

Prices: livestock okay, grain questionable

By DIETER KRIEG
LITZ — According to information received here at LANCASTER FARMING, livestock and poultrymen can look to favorable prices throughout the next several months. Grain producers, on the other hand, could be in for a not-so-good year. Crop yields are expected to be good, barring any interference from the weather. The reason for lower prices in sight for corn, wheat, barley, and oats is that there's one whale of a big crop out there. Many other countries are also reporting good results so far. It adds up to a bumper crop here, with lowered possibilities for exports.

Milk prices have started to decline somewhat, but according to economists, and most dairymen, the return is still favorable. The higher support price set earlier this year is cushioning prices. The milk-feed price ratio is described as "favorable" also.

Profits are increasing for livestock producers, according to several sources of information, including the WALL STREET JOURNAL. That prestigious periodical



Care instructions on flame resistant textiles should be followed strictly because improper care may even make the fabric highly flammable. For example, soap and hard water mineral deposits can counteract the effect of flame-retardant finishes.

carried a headline earlier this week proclaiming "Higher feeder-cattle prices seen in general over next two years." The rise in prices is due largely to a decline in the U.S. cattle population, the JOURNAL's reporter wrote. Further reasoning behind this prediction (which is already becoming reality) is that a lowering of feed prices is causing cattle feeders to be willing to pay higher prices. One Chicago cattle expert says feeder cattle could reach 50 cents per pound. Once the pasture and range season is over, and cattlemen ship their stock to market, the market is likely to go down again. But over-

all, it's on the way up, with only seasonal drops.

It is further reported in the WALL STREET JOURNAL that feeder cattle prices will tend to equal or exceed fed cattle prices for as long as the next four years. That's the opinion of William C. Helming, president of Livestock Business Advisory Services, Inc., in Kansas City.

Fed cattle prices are also on the rise. It's reported that demand is picking up; the effects of the new grade standards are easing, and supplies are slackening.

Hogmen can look to July as being the "peak" month, say analysts of the

marketing scene. Prices are expected to be favorable as demand for pork is described as strong and the industry has comparatively low storage stocks on hand — 38-million pounds.

The poultry business isn't expected to show much strength. Like the dairy and beef cattle people, lower feed prices will be beneficial to them.

Soybean prices are not likely to increase. The reason is that the country still has enough on hand from last year and is expecting a good crop this year. Brazilian soybeans and the palm oil from Southeast Asia depress soybean prices somewhat. One report says, in fact, that the world is presently going through a surplus of fats and oils. It's possible for soybean prices to come down. Soybean meal will likely follow the same trend as corn.

Brazil is catching up fast in soybean production. They've been second only to the U.S. in production and exports, and if they keep up their pace, they'll soon surpass Uncle Sam's farmers. Five years ago Brazilians produced 55.4 million bushels of beans, for example, and last year they

topped 350 million bushels. The U.S. expects to produce 1,350-million bushels this year, compared to 1,450-million last year.

All in all, the situation with soybeans is similar to that with cereal grains and corn. Increased world-wide production, and less likelihood for big exports.

Broilers up again

Placements of broiler chicks in the Commonwealth during the week ending May 1, 1976 were 1,598,000. The placements were 16 percent above the corresponding week a year earlier, and four percent above the previous week. Average placements during the past 10 weeks were 13 percent above a year earlier. Settings for broiler chicks were 2,303,000 — 10 percent below the previous

week but 18 percent above the comparable period a year earlier. The current 3-week total of eggs set is 19 percent more than the same period a year ago. Inshipments of broiler-type chicks during the past 10 weeks averaged zero compared with zero a year ago. Outshipments averaged 247,000 during the past 10 weeks, 5 percent below a year earlier.

FFA winners announced



Roger Imes
LEBANON - Two Berks County FFA members

topped the field of contestants at the Area Public Speaking and Interview contest held here recently.

Roger Imes, a Oley Valley High School student, was the first place winner in the interview contest and also placed third in the public speaking event.

James Shrawder, Kutztown, was first in the speaking competition with Gail Ann Kleinfelter, Lebanon AVTS following in second place.

Barbara Herr, Northern Lebanon High School was the second place contestant in the interview competition with Donna Lansberry of Cedar Crest taking third place honors.

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Tobacco inspections revised

WASHINGTON - Tobacco regulations have been amended by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to bring all voluntary inspection under a uniform fee structure, it was announced last week.

The revision, which became effective May 4, will amend a system adopted last September under which voluntary inspection performed under an agreement was excepted from the fee structure.

Voluntary tobacco inspection is performed under terms of the Agricultural Marketing Act of 1946, which directs that fees for inspection and grading services be set so as to cover as nearly as possible the costs

of providing the services. Tobacco inspection performed at designated tobacco auctions is mandatory and performed without charge to growers, under terms of the Tobacco Inspection Act.

According to James W. York, Director of the Tobacco Division of USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service, no comments were received on the proposed revision of fee regulations announced in the March 9 Federal Register.

Copies are available from Tobacco Division, Agricultural Marketing Service, Room 502-Annex Building, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

Farm prices up

The Index of Prices Received by Farmers increased four points (two percent) during the month ended April 15, USDA reported last week. At 188 (pct. of its Jan.-Dec. 1967 average) the index was at its highest point since last October (when it stood at 193) and was 18 points (11 pct.) above a year earlier.

Meanwhile, the Index of Prices Paid by Farmers remained at 194, unchanged from a month earlier. It was

12 points (seven percent) above a year ago.

With Prices Paid up and Prices Received unchanged the Ratio of Prices Received to Prices Paid moved up two points to 95. It had been 93 a year ago.

Under the old 1910-14 formula, Prices Received moved up from 468 to 478, Prices Paid advanced one point to 665 and the Parity Ratio advanced two points to 72. It had stood at 69 a year ago.

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