

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION WORK
IN
AGRICULTURE AND HOME ECONOMICS
STATE OF OKLAHOMA

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Making Farm Plans for 1932

The First Business of Farming
Is to Make the Living

D. P. TRENT, Director of Extension

THE emergency measures which were applied by Oklahoma farm people following the drouth of 1930 are just as important in 1932 as a safeguard against the possible return of those same trying conditions. The emergency measures of 1930-31 should now be made a permanent part of our farming system. The methods which pulled us out of the difficulties of 1930 will keep us out of such difficulties in the future. Let's make those temporary measures permanent. It's the only safe course to pursue.

SURPLUSES? YES AND NO

D. P. TRENT, Director of Extension

There has been a lot of talk about surpluses of cotton, wheat, butter, eggs, poultry and other commodities on the market, and certainly surpluses of market commodities have played havoc with prices. But have you heard anybody complaining about too much country-cured hams or smoked bacon in the farm smokehouse, about too much canned fruit and vegetables in the farm cellar, too much fried chicken for Sunday dinner, too many fried eggs to eat with good fried ham or too much milk and butter on the table for farm boys and girls, and men and women to satisfy their appetites? Do you know of anyone who is bothered about too much jelly, jam, syrup or honey in the pantry to eat with hot biscuits and butter or to pour over stacks of hot cakes? Did you ever know of a family that was discouraged and blue because of too many beans, onions, beets, peas, mustard, cabbage, potatoes and other vegetables in the garden? Did you ever know a farmer who was worried about too much corn, oats, kafir or hay in the barn to feed his livestock or about having so much good green pasture that his cows could eat their fill in a few hours and then lie in the shade and chew their cuds during the heat of the day? Do you know a farmer who has complained about having wheat, rye or other green pasture during the fall and winter months? Do you know of a farmer who has been greatly concerned about the high price or low price of food which he had on hand for family needs or feed which he had on hand for his livestock? Not much! These are ailments which have never bothered farmers. There isn't any such thing as a surplus of good food for the family or feed for the livestock. While there has been a surplus of wheat and of butter that has depressed the market, thousands of farm families all over the land have been hungry for hot biscuits and butter. While there has been a surplus of cotton on the market, thousands of farm people have been in need of some heavy cotton clothes to keep their bodies warm. This is not a situation that can be remedied to any great extent by legislation or by governmental machinery. The solution must largely be found on the individual farm. There have been surpluses of market commodities, and no doubt will be again in the future, but there can never be a surplus of good living produced on the farm.

MAKING FARM PLANS FOR 1932

The First Business of Farming is to Make the Living

D. P. TRENT, Director of Extension

Farmers are asking themselves and asking their land-owners, bankers, county agents and others, "What shall we plant in 1932?" Many of them at least are asking this question in terms of what they can produce to sell to bring in some "ready cash." In other words, they are thinking of cotton, wheat, broom corn, potatoes, peanuts and other cash products. Conditions are widely different in different counties and in different communities and on different farms. Necessarily each farmer must largely answer the question for himself in the light of his own conditions and needs and in the light of the markets which are available to him. However, there are a few general principles which we should keep in mind in making our farm plans.

In the first place, the matter of what we should produce to sell to bring in some cash should be the last question answered in making our farm plans. Instead of starting at the end of the problem and working backward, let's start at the beginning and work forward. The first business of farming is to make the living on the farm. It has been well said that, "The man who farms to make money will go broke, but the man who farms to make a living will make money." Because of the disastrous experiences of 1930, Oklahoma farmers in 1931 gave first consideration to the problem of making a living. As a result, more food was put away in farm cellars and smokehouses and more feed was put away in barns than ever before in the history of the State.

There was never a time when this same "LIVE AT HOME PROGRAM" was more important than in 1932. The chances for greatly increased prices for wheat, cotton, potatoes, livestock and dairy products and the other things which Oklahoma farmers produce for market are not particularly promising. There are indications that conditions may improve gradually and that demands for farm products may be better toward the end of 1932. There is, on the other hand, the possibility that the depression may continue and that conditions may become even worse than we have yet experienced. It is certainly no time to gamble with the welfare of our families and the wise farmer will put forth his utmost effort to provide liberal supplies of food for his family and an abundance of feed for his livestock.

Certainly, there is urgent need for money to apply on debts and pay taxes and to buy clothes, books, medicine and the many other things which farm people need. But first of all we must have food and our livestock must have feed and these are the

first needs to provide for in making our farm plans. Let's keep in mind that the only sure way of having a good living on the farm any year is to produce it on the farm. Unless we produce the milk and butter, the vegetables and fruits, the poultry and eggs, the hams and bacon, the canned beef and pork, the jellies and jams, the honey and syrup, the pickles and relishes, the meal and flour and all the other things which go to make a good living, in large measure we and our families will go without much of the food which we need and want. Most farm families will not be in position to buy these in the quantities and variety needed. The same applies to feed for our livestock. Unless we produce and put away the corn, oats, hay and other feeds necessary to feed our livestock as they should be fed, we will feed sparingly and our livestock will go without much of the feed which they should have. These are factors which should be kept in mind every year and they are particularly important in 1932.

In making your farm plans for 1932, we suggest the following general outline for your consideration.

(1) *Every family should grow a good garden of not less than one acre.* In addition, potatoes, melons, pumpkins, field peas and beans, popcorn and other things commonly grown outside the garden should be grown in liberal quantities. Prepare the land early, apply plenty of well-rotted manure, use some commercial fertilizer under vegetables if available, plan the garden systematically according to garden bulletins which can be secured from the county agents, replant vegetables at regular intervals during the season so as to have fresh vegetables the longest possible season and plant a liberal fall garden. Don't let weeds and grass grow in the garden to sap moisture and fertility but as vegetables are gathered cultivate the land and keep it in condition for later plantings.

(2) *Every family should have at least one good milk cow.* Two will be better, bred so that they will freshen at different seasons and thus provide plenty of milk and butter for the family throughout the year. Nothing else is quite so important in the diet, particularly for children, as plenty of milk and butter for the family throughout the year. Dairy products contribute to the strength and health of human kind, and in no case should they be omitted from the diet. For any farm family to be without a milk cow and thus without milk and butter most of the time is a tragedy. Cows are cheap, there are plenty of them for sale and every farmer should find some means of securing a family milk cow. No doubt there are people in every community who have surplus cows which they will be willing to sell on credit or to loan for their keep and the offspring. Good pasture should be provided for the cows, in

winter as well as in summer, and plenty of the right sorts of feed should be grown and stored in order that the cows may be fed liberally through the winter.

(3) *Every farm family should have at least one good brood sow* to raise a litter of pigs and provide meat for the family. Pasture, shelter and plenty of feed, and good water as well, are as important for the hogs as for the milk cows. Meat is an important part of the family diet and nothing can take the place of country-cured hams, smoked bacon, sausage, backbone and ribs, etc. produced on the farm. Instructions for butchering and curing meats on the farm can be secured from the county agents.

(4) *No farm family can adequately provide for its food needs without a flock of at least 50 good hens.* Shelter, pasture, feed and water are essential for these if we expect to succeed with them. A flock of hens will utilize a lot of waste on the farm and they will to a considerable extent make their own way. Give them a chance and they will help you make the living. The 1930 federal census shows that 25,000 Oklahoma farmers had no poultry.

(5) Making use of the services of the county home demonstration agents and the instructions which can be secured from them, *every farm family should can and store liberal quantities of fruits, vegetables, meats, pickles and relishes, jellies and jams and other good things to eat* and put these away for use when they are not available in fresh form. There's no danger of having too much of these things to eat, a surplus of these is not a thing to worry about, and it is the only sure way to have them. Canning the various products as they become available throughout the season distributes the work and insures a liberal supply. Many farm women can by the "budget plan", detailed instructions for which the home demonstration agents will be glad to furnish.

(6) *From the standpoint of health, it is important that we have fruit to eat regularly throughout the year.* Every person likes fruit and every farm boy and girl is entitled to the pleasure of gathering and eating fruit from the home orchard. A great many Oklahoma farms are without orchards, but every farmer who can possibly do so should produce plenty of fruit for home use. Here again, if we do not produce the fruit, which we and our families like, most of the year we will do without it. If you have an orchard of any sort, you will be surprised at the results which you will get from cultivation and care. Cultivation and care of your orchard is as important as cultivation and care of your crops. In most of Oklahoma blackberries, dewberries, grapes, strawberries and

some other small fruits do well and can be brought into bearing in a comparatively short time.

(7) *On many farms a stubborn bull calf is considered a nuisance.* If you will feed him well and butcher him at the right time and put him away in glass jars or tin cans you will find him a welcome dish on the dinner table during the winter. The children will welcome portions of him in the dinner pail as a part of the school lunch. By all means, provide at least one good fat calf to be canned for a winter meat supply. If you want the best quality of meat it is important that the calf be put on full feed for some time and be well finished when butchered. Don't undertake to can meat until you have consulted the home demonstration agent, a home economics teacher or someone else who can teach you correct and safe methods of meat canning. Chicken and pork may also be canned successfully.

(8) *Add to the above some honey or sorghum,* corn bread from home-grown corn and some biscuits and hot cakes from home-grown wheat and you have a living which is good enough for a king and certainly not too good for any farm family in Oklahoma.

(9) *Budget your feed production.* Instead of planning your feed acreage in a haphazard way and guessing at the feed which you will need for your livestock, it is a good plan to determine how much grain, hay and pasture you will need to meet the needs of your livestock and then plan your acreage accordingly. While conditions will vary on different farms, depending upon the ages and sizes of your livestock and the amount and quality of pasture provided, the following may be used as a rather safe basis for planning feed production on the average Oklahoma farm. For each milk cow you will need at least 25 bushels of corn or grain sorghum and oats, at least two tons of good hay, and two acres of good pasture. To this you should add at least 500 pounds of cottonseed meal and 200 pounds of bran. For each beef animal you will need at least 10 bushels of corn or grain sorghum and oats, one ton of good hay and two acres of good pasture. For each horse or mule you will need 60 or 70 bushels of corn and oats and two tons of good hay. For each head of hogs you will need 10 or 12 bushels of corn and if possible 50 pounds of bran or shorts, 50 pounds of tankage and one-fourth acre of good pasture. For 50 hens you will need at least 60 bushels of corn and other grain and particularly during the winter you will need beef scrap or meat meal, bran and other ingredients in the form of a laying mash. Instructions for mixing laying mash can be secured from the county agents. By making your calculations upon this basis you can determine your total needs for the

livestock on your farm and, based upon the acre yields of your farm, you can determine the acreage of each crop which you should plant. In these figures we have taken into account stalk fields, straw stacks and other feed which livestock will rustle on the average farm and these figures are the minimum requirements for farm livestock. It is safe to increase your acreages slightly so that under any circumstances you will be reasonably sure of producing sufficient feed. There's nothing serious about having a surplus of good feed in the barn or of good pasture in the field. Did you ever notice that the farmer who always has old corn in the crib seems to always be prosperous? Production of the feed on the farm is one of the essentials of safe farming. The federal census shows that in 1929 Oklahoma farmers paid out \$17,138,000 for feed, much of which could have been produced on their own farms much more economically.

(10) When you have planned your operations in accordance with the above nine points, you are ready to consider the question of what you will produce for market. There is no reason to expect that in 1932 the world will greatly increase its takings of products which American farmers produce for export. There are already surpluses of both cotton and wheat and certainly no Oklahoma farmer can safely gamble on cotton or wheat alone for the money which he will need. If economic conditions improve during the year and the millions of unemployed secure work and have the means with which to buy our products, there is reason to expect that the demand for food products will increase toward the end of the year. It would seem that farmers who have the foundation livestock and will produce the feed may safely and profitably plan for some increase in their production of livestock and livestock products. By all means, it is not safe to place all of your eggs in one basket. By producing some surplus vegetables and truck crops above family needs, and of feed which may be marketed we will increase our chances for having something that we can market and provide some cash at different times during the year.

If we grow cotton we should keep the following points in minds (a) Grow only such acreage of cotton as can be handled by members of the family. According to the federal census Oklahoma farmers paid out in 1929, \$22,245,000 for hired labor. Where hired labor was used in the production and harvesting of cotton, in most cases the only man who realized a profit was the man who was hired at day wages. (b) Plant cotton only on good land that can be expected to yield a third of a bale or more per acre. It is no time to expend labor, time and seed on poor, worn-out, impoverished land and the man who does it will be sadly disappointed at the end of the year.

(c) Grow only a variety that is known to be adapted to the section of the state and that will give highest yields of good staple and plant only seed that is known to be pure and of high quality.
(d) Cultivate the cotton thoroughly and regularly. Mature as early as possible so as to get ahead of the boll weevil and apply such measures throughout the season as are recommended for controlling the boll weevil.

Rigid economy should be practiced, expenditures should be made only for necessities, further indebtedness should be religiously avoided, installment buying should be discouraged, and in every way possible we should strive to improve our financial standing. It is a time for every family to keep expenditures within their means, be content with good old-fashioned thrift and frugality and a good living, and work systematically toward the time when we can go forward on our own resources. It is not a time to be discouraged and pessimistic, but a time to take courage and tackle the job ahead of us with hope and determination. The solution lies largely in the careful planning, industry, frugality and thrift practiced on each individual farm. The way out lies largely in our own hands.

OTHER AVAILABLE BULLETINS

Other circulars which you should secure and study carefully:

Oklahoma's Insurance Policy Against Depression and Hard Times, Circular No. 292.

Thrift in Using What We Have, Circular No. 288.

Emergency Home Vegetable Garden, Circular No. 278.

Home Vegetable Garden, Circular No. 196.

Home Preservation of Fruits and Vegetables, Circular No. 260.

Home Canning of Meat, Circular No. 240.

These can be secured free from the county farm agent or county home demonstration agent in your county, or by writing to the Extension Division, Oklahoma A. and M. College, Stillwater, Oklahoma.