AGRICULTURAL OUTLOOK FOR 1927

An analysis of the detailed report of the United States Department of Agriculture, looking into the prospects for Maryland farmers for 1927, shows the following.

The livestock industries have represented the strength of the agricultural situation in 1926 and the prospects are that they will be favorable throughout 1927.

Domestic demand for farm products of the 1927-28 season is not likely to be materially different from 1926. More attention should be given to means of lowering cost of production and to producing better quality products rather than to any general increase in production. Some improvement in the purchasing power of foreign countries for agricultural products of 1927 may be expected.

The prospect that industrial employment will be less in the first half of 1927 than in 1926 indicates that a slightly larger supply of farm labor will be available in Maryland wages may be lower.

No material change in the price of farm machinery may be expected in 1927 as compared with 1926.

With the probable decline in building activity in the cities during 1927 no increase in prices in building materials is to be expected. Possibly, they will be lower.

Prices of fertilizer will probably be lower in 1927 than in 1926.

The autumn and winter condition of the 1927 wheat crop is about the same as for the 1926 crop, but the yield prospects cannot be forecast at this early date.

The barley and oats crop serves as a protection crop for spring planted alfalfa. The low prices for these feed grains make their production in Maryland for purposes other than farm use impractical.

Dairy production in Maryland is on a sound basis. The fluid milk outlet continues good, and satisfactory marketing conditions have provided fair returns to producers. The present volume of production may be maintained with fewer animals if they are carefully selected; adequately fed; and well cared for, and this, rather than an increased number of dairy cows and a much larger output, is needed now.

On account of the shortage of supplies of real and alsike clover and the abundance of alfalfa seed, the spring of 1927 will be an especially opportune time in which to substitute alfalfa for red clover. Sweet clover should be planted in what early this spring for pasture purposes.

The outlook for poultry and poultry products for 1927 in Maryland seems satisfactory. There is every indication of a good demand for baby chicks. This will bring on a rather heavy supply of broilers, and producers will do well to market this class of poultry early. With egg production on the increase through the country, and the largest storage holdings of dressed poultry in the history of this country, there is little possibility of increased prices for either eggs or poultry in 1927.

Though prices for lambs and wool are distinctly lower than a year ago, the beginning of 1927 found prices for both lambs and wool in Maryland at levels which are favorable to the producer.

There is a serious probability that an excessive acreage of potatoes will be planted in 1927.

An incrased acreage of sweet potatoes this season should be planted only by those growers who need the increased supply for their own use, who can dispose of the crop on their local markets, or who can afford to produce a crop for sale at relatively low prices.

On the basis of the information available Maryland growers have an opportunity to supply the market with early tomatoes from June 20th until July 10th, the latter date depending upon seasonal conditions. In order to mature the crop sufficiently early, full advantage must be taken of the best known cultural practices.

The asparagus acreage has greatly been increased the past few years in Maryland. Asparagus has posibilities as a canning crop in certain sections of Maryland where sufficient acreage is available to canners who are interested in canning this commodity, on a competitive basis with other asparagus canning sections.

Strawberry returns per acre, probably will be considerably less than the average for the last two years. Acreage has increased considerably and caution should be exercised by growers who contemplate increasing acreage this spring.

In the swine industry in Maryland a normal production program should be pursued in 1927. Prices for hogs are on a satisfactory basis, and indications point to a continuation of favorable market conditions during much or all of this year.

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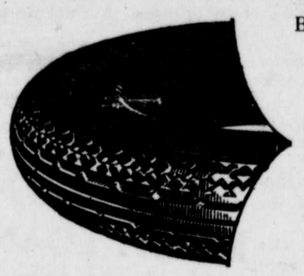

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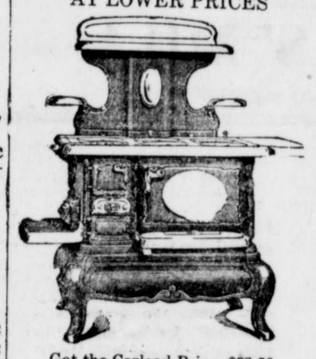

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