

Farmers' Net Income Down During First Half of Year

Farmers' realized net income—which is the amount of money they have left to spend after paying their production expenses—took a tumble during the first half of 1959, the Department of Agriculture has disclosed. Net income was about 12 billion dollars, which is 8% less than the first half of 1958. On the other hand, it was about a billion dollars more than for the first half of 1957. Receipts from farm volume of sales. However, government payments were lower than last year because acreage reserve payments were discontinued. Realized gross farm income was down about 1% from the

first half of 1958. Realized gross farm income includes cash receipts, government payments, home consumption of farm products, and the rental value of farm dwellings. Production expenses continuing their upward trend during the first six months of 1959, reaching a new high rate of 25.88 billion dollars, 3% above the 1958 first half rate. Contributing to this in-

crease were higher wage rates, property taxes, and interest charges, plus higher prices paid for feeder livestock, feed, farm machinery, and motor vehicles. Seed and fertilizer were the only important cost items for average prices declined. Cash receipts from the farm marketings during the first half of 1959 totaled about 13.9 billion dollars, only slightly below the same period in 1958. Prices received by farmers averaged 3% lower in 1959, while the volume of marketings was up nearly 3%.

eggs were down because of lower prices of eggs and chickens (including broilers). Crop receipts of 4.9 billion dollars were about 5% above the first half of 1958. Increased marketings more than offset slightly lower prices. Movement to market of the record 1958 wheat crop was the main factor in maintaining cash receipts above a year ago.

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Members of farmer cooperatives tend to base their loyalty on the organization on what they think the organization is doing for them rather than on what the organization does for them. This was reported by a researcher from the Pennsylvania State University August 27 during meetings of the Sociological Society at Cornell University. Dr. H. Copp, rural sociologist of three states. The study at Penn State, said, was made with the financial conclusions were based aid and sanction of the cooperative serving parts. Dr. Copp said results of

the study suggest that farmer cooperatives can do a more effective job of satisfying members if the cooperatives will help the members evaluate their benefits and experiences as members. He suggested this may require providing a set of standards for members to use in checking the personal benefits. Traditional membership relations in farmer cooperatives have been built around three concepts—knowledge, participation, and attitudes, he pointed out. "This recipe does not fit the modern farmer cooperative since there are too many facts and too few opportunities for active participation in the direction of the organization," Dr. Copp stated. "This is a problem for all large organizations, cooperatives and otherwise," he added. "If information specialists in organizations do not explain what the facts mean, the rank-and-file member will look for the explanation from other sources," he concluded.

Farmers received about 9 billion dollars for livestock and livestock products in the first half of 1959—3% less than in the same period of 1958. Receipts of cattle made a substantial gain, but those from hogs dropped sharply, so that the total for meat animals showed little change. Lower prices of hogs more than offset larger marketings, but higher prices for cattle more than compensated for lower volume. Receipts from poultry and

● Jack Owen
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Quarryville Methodist Church. Owen and his wife, the former Ruth Osborne of Drumore, have two children, Eugene, 10, and Bobby, 6. They plan to continue making their home in Quarryville.

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processing has gone up 44% in the past ten years, while farm prices were dropping 8%. The average price of farm land throughout the United States is now leveling off, federal department of agriculture officials say. For five straight years, farm land prices have climbed. In March, the average was \$83 an acre—up 8% over the previous year and 36% over 1954. But the rate of increase is believed to be dropping

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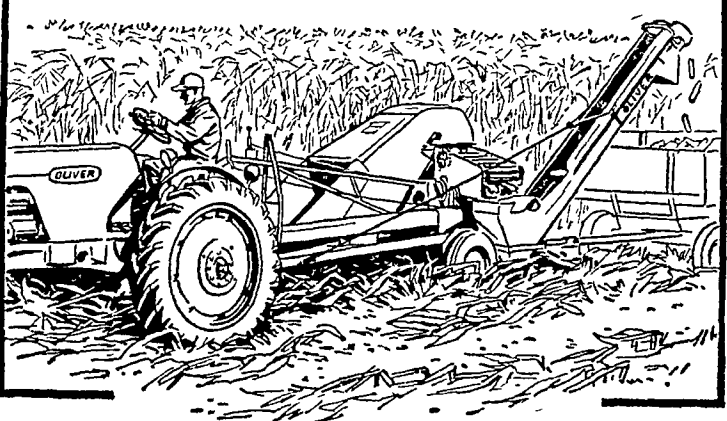
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