

## '71 Outlook: Cautious Optimism

What will 1971 be like for the Pennsylvania farm economy?

Prices will probably be lower than in 1970 in the early part of the year in most major livestock and poultry products because of increased supplies, and costs will be higher. The dairy outlook continues good, although individual producers face problems. The crop situation is firm because of a relatively low supply situation, caused nationally (but Pennsylvania was an exception) by the corn blight.

In the latter part of 1971, the situation could begin to improve for most local farmers as farmers nationally move to reduce the supply of their products in the face of lower prices and higher costs. At the same time, the consumer demand could begin to pick up in response to improvement in the national economy.

These are among the findings of an assessment of the "1971 Farm Business Outlook" by the Pennsylvania State University agricultural economics Extension staff, including H. L. Moore, A. K. Birth and W. F. Johnstone.

The Extension men begin the report by stating, "The economy of the United States is undergoing a disconcerting adjustment. It appears that the recession bottomed out shortly after midyear and there is some evidence of recovery. 1971 will be an unusual year, since recovery will not be as rapid as in past business cycles. Recovery will take longer because we have had only limited success in solving the serious problems of inflation."

The report also sees some sectors of the economy continuing to lag. Unemployment may show some further increase and business investments in new buildings and equipment will drag. Business profits are expected to increase slowly and further defense cuts are likely.

New housing, however, should give the economy a boost, but high interest rates and increasing taxes will continue to hamper industry, the report states.

Consumers "may continue to be apprehensive," but many have increased savings and paid off debts over the past year. Consumers are expected to begin to spend more freely, particularly in the area of services.

Overall, the Penn State farm economists' forecast is one of cautious optimism, with the expectation that the year will start

out slow for most sectors of farming and gradually pick up through the year. The optimism is based largely on the assumption that the national economy will improve gradually; if economy does something else, then the forecast would have to be revised accordingly.

In making their own plans for the next year or more, farmers should recall that the economists generally have been wrong about the farm economy for the past two years. Failure to make the proper projections in recent years have stemmed largely, it appears, from a failure to correctly anticipate the direction of the national economy.

In 1969, farmers were projected to have a so-so year, based on the expectation that the national economy would be a normal one. But inflation became rampant, consumers had lots of money to spend and they spent a large share of it for top quality food items, including beef, pork, poultry and eggs. Farm prices were unusually good.

In the face of good prices, many key segments of farm production were expanded. This was notably true of eggs and pork. Despite increased production, most economists projected a good demand and continued high farm prices in 1970.

But just when the larger output of farm products began to hit the market in the latter half of 1970, the federal government began to push the panic button on inflation. The anti-inflation drive began to work, unemployment rose sharply, the boom slowed down.

The result was that beginning late last year, farmers were hit from both sides by increased production and decreased demand for their products.

In recent months, farmers have been moving to cut back production, particularly eggs and pork, while the national economy has been moving slowly toward revitalization.

If these trends continue, if farmers nationally continue to show restraint on production and if the national economy continues to improve the demand for farm products, 1971 should turn out to be another good year for Pennsylvania farmers.

This is particularly true because the corn blight damage last year was minimal in Pennsylvania and Pennsylvania farmers are getting off to a better start in 1971 than farmers in most other areas.

## Pesticides and Fire

Fire isn't a pleasant subject, but it is always a possibility, warns James K. Rathmell Jr., Penn State floriculture and nursery agent.

If fertilizers and pesticides, including all the various chemicals such as insecticides, fungicides and herbicides, were to be involved in a fire, certain things might happen, Rathmell warns.

While Rathmell was making his remarks for florists, we think his advice should also be considered by all farmers. Knowledge of what happens during a fire may help farmers take preventive steps to keep losses down if a fire should occur.

According to Rathmell, here are some of the hazards from pesticides that might be involved in a fire:

### A. Highly flammable or explosive.

1. Oils — spray materials in oil. Containers may rupture or explode if overheated.

2. Aerosol containers — will explode, just like a hand grenade!

3. Solvents — Some pesticides are carried in highly flammable and explosive solvents.

An example is xylene is used as a base for some soil fumigants.

4. Dusts or powders — can literally explode, if ignited.

5. Ammonium nitrate fertilizer — never store this with pesticides. When this fertilizer burns, it releases large amounts of oxygen. This in turn will cause the fire to burn with even more intensity.

6. Calcium hypochlorite — Common use for this is in a swimming pool as a sanitizer. It is a very reactive and powerful oxidizer.

B. Toxic fumes or smoke — dangerous to people.

1. Organophosphates and carbamates — can be highly toxic. Parathion is a phosphate

2. Chlorinated hydrocarbons — highly toxic.

3. Solvent fumes — toxic.

4. Plastic flower pots — depends on plastic material used, but can produce toxic fumes.

C. Toxic fumes or smoke — dangerous to plants.

1. Herbicides — the smoke may kill or injure plants some distance from the fire.

D. Water run-off from fire hoses.

1. Can be highly toxic, if it carries a heavy concentration of pesticides or other chemicals.

2. May be toxic to people, plants, and animals. Some of the materials can be absorbed directly into the skin.

3. May run off into the ponds, streams, lakes, etc. and cause serious pollution problems.

What to Do? Rathmell advises:

1. Use separate building, if possible, for storing pesticides.

2. Store herbicides in a separate area from the other pesticides.

3. Identify pesticide storage, on water proof signs located over each entrance. All sides of the building should be marked.

4. Use a locked cabinet or storage area, away from your workroom area.

5. Tell your local fire department what materials you have stored. Your local fire chief, or his representative may give you some free professional advice on the storage of your pesticides.



## NOW IS THE TIME . . .

By Max Smith  
Lancaster County Agent

### To Provide Free Choice

Water, loose salt, and minerals are very important to the maximum gains or production of every farm animal. Producers are urged to provide these items at all times to their flocks or herd. Loose salt is recommended over block salt because of greater consumption followed by greater intake of water. Minerals will help with the digestive processes and increase breeding efficiency. Some of these smaller items in management will help obtain more efficient production and gains.

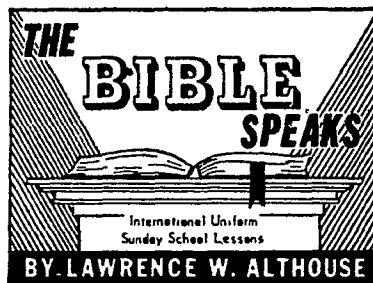
count against a heavy load of dung locks. In addition to straw we suggest the use of wood shavings or chips, sawdust, peanut hulls, or shredded corn fodder. With greater corn acreage on many farms, stalks that do not go into the silo could be shredded for bedding.

### To Transfer Silage

Some producers have made silage in bunker or above-ground storages until part of the silage is fed from their upright silos. If this material is to be moved into the upright silo for automatic feeding, it is suggested that it be done before warm weather arrives. The months of February and March would be a desirable time. When moved in warm weather there is greater danger of heating, especially if the silage is on the dry side. It should be moved as rapidly as possible and will make good bedding but some buyers may dis-

### To Recognize Bedding Problematic

The shortage of straw is weathering more farms each winter and the purchase price makes a questionable practice. How in winter weather there is greater danger of heating, especially if bedding in order to be reasonably clean and especially in the dairy industry. Fattening cattle will survive with limited bedding if the air was sealed out of the temporary storage.



## RUMBLINGS IN THE VINEYARD!

Lesson for January 31, 1971

Background Scripture: Matthew 19:23 through 20:16.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, most Christians were Europeans, Russians, or North Americans. By the beginning of the next century, however, it is predicted that Christianity will have shifted its base in a southerly direction and will be well on its way to becoming predominantly a religion of non-whites. Africa, Asia, and Latin America will most likely be its new focus.



Rev. Althouse

### The "others" who will come in

By the end of this century, according to a report of the Africa Department of the National Council of Churches, the number of African, for example, will be about 351 million or 46 per cent of the continent's population. In 1900, by comparison, there were about 4 million African Christians, or 3 per cent of the total population of Africa. "For sheer size and rapidity of growth," says a National Council spokesman, "this must be one of the most spectacular stories in history. This tremendous growth of African Christianity may well give Christianity a permanent non-Western base." It may not be too far-fetched, say some observers, to envision a day when missionaries from Africa and Latin America might be sent to evangelize in the very Western countries that first brought the gospel to them.

Many of us will have two different reactions to this news. On the one hand there will be a feeling of gratification. After these years of struggling and

worrying over our overseas missions efforts, it seems they are to bear fruit perhaps beyond our greatest dreams. How wonderful to know that the Gospel has made such great progress in what we once called "the dark continent."

### "Our Vineyard"

Yet, mixed with the elation of this "success story" there may be feelings of disquiet. Suppose Christianity should become "predominantly a religion of non-whites?" Suppose the next century should give Christianity "a permanent non-Western base?" We have long believed that the nonwhite had a place in Christianity. We have prepared that place and everything has been fine so long as they have stayed within it. Until now they have always seemed to know their place: we are the "Daddy's" and they are the "children."

Today, however, they are not staying in their place. According to the article, they are beginning to move up into our place, and that shakes us up.

For too long we have regarded the Church as "our vineyard." We broke the soil, planted the seeds, tended the vines—surely the fruit is ours to dispense as we please! But we are quite wrong and have always been wrong about the vineyard: it is not ours, it never has been, it never will be. The Church belongs to God, no matter who erected its buildings, paid its debts, or held its offices.

### . . . "What belongs to me"

It has never belonged to the Western world. Anglo-Saxons got the Good News from Italians and Greeks, and these got it from Jews. It began, not in the West, but in the Near East and among its first converts were black Egyptians and brown Egyptians.

Many of us have come to look upon the Church as many regarded the Kingdom in Jesus' time. They thought it belonged to them and when Jesus told of "outsiders" coming in, they were upset. Thus, in the parable, the owner of the vineyard says to the malcontented: "Friend, I am doing you no wrong . . . Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me?"

It is that same question which God poses to those who murmur in his vineyard today.

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