

## Across the Editor's Desk

**The Egg Market**  
The Northeast Egg Marketing Association (NEMA) report of January 12 made the following comments about "remarkable results" of efforts to avoid an egg crash:

The UEP "Action Now" program was the first major voluntary program by a commodity group to avoid extreme over-production and disastrously low prices. What it has accomplished is little short of a miracle, for the problem (in the way of pullet chicks placed) was already there before the program was launched.

Every breeder, hatcheryman, started pullet grower, and egg producer who is participating is to be congratulated and should be very proud of his history-making efforts.

If disastrously low egg price swings, resulting from over-production, can be avoided, then efficient egg producers, large or small, have a place in the industry and can expect a reasonable return on their investment and for their efforts.

According to the USDA, the Nation's laying flock had 325 million layers on December 1, up two per cent over the 320 million layers a year ago. There is every reason to believe that the January 1 figures will show continued improvement with the laying flock within two million of a year ago. Fowl sold through USDA inspected plants continued to exceed three million a week, which in most cases, represents nearly one million over the same week a year ago. Chicks hatched from July 1 through December 1970 will be close to those hatched in 1969.

The chick hatch and the size of the laying flock should be

within USDA Guidelines on January 1. This was the goal of the "Action Now" Program.

If we are to have a stable industry, continual adjustments in the available supply of eggs for cartoning will have to be made. Eggs will have to be diverted to breakers to clear temporary surpluses while moving flocks ahead of schedule will be the most efficient and most desirable adjustment when the surplus is likely to be fairly heavy and last for several weeks.

If egg producers are able to correct the dismal outlook of last spring and make 1971 a profitable year, then we should be able to fine tune our ability to cooperate to stabilize our industry. We have a lot going for us, our only limitation being our inability to cooperate.

According to Jim Biggers, who spoke at our annual meeting, "Cooperation is the industry's key to profit."

### U.S. Farm Trade Policy

The following is an excerpt from a speech on January 12 by U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Clifford M. Hardin before the National Council of Farmer Cooperatives. We think it is an excellent summary of administration thinking on farm policy, particularly farm trade policy. Hardin said:

The aim is to place greater reliance on the free enterprise system, while helping farmers and agribusiness make the adjustments needed to stabilize agriculture and improve farm income. As a result of the new farm legislation now being put into effect, we are better equipped to move in the direction of market-oriented farm pro-

duction, crop specialization, and greater managerial freedom on farms, with better leverage for expanding export sales.

As we look ahead to the coming year and next, my feeling is one of decided optimism that agriculture is making a turnaround into a new era of promise for farmers and, indeed, for the entire national economy. There's lots of careful planning and hard work to be done—and we have to cope with unexpected developments in nature like the corn blight—but I am confident that the new farm law has given us better means of tackling agriculture's problems, and that in time the result will prove gratifying.

Agricultural exports, for example, promise to be a growth area in which cooperatives can play a particularly significant part. In this Administration, we are placing heavy emphasis on a continued expansion in sales of our farm products abroad, and expansion stands out as a major objective of the new farm program.

During the last fiscal year, agricultural exports for cash set a new record—\$5.7 billion. That was a billion-dollar increase in one year. This year the trend is still up—another good increase seems certain.

Yet all is not clear and serene on the world horizon. There are problems of many kinds, most of them related to market access. Some nations have set up arrangements that exclude or discriminate against outsiders. In a number of instances these schemes violate agreements made in good faith, including the

General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). Our concerns about trade have deepened, especially since the proposed enlargement of the European Community to include the United Kingdom, Denmark, Norway and Ireland might lead to an extension of protectionist trends that are a part of the Community's trade and agricultural policies.

This was why President Nixon suggested the trip that we made last month to Europe. It was not expected that the trip would turn people around in their

(Continued on Page 21)

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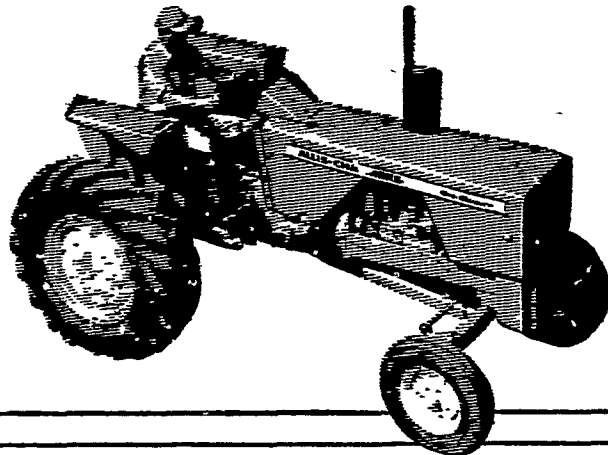
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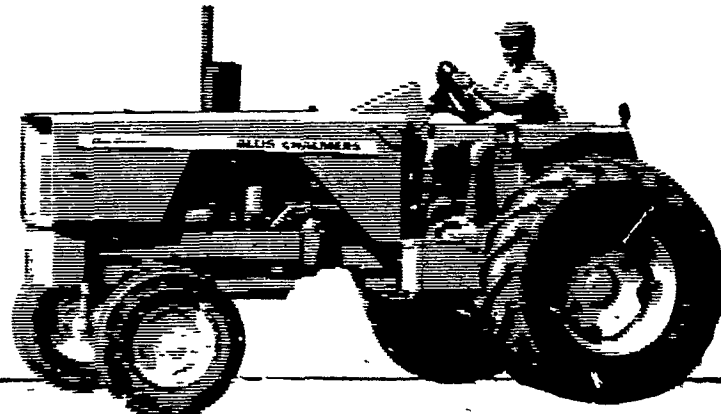
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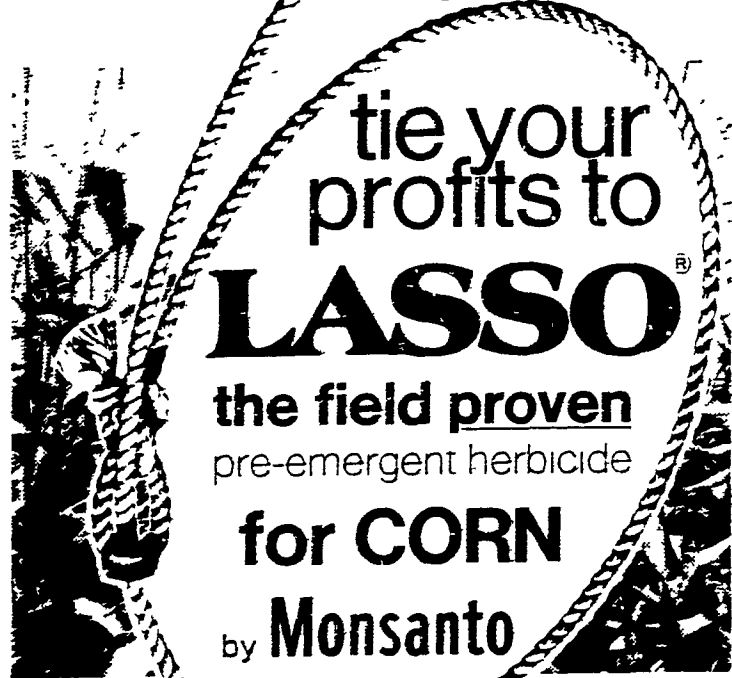


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