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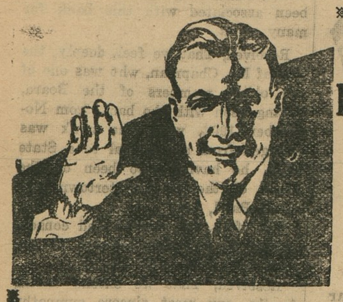

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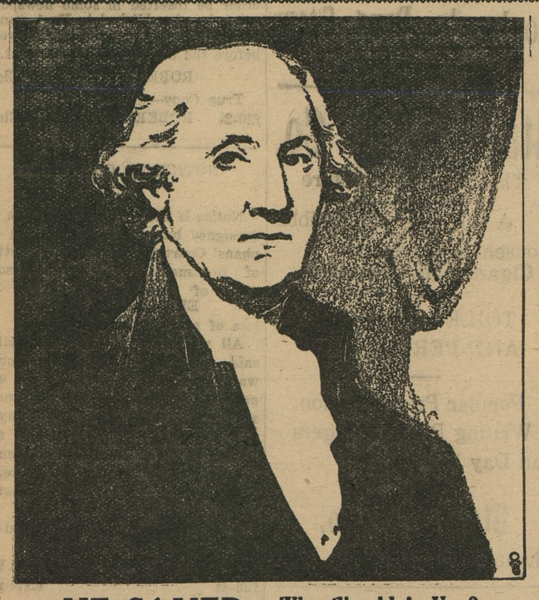

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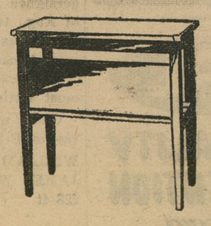

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The Agricultural Outlook For Maryland for 1926

While the farming industry is in the best general position since 1920, any general expansion in production this year would tend to place the farmers in a class favorable economic position than they now hold. An Any material expansion in Maryland should be done on the basis of local markets.

There is little liklihood of an increased domestic and foreign demand for farm products during the year will see a decrease in demand. Farmers in Maryland should, so far os possible, adjust their production to meet local market requirements, especially in those products for which there is likely to be keen competition from other States and counties.

No material change in the supply of farm labor, and no reduction in farm wages is expected in 1926, and the price of farm materials probably will bremain at the present level. While there has been a general scarcity of seasonable labor in Maryland for the past year or so, conditions indicate that the situation in 1926 will be no worse than last year.

Sufficient funds for agricultural credit will be available in most regious at about the same rate as in 1925. In the Eastern States particularly no difficulity should be encountered in securing credit at reasonably low rates.

Wheat. Although it is yet too early to form an estimate of the 1926 world wheat production, it is expected that it will be smaller than in 1925. Maryland harvested about 553,000 acres in 1925 and produced about 11,500,000 bushels of wheat, all of which grades as soft winter wheat.

Corn. A slightly enlarged corn crop ocreage, with yields above normal, coincident with a decreased feeding requirement for hogs and cattle is principally responsible for low prices now prevailing in the United States. Maryland normally produces less corn than is consumed within the State. It would seem therefore that the corn acreage of 1925 (646,000 acres) should be duplicated in 1926 throughout the State as a whole and some slight increases might be made in Southern Maryland and on the lower Eastern Shore.

Oats. The decreasing supply of horses on the farms and in the cities has caused a low demand for oats, resulting in the lowest prices for this grain since 1921-22.

Potatoes. Growers of very early potatoes in the States south of Maryland who can market their product by the first of June have an unusual opportunity this season. There is danger, however, that Maryland growers of late and midseason potatoes may be influenced by present prices to plant too heavily. Maryland's fall potato crop is planted late enough to permit the growers to know before planting time whether plantings for the country as a whole have been heavy enough to make increased plantings inadvisable.

Hogs. The outlook for the swine industry throughout 1926 appears very favorable with indications that hog prices will be maintained at about the 1925 levels. The number of hogs in the areas of commercial production is the smallest since 1921 and for the country as a whole the smallest in many years. Stocks of pork and lard are the smallest in ten years.

Swine on farms in Maryland decreased from 306,452 on January 1, 1920, to 203,133 on January 1, 1925, and to 190,000 on January 1, 1926, while sows kept for breeding purposes decreased from 41,320 in 1920 to 26,066 in 1925.

Dairying. The dairy industry as a whole is in a relatively strong position. For the United States the number of dairy heifers on farms has been decreasing since 1922 and the number of milk cows on farms in slightly less than a year ago.

The number of dairy cows on the farms in Maryland increased from 161,972 in 1920 to 172,791 in 1925, while the number of young dairy cattle decreased from 67,739 in 1920 to 56,586 in 1925. Some slight increase in numbers of young dairy stock in Maryland farms during the next two or three years may be desirable. Maryland dairy products are largely sold in the form of fluid milk, and production should be maintained at a level which is sufficient to supply local demand.

Horses and Mules. The present number of work animals is apparently ample to meet farmers' needs during 1926, although there has been a marked decrease in the number of colts foaled during the past six or seven years. Continued reduction will eventually result in an acute shortage of work animals.

The number of horses on farms in Maryland decreased from 141,341 in 1920 to 116,761 in 1925, while the number of mules decreased from 32,621 in 1920 to 30,761 in 1925.

Poultry and Eggs. The market for poultry, at least during the first six months will probably be better than during the same period of 1925 when storage stocks of dressed poultry had a depressing influence. Storage stocks this year are considerably below those of the same month last year, which may be expected to result in broader outlets for fresh killed poultry.

Canning Crops. The usual production and pack of sweet corn, tomatoes and peas in 1925 would indicate that growers in Maryland would carefully consider the acreage to be devoted to these crops in 1926. The pack of sweet corn for the United States was 14,160,000 cases in 1923, 12,131,000 cases in 1924, and 24,320,000 cases in 1925; the pack of tomatoes was 14,672,000 cases in 1923, 12,519,000 cases in 1924, and 19,770,000 cases in 1925; while the pack of peas was 13,948,000 cases in 1923, 19,315,000 cases in 1924, and 17,816,000 cases in 1925.

In the light of present conditions, a reduction of acreage to the normal market demands would seem advisable. It is essential that greater effort be made toward improving the quality of Maryland canned goods.

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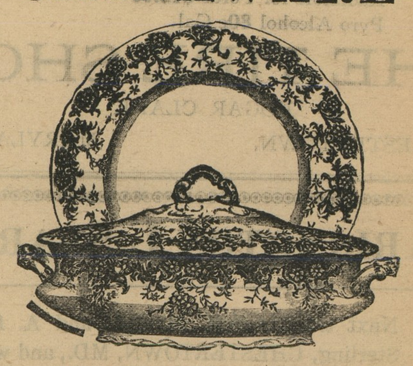

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