

Record Corn Production, Carryovers

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2.32 billion bushels and soybean totalled 2.56 billion bushels.

"If last year at this time someone would have said we'd produce 10 billion bushels of corn, no one would have believed it, because we had never done better than 9.48 (billion bushels), which was a record in 1992," said Moore. "A lot of people are feeling it may be a while again before we produce a crop that big."

Moore said Pennsylvania's total corn harvest last year was not a record, however, and it stood at 118 million bushels, or about 118 bushels/acre. National yields for 1994 totalled 138 bushels/acre.

(To provide some perspective, according to Moore, in 1954 the national yield for corn was about 39 bushels/acre.)

Projected carryover for this year will total about 2 billion bushels of corn for next Sept. 1. Carryover of wheat will be 670 million bushels and soybeans will be 475 million bushels, nationwide.

What does all this mean? Simply, while the price for corn may hurt a lot of producers (Jan. 10 projection for March at \$2.32 per bushel, May at \$2.39 per bushel, and December at \$2.52 per bushel), because meat production in some cases will rise dramatically, there will be good, potential markets for the product.

"We're going to have a record supply of meat, even greater in 1995 than the record we had in 1994," said Moore. He said we're "going to use a lot of corn and going to use a lot of soybeans."

Projected harvest for this year's corn crop stands at about 8.5 to 8.7 billion bushels, depending on weather and other factors, according to Moore.

The past year was a good one for producers. Consumer spending increased and "food prices are cheaper than nearly anything else in the economy," he said. The price of food is only about half the real rate of inflation (projected at 3 percent in 1995), and "the supply of food is abundant. Food is everywhere," said the economist.

Overall, agriculture will be a big winner, because livestock supplies will fuel demand for grain. Pork production will increase 3 to 5 percent this year, and total red meat production will be up 4 percent. Broiler production is projected to rise 6-7 percent (8-10 percent for turkeys), and maybe even higher, in some cases, according to Moore.

What is interesting, according to the economist, is that the price of grain did not decrease as much as



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the crop increased. But if producers are expecting a rally, they should be prepared to take into account the fact that there is a record number of livestock needing feed. Also, because of the return of the El Nino weather pattern, the Midwest could be hit by a drought in mid-summer.

Right now, the 1995 Farm Bill is being written. Moore believes it will be similar in many ways to the 1990 Farm Bill, only with less funds allocated for agriculture. Already, more than 1,000 USDA field offices have been closed, and more such budget-trimming will take place in the years ahead.

Moore provided examples proving that, while agriculture made up only 1.5 percent of the total federal spending in fiscal year 1994 (\$23 billion), other issues need to be addressed. Social security, for instance, makes up 20.5 percent of the budget (\$319 billion), defense 17.8 percent (\$276 billion), and Medicare and Medicaid 16.2 percent (\$251 billion). The interest on the national debt totals a whopping 13.1 percent, or \$203 billion, for 1994.

Also, more farms are being lost in the U.S. to the tune of 32,500 per year. In 1935, according to Moore, there were 6.80 million farms in the U.S. In the year 2002, there will be only 1.54 million farms.

Parity, once a measuring stick of how the national economy is doing regarding price, indicates that prices for most commodities has been shrinking rapidly. Parity is the relationship between things that farmers buy and sell. For

example, in 1910, as in 1960, one bushel of wheat could be sold to purchase one shirt. But now, to buy the same shirt, you'd have to sell about three bushels of wheat. Most ag products fall anywhere between 35-48 percent of parity. A parity price for corn would be about \$5.77 a bushel.

"But parity is dead, and who killed such a good thing?" said Moore. "The farmers killed it because of our yields in productivity."

Not all is doom and gloom for farming, however, especially in this region. Pennsylvania cash receipts in 1993 totalled \$3.712 billion, which gave the state a 19th ranking.

He said because of the strong economy and expanding agricultural exports, he remains positive about agriculture. Producers should watch for rallies this spring and take advantage of them.

Ag In 2010

Keith Eckel, president of the Pennsylvania Farm Bureau, spoke about Pennsylvania Agriculture in the Year 2010. He offered some pointers about how producers can survive in the coming years, and what they should expect.

The challenge to see what agriculture would be like in 15 years is difficult enough. "Believe me, if I knew what the markets would be a month from now, I'd probably would not be with any of you," said Eckel. "I'd probably be capitalizing on that."

Agriculture in the coming millennium will be that of an "agriculture in change."

"It's hard to believe that 50 years ago, we had about 30 million farmers in the U.S.," said Eckel. "Today we have 1.8 million."

By the year 2000, according to the Farm Bureau president, 300,000 of those farmers will be producing 80 percent of the food and fiber in this country.

Also, the land base is less than what was available to farmers in 1900. And those farmers will be feeding a nation of 260 million people and exporting about 40 percent of all we produce in the next century.

Technology will play "a major role in these changes," he said. Those changes will take place by refining the technology, through computerization, that farmers make use of today.

Eckel, who grows about 500 acres of corn and 300 acres of wheat, also grows several acres of tomatoes. Technology has allowed him to use the concept of "band-



Speakers at the crops conference included, from left, Lou Moore, Penn State ag economist; John Rowe, York County agent; and Robert Leffel, soybean breeder, York County.

ing" fertilizers in row for his tomatoes.

Using Penn State research, Eckel said that, 14 years ago, he started using the technology, which cut the application of fertilizers in half and decreased the cost per unit of production to the tune of about \$14,000 per year.

Agricultural policy should be established by research and reason and not by the emotional agendas of environmental activists and animal rightists. Eckel spoke about the 30-day moratorium placed on BST, and how that moratorium could set a precedent — it has the "potential for setting agricultural back," he said.

But farmers who recognize the globalization of markets and how to adjust their operations accordingly can benefit in the long run.

Soybean Season

Also at the Monday conference, Robert Leffel, soybean breeder from York and retired USDA Research Service scientist, spoke about the nearly perfect 1994 growing season for soybeans.

Leffel said the year was almost ideal in terms of distribution of rainfall, providing a national average of 41.5 bushels/acre in the U.S. for a total of 2.45 billion bushels.

But what concerns the industry is the fact that Brazilian competition is proving tough on American producers, because the Brazilian beans have more oil and a lot less foreign material per seed.

Unless U.S. can improve the intrinsic quality of the soybean, the U.S. will lose ground to Brazilian competition for Japanese markets, according to the soybean breeder.

Corn Growers Present Awards

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— Even on group 3 and 4 soils in Pennsylvania, record corn harvests were filed in 1994 during a near-ideal growing season, according to Greg Roth, assistant professor of agronomy at Penn State.

Roth reviewed the year for the Pennsylvania Master Corn Growers Association (PMCGA) at the dinner meeting during the Pennsylvania Crops Conference on Monday. Also, Roth presented the annual Pennsylvania Five-Acre Corn Club awards at the dinner.

Roth said that the club recorded the highest yields ever for the entrants in the annual contest, for an average of 168 bushels per acre. There were more than 100 entrants.

In the three-year average awards, shelled grain class, regular harvest size, Ed Snook, Jersey Shore, took first place with an average yield of 195.8 bushels per acre using Pioneer 3293. Second place went to Matthew Maximuck, Doylestown, for his 192 bushel per acre yield using Dekalb 677 and Dekalb 623. Lloyd Zook, Oley, took third place for his 191.8 bushel per acre yield using Pioneer 3293.

In the three-year average awards, shelled grain class, 3 acre plus harvest size, Norman Jodikinos, Clinton, won first place with a 193.5 bushel per acre yield using Pioneer 3527, Pioneer 3245, and Pioneer 3394. Second place went to Daryl Alger, Palmyra, for his 185.5 bushel per acre yield with Pioneer 3293 and Pioneer 3394. Third place went to Richard Kreider, Lebanon, with his 185 bushel

per acre average using Pioneer 3394.

In the three-year average awards, ear corn class, regular harvest size, first place went to David Schantz, Alburtis, for his 196.4 bushel per acre yield using Pioneer 3358 and Pioneer 3163. Second place went to Thomas Pepper, Canton, for his 185.7 bushel per acre yield using Doebler's 75X and Dekalb 646. Third place went to Sandy Ridge Farms, Shippensburg, for their 185.4 bushel per acre yield using Pioneer 3394, Pioneer 3727, and Pioneer 3527.

In the shelled grain class, regular harvest size, first place went to David Crist, Jersey Shore, for his 223.4 bushel per acre yield using Doebler's 62XP. Second went to Elder Vogel, Rochester, for his 221.3 bushel per acre yield using Funk's 4446 A. Third place went to Brian Koch, Tamaqua, for his 186.8 bushel per acre yield using Dekalb 580.

In the shelled grain class, 3 acre plus harvest size, first place went to Jody Hock, Watsonstown, for his 212.4 bushel per acre yield using Pioneer 3293. Second went to Clarence A. Keener, Jr., Manheim, for his 193.3 bushel per acre yield using Pioneer 3394. Third went to Keith Bissinger, Bloomsburg, for his 192.8 bushel per acre yield using Pioneer 3394.

In the ear corn class, hand harvest, first place went to the Mark Crist Farm, Jersey Shore, for their 224.8 bushel per acre yield using Doebler's 73 XP. Second went to Bud Novak, Meshoppen, for his 214.4 bushel per acre yield using Doebler's 75X A Mod 2. Third went to Eugene Graham, Cranberry, for his 207.8 bushel per acre yield using Pioneer 3394.



Five Acre Corn Club contest winners, from left, Clarence Keener, second place, shelled grain class, 3 acre plus harvest size; David Koch, third place, shelled grain class, regular harvest size; and Richard Kreider, third place, 3-year average awards, 3 acre plus harvest size.