

Food Supplies and Costs to Remain Comparable to 1960 During New Year

Shoppers can expect to spend about as much for groceries during the new year as they did during 1960, according to an Oregon State college extension specialist.

Zelma Reigle, extension marketing specialist and delegate to the recent agricultural outlook conference in Washington, D.C., summarizes the national outlook for food in 1961. Forecasts are based on 1960 supplies and prices, unless otherwise indicated.

Meat and Poultry

A record amount of beef is predicted by the U. S. Department of Agriculture for the coming year, which may mean lower beef prices. Pork supplies may be lower until at least mid-1961, picking up in the fall and winter.

Miss Reigle says a little more veal will probably be seen on meat counters than has been available the last couple of years. A larger U.S. population will probably mean less lamb per person next year, although lamb production is expected to be about the same as last year.

Shoppers can look forward to more turkeys and broilers next year, with possible lower prices, but none promised. Egg prices will continue at about the present level until spring when they should start to drop. Consumer preference for red meats and poultry are shown in the average amounts eaten per person each year: Beef, 86 pounds; pork, 64 pounds; veal, 6 pounds; lamb, 4 pounds; turkey, 6 pounds; and chicken, 29 pounds.

Seafoods

Amount of fresh and frozen seafood offered shoppers through the winter should be about the same as a year earlier. Canned red salmon and California sardines should be noticeably more plentiful; tuna prices should remain about the same. On a cost per serving basis, seafood ranks as one of the best protein bargains, Miss Reigle says.

About 160 varieties or forms of seafood are available. And in Oregon, there are 26 species of shellfish available during the year at most markets.

Dairy Foods

Little change is expected in milk prices for 1961. Measured in terms of minutes the family wage earner has to work to buy a quart of milk, the price is the lowest in history, Miss Reigle notes. In 1890, it took 26 minutes of factory work to buy a quart of milk at 7 cents a quart. In 1959, it took only 6.8 minutes to buy a quart of milk at 25 cents a quart.

Shoppers are expected to continue to buy more cottage cheese, sour cream, non-fat dry milk and ice cream. A definite preference for these items has been noted in the last 10 years due to improvement in these foods and a more weight-conscious population.

Processed Foods

Prices on some processed foods may advance during the new year as processing costs increase. However, with the increase in the two-paycheck family, consumer demand for these time-saving foods will likely continue at current levels.

Fruits, Vegetables and Nuts

Fresh and processed fruits — mainly non-citrus fruits, including apples and pears — may advance in price during the first half of 1961 because of smaller

production in 1960. However, families should be able to shop economically for citrus and dried fruits this winter. Tree nuts will also be plentiful and reasonably priced.

Fresh vegetable supplies will probably be as varied and as favorable price wise as they were a year ago. Bargains on some canned vegetables may be harder to spot, because of smaller packs this season. Half or more of the fresh produce is now offered in pre-packaged form to conform to self-service in stores and reduce time spent in home food preparation. Twenty years ago, scarcely three percent of fresh fruits and vegetables was consumer packaged.

Food prices have increased less than most other items in the budget, still making food a good buy, reminds Miss Reigle. The food dollar buys considerably more in quality, convenience and variety at any season, than it did a decade ago, she noted.

Veterans' State Loans Amount to Record \$11,892,250 for Feb.

Oregon Department of Veterans' Affairs granted farm and home loans to 1079 veterans in February in the amount of \$11,892,250 for the highest month in the department's history. H. C. Saalfeld, director, reported recently. This was more than half the loans granted last year, when 2185 veterans borrowed \$22,989,150 during the department's short-money period.

Most of last month's loans were granted after Feb. 21 when the department received the proceeds of a \$30,000,000 bond sale held in January. The month's activity eliminated the backlog of those applicants who had been waiting for loan funds. The current list of 1452 applications on file on Jan. 31 will be closed as fast as the veterans are ready for their loan funds, or at the rate of about \$1 million a week.

The department's increased loan activity is the result of passage by voters last November of the war veterans' bonding and loan amendment which makes another \$135,000,000 available for veterans' loans. Saalfeld said it has resulted in increased loan applications as well. Prior to the November election, when loan money was scarce, applications had sagged to slightly more than 100 a month. In each of the past two months they have exceeded 500, with February registering 537 for a new record for that month. The average number of applications for February had been 213 until last month.

4-H CLUB MEMBERS LEARN TO GIVE DEMONSTRATIONS

Needle and Thread 4-H club members heard Teresa Hamilton give instructions on how to give a demonstration when they met March 28 at the home of Mrs. Bill Hamilton.

Karen Main, president, presided during the business portion of the meeting. Flag and 4-H pledges were led by Linda Clapp and Junia Mitchell.

Refreshments were served by Sheila Huffman at the close of the meeting.

—Sheila Huffman, Reporter

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