

# Bust Threat Grows

On March 7, Lancaster Farming editorially raised the question of "How Many Eggs?" Our question followed a USDA recommendation to farmers not to increase egg production in 1970. We carried the advice of Poultry and Egg Production newspaper to farmers to go slow. But we left the choice to the individual farmer on how to proceed in the face of the caution flags.

Since March 7, the egg marketing situation for most farmers has changed drastically. The biggest blow came immediately after Easter when egg prices dropped 25 per cent, to a level a national egg marketing official informed us was just about break even.

## Stability Efforts

In the past two weeks, egg prices have stabilized at the new level. Meanwhile, various poultry organizations are in the process of encouraging farmers to sell off old flocks, cut down on flock size increases, promote eggs, and sell breakers. The effort is to cut back on egg production so as to stabilize supply and keep demand high. In short, the effort is stop prices from going lower.

But the egg men are not optimistic about keeping present egg prices — primarily for one reason. That reason is the mushrooming egg hatch which threatens to flood the country with new laying flocks and more eggs in the next several months.

Egg hatch was up 21 per cent in January compared to a year ago, and it was up 17 per cent in February, according to the USDA. We haven't seen any figures for March, yet, but recent statements by poultry officials indicate the March figures won't be an improvement.

Some officials already have said that in order to avoid "a bust" in egg prices, the hatch from March through June would have to be held at not higher than the 1969 level.

## Warning!

Just how serious the situation has become is indicated by the large advertisement by United Egg Producers in the April 11 edition of Poultry and Egg Production. Headed "WARNING!" in large red letters, the ad asks if the egg industry is headed for a massive bust. It continues:

"The urgency of the problem is real and upon us. Recent increases in pullet placements are alarming. The trend started in December when egg type placements rose 19 per cent

"In January, a 23 per cent increase was recorded. February layer type eggs in incubators were up 19 per cent over February a year ago level."

"If this alarming trend continues through June, the spectre of a recurrence of the 1967-early 1968 nightmare (egg prices remained below cost of production for 18 months) is a definite reality . . . and it will happen even if July-December placements are held to the 1969 levels. If the industry is blessed with improved pullet survivals the nightmare will be intensified.

## 18 - 24 Months

"The warning signs are clear. A massive 'bust' is building up rapidly and can hit as early as August or September this year . . . and according to past history, it will take 18-24 months for recovery.

"There is only one way to prevent disaster and that is through enlightened responsibility — 'Producer Responsibility,' 'Grower Responsibility' and 'Hatcher Responsibility.' All must act immediately to make responsible placement decisions.

"It's already later — much later — than you think. It's almost too late!" UEP said.

We can't say it any better

The question remaining for each poultryman is, "What am I going to do about it?"

## A Real Dilemma

For the businessman who has the bulk of his know-how, equipment and capital tied up in layers, it's a real dilemma. Does he hold off starting the next flock of layers? Does he move ahead and hope that enough of the other guys take corrective actions to stave off the bust?

Does he go ahead and pray the bust won't be very long or very severe?

Only the individual farmer can answer these questions, but we suggest he do some very serious thinking in the next few days. The decisions made could be very important for his future.

Those farmers who have the flexibility and aren't committed and who are about ready to get a new flock of birds, might consider holding off until the rate of hatch becomes more reasonable. While idle equipment and buildings are costly, losses could be multiplied by large outputs of eggs which might have to be sold for much less than the cost of production.

# Hans Herr House

The Lancaster Mennonite Conference Historical Society has purchased the Hans Herr house, the oldest dwelling house in Lancaster County and the oldest Mennonite meeting place in America. Built in 1719, the house is truly historic and the Historical Society deserves commendation and assistance in the restoration effort.

Elsewhere in this issue are pictures of

the exterior of the Hans Herr house and the hand-hewn wooden steps in the house.

Many prominent persons, including painter Andrew Wyeth, have already lent their moral and financial support to the restoration effort.

The fact that many Lancaster Countians are descendants of the Hans Herr heightens the local interest in the project.

We feel sure the project will continue to gain the support of citizens in Lancaster County and elsewhere.

## A Bit More . . .

There have been a lot of accidents in Lancaster County this year, far too many, both on the highways and elsewhere.

We think these comments by a hardened news reporter in Missouri sum it up:

"It's not a pretty scene to come upon shattered glass, twisted metal, oozing oil and gasoline, moans of pain and the flowing of a man's life-blood don't give you a comfortable feeling. How can drivers be made to realize that a bit more caution, a bit more kindness, a bit more courtesy and a lot more decency would put an end to many of these scenes."



## NOW IS THE TIME . . .

By Max Smith  
Lancaster County Agent

### To Set Strawberry Plants

Early spring is the best time to set strawberry plants in this part of the county. Early plants will usually result in greater yields next spring because the first few runner plants will bear the most strawberries. The earlier the runner plants are set, the better will be the yield. Planting distances should be four feet between rows and 24 inches on the row. Fertilize in June and again in early August to develop the maximum number and strength of plants.

### To Observe Alfalfa For Weevil

Warm spring weather is slow in coming this year but it may arrive all of a sudden. With the current favorable moisture conditions the growing season will get off to a fast start. Alfalfa

growers are urged to observe the alfalfa stands closely for feeding weevil later this month and early May. It is likely that many crops may be cut without any spray until after the first cutting is made. A leaflet is available on the subject.

### To Buy Feeder Pigs Carefully

If you plan to buy feeder pigs from out of state, demand official Interstate Health Certificates before the animals are moved. Failure to buy and move pigs legally is too big a risk; if they come down with the disease, hog cholera, all hogs on the farm and in the area may be infected and the dreaded disease spread. Don't be taken by offers of bargain pigs, they may put you out of business.

## For Full Market Reports Read Lancaster Farming

### ALL ONE?

Lesson for April 19, 1970

Background Scripture: Galatians 3.  
Devotional Reading: Psalms 67.

I'd like to tell you a story about a man named Ivan.

Ivan was a citizen of the Soviet Union. He was much like any other citizen of the U.S.S.R., with one notable exception: he was also a Christian, a practicing member of the Christian Church. This was a commitment that made his life a hardship.

Because he was a Christian, Ivan had a very limited future in the little Ukrainian town in which he lived. He wasn't abused physically in any way for his Christianity, but his opportunities in the Soviet society were strictly limited. One opportunity that was not closed to him, however, was the armed forces and so he enlisted. So fine was his record in the army, so great was the initiative and talent he demonstrated, that he eventually became an officer.

### Stacked against him

When he had been mustered out of the army, he set his heart and mind on going to the university to study for the profession of law. Christians were not forbidden to enter the university, but, as the saying goes, "the deck was stacked against him." On the day of his registration, the school authorities caused him to be arrested on a minor, trumped-up charge and he was put in prison.

After months of prison in his home town, he was transferred to what we would call a state penitentiary, one of the most brutal prisons in the country. There, Ivan, a brilliant young student, the kind of self-enterprising youth any nation should be anxious to claim, was brutally beaten and died.

This tragic story, as I have told it to you, is true in every detail but these: his name was not Ivan, but Clyde Kinard; the scene of the story was not the

Soviet Union, but the United States; the prison was not in the Ukraine, but in Mississippi; and his offence was not that he was a Christian in a Communist land, but a black man in a white man's society.

I tell this story to you, not because it is an unusual story, for it is not; there are many other true stories equally tragic. I tell it simply because I know that I need to be reminded, lest in my comfortable complacency I find it difficult to understand why some people in this nation are so angry, so bitter. And if I need to be reminded, so, I'm sure, do you.

### Coming apart

There is probably no time in the history of this nation when we have been so deeply divided as a people, when the fabric of our society was so deeply in danger of coming apart at the seams. Never have so many people been so frightened or spoken so rashly or asked with more urgency: "What is going on in our nation?" The Report of the United States Riot Commission has given one answer: "This is our basic conclusion: Our nation is moving toward two societies, one black, one white—separate and unequal."

There are also other divisions. There are the divisions between the poor and the affluent, the have's and the have not's. There is the division that exists between generations, the young and the old. These divisions are so deep, so complex, so bitter, so dangerous. The times demand a ministry of reconciliation so that men may recognize, as Paul puts it in Galatians 3, that we are "all one in Christ Jesus."

There are passages in Paul's letters where he speaks of the different ministries in the church: some men are called to be preachers, other teachers, etc. But he says nothing about some being given the ministry of reconciliation. The reason: all are to be reconcilers. He gives all of us this "ministry of reconciliation."

The job of bringing us together, of healing the wounds of this society, is something that rests upon all of us. We are "all one in Christ Jesus," and we must both recognize that oneness and make it evident to our divided world.

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