

From Where We Stand . . .

The Tobacco Quota Question

Did you sell your tobacco yet this year? If so, did you make any money on the crop? To a great extent that question seems to depend on what value you place on your labor. The greatest single cost item in tobacco production is labor. But there are others — seed, fertilizer, chemicals, and the cost of the land which could be used for other crops.

Tobacco is a traditional crop in Lancaster County. We have the growers and we have the buyers. This is usually all that is needed to establish a satisfactory market, assuming, as the economists say, "all other factors are equal." Equal to what, we don't know. This writer has noted a general feeling of dissatisfaction over the past few years, on the part of the growers in particular. Many claim they are completely at the mercy of the buyers, and that they are not being adequately paid for their labors.

The tobacco market is a unique thing. There is no national price scale in evidence. How the price is arrived at no one seems to know. It might almost be an imaginary number pulled out of an imaginary hat. But somehow, each year, there it is. Each grower has the choice of accepting or rejecting it. Generally, he needs the cash to pay other bills, so he accepts it. Tobacco is not like any of the other products you raise on the farm. Either you sell it here, or you eat it, there is no other place to go with it.

Each year Lancaster County growers produce approximately \$10 million worth of tobacco. This makes it a vitally important crop by any measurement.

Every three years the farmers are offered a chance to change the way in which they market their tobacco, they are offered the opportunity of a guaranteed price for their product. As regularly as clockwork, every three years they reject the offer, overwhelmingly. And the situation remains as before.

A new group in the county is now demanding that that situation be changed. They want a referendum every year, assuming quotas are voted down in each preceding year. They want Lancaster County growers to accept a quota system and to put a price floor under the tobacco market. To bring this about they need 2000 signatures on a petition for an off-year referendum. That is the first step. They want a central marketing agency, such as Agway, to handle all the tobacco. They want to eliminate the individual buyer-seller arrangement which they feel is the crux of our marketing problem.

We have met the leadership of this new association — Tri-County Tobacco Growers — and believe they are sin-

cere and honorable men. Their membership is not looking for glory; they are not looking for a free handout; and they are not looking for a seat on the government "something-for-nothing" express. They are searching for a solution to a common problem. They are, in fact, fighting for the economic survival of the tobacco grower in Lancaster County.

Whether their approach is right or wrong is for you to say. We are interested because we see people working for a solution to a problem instead of blindly accepting it. And, tobacco raisers, whether or not you recognize it, you have a serious problem.

Perhaps a countywide "clinic" to thoroughly air and study all angles of this situation might be the first step to be taken here. The USDA's Consumer & Marketing Service can help organize and stage such a clinic. It has been done in examining the marketing ills of other commodities.

HOGWASH!

"NFO bargaining agreements are 100 percent responsible for today's hog price". This statement was made by a Minnesota businessman at an annual National Farmers Organization (NFO) meeting in Henry County, Indiana, recently and reported by a mid-western farm paper.

That the statement was not made in jest is evident from the rest of the speaker's talk. He explained that NFO agreements with two of the nation's largest packers that process 45 percent of the hog supply, plus contracts with smaller packers, has forced the hog price rise.

So it is the NFO, single-handedly, that has caused this dramatic rise in hog prices! . . . "not the scarcity of hogs as economists and newspapers lead all to believe," he says.

The article does not spell out what business the gentleman from Minnesota is engaged in, but we seriously hope that he pays closer attention to what is going on in his field than he apparently does to the supply-demand picture in agriculture.

Hog statistics have clearly spelled out their shrinking supply story for well over a year; economists and newspapers didn't just dream up the fact that fewer hogs were being raised all during 1965, they merely reported it.

If this uninformed speaker had said that NFO contracts controlling hog production had played a part in the price rise, and backed up his statement with facts and figures, no one could dispute that opinion. But such a flagrant display of pure fantasy . . . to say that no other factors but NFO were responsible . . . can not go by unchallenged.



Yourself And...

Lesson for March 13, 1966

Background Scripture: Romans 12:3-21, 13:8-10, Ephesians 4:25-32, 1 Peter 4:7, 11 James 2:1-17.
Devotional Reading: Romans 12-21



Dr. Foreman One of these modern pagans wrote: "The world is my orange and I intend to squeeze it." Another one, the famous playwright Sartre, said something to this effect: Hell is the existence of other people. Every other person besides yourself is a threat to you, personally. He lessens your available good, fame, pleasure. The more he or they get out of the world the less there is left for you.

Others

It is obvious that we cannot live in this world—and never could have lived in it—without thinking about other people, some way or other. That is why any form of religion which puts it into purely personal, singular, individual terms, ignores the basic facts of life. Religion has a theoretical side—what we believe; it also has a practical side—what we do, or ought to do. The Christian religion in particular is not a "flight of the Alone to the Alone;" it is much more than what man does with his solitariness. It is the practical answer to the question, "What do you put after Yourself and . . . ?" Yourself and God, of course. But that is another story. After God, who else? Others, of

course. You can't shut your eyes to them. But what to do about others? Is there a difference between a Christian and an un-Christian way of looking at, thinking about and dealing with people? There certainly is. The Christian and only the Christian takes seriously the divine Commandment, Love thy neighbor as thyself. We must add: The Jew also, for the very commandment of love is one we find in the Old Testament first (Leviticus 19:18).

True love not sloppy

This commandment is quoted in the New Testament more often and more emphatically than any other. Jesus, Paul, Peter, James, John, — how different they all are! Yet every one of them headlines and insists on love as the first duty, the Christians all-inclusive duty to man. This can be misfar as it lies in us, to live at peace with all men. Our Christian duty and our Christ-mouthed people to mean something as shapeless as a fog in a bog, as meaningless as the love-song of a sick bullfrog, as elusive Christians have as a wet ghost. Love, or what is the same duty to others, only they don't admit it. Love as it comes to us on the airwaves to the accompaniment of an electric guitar can be nothing more than noise profaning the very love the crooner whines about. Real authentic take-no-substitute love for our neighbors (next door or around the world) is a solid unsentimental thing.

Love is concern

Love is active self-sacrificing concern for the welfare of those who are loved. Love of a man for his country may be shown in honest tax return, or enlistment in the army, or helping reduce air pollution, or electing intelligent congressmen. Love of a parent or children does not mean indulging them in monopolizing the telephone or the family car. Concern for the welfare of distant people—say in southeast Asia—may mean we have to keep on with a nasty war we did not want. Concern for the true welfare of others can take many forms.

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Now Is The Time . . .

By Max Smith, Lancaster County Agent

To Plant Spring Oats Early

Local growers who are planning to sow spring oats should make every effort to get them into the ground the last 10 days of March (if weather permits) or by the middle of April. Here in southeastern Pennsylvania spring oats seeded as early as possible will outyield late April or May seedings.



SMITH

To Go Light With Nitrogen On Wheat

Wheat growers are planning to seed the area down to alfalfa or clover should be cautious about making a heavy nitrogen application on the wheat this spring. On fertile soil this application may not be needed. On lighter soils, or on soils of sand, shale, or gravel, about 25 pounds of nitrogen per acre is the limit. Too much nitrogen will result in heavier growth of the wheat plant and extra shading and competition for the small legume seedings.

To Evaluate "Medicare" Health Program

All persons 65 or older may want to investigate the benefits of the "medicare" program. Many rural people can be assisted in this pro-

gram. The purpose of "medicare" is to help alleviate, for the aged, the burden of heavy medical expenses during a period when income is generally lower. The deadline for sign-up this year is March 31.

GROWTH IN NURSERY INDUSTRY

During the past two decades, the amount of nursery stock being grown and sold in Pennsylvania alone has increased 500 percent. By almost any yardstick, this industry can be characterized as one of past dynamic growth, with prospects of continued future growth.

70,000 SOIL SAMPLES TESTED AT PENN STATE LABORATORY

The Penn State University Soil Testing Program initiated in 1952, has leaped from an analysis of 7,000 soil samples the first year of operation to over 70,000 this past year. . . .

Farm Calendar

March 14 — 1 p.m. Lancaster County Swine Producers Spring Carcass Show Lancaster Stock Yards
— 7:30 p.m. 4-H Avishire-Jersey Dairy Club reorganization meeting at Farm Credit Bldg W Roseville Rd Lancaster
— 7:30 p.m. Lancaster County SWCD directors meet at Courthouse Lancaster
— 8 p.m. Cattle Feeder Meeting at Milton Brecht School Lititz Pike Lancaster

March 15 — 10:30 a.m. Dairy Breeding Institute at Guernsey Sales Pavilion
— 7:30 p.m. Lincoln 4-H Community Club reorganization meeting at Mt Airy Fire Hall
— 8 p.m. Manor YFA class at Penn Manor High School subject "Summer annual grasses" speaker

4-H GUERNSEY CLUB ELECTS '66 OFFICERS

Wayne Denlinger was elected president of the Lancaster County Guernsey 4-H Club during its reorganization meeting at the home of Raymond Witmer Willow Street R1

Other new officers are Earl Mull vice president, Cynthia

Chris Nissley, A H Hoffman Seed Co

March 17 — 7:30 p.m. Lancaster County Poultry Assn annual meeting at Farm Credit Bldg W Roseville Rd Lancaster.

March 18 — 6:30 p.m. Lancaster County Swine Producers Assn annual banquet meeting at the Blue Ball Fire Hall

— 6:15 p.m. Cloister FFA Chapter annual parent-son banquet at Ephrata High School cafeteria

— 7 p.m. Manheim YFA Chapter annual banquet at Penryn Fire Hall.

Balmer, secretary; Steve O Connor treasurer; Nelson Landis news reporter; Pete Witmer and Donald Breneman, song leaders. Louise Ann and Ruth Breneman and Cindy Breneman game leaders, and Wayne Denlinger county council

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