

U.S. Milk Production Outlook Revised

Dairymen changed a habit of a generation last year. They reduced herd culling to such an extent because of low slaughter cow prices, apparently - that milk cow numbers increased from July through December 1974 for the first time since 1953. That accounts for the increase in dairy cattle numbers picked up by the annual cattle inventory of Jan 1.

As the result of that increase, and possibly because of the boosts given milk prices last month, USDA revised its milk production outlook. While it still hasn't gone beyond the first 6 months, it now thinks production during Jan. - June will remain near year-earlier levels. At Outlook Conference time, it had predicted output during the first 6 months would run "well below" year earlier levels.

If There Hadn't Been A 1973 . . .

Fact is - except for 1973 - it was the highest in history. Trouble is, it has to be compared with 1973. By that standard, the \$27.2 billion in realized net farm income was down 16 pct. And, though cash receipts for farm marketings did hit \$95.0 billion, up 7 pct from the previous high (of \$88.6 billion) set a year earlier, production expenses, at \$74.8 billion, were up 15 pct. Government payments were off an estimated \$2 billion. That put them at about \$600 million and the lowest since 1960.

By almost any standard, 1974 was a banner year for farm income. Prices received by farmers were up 6.4 pct and were the highest on record, as were over-all cash receipts from farm marketings. And, while farm production expenses were sharply higher and government payments sharply lower, realized net farm income was more than 50 pct higher than in 1972 - more than double that for 1971, according to the USDA's most recent "Demand and Price Situation" report.

Hog Imports at Record High, Cattle Are Lowest in Decade

Hog and cattle imports both off sharply in December. But, while hog imports finished the year at an all-time high, imports of live cattle were the lowest since 1964.

Hog imports totaled only 1,612 head in December, less than a third of the Dec. 1973 total. But, the Jan. - Dec total, at 196,347 head was 2 1/4

times the 1973 total, more than double the previous high (of 89,032 head) set in 1972.

December cattle imports totaled only 16,136 head, less than one-tenth the Dec. 1973 total. The Jan. - Dec total, at 568,271, was only a little more than half of the (1,038,985 head) imports of a year earlier.

Egg Output Down - Layer Numbers Dip to 36-Year Low

U.S. egg production and layer numbers continue to downtrend. Though egg production per layer hit a record high last year, layer numbers and total egg production both declined for the third straight year.

Total egg production, at 66.0 billion, was off 1 pct. from a year earlier and

the lowest since 1965. Average number of layers on farms, at 286.5 million, was down 2 pct from a year earlier - and the lowest since 1938. Production per bird, at 230.5 eggs, was up from 227 a year earlier and record high.

Russians Post Banner Livestock Year, But Lower Crop Yields

Aided by abundant feed supplies from 1973's record harvest, Soviet livestock production hit record highs last year. But, these gains were more than offset by sharply lower crop output. As a result, over-all farm production declined 3-4 pct in the USSR in 1974, according to USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service.

Both meat and egg production increased 7 pct, wool output was up 6 pct, and milk production was up 4 pct from 1973. But, production of grains, sugarbeets and vegetables were off 11-12 pct, while potato output plunged 25 pct.

The reason for the lower crop production. Bad weather. Though by an early spring, weather turned cool and rainy in parts, there was frost damage as well. This was followed by a summer-long drought, and finally abnormally

heavy rains that caused flooding during the harvest season.

Meat production was up 1 million tons, to 14.5 million tons. Egg output totaled 55.0 billion, compared to 51.2 billion in 1973. Milk production hit 91.8 million tons, up from 88.3 million in 1973. Wool output reached 461,000 tons, compared to 433,000 a year earlier.

But, grain production sagged - from 222.5 million tons in 1973 to 195.6 million last year. Sugarbeet production dropped from 87.0 million tons in 1973 to 76.4 million in 1974. Sunflowerseed production was off - from 7.4 million tons a year earlier to 6.8 million tons last year. Vegetable production, from 25.9 million tons in 1973 to 23.1 million last year. And, potatoes, from 108.2 million tons to 80.7 million last year.

THE BIBLE SPEAKS
BY LAWRENCE W. ALTHOUSE
THE ULTIMATE WORD
Lesson for March 2, 1975

NOW IS THE TIME . . .



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Background Scripture: Hebrews 1 through 2:9.
Devotional Reading: John 1:1-5, 10-13.

There is a story about a father who took his children to the circus. There, for the first time they saw an elephant. When they got home their mother questioned them about what they had seen. All the children wanted to tell her about the strange beast they had seen: the elephant!

"What did he look like?" the mother wanted to know. Little Johnny, who had looked at the elephant from one side of the cage and seen only the face of the beast, described the elephant in terms of the long, grey trunk that lifted food to his small mouth. Lucy, who had viewed the elephant from the side, described the huge mammal in terms of his enormous body. Bobby, however, who had seen the elephant only from the rear, was fascinated by the huge, thin, flapping ears.

"Why," said mother mischievously, "I have a hard time picturing him from your different descriptions." At that, Ellen, who had not yet been heard from, handed her mother a polaroid photograph she had taken of the elephant: "Maybe this will help you, Mother."

"Many And Various Ways" The story is a parable of man's attempts to define and describe their experience with the Divine dimension in life: the reality we call God. It is not that some views of the Divine are wrong, but that they are incomplete, only part of the picture. Each approach reflects God's attempt to reveal himself to men.

He has always used a variety of methods and means. The writer of Hebrews acknowledges this when he says: "In many and various ways God spoke of old to our fathers by the prophets . . ." (Hebrews 1:1). There has never been just one way by which God reveals himself to man. These ways are often so diverse so as to seem contradictory and incompatible. But they are not: it is man's limited, partial vision that creates the conflicts. Man has a finite mind and whenever he attempts to comprehend the infinite he is forced to admit defeat.

"In many and various ways," God has spoken to us over the centuries. He has spoken to us through all kinds of religions and religious leaders. He has spoken to us through men who did not even know that God was using them. Each of these pictures has helped us to better understand the nature of God, yet the composite picture is always incomplete at best.

God's Reflection This is what we find to be the uniqueness of Jesus Christ: what we find partially in others, we find completely in him. The writer of Hebrews says it this way: "but in these last

To Use Certified Seed Many kinds of seeds will be going into the ground in the next few months. Certified seeds are worth the extra cost and will help insure a good crop. When home-grown seeds are used, or those from a neighbor, the germination is unknown, the amount of weeds present is a question, and several diseases may be on the seeds. Also, it is unlawful in Pennsylvania to sell seeds unless they are tested and approved by the Bureau of Plant Industry at Harrisburg. Don't take the risk of planting poor quality seeds because the cost of inputs will be just as great as with certified seed.

To Beware of Sewage Sludge We are aware of the availability of sewage sludge from the various public sewage plants. Also, we know of the problem of disposing of this sludge in the community. The fertilizer content of sludge will vary, but on the average the content of dry sludge is about 3 percent nitrogen, 1 percent phosphorus, and one-half percent potash. Also, in many cases only about half of this fertilizer value is available the first year. Another consideration is the amount of heavy metals in the sludge, such as copper and zinc. If farmers are going to utilize sludge we suggest they do the following: (1) Have the sludge tested. (2) Have the soil tested to learn the needs. (3) Request approval from the regional office of the Department of Environmental Resources. In addition, don't apply the sludge within at least 100 feet of any stream.

To Permit Soil To Dry Spring is just around the corner when many gardeners and farmers will be anxious to get out in the garden or fields and start the spring planting. It will be a mistake to work soil that is too wet because it will be hard and lumpy all season. Heavy clay soils should be given more time to dry than sandy or loam-type soils. Also, with heavy equipment used on our farms today, it is more important to wait until the soil is dry before working it. The hand test where you squeeze a handful of soil and then roll it along on the ground as you would a bowling ball, is suggested. If it stays in a ball, the ground is too wet; if it crumbles and falls apart, then the soil is sufficiently dry to work. Don't work in the mud or wet soil.

Calendar

- Monday, March 3**
7:30 p.m. - Manheim Young Farmers meeting at the Manheim Central High School.
6:15 p.m. - Pa. Cattlemen's Association annual meeting at the Holiday Inn at State College.
- Tuesday, March 4**
9:30 a.m. - 1975 Livestock

days he has spoke to us by a Son . . ." (Hebrews 1:2). The Christ does for us what Ellen's polaroid photo did for her mother in the story. The writer of Hebrews says, "He reflects the glory of God and bears the very stamp of his nature . . ." (1:3). In Christ we see the clearest of all reflections of God. It is the best likeness of God available to man. To view Christ may not dispel all the Divine mysteries, but in him we find a sufficient likeness so that the major questions of life may be answered.

God has spoken many times to man and in many different ways and we must respect what others have heard him say. Yet, those who follow Christ will humbly believe that in him God has spoken his ultimate word.

Day at Penn State. Registration begins at 9:00 a.m. at the J. O. Keller Conference Center-State College.

9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. - Lancaster County Dairy Day at the Lancaster Farm and Home Center.

Wednesday, March 5
9:00 a.m. - Schuylkill County Agronomy Day at Hegins United Church of Christ.

7:30 p.m. - Lancaster County Conservation District meeting at the Farm and Home Center.

9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. - Lancaster Fruit Growers Meeting at the Lancaster Farm and Home Center.

Thursday, March 6
7:30 p.m. - Poultry Education Meeting at the Farm and Home Center.

7:30 p.m. - Lancaster County Holstein Association Barn Meeting at the Albert Fry farm in Manheim.

Friday, March 7
6:45 p.m. - Manheim Young Farmers Banquet at the Manheim High School Cafeteria.

7:30 p.m. - Lancaster County Holstein Association barn meeting at the farm of Amos and Kenneth Rutt in Quarryville.