

# Lancaster Farming

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## Inept Farmer Stands to Gain From Integration

The pillar of the farming industry, the highly efficient middle sized farmer, is likely to suffer most as integration spreads. The less efficient farmer stands to become better off.

This gloomy prediction was made Monday in Washington by Orlin J. Scoville, head of the Farming Efficiency Section of the Agricultural Research Service, at a meeting of the Newspaper Farm Editors Assn.

Scoville did feel that the efficient producer may be able to maintain part of his favorable position by his current favorable bargaining power potential.

**GOING INTO THE** history of vertical integration briefly, Scoville said that increased demand from consumers for quality products the year round has caused changes in the buying policies by retailers, especially the chain stores. As a result, we hear much about specification buying by mass retailers.

"Processors reflect the changing demands of distributors and consumers. They seek greater control over the quality of farm products and try to reduce seasonal and cyclical fluctuations in supply.

"**THEY ARE SOMETIMES** able to reduce capital costs by extending the seasonal use of equipment, and they can reduce labor costs by levelling out day-to-day fluctuations in the quantity of products processed," he said.

Farmers, he said, are interested in integration for several reasons. By contracting with dealers or processors, they may reduce risk and get more capital. As a result, they can expand their scale of operation, make better use of underemployed labor and other resources.

Looking into the future, the economist saw little to cause joy for the family farm operator who wants to keep three or four enterprises going.

"**FARMS WILL** become more specialized, and the number of highly diversified general farms will decline. Small subsistence enterprises will tend to disappear, particularly in livestock production.

"There will be fewer full-time commercial farms," Scoville said.

Backing up this statement, he pointed out that only 28,000 broiler farms produce more than 90 per cent of all broilers in this country. If the same formula were applied, these changes would be made:

- Hog requirements could be met by only 60,000 farms having 100 sows each. There are now 2½ million farmers raising hogs.

- Only 200,000 dairy farms of 100 cows each could take care of the nation's milk requirements. There are now half a million dairy farms and 3 million farms keeping at least one milk cow.

However it is not likely that hog and dairy production will become as concentrated as have broilers, due to the difference in equipment and land use potentials. But substantial adjustments

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**AGRICULTURAL INTEGRATION** was here with us long before it received its big boost in the poultry industry. Agricultural experts now believe that integration is going to be generally the rule rather than

the exception on American farms. Through the influence of integration, some 28,000 farms such as this one produce some 90 per cent of the broilers in the United States.

## Cool Wet Weather Further Slows Field Work; Tobacco Plants Slow

Cool wet weather retarded field activity for the second week in a row. Keystone State farmers are now anxiously awaiting fields to dry up so they can continue planting oats and prepare seed beds for other crops.

In Lancaster County, field work resumed on Monday, although conditions for working the soil were far from ideal. However the time is running short for tomato growers and corn planting.

Tobacco plants in seed beds made slow growth because of the cool weather.

For the week ending Monday morning, Safe Harbor reported a total of 2.23 inches of rain. The total during the 1958 growing season now stands at 7.27 inches.

The average maximum temperature for the week at Safe Harbor was 59 degrees and the average minimum was 45 degrees. The high for the week was 72 on Monday and the low was 40 on May 8.

Hays are progressing nicely, little damage from insects so far, however, spraying has been held up by the wet weather.

Rye and barley are shooting heads.

This week the federal crop reporting service released nation-

al crop production highlights. It is estimated that winter wheat production in the U.S. will total 1,010 million bushels, 43 per cent more than last year and 19 per cent more than average.

Egg production at 5.5 billion eggs in April was three per cent less than April 1957 production and six per cent below the April average.

Milk production in April was about the same as last year.

## April Milk Production 5% Higher Than in 1957; Cow Numbers Drop

Milk production in Pennsylvania set a record in April despite a decline in the number of cows.

The 601 million pounds produced exceeded April last year by five per cent, and April 1956 by three per cent.

The estimated 936,000 cows in Pennsylvania herds during April represents a drop of 2,000 head from the month previous and 6,000 fewer than a year earlier. Reports indicate no let-up in the trend toward fewer but larger herds as mechanization continues.

**REPORTING HERDS** fed an average of 9.2 pounds per cow in the herd on May 1, an increase of .3

## May 1 Rate of Lay Exceeds Record For Date; April Production Down

Reports from poultrymen on May 1 indicate layers have fully recovered from the effects of stormy weather in February and March, according to the State Crop Reporting Service.

Production, averaging 62.8 per cent, set a new record for the date and exceeded the previous high a year earlier by almost one per cent.

The average for the month at

61.2 per cent reflects a relatively low rate on April 1.

**THE AVERAGE** number of layers during April at 16,746,000 showed less seasonal decline from March than in most years and was only one per cent below April 1957. The low rate of lay early in the month was sufficient to drop egg production two per cent below April last year.

The total for April was 307 million compared with 303 million in March and 315 million for April 1957.

Production of eggs for January through April of this year totals 1,203 million or six per cent below the 1,271 total for the same four month period of 1957.

The chicken-feed ratio stands at 4.9, a point above the national average. The egg-feed ratio is 11 points above the national average which stands at 10.8.

Pennsylvania broiler growers also showed themselves to be in a better position than the average for the nation. The broiler-feed ratio in this state was 4.3 while nationally it was down to 3.9. Both showed a drop from the month previous, but were a point above last year.

## Benson Finds Farm Economy Now 'Refreshing'

by BOB BEST  
Editor, Lancaster Farming

WASHINGTON — Looking like a cat that has just polished off a particularly tasty canary, Sec. Ezra Taft Benson Monday made some predictions on the fall election and the state and form of farm legislation and reviewed the increase in farm income.

Speaking at a press conference for the conventioning Newspaper Farm Editors Assn., Benson said that it is "refreshing" to have agriculture as the bright spot in the American economy.

"Realized net income of farmers will be \$13 billion this year. April prices are up 10 per cent from 1957 and 10 per cent greater than when high rigid price supports were in effect."

**BENSON SAID** that agriculture will not be a major campaign issue this fall. But when asked his opinion on the fate of politicians who were after his scalp a few weeks ago, he said, "Farmers aren't dumb. They can see through it and it will be hard on some people."

In speaking of the legislation before the Congress, Benson again reaffirmed his stand against rigid price supports, escalator clauses and general governmental interference with agriculture.

"**MORE CHANGES** are needed in basic legislation," he said. "More changes are outlined in the President's message to Congress. The changes are needed to give greater freedom to plant, market and compete."

He predicted passage for an extension of Public Law 480 which allows American farm products to be sold overseas for local currencies.

Legislation for cotton and rice supports must be passed this

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