

-Is There a Cure or Only a Painkiller?

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story you need go only 50 miles to the south to the University of Nebraska's College of Agriculture in Lincoln.

Both the supply and demand for agriculture products are what economists call "inelastic."

According to Dr. Howard Ottoson, University agricultural economist, the price elasticity of demand for all agricultural products has been estimated at somewhere between ".1 and .2." This simply means that every time the price of corn or sorghum, for example, decreases one per cent, people will want to buy only one to two-tenths of a percent more of these feed grains. Actually Americans will eat just so much of certain types of food no matter how much the price of this food rises or falls. Or as Dr. Ottoson puts it:

"Inelasticity of demand occurs simply because of the lack of stretch in the typical American stomach. When the price of food goes down, we are not apt to eat many more calories. We are more apt to think about a new car or a motor boat, or a trip to the mountains."

Ag Products Inelastic
The supply of agriculture products have this same inelastic quality. During the year farmers will raise about the same amount even though the prices may fall. According to Ottoson, the elasticity of supply is less than .2 for all food products for the short run (one season). This means that as the prices go down one per cent, farmers will decrease their production by only two-tenths of a per cent.

So, when these two economic freaks . . . inelastic supply and inelastic demand . . . are put together, they cause great big fluctuations in the prices farmers receive for their products, even though the difference in supply may not be too great.

Ottoson says that in 1959, for example, the additional five per cent of products that were fed into the market caused a 20 per cent drop in prices. Thus agriculture's supply and demand structure is completely opposite from most other industries where prices can be kept relatively stable through an elastic supply to

meet the fluctuating demand of their products.

Stethoscope Tells Story

In 1961 a stethoscope applied to the nation's breadbasket finds these sources for the surplus headache; more powerful and efficient machinery, fertilizer, irrigation, population variations, and changes in eating habits. They add up to a million-dollar migraine, even in Dodge County.

Will today's headache turn into a cerebral hemorrhage, or an old-fashioned stomachache, so familiar to the pioneers of Dodge County?

About technocracy, Dodge County's implement dealer Froid predicts: "There will be more automation in hydraulics in tractors. This means there will be less fatigue for the operators, and thus they will be able to farm more per person."

His other predictions: Wheat farmers will work only 100 hours per year, more tractor horsepower, more conveniences, more speeds forward on machines, and more efficiency.

And the general manager of a hybrid seed corn plant in Fremont, W. A. Koepplin, feels that Dodge County, as well as the rest of Nebraska, "hasn't anywhere reached maximum corn production."

He says: "Yields could improve another 50 per cent on the average with fertilizer and irrigation."

"Production will be increased 10 to 15 per cent by insect control, and from 15 to 25 per cent by the use of herbicides."

"Farmers will use 500 times as much fertilizer as they use now."

More predictions can be had at the University Agriculture College. Prof. Lloyd W. Hurlbut, president of the American Society of Agricultural Engineers, the chairman of the department of agricultural engineering at the University of Nebraska, says that patterns of specialization are already appearing.

He said that a company was formed in western Nebraska for the purpose of feeding 50,000 beef cattle a year. The company plans to employ 50 people, including a bookkeeper, several secretaries, a veterinarian, and a feed technologist. The long-

term plans include slaughtering facilities.

What is going to happen to future population? In the nation's capital, the USDA says there will be 210 to 215 million people in the United States by 1975 and 370 million by 2010. In other words, there will be a little over 2.2 times as many people in the United States 50 years from now as there were in 1956. This means that if Dodge County keeps up with the national average it will have over 70,000 people in the year 2010.

And will American's eating habits continue to change?

The USDA says people will be eating higher-cost foods such as meats, milk, and certain fruits and vegetables that tend to upgrade the diet but add nothing to the number of pounds of food or number of calories that will be consumed per person. The per person use of farm products will rise only one-tenth.

Will there be a shortage of food as the population explodes?

While there will be a population increase of 43 per cent by 1975, the acres under cultivation can be increased by 37 per cent, according to Howard W. Ottoson, chairman of the University of Nebraska agricultural economics department. He said that it has also been shown that if farmers pushed fertilizer to optimum levels of use, there would be a need for one million fewer acres of corn by 1975.

And the possibility of future crop yields?

The USDA predicts that corn will yield 57 bushels per acre in 1975, and 85 bushels per acre by 2010. This compares to 47.1 bushels per acre in 1957. Wheat also will increase from the present 21.7 to 34 bushels per acre 50 years from now.

Can Dodge County farmers and their grain belt counterparts feed the exploding population, at least in the 20th century?

Yes, many experts agree. There's land and fertilizer aplenty and technocracy is on the march.

But what about that migraine of the moment?

Kennedy Remedy?

What has the Kennedy administration proposed as a remedy for the headache?



TALL CORN - MORE SURPLUS—The Midwest's excellent growing conditions and technocracy in the form of better fertilizers, irrigation, and superior hybrid

seeds have combined to produce this lush stand of corn which seems well on its way to adding to the already bulging storage bins.

Only a short time ago the Emergency Feed Grain Program was enacted to temporarily ease the pain of the surplus headache.

According to Ralph Cole, the new program will not only stop future pile-up of surpluses, but will also elimi-

nate some of the present feed grain surpluses.

Cole is a member of the Feed Grains Study Committee after whose recommendations the Emergency Feed Grain Program was patterned.

He explained that under

the program, farmers will cut back on the amount of feed grains that they produce by retiring up to a maximum amount of 40 per cent of their crop. This amount will be based on their past two-year average acreage. The land retire-

ment will in turn decrease the supply of certain feed grain crops, primarily corn and sorghum.

To make sure production on the remaining unretired acres isn't increased above normal by the addition of fertilizer or other factors, payments will be made only for the past average yields per acre.

According to Cole, the present surpluses can also be decreased through payment-in-kind. The farmers can receive part or all of their payment for retiring their acres in surplus corn or sorghum. This will be done by issuing certificates which in turn can be redeemed at the Agriculture Stabilization and Conservation office for corn and sorghum.

The new program, it is hoped, will stabilize the supply of feed grains for the coming year so that it will meet demand and thus reduce fluctuating prices.

Permanent Remedy?

And what about a more permanent remedy? In a speech before Congress on March 16th, President John Kennedy said that agriculture "needs a commodity-by-commodity approach, fitting each program to the pertinent problems."

To do so, Mr. Kennedy said, "I am therefore asking the Congress to enact legislation to be submitted shortly and to be known as the Agricultural Enabling Amendments Act of 1961."

The act was recently killed in committee. However, Washington observers expect at least parts of it to be revived into some kind of a farm program.

As for the permanent remedy, President Kennedy concluded in his speech before Congress:

"We cannot expect to solve the farm problem in a day or in a year, or perhaps even in this administration. But we can and must adopt a new approach based on a clear recognition of the goals we seek, a realistic appraisal of the problems involved, and a firm determination to solve these problems and attain these goals."

And in Dodge County, Nebraska, the Midwest?

The headache throbs, now to the rhythm of combines as the wheat harvest commences.

Microfilm, Microcards, Records at Love Library

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cannot be checked out except by faculty members and occasionally student teachers. The library does provide four sets of earphones for each record disk so that 12 students can listen to records at one time.

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Miss Moore said that on their heaviest day about 60 students patronized the department. Most users of the facilities are music and graduate students, she said.

Another service of the library is the making of reproductions of reading matter and occasional photographs. Copies made by a heat process, Thermofax are available for 15 cents each. Verifax copies, which are more permanent cost 25 cents. The library has another ma-



WHITMAN RARITIES—Charles E. Feinberg of Detroit presented two rare proof sheets of writings of Walt Whitman to the University of Nebraska Libraries. Shown

receiving them are: (from left) Frank Lundy, director of Libraries; Karl Shapiro; Mr. Feinberg; and Dr. James Miller, Jr. (U. of N. Photo.)

chine which makes copies from microfilm. These copies also cost 15 cents each.

Get First Chance
Farley said that these facilities are available to all, but

that University of Nebraska students and faculty are the first users.

"Our students get the first call on all materials," he said. "We're here to serve them." After the approximately 8,000 students and faculty members, come about 300 city borrowers. These are doctors, lawyers, and teachers who need the library for their professional work.

Students from other colleges cannot have Love Library cards, but through a system of inter-library loan, a student from Wesleyan or Union college could have his library borrow the book for him from Love Library. The inter-library loan system enables the University to have access to all major newspapers and to books in other libraries in the United States.

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