

Scott Supports Potato Diversion

Senator Hugh Scott (R-Pa) this week urged the Department of Agriculture to establish a potato diversion program at "the highest possible base price to growers." The Senate Republican

Leader joined with Senator Frank Church (D-Idaho) in a letter to Agriculture Secretary Clifford M Hardin asking the Secretary to "immediately institute a potato diversion program" in an effort to halt "a serious price decline" in the potato market. Such a program would di-

vert potatoes from normal channels of trade to other uses such as starch and feed.

The letter follows. The Honorable Clifford M Hardin Secretary of Agriculture United States Department of Agriculture Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr Secretary: In recent weeks, indications of serious price decline have appeared in the potato market.

Potato growers in our states have strongly urged that the Department of Agriculture immediately institute a potato diversion program in hopes that the decline can be halted and prices stabilized.

Broad powers have been placed in the hands of the Department of Agriculture to meet market problems caused by surpluses of this nature. It is our belief that a legitimate cause for concern and action exists. To partially alleviate the hardships which many growers are suffering under current conditions, and in the hope of stabilizing potato prices, we request that a diversion program be granted providing for the highest possible base price to growers"

Delaware Act Allows New Basis For Farmland Tax

Farmland owners in many urbanizing states run the risk of extremely high assessments for land taxes if they are based solely on land market value. A nearby major highway, housing development or industry may make the market value of farmland shoot up, but its capacity for farm production does not change.

The 1968 Delaware Farmland Assessment Act which applies to their state, allows farmland owners to choose whether they want to have their land assessed on the basis it has been in the past or according to the land's value for agricultural production. The law was explained in a recent series of county meetings sponsored by the State Farmland Evaluation Advisory Committee in cooperation with the Agricultural Extension Service.

The Act set up a three-member State Farmland Evaluation Advisory Committee which primarily is responsible for determining the "fair" value of Delaware land based on its agricultural productive capabilities.

Assessment of farmland on the basis of its productive value presents a number of problems, according to the Committee. Factors of the innate productivity of various soil types

are not available, however, reasonable estimates can be made. Soil types, land use and net farm income were used in the determination of the "fair" values.

The procedure was simplified by grouping the 150 soil types found in Delaware into five groups. These groups range from Group A, soils with very high productivity suitable for permanent cultivation, down to Group E, soils with very severe limitations for cultivated crops, thus generally not tillable.

Land on Delaware farms is used for a variety of purposes which directly affect the income received. The uses considered as a part of the basis for determining value were cropland harvested, cropland pastured, permanent pasture and woodland.

To be eligible for the new assessment, (1) land must be actively used for agricultural purposes, (2) at least five acres must be included in the farm besides the area used for farmhouse and yard, and (3) gross sales, including government farm program payments, must amount to \$500 or more per year.

Landowners must apply annually before February 1 for the new type of assessment, according to the law. Obviously, a landowner will not want to apply for this re-assessment unless it will lower his land taxes. To decide whether or not to apply, landowners should figure out approximately what his new taxes would be.

In order to find out, a landowner will need a soil survey map of his land. This can be obtained through the office of the Soil Conservation Service or through the county agents. From the soil survey map and information in the University of Delaware's Agricultural Experimental Station Circular 13, the farmland can be classified into the five soil groups. In addition, the owner classifies the land according to its use.

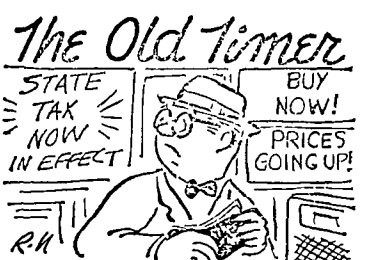
Pennsylvania Egg Production Down Slightly

Pennsylvania layers produced an estimated 255 million eggs in November, one percent below a year earlier, and 4 percent below October 1969. Average number of layers in flocks during Nov at 14,560,000, as 1 percent below a year earlier, but 1 percent above October 1969.

The average price received by farmers for all eggs was up from mid-October by 10 cents, and is also 10 cents above a year ago. With average price for laying mash the same as a month earlier, the egg-feed ratio is more attractive.

The October egg-type hatch, at 2,121,000, was up 19 percent from a year earlier, and 76 percent above October 1967. Total egg-type hatch for the US in October was 40 million, down 1 percent from a year earlier.

Stocks of eggs in cold storage November 1 amounted to 1,332,000 cases, down 7 percent from a month earlier, and 43 percent below a year earlier.



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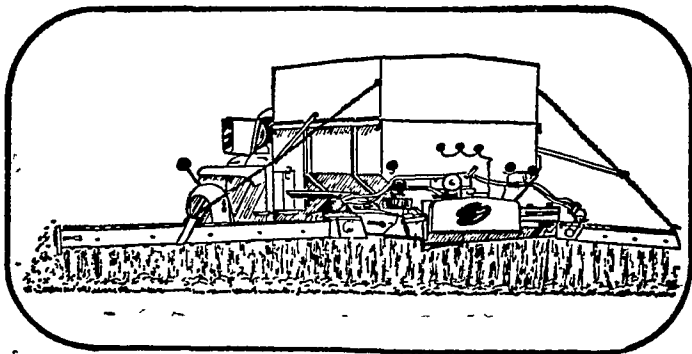
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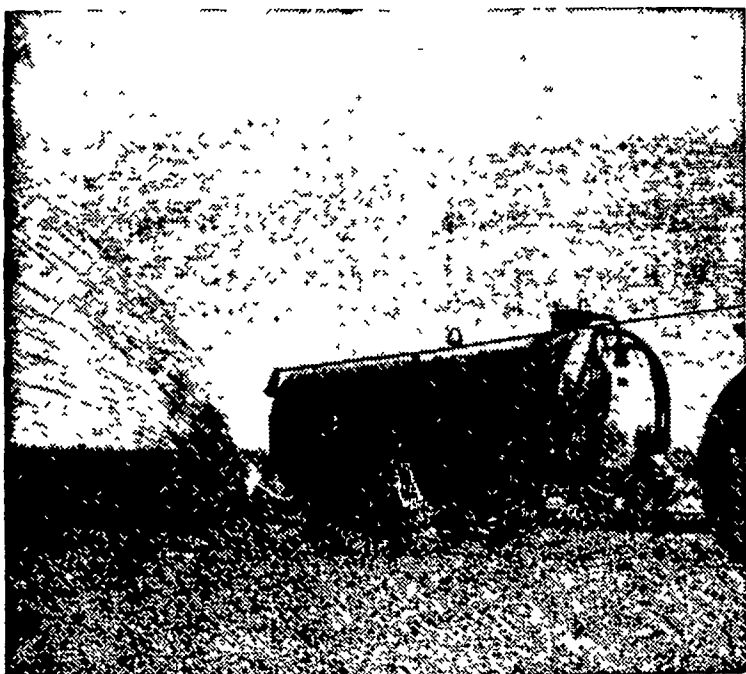
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