

Lancaster farm product sales exceed \$400,000,000

LANCASTER — The 1978 market value of agricultural products sold by the 4915 farms in Lancaster County amounted to \$405.5 million or an average of \$82,510 each, up from \$251.7 million in 1974.

There was an accompanying increase in production costs, according to a preliminary report of the 1978 Census of Agriculture released today by the Bureau of the Census, U.S. Department of Com-

merce.

A breakdown of the county's total agricultural sales for 1978 followed by that for 1974, is as follows: crops, \$50.1 million compared with \$39.8 million; livestock and livestock products, \$224.9 and \$136.6 million; poultry and poultry products, \$130.6 and \$75.2 million.

While the value of gross sales rose, the farmers' costs also climbed since 1974.

Expenditures for feed for livestock and poultry for 1978 were \$118.1 million compared to \$79.9 million; costs of gasoline, diesel and other petroleum products were \$7.4 million compared to \$5.1 million. Farm energy costs of all types totaled \$11.1 million for 1978.

The estimated market value of machinery and equipment per farm increased from \$20,328 to \$28,688.

Of the total farms in the

county, 915 had gross sales of \$100,000 or more and 976 had sales of under \$10,000. Farms operated by individuals or families represented 89 percent of the total; farms operated by corporations accounted for three percent.

Some 82 percent of the operators owned all or part of the land they operated.

In 1978 the average age of farm operators was 44.3 years. Since 1974 the proportion of operators listing farming as their principal occupation changed from 78 percent to 75 percent.

Other results of the census show that the number of farms increased from 4588 to 4915, while the average size remained at 87 acres. All land in farms totaled 425,561 acres in 1978 compared to 399,785 acres in 1974.

Land from which crops were harvested increased from 285,284 to 311,021 acres.

The number of cattle and

calves increased from 207,944 to 237,221; while those with 100 or more on hand accounted for 46 percent. Fed cattle accounted for 53 percent of the total 182,927 cattle and calves sold in 1978.

Sales of dairy products were reported by 1978 farms and totaled \$104.1 million. The number of milk cows reported was 82,295 in 1978 vs. 71,598 in 1974.

The number of hogs and pigs changed from 131,243 to 256,997 in 1978. Of the total 420,357 hogs and pigs sold in 1978, 94,671 were sold as feeder pigs.

Hens and pullets of laying age increased from 3.9 to 7.3 million. Of the hens and pullets of laying age, 6.3 million were on farms having 10,000 or more on hand. Broiler production increased from 27.2 million to 38.1 million. There were 312,740 turkeys sold in 1978.

Acresages of crops harvested for 1978 and 1974 were as follows: corn for grain, 120,314 acres vs. 105,930 acres; wheat, 22,426 acres vs. 27,559 acres; hay 82,010 acres vs. 68,376 acres; tobacco, 10,685 acres vs. 9,578 acres; barley, 9,779 acres; corn silage, 63,399 acres in 1978.

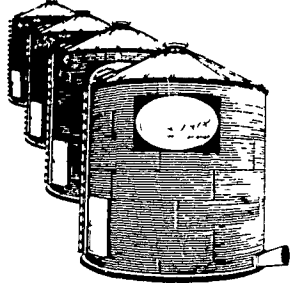
Production of corn for 1978 was 13.8 million bushels compared to 11.1 million bushels in 1974.

The figures are for farms qualifying under the definition: Any place from which \$1000 or more of agricultural products were sold, or normally would have been sold, during the census year.

Data in the reports for acreage and inventories for 1978 and 1974 are directly comparable; however, dollar values have not been adjusted for changes in price levels.

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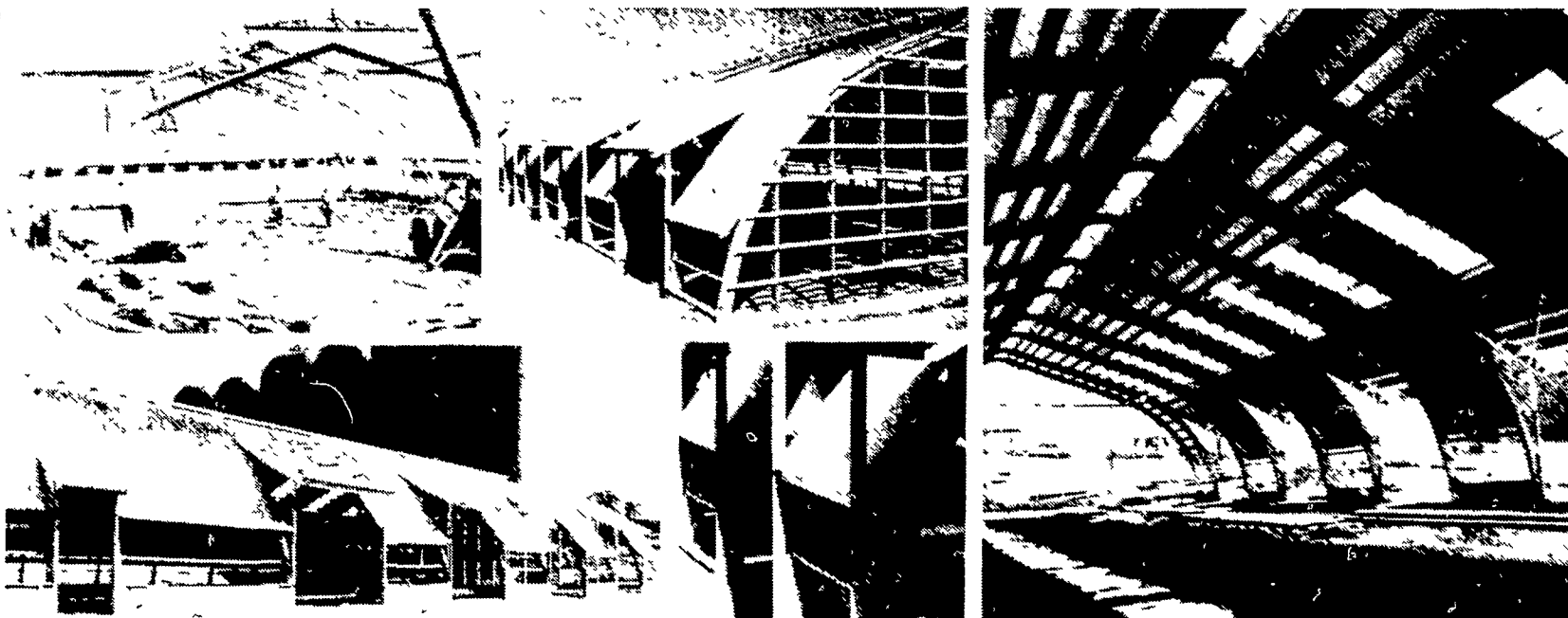


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