

# Rancher's Report

By BILL DECKER

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Commodity Stabilization Service said that it will not shift from the bushel to the hundredweight measure in handling next year's Commodity Credit Corporation grain operations, but that study and discussion of the desirability of making the change at a later date will be continued.

The possible use of the hundredweight measure at the beginning of the 1958 marketing year as the basis for CCC price support loans, warehouse handling and storage charges, sales, and related activities has been under current consideration. The proposal was discussed with grain trade and farm organization representatives at a special meeting in Washington September 25. It was also considered at a national conference of state commissioners and directors of agriculture early this week.

After this discussion, it was decided that it would be advisable to make further determinations regarding both the advantages and the difficulties in the proposed change before undertaking the shift. Among factors considered were the need to be certain that all concerned with grain handling, from producers to ultimate users, had full opportunity to understand just how they would be affected; the minimum timelag required for both CCC and the trade to revise regulations and procedures, and the possible need for legislative revision of laws regarding grain handling in some states.

Cattle topped the livestock category, wheat headed the crops division, and pears led the fruit list on the first official breakdown of gross cash farm income in Oregon during 1956, according to Robert J. Steward, director of the State Department of Agriculture. The figures were released in the September Farm Income Situation of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Total cash sales of Oregon farm products in 1956 were \$407,852,000, about six million dollars above Oregon gross cash farm income in 1955. Among the states, Oregon ranks 29th in cash receipts from 1956 farm marketings.

Livestock and products gross cash income increased from \$170,192,000 in 1955 to \$171,480,000 in 1956 for over a million dollar gain. Cattle and calves, which headed the list, showed about a two million dollar decrease from 1955 totals but dairy products, eggs, sheep and lambs, broilers, wool, and some types of poultry sales increased. There were also slight decreases from the 1955 totals in hogs, turkeys, and chickens.

Almost a five million dollar increase was noted in crop gross cash income—\$236,372,000 in 1956 as compared with \$231,387,000 in 1955. A decrease of over two million dollars occurred in wheat income, but it continued to be the largest selling field crop. Barley sales showed an increase over the previous year, and oats brought in a little less money than in 1955.

Ten seed varieties brought Oregon growers more money in 1956 than 1955 — perennial ryegrass, bentgrass, chewings fescue, Merion bluegrass, alsike clover, red clover, alfalfa, crimson clover, red fescue and tall fescue. Seed sales went down in only three varieties: common ryegrass, hairy vetch, and common Willamette vetch.

Oregon farmers received more money in 1956 for potatoes, hay, green peas, sugar beets, mint, sweet corn, hops, corn, broccoli, beets, and cauliflower. Decreases in sales were apparent in the gross cash farm incomes of snap beans, onions, Austrian winter peas, and carrots.

Pears again led the fruits in cash farm income, with an increase over the 1955 total of over seven million dollars. However, pears and peaches were the only fruits which showed gains in sales in 1956: income from strawberries, apples, cherries, plums and prunes dropped.

Filberts and walnuts also showed marked sales decreases for the past year.

Sale of forest products cut from farms declined almost four million dollars in 1956. Greenhouse and nursery products increased slightly for the past year.

Steward called attention to the fact that there is a wide difference between the gross farm income and the net farm income. The report just received shows a total net farm income after all expenses in Oregon of 162.5 million dollars. This figure is 14.8 million dollars greater than the net farm income here in 1955.

Fed cattle prices in Oregon are not expected to drop as sharply during the heavy October-November marketing season as they did a year ago, report Oregon State College agricultural economists.

Cattle slaughter is now rising seasonally but prices may decline only \$2 to \$3 a hundredweight compared to a drop of \$4 to \$5 last fall when the 1956 drought forced fall slaughter to a record high, the economists say.

A general downtrend in cattle slaughter is expected to continue in 1958, pointing to favorable prices for fed cattle in the year ahead. Cattle feeders are also favored with prospects of large hay supplies and cheap feed grains, but feeder's margins may be squeezed by the higher prices being paid for feeder animals.

Meanwhile, hog production is responding to generally good prices with national increases expected in both this fall and next spring's pig crops. This dims hog price prospects for next fall, the economists report in the current issue of the OSC "Oregon Farm and Market Outlook" circular. Copies of the circular are available from county extension offices.

Good range conditions during the past summer brought mixed blessings to lamb producers. A larger than usual percentage of western lambs are ready for slaughter this fall. This is holding prices down for fat lambs. At the same time, the supply of feeder lambs is smaller and prices are higher than last fall.

Large supplies of feed grains and hay point to a heavy carryover in Oregon next year with little possibility of price increases, report Oregon State College agricultural economists.

Nationally, the feed grain build-up is expected to leave record carryovers on hand next fall. While the nation's corn acreage this year is 13 per cent smaller than 10 years ago, the nation's grain sorghum acreage is 2½ times as large and the barley acreage is 37 per cent larger. Oregon's barley acreage has practically doubled in the past 10 years, the economists report in the current issue of OSC's Oregon Farm and Market Outlook.

Oregon hay supplies for the 1958 feeding season probably will be at least as large as this year, the economists say. Unless unusually harsh weather lengthens this winter's feeding season, the carryover of hay next summer is likely to increase again, according to the OSC outlook report.

The outlook circular also examines the 1958 picture for wheat, seed crops, livestock and the Soil Bank. Copies of the circular are available from local county extension offices.



**DOUGLAS FIR LOGS** infested with bark beetles are getting special screening treatment at Oregon State College. These screened pens, in which logs are being placed, are rearing cages for bark beetles that will be used later in screening tests on promising new pesticides. Work is underway in OSC's new forest insect laboratory that will speed research control of beetles and other forest pests that cost Northwestern foresters millions of dollars annually. Dr. Julius Rudinsky, shown above, is in charge. Silver fir and cedar bark beetles are being reared in the tin cages in the background.

## Forest Insect Lab Studying Controls

A new \$35,000 forest insect laboratory with facilities that rank among the best in the nation has been completed at Oregon State College for research on forest pests that are the No. 1 enemy of Northwest foresters.

Testing of insecticides to determine which are most effective and practical to use against various insects will be the major phase of work.

Tied in with the testing will be basic research on insect biology, behavior and activities. Little is known about some of the insects and effective controls cannot be developed until that information is available, Dr. Julius Rudinsky, project leader, pointed out.

Entomologists of the Oregon State Board of Forestry are cooperating in the research.

To provide a constant supply of insects for pesticide testing, the lab will "raise its own" in temperature-controlled rearing rooms. Douglas fir logs infested with bark beetles were sealed in wax, brought to the laboratory, and placed in screened rearing cages. Cedar bark beetles, that work on Port Orford and Western red cedar, and silver fir bark beetles also are being reared in the room. They have to be kept in tin containers, however, since they are small enough to go through regular screens.

Raising the pests in the laboratory also speeds up research work, according to Rudinsky. At least two and likely three generations of some of the insects can be raised in the laboratory each year, compared to only one generation in the field.

The "winter season" in the insect's life is supplied in a freezer room. It gives the pests a chilly and brief artificial resting period.

Forest insects are more costly each year to Northwest forests than fire, Rudinsky explained, and research on pest control is now getting considerably more attention than in the past.

The Douglas fir beetle which has taken a tremendous toll of trees—some six million acres were infested in 1955 in the Northwest—will be one of the insects given

priority in lab work. Some work on the behavior and development of the beetle as influenced by various temperatures has already been completed. Although the Douglas fir beetle epidemic has dropped off recently, "it will be back some day," Rudinsky says.

Other pests listed for study in coming months include the spruce budworm and balsam woolly aphid.

The insect project is sponsored by the Northwest Forest Pest Action Council, the Oregon State Board of Forestry and the Pacific Northwest forest and range experiment station, Portland, in cooperation with the college. A grant of \$3,800 also was received last month from the Foundation for American Resource Management, San Francisco, to help support the research.

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