

# Farm Commentary

## Small Grain Production in Pa. Higher Than a Year Ago

Farmers in Pennsylvania produced more of each major small grain in 1974 than they did in 1973. High yields and more acres harvested both contributed to the increases, according to the Pennsylvania Crop Reporting Service.

Winter wheat production totaled 126 million bushels in 1974, a 70 percent increase from last year. Yield averaged 36 bushels per acre, compared with 28 the preceding year. Acreage harvested was 350,000 — up from 264,000 last year. Estimates of acreage planted to wheat this fall for harvest in 1975 will be released by the Crop Reporting Board December 23.

Barley production totaled 8,690,000 bushels, up 27 percent from last year. The crop was obtained from 158,000 acres yielding 55 bushels average. Last year 155,000 acres were harvested and yield averaged 44 bushels per acre.

Oats production totaled 20,145,000 bushels this year, up 14 percent from last year. The harvest was obtained from 395,000 acres. Yield averaged 51 bushels per acre. Last year 375,000 acres were harvested and yield averaged 47 bushels.

The rye crop totaled 512,000 bushels this year, up 26 percent from a year ago. Acreage harvested for grain was 16,000 and yield averaged 32 bushels per acre. Last year 15,000 acres were harvested and yield averaged 27 bushels.

Winter wheat and barley survived the milk, open winter of 1973-74 in good condition and by the end of April were greening nicely and growing well. Favorable weather allowed farmers to topdress their wheat fields on schedule. Soil moisture remained adequate during most of the growing season and the crops remained in good to very good condition. By the end of May one-half of winter wheat and three-fourths of barley were headed. Early June temperatures and rainfall were subnormal in most parts of the state, but cool, cloudy and wet weather late in the month restored soil moisture. By late June most farmers were starting to harvest barley, and by early July most were harvesting wheat. Most farmers reported good yields. Farmers in some areas reported spotty stands of oats and slow growth because of dry weather, but in other areas soil and weather conditions were favorable for oats. Damage from cereal leaf beetle was reported in some areas. Harvest progressed well during August and average yield for the state was 4 bushels higher than last year.

Total potato production for Pennsylvania in 1974 was 7,360,000 cwt — 17 percent above the 6,300,000 cwt produced in 1973. Average yield of the 1974 crop was 230 cwt per acre, up 20 cwt from last year. Acres harvested totaled 32,000 in 1974 compared with 30,000 acres a year ago.

Pennsylvania potatoes in storage as of December 1 totaled 4,250,000 cwt — 29 percent above a year ago. These stocks consisted of potatoes held for all uses by growers, local dealers and processors. Potatoes held by processors in excess of

normal supplies for current operations were included. The extent of frost damage is not available but shrinkage could be heavy as potatoes in storage that were hit by frost or cold weather are deteriorating drastically.

## Cattle on Feed in U.S. Down 30 Percent

Cattle and calves on feed for slaughter market totaled 6,626,000 head in 7 States preparing monthly estimates, down 30 pct from a year earlier and 32 pct below December 1, 1972, according to the Crop Reporting Board. November placements on feed in the 7 States totaled 1,168,000, down 29 pct from November last year and off 36 pct from November 1972.

Fed cattle marketings from these States during November totaled 1,338,000, down 19 pct from November last year and 23 pct below November 1972. Marketings of fed cattle were below a year ago in all States except California.

## Milk Production Shows Slight Gain Over 1974

U.S. milk production during November amounted to 8,644 billion lbs., up slightly from a year earlier but 3 pct below November 1972. Production for the first 11 months of 1974 was 105.9 billion lbs. 0.7 pct below the same 1973 period.

Milk production per cow was 788 lbs. during November, up 16 lbs from last year and 12 lbs above November 1972. There were 11,107,000 milk cows on farms during November, down 11,000 from last month and 2 pct below last year.

The November milk-feed price ratio was 3 pct above last year at 1.22, however, the ratio lagged a year earlier by 25 pct. Average price of all milk sold to plants was above Oct in all regions and the estimated value of rations fed milk cows declined in all areas except the west.

## Farm Labor

The Nation's farm labor force during the week of Nov 17-23 totaled 3,953,200 workers, 2 pct smaller than last year. Farm operators and unpaid family workers numbered 2,977,300, down 3 pct from 1973. Hired workers totaled 975,900, or 3 pct greater than a year earlier and 10 pct more than 1972.

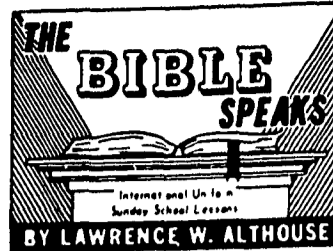
## Potato Stocks at New High

Stocks of Irish potatoes for all uses held in storage by growers, local dealers and processors in the fall production areas totaled a record 187.4 million cwt on December 1, 1974, according to the USDA Crop Reporting Board. This was 29.6 million cwt (19 pct) more than the 157.8 million cwt on hand a year earlier and above the previous record of 176.3 million in 1971 (Potato Stocks).

## World Prices Rising

World prices are generally rising for agricultural commodities, with beef, cotton, and coffee notable exceptions. October sugar prices were at least 35 times higher than last year's prices and are likely to continue at record levels as long as reported stocks are low.

World grain (including rice) production is now estimated at 1,126 million metric tons, or roughly 4.5 pct. below last year's level.



## THE DIMENSIONS OF CHRISTMAS

Lesson for December 22, 1974

**Background Scripture:** Matthew 1:1 through 2:6; Luke 3:23-38; Galatians 3:23-26.

**Devotional Reading:** Isaiah 9:27.

Past.  
Present.  
And future.

These are the timeless dimensions of Christmas. "WHILE SHEPHERDS WATCHED THEIR FLOCKS BY NIGHT..."

There is the dimension of the past. Christmas is linked to history: Christ has come!

Even the first Christmas was linked to past history. When Christ was born in Bethlehem there was fulfilled the prophecy of the past: "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son..." (Matthew 1:23). The people of Israel had waited for the messianic prophecies of the past to be fulfilled. Thus, to the writers of the Gospels, the birth of Jesus was not an unrelated incident of the present, but an event linked with the heritage of Israel.

The writer of Matthew emphasized this historic dimension in setting forth a lineage of Jesus that linked him with David and Abraham. In doing so he holds up God's plan for all to see: the birth of Jesus is the culmination of Israel's hope through the ages.

No less for us there is a past dimension of Christmas, a looking-back to the messianic heritage of Israel and to the Christ event itself. This holy season also evokes memories of past Christmases that we have experienced. As with Ebenezer Scrooge, there is a "Ghost of Christmas Past" for all of us.

### "Be born in us today"

There is also the present dimension of Christmas. Christmas is nothing if it is not linked to the present: "Be born in us today."

The very name of the Nazarene emphasizes the present tense: "Jesus," meaning "God saves." And the name ascribed to him through the prophecy of Isaiah, "Emmanuel," means "God with us." Christmas always speaks of what God is doing today. The past event of Christmas must be a present reality in our lives if it is to be more than a mere commemoration.

So, there is also for us a "Ghost of Christmas Present," a dimension of the "now" into which Christ comes today. And if Christmas is present-tense as well as past, we must acknowledge the implications of this for our lives. As Paul says, "... now that faith has come, we are no longer under a custodian; for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith" (Galatians 3:25,26).

"O Come, O Come, Immanuel"

There is also the dimension of the future. Christmas stretches from the past, through the present into the future. Christ has come, he is here, but he is also yet to come! There is a fulfillment



## NOW IS THE TIME...

Max Smith  
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### To Prepare For Emergencies

The loss of electric power for several days has caused hardships to many Pennsylvanians in the past month. This could happen in this part of the state as well, and all farmers should make plans for this problem. With modern methods a stand-by generator to make electricity is needed in order to keep the farm operation going. I hope that all producers with considerable automation have emergency plans in case power lines are broken. Food supplies and other necessities for several days should be kept on hand at this time of the year. Previous planning for these emergencies will reduce suffering and losses.

### To Inspect Barn Ventilation

Most barns are full of livestock and especially tightly constructed dairy barns. If there is condensation on the walls, ceiling, or windows, it is a sign of improper ventilation. The installation of exhaust fans to remove the foul, moisture-laden air will help. Additional insulation in the ceiling or side-walls is also suggested. An Extension Circular on Dairy Barn Ventilation is available from Extension Offices. Animal comfort is needed for efficient gains and maximum profits.

### To Recognize Manure Value

We repeat the thought that many livestock and dairy producers can get along with less fertilizer, providing they store and apply the manure properly. Most livestock and poultry waste is high in nitrogen, which is scarce and expensive at this time. Average cattle manure will contain about 5 pounds of nitrogen per ton while crumbly moist poultry manure contains from 40 to 60 pounds of nitrogen per ton. Storage should prevent leaching of these elements along with snow and rain. Application by soil injection or on sod crops such as clover and alfalfa add from 40 to 75 pounds of nitrogen per acre. Producers should recognize other sources of plant nutrients rather than from the fertilizer bag.

### To Control Parasites

In spite of various simple treatments for both stomach worms and body lice, many livestock and dairy producers are still feeding the parasites this winter. We urge prompt attention to treating the animals and getting rid of the lice and stomach worms. Production costs are high enough without having them increased because for their owners if they are wormy or lousy. Don't put it off any longer.

# Farm Calendar

## Upcoming Events January 1975

January 1, 1975  
8th Annual Pork and Sauerkraut Dinner at the Leola Fire Company. 12:00 noon to 6:00 p.m.

January 6-10th  
Pa. Farm Show in Harrisburg  
January 14th  
Ephrata Adult Farmer Dairy Calf Meeting at the Ephrata High School 7:45 p.m.



From Ethel Hart Edsall, Benzonia, Michigan: This difficulty of children learning to read and figure puzzles this old timer. With all the "modern" teaching methods and all the mileage voted for "better" education, what is the problem?

Sixty and seventy years ago, even lower IQ pupils learned the rudiments of the three R's without too much strain.

Living on an isolated farm, we were often housebound for days after a heavy storm. Mother became teacher. She cut letters from Rolled Oats boxes and I learned the alphabet by putting together words. Soon I was reading simple children's books, next, magazines

for which we must wait just as the people of Israel waited for that first advent.

Past. Present. Future. All these intersect in Bethlehem's manger.

(Based on outlines copyrighted by the Division of Christian Education, National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A. Released by Community Press Service.)

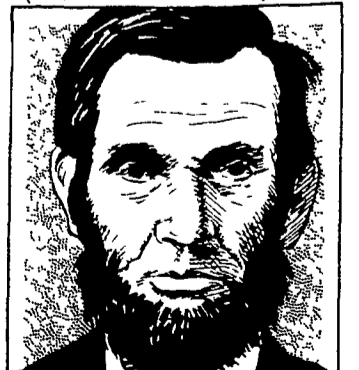
and newspapers. Basic arithmetic was learned by the same procedure.

How exciting and rewarding were the results. How proud both Mother and I were of our achievements. When it came time to enter school I had a big head start.

It can be done today. I know because my niece is following the same path with her four year old boy.

(Send contributions to this column to The Old Timer, Box 639, Frankfort, Ky. 40601)

## American Viewpoints



While the people retain their virtue and vigilance, no administration, by any extreme of wickedness or folly, can very seriously injure the government in the short space of four years.

—Abraham Lincoln  
First Inaugural, 1861