

Editorials

Lamb Tariff Increases Denied

SHEEPGROWERS are understandably unhappy about the refusal of the tariff commission to give lamb and mutton more protection. The commission turned down the growers' request for relief on the grounds that they are not yet suffering serious injury. Commission members thus appeared to favor the rather doubtful philosophy of not locking the gate until the "sheep are stolen."

Imports have increased from a negligible volume to almost 8 per cent of our lamb and mutton slaughter during the past three

years. Imports of live sheep totaled 75,000 head in 1959 of which 48,000 head came from Australia and New Zealand.

Those in touch with the production situation in these and other foreign countries foresee a continuing rapid increase of lamb imports.

About two months ago the House Agricultural Committee unanimously adopted a resolution asking that remedial action be taken before serious injury is done to the domestic lamb producing industry.

But the tariff commission turned thumbs down on the request for prompt action.

A Word to Consumers

SHORT-SIGHTED CONSUMER groups are working against their longtime best interests in opposing the efforts that are being made to maintain prices of agricultural products at levels that will return a reasonable profit to producers.

If farm incomes are permitted to get too far out of line with prices of other commodities and services, consumers will eventually be compelled to pay much higher prices than those based on present support levels.

This point is made by the National Grange in listing the following reasons why much higher prices will inevitably follow if price levels are not maintained on a basis that will permit efficient family farms to stay in business:

Fewer outstanding rural young people will remain on the farm.

Fewer will get a college education. Management ability on the average farm will therefore deteriorate.

Fewer and fewer producers will be able to afford the more expensive technological improvements designed to increase efficiency. This is the road to stagnation.

As farmers become poorer, the threat of a radical change in our type of agriculture emerges. United States may be forced to choose among (1) across-the-board integration; (2) a corporate form of agriculture; (3) an agricultural "labor" union; or (4) an agriculture controlled by outside capital.

As the Grange sees it, any of these systems would result in far higher labor and management costs in food production. And if such outside groups should gain control of the production of agricultural products, they would strive to control market supplies and set prices at much higher levels.

Too few leaders of consumer groups see these dangers that lie ahead. So consumer influence is almost invariably thrown against constructive efforts to maintain farm prices at reasonable levels in relationship to other prices.

An Optimist in the Atomic Age

ALTHOUGH HE IS more aware than most men of the awesome destructive powers of atomic weapons, Dr. Edward Teller, the great atomic scientist, told members of the Commonwealth Club of California recently why vastly more good than harm should come to the world through the use of nuclear reactors.

Here are some of his reasons for being optimistic:

As long as we, and the free world, are prepared to defend ourselves with big weapons, and small weapons in a flexible way, there will be no war.

Properly developed and handled, nuclear reactors of the future will produce enough energy to make an amazingly high standard of living available to all the peoples of the world wherever they may be.

When nuclear explosions are refined and controlled they can be used to make harbors and canals, to regulate underground water flow and create underground water reservoirs, to solve big problems of transportation, mining, oil production, and water supply.

Weather satellites will greatly increase the accuracy of long-range weather forecast-

ing and on the basis of information thus secured we may be able to influence weather, increasing and controlling rainfall where it is most needed.

Man may learn to cultivate the oceans as we now cultivate the land, grow the right kind of fish and perhaps even "produce the right genetic changes and breed fish which will swim into the appropriate nets and enclosures when the season of the harvesting has come."

These observations of Dr. Teller point to just a few of the countless revolutionary changes which will result from discoveries and developments that are even now beginning to pour from the research laboratories of the world. These wonders of the scientific age will facilitate and require revolutionary adjustments between men and nations.

In Dr. Teller's opinion, the function of the powerful weapons of defense being developed by the free world is to buy time while nuclear energy, electronic methods and equipment, and other scientific achievements solve the material problems of mankind which have been and still are the basic causes of wars and dangers of war.

Straws in the Wind

Internal Revenue Service has ruled that rental income is not to be counted in figuring self-employment earnings. The first \$4,800 of income of a self-employed taxpayer is taxed at 4½ per cent. Income from dividends and interest, as well as rent is not included in this total. Part or all of a farm or ranch may be leased and if the owner does not participate in operating it the rent need not be added to the self-employed earning total.

* * *

Tax credit for retirement income is limited by the Internal Revenue Service. Although the credit is based on the amount of dividends, interest, rents and similar income, IRS recently ruled that a farmer cannot use more than 70 per cent of net farm income in figuring credit. Another recent ruling is that Commodity Credit certificates of interest are not taxable income until cashed even though you may have elected to report CCC loans as gross income instead of waiting until the crop is sold. According to IRS, for tax purposes no loan has been made until the crop is sold.

* * *

Unless Congress enacts a new wheat law within the next few days, which is doubtful, wheat growers will vote in a referendum on July 21 to decide whether marketing quotas will apply for the 1961 crop. Farmers who will harvest more than 15 acres of wheat as grain, will be eligible to cast ballots. Most growers will vote in favor of quotas because if quotas are not approved price support will drop from the present basis of 75 per cent of parity to 50 per cent.

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Lubricants made from tallow stand up under the high operating temperatures of jet airplanes better than petroleum products. It appears likely that this livestock fat will be used to an increasing extent in the manufacture of greases for this purpose.

* * *

Believe it or not, a loud hi-fi recording of jet plane noise has been found effective in getting broody hens back into production. It is more resultful than the broody coup or progesterone treatment. And it has no ill effect on production if laying birds are treated by mistake.

* * *

Purdue University reports, "a review of 80 experiments indicates a variety of results, but the majority of tests shows very little if any effect on improving gains or feed efficiency," through the use of tranquilizers. However, these drugs do quiet cattle during such periods of stress as shipping, weaning, branding, clipping, dehorning, castrating, etc.

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