

Farm Price Index Drops 4 Points In Period from Jan. 15 to Feb. 15

HARRISBURG — Seasonal increases in milk production brought about an average drop of 10 cents a hundred pounds in the price received by Pennsylvania farmers during the month ended Feb. 15 and became a major factor in a decline of four points in the overall farm price index.

According to Federal-State surveys announced Tuesday by the State Department of Agriculture, substantial price gains were recorded in meat animals between Jan. 15 and Feb. 15. But these advances were more than offset by the decline in milk and the lower prices received for major grain crops.

The Feb. 15 price index of all Pennsylvania farm products was reported at 241 per cent of the 1910-14 base, down two per cent from the Jan. 15 index of 245, but seven points higher than Feb. 15 of last year. The Pennsylvania parity ratio stands at 82, down two points from a month earlier and two points below a year earlier.

Pennsylvania dairy farmers on Feb. 15 averaged a return of \$5 per hundred pounds for milk at wholesale. In spite of the 10-cent reduction they were receiving 60 cents a hundred pounds more than in the same period last year.

For the first time in three months the Pennsylvania crop price index failed to show an increase over the previous month, falling nine points from mid-January. With seeding time approaching most major small grains showed a drop in price, with only wheat and oats showing no change from Jan. 15. The index is 15 points above Feb. 15, 1956.

Beef cattle, all calves and sheep

showed an increase in price over mid-January, with the price of hogs and lambs declining somewhat from the month earlier. The average price received for live chickens advanced nearly one-half cent from Jan. 15, and at 18.4 cents per pound, was the highest since Sept. 15, 1956. Eggs at 39 cents a dozen to producers were unchanged for the same period last month.

Emergency Grazing Okayed in 12 States

On Feb. 27 the program permitting emergency grazing of Soil Bank winter wheat Acreage Reserve land was extended from Feb. 28 through April 15 in certain drought-designated counties of these 12 States: Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Texas and Utah.

Two Officers Tell Rep. Dague Legislative Views

Two officials of the Lancaster County Farmers' Assn. were in Washington this week to explain the legislative position of the organization to U. S. Congressman Paul B. Dague.

Representing the association were William B. Jacobs, president, of R1, Narvon, and J. Roy Greider, chairman of the county legislative committee, of R2, Mount Joy. In meeting with Congressman Dague, the two farm spokesmen presented major legislative reviews as adopted by voting delegates of the association last fall.

Among other subjects discussed with the Congressman was the Taft-Hartley Act. "Our association is for the Taft-Hartley Act," said Greider; but we feel it needs to be strengthened. Especially we hope to see an act to support the principal that no person should be deprived of his right to work because of membership, or lack of membership, in a union or any other organization.

"A man should have the privilege of deciding for himself whether he wishes to belong to a union or not, and we would defend that privilege," said Greider.

Labor unions are reported to be trying to extend the coverage of the minimum wage law to include agricultural, and all other businesses and professions. In addition, they would like to raise the minimum wage from \$1.00 an hour to \$1.25.

"Of course we are against that sort of proposal and will do everything we can through our organization to prevent it happening," said Greider.

Federal aid to education was another subject discussed at the Washington meeting.

The Farmers' Association is committed to the position that the individual state can do a more efficient job of school construction and of school operation than can the Federal Government.

"Why do so many people think," asked the county president, "that by going to the federal government for our money we can escape paying for our schools?"

"The only thing we accomplish by going to Washington for help is that in the long run we pay more for our schools than if we kept the authority closer to home.

"Furthermore," he said, "all of us learned long ago that when we go to Washington for money, we get government regimentation as well as money."

On the Soil Bank and farm program issues, the local farmers told the Congressman that the federal government is too much involved in the regimentation of agriculture.

"We'd like to see less government instead of more," said Greider. "We've had high price supports long enough to prove they won't work. If the Soil Bank is to be of any value, it must be made effective in controlling diverted acres.

"What good does it do for the Government to support the price of eggs, for example, and then turn right around and loan money to farmers to build more chicken houses?"

"If corn and wheat farmers are going to have their prices supported, they must reduce their acreage; and that acreage should not be permitted to be planted to some other crop that competes with us here in Pennsylvania," said Greider.

Along with the two farmers from Lancaster County were 80 other farmers, representing the Farmers' Association from all sections of the state.

Farm Women No. 16 To Meet March 13

Farm Women 16 will meet with Lucy Mendenhall, Christiana, on Wednesday, March 13. Edith Mendenhall will serve as co-hostess. A representative of PP&L will be present to speak and show a movie. The roll call word will be "A guest you would like to entertain."

More Plants Mean More Profit, Says Penn State Corn Breeder

"Farmers can make an extra \$800 profit from 20 acres of corn if they grow 13,000 to 16,000 plants per acre instead of the usual 10,000." This statement was made at a Jersey Shore meeting of the Pennsylvania Seed Corn Producers' Association by L. L. Huber, corn breeder for the Agricultural Experiment Station, the Pennsylvania State University.

Huber declared corn yields increase as the number of plants per acre increase. He said each farmer must decide what is best for his farm.

"You must decide whether you want early or late maturing corn," Huber pointed out. "You must consider the depth of your soil, your level of fertility, whether you plant early or late, and whether you want corn for grain or silage."

The meeting was attended by 40 contract growers and commercial producers of certified Pennsylvania Seed corn from 18 localities. It was announced that 3,000 acres of Pennsylvania hybrid seed corn were inspected for certification in 1956, an increase of almost 1,000 acres since 1954.

Huber reminded growers that Pennsylvania hybrids have produced high yields despite drought, diseases, insects and wind damage (lodging) Hybrid 807 won the 1956 Five Acre Corn Contest for Hoppel Brothers of Chambersburg with 160 bushels per acre.

Three Pennsylvania hybrids won first place in the One Acre Corn Contest: Pa 602A grew 122 bushels per acre for William Luse of Centre County. Pa 807 grew 155 bushels per acre for Walter Ramsey of Chester County. Pa 444 grew 170 bushels per acre for Carl Gadsby of Venango County.

Among the short and medium season hybrids, four hybrids developed by the Agricultural Experiment Station at Penn State were described as outstanding for resistance to stalk rot, lodging (wind damage), and blight. These are Pa. 507, Pa 820, and Pa 333. Two of these were new in 1956.

Another high-yielding hybrid is Pa 602A. In the Five Acre Corn Contest, 9 of the 18 first-place country winners grew Pa 602A. Seven of the 16 blue ribbon winners in the One Acre

Corn Contest grew Pa 602A. Sixteen of the 22 county champions in the latter contest had Pennsylvania hybrids.

France to Increase Livestock Production

Under the so-called Third Modernization Plan for Agriculture in France, that country aims to produce 25 per cent more calves, 12 per cent more hogs, and 35 per cent more sheep in the next four years.

By so doing, France hopes to meet a growing domestic demand and help satisfy the import needs of neighboring countries, according to the Foreign Agricultural Service.

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