

Farm Outlook Bright for '51

By HOWARD R. BAKER

What can farmers and ranchers look forward to in 1951?

The answer to that question depends primarily upon developments in the present unsettled world conditions and action to be taken at Washington.

In general, everything points to higher farm prices, together with increased costs of production, higher taxes, and almost unrestricted agricultural production. Higher prices and consequent additional inflation can be expected in 1951. And practically no one benefits from inflation.

Agricultural prosperity depends primarily upon prosperity in industry, high industrial production, and full employment at good wages.

So a glance first at the business picture should give some idea of the buying power in the hands of the 125,000,000 people in the United States not engaged in agriculture. For upon their buying power depends the prosperity of the farmer and rancher.

First, a look at our industrial production. Industrial plants are producing at almost full capacity with employment at the highest level in history. Wages, too, are at high levels. The index of industrial production, which is one of our best indexes of business conditions, stands at about 210 (the war-time high was 247), based on the pre-war years 1935-39 as 100. In other words, production today has more than doubled compared with the pre-war period.

High industrial production means full employment. Full employment at good wages means a large buying power in the hands of the public.

Prior to the Korean outbreak, price levels were steady or rising, with record employment at high wages. People were spending freely. The mid-year outbreak drove prices sharply upward. Farm prices, which in the previous year had fallen somewhat, rose 6½% in this one month and an

additional 1½% the following month. Non-farm prices likewise rose.

Prices probably will be higher in 1951 although some irregularity will undoubtedly occur with the changing economic and military conditions.

A major problem resulting from the anticipated higher prices will be that of inflation. How much inflation will we have? Can it be controlled? How will it affect the Arizona rancher and farmer? Will it bring price controls? These are some of the questions facing agriculture today.

Inflation, in any sizable degree, is harmful to almost everyone. And its control is most difficult.

1951 Offers to Farmers:

- Unrestricted production
 - Higher farm prices
 - High costs of production, labor, machinery, supplies
 - Higher taxes
 - Greater net income
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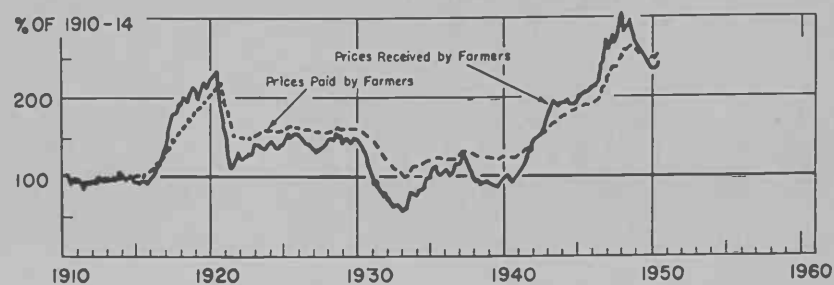
The only way to control inflation is to prevent it.

Probably the principal factor in inflation today is the defense program. The defense program is expected to take an increasingly larger percentage of our national production. This year the nation is spending around sixteen or seventeen billions of dollars on the defense program. It is expected that this will double by mid-1951—to nearly \$30,000,000,000.

Several means of controlling inflation have been suggested. Control through taxation is an important one, and will undoubtedly be used. And it is least disturbing to the economy.

A second means of curbing inflation is through controls — controls on prices, wages, and on certain more strategic materials. Much greater care must be used in the placing of con-

INDEX OF FARM PRICES
1910-14 = 100



trols because of their effects on business.

What does inflation mean to the farmer and rancher? Inflation hurts everyone. Farmers and ranchers can expect somewhat higher prices for their products in 1951. At the same time, the things they buy will carry a higher price tag. However, it is expected that farm prices may rise more than the price of things farmers buy, thus resulting in a higher net income. Taxes will unquestionably be higher.

The U. S. Department of Agriculture has asked for full farm production in 1951.

A large domestic demand for the products of agriculture, both civilian and military, and some demand from export markets are the chief reasons for this request for full production.

Turning to specific agricultural commodities, a large increase in cotton acreage is requested for 1951. The goal is 16,000,000 bales. In only 5 of the last 30 years have we had a crop of over 16,000,000 bales.

Arizona farmers are in a position to meet and profit from this request for increased acreage. The new varieties of cotton developed by Prof. E. H. Pressley of the college of agriculture of the University of Arizona are not only giving increased yields per acre but have been receiving a premium in price of some 200 points or more. Neither acreage allotments nor marketing quotas will be in effect in 1951, but prices will be supported at 90% of the parity price on Aug. 1, 1951.

Prices of beef cattle are expected to be at continuing high levels in 1951. Higher consumer incomes will increase the demand for meat, and even though beef cattle (and all meat) supplies are expected to be higher in 1951, prices will likely continue at or near present levels.

Other important farm commodities produced in Arizona are expected to be in good demand in 1951. With a large acreage planned for cotton production, alfalfa, grain, and grain sorghum acreages will be cut somewhat. This will reduce supplies of

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Expanded Cotton Acreage and Root Rot

The measures which have proved to be effective against root rot are all things which must be done before the cotton is seeded in the field. They are preventive, not curative.

By R. B. STREETS

Government sanction of unlimited cotton acreage and the support price of 90 percent of parity will mean a very considerable increase in cotton plantings in Arizona in 1951. Most of this added acreage will be diverted from other crops or virgin land cleared and planted for the first time.

In either case there is a possibility that Texas root rot may be present in the soil and appear in the 1951 crop in late June or early July and continue to kill the cotton plants at an increasing rate until late October. In irrigated cotton the greatest number of plants are killed between August 15 and October 15. As root rot causes heavy losses in yield and quality of lint any measures to minimize losses are worthwhile.

Choose Clean Land

The only way to be certain that land is free from root rot is to examine a susceptible crop on that land for evidence of root rot. The roughly circular areas of dead plants in cotton fields before frost, and visible in alfalfa fields the year around will mark the disease.

In case of doubt, send freshly dug roots carefully wrapped in waxed paper or slightly dampened newspaper to prevent drying out to the Department of Plant Pathology, University of Arizona, for examination.

There is no way of telling whether newly cleared land is free from root rot, slightly infested, or badly infested. Fields which have been in flax for several years, as is the case with many fields in the Yuma valley, should show only slight infection with root rot the first year in cotton. Likewise, fields that have been in wheat, barley, grain sorghums, lettuce or other winter vegetables, or cantaloupes for three or more years should be relatively free from root rot.

Avoid Losses

Where the crop history is not known, or in case of virgin land, or fields known to have root rot, the best procedure is to take steps to avoid or reduce losses. Seven years of rotation experiments on the Salt River Valley Experiment Farm at Mesa have shown that early-maturing cottons, especially those like Paula C and Arizona 33 or 44, which mature a large part of the total crop at the time of the first picking, produce much better yields than San Tan Acala or long staple cottons (Pima and S X P) on root-rot land.

Organic Matter

Heavy additions of organic matter, either as manure applied to the root rot spots, or a winter legume plowed under will greatly increase the yield of cotton and reduce root rot. Soil sulphur applied before plowing is also beneficial. Papago peas have been found to grow better at winter temperatures and produce more green weight to plow under (16.5 tons per acre in 1949) than early sour clover or Hubam.

Cotton Every Year

In case it is desired to plant cotton two or more years in succession on root-rot land, the use of early maturing cotton makes it possible to make the final picking by November 1 and disc down the cotton stalks and drill in the Papago peas by November 15. (December 1 in Yuma county.)

The broadcasting of 100 pounds per acre of ammonium phosphate 16-20 (or equivalent in ammonium sulphate and treble superphosphate) before planting will stimulate the growth of the peas, and 100 pounds of ammonium nitrate or equivalent applied when the peas are plowed under will hasten rotting of the green manure. The fertilizers have given profitable increase in yields.

Several other rotations involving the profitable use of root-rot infested land are under investigation but they do not apply directly to the present problem of handling cotton in 1951 on land which may have root rot.

—R. B. Streets is Associate Plant Pathologist.

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these commodities, thus tending to improve their price situation.

Summary

Summarized briefly, the high level of domestic demand expected in 1951, coupled with an enlarged defense program, should result in a high level of industrial production, business activity, and employment at good wage levels. Under these conditions, purchasing power in the hands of the public will be at top levels.

Farm prices will likely be higher, with costs of production showing a somewhat lesser rise percentagewise, resulting in a somewhat greater net income for farmers in 1951. Taxes will be higher.

Economic forces are today largely inflationary. The rate of increase of that inflation will depend largely upon national and international developments.

—Howard R. Baker is Assistant Director of the Agricultural Extension Service

Farm Radio

Daily (Except Sunday)

KRUX, Glendale, 6:55 a.m.—Farm Front—Maricopa County Extension Agent.

Wednesdays

KYUM, Yuma, 6:45 a.m.—Yuma County Agricultural Extension Service Radio Program.

Fridays

KCKY, Casa Grande—Pinal County Farm and Home Program.

Saturdays

KOPO, Tucson, 8:45 a.m.—County Agent Program.

KGLU, Safford, 11:30 a.m.—Stepping Along With the Agricultural Extension Service.

KOY, Phoenix

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KSUN, Bisbee

1:30 to 2:00 p.m.—Arizona Farm and Ranch Hour, presented by the Radio Bureau, University of Arizona, and the College of Agriculture.