

The Work of the President's Cabinet

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

TREND OF PRICES OF FARM PRODUCTS

According to the department's bureau of crop estimates, the level of prices paid to producers of the United States for the principal crops increased about 11.2 per cent during January; in the past seven years the price level has increased during January about 2.1 per cent.

From January 1 to February 1 the price of wheat increased 21 per cent, corn 11 per cent, oats 11 per cent, barley 16 per cent, rye 12 per cent, buckwheat 7 per cent, potatoes 1 per cent, flaxseed 21 per cent, hay 4 per cent, cotton 12 per cent, chickens 3 per cent; butter declined 3 per cent and eggs declined 8 per cent.

On February 1 the index figure of crop prices was about 6.4 per cent higher than a year ago, 24.8 per cent higher than two years ago, and 11.1 per cent higher than the average of the past seven years on February 1.

The level of prices paid to producers of the United States for meat animals decreased 0.6 per cent during the month from December 15 to January 15. This compares with an average increase from December 15 to January 15 in the past four years of 1.8 per cent.

On January 15 the average (weighted) price of meat animals—hogs, cattle, sheep and chickens—was \$6.57 per 100 pounds, which compares with \$7.05 a year ago, \$6.40 two years ago, \$5.44 three years ago, \$6.40 four years ago, and \$6.67 five years ago.

The average prices to producers for the entire United States on dates indicated, are as follows:

	Feb. 1, 1915	Feb. 1, 1914
Wheatbushel..	\$1.299	\$0.816
Corndo....	.728	.683
Oatsdo....	.501	.393
Barleydo....	.629	.524
Ryedo....	1.006	.617
Buckwheatdo....	.837	.756
Potatoesdo....	.504	.697
Flaxseeddo....	1.637	1.278
Cottonpound..	.074	.119
Butterdo....	.279	.274
Chickensdo....	.115	.117
Eggsdozen..	.292	.284
Hayton..	11.69	12.41
	Jan. 15, 1915	Jan. 15, 1914
Applesbushel..	\$0.693	\$1.106
Beansdo....	2.63	2.17
Onionsdo....	.889	1.21
Cabbagehundredweight..	1.36	1.87
Turnipsbushel..	.491	.563
Clover seeddo....	8.51	7.99
Alfalfa seeddo....	7.61	6.55
Timothy seeddo....	2.63	2.07
Broom cornton..	66.26	94.38
Cotton seeddo....	18.97	22.70
Hogshundredweight..	6.57	7.45
Beef cattledo....	5.99	6.04
Veal calvesdo....	7.66	7.89
Sheepdo....	4.95	4.67
Lambsdo....	6.47	6.16
Wool, unwashedpound..	.186	.157
Milch cowshead..	58.48	57.99
Horsesdo....	119.69	137.46

STOP ADULTERATION OF OATS

Seventy-five carloads of oats intended for export have recently been seized by the federal authorities because they were found to be adulterated within the meaning of the food and drugs act. The adulteration charged is the addition of feed barley or water, or both. Under certain circumstances adulteration in these ways may be so profitable that it is believed to be at times a common practice among grain shippers. The government, however, is determined that the practice shall cease at once, and field representatives of the department have all been instructed to exercise the utmost vigilance in detecting future shipments adulterated in this way.

Low-grade barley, which is known to the trade as "feed barley," is sometimes mixed with oats when there is sufficient difference between the prices of the two grains to make this profitable. This "feed barley" is the product which remains after the best grade of the grain has been separated and removed for malting purposes. It contains material percentages of weed seeds, foreign grains, and dust, and the addition to oats of such a product is held to be a violation of the

food and drugs act. The addition of water to oats arises from the fact that the grain is sold by weight. Investigations of the department of agriculture have revealed the fact that water is sometimes added in the amount of from 2 to 4 per cent.

In the opinion of the government officials there is no reason why either of these practices should be tolerated. Grain shippers and dealers, therefore, are being warned that the prevalence of the custom in the past will not affect the legal proceedings against future shipments found to be adulterated in this way.

CHANGES IN FOOT-AND-MOUTH QUARANTINE

Two orders, signed February 13, by the secretary of agriculture, make radical changes in the quarantine regulations for the foot-and-mouth disease. All the territory east of the Mississippi and north of Tennessee is now included in the quarantined area and no shipments of live stock, except for the purpose of immediate slaughter will be permitted from this area to the south or west. Stock owners, however, in the states of Virginia, West Virginia, Vermont, Maine, and the District of Columbia may ship out their stock upon affidavit that it has been on their farms for a certain length of time and has not been exposed to any risk of contagion.

This step the authorities believe to be necessary for the protection of the south, southwest, and west, which have not as yet been affected by the disease. The recent discovery of a few cases where cattle, shipped from areas where the disease had existed, carried it to previously uninfected sections, such as four counties in Kansas, convinced the department that no precautions will make such shipments absolutely safe. The new measure, it is said, should confine the disease to the regions in which it has already made its appearance and in which the work of eradicating it will be pushed as before. All of the large slaughtering centers are within this area and very few shipments for immediate slaughter are expected to be made out of it.

The regulations are embodied in the order known as Bureau of Animal Industry Order No. 234, which defines and classifies the various areas in all the states affected. Another order, Bureau of Animal Industry Order No. 233, requires that on and after February 17, 1915, all live stock, unless intended for immediate slaughter, shall be transported only in railroad cars which have been cleaned and disinfected. This applies to the whole United States.

UNITED STATES NOT THREATENED WITH FOOD SHORTAGE

On February 17 the department issued a statement regarding food stuffs. The 1914 wheat crop of the United States was estimated to be 891,000,000 bushels. The estimated surplus carried over from the 1913 crop was about 76,000,000 bushels. There was, therefore, a total available supply of 967,000,000 bushels. As the normal annual per capita consumption of wheat in the United States is about 5.3 bushels, 520,000,000 bushels should meet our normal domestic requirements for food; in addition, 90,000,000 bushels are required annually for seeding. Six hundred and ten million bushels, therefore, should supply the normal domestic demand. This would leave a surplus of 357,000,000 bushels. Of this surplus, about 210,000,000 bushels were exported by January 30. This left 147,000,000 bushels, or 40,000,000 bushels more than our average annual export for the past five years, for export between February 1 and the appearance of the new crop, or for carrying over into the next crop year. The amount is sufficient to permit the export of nearly 1,000,000 bushels a day until July 1, before which time the new crop will begin to be available. This is about the average recent exportation.

But suppose a shortage in wheat should develop in the next three months, what would be the situation? There is a great surplus in other food crops in the United States, a number of which can be used as substitutes. Wheat does not constitute more than 12 per cent of the normal diet, about the same as poultry and eggs. Meat and dairy products constitute 48 per cent; vegetables, 11 per cent; fruits, nuts, sugar, fish, and other items remaining 19 per cent. There are larger supplies of corn and other grains, meat animals, dairy products, potatoes, and fruit at the opening of 1915 than for many years. The

most important competing products are corn and potatoes. This is shown by the fact that while the normal consumption of wheat is 5.3 bushels, in Maine it is only 4.7 bushels and in Michigan 5. In the wheat-growing states, where wheat is abundant, such as Minnesota, the average is 7.2, whereas in the south, where corn is much used, the average is 4 bushels. Normally about 3 per cent of the corn crop is consumed as food. Of our total crop about 80,000,000 bushels would be used for food, the remainder for other purposes. The remainder could be used for foods and substitutes used for animals. The potato production in the United States averages 3.8 bushels per capita. This year the available supply is 4.1 bushels. The average price of meat animals was 7 per cent cheaper in January than a year ago, butter 2 per cent lower, the price of chickens slightly lower, of potatoes 35 per cent lower, and of apples it was 37 per cent lower.

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Early in February Secretary Redfield wrote the following letter to the Honorable John J. Fitzgerald, chairman of the house committee on appropriations, requesting a reduction of \$40,300 in the appropriation for taking the census of manufactures:

"We like you to feel that the department of commerce realizes the efforts of your committee to economize in government expenditures, and so far as it is in its power endeavors to second them by saving money itself wherever possible even after same shall have been appropriated. Therefore I am sure you will be glad to know that the director of the census finds that through the success of his efforts in putting the census of manufactures, now under way, upon a business basis he has been able so far to save money that he has requested the senate committee on appropriations to reduce the amount already appropriated by the house of representatives in the pending legislative, executive and judicial bill for completing the census of manufactures by the amount of \$40,300. This amount the progress already made shows will not be required. It is conditioned upon the amount in the present bill being made immediately available, otherwise we should not be able to make the saving.

"This is written to you both for the reason above stated and because we should like you to understand why, should the bill come into conference, we have asked for a reduction of the amount which you kindly allotted us and the conditions under which same can be saved."

EXHIBITS AT THE PANAMA PACIFIC EXPOSITION

Exhibits of educational and historical interest have been installed at the Panama-Pacific International exposition. In the Food Products building will be found a large exhibit by the bureau of fisheries, the Palace of Machinery houses an extensive display from the bureau of lighthouses, and in the Palace of Liberal Arts will be found exhibits from the bureaus of standards, navigation, census, and foreign and domestic commerce, and the coast and geodetic survey. The magnitude and excellence of the department's showing is largely due to the energy and activity of its official representative, Dr. Geo. C. Havenner, the chief clerk of the department.

BUREAU OF FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC COMMERCE

CANNED GOODS INDUSTRY

Three reports prepared by Commercial Agent J. Alexis Shriver, on the canned goods industry in various parts of the world, have been issued recently by the bureau of foreign and domestic commerce.

One entitled "Canned Pineapple Industry of the World," states that Hawaii produced in round numbers, 2,000,000 cases of canned pineapple in 1914 as compared with 2,000 in 1901, a most remarkable development in the face of active competition from the older canning centers of the far east. The up-to-date machinery and the cleanliness that characterizes the Hawaiian factories are contrasted with the hand labor and the general untidiness that is the rule in most of the other pineapple centers, and the conditions in general that govern the industry in all the producing countries of the world are described in the report.

Another report entitled "Canned Goods Trade in the Far East," contains many interesting facts about the home life of the Chinese, Japanese, Malays, etc., and many valuable suggestions for