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Weekly Review for MINNESOTA AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION SERVICE

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University Farm, St. Paul 8, September 21 1945

SLAUGHTER CONTROL ENDS. OPA controls over how much livestock can be slaughtered and where the meat is shipped were ended Sept. 8. The action was taken on the recommendation of Secretary of Agriculture Anderson. Meat rationing is not affected by the action. When the slaughter control program was put into effect last April, lower meat production, compared with last year, and continued high military requirements had resulted in a serious distribution problem.

The slaughter control program was designed to increase the amount of livestock slaughtered in federally inspected plants by decreasing the amount of slaughter in non-federally inspected plants, from which meat cannot be shipped across state lines. In this manner, the requirements of the armed forces and other government needs could better be protected. At the same time, a larger proportion of meat for civilians would be made available for shipment across state lines.

The objectives of the slaughter control program were accomplished by imposing quotas on the number of animals non-federally inspected slaughterers and farm slaughterers (for sale) could process. Another major provision of the program called upon slaughterers to follow the same geographic distribution pattern in making shipments that they used during the first quarter of 1944.

FARM MACHINERY. Farm machinery is an expanding, not a reconversion industry. Output of farm machines and equipment, attachments, and parts in 1944 was valued at \$1,067 million wholesale, according to the Bureau of the Census. This exceeded 1941 production by nearly \$400 million. It was more than double the 1929 figure.

Scheduled production for the 12 months ending June, 1946, is said to be by far the largest in the history of the industry, particularly in the case of tractors.

The industry has been in production throughout the war with ceiling prices in effect since late 1942. Some new companies such as Graham-Paige have announced they will enter the farm machinery field. The National Farm Machinery Cooperative of Indiana has had ceiling prices established for new models of tractors.

The price control record in new farm machinery is pretty good. June, 1945, prices were 10% above those for March, 1942. The increase in the more than two years since the issuance of the hold-the-line order amounts to 5%.

Farm machinery prices advanced 65% during the period of World War I and retained much of this advance in subsequent years. The advance so far during the present war period totals 15%.

GASOLINE CEILINGS. Consumers in the near future will get higher quality gasolines for the same prices they are now paying for regular and premium gasolines. No changes are being made in the ceiling prices but octane ratings will be increased.

PRESIDENT SEES NEED FOR FULL FARM PRODUCTION IN 1946. Another year of full production will be needed from farmers in 1946, according to President Truman. Continuing great demands for food plus the uncertainties of weather will call for about the same total acreage in crops next year as this year, the President said in his reconversion message to Congress.

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He pointed out, however, that this does not mean the same volume of production for each farm commodity since the surrender of Japan has brought changes in kinds of commodities wanted.

THE FARM LABOR SITUATION. The number of hired workers employed on farms showed a larger than usual seasonal increase during August, and on September 1 was about the same as a year earlier, the United States Department of Agriculture reported recently. During the past year the monthly estimates of the number of hired workers have averaged about 100,000 less than for the same months a year earlier. Hired workers totaled 2,813,000 this month, just a little less than on September 1, 1944.

Some workers released from war industries and the armed forces are already returning to work on farms. On the whole, however, few residents and former residents of rural areas discharged from war jobs are now returning to farm employment. Shifts from industries to farms probably will not result in any immediate sharp upturn in farm employment. The return of former workers to the farm will result in much replacement of young boys and old men, hired of necessity, and of women and children of farm operator's families, by able-bodied and more efficient workers.

Operators were still working more hours per day on September 1 than before the war, but less than a year ago. Average number of hours worked per day by farm operators declined from 12.1 to 11.9. In 1939, the average was 11.7 hours. The workday for hired labor averaged 9.9 hours, compared with 10.0 hours a year ago, and 10.1 hours on September 1, 1939.

Total employment on farms, at 10,907,000 workers on September 1, was up 3 per cent from a month earlier. Seasonal labor requirements for picking cotton in the South, and for the harvest of grains, fruit and specialty crops in the West, were primarily responsible for the increase. In other areas fewer people were working on farms than on August 1. Total farm employment was, however, 1 per cent less this month than the 11,040,000 of a year ago. The decrease was greatest in the West South Central States, where rain and wet fields delayed cotton picking in Texas. The East South Central, the West North Central and the Middle Atlantic regions also showed decreases. The Pacific region showed an increase of 3 per cent.