

U.S. Birthrate Keeps Falling

The decline in the U.S. birth rate shows no sign of halting and in 1973 may be below the level needed for parental replacement, according to a report presented at the recent USDA National Agricultural Outlook Conference in Washington, D.C.

The speaker, Calvin L. Beale of USDA's Economic Research

Service (ERS), said the effect of the recent Supreme Court decision on abortion "will almost certainly serve to further lower the birth rate in this decade." The U.S. birth rate fell from 18.2 births per thousand total population in 1970 to 15.7 per thousand in 1972.

Beale joined other speakers at

the Outlook Conference's Family Living Sessions in reporting on national issues influencing the quality of life.

Theodore Taylor, executive director, Day Care and Child Development Council of America, Inc., said that up to now the United States hasn't faced up to "the inevitability of child care as a social institution . . . a way of organizing which features a high degree of social responsibility." Good, creative child care offers, he said, a better chance for a child to be able to cope while at the same time affording greater family stability and a new focus for a kind of "extended family community" at the neighborhood level.

On the issue of welfare reform, Alair A. Townsend, of the Subcommittee on Fiscal Policy,

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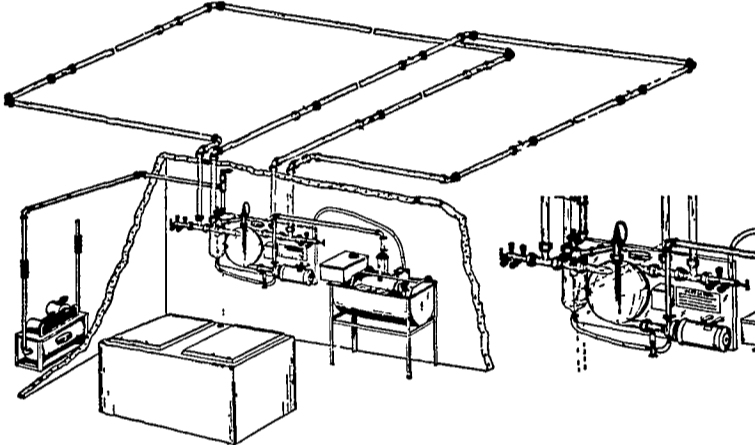
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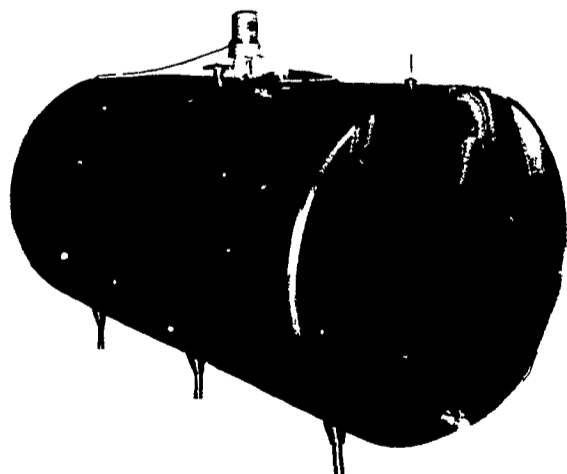
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Trade Barriers Seen Hurting Farm Exports

Dr. Carroll Brunthaver, assistant secretary of agriculture, forecast increasing pressure on trade barriers which prevent U.S. farm exports from competing in foreign countries.

"The United States has a balance of trade problem and it is serious," said Dr. Brunthaver before the 1973 National Agriculture Outlook Conference here. "We have a potential growth industry in agriculture which could go a long way toward solving the balance of trade problem. We have already made the basic decisions for an export-oriented agriculture."

"With the trade problem and having taken steps to expand U.S. agriculture," he said, "we must increasingly put pressure on barriers which prevent one of our most efficient industries from improving our balance of payments."

"We would prefer to solve the balance of trade problem through trade liberalization. If each country lowered its trade barriers so that goods and services could flow freely, then the principle of comparative advantage would work to even out trade balances."

"However, if we cannot solve the trade balance problem through trade liberalization," Dr. Brunthaver warned, "then the

United States may have to take more direct action."

The assistant secretary said U.S. agriculture, which is already one of our leading dollar-earners overseas, can make an even bigger contribution to our balance of trade because (1) farm product markets are expanding rapidly, (2) American farmers are so highly productive and efficient, (3) we have a

supporting system of research, education and extension that has given us the best educated and most highly skilled corps of farm managers in the world; (4) we have the infrastructure needed to supply inputs and then transport and market the products, and (5) we have a comparative advantage in producing the grains and oilseeds that are the hottest items in the world's growing agricultural trade.

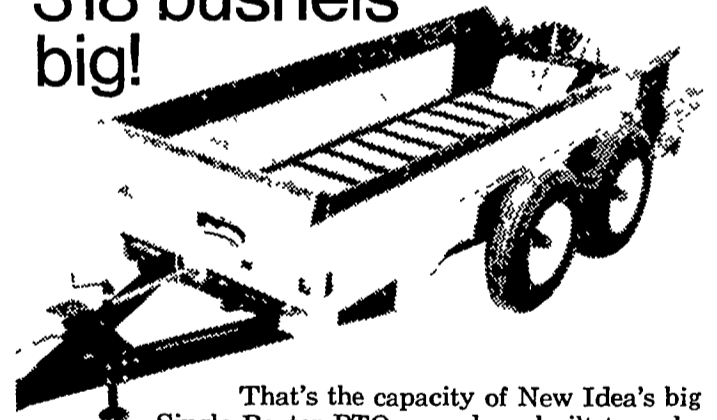
The assistant secretary said Administration favors extension of the Agricultural Act of 1970, with some variations. The set-aside and farmer decision-making principles should be retained, along with the authority and funds needed to idle excess capacity, the commodity loan mechanism which provides an emergency floor under prices and gives farmers a credit tool. However, he said, supplemental income payments should be phased down, and out-dated allotments and bases should be dropped in favor of a cropland base for individual farms.

Gum disease is the greatest single cause of loss of teeth after age 35.

Joint Economic Committee, said that many of the earlier analyses and "solutions" only treat the tip of the iceberg. Many programs, including Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), are past due for overhaul, she added, and "public debate about them must reflect the \$100 billion scale on which they operate."

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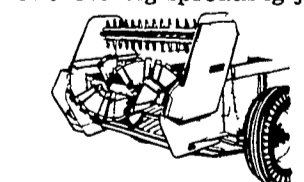


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