweight above support price levels throughout the fall. And the government hasn't had to enter the market to buy up any surpluses.

This year the support price was \$17.50 per cwt. in September, \$16.40 in October, \$15 in November, \$14.90 in December. It is \$15.50 for January and \$16.20 for February.

### No Prospects of Glut

There is still a possibility that farmers may be holding back some of their hogs to market later at heavier weights and for higher prices. But marketings have been from 20 to 40 per cent heavier than normal so far this fall. So the likelihood of a glut is minimized and the predicted fall hog market crisis isn't going to come off.

The moral of this is that economics still isn't an exact enough science for accurate prophecies. The tides and the phases of the moon can be predicted with absolute accuracy for as far ahead as wants to know. The weather can be predicted with say 50-50 accuracy from 24 to 48 hours ahead. It will rain or snow, or it won't. It is fun to guess as how they will work out. Plenty of farmers and businessmen make or lose fortunes trying to dope these things



TAKING THE PARTS OF Dick Winters and Emily Kimbraugh is Bill Van Horn and Jan Elliott, above, in the senior class play, "Our Hearts Were Young and Gay," to be presented at 8:15 o'clock Friday night, March 31, at the senior high school auditorium. (Picture by Paul Jenkins.)

out. If they guess right they're considered smart men. If they guess wrong, they're suckers. But any theory or economic plan for predicting and leveling out these uncertainties, no matter how carefully drawn, is apt to fail just because of the unpredictable turn like in this year's hog market. Men—economists and lawmakers in particular—aren't that smart yet.

### Curtin

By MRS. GRACE THOMPSON  
Mr. and Mrs. E. Langham are the parents of a boy born March 19 at the Butler Maternity home in Cottage Grove.

Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd Black of Sweet Home are receiving congratulations on the birth of their first child, a boy, born on March 13. Paternal grandparents are Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Black, Curtin. The Lloyd Blacks are former residents. Albert Goings is recuperating satisfactorily from an infection of the eye.

Mr. and Mrs. Joe Billings and Doyle and Judy visited relatives in Eugene over the weekend.

Mrs. Wilma Stigers and Jo returned home from Baker Thursday accompanied by Mrs. Stigers' parents.

A lamb belonging to Max Ames was shot Wednesday afternoon for an unknown reason. There are several stray dogs around the neighborhood molesting sheep and killing lambs.

Daniel Thompson, 12-year-old son of Mr. and Mrs. Eldon Thompson, is out of school suffering from an infected lymph gland.

A big shovel was used in deepening the mill pond Sunday for the Forest Veneer Mill company. Some more piling was put in where the logs are unloaded.

Both teachers at the local school have been offered contracts for next year. Mrs. Myrtle Gleason of Cottage Grove has already signed her contract, but Mr. Thomas of Yoncalla has not signed yet.

The Harold Powells of Charleston were visitors at the Charles W. Booher home Wednesday and Thursday.

Agriculturists say grass is the only crop that can be grown on most of the land in arid Utah.

### Young Democrats Of Oregon Name Batch Of Officers

PORTLAND, March 29.—(AP)—Walter J. Dennis, Portland, was elected president of the Young Democratic clubs of Oregon convention Saturday. He was opposed by Bruce Bishop, Eugene.

Resolutions included a proposal that state legislators' pay be raised from the present \$400 a session to \$1,200 with \$10 a day expense allowance while in session. Others urged lowering the voting age to 18 years and establishments of junior colleges over the state.

Others elected:  
Dale E. Gibson, Deschutes county, national committeeman; June Bredemeyer, Multnomah county, national committeewoman; John M. Winkler, Multnomah county, first vice-president; Ed Ridderbush, Benton county, second vice-president; Jean Hammel, Tillamook county, third vice-president; David Cromwell, Benton county, fourth vice-president; Jack Sollis, Lane county, fifth vice-president; Bill Linklater, Coos county, sixth vice-president; Noreen Kelly, Jackson county, seventh vice-president; John Kerbow, Klamath county, eighth vice-president; Keith Clark, Lane county, secretary.

### Northwest's Power Supply Is Ample At Present

BOSTON, March 29.—(AP)—Frank McLaughlin, president of Puget Sound Power and Light company, says present estimates indicate the Northwest's power supply will be adequate to meet demands at least until the latter part of 1950.

He told a stockholders' meeting that although new all-time peaks in demand were established January 3, no customer load curtailment was required.

The January 3 high of 3,592,000 kilowatts was 470,000 greater than the previous high, set a year ago.

Several times during January and February, he said, peak demands were so heavy that voltage and frequency dropped, indicating facilities were overloaded. All steam plants were operated to keep up with the customers' wants.

There were several reasons, McLaughlin said, for the ability of the power pool to keep up with demand and avoid curtailment.

He said one aiding factor was the additional generating units put into service at Grand Coulee in 1949 and increases in the resources of private utilities.

Water conditions were good in the last part of 1949, he added, and storage reservoirs were filled.

There were no major outages, he said, due to equipment failure and high peak demands were of short duration.

He said that net income available for dividends and other corporate purposes in January and February

### Acheson's Stand Against Communists Pointed Out

LONDON, March 29.—(AP)—Two London newspapers commented Tuesday on the charges of some Republican United States senators that Secretary of State Dean Acheson is tolerant toward Communists.

The Independent Times said: "The realization is growing that irresponsible partisan attacks weaken not only the State department, but the foreign policy of the United States at a critical moment."

The Communist Daily Worker said: "Short of starting the third world war next week, it is difficult to see how Mr. Dean Acheson . . . could manifest more hostility to Communism than he has done."

increased about 42 percent over the corresponding months of 1949.



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