

County Tobacco Growers Sell '70 Crop

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quoted a somewhat higher price than competitors for sorted tobacco, also insisted on a very high quality product. He explained that the firm uses its tobacco almost exclusively as chewing tobacco and generally disposes of its filler elsewhere.

In straight stripped tobacco, buyers reported that farmers tended to hold the better crops in the face of the initial 28 cent offer until late last week and early this week.

Then prices went to 29, with

some at 30, early this week and the crop moved rapidly. The price went up because "we're getting into larger crops and better tobacco," explained one buyer.

Quality Crop

Most reports indicated the crop this year was better overall than the 1969 crop. One buyer said the nicotine level in the tobacco this year is generally desirable or relatively low, the burn quality is good and there was relatively little damage from mold.

There were reports however, of some individual farmers who suffered substantial losses from shed burn, which reportedly occurred during an extremely damp week in the late summer.

Another observer said the crop had "good color and good stretch" and was overall better than last year, although some late tobacco was "not too good."

Elsewhere, there were reports of some short leafed tobacco.

Total Crop Down

Some buyers late this week reported that the overall Lancaster County tobacco crop is substantially smaller than state estimates.

The state had been projecting a crop of 18,000 acres and 34 million pounds.

Estimates from three separate buyers, however, showed a crop closer to the 17,000 to 17,500 acre level with a total yield estimated at from 28 to 31 million pounds.

An Agway spokesman said that both the yield per acre and the total number of acres are down from previous estimates. He noted that anywhere from a fraction of an acre up to about four acres of tobacco were drowned on many farms during the heavy rains last summer. He also said that fewer acres were planted than expected.

A spokesman for A. K. Mann Jr. said that heavy rains at planting time stopped the planting of many acres of tobacco. He estimated a total crop of 28-29 million pounds.

A Lancaster Leaf spokesman estimated a crop of 17,000 acres and 30 million pounds. He cited lower yields per acre, probably in the 1,700 to 1,750 pounds per acre level and labor shortages as factors in the lower output of tobacco.

Some farmers, who have been faced in recent years with both rising operating costs and rising costs of living, expressed disappointment with prices this year. The Mann firm spokesman said, the price was kept down by pressure from imported tobacco, including imports from the Philippines and South America. He noted that one formerly important buyer no longer buys the local crop.

Sorted and Stripped

Estimates were that about half of the Lancaster County tobacco crop was sold as sorted and about half as straight stripped.

It was reported that farmers with better crops tended to sort the tobacco to take advantage of the higher price. One buyer said that there were usually about eight bales of the higher priced sorted tobacco, which generally sold at 33-34 cents, to each one bale of the lower priced tobacco which usually went at 20 cents.

Farmers who had suffered shed burn or had poor quality tobacco generally did not sort it, it was reported.

There were also some high quality crops sold as straight stripped, however. Farmers, particularly including dairymen who didn't have the time to sort the tobacco, often sold high quality crops as straight stripped, it was reported.

When the difference in price between sorted and straight stripped is more than three cents a pound — it was about five at some points in the selling this year — it generally pays to sort the tobacco if the crop is good, one buyer reported.

Overall, with nearly all the tobacco sold, the report is, an unexpectedly small crop of exceptionally high quality sold at prices about the same as, or slightly lower than, last year.

Pa. Turkey Output Forecast Up

Pennsylvania turkey growers intend to raise eight per cent more turkeys in 1971 than in 1970. If these intentions materialize, 2,450,000 turkeys will be raised in Pennsylvania during 1971, according to the Pennsylvania Crop Reporting Service.

A breakdown shows 82 per cent of the turkeys will be heavy breeds and the remaining 18 per cent will be light breeds. The total number of heavy breeds raised is expected to be 2,009,000 birds, 9.5 per cent more than in 1970. The light breed forecast, at 441,000 birds, is 12.5 per cent more than the 1970 number raised.

The number of turkeys actually raised in 1971 may vary from the January 1, 1971, intentions of growers. Such changes

depend on growers' reactions to this report, price of feed, supply and prices of hatching eggs and poults, prices received for turkeys during the next few months, and production and prices of red meat.

Turkey growers intend to raise one per cent fewer turkeys in 1971 than in 1970. The intended decline is in the heavy breeds, as growers intend to raise about the same number of light breeds as last year.

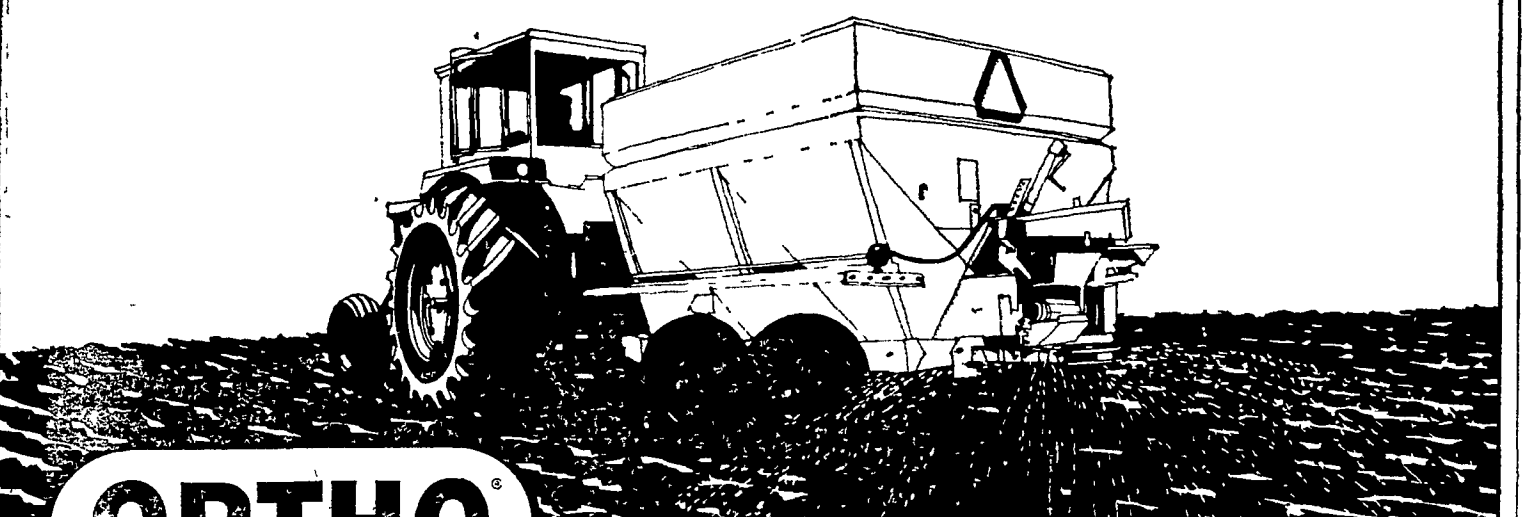
If producers carry out present intentions, the 1971 U.S. turkey crop would total about 115 million, compared with 116 million turkeys raised in 1970 and would be nine per cent less than the record crop produced in 1967.

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