

Farm Commentary

by Dick Wanner

Broiler Output Lowest Since '69

U.S. commercial broiler output off slightly last year. Number produced, at 2.917 billion (two billion, 917 million), compared to 2.923 (two billion, 923 million) produced in 1973. It was the second straight year output had declined. The 1974 output was the lowest since 1969.

Gross income received by producers in the 21 States that account for 97 pct. of U.S. production totaled \$2.36 billion, down 9 pct. from a year earlier — but still the second highest on record.

Despite the cutback in production,

the number of pounds produced, at 11.0 billion lbs., was up from a year earlier and the second highest on record. Reason for the gain: Birds averaged 3.8 lbs last year, up from 3.7 lbs. a year earlier and the highest on record.

Arkansas (482.4 million), Georgia (426.9 million), Alabama (398.3 million) and North Carolina (286.6 million) continued as the Nation's leading broiler producers. The four accounted for 55 pct. of national output.

Milk-Feed Price Ratio Improves

The milk-feed price ratio (pounds of feed equal in value to 1 pound of milk) improved somewhat in January, according to the current (March) issue of USDA's Dairy Situation.

At 1.25, it was up from December's

1.20 and the highest since last July. But, a check through the records shows that the 1.34 average for all of 1974 was the lowest annual average since 1955.

Cows in India Are Eating Grain

American farmers have come under a lot of pressure in recent months for feeding grain to their livestock.

But, an article in the current (March 10) issue of Foreign Agriculture magazine, hints that grain feeding of livestock has not only been common practice in parts of India, but that farmers found a way to make an extra buck by switching from feed grains to wheat during the past two years.

In his analysis of the India grain

situation, John B. Parker, Jr., of the Economic Research Service's Foreign Demand and Competition Division, points out that farmers in Punjab and other surplus producing States in India apparently fed wheat in their expanding dairy and poultry enterprises as a result of lower wheat (than feed grain) prices.

The reason: They were forbidden to transport wheat across food zone lines. So they sold their corn and sorghum (at \$160 to \$200 per ton) and retained their wheat for feed.

World Apple, Pear Output Off in '74

World production of both apples and pears down in 1974. According to USDA's Foreign Agricultural Service, apple output in the major producing countries totaled 14.7 million metric tons, down 10 pct from a year earlier. Pear production, at 4.9 million metric tons, was off 5 pct. from a year earlier, 10 pct. below the 1970 record.

The reason in both cases: Sharply reduced crops in Europe. While the U.S. apple crop, at 2.9 million tons, was up slightly, those in France (at

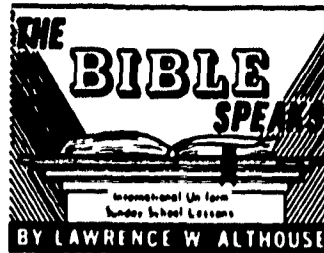
1.6 million tons) and West Germany (at 1.2 million tons) were off 21 pct. and 41 pct., respectively, and the over-all European crop, at 7.5 million tons, was down 20 pct.

Italy's pear production, at 1.4 million tons, was down 9 pct. That in France (at 388,000 tons) and West Germany (at 322,000 tons) was off 20 pct and 23 pct., respectively. U.S. pear production totaled 645,000 tons, up 2 pct. from a year earlier.

Hail Loss Study Published

Hail cuts U.S. crop production more than 2 pct, costs farmers an average of \$685 million annually (in 1973 dollars), according to a USDA Economic Research Service study

issued last week. The 5-year study of 20 basic crops showed wheat, corn for grain, soybeans, cotton and tobacco accounted for the bulk of the hail crop losses.



A MUTUAL STIRRING SOCIETY

Lesson for March 16, 1975

Background Scripture: Hebrews 6 through 10.
Devotional Reading: Matthew 5:3-11.

Some time ago a wonderful friend and parishoner passed away following many years of struggle against cancer. This woman had been an inspiration to many because of her undaunted faith that conquered both sickness and death. People with lesser ills and troubles were frequently shamed and lifted by her inspiring witness.

Shortly after her passing, one of her friends confided that he wanted to attend her church so that he could find "a faith as powerful as that!" It must be said that that faith to which she witnessed was dependent upon her own unique personality, yet at the same time it was also true that that native faith was much nurtured by a Christian fellowship. The fellowship was vital to this individual. To stir up one another

This is the purpose of a church to be the kind of vital fellowship in which faith is planted and nurtured. If it is not this, no group of people, regardless of how organized and authorized, can really be a "church." If it is not a nurturing fellowship, it is not a church.

In the Epistle to the Hebrews the writer admonishes his readers to "hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering . . ." (10:23). Still, it is easier said than done. It is one thing to tell people to keep their faith but something else to tell them how.

Thus, the writer of Hebrews goes on to point to one source of help in maintaining their faith: "... let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another . . ." (10:24,25).

Christians would do well to carefully consider this advice. The writer of Hebrews calls for us to "stir up" one another. Actually, the church should be a kind of "mutual-stirring society" where people are challenged and inspired to an ever-increasing level of love and service to one another. That, not perfect attendance or community acceptance, should be the great goal of our participation in a church fellowship.

What is the effect of your fellow church members upon you? What is your effect upon them? Is your church life a matter of stirring up one another to greater faith and service, or does your congregation represent something less than a "mutual-stirring society"? The ground of our confidence

One of the things we learn from our life together in a Christian fellowship is that we do not have to face life alone. For one thing, we have the support of Christian friends who can stir in us the faith we need for tough times.

But there is another reason why we do not walk alone through life: the faithfulness



NOW IS THE TIME . . .

Max Smith
County Agr. Agent
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To Apply Dormant Oil Sprays

One of the best control practices for scale on many trees and shrubs is to spray them with the dormant oil spray early in the spring. The timing should be made so that the buds are swelling, but not open when the oil spray is applied. Scale is a very common insect on fruit trees, oaks, and some of the ornamental plants. Owners of these trees and shrubs should be making plans to do this spraying during late March or early April.

To Grow More Alfalfa

Many dairy and livestock producers could benefit from greater acreage of alfalfa; this is especially true with dairymen. In recent years the price of corn has taken some of the alfalfa acreage; now that corn prices are changing, no doubt alfalfa will be more attractive. Over the years alfalfa has led the forage crops in this part of the country and still deserves more attention on many dairy farms. Early spring is one of the best times to establish new stands of alfalfa. This legume yields from 4 to 6 tons of hay per acre high in protein and mineral content. Prices of alfalfa hay have been very good and the crop is in strong demand from many parts of the country.

Farm Calendar

Monday, March 17
Lancaster County Young Farmers Volley Ball Tournament.

Lancaster County Goat Meeting at the Farm and Home Center, speaker will be Dr. Sam Guss - 7:30 p.m.

Tuesday, March 18
Montgomery County Dairy Day at the Collegeville Inn beginning at 10:10 a.m.

Farm Financial Management Seminar at the Lancaster Farm and Home Center at 9:30-3:00 p.m.

Chester County Coop Extension's Annual Meeting in the Central Chester County vo-tech school in Coatesville.

Solanco Home Gardening Clinic at the vo-ag classroom in the Solanco High School at 7:30 p.m.

Wednesday, March 19
Pa. Poultry Federation

of God. As the writer of Hebrews assures us: "... he who promised is faithful" (10:23). In the Christian fellowship we share with each other both the age-old stories of God's faithfulness and the contemporary evidences of his goodness in our own lives. In this fellowship we find that the God who did not forsake Israel, who kept his promises to Jesus of Nazareth, will also be with us in the midst of life.

To Fertilize Pastures

Many permanent pastures will respond to both lime and fertilizer applications. A complete soil test is the way to learn the actual needs. In a pasture mixture where we have both grasses and clover, a complete fertilizer such as 10-10-10 is suggested. On stands of straight grass (no clovers) nitrogen only is suggested. Applications made during late March or April should give earlier grazing and more forage per acre for the season. Producers should try to make every acre produce more feed and permanent pastures will respond to fertilizer.

To Shear Sheep

Warmer weather is on its way when most ewe flocks should be sheared. There is little to gain by allowing the wool to remain on the animal into the month of May and June. Late March and April would be the best time to shear the sheep and get the wool into dry, clean storage. Ewes that are nursing lambs will milk better and be better mothers without the fleece at this time of the year. Local growers may sell their wool clip to custom shearers, or take the crop to graded wool pools in either Berks or Cumberland county. These are held in mid-June. Wool to be graded should be sheared when dry, tied with the flesh side out with paper twine. Details are available at our Extension Office.

Annual Fund Raising Banquet at the Host Inn, Harrisburg.

Home Vegetable Gardening Meeting at the Lancaster Farm and Home Center at 7:30 p.m.

Schuylkill Co. Dairy Day at the Mansion House in Pine Grove 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

Pa. Turkey producers meeting sponsored by NEPPCO in Gettysburg. Second day of the Farm Financial Management meeting at the Lancaster Farm and Home Center 9:30 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

Thursday, March 20
Poultry Education Meeting at the Lancaster Farm and Home Center 7:30 p.m.

Friday, March 21
Pa. Farm and Power Equipment Association group meeting at the Exeter Restaurant, Mt. Penn at 7:00 p.m.

Saturday, March 22
Pa. Landrace Swine Sale at the Farm Show Building - Harrisburg.

Lancaster County Swine Association Annual Banquet at the Blue Ball Fire Hall 6:30 p.m.

Vegetable Gardening Seminar at the Church Farm School in Chester County - Paoli from 10:00 a.m.-12:00 noon.

Kindness is a language which the deaf and the blind can read

Mark Twain