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AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION SERVICE

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University Farm, St. Paul 1, August 28, 1947

TURKEY PRICE SUPPORT PROGRAM TO BEGIN SEPTEMBER 1. The U. S. Department of Agriculture announced recently that its turkey price-support program will be ready for operation on September 1 instead of October 1 as originally planned.

Change in the starting date was made in view of present high feed prices, which will cause many producers to market their turkeys earlier than usual. Because early marketing is likely to mean that turkeys will reach trade channels in substantial numbers well in advance of the development of the usual holiday demand, the Department of Agriculture has amended its price-support program to include the period from September 1, 1947, through January 31, 1948.

In addition to the change in the starting date, the amended program expressly limits purchases to turkeys purchased and dressed after August 30, 1947. In other respects, the program will operate as originally announced on April 30.

Purchases will be made at prices which will be announced by the Department about September 1, and will reflect a national average price of 90 per cent of the August 15 parity price for turkeys.

THE DAIRY SITUATION. Milk producers will receive seasonally higher prices from now until late fall although prices probably will be below those of a year earlier. In mid-July, farmers sold milk for 9% less and butterfat for 4% less than last year. Milk and butterfat prices also were lower than usual compared with prices of feed and competing livestock products such as meat and eggs. This probably will continue to be the case for the rest of the year.

Despite less favorable relation between dairy and feed prices, milk output during the rest of 1947 probably will be about the same as last year. Dairy pastures are exceptionally good and the long-time trend in milk production per cow is upward. In the first 7 months of 1947, dairy farms produced about 2% more milk than in the same months of 1946. Output per cow was nearly 4% higher.

SOYBEAN MARKET SUMMARY. Crushing of soybeans the first 9 months of the 1946-47 season was the largest on record, reflecting the urgent demand for oil. Soybean stocks July 1 totaled 40 million bu. which was about 8% larger than a year ago. A soybean crop of 188 million bu. in 1947 was indicated by Aug. 1 prospects. After advancing to near record levels in March soybean prices have since declined somewhat but in July averaged 34% above a year ago.

HATCHERY PRODUCTION. A total of 41,876,000 chicks were hatched by commercial hatcheries during the month of July the BAE reported. This was 24% more than the hatch of 33,651,000 in July 1946 but 37% below the July 1941-45 average hatch of 66,388,000.

FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE COMMISSION PLANS EXTERMINATION OF INFECTED WILD ANIMALS. Wild-animal eradication experts of the U.S. and Mexico are making plans for the slaughter of infected cloven-footed wild game within the main zone in Mexico quarantined for foot-and-mouth disease, officials of the Mexican-U.S. Commission directing the fight against the malady have announced.

H. Nelson Elliott, one of the leading experts on wild game in the U.S. has joined the
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forces of the commission. For many years an employee of the wildlife service of the Department of the Interior, Dr. Elliott brings to the commission expert knowledge of the habits of wild game and the most effective ways of conducting the necessary extermination.

FEED MARKET SUMMARY. Supplies of byproduct feeds for the first 9 months of the 1946-47 season were the largest on record and amounted to 11.8 million tons, as a result of the record production of wheat millfeeds, gluten feed and meal and soybean meal, according to the Feed Market Summary of the Production and Marketing Administration. With continued heavy feeding, prices of feedstuffs advanced during the past six months to more than double the 5-year level. Feedstuffs now are priced relatively higher on average than poultry and dairy products, with the result that feeding ratios have declined.

FARM POPULATION ESTIMATES. The farm population of the U.S. increased for the second successive year in 1946, and reached a total of 27,550,000 by January 1947, according to estimates of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics. The number of people living on farms in January was 2,360,000 higher than 2 years earlier, when the farm population was the lowest it had been for many decades, but less than half of the wartime decline in farm population had been regained. The figure was 2,719,000 under the prewar level of 30,269,000 in January 1940.

WORLD CATTLE NUMBERS IN 1946 AND 1947. World cattle numbers at the beginning of 1947 were estimated at about 716 million head, an increase of 3.5 million over a year earlier. Present numbers are more than 6 million head or about 1 per cent above the 1931-40 average. Decreases which were reported in all the North American countries, Australia, and the Soviet Union were more than offset by increases in Asia, Europe, South America, and Africa.

Many of the war-devastated and drought-stricken countries in 1946 made a moderate recovery in cattle numbers because of a more favorable feed situation and increased breedings during the last year and a half. In other countries, particularly where decreases occurred, uncertainty of cattle prices, inadequate domestic or imported feed supplies, and the need for expanding food-grain production for human consumption in lieu of feed grains materially affected farmers' plans to increase breedings and generally retarded cattle raising.