

Farm Commentary

Crop Report Highlights

Fortunes have been made and lost, bank accounts - and hearts - have been broken on the strength of the information contained in the USDA's annual August crop report. Here are some highlights from that report, received this week.

Corn--The first forecast of 1974 corn production by the Crop Reporting Board at 4,966 million bushels is 12 percent below last year, but the fourth largest of record. The yield at 77.8 bushels is down sharply from last year's 91.4 bushels.

Sorghum Grain--Production is forecast at 619.0 million bushels, 34 percent less than last year's record crop, and 24 percent less than 1972. Yields are expected to average 45.6 bushels.

Feed Grain--Production of corn, sorghum, oats, and barley combined is forecast at 175 million tons, 15 percent less than last year.

All Wheat--Forecast production of 1,840 million bushels is up 8 percent (128 million bushels) from 1973 but

is 4 percent less than the July 1 forecast. Winter, durum, and other spring wheats all showed declines from last month.

Food Grains--Production of wheat, rye, and rice collectively are expected to total 61 million tons, 8 percent more than 1973.

Oilseeds--Production of soybeans, cottonseed, peanuts, and flaxseed combined is forecast at 47 million tons, 14 percent (8 million tons) less than last year.

Soybeans--The first estimate this season for soybean production is 1,314 million bushels, 16 percent (252 million bushels) below last year's record output because of reduced acreage and lower prospective yields.

All Tobacco--Forecast of all tobacco, at 1,968 million pounds is up 13 percent from 1973. Flue-cured at 1,274 million pounds is up 10 percent and burley at 563 million pounds is up 25 percent.

Here's What It Will Mean

Less grain fed to livestock, somewhat lower grain exports, yet food use of grain will hold firm, perhaps even go up a bit during 1974-75.

But, grain carryover will still be down sharply next year. Those were among the prospects outlined in the latest USDA Supply and Demand Estimate Reports issued last week, one day after the crop report.

While domestic use of wheat during 1974-75 had once been seen as high as 810 million bu. and exports as high as 1,050 million bu., domestic use is now seen at from 758 to 808 million bu. and exports at 900-million-1,000 million bu. Food use is seen at an "inelastic" 532 million bu., seed use around 76 million bu., and feed use now down to 150 million bu. Carryover, once seen at 432 million bu. is now expected to be in the 332-382 million bu. range.

Corn supplies, once seen at 6.9 billion bu., domestic use at 4.8 billion bu. and exports at 1.2 billion bu. Now,

corn supplies are seen at 5.4 billion bu., domestic use at 4.1-4.3 billion bu. and exports in the 750-900 million bu. range.

Food and seed use, once seen at 435 million bu., is now seen as high as 455 million bu. But, feed use, once seen at 4.4 billion bu., is now seen at 3.7-3.8 billion bu. And, carryover, once seen at 854 million bu., is now seen at 340-360 million bu.

Feed grain supplies, once seen at 250 million tons, are now seen at 196 million tons; domestic use, once seen at 174 million tons, are now seen at 152-157 million tons; and exports, once seen at 416 million tons, are now seen at 24-30 million tons.

Food use, once seen at 17.6 million tons, now seen at 17.8-18.2 million tons. But, animal feed use, once seen at 156 million tons, is now seen at 134.5-139 million tons. And, feed grain carryover, seen only a couple of months ago at 34.3 million tons, is now seen at 13.6-15 million tons, the lowest since 1948.

Hog Imports Continue Up

Cattle imports were up slightly during June, but imports of live hogs continued to run well above their 1973 pace. At 79,950 head, cattle imports were up 5 pct. from a year earlier. But, hog imports totaled 25,748 head, 2½ times that of June

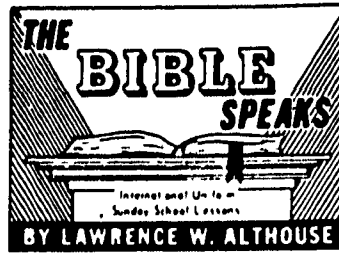
1973. The Jan.-June totals. Cattle, 473,259 head, down 21 pct. from a year earlier; Hogs, (all from Canada) 98,028 head, 2½ times the Jan. June 1973 total.

Meat Imports Off In June

U.S. meat imports down sharply in June. At 786 million lbs., those covered by the Meat Import Law (mainly fresh and frozen beef and veal) were off 14 pct. from a year earlier. All red meat imports (those covered by the Import Law, plus canned and preserved beef and veal, and all pork and lamb, mutton

and goat) totaled 1,228 million lbs. for the month, down 13 pct. from a year earlier.

The 6-month totals. Meats covered by the Import Law, 5,559 million lbs., down 7 pct., all red meats 857.3 million lbs., down 4 pct. from a year earlier.



WHATEVER YOU DO

Lesson for August 25, 1974

Background Scripture: Colossians 3:1 through 4:6
Devotional Reading: Colossians 3:1-11.

What are Christian relationships?

Sometimes we idealize what it means to be a Christian to the point that the gospel seems to become irrelevant to us. We think of a Christian person as one who is nearly perfect in terms of righteousness, of a Christian home as one in which there are no problems, of a Christian church as an ideal fellowship free of imperfections, and of a Christian community as one which is quite untainted by evil of any kind.

Forgiving each other

If our experience is something less than these idealized images--as it almost always is--we are likely to be disillusioned and may even lose hope in the gospel because its aims seem so unattainable. Almost no one can ever match our expectations of what a Christian is supposed to be, including and especially ourselves. Our homes will always seem to have been judged and found greatly lacking. Our communities will seem hopeless and quite beyond redemption.

The Bible, however, is a good antidote to our overidealized images of Christian relationships. The Book of Acts and the epistles of Paul give us many views of both individual Christians and congregations that are anything but perfect or even near perfection. For example, Paul counsels the Colossians: "forgiving each other" (3:12). What need would there be for Paul to give them that advice if the congregation at Colossae were relatively free from conflict? In fact, if the people there were ideal, there would be no reason for Paul to advise "compassion, kindness, lowliness, meekness, and patience" (3:12). Nor would he have to speak of "forebearing one another" and what to do "if one has a complaint against another" (3:13).

In other words, the gospel, although it challenges us to the highest possible type of living, anticipates human failure and provides for it through the forgiveness of Jesus Christ.

Admonish one another

A second indication that things at Colossae were less than ideal is to be found in Paul's admonition for the Colossians to continue to grow in spirit. If the church at Colossae were even near perfect, there would be little need or room for growth. Actually, Paul is indicating that the church is not so much a place for those who have "arrived," as for those who are still making the journey.

Paul's counsel is still relevant for the churches and congregations of today, for many Christians obviously believe they have "arrived" and that growth is

NOW IS THE TIME...



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To Control Weeds In New Alfalfa Seeding

Alfalfa stands seeded late in July or early August will soon be needing some attention for weed control. The best time to kill seeds is when they are small (1 to 2 inches) and at this stage they may not be easily visible and therefore, nothing is done to control them. Later in the fall the weeds come along faster than the alfalfa and then it is too late to get good control. When alfalfa is seeded without a nurse crop, a weed control spray is needed either before seeding or several weeks after. Spray to prevent a weed problem, and do not wait until weeds are crowding out the young plants; that is usually too late.

To Make The Most Of The Corn Crop

This is always good advice but some years it is difficult to know the best way to harvest and market the corn crop. This year we hear of some who are planning to sell their crop because of the current high prices. I wonder if these prices will hold until later in the fall when the corn must be harvested and stored. Cattle and hogs have usually been a good outlet for all feed grains, but at this time there is some question if these feeding operations can be profitable. The making of the corn crop into silage is the best way to harvest the maximum pounds of feed nutrients. Corn cut in the full dent stage for silage and put into a good silo or well managed truss will always be a good feed and in most years very much in demand. If the great majority of cattle and hog feeders decide to sell their corn rather than market it through their animals, we

could have a depressed corn market, cheaper feeder animals, and much higher priced beef and pork next summer.

To Make Pasture And Lawn Seedings

Late August and early September are the very best times to make new seedings of pasture and lawns. The cooler weather of the fall months with average moisture will give the plants an excellent start. The place to start planning for this new seeding is a complete soil test. I'm amazed at the number of folks who make these seedings without learning the lime and fertilizer needs of the soil. These materials should be worked into the soil before the seeding is made so they will do more good and correct the needs much quicker. If the seeding operation is done properly the first time, it should not have to be done over in a few years. Also, the seeding of waterways should be done late summer or early fall in order to establish a tough sod for the future.

To Control Rodents

The rat population is far too high on some county farms and in the rural areas. These rodents can do considerable damage and when colder weather arrives they will be coming to the farm buildings. Prevention is much easier than eradication. We urge a good clean-up program and the use of concrete to fill up broken walks, floors, and to repair foundations or stone walls that make good nesting places for them. Costs of production are too high to permit rats and mice to reduce farm income. Good management requires that rats and mice must go.

Farm Calendar

Sunday, August 25
East Point Open Horse Show 10:00 a.m. on Route 15 near Liberty, Pa.

Monday, August 26
Reading Fair through Sept. 2

Wednesday, August 28
1974 State Plowing Contest at Ag Progress Days, Bloomsburg, Pa. 7:00 a.m. registration: 9:30 a.m. instructions on contest: 10:15 a.m. contest begins. 2:30 p.m. awards program.

Ag Progress Days featuring exhibits, educational programs and craft demonstrations.

Bloomsburg Fairgrounds Intersection of routes 42 and 15, Bloomsburg, Pa., Columbia County.

Thursday, August 29
Ag Progress Day at the Bloomsburg Fairgrounds, also rain date for the state plowing contest.

South Central Pa. Championship Dairy Show, Farm Show Building, Harrisburg. 9:30 a.m.

for others. "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, as you teach and admonish one another..." (3:16). No one, Paul is saying, ever is that near perfect that he has outgrown his need for the word of Christ and the admonishment of his brothers.

No, the goal is ever before us: "And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus

Editor's Quote Book

Men are apt to prefer a prosperous error to an afflicted truth.

— Jeremy Taylor