

# USDA Acts to Improve Markets for Five Crops

Secretary of Agriculture Earl L. Butz has announced a series of actions, ranging from possible use of an electronic selling system to development of quality standards, to improve markets for five crops.

The actions will be taken by various U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) agencies to help farmers develop and expand markets for apples, eggs, canning peaches, pork and potatoes. The actions were decided on after a study of the findings of five teams which last year investigated marketing problems for each crop.

One of the proposals, which will receive further study, is an electronic price negotiating system to help farmers sell their hogs. Farmers would have a telephone number which they could call and offer their hogs for sale. The offer would be put on an electronic communicating system which would go into the offices of meat packers. Every

few seconds, the offering price would be reduced a specified amount. The first buyer to press a button would get the hogs at the selling price then indicated on the machine, if the price was above the minimum which the farmer had indicated he would take.

Other actions which will be taken include:

**Pork**--Increase research into ways to reduce the cost of producing hogs by increasing the number of pigs marketed per sow. Get better data to farmers on hog and pig production by getting farrowing intentions from more states (14 states rather than the present 10). Develop a quality pork grading system to improve consumer acceptance of port.

**Eggs**--To counteract the declining demand for eggs and instability in egg production and prices, there will be more research on marketing costs and returns, the effects of selling eggs as "loss leaders" in supermarkets, and the impact of

various tax accounting methods.

**Apples**--Send market intelligence teams abroad to expand and study potential foreign markets. Develop quality standards for frozen concentrated apple juice. Cooperate with industry on joint marketing ventures, co-op mergers and consolidations.

**Peaches**--Expand research on new and improved peach products and new methods of processing. Develop an overseas canned peach promotion program.

**Potatoes**--Research to develop new potato products and to cut down on pollution from potato processing. Provide more reports grade and size of potato crops, both during the growing season and during initial storage. Develop farm financial management programs and study bargaining as a possible market alternative for potato growers.

## State Apple Production Expected Up from '72

The first Pennsylvania commercial apple production forecast for the 1973 season indicates a 425 million pound crop according to the Crop Reporting Service. This would be 6 percent above last year but 12 percent below the 5-year (1968-72) average production.

The Commonwealth's peach crop forecast at 81 million pounds increased 3 million pounds from last month's forecast. Ample moisture promoted good sizing of the fruit and is responsible for improved forecast. The peach crop is still expected to be one-

fifth below the 5-year average.

The state's pear crop is expected to total 2,800 tons, down 500 tons from last year and 900 tons below the 5-year average. Spring freeze damage, winter-kill, unfavorable pollinating weather, and severe hail storms have kept the state's fruit crops below average.

The nation's 1973 commercial apple production is forecast at 6.1 billion pounds, 4 percent above last year's 5.8 billion pounds. In the five leading apple states, a larger crop than last year is expected in Washington and

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Pennsylvania, but New York, Virginia and Michigan expect smaller crops.

The U. S. 1973 peach crop is forecast at 2.6 billion pounds, a 10 percent increase over last year. Total pear production in the U. S. is forecast at 724,400 tons, up 18 percent from last year's crop of 611,700 tons.



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## Quarryville Bank Promotes Two

The board of directors of Farmers National Bank of Quarryville has announced the promotions of two bank staff members.

Promoted to the position of assistant cashier were Sarah M. Douglas and Robert L. Keene.

Mrs. Douglas, a 1948 graduate of Solanco High School, began with the bank in 1951. In 1954, she left to raise her two children, then returned in 1962. She has worked in the Bookkeeping Department, and more recently as a teller.

Treasurer of the Grow n' Show Garden Club of Quarryville, the Quarryville native is a member of St. Paul's United Church of Christ.

Keene, who will become the assistant manager of the Farmers National Penn Hill office when it opens this fall, is a 1961 graduate of Solanco High. He has completed a number of courses given by the Lancaster chapter of the American Institute of Banking, as well as U. S. Army personnel courses.

Prior to joining the bank in August 1971, he worked for seven years at the RCA plant in Lancaster. He served three years in the Army, 14 months of which were spent in Korea.

The new assistant cashier was born and raised in nearby Georgetown, where he now lives.



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