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Old-Age Applicants Required To File For S. S. Benefits

A representative from the district social security office said today: "An application for old age and survivors benefits must be filed before payments can begin."

He added that one of the basic requirements that must be met before benefits can be paid to a retired worker is that he must contact the nearest social security office and file an application, he added. The same requirement must be met before survivors benefits can be paid to a deceased worker's family after his death.

"It is very important for the worker and his family to understand this requirement so that checks can be started promptly and so that no loss of payments will result," the representative said. "The three statements which follow are important to every worker and to every member of his family":

1. The worker who is between

sixty-five and seventy-two years old should file his application at the nearest social security office at the earliest opportunity after he retires from work.

2. A worker at the age of seventy-two need not retire to be eligible for payments. Payments may be made to an insured worker at the age of seventy-two regardless of his earnings. The worker still employed at the age of seventy-two should file his application at the earliest opportunity after he attains that age.

3. After the death of a person whose work was covered by social security, some member of his family should inquire promptly at the nearest social security office to learn what survivors insurance benefits may be paid.

Vaccinate Swine, Farmers Advised

Dr. H. J. Rollins, state veterinarian, says that recent outbreaks of hog cholera in eastern North Carolina are due largely to the failure of many farmers to follow three important practices in swine production: Sanitation, isolation and vaccination.

Other factors have contributed to the situation, he said, such as floods and mosquitoes. Flood waters have spread infection from one farm to another in some sections; and mosquitoes, occurring this year in unusually large and vigorous swarms, have irritated swine and lowered their resistance to disease.

"Generally, however," Dr. Rollins explained, "the outbreaks can be traced to more fundamental causes. The low incidence of cholera during the past two years lulled farmers into a sense of false security. Some have grown lax in keeping their hog lots and shelters clean, or have failed to move their pigs to new ground from time to time."

"Many farmers also have fallen into the error of moving newly-acquired animals into their swine herd without first isolating them. All herd additions should be kept apart from the regular herd for two or three weeks to make certain that they are not diseased. This is especially important when herd additions have been bought at livestock markets or from unfamiliar sources."

The state veterinarian advised that all pigs should be immunized against cholera, preferably a week before weaning; but he said older animals can be successfully immunized, provided they are healthy. He reported that excellent protection against hog cholera had been provided for large state-owned swine herds at Caledonia Prison Farm and at mental institutions at Goldsboro and Kinston.

Farm Operators To Pay Social Security Taxes

Farm operators who figure their farm income on a calendar year basis will be paying social security taxes on their self-employment income for the first time between January 1 and April 16, 1956. The payment of social security taxes on net earnings from operating a farm is compulsory, provided the net earnings amount to \$400 or more during the year.

The farm operator who had net earnings from farming of \$400 or more in 1955 should first make sure that he has adequate records of his farm income and expenses for the year. Next, he should get a social security account number from his nearest social security office if he does not already have one. If he has had a number but lost it, he should apply for a duplicate number. This should be done soon to avoid the last minute rush, since the number will have to be shown on his income tax return.

Even though the farm operator may not make enough to have to pay income taxes, he will still need to file an income tax return in order to pay his social security taxes. Social security taxes are paid on net earnings of \$400 or more before taking off for personal exemptions. For example, a married farm operator whose net earnings were \$1,000 in 1955 would not owe any income taxes, since he is allowed \$1200 personal exemptions, \$600 for himself and \$600 for his wife. In this case, however he would pay the social security tax on \$1,000.

A recently issued tree booklet, "How Social Security Covers Farmers," outlining the details of this new law as it applies to farm operators, can be secured by getting in touch with your social security office, located at 212 W. 2nd Ave. in Gastonia. The phone number is UN 5-4611.

The practice in these herds, he explained, is to vaccinate pigs with serum and virus a week before weaning.

Dr. Rollins explained that serum, given alone, provides immunity for only two or three weeks; but, when administered together with virus, it establishes long-range immunity, usually for the useful life of the animal. The veterinarian added a warning, however, that as live virus is used in serum-virus immunization, it is highly important that this treatment should be given only to animals known to be healthy, except in certain instances of emergency. It is also important, he added, that swine treated with live virus be quarantined for 30 days.



By JOSEPH P. WALSH
District Manager of the Gastonia
Social Security Office

The months immediately ahead are of special significance to self-employed farmers and all others who work for themselves in some kind of agricultural enterprise. It is possible for them to become insured under the social security law after they have had credit for net earnings of at least \$400 in both calendar years 1955 and 1956. This could be as early as April 1956.

Older farmers — those now 65 or over, and those who will have reached 65 at that time — can retire after March and start getting monthly old-age insurance payments if they meet the earnings requirement stated above. Other farmers, regardless of age, will acquire family protection under social security on the first of April provided they meet the same earnings requirement. If they should die at that time their dependents would become entitled to monthly survivors insurance benefit checks.

It is well to bear in mind that becoming insured does not mean that a person will remain insured. Those under age 65 and alive after March 1956 will need additional work to retain an insured status. I want to point out also that being insured has nothing to do with the amount of benefit payments. Payments to a self-employed farmer and his family or to his surviving dependents will be based on his average earnings. His own monthly benefit in retirement could be as little as \$30 or as much as \$108.50; total monthly payments to his family would range from \$45 to \$200. The amount of the benefit depends upon the farmer's average net earnings in years after 1954.

Today, I have discussed the protection under the old-age and survivors insurance program which so many farm people will have acquired by mid-1956. In my next article I shall explain the obligations that go along with this protection — the responsibilities which must be met by self-employed farmers after the turn of the year.

Self-employed farmers should report their 1955 net income for social security credit and pay the self-employment tax not later than April 15, 1956. Watch for a full explanation of these reporting requirements in a later installment of this series.

Lincolnton will have representatives at a special meeting of stockholders of the Carolina Natural Gas Corporation at 3 o'clock Friday afternoon, Dec. 30, in the Directors room of the First National Bank in Hickory.

Lincoln Expected To Have Representatives At Gas Co. Meeting

The meetings is being called by R. Walker Geitner, secretary of the corporation, and it is reported that a tentative proposal made by an out-of-area concern to effect the bringing of natural gas to this area of the state, will be the main item of business.

Details of the plan will be brought before the shareholders at the meeting. It is understood that the proposal contemplates the distribution of natural gas in the area included in legislative act, passed by the last General Assembly, creating the Catawba Valley Natural Gas Authority, or the communities of Lincolnton, Maiden, Newton, Conover, Hickory, Granite Falls, Lenoir, Valdese and Morganton.

The Carolina Natural Gas Corporation acquired ownership of the Piedmont Gas Company in Hickory a few years ago.

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T 10/27-3/31/56

Hog Killing Time Still Is Governed By The Moon

By BEATRICE COBB
(In Morganton News-Herald)

I am aware of the fact that modern butchers, meat packers and dealers will argue that "anytime" is good hog-killing time — that the old notion that the moon has anything at all to do about governing the butchering of hogs is just an old myth. Of course, I haven't made a survey of Burke County farm homes to find how many still stick to the old rule of consulting the almanac for picking a "good" slaughtering time, but I am convinced from conversations I have had with local farm people that perhaps the majority of them still follow the tradition of "killing when the moon is right." Scores of them will testify that they have learned from experience that the old custom of "killing by the moon" really affects their meat and lard.

John Parris, one of the best news and feature writers in the State, whose "mountain" articles in the Asheville Citizen-Times, are a real service in the preservation of the folk lore of Western North Carolina, recently wrote one of his most interesting articles on the subject of the debate on the best time of the moon to kill hogs. Apparently his assumption is that practically all mountain farmers "believe in the moon," but have different ideas about the time to kill. "The argument has been going on," he believes, "since man first looked to the moon for signs to guide him through seed-time and harvest-time..."

"Some folks argue a man must do his hog killing on the shrinking of the moon," he reports. "Others are just as insistent the butchering should be done on a 'growing moon.'"

"The 'shrinking moon' faction contend a hog killed when the moon is waning will prevent the bacon and lard from shrinking."

"My grandfather, who is 96 and who has butchered many a hog, holds to this theory with a persistence that rules out all argument."

"The proof," he says, "is in the meat. So there ain't no room to argue. When a hog is butchered in the dark of the moon, the meat will shrink in the pot and yield its juicy goodness."

"Now, if a fellow kills his hog in the full light of the moon, the meat won't give up its fat. It'll just grow bigger and tougher the longer it's cooked in a pot."

"Show me a piece of bacon and I'll tell you right off when the butchering was done. It's the easiest in the world to tell. All you've got to do is put a piece of it in a pan and start frying it."

"If the bacon curls up, you know for a certainty that it was butchered in the light of the moon. Meat butchered on the dark of the moon, flatters out and you get a heap of grease."

"There are others, however, who argue that unless you do your hog killing on the full light of the moon there won't be as much grease and fat," and he cites his grandfather's brother-in-law as a confederate on that side, and says that "he is known in these parts as a superprime killer and butcher."

I am not sure but I rather think the majority of Burke farmers would side with the grandfather. I think his theory is what I've heard.

To quote further (and I have quoted from so many of John's articles, which are "right down my alley," that I should write him for permission for even excerpts), he has this observation to indicate that among mountain people, on whatever side they argue about the effects, the moon still governs their time for hog-killing.

"Hog killing usually begins when the first heavy frost hits the valleys. That is, it begins if the moon is right. Of course, the weather must be cold and crisp and clear."

"In many sections of the mountains, neighbors gather and make hog killing a sort of community affair."

"It is about the only thing left of the old time customs where neighbors gather to help each other."

I have understood that Mr. Parris will include many of his newspaper articles, and perhaps other interesting mountain lore he has been collecting for years, in a book to be published soon. I for one, shall be looking forward to owning and reading such a worthwhile volume.

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