

# New directions needed

(Continued from Page B6)  
to fuel inflation and restrict exports.



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Target prices and deficiency payments will be much debated issues in the year ahead. Some farmers will surely urge Congress to raise the level of target prices and increase the size of deficiency payments to help them meet their rising costs. But this policy can have unintended results, according to Cochrane.

Deficiency payments are made to farmers on the basis of volume of production. That means that the bulk of the deficiency payments go to the largest, most efficient farmers, leaving the smaller farmers even further behind. The farmers with the largest acreages use their deficiency payments to bid up land prices and buy out their smaller, less-efficient neighbors.

Based on these arguments and because the total government payments to

farmers runs close to three billion dollars annually, Cochrane believes the concept of target prices and deficiency payments should be eliminated from the Food and Agricultural Act of 1981.

Instead, Cochrane would like to see new legislation designed to help the small and medium-sized farmers.

For instance, Congress could eliminate many provisions in the federal tax code that provide incentives for the big to become bigger. Congress could also provide for deficiency payments to only those farmers whose gross receipts total less than \$40,000 per year.

It could expand loan and technical assistance programs to established farmers whose gross receipts total less than \$40,000 per year.

And Congress could initiate a program to provide capable young people with the resources they need to

get started in farming. A thousand likely candidates could be selected each year to receive government loans or loan guarantees and technical assistance for five to 10 years.

Programs such as these would not be inexpensive, but they wouldn't cost any more than the current deficiency payment system that benefits mostly the largest farmers at the expense of the smallest.

As farm input costs soar, farmers need to be able to depend on steadily increasing yields to lower their unit costs of production. Unfortunately, there has been a slowdown in the rate of increase in crop yields in recent years.

One possible cause is a relative decline in the federal funds allocated for agricultural research and development. If Congress and the Administration are truly interested in stepping up the rate of technological advance in farming, the 1981 legislation must authorize increased financial support

for agricultural research and development.

Given the necessary resources, the Agricultural Experiment Stations can turn out a steady stream of new and improved technologies, which the state extension services can introduce to the nation's farmers.

Transportation, too, needs attention in the new legislation. To move farm supplies and food into and out of agricultural areas efficiently, we need to rebuild our neglected

railroad system and integrate it with our waterways. This should prove more cost effective than further subsidization of truck transportation, which is increasingly expensive and inefficient for moving heavy, bulky freight long distances.

Finally, the food and agricultural legislation should include increased funding for nutrition, and even scientists have a lot more to learn about the subject, he concludes.

## Maryland expecting bumper peach harvest

ANNAPOLIS, Md. — If you like peaches this may be your year. Maryland's peach growers say they have the largest crop in twenty years coming on and estimate the harvest in 1980 will be 25 million pounds of the summer super fruit!

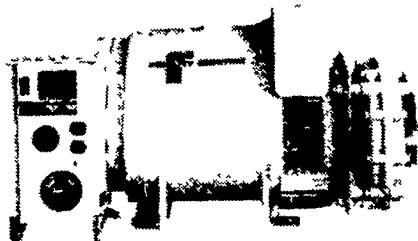
According to the Maryland Department of Agriculture's Marketing Division and the Crop Reporting Service, the reason for this bounty is the ideal weather at blossom, pollination and fruit set time this Spring.

Helen Huber, MDA marketing specialist, offer this handy harvest time guide to Maryland peaches as a tool for planning your purchases.

She says the earliest Maryland variety, Sunhaven, comes in beginning July 3-25; followed by Redhavens, July 24-August 7; Triogems, August 3-15; Sunhighs, August 8-19; Lorings, August 13-20; Blakes, August 17-25; Elbertas, August 21-27; Redskins, August 24-September 2; Rio-Oso-Gems, August 31-September 10; and Mar-Highs which ripen in early September.

A wise idea for the home canner and freezer is to check ahead with their planned source of supply for exact harvest time information as the weather can speed up or slow down normal ripening schedules with peaches, says Huber.

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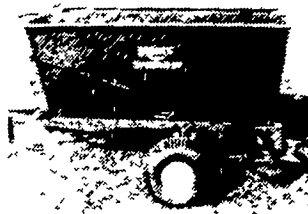
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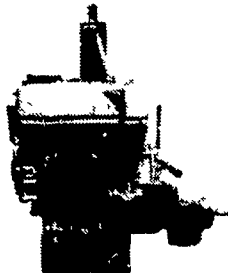
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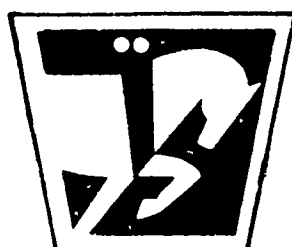


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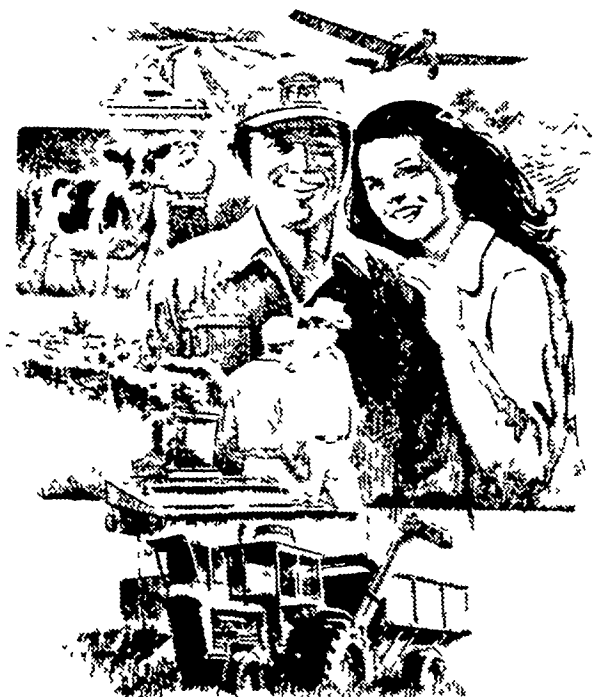
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