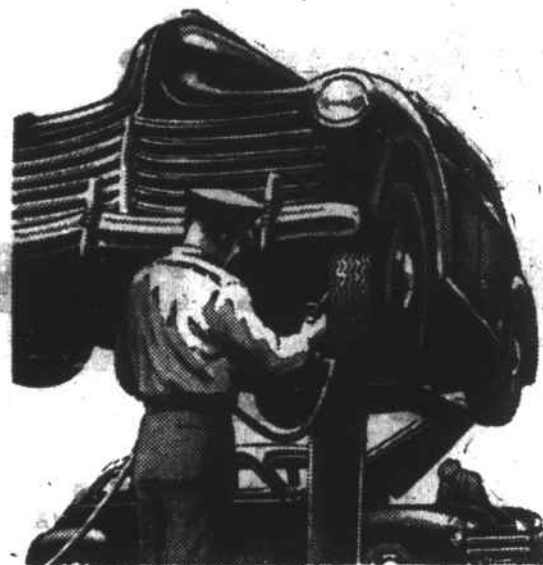


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Surplus Of Meat Forecast By Fall

The dark cloud that has been hovering over the nation's corn crop has a silver lining—temporarily at least. As a result of dwindling corn crop prospects, housewives may expect a rise in meat supplies this fall and winter, according to a report just issued by the Department of Agriculture.

This feast will be followed by a figurative famine next year, however, after livestock herds have been cut down in keeping with the smaller amount of feed available, Department authorities added.

Little attempt has been made to predict what will happen to meat prices, general expectation is that they may drop somewhat with the influx of supplies this fall and winter, and probably rise again when the tide turns.

The temporary "feast" in meat is expected to result from the fact that farmers will move their herds to market now rather than hold them for fattening in view of dwindling feed supplies at prices too high for profitable meat production.

In addition, there is the apprehension that the corn crop not only will be short but poor in quality as well, with a lot of "soft corn" in prospect—corn which is poor in food value and difficult to store satisfactorily.

With herds reduced, there will be less meat for the American dinner table next spring and summer.

The corn outlook is already some 628,000,000 bushels short of last year, with the current heat wave in the Corn Belt posing an even more "serious threat," according to the Agriculture Department's latest crop report.

Crops as a whole are expected to be 2 per cent above the average for the 1942-1946 period, but 2 per cent below the record volume of last year.

The Government's hoped-for goal for corn this year was 3,000,000,000 bushels. Last year's crop totaled 3,287,927,000 bushels.

Corn crop prospects for 1947 were estimated on Aug. 1 at 2,659,949,000 bushels. Since then the Midwest has been seared by a heat wave, leading Agriculture Department authorities to add, as they issued these figures, that "the continued hot, dry weather has become a serious threat to corn and other crops in the Corn Belt."

The corn crop has suffered severe ups and downs during the past few months, with wet weather and floods delaying or washing out plantings.

By working round the clock when the sun finally shone upon the fields, farmers managed to get the corn in to the ground. Hopes rose with the weather favoring crops in first half of July, and it was believed that they might pull out with little damage after all.

But corn deteriorated during the latter part of July in the central Corn Belt, causing the Agriculture Department to revise its estimates downward to the present figure—110,051,000 bushels below the estimate.

The country has nothing to apologize for, however, in its crop prospects. Production has been stepped up to history-making totals, and even with the slump in corn, total

crop production will be above the normal average.

Just what affect the smaller corn prospects may have on exports to Europe where food needs in some sections are expected to be even more urgent next year than this has not been evaluated yet.

Wheat is the most popular European import. Corn in many cases has been taken only as a substitute, and in France an unpopular substitute. Visitors returning here report that the French have had great difficulty in using corn as a substitute for wheat in bread.

Instead of using it in the type of corn bread baked here, they have tried to make it into the usual French loaf, with a most unappetizing result, admitted by the French themselves, it is related.

Naval Vignettes

A Seabee diver, at work for the 73rd Naval Construction Battalion on a dredging project at a Pacific island during the war, looked around mildly when he felt a nudge in his back. The "gentleman" doing the nudging, he discovered as he clenched his teeth to keep his heart from jumping out of his mouth, was an eight-foot shark!

The shark, who appeared merely to have been peering over the Seabee's shoulder, moved over to another diver working a few yards away, where he looked on for a few moments, then peacefully swam away.

Both divers surfaced immediately, for lack of anything stronger, gulped several cups of hot coffee.

A Navy Seabee detachment assigned the job of installing a new-type catapult at a Naval Air Station during the war found it lacked the equipment to haul the arresting gear.

The gear, with its crate, weighed 4 1/2 tons and extended 35 feet. The Seabees borrowed two 1 1/2-ton flatbed trucks, placed them back to back and centered the crate on six-inch wooden blocks on the truck beds. Using half-inch wire cable to keep the trucks at the correct distance apart, the construction men then moved the load 2 1/2 miles to the site by driving one truck in forward gear and the other in reverse.

"Don't worry about me, Mom. I'll keep my head down," the young Seabee wrote from his front-line fox-hole.

The mother received another letter the following week, in which the Seabee told her he had been cut by flying shrapnel.

"In the future," he said, "I'll keep both ends down."

A CVE (small aircraft carrier) pilot, accustomed to the tiny flight deck of his own ship, was preparing to land on the expansive deck of one of our largest and finest carriers. When given permission to land, he asked—

"Which runway?"

The Tyrrhenian Sea, still washes the shores of Palermo in Sicily, but it's not the fault of a certain Seabee shipfitter, stationed there shortly

after the island had fallen.

An enemy bomb had blasted a crater near an installation the Seabees were building at Palermo, and the shipfitter was assigned the job of pumping it dry.

"The pump did all right," he later reported, "but crater wouldn't empty. Finally, I discovered the trouble. High tide was seeping in the crater, and I was trying to pump the Tyrrhenian dry."

Veteran Seabee, making a D-Day landing in the Marshall Islands with the Marines, scrambled down cargo nets into landing craft, singing: "I Love You Truly" and other sentimental ditties.

A Seabee chief photographer's mate apparently was responsible for starting his buddies off on their musical invasion.

The night before the landing, he put his tongue in his cheek and told his mates that combat veterans had assured him that singing a love song while going over the side of the ship was a sure good luck charm. Superstitious as most servicemen, the veteran Seabee took the chief at his word.

At H-Hour, to the astonishment of battle-toughened Marines, most of the hard-bitten construction men were humming tunelessly and singing softly to themselves as they maneuvered down the swaying rope nets.

In a variation of what Mohammed did when the mountain wouldn't come to him, Seabee, at an advance base in 1944 "stretched" an island to reach a grounded LST.

It happened when an LST landing at the base missed the channel and grounded about 60 feet from the beach.

The incident occurred during the late afternoon. The ship had to be unloaded and removed from the sand bar by 2:30 (high tide), the following morning or be swamped.

Detachment 1084 (Special) immediately ran two pontoon barges between the LST and the beach to form a causeway. They finished the causeway by filling in with coral sand.

Unloading operations began at 7:30 p. m. Exactly seven hours later, at 2:30 next morning, 3040 tons of gasoline and additional cargo had been discharged. As the men took time out for coffee and sandwiches, the Seabee's actual working time was six hours and 10 minutes.

Cutting hair for thousands of his mates made a Seabee operator of a "South Sea Island Barber Shop" more than a little absent-minded, but he managed to get by until the day a customer got into the chair with a request to "take it all off."

The Seabee barber obligingly ran the clippers over the man's head and then shaved his skull. The Seabee customer left, and the next customer, the construction battalion's Executive Officer, sat down in his place.

Completely preoccupied, the barber went to work. A few minutes later roars of rage brought him face to face with the horrible truth; he had unconsciously shaved the "exec" as bald as a coconut!

When his construction battalion

was ordered to build a pipe line on a certain Pacific island, a Seabee photographer got the job of making a daily check of the number of pipe lengths laid each day. It was a pleasant change from the confinement of his photographic laboratory. After a few days in the open air, the Seabee decided he had stumbled onto the easiest job in the South Sea.

One morning he left camp as usual and followed the lengthening pipe line over green hills and down into ravines entangled with creepers. He walked until the sun went down, but the pipe line stretched unendingly ahead of him.

Despairing of ever finding the end of the section laid that day, he struck off into the woods in what he thought was a shortcut and was lost in the jungle for hours before finding his way back to camp.

Early the next morning he sought out the pipe-laying crew to remark about the unbelievable amount of tubing they had put down the preceding day. How had they ever done it?

"Why, we thought you knew,"

they said.

"Knew what?"

"The Marines have been working from the other side of the island. Yesterday morning they reached our end and joined the two lines. You must have walked nearly across the island."

Without a word, the Seabee went back to his photography.

The teacher was talking about the dolphin and its habits. "And children," she said impressively, "Just think! A single dolphin will have two thousand baby dolphins."

"Goodness," exclaimed the little girl at the foot of the class, "and how many do the married ones have?"

"All right back there," shouted the bus driver.

"No. Wait 'til I get my clothes on!" replied a feminine voice. So the driver led the stampede to the rear and watched a girl get on with a basket of laundry.

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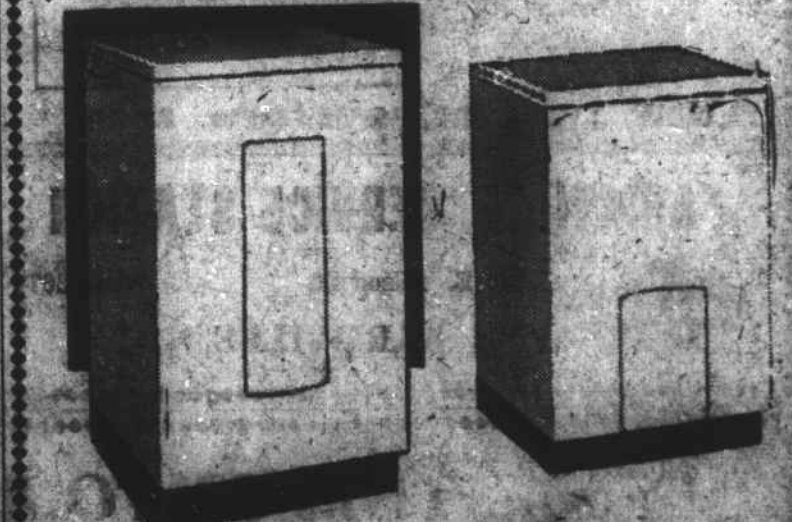
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