

AMONG THE FARMERS

Federation of Agriculture Newsletter

HOG CHANGES

The month of October will see two significant and important changes related to the marketing of hogs. First of all on October 1, the support price level for Grade A hogs, basis Toronto, will drop from \$25 to \$23.65. It is also understood that the packers have decided in order to head off a heavy run of light hogs in the latter part of September that the discount on light animals will be increased from \$3.50 to \$5.

Until the government is ready to put the deficiency payment system into effect it will continue to buy pork cuts. Once deficiency payments are instituted the Government will no longer be in the hog buying business and the farmer will then receive the market price for his hogs plus payment by the Government should the national average price fall below an agreed on level.

HOG GRADES

The second change which will come into effect on October 5 deals with hog grades. In a general way the changes provide somewhat stricter fat requirements in both A and B hogs and substitute a single B grade for the present three grades of B1, B2 and B3.

At the present time there are six grades — A, B1, B2, B3, C and D — after October 5 there will be four — A, B, C and D.

At present the weight range for A's is 140 to 170, this is to be changed to 135 to 170.

The three old B grades ran from 125 to 185, the new B grade will run from 125 to 180 instead of from 120 to 185 as formerly.

Premiums will continue to be \$2.00 on A's with \$1.00 being paid for the B grade, formerly it was only on B1's. However, it is planned that later in 1950 the premium will be discontinued on B's and paid only on the top grade.

No changes have taken place in hog grades since 1934 when the emphasis was on the production of Wiltshire sides. The consumer is demanding a leaner meat and with the United States making progress towards producing a leaner hog it is important that Canadian producers maintain and improve their quality position. This the new grades are designed to do.

EGG SUPPORTS

The first announcement on deficiency payments on eggs made that payment would be made only to producers who sold through a registered egg grading station. This program has now been widened to include eggs marketed by producers direct to retail stores.

In order to qualify it will be necessary for the farmer to register as a producer-grader and to provide a district supervisor each week with a record of all eggs marketed.

Producers are advised that if they have not already completed the registration cards that they should do so as the new plan goes into effect on October 1. Unless the producer registers he will not receive deficiency payments when and if they are paid. In any event payment will not be made to any single producer on more than four thousand doz-

eggs which must be grade A extra large or A large during any twelve month period.

STILL HAYING

As of September 25 haying still continues in the three Maritime provinces. Curiously the claim is being made that some excellent hay is being stored from good fields that have been in hay for some years. This is apparently the result of most of the growth taking place since July. However, the newer fields are producing a woody sample even though it is mixed with some late green growth.

Continuing good weather aids grain harvesting and a good percentage of the crop is now either safely stored in sheaves or combined. In many parts of the province the demand for combining has outrun the supply of these machines and as a result some quite heavy fields of grain do not present a very attractive appearance.

Within two weeks potato digging will be general with crop prospects being predicted as spotty — some very good, some the opposite.

HARVEST FAIR

The Harvest Fair provides an opportunity for the display of field and garden crops — a display which used to be many years ago one of the great attractions in the old exhibition building. In addition the 4-H club people hold their annual round-up and compete with one another for provincial honours. Much of the interest centers in the large display of club calves which since the various achievement days have no doubt been receiving quite loving attention.

An added feature this year will be the official presentation of prizes to the County and provincial winners of the Pasture Improvement Competition sponsored by the P.E.I. Dairymen's Association and the Department of Agriculture. The prizes will be presented by the Minister of Agriculture, Premier W.R. Shaw and Mr. Max Thompson, president of the Association.

With no Maritime Winter Fair in prospect the Harvest Fair is pretty nearly the last chance to visit an exhibition until Royal time.

SCHOLARSHIPS

We repeat the announcement that applications are invited from young farmers for the Nuffield Foundation Travelling Scholarships. Those interested should contact the Federation office and complete their application as soon as possible.

REGULATIONS

Generally the farmer has been pictured as a rugged individualist who was able to operate in an independent manner and free to make his own decisions. All of which has been pictured as one of the great advantages of farm life and advocated quite strongly by those who might have something to lose by farmers working more closely together.

Of recent years there has been considerably more Government intervention in farm matters, a situation which has naturally resulted in the development of some concern on the part of farm people.

Will this trend continue? Must

the farmer look forward to more rather than less direction and regulation? From what quarter will it be applied?

The belief is held by many thinking people and students of the problem that in many countries agriculture will become almost in the nature of a public utility with a great deal of direction and regulation by Government. Certainly present trends in production and marketing appear to point to more regulation than has been the case in the past.

If the farmer has no choice but a future of regulation and direction he may have some choice in the quarter from which they will proceed. It is possible that through his own organization the farmer can control and direct the regulation. To some extent he may also influence it when applied by Government. The third alternative is that of private concerns, corporations, feed and packing houses and those who control capital. Which of the three will eventually call the plays can be determined by the farmer himself providing he takes an interest in the matter and is willing to do some work in controlling his own business.

FARM FORUM

This week a special Maritime Farm Forum committee met in Pictou and among other matters decided the regional topics for November 9 and February 7.

The first one will deal with the question of Maritime unity—political, economic and educational. The winter topic will discuss the value and development of the credit union movement and in the rural community. A strong committee was named to prepare reading material in connection with these topics. It was announced that the National Secretary of Farm Forum will visit the Maritimes during the last week of September. It is probable that Mr. Schwass will meet with the provincial committee and others interested in Farm Forum matters.

LIME SPREADING

The handling of lime is heavy

End Of Grade B Hog Premium Means Emphasis On Quality

Cutting out the premium on grade B hogs makes quality even more important to Prince Edward Island swine breeders. Hog producers in this province should in the future "exercise more care in breeding," stated H. W. Clay, senior livestock fieldman, in commenting on a new system of national grade standards for hog carcasses.

SOW SIDE

"Lots of hogs are grade B due to indifferent breeding, especially on the sow side," he said. The revision in hog grading, to start Oct. 5, will mean that hog producers will have to market slightly leaner, meatier hogs in order to collect the federal government premium on top grade animals.

Agriculture Minister Harkness, announcing the change Monday, also said that starting in the latter part of next year the \$1 a head premium paid by the government on grade B hogs will be ended. After that, the only premium will be the present \$2 a head for grade A hogs.

WHOLE PROFIT

In connection with the above Mr. Clay felt that the producer of Grade B hogs would find it difficult to survive. "Sometimes," he said, "the \$1 premium on grade A hogs plus the premium of \$1 a cwt the packing plants

work that probably calls for more mechanization than is presently the case. In Nova Scotia a special lime spreader has been imported from England to be used with farm tractors. This machine has the advantage of being able to spread wet lime. In addition large trucks are provided by custom operators. These trucks equipped with spreaders usually handle a car-load a day.

anywhere from 800 to 1,000 ducks in this section in mid September.

Big Pond, on the North shore of Kings County, had 16 blacks and teal where a normal concentration should have been between 150 and 200. Head of Fortune 14 blacks, normal concentration 300 or over, Black Pond Sanctuary approximately 150 teal, a dozen blacks, where there should have been one thousand. North River and West River a blank. South Lake 25 geese and approximately 20 black ducks, normal concentration 300 or better. We didn't have time to check East Lake but an observer told us only about 40 or 50 were present.

East Lake usually sports several hundred birds prior to the opening date.

GLOOMY PICTURE? This may look like a pretty gloomy duck picture and a natural question is: "What happened to the ducks present on August 1st?" Quite a few are still with us but are concentrated in large 'ratts' in safer places like Tracadie Bay and the tidal flats A

hunter with an outboard motor made a survey of the Hillsboro River on the same Sunday as we made our land check. He reported a good concentration of ducks in a wide section of the Hillsboro where ducks have a fair share of natural protection. I also have it on good authority that hundreds of black ducks were observed flying across the Strait in September their obvious objective being the Amherst marches.

Such flights are not unusual. In the old days when the duck season opened on the Amherst marshes on September 1st and in this province on September 15th I noted, during pre-season patrols, that our local duck crop increased rapidly after September 1st. Some marshes filled up over night. The \$65.00 question at the moment is: How will our local concentrations of ducks, with specific to blacks, act on the opening morning? My own opinion is that if we have Blue Bird weather on the morning of the 1st approximately 90 per cent of our ducks will take off for the

Hunters Corner

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On Sunday September 13th, Johnnie White and I left at 7:00 a.m. on a general duck count and quit at approximately 6:00 p.m. Blooming Point Ponds at 7:30 a.m. held 14 ducks, all teal. There should have been fifteen hundred or two thousand. There were that many there two weeks previous. Stephen MacDougald's pond, the one with the Island, held 7 Green-wing teal and they took off like jets when we were 300 yards distant. Miller's Marsh held 18 black ducks where there should have been 150. Lakeside Ponds, St. Peter's did not show a feather. The North shore string of ponds, usually the headquarters of several hundred Blue-wing teal and about half as many blacks were practically devoid of ducks. In the past it was nothing unusual to count

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