

Ag Report Tells Of Farmer's Plight

The following editorial from the October issue of DOANE'S Agricultural Report calls attention to an often untold story about the rising cost of food, the consumer's dollar and the man at the foot of the "totem pole," the farm producer. Even with food prices going up . . . farmers' share of "dollars" goes down.

Glamorous these figures are not . . . but the U.S. Department of Agriculture issued a fact sheet recently that helps establish trend relationships between food costs and farm operating expenses and income.

First, what has happened to farm production costs? The index of prices farmers pay for input items, interest, taxes and wage rates increased 28 percent from the 1957-59 period to mid 1969, ranging from as much as

106 percent for taxes to only 3 percent for feed and a decline of 6 percent for fertilizer. This compares with a rise of 17 percent in the overall consumer price index, and a retail price of food up 24 percent in the same period.

What share of the consumer's dollar does the farmer receive . . . and is he maintaining his percentage of this dollar over the years? The following figures substantiate an already common belief—the farmer is losing rather dramatically to "marketing" in the race to consume larger shares of the dollars spent for food.

Farmers receive an average of 40c of each dollar spent at retail for U.S. farm-produced food. This is 10c less than was the case 20 years ago. A farmer's "share" depends upon the price he receives and the costs of marketing the product sold. And this share is smaller for highly "serviced" products such as bread (14c) than for unprocessed products such as eggs (65c).

Since the 1947-49 period, dollars spent for food products in this country have climbed \$46.1 billion . . . to about \$90 billion today. Just 22 percent of this total dollar increase was realized by farmers.

In the past ten years, however, surprisingly little variation has occurred in the percentage farmers receive on a commodity or unit basis. In 1957-59, for example, farmers received 62c out of each dollar consumers spent for beef. In the first quarter of 1969 they received 61c. Figures for other commodities are as follows: eggs, 64c in 1957-

59 compared to 65c this year (an increase of 1c in the past 10 years); bread, 16c compared to 14c; Potatoes and butter, no change; canned corn, 13c compared to 12c.

All of this can be simplified into a few words. Consumers pay less and less of total disposable income for food . . . consumers spend more total dollars, largely paying for services and increased marketing costs . . . farmers' share of total spending continues to go down

Proper Care Of Game Urged

Several reports of game spoiling during warm weather have been received by the Game Commission this fall.

Hunters are advised to handle meat properly during warm days; otherwise, it can become tainted in a few hours.

Sportsmen should remove entrails of game immediately after killing, and the meat should be kept as cool as possible until it can be processed.



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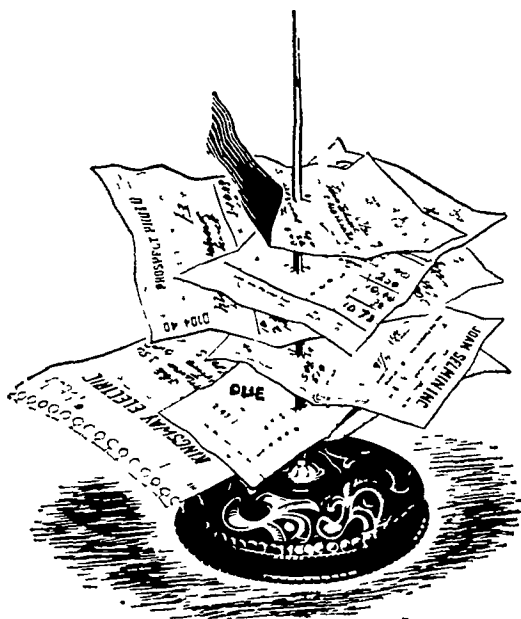
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