

1952 Farm Output Up; Farmers Look Ahead

Expert Predicts Still Future For Alsike

JUST PLUNGE AHEAD

By OVID A. MARTIN
WASHINGTON (AP) — The year 1952 turned out to be a record production one for agriculture, but it raised many questions about the economic future of farmers.

Declining farm product prices, a lower level of agricultural income, reduced exports and an increasing farm debt led to speculation in some circles that a new agricultural recession might be in the making.

The year opened with the level of farm prices at 103 per cent of the parity price goal set by farm-aid laws. Parity is a standard for measuring farm prices, declared by law to be equally fair to farmers and those who buy their products.

But by the end of the year, the price level had dropped below the parity goal for the first time in nearly two and a half years.

Farm production costs — machinery, fertilizer, insecticides, other materials and labor rates — went up. As a consequence, the amount farmers had left after paying these costs was less than in the previous year despite the fact that the volume of production was larger.

The new income for the year has been officially estimated at \$14,200,000,000, compared with \$14,300,000,000 in 1951 and a record of \$14,744,000,000 in 1947.

Government experts expect a further drop in farm income in 1953, largely because of prospects of a weaker export market and a likelihood that total production will drop below this year's peak.

The year was marked by a sizeable increase in marketings of food grains, cotton, livestock feed crops, beef cattle and poultry. Hog production, on the other hand, eased off some because of less favorable prices and higher feed costs.

Both the wheat and corn crops were the second largest of record. The big wheat crop had the effect of boosting reserves to high levels and raising the prospect of top-heavy surpluses in 1953 should production again be large. In fact, there was a possibility that the government might have to resort to rigid production control measures for the 1954 crop.

The large corn crop was welcomed because it assured the nation of ample livestock feed grains to maintain a high level of production of meat animals, dairy and poultry products, as well as of a reserve for possible emergencies.

An early summer drought threatened the cotton crop, but late rainfall retrieved the situation. Production was more than adequate to meet anticipated domestic and export requirements.



A new and non-pessimistic flavor has entered the alsike clover picture here with the receipt of a letter from one of the top recognized farm crops experts in the Pacific Northwest, E. R. Jackman of Oregon State College, who figures the drop in alsike use in the nation has about run its course.

The diminishing demand for alsike, he wrote Klamath County Wailer Jendrzejewski, has been going on for some 25 years.

"I do not believe alsike is suffering any 20 per cent drop in use this year. It has never shown any sudden drop in any one year," he said.

With the proverbial bottom pretty well rusted—at least to all outward appearances—in the alsike market, there has been a wave of pessimism noted among growers. The Klamath Basin is the country's greatest alsike producing center, with well over one-third of the estimated 1952 national crop grown right here.

But a heavy influx of alsike seed from Canada, where reports of up-

wards of 4,000,000 (M) pounds were said exportable by the Canadian government itself, coupled with upward revisions of the U.S. crop in its December estimate, had combined with reported declines in use to help let the price drop to support levels —about 25 cents per pound.

A year ago the price reached a surprising 41 cents per pound and better, a record in all books.

Jackman, a farm crops specialist at OSC, wrote he didn't think the present decrease in alsike use will go much further. The use of ladino clover has about reached its limit, he said, and many spots which have been experimenting with ladino are about ready to return to alsike.

The crop expert predicted this country is likely to see more and more English system of farming, i.e., where legumes and grasses are kept down only two or three years and then plowed. With these about rotations he said alsike will probably always be in preference to other types of legumes.

"In other words," he said, "I think the reduction in alsike use has about run its course."

"I think that it is safe enough for the next five years at least to stay with alsike in Klamath. It has done more for the Basin than any one thing, except potatoes I suspect that as soon as the Canadian crop is out of the way buyers are going to come around shortly after the first of the year wanting to buy some alsike."

Jackman said that on a recent trip to the East he asked what

the greatest forage need was back there. The answer: "A legume which will last in our hay meadows."

He said they seem to be fairly well satisfied with ladino as a pasture crop but when cut for hay,

particularly if the grasses were fertilized, it disappears.

"I think for the time being, anyhow," he said, "they are still going to want quite a bit of alsike."

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Beef, Sheep Compared

A comparison between yields in sheep and beef pasturing has been noted by Jim Ellings, OSC animal husbandry specialist and former county agent here.

Ellings says most people assume that it will put on 300 pounds per beef animal during a grazing season.

They also assume four ewes may be run where one steer can.

Four ewes will (theoretically) produce four 90 pound lambs, or 360 pounds of meat. But the fact cannot be overlooked the sheep will also produce 32 pounds of wool in the same period, and at present-day values that's about the same as 80 more pounds of lamb.

Considering average values that stacks up 300 pounds of beef against 440 pounds of gain from ewes on the same size area. At the present price of graded cattle and lamb prices, value of both are just about the same.

TGA Directors Set Meet Date

TULELAKE — Directors of the Tulelake Growers Association are to meet Jan. 2, 2 p.m. in the first meeting of the year since election and reorganization.

Under new president, Charlie Wiese, the first order of business is the forthcoming drive to gain approval of 75 per cent of the Tulelake Basin farmers for continuance of the association. Present assessment contracts expire March 1.

Farm Safety Commission Planned for Oregonians

A permanent farm safety commission to combat Oregon's mounting rural accident problem was called for recently by the state's first Coordinated Safety Congress at Oregon State college. The Congress pointed out that Oregon ranks seventh in the nation in number of farm accidents.

Officers of the new commission are Marion Weatherford, Arlington farmer, president, and Mrs. Mable Mack, assistant director of extension at Oregon State college, secretary. A meeting of representatives from various farm, industrial, school and state groups is scheduled for early February to outline the farm safety program.

Mrs. Mack says tentative plans call for careful building of the program with several methods of promoting safety scheduled for trial in pilot counties before launching a statewide program.

The Safety Congress also requested employment of a farm safety specialist on the Oregon State college extension staff to work with the committee in developing the program.

The general assembly of the Congress voted for a permanent Oregon state safety commission to coordinate programs for farm, home, school, traffic and recre-

Dairymen Plan Meet

Sales promotion and marketing of milk, public relations, and milk production problems will highlight the Oregon Dairymen association's 59th annual meeting at Oregon State college Jan. 13 and 14, according to H. P. Ewalt, extension service dairy specialist.

Milk prices and butterfat content, which have come in for much public discussion recently, will be examined along with Oregon's declining number of dairy cows. Ewalt reports that dairy cow numbers have dropped from 290,000 in 1943 to 228,000 in 1952, an average annual decrease of 7,000.

MIAMI WEATHER RECORDS

MIAMI, Fla. (AP)—This city set a new record for dryness in November, normally the beginning of the dry winter season here. Only .21 inches of rain fell as compared to the previous low of .23 in November, 1944, the weather bureau says.

Miami also set a wind velocity record for February and without the benefit of a hurricane. The wind velocity reached 68 miles an hour, smashing the previous mark of 41 mph.

Herald and News

FARM NEWS

MALCOLM EPLEY, Jr.
Farm Editor

1952 Sheep Kill Increase 24%

Concerned over low prices received this fall for lambs and breeding ewes, lamb and wool producers are making efforts to stimulate demand for their products.

Slaughter of sheep and lambs for the first 10 months of this year has run 24 per cent greater than a year ago, and slaughter of cattle will run about 10 per cent above a year ago.

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