



MERRY CHRISTMAS



Farming Income In Drastic Drop

(Editor's Note: This is the first of a two-part series dealing with Union County farm income during 1959. The articles are based on information released today by the Union County Extension Service.)

By BILL BEBOUT
Observer Staff Writer

Union County's gross farm income for 1959 has dipped below previous years despite bumper crops in some areas of the county.

Total farm income for the year is \$11,044,890, a drop of \$233,290 from the 1958 gross income figure of \$11,278,180.

Increased production, as a result of greater efficiency on the farm, has failed to halt the downward trend which started in 1949.

Since 1949, gross farm income in the county has steadily declined from \$12,099,000 to the 1959 figure—a loss of more than a million dollars.

The outlook for 1960 gives the farmer little hope for an upward trend.

Ted Sidor, Union County Extension agent, said new outlets will be necessary for Union County crops if farmers are to hold their own.

"Unless we can find new outlets for present crops or begin producing higher return crops, the downward trend in gross income will continue," Sidor said.

Vegetable Crops
Some farmers in the county are currently experimenting with vegetable crops as a possible solution to some of the county farm income problems.

There is a possibility that vegetable crops for human consumption, and seed, may improve the local farm picture if experiments prove to be successful, Sidor pointed out.

Increased livestock production in Union County is seen as one encouraging trend by the county agent. He pointed out that meat and meat products are easily transportable—an important factor in the farm income picture.

Cost of shipping of county products puts area farmers in a difficult situation market-wise, in many cases.

Specialization may be the answer if the downward trend continues, Sidor declared. He said specialization may enable the small farmer to remain solvent despite declining markets.

Union county gross farm income for the year is in line with the national downward trend.

Lower Prices

Farmers are receiving lower prices for their products but they must pay more for products which they purchase.

Farm product purchasing power lost additional ground during the year with the parity ratio of 77 in November, two points below October, five points below November 1958 and the lowest since August 1940.

When all accounts are added up, this year's net farm income nationally may fall below last year's by as much as 15 per cent, according to figures released by the Department of Agriculture.

Biggest reason for the national drop in farm income are lowered cash receipts and a higher

operating bill, the U.S.D.A. report indicated.

Field crops led the field in income for Union county during 1959 with a gross income figure of \$5,237,957.

Wheat is still the leader in the county in gross returns for a single crop. The 1959 wheat crop totaled \$2,515,947. Wheat yield per acre increased by seven bushels per acre over 1958.

Wheat farmers this year were paid \$1.66 per bushel for 1,515,031 bushels as compared to last year's \$1.79 for 1,295,494 bushels.

Better Growing
The yield increase in wheat is attributed to better growing conditions—less disease and insect troubles.

There were 37,000 bushels as compared to last year's 35,341 acres with a yield of 33 bushels per acre.

In the livestock field, a total of \$3,404,015 was returned to the producers. Total value of 8,118,900 pounds of beef for the current year amounted to \$1,986,150. The same figures for beef were recorded for 1958.

Dairy products in 1959 were even with last year's totals of \$683,127 for 18,378,500 pounds of milk.

Sheep producers suffered from lower prices in 1959 as lamb prices dropped from 19c cwt. in 1958 to 15c this year. Total income from sheep and wool was \$197,325 for 948,000 pounds as compared to last year's \$193,863 for 795,000 pounds.

Hog producers were the hardest hit by lower prices this year. Prices dropped from 19c cwt. in 1958 to 14c this year. Total income from swine in the county was \$346,254 for 3,212,000 pounds as compared to last year's \$427,196 for 2,920,000 pounds.

The sweet cherry industry was hardest hit in total income this year. Frost damage dropped income from \$279,635 in 1958 to \$72,408 this year.

Poultry dropped from \$287,142 in 1958 to this year's total gross income of \$184,574. Chickens in 1958 brought 37c per pound for 253,125 pounds and in 1959 the figure dropped to 29c per pound for 225,000 pounds.

Eggs were down to 25c a dozen as compared to last year's 45c and production dropped from 547,000 dozen to 486,400 dozen.

Next—Seed and field crops.

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'OH COME ALL YE FAITHFUL'

The religious significance of Christmas is reflected in the faces of these three La Grande youngsters who join in song to honor the birth of the baby Jesus. From left to right are Marlene Wyde, 11; Paul Tomeraasen, 13, and Sarah Tomeraasen, 11. Altar in the background is symbolic of the meaning of Christmas which will be celebrated in churches throughout the world. Above photograph was taken in the St. Peter's Episcopal Church. (Observer Photo)

Salvation Army Lauds ITU Christmas Gift

The Salvation Army issued a Certificate of Appreciation to members of Typographical Union No. 683, Baker and La Grande, for a \$30 donation to the Christmas fund. The Union in La Grande includes members of The Observer composing room and Happersett's Quick Print Shop.

Dreams Of White Christmas Here Unlikely, Says 'WM'

By GRADY PANNELL
Observer Staff Writer
Oregon, however, can look forward to some snow, but not much. High winds in the La Grande area last night and early this morning stammered down and did bring in some light rain, mixed with sleet and snow in the higher elevations.

La Grande folks can expect just about the same pattern weather-wise as will most of the nation tomorrow, overcast skies and some snow patches.

The grey clouds should not reflect the feeling of Americans, however, as the gift of giving and receiving will follow the same Christmas day pattern as in the years past.

Few Flurries
All the WM can promise as far as anything resembling the white stuff is an occasional flurry of snow tonight and possibly on Christmas day itself.

More remote areas of Eastern

Fear High Death Toll On Highways

NO OBSERVER ON FRIDAY

The Observer will not publish on Christmas day, but today combines various Christmas stories and advertising into a 16-page Christmas edition. Saturday's edition will carry the usual Friday farm page news and roundup. The Observer wishes its readers a very Merry Christmas.

MILLIONS OF DRIVERS OUT FOR THE HOLIDAYS

By United Press International
Millions of Americans took to the nation's highways today at the start of the most accident-prone holiday period of the year, and police were out in full force to hold down the traffic slaughter.

The National Safety Council refused to predict the number of persons who would be killed in auto crashes during the 78-hour holiday, but said the death toll could reach 530 between 6 p.m. tonight and midnight Sunday.

Many states announced they would use National Guardsmen, roadblocks, pocket drink-o-meters and helicopters in an effort to cut the annual highway carnage.

Indiana officials planned to double usual law enforcement with National Guardsmen, Michigan Guardsmen were to act as the second man in state police cars.

In Rhode Island, officials enlisted the aid of news media and clergy in an all-out safety drive, and Gov. Christopher Del Sesto said he would call out the National Guard if necessary.

State police in Iowa, Florida, Indiana and Missouri will take to the air in airplanes and helicopters. Their birds' eye view will enable them to spot traffic violators and radio information to colleagues in squad cars.

Most states said they would keep a special lookout for the drunken drivers leaving office parties. Massachusetts, Maine and Oregon police planned to set up spot roadblocks to nab drunks on the spot.

Elks Treat Kids Here Christmas

La Grande Elks will observe their traditional Christmas giving to youngsters, rest home elders and hospital patients here and at Mt. Emily camp, Perry and Union on Friday.

Following dismissal of local youngsters at the special 11 a.m. La Grande theater show, Elks committee workers and the kiddies will gather at the big Christmas tree erected at Washington and Depot Street where Santa Claus will hand out the goodies.

Many Goodies

Approximately 1,050 sacks of goodies have been prepared this year by the Elks. Gifts will go also to the Hot Lake rest home and to Ward Miller of Union who will distribute to that town's small fry.

Verne Pieper is Elks chairman of the "sacking committee." Assisting him are Chuck Wing, Norm Daniels, Don Caldwell, Robert Fallows, Jack Hermann, Mel Plass, Basil Bonning, Allen Keffer, Don Ragsdale, Kenneth Workman, Marvin Mortensen and Ed Hulif.

City, Police Issue Safety Reminders

La Grande city officials have joined with Oregon Governor Mark O. Hatfield to urge drivers to exercise extreme caution while on the streets and highways over the holidays.

City Manager Dave Slight said the month of December sees more accidents than any other month, undoubtedly due to congested holiday traffic, early hours of darkness, weather conditions and drivers who have been drinking.

"Citizens of La Grande can do a great deal toward preventing unnecessary accidents and possible death if they will practice courtesy to other drivers and pedestrians," Slight said.

Oliver Reeve, police chief, issued an appeal to holiday hosts at office parties and private celebrations to make their guests aware that a party can be enjoyed without over-indulging in intoxicants. The chief added that La Grande police officers will not let holiday spirit deter them from strict enforcement of traffic laws.



BAM, MUMBUG—Nikita Khrushchev who doesn't believe in Christmas, Christianity and other things has accused the U.S. of distorting underground nuclear test data at the Geneva talks.

SHOPPING DAY LEFT
HELP FIGHT TB CHRISTMAS SEALS
1959 CHRISTMAS GREETINGS 1959

WEATHER
Snow flurries tonight and Friday with partial clearing. Friday: high Friday 34-42; low tonight 24-32.

Pistol-Whipping Duo Nabbed By Policeman

OAKLAND, Calif. (UPI)—Police said today a pistol-whipping hold-up team was broken up when an ex-convict sought vengeance for the way his arm was tattooed.

"You put this thing on me three years ago and the curves are all out of proportion," Larkin Murrell, 31, told tattoo artist Gene Smith Wednesday pointing to an arm tattoo. Then, as his companion, 22-year-old Mrs. Corinne Wieland, held back the manager of the amusement center in which Smith's parlor is located, Murrell beat the tattoo artist with a pistol.

Smith fought back and Murrell yelled, "I'm going to kill you."

But patrolman Stanley Vares said he broke up the fight and arrested Murrell and the woman.

The officer said Murrell, who has a long police record, tried to shoot him but his gun misfired.

Mrs. Wieland told police she, Murrell and Richard Dubinski, 27, also an ex-convict, robbed 12 persons in two taverns Monday night, pistol whipping their victims. She said Murrell critically injured Mrs. Marjorie Nowell, 45, an attorney, when he alternately beat and kissed her during one of the robberies.

"I could feel the cold metal on my forehead," Vares said. "The gun was cocked, his fingers on the trigger. I swung at him hard with my fist and grabbed the gun at the same time."

The gun's hammer fell, but Vares said there was only a click.

Hitchhiker Tabs Man As Killer Of Touhy

LINCOLN, Ill. (UPI)—A teenaged hitchhiker told police today a man who picked him up boasted of killing Roger Touhy and Chicago police sent two detectives to question him.

The hitchhiker identified himself as George Green, 17, and said he was en route to visit his mother in Dallas, Tex. He said he had worked in Chicago since April and Chicago police confirmed this.

Green gave a statement to police here that the driver claimed to have shot Touhy, 61, prohibition era gangster. Touhy was shotgunned in an ambush in front of his sister's house in Chicago.

A .12 gauge shotgun, the same gauge that killed Touhy, was found in the man's car. Chicago police sent Detectives Marshall Carroll and Robert Noonan to Lincoln to talk to the man and to Green and to bring back the gun and shells for laboratory analysis.

The man is a resident of Lockport, Ill., a Chicago suburb. Lockport sources said he had been involved in two recent scrapes with the police there. On one occasion he is alleged to have produced a shotgun in an argument with his wife. Also, there is a charge against him of having an open bottle of liquor in an automobile. He has been a patient in a Veterans Administration hospital and has been a truck driver and a gas station attendant.

Birth Of Christ Is Celebrated

JERUSALEM, Jordan (UPI)—Hundreds of Christian Arabs crossed through Jerusalem's ancient Mandelbaum Gate from Israel to Jordan at dawn today to celebrate the birth of Christ in Bethlehem.

As is the custom each year, Israel and Jordan relaxed tense relations long enough to permit the pilgrims to cross through the gate to pay homage to the Nativity.

YANK AIRMAN PLAYS SANTA TO ISOLATED SPANISH TOTS

SEVILLE, Spain (UPI)—Children in the isolated outback areas of southern Spain peered anxiously into the skies today, awaiting the appearance of Santa Claus.

Not for them, a whiskered fat old merry chimney climber on a sleigh pulled by eight tiny reindeer. Their Santa is a U.S. Air Force pilot from the Strategic Air Command's 16th Air Force.

He is Capt. Jack H. Capers, of Apple Valley, Calif., and the drone of his L-20 light plane is more musical to the children's ears than the ringing of sleigh bells.

Patrols Pipeline
It all began back in early 1958 when Capers was patrolling the

fuel pipeline running from U.S. bases near Seville to Rota in the south.

While hedge-hopping along the line checking for possible leaks or other damage, he struck up a waving acquaintance with the children of the more than 120 families that live along the isolated route.

"Captain Jack," as he became known to his little friends, began filling the pockets of his flying suit with candy and other sweets. Then as he buzzed along the pipeline, he dropped the precious tidbits to the eager children.

Buy Candy And Toys
Last Christmas, Capers' comrades of the 357th Supply Squadron at Moron Air Force Base

DISPLAY OF CHRISTMAS SPIRIT

Jail Inmates, Guards In Tour Of Stores Singing Yule Songs

RIVERHEAD, N.Y. (UPI)—Twenty-seven prisoners from the Suffolk County jail have been mixing with some of this exclusive area's most distinguished citizens in a rare display of Christmas spirit.

For the last week, the 27 prisoners, along with six of their guards, have been making the rounds of the area, singing Christmas carols before service organizations and other groups to the musical and spiritual satisfaction of both the listeners and the carolers.

In addition, Christmas carol recordings by the choir being played over loudspeakers at the jail are serving as background music for Christmas shoppers at nearby stores—and to the jail's inmates.

Formation of the unusual choir came about several weeks ago

when Stuart Gracey, publisher of the Port Jefferson (N.Y.) Record and a former concert and opera singer, suggested the idea to county Sheriff Charles Dominy, a close friend. Dominy in turn advanced the suggestion to the entire inmate population in the jail mess hall, and the following day 27 prisoners—ranging in age from 18 to 50—and seven guards signed up. None had any professional singing experience.

A few days later, rehearsals began under Gracey's direction.

Word of the choir's existence—and fine harmony—soon leaked out and, in short time, requests for outside appearances began to pour in. Dominy, Gracey and county officials agreed that outside appearances would do no harm and, if anything, probably would be spiritually beneficial to the inmates.

They have indeed, not only to the inmate carolers but also to their listeners. Many have been moved to tears by the sight of the carolers, in their jail uniforms, singing the standard carols and other popular Christmas favorites.

The most open display of emotion occurred last week when the choir performed at a "ladies day" lunch of the Rotary Club of Southampton, one of the nation's swankiest communities. Tears flowed freely from the eyes of both the urbane members and their wives.

Most of the carolers are "short-termers," serving sentences ranging from 30 to 90 days. All were convicted of relatively minor charges. Gracey's daughter, Mrs. Honor Kopicinski, who provides organ accompaniment, is the sole "outsider."