

# Maryland's '84 farm output sets three records

Agriculture in Maryland served up quite a 1984 birthday present to help celebrate the state's 350th Anniversary; it set all-time production records in three of its leading sectors: corn, soybeans and broiler chickens!

According to the latest estimates of the Maryland-Delaware Crop Reporting Service, corn production in 1984 was 69,620,000 bushels breaking the earlier mark set in 1981 and soybean production was 12,325,000 bushels breaking a record that had been set in 1982.

Corn and soybeans are the number one and two leading field crops in the state and are the feed mainstay of Maryland's number one commodity: broiler chickens. The production of broiler chickens in Maryland last year is also estimated to be a record breaker at 275 million plump, 4.1 pound chickens.

Previous high for Maryland production of broilers was 267 million birds in 1982.

Maryland's broiler production is part of the Delmarva poultry complex, which as a whole, saw production of 483 million birds, up from 468 million in 1983. At today's feeding rates, it takes about 8 pounds of corn and soybean ration to produce a broiler chicken.

Thus, the poultry industry on Delmarva used about 3.8 billion pounds of corn and soybeans to produce its huge chicken crop in 1984.

The 1984 production rebound in Maryland is particularly noteworthy in that it came on the heels of drought-ravaged 1983 which saw some of the worst growing conditions in 50 years with greatly reduced corn and soybean production and an extremely poor quality tobacco crop.

Another record-breaker in 1984

was barley production at 5.5 million bushels shattering a record that had stood since 1969.

Other segments of Maryland agriculture showing strong production rates in 1984 include:

- Dairy - production of about 1.5 billion pounds of milk. The dairy industry is Maryland's second most important segment when it comes to cash value in agriculture.

- Wheat - production of over 6 million bushels in 1984 for one of the larger outputs in the state's recent history.

- Tobacco - the state's first cash crop, is estimated at 31.2 million pounds, an average size crop. However, planters report that the 1984 leaf is of exceptional quality, of good color and very thin leaf making it one of the best crops of recent years.

- Hogs - the 1984 pig crop came in at 417,000 pigs.

- Mushrooms - 2,146,000 pounds.

- Fresh market vegetables - mainly tomatoes, with a production of 28.8 million pounds, or 14,400 tons.

- Processing Vegetables - 119,990 tons breaking out as 48,640 tons of sweet corn, 4,080 tons of peas and 52,580 tons of tomatoes.

These numbers are particularly more impressive when compared

in terms of percentages against 1983.

A few examples in the crop areas show that corn production was up by 81% over 1983! Soybean production was up by about 20%, tobacco production by 5%, wheat up by 6%, barley up by 11%, processing vegetables by about 37%, fresh market vegetable production by about 9%, apple production up by about 7%.

One Maryland crop, however, was literally 'nipped' by weather in 1984. That was the peach crop which came in at about 18 million pounds, down about 14% due to a hard freeze.

The production increase for broiler chickens is believed to be up by about 5% representing a truly remarkable rate of growth for a single year. Dairy production was off somewhat by about 5% reflecting impact on Maryland of industry and government programs to reduce surplus production.

One conclusion to be drawn from the outstanding production rebound of Maryland agriculture in 1984 from the disasters of 1983 is that agriculture is truly a "modern miracle" in that it responds quickly to good weather for crops and improved markets for livestock.



# Federal user's fees

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supports a separate cost-cutting measure called "less-than-continuous-inspection," which would allow inspectors to review plants randomly without requiring that each piece of meat be viewed individually.

Inspectors could still see half of the company's product, which would be a "pretty good indication that a company's entire production line was pretty wholesome," Allwein said.

The poultry group, he added, will be lobbying actively with the state's congressional delegation, attempting to find support for their proposal.

He noted that Sen. Arlen Specter had seemed especially persuaded by the group's contention that the measure would cost the state jobs — because of packers' attempts to offset costs incurred by the new program.

Although no other state organizations seemed to be taking on the leadership in fighting the measure, several individuals and companies spoke out against the proposed fee arrangement.

Ben Burkholder, a vice president at Victor F. Weaver in New Holland, said his firm would make its case through the poultry federation and other national organizations.

He did note, however, that his company, with about 18 federal inspectors on site, would eventually face costs of as much as \$700,000 annually for the inspection program.

Costs at the Hatfield Packing plant in Montgomery County, on the other hand, could surpass \$1,000 a day, said Executive Vice President "Butch" Clemens.

And, he said, the inspectors hired by the feds are not the kind of people he'd hire in his own organization.

"Our own quality control people find a lot of things they never see,"

Clemens said. With \$130 million in annual sales, Hatfield employs 700 workers and slaughters more than 3,500 hogs daily.

Officials at the Pennsylvania Livestock Association and the Pennsylvania Pork Producers Council both say their organizations have adopted a "wait-and-see" posture on the new proposal.

"I guess a lot of people aren't paying attention because it's been discussed before," said John Henkel, President of the Pennsylvania Livestock Association.

He added that he doubted the public would accept an inspection program that is financially supported by the producers themselves.

The thought was echoed by Herb Schick, secretary-treasurer of the Pennsylvania Pork Producers Council.

"Will the consumer have faith in this kind of set-up?" Schick asked.

Livestock producers themselves had little to say about the legislation. But at least one felt uneasy.

"Invariably," he said, "we'll pay for it. You don't think the packers and processors aren't going to pass along some of those costs to us, do you?"

## Farm Calendar

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Thursday, March 7

Pennsylvania Potato Growers Institute, Sheraton Inn, State College

Poultry Progress Day, 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Friday, March 8

Dairy Breeders Institute, Farm and Home Center.

ANNOUNCING



# GRAND OPENING

Monday, March 4th  
thru  
Saturday, March 9th

2460 New Holland Pike

1/4 Mile West of Meadowbrook Farmers Market, Rt. 23, Leola

(717) 656-3700 or (717) 291-4420

Lancaster, PA 17602

HOURS: Mon.-Thurs. 8 AM : 8 PM

Friday 8 AM - 9 PM

Saturday 8 AM - 5 PM

Register For DOOR PRIZES Given Away Every Hour - Must Be Present To Win

REGISTER ALL WEEK FOR 5 GRAND PRIZES

Given Away Saturday, March 9th. Need Not Be Present To Win

- Set of 4 Star All Season Radial Tires
- Gott 50 Quart Ice Chest
- 9 Piece Set of Silverstone Wear-Ever Cookware
- 4 Gallon of Olympic Stain
- Set of 6 Adams Plowshares



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And  
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Hot  
Dogs  
.20¢



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