

State Potato Crop Could Be Smallest Since 1876; U.S. Crop Down 7 percent

Pennsylvania potato production for 1972 is forecast at 5,850,000 cwt., 25 percent less than a year ago. Yield from the 30,000 acres planted this year is expected to average 195 cwt. per acre - down 11 percent from the 1971 average yield. If indications materialize this would be the smallest crop on record since 1876.

Many potato growers in Pennsylvania suffered acreage losses from flood waters caused by hurricane Agnes. Most of the damage occurred in the Susquehanna River Basin Region as some growers suffered total losses.

Once the water receded and the heavy rains ceased, most of the state began experiencing very dry weather. The variation from excessive moisture to extremely dry conditions caused many

vines to die early and also brought about the hard top-soil conditions that were most prevalent in the southern counties.

Yields are reported to be greatly reduced due to the absence of moisture the past two months. Western counties have experienced aphid infestation in many areas. With the wet conditions during June some growers were unable to cultivate their fields, therefore, weeds are now presenting a problem. The early varieties which have been dug are showing the effects of the dry weather as yields are said to be below normal. Tuber size is reported to be small with tuber set reported to be light to average.

U. S. Potato Production Below Year Ago
The 1972 fall potato crop for the

U.S. is forecast at 235,531,000 cwt. The first forecast for the 1972 season is 7 percent (18 million cwt.) less than both the 1971 crop of 253,796,000 cwt. and 1970 crop of 253,525,000 cwt.

The 1972 acreage for harvest is placed at 985,100 acres, 8 percent less than 1971 total of 1,075,800 acres and 10 percent below the 1,069,100 acres harvested 1970. Planted acreage for 1972 is placed at 1,012,400 acres.

The average yield per acre is forecast at 239 cwt., 3 cwt., more than last year and 6 cwt. above 1970. Although early maturing fields are being harvested in many acres, final outcome for the 1972 crop will depend on growing and harvesting conditions during the remainder of the season.

For the eight Eastern States, production is forecast at 52,588,000 cwt., 15 percent below 1971 and 16

percent less than 1970. The expected average yield per acre of 233 cwt. compares with 246 cwt. per acre harvested in 1971.

Production this year for Maine is forecast at 33,915,000 cwt., 10 percent less than the 1971 crop of 37,700,000 cwt. and 5 percent less than 1970 production of 35,700,000 cwt. The Aroostook County crop has had favorable growing conditions with timely rainfall and adequate sunshine. Digging was underway by September 1.

Production for both Upstate and Long Island, New York and for Pennsylvania is below 1971 because of cuts in both acreage for harvest and yield per acre. Downward adjustments were made in the acreage for harvest in Upstate New York and in Pennsylvania due to losses caused by tropical storm Agnes.

Fall production in the eight Central States is placed at 50,762,000 cwt., 14 percent under last year and 5 percent less than the 1970 crop.

The 287,100 acres for harvest is

11 percent smaller than 1971 and 6 percent less than 1970. Cool summer weather brought rapid recovery from June frosts to Michigan's fall crop. Excessive moisture during August was a problem in Wisconsin but harvest was underway in early September in the Antigo area. In the Red River Valley on Minnesota and North Dakota growing conditions have generally been good except for dry weather in the northern area.

In the Western States, September 1 growing conditions indicated production of 132,181,000 cwt., slightly less than the 1971 crop of 132,780,000 cwt., and 4 percent smaller than the 1970 outturn of 135,798,000 cwt.

Total production for Idaho is estimated at 78,795,000 cwt., 2 percent more than the 77,290,000 cwt. produced in 1971 and 6 percent more than the 1970 crop of 74,660,000 cwt. The Idaho crop was planted early and growing conditions have been favorable. Harvest was underway in the southwest counties during August and is expected to be earlier than normal in the Magic Valley and eastern counties.

The crop in the San Luis Valley of Colorado is generally in good condition despite hot August weather and short water supplies. The Washington crop progressed favorably during August.

Kline Will Keynote Grange

Convention

Lieutenant Governor Ernest P. Kline will keynote the Pennsylvania State Grange year-long centennial celebration as principal speaker at its 100th convention October 23-26 in Williamsport, A. Wayne Readinger, master, announced this week.

Kline will address a centennial banquet at 5:30 p.m., October 24, in Lycoming Hotel, convention headquarters where plans are being made to accommodate more than 600 delegates and guests.

As grange centennial keynoter, with Readinger presiding, Kline will launch a continuing series of celebrations and festivities that will reach a climax a year hence at the 101st convention at Reading where the State Grange was organized September 18, 1873.

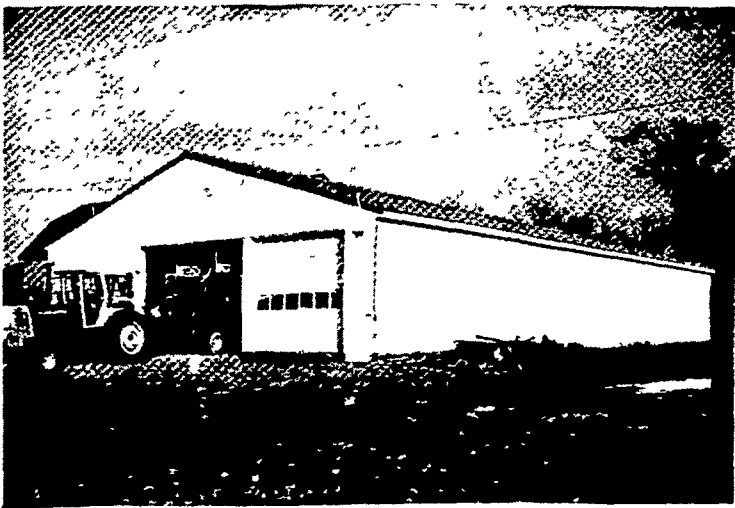
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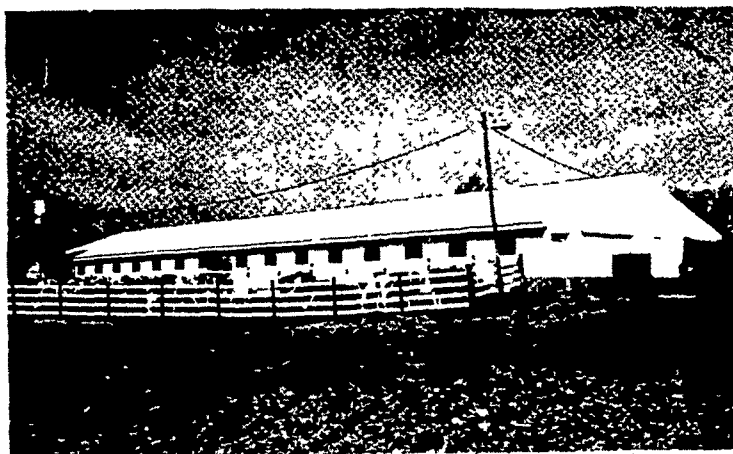
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