

Farm Bureau Notes

By TOM WOOD
N. C. Farm Bureau

In the past 12 years, America's farm operator population has dropped from about eight million to just over four million, and some folks think the farmer's position is weaker. There's considerable room for disagreement, though.

The individual farmer of today is far stronger than he was yesterday. Chiefly, this is because he has had to struggle mightily to stay in farming. He has fought the battle of cost-price squeeze, and will for years to come. He has wrestled himself in adapting to a new technology. He has been battered by sweeping social changes.

In one sense, it has been a "survival of the fittest," but he has had many allies.

Science has given him machines to banish the hoe stoop, the mule heel dust in his eyes, the tobacco prime squat. Every year, many mechanical innovations ease the physical strain of farming. They leave him more energy for new tasks, more enthusiasm for thinking and planning, more time to manage the farm and seek better markets for his products.

Agribusiness, realizing the potential in the successful farmer as a customer, has grown to serve him. It has developed the tools and the machines and the chemicals he needs, and it has hired specialists to help him use them. Government research and technology have taught him to grow more and better products on less land, for land is the one resource that can only diminish as population grows. Government inspection has helped develop quality standards for farm products.

But the very fact of his growing strength has made the farmer richer prey. A strong man is a free man, and the freer the man the greater his freedom is coveted by weaker men. They set a bewildering array of traps for him. They gun for him constantly.

There's the gold-covered trap of government overpayment for overproduction; the invisible trap of government paying the farmer not to produce; the trap of slashed allotments, squeezing more net yield from less land; the pin-hooker's trap, promising a sure but unfair price for surrendering the crop well before harvest; the trap of the blanket law that protects the faraway farmer but burns up the man right here; the trap of the political compromise with well-hidden teeth.

Able, strong and up-to-date farmers know these traps and step warily enough to dodge their bites; yet in the maze of conflicting trends, political wars and power struggles even the best of farmers sometimes must fall back on instinct, the survival weapon built through the years out of kinship with nature.

For all of his prickly problems—perhaps because of them—the farmer still believes his job is the best of all possible. It is a way of life worth battling for, and the armchair agriculturists and pushbutton oracles who never followed the south end

Tester Family Reunion Held

The family of Mr. and Mrs. A. A. Tester of Sugar Grove gathered at their home Sunday, April 28 for a reunion and to celebrate the 84th birthday of Mrs. A. A. Tester. It was a happy occasion for them. A picnic style lunch was enjoyed by everyone.

Those present for the occasion were Mr. and Mrs. Clint Wyatt of Newton Square, Pa., Mr. and Mrs. Cecil Tester and family, Mr. and Mrs. Rom Tester and family and Mr. and Mrs. Bobby Tester and son of Lexington; Mr. and Mrs. Claude Tester and family, Mr. and Mrs. Basil Tester and daughter, Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Haas, Mrs. Thad Harmon, Mr. and Mrs. Clint Harmon and family, Mr. and Mrs. Herman Tester and daughter and Mr. Dol Ellis of Lenoir; Mr. and Mrs. Micheal Holt and daughter of Greensboro; Mr. and Mrs. Millard Tester and family of Bluff City, Tenn.; Mr. and Mrs. Earl Main and daughter, Mr. and Mrs. Clay Tester and family, Mr. and Mrs. Hal Main and family and Mr. and Mrs. Benny Greene and family of Sugar Grove; Mr. and Mrs. Ben Tester and son, and Mr. and Mrs. Frank Williams and son of Zionsville; Mr. and Mrs. C. V. Ashley and daughter, Mr. and Mrs. Baxter Miller and family and Mr. and Mrs. Dale Tester and family of Boone.

Bethel Club Has Meeting

Bethel Home Demonstration Club met in the home of Mrs. Howard Love on the afternoon of April 24. Mrs. Baker Wood served as her sister's assistant hostess. For devotional the members repeated in unison the

Twenty-Third Psalm. The demonstration on "Window Hardware" was given by Mrs. Baker Edmisten. She discussed the selection, installation, and maintenance of window hardware, and in stressing the

importance of quality hardware, she said, "Good hardware makes draw draperies and curtains operate easily and smoothly." For recreation the club had an old-fashioned spelling bee, and the winner, Mrs. David Farthing, was presented a gift by the hostess.

The club adjourned early in order that the members might meet on the church grounds to do some cleaning up, in preparation for the spring session of the Baptist Association, held April 30.

DEMOCRAT ADS PAY

Chicken Supper At Bethel School

There will be a chicken pie supper at the Bethel School cafeteria May 24. Proceeds from this supper will go to the Mountain Dale Church building fund. Serving time will be from 5:00 to 9:00 p. m. Tickets may

be obtained from members of the community at \$1.25 for adults and 75c for children under 12 or you may pay at the door. The public is invited.

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