

Officials of the Department of the year when the fire danger Forests and Waters, particularly those charged with forest protection, are emitting a sigh of relief these days as the 1970 spring fire danger period comes to a close.

The sigh of relief is born out of the fact that this year's spring fire season, normally a time of

1970's fire record through the end of May revealed 737 fires, which burned off some 4,064 acres for an average per fire of 5.5 acres. During 1969 there were 1,445 fires which burned off some 15,000 acres for an average of 10.4 acres per fire.

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Across the Editor's Desk

Broiler Merger

Part of a report in a recent edition of Broiler Industry. Perhaps a harbinger of things still to come in this country, the United Kingdom still is locking from mid-January acquisition by Imperial Tobacco Group of Associated British Foods for the equivalent of \$45-6 million. It is having serious repercussions on American breeders who have outlets in Britain.

Associated British Foods includes 115 farms, six hatcheries, 18 feed mills and six processing plants. Of some 16 companies in ABF, the one best known to Americans is Buxted Chicken Co. Ltd.

Imperial's action was preceded by purchase of Allied Farm Foods in 1968 and, in 1969, the Ross group.

The new Ross-Buxted complex will supply about 28 per

cent of the U.K.'s broiler market, estimated at 265 million head a year. This would give an annual output of about 70 million birds and about 10 per cent of the turkey meat.

Atlantic's Sires Lead

From the June edition of the A B C Transmitter.

For the eighth consecutive time, Atlantic's AI-proven Holstein sires lead other studs with the highest average predicted difference for milk production on the Penn State daughter herdmate report.

The latest compilation is dated April, 1970 and is based on the January USDA sire summaries for bulls with 70 per cent repeatability or higher that have semen available.

The average PD for Atlantic's 13 sires is +723M and +20F. These figures represent an ex-

tra return over feed cost of \$23 per lactation, compared with herdmates producing at breed average.

With information based on large numbers of daughters in numerous herds for sires currently in service through various studs, each Penn State report adds more significance to the need for sampling and proving young sires in members' herds.

The purpose of this program is to develop well-proven sire-capable of extensive future service and supported with the dairyman's confidence that higher production will result.

Liberal Trade Policy

In a recent speech before the U.S. House Committee on Ways and Means, Clifford M. Haidin, a liberal rather than a protectionist approach to trade while testifying in favor of the proposed Trade Act of 1969.

Haidin noted that for many years, the U.S. has exported more than \$5 billion annually of agricultural products. He contended that the figure would be considerably higher if not for "unreasonable trade barriers set up to protect excessively high guaranteed prices" in some other countries.

He concluded, "Above all, U.S. agriculture needs a worldwide climate of liberal trade. In such a climate importers and exporters of farm products can best work together in seeking solutions to their problems. The Trade Act of 1969 is cast in a liberal mold. I urge that it be enacted without delay."

Europe's Cow Removal

Under the European Common Market plan, 290,500 dairy cows are being slaughtered, another 130,000 "retired" from milk production — presumably added to beef herds — this year.

But, no significant reduction of dairy surpluses will be brought about — and that's what the program was all about, reports Foreign Agriculture Magazine.

The European Community Commission, which is sponsoring the program under which EC dairymen receive subsidized payments, still looks upon the results as "disappointing."

Besides failure to reduce surpluses, reasons for disappointment are:

The initial goal was for 250,000 dairy cows under each measure and while the slaughter total is 16 per cent above its goal, the "nonmarketing of milk" total is nearly 50 per cent short. That means the combined total is 16 per cent below the goal.

Less than two per cent of the EC's total of 22.1 million dairy cows is involved in the program.

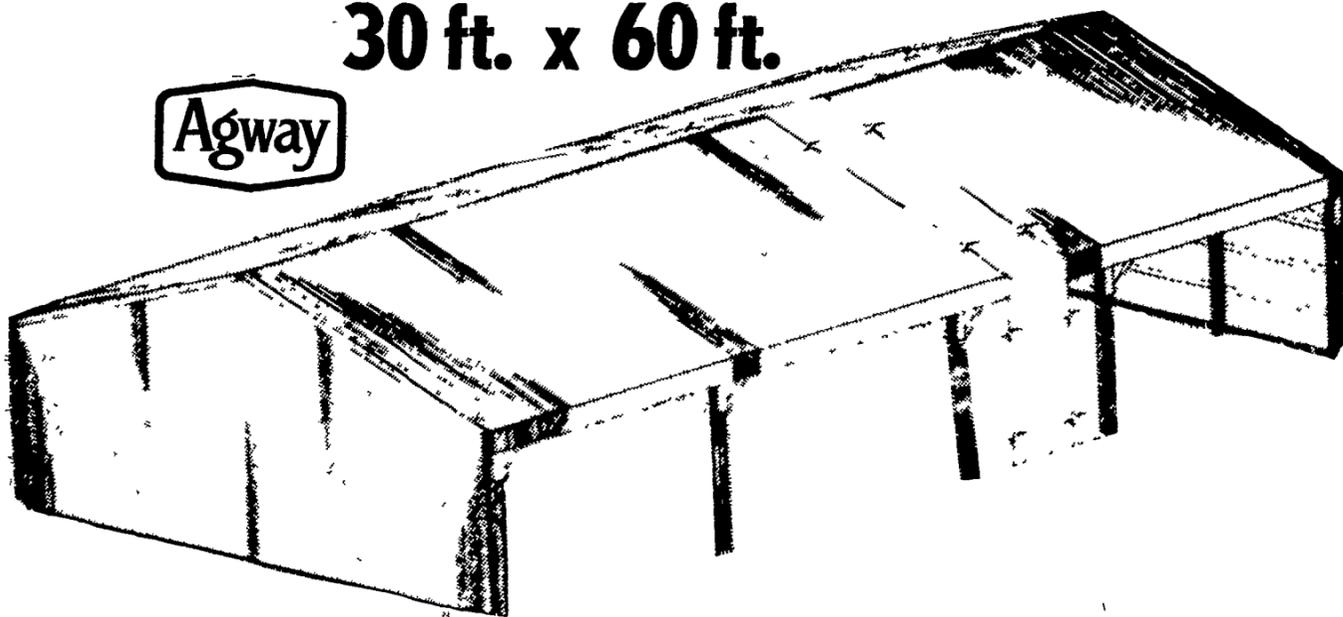
France, which is the EC's biggest milk producer, with 9.7 million dairy cows, has the lowest (5/10 of one per cent) percentage of cows involved in the slaughter measure.

Some other things pointed up in the article: 94 per cent of the cows subsidized for slaughter come from herds under 10 head in size; 54 per cent (155,400) of them are from herds averaging from two to five cows. But, that cannot be considered unusual, since the average number of cows per farm throughout the EC is estimated to be less than five.

In contrast, herds in this area average 30 to 40.

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