

Lancaster Farming

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Pennsylvania Not Following Nation In Acreage Cuts

Contrary to a national trend this spring, Pennsylvania farmers March 1 intentions are to plant about the same number of acres to spring crops as they did a year ago.

However Lancaster County farmers reported an intention to plant five per cent fewer acres to tobacco than they did a year ago.

The State Crop Reporting Board said that returns from 5,000 farms show that 4,668,000 acres are expected to grow the states seven important field crops in 1957 the spring acreage was 4,651,000. Included in this year's estimates are acreages for corn, oats, barley, soybeans, hay, tobacco and potatoes.

Farmers expect to plant more barley, hay and about the same amount of corn. They have reduced their acreage of soybeans, tobacco, potatoes and oats.

Last year, the Crop Reporting Board says, 29,400 acres of tobacco were harvested in the state the bulk of it in Lancaster County. This year farmers intend to cut back by about 1,400 acres.

Pennsylvania's major crop, as usual, is hay with 2,255,000 acres producing all types. Corn is expected to be grown on 1,249,000 acres the same as last year and barley acreage is estimated at 240,000 in comparison with 224,000 acres a year ago.

Weather conditions probably will play an important part in actual acreage planted to potatoes and grains. Potato acreage might be affected because of the recent upswing in prices. Estimates show the Pennsylvania 1958 potato acreage at 49,000 is a record low.

The nation's farmers will plant the fewest number of acres since 1917. Leading the way with a 13 per cent cut in acreage from last year will be sorghums. Many western farmers got caught with this crop last fall and were faced with price and harvesting difficulties.

Other crops indicated for a downswing are flaxseed, down 18 per cent and tobacco, slated for 1,095,000 acres, is down 24 per cent from last year and will be the smallest crop since 1908.

Actually most other crops show a slight rise in planting intentions, but the rise is in the one to two per cent bracket. The total acreage will be only slightly less than that of 1957, in the range of less than a million acres.

Corn for example, will be planted on 751 million acres up 1½ per cent from 1957, but still nine per cent below average. Wheat acreage will be up 66 per cent from 1957, oats, down eight per cent to 39.7 million acres, barley, down three per cent to 16 million acres, and soybeans, 24 million acres, will be a tenth larger than last year's record high acreage.

However statistics point out that weather conditions may change the picture considerably as farmers are forced to substitute one crop for another, or revise their plans in view of other farmers intentions.



LIKE HUNDREDS OF other Lancaster County and eastern Pennsylvania farmers, J. Wade Groff, R7 Lancaster, had to leave the milking machine in the milkhouse and

go back to the old way of milking during the past week. Some farmers tapped tractor manifolds to obtain vacuum to run milkers. (LF Photo)

New Jersey Milk Shippers Must Have Clean Herds

HARRISBURG March 26 — Pennsylvania farmers shipping milk to New Jersey were advised today by the State Department of Agriculture that New Jersey will not accept milk after April 1 from herds other than those already free from brucellosis.

Dr. Howard A. Milo, director of the Pennsylvania Bureau of Animal Industry, said although Pennsylvania is certified as a modified brucellosis free state this does not mean every herd owner can continue shipping milk to New Jersey after April 1. Their herds must meet state requirements.

"New Jersey says milk must come from herds without any brucellosis reactors as the result of the last herd test," Dr. Milo explained. Many Pennsylvania herds fall in this category, but some in recently certified counties have yet to attain this high rating, he said.

In addition to the New Jersey order, Doctor Milo said New York has revised its regulations effective Jan. 1, 1959 at which time they will accept milk only from "clean" herds.

A department spokesman said the New York and New Jersey regulations are a matter of economics that can't be underestimated. Pennsylvania Crop Reporting surveys show approximately 25 per cent of the milk produced in Pennsylvania is shipped to New York and New Jersey markets.

Gov. Leader Lauds Addition of Butter To Surplus Food Commodity List

Governor George Leader Saturday described "as an excellent move in the right direction" the decision of the Department of Agriculture to add butter to the list of commodities available for distribution under the surplus food plan.

The Governor, in thanking those whose efforts had made the move successful, expressed gratitude to Sen. Joseph Clark (D-Pa.) in particular.

Governor Leader commented "The addition of butter to the list of foods now available—corn meal, wheat flour, cheese, rice, and dried milk—is an important action. Not only will it help reduce butter surpluses, but it will

augment the diet of hungry people.

"I hope the Department of Agriculture will soon add such foods as dried beans and peanuts to its list. Not only do we have substantial surpluses of these foods, but we can use them to round out the diets of those eligible to receive them.

"I also hope that the Department will step up the pace of its buying with money already appropriated for the fiscal year of 1958, and that it will begin to buy foods in abundance, as well as surplus supply. This has been suggested in new legislation offered by Senator Proxmire of Wisconsin this week.

Lowest Storage Supply of Keystone Potatoes in 9 Years Reported

The lowest storage supply of Pennsylvania-produced potatoes in nine years was reported on Keystone State farms as of March 1, according to the State Department of Agriculture.

The Pennsylvania Crop Reporting Service says the equivalent of 1,100,000 bags of 100 pounds each in potato storage places was a decline of 1 million hundred-weight since Feb. 1, and was 500,000 hundredweight below March 1 storage stocks a year ago.

Potato stocks on hand nationally on March 1 this year were 20 per cent below a year ago and 9 per cent less than the 1949-55 average.

Pennsylvania production of fall potatoes in 1957 was 6,142,000

Weather Bureau Caught Again By Heavy Snow

The Weather Bureau was caught off-guard a second time last week as a load of wet heavy snow was dumped on Lancaster County Beginning Wednesday evening, the storm was supposed to be only "snow flurries."

By the time the storm stopped Thursday, up to 30 inches of snow had fallen, causing thousands of dollars worth of damage, leaving some 75,000 homes without lights and electric power and an equal number with no phone service.

Farmers, as a group, suffered more from the storm than did any other segment of the county population. In a heavy dairy county such as this, power for electric milkers and bulk milk tanks are almost a necessity.

Farm homes, as well as city homes, were left dark and in many cases cold, as electric powered oil burners were left powerless. Home freezers without power caused the spoilage of much meat and other frozen food. Water pumps, too, were out.

The eastern part of the county showed deeper snow accumulations from the off-shore storm. Measurements showed that up to 38 inches of snow fell in several areas.

Fortunately there was no drifting and roads were opened much faster than in the preceding storm.

But unlike the light fine snow of the February storm, this snow was wet and heavy, breaking phone and electric lines, snapping limbs from trees and crushing buildings by virtue of its sheer weight.

Several families were sickened by carbon monoxide fumes when they tried using charcoal inside buildings to cook. The fumes caused some persons to be hospitalized.

Several devices were pressed into service to provide farm power and comfort. Gasoline engines were stripped from power lawn mowers to pull pumps. Some farmers tapped the tractor manifold to get vacuum to run milkers. Many drained milk from bulk tanks into cans and used the deep snow as their cooling agent.

Reports of milk spoilage were not as numerous as had been expected. However several tanks were rejected because the temperature of the milk had become too high to be transported.

Poultrymen with chicks under electric brooders and heat lamps also suffered heavy losses. There were reports of chicks being hauled out by the spreader load by some farmers.

Layers and older birds were little affected as temperatures remained mild. Their owners, however, were hard put to keep feed and water before them as the automatic machinery sat helpless with no power.

Winter ended officially March 20.