

Remember Egg Costs

One thing egg producers should keep in mind in regard to the impending egg bust is that even if egg prices go down only to the 1967 level, farmers will likely lose more money.

That's because it will cost most producers more per dozen eggs to produce than it did three years ago.

Labor and equipment costs are up substantially. Medication is up.

Feed cost increased about five per cent in the past year, according to the Farm Economics report of Penn State and USDA. Feed accounts for the majority of the cost of production.

Some farmers fortunate enough not to need hired labor can eliminate that factor. Established farmers many not need much new equipment.

But few can economically avoid medication, none can get around the feed situation.

Steady improvements in the quality and efficiency of the birds through genetic advances, plus the industry's steady improvement in know-how, will help off-set these increases. But overall, the poultry industry follows the trend almost everywhere else in the country during the past several years of inflation: costs are up.

Keep a Sharp Pencil

The egg producer should remember that in even a relatively mild bust, most or all producers lose money for varying periods of time.

Producers should keep in mind in planning their farm programs in the next several months.

While egg prices have firmed somewhat recently, we are informed that only the best and most efficient producers are making a profit. Remember that some, possibly most, egg producers have been losing money in recent weeks — and the egg bust which we believe is coming hasn't really started.

If this type of marginal egg market continues indefinitely, or if the market goes down further, the losses for some producers can accumulate day after day, week after week, month after month.

Farmers can sustain such losses for a time by cutting back in some areas of operation, such as maintenance and plant improvement, but there's a limit to which

a property can be "bled" in this way. In the long run, such items as maintenance and replacement of buildings and equipment have to be provided for.

One way the farmer can save himself during hard times is to run a sharp pencil. Publications such as ours can inform the farmer about the overall health of his industry, but only the individual farmer has the data upon which to judge the health of his own farm operation.

Correct decisions in all times should be based on accurate and comprehensive cost and return figures. In periods of depressed markets, such figures are absolutely vital.

Without a clear understanding of where he stands at all times financially, the farmer is not prepared to make proper management decisions.

In the type of egg market that exists today and is indicated for the future, the importance of a sharp pencil has never been greater.

Still Too Much Optimism

There's a natural tendency among people in general to get caught up in the mood of the times and to forget reality. This helps explain the widespread, abject despair which prevails in market busts and the bouyant, reckless optimism that takes over in times of prosperity.

These swings in the prevailing mood have been particularly severe in the egg industry. These swings have been made more severe by the basic fact that small changes in the supply of eggs tend to produce big changes in egg prices — both up and down.

The egg market now would appear to be at the beginning of a new period of despair, but close enough to the last period of prosperity that too many producers can't think in terms of what conditions really are because they are blinded by the vision of what has been.

The new period of despair would appear to be certain because of the current, huge build-up in egg production capacity. Some egg industry officials, however, are optimistic that the bust, which these production increases would normally mandate, can be avoided.

Can the bust made imminent by the natural human instinct to jump on prosperity's bandwagon be averted?

Technically speaking, there is no doubt that the bust can be avoided. The UEP program to sell off layers earlier and to hold

moulting to low levels will stop an immediate build-up of egg supplies and therefore stop any significant downward pressure on eggs in the next several months, possibly through this year.

The UEP program to hold egg type chick hatch to zero in August and to 1969 levels the rest of the year would solve the long term problem for 1971.

It would appear that if the UEP program is carried out, there will be little or no significant drop in egg prices from current levels. Under the UEP program, there would be no bust.

But the UEP program is bucking human nature.

The UEP program is bucking the farmer who won't listen to any proposal, no matter how beneficial.

It's bucking the producer who will hold his birds that extra month and let the other farmer sell his.

It's bucking the producers who will try to take advantage of the efforts of others to stave off a bust.

And will hatcheries actually cooperate to achieve zero hatch in August? It will have to be seen to be believed.

So, will the UEP program be successful and avert the type of tragic market bust all too common to the egg industry, the type that results in bankruptcy for many producers?

While we wish the UEP all the success in the world, because the success of the UEP program will mean success for southeastern Pennsylvania egg producers, we're past the period of optimism generated by last winter's egg boom. We think any optimism remaining from that boom is ill-founded.

But because we believe there is a lot of optimism still remaining in other quarters, and because we think this will prevent the true seriousness of the present egg market condition from being widely enough recognized, we think the UEP program will be only partially successful.

Therefore, we think there will be a market bust, but not nearly as disastrous a bust as would have occurred if the UEP program had not been undertaken.



NOW IS THE TIME . . .

By Max Smith
Lancaster County Agent

To Feed New Grain Carefully

Barley and wheat harvest is at hand and these new grains will soon be finding their way into livestock and poultry rations. Producers are urged to introduce these grains slowly into the grain mixture and only after they have had several weeks of curing in the bag or bin. Too much of the new grain may cause scouring, bloating, or other digestive disturbances. If the grain is placed in storage bins, be sure the bins are clean and have been treated with an insecticide such as malathion or methoxychlor.

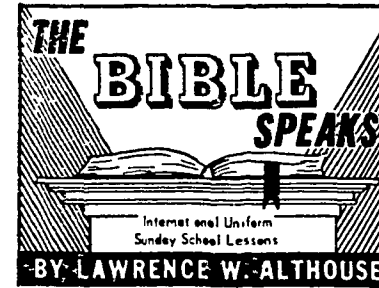
To Care For Heifers

Replacement heifers are most important in the future of any herd. Daughters are reminded of the need to check on the heifers frequently if they are away on pasture on another farm. Be sure they have plenty of forage, water, salt, and shade. This same

management is in order for dry cows if they are not with the milking herd. First-calf heifers should be brought into the barn and with the milking herd several weeks before freshening in order to get them accustomed to the daily milking routine. Replacement heifers are very important to all breeders; they deserve careful attention and management.

To Make Alfalfa Cuttings

Weather conditions have favored the excellent growth of second cut alfalfa. The latest recommendation from our crop research men suggest that we make the second and third cuttings of alfalfa from 35 to 40 days after the first cutting. Experiments have favored this frequency of cutting for maximum yields and longevity of the stand.



A VISION OF HOPE

Lesson for June 28, 1970

Background Scripture: Revelation 21 through 22:5.
Devotional Readings: 1 Peter 5:6-11.

"Why study a bunch of old visions, anyhow?"

This was the response of a highschool youth confronted with the prospect of studying the Book of Revelation in a church school class. After all, he reasoned,

these visions talk about the distant future and we are busy enough with the present! Yet, just as the past has served to shape the present, what we do now can be greatly affected by what we expect of the future. And people do wonder about the future. Among the questions they ask are these:

1. Will our world go on unendingly, or will it someday be brought to a close?

2. In what direction is the world heading? Is it getting "better" or "worse"? Is it staying the same?

3. Will Christianity be undisputedly vindicated at some point in the future? Will "good" be triumphant once and for all over "evil"?

4. Will there be a day of reckoning for each of us?

A new heaven and earth

It is to questions such as these that the Book of Revelation is addressed. People in those days also wondered about the future and needed an assurance to buttress their hope. In looking at John's visions it is important that we do not get hung-up on the details of his visions, but that we concentrate on the message behind those details.

For example he speaks of "a new heaven and a new earth." This is an expression of faith that indicates that God will transform the world so that it eventually fulfills the purpose for which he made it. Today it is a

far cry from what God intends it to be, but we believe it will someday be a far different world, a world so different that it will seem a "new world." This will happen, not because "day after day" man simply will get "better and better in every way," but because God is moving this world along toward that goal.

John also saw a vision of a "New Jerusalem." Jerusalem was for the Jew the center of all his religious hopes. It had been destroyed a number of times by enemies and had been rebuilt again. The Jews remembered with pride the beautiful temple that had once stood in the midst of the city and looked forward to that day when it would be there again. They also believed that when God's plan was fully accomplished, people from all nations would look to the temple in Jerusalem as the center for the worship of God.

At the center: Christ

John saw the coming of a new Jerusalem, but it is something rather different than a city which is restored. Far above any human city will be the person of Christ. What this means for us is that whatever the future may hold for the world in which we live, Christ will be at the center of it. It means that that which we have partially experienced in this world will be perfectly and completely experienced in this new existence. This is what Paul alluded to when he said: "Now we see only the puzzling reflections in a mirror but then we shall see face to face. My knowledge now is partial; then it will be whole . . ." (1 Corinthians 13:12).

With this hope of the future within him the Christian can draw power to live in the present. Though life may seem to ride roughshod over him, though he may have to taste again and again the bitterness of seeming defeat, he can still be a conqueror: "He who conquers shall have this heritage, and I will be his God and he shall be my son" (Revelation 21:7). We are like soldiers who fall wounded in a battle that we know will eventually be won by our side. We can accept these wounds because we are secure in our knowledge of victory.

It is the vision of our hope for the future that makes us truly unconquerable in the here and now of the present.

(Based on outlines copyrighted by the Division of Christian Education, National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. Released by Community Press Service.)

LANCASTER FARMING
Lancaster County's Own Farm Weekly

P. O. Box 266 - Lititz, Pa. 17543
Office: 22 E. Main St., Lititz, Pa. 17543
Phone: Lancaster 394-3047 or Lititz 626-2191

Robert G. Campbell, Advertising Director
Zane Wilson, Managing Editor

Subscription price \$2 per year in Lancaster County \$3 elsewhere

Established November 4, 1955
Published every Saturday by Lancaster Farming, Lititz, Pa.
Second Class Postage paid at Lititz, Pa. 17543

Member of Newspaper Farm Editors Assn.
Pa. Newspaper Publishers Association and
National Newspaper Association