

# AROUND THE FARM

By Don Coin Walrod



The many variables affecting farm production, including problems of weather, labor, and various pests, plus market fluctuations not only make heavy demands upon the ingenuity of the farm manager but they also introduce more variation into year to year farm incomes than is common for other enterprises.

While farmers have more problems keeping their incomes on a steady even keel, they also have more opportunity to shift income from one period to another by shifting the time marketing. When growers specialize, as in the case of dairymen or strawberry growers, this choice of time of marketing is frequently lost or at least minimized.

By making purchases of production items or selling crops, livestock, or capital items before the end of the year, farmers can change their income tax picture. By making cash purchases of feed, seed, fertilizers, fueloil or supplies; buying small tools or other deductible items; or making repairs adjustments in the 1964 taxable income can be made.

Farm management, as contrasted to ordinary matters of straight production, is becoming more important in the business of farming but many opportunities are overlooked unless some real attention is given to taxable phases on a year-round basis.

Wool growers have only until January 30 to file with the county ASCS office, St. Helens, for wool incentive payments, but all sale for this year must be made before December 31. Because of the vital importance of wool as a strategic material to our country, the government, through the USDA, has offered incentive payments to encourage greater wool production.

Ever since its inception several years ago, the incentive price has been pegged at a national average of 62 cents per pound. Growers are paid the difference between the national average price growers receive and the 62 cents. Funds used to make these incentive payments come from duties charged on wool imported into the country.

Also on the subject of wool, its worth noting that a new treatment for wool makes it shrink-proof and mat-proof even when machine washed. The WURLAN process, so called because it was developed at USDA's Western Utilization Research Laboratory at Albany, California, provides for treatment of wool before its manufacture into yarn or treatment of woven fabric.

Two mills in Rhode Island and one in Pennsylvania began using the WURLAN process for making shrink-proof yarn earlier this year. The Agricultural Research Service reports enthusiastic reception from industry and consumers for the shrink-proof woven or knitted woolsens.

The three companies producing WURLANIZED yarn say it is dependably washable by any normal method and is truly resistant to shrinking and matting. Fabrics knitted from the yarn have the look and feel of natural wool and the easy-care qualities of fabrics made from synthetic fibers.

The choice of a farm enterprise for individual arms depends upon many factors, not the least of which is the personal likes and dislikes of the operator. Economists, of course, point out the very important factor of comparative advantage that one farm might have over another for the production of any given commodity, although this factor is more apt to be of area concern. In some cases, the least comparative disadvantage might determine whether a commodity could be produced economically.

Lamb and wool production are particularly well suited to our area for a good many reasons. From the standpoint of lamb production, our normally mild climate is well suited to early lambing. Lambs are then ready for market as milk-fed lambs at the end of May or early in June. These lambs are in the market at a time when no other area of the nation is supplying lambs gives us some advantage. In addition, neighboring California is a major lamb consuming area.

Returns, on a dollar invested basis, are better in the field of lamb and wool production than most other livestock production enterprises. Labor requirements are relatively low with the heaviest demand coming during

lambing. Given high quality roughage, little else in the way of feed is required, although a small amount of supplement may be justified in some instances.

In a general discussion of livestock enterprises with Jess Lewis, Clatskanie, a few weeks ago, Jess indicated his belief in the ability of a flock of sheep to give a greater return with less effort than most other livestock enterprises. Certainly, they are well adapted to some of our small farms and part time operations.

Woodland owners planning to make plantings of forest seedlings during this planting season should be getting orders into the state nursery to be assured of having the species wanted. Supplies of incense cedar and Chinese arborvitae are already depleted. Order blanks are available from state farm foresters or county Extension agents.

Bob Reed, new president of the Western Oregon Livestock association and a livestock operator of the Warrenton area of Clatsop county, is well known among livestock circles in Columbia county, particularly in the Clatskanie area.

Jack Wood, secretary of the Clatsop association, recently indicated to us that they probably would be approaching Columbia county for support on the year's program and possibly co-sponsorship of next year's convention to be at Gearhart.

Common markets are getting commoner every year, as a marketing idea reports.

Five Arab nations are now setting up their own economic union, effective the first of the year. The five, clustered at the eastern end of the Mediterranean, are the United Arab Republic (Egypt), Jordan and Syria, largely agricultural, plus oil-rich Iraq and Kuwait.

The Arab Five have undoubtedly taken note of the success of the six nations of European Economic Community often called European Community. Intra-EEC trade has doubled, from \$7,030 million in 1957, the year before the market was set up, to \$15,491 million in 1963.

Younger and less closely organized than the EEC, two trade groups in our own hemisphere have seen business move ahead, too. Founded in 1961 the Central American Free Trade Area (CAFTA) doubled trade among members, from \$32.7 million in 1960 to \$67.6 million in 1963.

Nearly the same thing happened, on a larger scale, in the Latin American Free Trade Area (LAFTA) founded in 1960. In 1961 trade among members came to \$360 million. By 1963 intra-LAFTA business was up to \$525 million.

Other going concerns are the European Free Trade Area and the East African Free Trade Area. The first group includes most of Western Europe outside the EEC. The second is comprised of Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika-Zanzibar.

The new Arab Common Market provides for a lowering of trade barriers by each member to the products of the other members. There will be free exchange of currency and skilled labor. And transportation facilities will be cooperatively shared.

The Five have much to offer one another. Egypt, Jordan and Kuwait, which exist on a marginal level of farm production, must depend heavily on food imports. Conversely, Iraq and Syria in most years produce a surplus of major food items. With a combined population of some 30 million, Egypt, Jordan and Kuwait could absorb the surplus grain, livestock and livestock products of both Syria and Iraq. In exchange, Syria, for instance, might well take more Egyptian rice and some citrus.

As the most industrialized of the Five, Egypt could also process Syrian hides and skins into leather goods for export to Western Europe and other world markets.

Free movement of people would do much to even out the peaks and valleys in the skilled labor market. Egypt is said to have more skilled technical personnel, both in agriculture and related industries, than it can place. Syria and Iraq are short of skilled manpower.

The new union will have little effect on U. S. farm exports to the area in the near future. Most of our shipments, chiefly wheat, aren't dollar sales but government-sponsored exports. Only if the trade union spurs members to up farm output significantly could U. S. markets be affected. By the very magnitude of the

task, this is a long-term proposition.

What does seem likely is that, if the five succeed, the economic union will expand to include much of the Arab world.

Government payments to farmers amounts to relatively small amounts of the total gross income farmers receive. For the 1963 marketing year the total was \$13.4 million or about 3 percent.

Conservation Practices, under which the farmer normally pays more than half the cost, came to about \$4.1 million. Wool incentive payments came to almost an even million dollars. Cost of this program is covered by wool import tariff fees.

Soil bank payments, totalling \$2.8 million in 1963 paid diversion of land to conservation purposes. Feed grain diversion programs brought in \$1.8 million, and the Wheat program, including diversion payments and price support brought Oregon farmers \$2.5 million.

Farmers receiving such payments need to list them, along with any windstorm damage payments, as income received when making up income tax forms. They can also deduct the expenses incurred in undertaking such practices. How to handle such income expenses connected with various practices is covered in some detail in the "1965 Farmer's Tax Guide" which can be obtained free from county Extension offices.

A new alfalfa variety nursery esome marked differences, Ron reported to us while at a meeting last week. Since we have not put signs on the plot for this year, Ron was curious as to varieties. Without going to see, we are confident that they will be some of the French varieties similar to DuPuits. This will be something to watch next year.

Alfalfa acreage in Columbia county has more than doubled in the last ten years, but we won't know just how much more until the results of the current farm census are published.

While acreages have gone up, there's little doubt that similar progress has not been made with yields. Using figures of crop reporting service and all other sources, in addition to our own estimates, the best we can come up with is an average of 3.4 per acre on all fields.

Actually, most alfalfa growers do an excellent job at the time of establishment of the crop—primarily because a full treatment of lime and fertilizers required under the provisions of the cost-sharing program of the ASCS office. Many fail to realize that annual fertilizer treatments are needed since a three ton per acre yield of alfalfa will remove about 115 pounds of nitrogen, 30 pounds of P2O5, and 45 pounds of K2O per acre annually.

A soil test is the only accurate key we have as an indication of the amounts of these materials needed. However, we do know that every alfalfa field in Columbia county needs an application of 30 to 40 pounds of sulfur and one to two pounds of boron applied this fall. This can be done by the addition of 200 pounds per acre of borated gypsum. However, if phosphorus is needed in the fertilizer program, it may be more economical, and easier, to use a borated superphosphate. It will supply the needed sulfur and boron as well if the application is at least 200 pounds. On alfalfa, all applications of fertilizer should be made in the fall except in the case of heavy applications of potash which should be split into two or more treatments.

Much is being said these days about poverty and unemployment. Unemployment situations on the farm may be masked. Under the current method of reporting, unemployment rates are about twice as high off the farm as they are on it. However, the figures are no measure of the relative well-being for the two segments of the population.

Self-employed farmers may, for instance, struggle along with not enough work to do and too little income. Furthermore, the part-time farmer is still listed as employed when he loses his off-farm job, even though he may have relied heavily on such work for his income.

Because we are in a period when the interests of urban dwellers are very likely to shove the interests of rural dwellers further down the list for legislators, it is important that more effort be put into developing the kind of intelligent understanding, on both sides, that could produce strong and effective working relationships.

If agriculture and the food processing and distributing industries continue to do as good a job of providing the variety and high quality of goods now available to Americans, it is doubtful that homemakers, who are usually the family food purchasing agents, are going to rise up and revolt. At the present time it appears, from whatever studies have been made of this subject, that most women are quite happy with the food

# Happy New Year

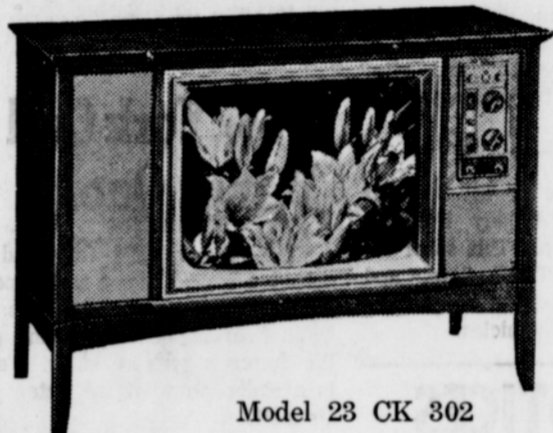


To old and new acquaintances, our sincere thanks for many happy memories and best wishes for the days ahead. Happy New Year to all!

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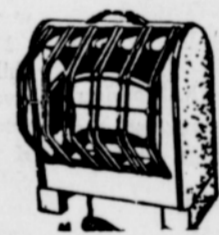
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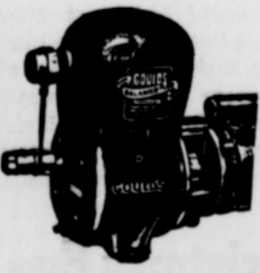
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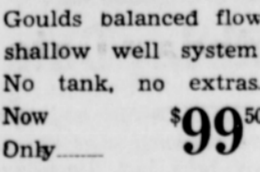
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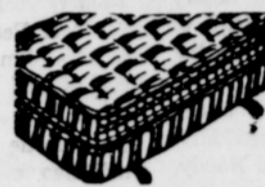
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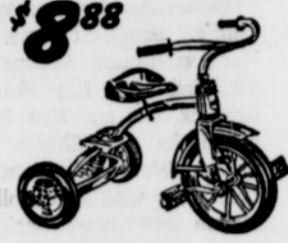


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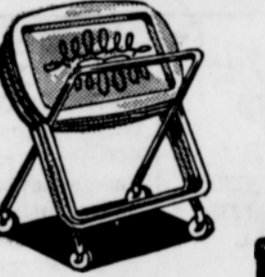
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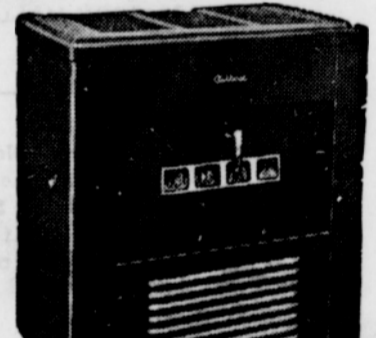
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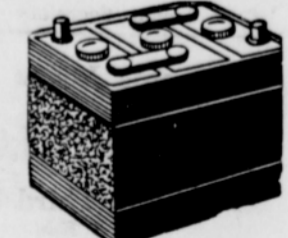


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industry and do not feel that food prices are out of line any more than any other product or service. (Most people will readily suggest that everything is over-priced, except the product or service he is selling of course. There is no evidence to suggest that food prices get more criticism than other prices.)

The very fact that families today are spending only 19 cents out of each dollar for food, on the average, is in itself a factor which makes food purchasing less important than it once was. Today's family may be more concerned about the cost of a

second car or a motorboat.

Vern Kohlstrand, McNulty, was one of thirty-three dairymen and wives from Oregon to visit the headquarters of the All West Breeders at Burlington, Washington. This organization is a cooperative resulting from the merger of Oregon Breeders Association and Evergreen Northwest Breeders. Not only do they now serve cattlemen in Oregon and Washington but they extend services into Montana and have exchange programs with other states. Dairymen on tour saw the 62 dairy

and beef sires quartered in modern facilities on a 20-acre plot that represents the facilities of the organization. Jay Harris, manager; Fred Roberts, assistant manager, and Archie Nelson, sire analyst directed the tour of the facilities. Laboratory techniques of collecting, diluting and packaging 5,400 ampules of semen in one day from 20 different sires were shown. After packaging, the glass ampules are frozen in liquid nitrogen at 320 degrees F. below zero.

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