

Wheat Surplus Adds To Nation's Storage Bins

Pennsylvania farmers who grow soft red winter wheat are contributing substantially to the Nation's supply of excess wheat, according to Fred Seldomridge Chairman, Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Lancaster County Committee.

"While production of this class of wheat has remained relatively stable in comparison with other classes of wheat in recent years, supplies have been considerably greater than domestic demand since 1957. For example, since 1957, production of soft red winter wheat has averaged 175 million bushels annually, while domestic use during the same period has averaged only 132 million bushels. This has resulted in an annual surplus of 43 million bushels which domestic markets could not absorb," Seldomridge explained.

The statement came in response to questions raised by some Pennsylvania wheat producers concerning the need for reducing the national acreage of soft red winter wheat under the proposed 1964 wheat program. Some growers have contended that this class of wheat is not in surplus.

Soft red winter wheat makes up about 13 percent of total wheat production in the United States. Nearly all of the wheat grown in Pennsylvania is made up of this class. Major uses for this class of wheat, and soft white wheat another class which is also in surplus, are in the manufacture of flour for pastry, crackers, biscuits, and bread.

Exports of soft red winter wheat to foreign markets under the Food for Peace Program in recent years has been

a major factor in keeping stocks at a reasonable level.

"About 25 percent of total production of this class of wheat has been exported in each of the past five years, with approximately half of these exports under the Food for Peace Program. As a matter of fact, government export subsidies designed to help commercial exporters sell in the world market recently have ranged from 57 to 71 cents a bushel at Atlantic and Gulf Coast ports," Seldomridge pointed out.

Wheat producers will have an opportunity to vote on whether or not they wish to accept wheat allotments and quotas on their 1964 wheat crop in a national referendum to be held on May 21.

CONFUSED

The Priest River, Ida. Times makes this acute observation "Historians tell us about the past and economists tell us about the future. Thus only the present is confusing."

Farm Prices Drop 4 Per Cent In Mid April

Prices received for farm products in mid-April, led by a seasonal drop in milk prices, declined 4 percent from the mid-March level, according to the Pennsylvania Crop Reporting Service. Despite the decline the index remained above year earlier levels for the ninth consecutive month.

The Index of Prices Received, a barometer of farm income, was 217 percent of the 1910-1914 base compared with 225 on March 15 and 213 for mid-April last year. The index for crops was up 1 percent from a month earlier and 13 percent above April last year. For livestock and livestock products the index dropped 5

percent from mid-March and 2 percent from April 1962.

Decline in egg and milk prices sharply influenced the overall price drop. The average price received for milk in mid-April was estimated at \$4.20 per cwt. or 40 cents below the mid-March average and 10 cents below April 1962. The milk pricing system usually accounts for a sharp drop in price at this time of year. The price received for eggs averaged 36 cents per dozen, 5 cents below a month earlier. It was the lowest price for eggs since last July. Prices received for lambs made a strong seasonal advance from mid-March but changes for other meat animals were relatively minor.

Prices received for alfalfa and other hay declined \$1.00 from mid-March but remained about \$18.00 above April last year. Wheat, oats, rye and soybeans also showed declines from a month earlier while corn and barley held steady. Grain prices generally were 2 to 11 cents above April 1962.

U. S. PRICES

The index of Prices Received by the Nation's Farmers increased 1 percent (2 points) during the month ended April 15 to 242 percent of its 1910-14 average. The most important increases were reported for oranges and beef cattle. Partially offsetting were seasonally lower prices for eggs and wholesale milk. The April Index was the same as a year earlier.

A higher seasonally adjusted index of farm wage rates raised the Index of Prices Paid by Farmers, including Interest, Taxes, and Farm Wage Rates a third of 1 percent from March to 311 on April 15, the record of this year. Prices paid for family living items averaged the same in mid-April as in March. Prices of farm production goods were slightly lower. The Index was 1 percent higher than a year earlier.

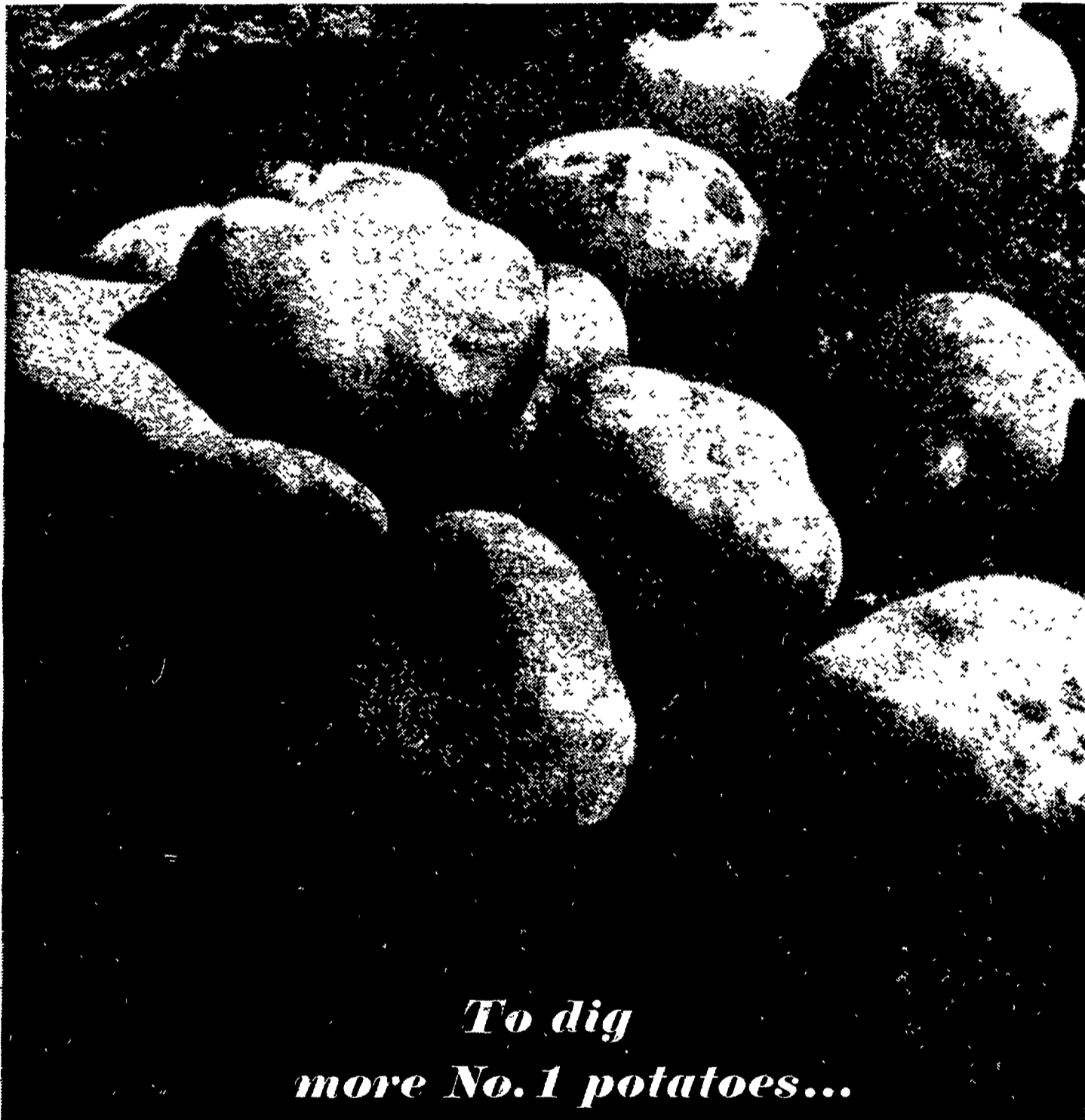
Farm product prices advanced more rapidly than prices paid from March 15 to April 15, lifting the Parity Ratio 1 percent to 78. This was 1 percent lower than a year earlier.

FARM FIRES COSTLY

Farm fires last year cost 110 million dollars worth of damage, says the Water Systems Council, but could have been markedly reduced had there been an adequate supply of water available. Fire protection authorities recommend a minimum 3,000 gallons of water available at all times in case of emergency.

WATER SYSTEM

What's the most valued piece of equipment on today's modern farms? Chances are good that it's the water system. Without an electric water system, the twentieth century farmer would not be able to water his livestock, irrigate his crops, water his lawn or make use of any of today's labor-saving water using appliances, such as automatic clothes washers, etc.



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