

Farm Land Prices Up; Warning Given

Owners Advised to Reduce Debts While Commodity Prices Up

With Oregon land prices approximately 60 per cent above the 1935-39 average, many purchasers may have difficulty in meeting interest and principal payments following the decline occurring in post-war commodity prices. This is the warning being sent out by agricultural economists throughout the northwest.

Heavy debts are being built up on a significant number of farms. While one hears of several cash sales, down payments have averaged only two-fifths of the sale price on farms purchased on credit. Unless such debts can be reduced materially before the decline of commodity prices, financial difficulties may result similar to those in the years following 1920, when many people failed to recognize the difference between market prices and long-time productive value of land. W. M. Bristol, northwest agricultural economist warns:

"Present conditions indicate that the 1920 situation is developing again," Bristol continues. "It seems likely that farm real estate prices will continue to rise for at least one or two years after the war. During this period, the prices for agricultural produce are expected to remain relatively high on account of rehabilitation requirements, domestic demand and the government price support programs."

An added warning is being issued to the owners of farms who sell at the attractive prices, but who feel their farming days are not over. Economists point out that in 1920 frequently well equipped farms were sold at big prices, but when commodities began to drop in prices, the new purchasers could not meet payments and the former owners had to take their farms back. Frequently payments had not been sufficient to cover the damage done by the inexperienced, careless purchaser who knew little or nothing about care of land or farm buildings.

Said one economist: "If your purchaser can pay cash, the big price is well enough. Likely, if the purchaser doesn't have to borrow the money, he is sufficiently good in management to come out and at any rate the farmer will not have to take back his farm in a delapidated condition. But beware of a big price with a little payment down."

More people went into debt to buy farms in 1943 than during any year since 1920. In one third of the credit sales, mortgages amount to 75 per cent of the purchase price and in three-fourths of such sales they were 50 per cent or more.

At present it appears that fewer and less desirable tracts are being offered for sale, but these fewer and less desirable tracts are being offered at prices higher than during any previous periods.

Dairymen Attend Malheur Show

Jersey men from the valley are today attending the dairy show sponsored by the Malheur Jersey Cattle club and the Nyssa chamber of commerce.

While the show is predominantly of Jersey cattle, other breeds are admitted to the open classes. C. M. Beaumont, known here in the valley, is the cattle club president.

More Strawberries Than Expected

Washington and Oregon both will have larger strawberry crops than surveys of a month ago indicated. Oregon's crop is now estimated at 561,000 crates of 36 pounds each, or 23 per cent above the 1944 output of 456,000 crates.

But production is still far below the pre-war average of 1934-43.

Falls City Man Is Re-elected

FALLS CITY — The annual school election was held Monday. Art Ross was reelected chairman, Floyd Graham, director, and Mrs. Ethel Gutheridge was appointed clerk.

Mrs. Gene Rowley, daughter of Mrs. William Tice, underwent a major operation at the Bartell Hospital Monday.

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Abbott and family of Salem visited her father, Mr. Greenslade, Sunday. The Young Women's club met at the home of Mrs. Clyde Bancroft in Salem Friday. Those attending were Mrs. John Gilbert, Mrs. Virgil Taylor and Mildred Wray of Falls City; Mrs. Calvin Barnhart of Dallas and Mrs. Arthur Martin of Salem. The afternoon was spent in playing contract. Mildred Wray winning high score.

Returns Home—Mrs. Lawrence Hamner has returned to her home in Middle Grove from Grants Pass where she was called by the injury and death of her brother-in-law, Reuben Tucker, while working for a lumber company.

Willamette Valley Farmer

News and Views of Farm and Garden

—BY LILLIE L. MADSEN



Resembling the barrels of a winery are these 28 wooden vats recently constructed by the Willamette Cherry Growers. They will soon be filled with brined cherries.

Cherry Growers Will Brine in New Vats

Twenty eight vats, each with a capacity of 12,000 gallons, are being completed this week at the Willamette Cherry Growers plant near the fairgrounds. They have been built to bridge a labor shortage during the peak cherry season. Fruit brined by the Cherry Growers will go east to manufacturers of maraschino cherries.

A crop valued at an estimated \$840,000 will be taken from the Salem cherry area this year, and harvest work is swinging into high gear this week as tons of cherries are coming in from the orchards for shipment to fresh fruit markets, canners and processors.

Harvest of the big cherry crop is expected to take about three weeks.

Cooperative Will Build

In keeping with their steady growth, Mount Angel Cooperative Creamery is now planning the erection of two new buildings. One will be a garage to house the large number of trucks, the other will be a building for the milk dryers.

A special meeting of the cooperative members has been called for Monday, July 2, at 8 p. m., at the American Legion hall at Mt. Angel, when the erection of these two buildings will be discussed. At the same time purchase of land on which to erect the garage and purchase of additional milk dryers will be talked over.

The creamery added a new cheese plant to its set-up early this spring.

Select Range for Turkey Carefully

Do not range turkeys on ground previously occupied by sheep or swine, or on ground which intercepts the drainage of a sheep or pasture or hog lot, because these animals may harbor the erysipelas organism that sometimes affects turkeys and causes heavy losses in the flocks. This is advice given by northwest poultry experts.

With many new turkey producers in the business this year, who are raising the largest population of turkeys in the history of the state, these safeguards are particularly necessary, poultrymen of experience report.

Last year several new turkey men lost a large percentage of their flock, either because of concentrating their birds at one spot for too long a time, or because the turkeys were ranged on sheep or swine ground. In one known case, a farmer lost 400 tons in a period of a few days after they had been concentrated on and where sheep had been, the poultry experts tell, adding that "you may be lucky, but it's safer to be careful."

Hay, Grain Remain Important Crops Of Oregon Farmer

Oregon's grain and hay crops still constitute the most important group of farm products in terms of both acres of land used and sales value, though the relative importance has declined steadily as the state has diversified its agriculture.

In 1944, the value of marketings of grain and hay crops amounted to 13 to 14 per cent of the total value of all farm sales of crop and animal products. This compares with approximately 15.9 per cent during the 1935-39 period, and 23.3 per cent in 1928-30.

In Salem Markets

While some slaughterers are folding up for the time being, Valley Packing company saw one of the biggest weeks in recent months and the largest week in sheep slaughterings ever seen in the plant, officials said Tuesday afternoon. All prices remained the same during the past week. No important changes were anticipated within the next few days, officials stated. Of the 490 sheep slaughtered at the plant during the week ending Tuesday night, 361 were spring lambs. A fair amount, for these times, of hogs was also received. All of the 176 were tops with the exception of nine sows and three steers. A total of 45 cattle and 22 veals were also brought in.

Cattle continue to remain short in the local market and very few of top quality are being marketed by local farmers. Hogs, while they have come in more plentiful than in the past weeks are still far from plentiful and less than one-third of the supply in normal times.

Contributing hogs to Valley Pack this week were David Gerig, Salem; P. E. Jensen, Gervais; H. J. Alrick, Mrs. E. W. Herr of Silverton; D. D. Peters of Dallas; D. A. Dryden of Woodburn; Claude Norris of Amity; John Reiger, Woodburn; S. S. Miller, Hubbard, and H. Scheidter, Brooks.

Veals were sold by Glen Davis, Mouth; J. L. Petersen, Salem, and W. J. Haberly, Silverton.

Among those bringing in top lambs were Walter Dozier, Scio; K. A. Bursell, Harold Stapleton, W. J. Daniel, jr., W. L. Jackson, all of Dallas; Frank Lackner, Scio; R. Andres, Salem, and S. K. Furnee, Silverton.

Increase Seen In Irrigating

The Mountain States Power company office reports that a large number of growers in the Stayton and West Stayton area are installing pumps for irrigating beans and some peapewmit.

The past year has seen an increased number of power pumps being used in irrigating beans by overhead sprinkling systems instead of the former method of using ditches.

Recent installations have been made by C. H. Darley, Arthur Biles, R. R. VanCleave, Ed J. Glidewell, Lawrence Clark, Merle Crane, Gilbert Brothers, Hoffman Brothers, Otto Nelson, William Towerly, W. V. Chamberlain, L. C. Keithly, Clarence Gavette, Harold White, Joe Williams and E. R. Clark.

Peterson Says Cow Does Job

E. L. Peterson, Oregon agricultural chief, has been directing the state's attention to the dairy cow during June.

Peterson says: "As we draw to the close of the 1945 dairy month, the dairymen of Oregon and the nation continue to do a top job of producing dairy products. By virtue of long hours of hard work of the dairyman and his family, he has overcome many of the handicaps of labor and material shortages. As his contribution to wartime essential food production, he is producing milk at near the record volume of 1942 when labor and equipment were relatively plentiful."

He adds that the average of milk per cow has been 60 pounds more this year than in the year previous.

Food Declared Most Vital by Administrator

Pertinent comments made at the recent food investigation hearings at Seattle and Yakima by Clinton P. Anderson, head of the house food investigation committee and who on Sunday becomes the nation's new war food administrator and agricultural chief:

Food is as important now to finish the war and complete the peace as it has been at any time during the entire course of the conflict. Even food production costs are not so important as getting the food.

Largest possible output of urgently needed foodstuffs, just as with planes, tanks, guns, ships and munitions, is the important thing in the farm and food situation.

Brought out at the hearings were: Egg receipts are 24 per cent lower than a year ago, the decrease amounting to 31 per cent for the week ending June 2.

That the decline in egg production was attributed to shortage of help on the farms, shortage of production supplies, relatively high feed costs, and to "arbitrary unrealistic price policies of OPA."

That sale of laying hens for poultry meat was cutting fast into egg production.

That an increase from 5 to 19 cents per dozen for eggs and 5 to 7 cents for poultry should be made in prices to maintain egg production.

That poultry farmers have gone into turkeys instead of hens because turkey prices are higher.

Time Element Important in Water System

The effectiveness of an irrigation system on pastures will be determined largely by the time that irrigation is started. If grass is allowed to stop its growth because of lack of moisture it is very hard to get this grass to start growth again during the season.

In addition to the irrigation, pastures should be clipped so that no grass is allowed to head out, as this tends to stop the normal growth of the grass. Light application of nitrogen fertilizer, either in the form of liquid manure or commercial fertilizer will greatly increase the yields, if this is applied at the time of irrigation.

Farm Labor Office Business Bigger

Despite much unfavorable weather this spring, county farm labor offices in Oregon made nearly double the number of placements of workers in farm jobs for the first five months this year compared with the same period in 1944.

A total of 15,518 placements of farm workers had been made up to June 1 this year compared with 8865 for the same time a year ago, J. R. Beck, former Polk county agent and now state farm labor supervisor says. More than half of the placements, 8583, were made in May, an increase of about 85 per cent over a year ago.

Marion county was second on the list of counties in number of placements with Marion county's total at 2203 in May. Polk county records one of the largest percentage increases in placements this year over last year.

Outlook Favorable for Hog, Sheep Investors

Experts Warn Against Buying Into Cattle Business; Advise Watching Business Trends

The outlook for investing in sheep and hogs now appears favorable; but buying into the cattle business at present prices and assuming large debt is risky.

This is the statement of farmers who have made a success of it is generally termed "the trends" and a few refer to it as "good luck."

Compared with sheep and hogs, cattle for both beef and milk require a larger initial investment and must have a longer period before starting to return any interest upon this investment, they explain.

Although prices for cattle as well as sheep and hogs, are expected to remain well above pre-war levels for the next year or two, the prices of all three along with other basic commodities probably will decrease considerably after rehabilitation requirements have been met and government support programs withdrawn.

Therefore, since cattle buyers now going into debt on a new herd will receive scarcely more return from their investment before prices of milk and beef, along with other basic commodities, have fallen, these purchasers would be saddled with heavy interest payments which might easily pay them out of business.

Basing their opinions upon the history of price fluctuations, farm economists state, the value of cattle in terms of other commodities make a complete cycle about every 15 years, half of which time the value of beef and milk animals is going downward and half of which the value is swinging upward again.

Falling cattle value in terms of other commodities began in 1942 and is expected to continue downward for several years longer; whereas, the value trend on sheep and hogs is now about ready to start upward.

The length of a livestock purchasing power cycle is generally the time it takes a man to get into the business and get out again.

For sheep and hogs, this purchasing power cycle is shorter and not so regular as with cattle. Both cattle and sheep have been falling in purchasing power since about 1942; but since the sheep purchasing power cycle is shorter, it is expected that prices for sheep and

Guernsey's Secretary to Be Speaker

Karl B. Musser, Petersburg, NH, secretary of the American Guernsey Cattle club will be a visitor in Salem Thursday, while on a tour of the states.

Club officers and local breeders have planned a luncheon at the Marion hotel, starting at 1:00 p. m. Mr. Musser will be the principal speaker. Musser has been secretary of the American Guernsey Cattle club for the past 25 years and is very largely responsible for the rapid growth and popularity that Guernseys have nationally today, said members of the organization. Future activities of the club and how Guernsey breeders can best plan their programs for the good of everyone connected with the dairy industry will be discussed by the speaker, Charles Evans, Salem's Oregon Guernsey Breeders club secretary. Musser is a western man and one of the best friends the western breeders have nationally.

ably short of the number needed by farmers who depend on crawlers for power. The quota for July, August and September is 92 machines, 20 more than for the previous quarter. Applications already on hand are more than sufficient to take up the entire quota. In most cases, consideration will be given only to applications for new equipment to replace worn-out crawlers, state AAA officials say.

Crawler Tractor Ration Is Short Of Needed Machines

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