

# Lancaster Farming

VOL. 16 NO. 14

Lancaster Farming, Saturday, February 27, 1971

\$2.00 Per Year

## Broiler Men Should 'Localize' Their Product, Speaker Says

A stable broiler market is at least 15 years away, according to Dr. Filmore Bender, University of Maryland agricultural economics specialist, who made the projection at a meeting of the Lancaster County Poultry Association at an educational meeting at the Farm and Home Center Thursday night.

To avoid the worst aspects of the depressed markets which can be expected as a result of present practices in the broiler industry, Dr Bender urged broiler producers to "localize" their product.

He noted that Pennsylvania is a deficit production area that imports considerable poultry while this ties Pennsylvania to the national market, every locale has "preference patterns."

Local producers should study these preferences in areas such as Philadelphia, Pittsburgh and New York, and determine how they can meet them.

Some of the largest poultry firms, he said, have been successful because they have provided for a local market that they can serve better than any one else. This practice gives these firms a special place in the market and makes price

fluctuations for them less severe, Dr Bender explained. Possibilities for localizing birds include, by skin color, which can be regulated by changes in the diet; weight; delivery schedules, form of delivery, and packaging.

These extra and specialized services cost the producer more, Dr Bender emphasized, but added that the advantage is that the producer is "isolated from the market" and doesn't get hurt as much during the market lulls.

Jay Irwin, associate Lancaster County agricultural agent, pointed out that the Lancaster County does have some specialized processing. "I believe this is one reason poultry is on the upswing in Lancaster County," Irwin added.

Irwin also said he thinks that more and more industry demand will go toward a "further processed product. We have good markets and I think this is where we're going to move," Irwin stated.

Dr. Bender indicated he thinks there is much greater potential for specialized marketing.

**Unstable Industry**  
Noting that many poultry organizations have been calling for

a stabilized market, Dr Bender stated, "unfortunately, there's nothing on the horizon that will change the unstable industry. There is going to be good times and bad times."

Most of the efforts toward stability so far have emphasized voluntary restraint, gentlemen's agreement and social responsibility in which the producer agrees to a voluntary cutback. This is easy to talk about but hard to enforce, largely because mavericks who go against the general trend of the restraint tend to reap the benefits.

While no one really knows why the broiler industry goes through "surges" of growth in which the industry grows as much as 10 per cent a year, some factors, according to Bender, are:

A history of growth since 1948, including new technology which led to decreases in costs; this has built up a psychology of continual expansion. At the same time, there have been tremendous increases in per capita consumption as the public accepted a new product.

It's easy to expand but hard to cut back. Once expansion in a productive capacity has been achieved, it's difficult not to use



Dr. Filmore Bender  
'Localize' Broilers

means of centralizing industry control and enforcing stability. But Dr Bender discounted this as an immediate solution to the industry's price problem. He noted that the trend toward centralization of the industry has slowed considerably in recent years and that the smaller producers remaining in the industry today are financially stronger than in the past. The little producers often are able to weather low price cycles as readily as the bigger producers, he said.

Because of these and other factors, Dr Bender said he thinks price stability is not a near term solution, but is at least 15 years away.

Also speaking was Dr. Anthony Stemberger, Penn State poultry specialist, who outlined the responsibilities of the poultry grower. Dr. Stemberger emphasized that the poultryman must keep a constant and close check on his broilers, being particularly alert for diseases and improperly functioning equipment.

The secret to success is lots of T.L.C. (tender loving care) at all times. "We have a tender little product that seems to do better if it gets this TLC all the time."

Also, once the hatchery flock gets built up, it's extremely hard to bring it back down.

A widely accepted practice of "cash basis accounting" encourages poultrymen to spend money for expansion during boom periods.

Demand is seasonal. With constant output there would be a price swings of five and a half cents per pound, with prices being higher in summer and lower in winter.

Some industry sources have seen a trend toward bigger and better financed operations as a



Among those participating in a Veterinary-Nutrition Forum at the Colonial Restaurant, Denver, this week are: left to right, Paul M. Herr, veterinarian at Gap, past president of the Forum; Jere Hess, nutritionist with Young's Inc., Roaring Spring, Blair County, program chairman,

and Dr. Emmett I. Robertson, director of nutrition for John W. Eshelman and Sons, and immediate past Forum president. The organization is designed to give its members up to date information on animal health and nutrition.

## Two Feed Firms To Join Mar. 15

The proposed consolidation of Miller & Bushong, Inc., Rohrerstown, and D E Horn & Co., Inc., York, moved a step closer to reality Wednesday when the Internal Revenue Service approved the formal intent to bring the two well-known Pennsylvania agricultural marketing companies together.

Ernest Horn Sr., president of D E Horn and Robert Graybill, president of Miller & Bushong, in a joint statement said that the effective date of the consolidation will be March 15.

A new company name and corporate symbol will be announced in a few weeks, according to the statement issued by the two company presidents. Plans call for the maintenance of all present plant and mill facilities, with the new corporate headquarters to be located in Lancaster.

## Farm Calendar

**Saturday, February 27**  
Tovoca FFA Chapter (Browns-town Vo - Tech) Bowling Party, Leola Lanes  
State Grange Regional Institute, Loysburg Blair County

**Monday, March 1**  
First day to sign up for U S wheat and feed grain program, ASCS office, Farm and Home Center, runs through April 9

1 p.m.-3 p.m. — Regional Young Farmers Leadership Training Conference, Ephrata High School Vo-Ag Department

7:30 p.m.—Garden Spot Young Farmers records meeting.  
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## No-Till Corn Is Discussed at Soils Day

Willis L. McClellan, Penn State extension agronomist, speaking on no-till farming, said when he first heard of no-till he was "sure it wouldn't work." His current assessment: "It can work if you know how to work it," he said at the annual Crops and Soils Day Tuesday at the Farm and Home Center.

But he emphasized that no-till farming is "not a cheaper method of growing corn." The

method relies heavily on herbicides. Herbicides help make continuous corn under the no-till method workable, he said.

He also explained that when "a new practice," such as no-till, first starts, there is "no basis for predicting failure. It's important to learn what not to do," he said.

Experience in recent years is beginning to supply some necessary information on the

"don'ts" associated with no-till, he indicated.

Farmers using a four-row planter must have at least an extra 1,000 pounds of weight for successful planting. This is necessary to make sure that the seed is planted deep enough.

There's a big problem with no-till if the seed isn't planted deep enough. Experience shows that pheasants will walk down a row and get nearly every seed

if it isn't covered, he noted.

With no-till, experience also shows that the roots tend to run up and down the row rather than spreading out as in conventional plowing, making it easier for birds to pull out the young shoots.

The farmer must also be extra careful to make sure that the vegetation on his no-till seed bed is killed. Much of the problems farmers encounter with no-till so

far, he said, have stemmed from inadequately killed vegetation. He recommended that farmers kill the vegetation before planting, rather than afterward, so that they will have an opportunity to go over the field a second time if necessary.

One of the major benefits of no-till, he said, is that conventional plowing results in about

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