

FARM AND RANCH BULLETIN

Vol. 13, No. 9

September 15, 1958

NEW FARM BILL

The following are discussions of some of the major provisions of the Agricultural Act of 1958, which was passed by the Eighty-Fifth Congress and signed by the President.

Cotton

A minimum national upland cotton acreage allotment of 16 million acres is established for 1959 and subsequent years. In addition, a reserve of 310,000 acres is available for apportionment to small farms in order to maintain minimum farm allotments. The minimum cotton allotment for an individual farm is set at 10 acres or its 1958 acreage allotment, whichever is smaller.

For 1959 and 1960, each farmer will have a choice between two plans for upland cotton. "Choice A" is essentially the same program which has been in effect for the past few years under the Agricultural Act of 1949. The exception is: For 1959 the support price will be not less than 80 percent of parity, and for 1960 the support price will be not less than 75 percent of parity. "Choice B" permits farm acreage allotments to be increased up to 40 percent (the exact percentage to be determined by the Secretary of Agriculture), with the price support set at 15 parity points lower than the Choice A level.

Price supports for the 1959 and 1960 crops of upland cotton will be made available through a purchase program to Choice A farmers and through loans, purchases, and other operations to Choice B farmers. Support levels for both Choice A and Choice B producers

will be determined by the Secretary of Agriculture not later than January 31 of each year. These supports will *not* be subject to adjustment later in the year. The Secretary is required to notify each farm operator of the alternative levels of price support and alternative acreage allotments available for his farm.

Beginning in 1961, the "supply percentage" formula for determining the level of price support will no longer be in effect. The Secretary will set supports between 70 and 90 percent of parity for 1961-crop upland cotton and between 65 and 90 percent of parity for 1962 and subsequent years.

Beginning in 1959, the Commodity Credit Corporation will establish separate premiums and discounts for standard grades and split grades of upland cotton. For the 1961 and subsequent crops, price supports will be based on "the average of the crop" instead of the present basis of Middling $\frac{7}{8}$ inch.

From August 1, 1959, through July 31, 1961, the Commodity Credit Corporation will offer CCC-owned cotton for sale for unrestricted use at not less than 10 percent above the current level of price support prescribed in Choice B. Effective August 1, 1961, the minimum sales prices for CCC cotton for unrestricted use will be increased to 115 percent of the support price, plus reasonable carrying charges. However, under certain conditions, the CCC is authorized to sell a limited amount of cotton at market prices. The current export sales program (as authorized by the 1956 Agricultural Act) is not changed.

Corn and Feed Grains

The Agricultural Act of 1958 provides for a referendum to be held among corn producers in the commercial corn-producing area to determine which of two programs shall be in effect. If a majority of the producers approve, acreage allotments will be discontinued in the commercial corn area. The price support for corn will be 90 percent of the average farm price for the three preceding years but will not be less than 65 percent of parity. If the referendum does not carry, acreage allotments will remain in effect, and the minimum level of price support will continue to be between 75 and 90 percent of parity, depending on the supply percentage.

Beginning with the 1959 crops of oats, rye, barley, and grain sorghums, price supports will be at a level determined by the Secretary of Agriculture to be fair and reasonable in relation to the price support for corn. The feed value of the commodity in relation to corn, as well as other factors, will be taken into consideration in setting the price support level.

Rice

The present minimum national and state acreage allotments for rice will be extended permanently. Effective with the 1959 crop, the escalator clause, under which the minimum support level is determined on the basis of the supply percentage, is repealed. The price support will be at a level determined by the Secretary within the following limits: For 1959

and 1960, the price support will be not less than 75 percent and not more than 90 percent of parity; for 1961 the price support will be not less than 70 percent and not more than 90 percent of parity; and after 1961 the price support will be not less than 65 percent and not more than 90 percent of parity.

Wool

The Wool Act is extended for 3 years until March 31, 1962, and provides that 70 percent of the ad valorem duties on wool and wool products (in addition to 70 percent of the specific duties) can be used for incentive payments. The ad valorem duties add about \$20 million a year to the funds available for payments under the wool program.

Miscellaneous

The Agricultural Act of 1958 provides a uniform procedure for transferring a farm allotment to other farms owned by a producer if he is displaced from his farm by eminent domain proceedings.

The special program for making dairy products available to military agencies and veterans' hospitals is extended through December 31, 1961.

The Commodity Credit Corporation is authorized to donate cotton to educational institutions for use in training students in the processing and manufacture of cotton into textiles.

Profits from Peanuts



Tests conducted by the Oklahoma Agricultural Experiment Station during 1957 demonstrate the advantage of planting recommended varieties and of using improved cultural practices in peanut production.

The use of recommended varieties instead of common seed resulted in a 15-percent gain in yield and an additional \$12 per acre income. Using improved cultural practices — such as seed treatment; weed and pest control mea-

asures; and recommended rates of planting, seed size, and methods of cultivation — resulted in a 30-percent increase in yield and an extra \$24 of income per acre. The combined value of recommended varieties and cultural practices amounted to a 45-percent gain in yield and \$36 more income per acre.

Costs of dairy farming now favor the mechanization of chore work. Operators planning to mechanize should balance carefully the estimated costs against expected net returns, states A. M. Meekma, Extension Dairy Husbandman with the Texas Agricultural Extension Service.

Cotton Defoliation Guide Available



A good cotton defoliation job will pay dividends in terms of less trash and green stain and better grades when cotton is harvested mechanically, points out Fred C.

Elliott, Extension Cotton Specialist with the Texas Agricultural Extension Service. The specialist says that this is especially true if the crop yield is high and if the plants are tall, leafy, and succulent.

Application of defoliants usually should be delayed until 55 to 60 percent of the cotton bolls are open. Dew is necessary to activate defoliants used as dusts. Defoliants applied as sprays should be used as recommended by the manufacturer of the material or in accordance with recommendations contained in the publication entitled *Guide for Use of Cotton Defoliants*, which is available from the offices of local county agricultural agents.

New Insecticide for Livestock Pest Control

The United States Department of Agriculture recommends the use of Bayer 21/199 (commercially available as CO-RAL) for controlling certain livestock pests. With proper precautions, this material can be used on beef cattle, sheep, and goats for the control of cattle grubs, horn flies, lice, ticks, keds (sheep ticks), and screwworms and on swine for the control of lice and screwworms.

Bayer 21/199 should not be applied to sick animals or to calves which are less than 3 months of age. Sixty days must intervene between the date of the last application of this insecticide and the time of slaughter of the animals. Bayer 21/199 is not recommended for use on dairy cattle or milk goats, since it secretes in the milk for a week to 10 days following treatment.

When applied externally as a single spray treatment, Bayer 21/199 is absorbed and acts systemically to kill 75 to 100 percent of the young cattle grubs in the animal's tissue. The material is a potent contact insecticide against

ticks and horn flies and provides protection for 2 to 3 weeks. A single application usually will provide a high degree of control of lice on sheep, goats, and cattle, as well as keds on sheep.

One of the most beneficial uses of Bayer 21/199 is for controlling screwworms. A single treatment destroys infestations and usually protects against reinfestation until wounds heal.

Rabies Potential Threat to Livestock

A higher incidence of rabies among wildlife in this country has resulted in a spread of the disease among domestic animals, reports the United States Department of Agriculture.

In 1957, there were 654 cases of rabies among cattle in the United States, 25 among sheep and goats, and 24 among horses. The principal wild animals affected by the disease were foxes and skunks, with 1,068 cases and 775 cases, respectively. The number of rabid dogs in 1957 was 1,908, reflecting an encouraging reduction from the 6,949 reported in 1947. During the same period, however, rabies in wild animals more than doubled—from 728 cases in 1947 to 1,989 cases in 1957.

Control of rabies in this country is based upon (1) immunization of animals, (2) elimination of stray dogs, and (3) the reduction of excessive numbers of wildlife carriers. Outbreaks among wild animals generally occur when the population of a species becomes especially dense in a particular area.

Is Crossbreeding Dairy Cattle Worthwhile?

The goal of a study recently started by United States Department of Agriculture dairy scientists is to obtain additional information on whether crossbreeding of dairy cattle can be valuable to the Nation's dairy industry. The trials are to be made at the USDA's Agricultural Research Center at Beltsville, Maryland.

The long-range project will compare purebred Brown Swiss, Ayrshire, and Holstein cows with crosses of the same breeds. The test matings have been planned so that two- and three-way

crosses can be compared in the same generation.

Results of the trials will be evaluated on the basis of milk production, butterfat content of the milk, solids-not-fat output, breeding characteristics, birth weight and growth rate of calves, and feed efficiency. The study should provide further information on the value of crossbreeding for rapid herd improvement when sires from artificial-breeding establishments are used.

The Holstein, Ayrshire, and Brown Swiss breeds were selected for this trial because of their similarity in milk outturn. Forty heifers from each of the three breeds were purchased from widely separated sources in order to obtain the greatest possible variety of pedigrees. All heifers are from herds with milk production levels equal to or better than the average for the particular breed and from dams with similar records.

Effect of Nitrogen Fertilizer on Wheat

Five sources of nitrogen were applied to irrigated winter wheat at the Southwestern Great Plains Field Station at Bushland, Texas, during 1957, reports the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station. The nitrogen was applied on Pullman silty clay loam at rates of 0, 50, 100, and 150 pounds of nitrogen per acre. The trial was conducted on land that was broken out of sod shortly before the wheat was seeded.

Results of the trial show that there were no differences in yield, test weight, or protein content among plots receiving different sources of nitrogen at comparable rates. Plots receiving 50 pounds of nitrogen per acre produced more forage than did those receiving no nitrogen. An additional increase was obtained from the 100-pound rate.

Test weights were not affected appreciably by the rate of nitrogen. The protein content of the wheat receiving 50 pounds of nitrogen per acre was no higher than that on the check plots. The use of 100 pounds of nitrogen increased the protein content above the level in the check plots or plots where the 50-pound

rate was used, and the gain from the application of 150 pounds of nitrogen per acre exceeded the increase in protein content resulting from the 100-pound rate.

The area in the trials was placed under irrigation for the first time in 1957. The test will be continued on the same plots for 3 to 5 years.

Better Beef Cattle



Breeding and gaining-ability tests with beef cattle have been under way for 8 years at the Texas Agricultural Experiment Substation at McGregor. As a result of tests with the substation's herd and with cattle from cooperating breeders, animal husbandmen with the substation make the following recommendations for herd improvement.

1. Keep cattle from which selections are to be made under practical conditions for production.
2. Select cattle at a practical age (usually market age) for production.
3. Use actual scale weights.
4. Determine the ages of calves by recording dates of birth.
5. Compare animals on the basis of gain at the same time and under the same conditions.
6. Select animals on the basis of weight gain.
7. Select first on the individual's gain record and then on the record of his offspring.
8. Select both sexes — sires more critically.
9. Keep selection simple and sound.
10. When buying bulls, get tested, high-gaining individuals.
11. Select conformation and type which will allow slaughter cattle to reach the higher grades with proper finish.

The FARM AND RANCH BULLETIN is prepared in the Research Department under the direction of J. Z. Rowe, Agricultural Economist.