

### Farm Outlook Is Brighter

The new farm year probably will be a good one for the farmer—compared to any year except 1973. The record shattering net income of the season just completed isn't likely to be repeated in 1974.

This seems to be the consensus of the experts at a time when the difficult task of predicting agriculture is even more difficult than usual.

In many ways it's a new ball game. There is a new government program with its "target" prices and strong appeal for expanded production; there is a delicate balance of commodities worldwide; there is a serious shortage of such basics as fuel and fertilizer, and there are increased costs almost at every turn.

These are just some of the factors that promise to make 1974 an "interesting" year for agriculture and the farmer.

Whatever happens in '74, farm program will be a critical factor influencing prices in the match the income they received

last year. Realized net farm income probably reached \$25 billion, up over \$5 billion from the previous record set only the year before.

North Carolina State University economists point out that this "phenomenal" increase in farm income was a result of the continuing strong domestic demand for livestock production and a exceptionally strong foreign demands for coops.

Higher prices for all commodities and increased production of most major crops contributed to the strong agricultural picture in North Carolina. Production of blue-corned toacco was up 13 per cent, corn 5 per cent, soybeans 27 per cent, cotton 30 per cent and peanuts 22 per cent.

Looking into the new year, the NCSU economists point out that markets for important commodities are in a delicate balance. Prices are likely to move up and down during the first half of the year, but they should remain strong for commodities produced in '74 and carried over for sale.

Farmer's response to the new farm program will be a critical factor influencing prices in the second half of the year. If they

respond as anticipated a mild weather conditions are favorable, grain and soybean prices next fall will be lower than last fall but well above the average of the late 1960's.

Increased feed supplies at lower prices will encourage expansion of livestock in the second half of '74, the NCSU economists suggest.

The story on costs is the same as it has been for years—they will be higher. Taxes and farm wage rates will continue to rise, also.

### Traffic Death Count Listed

CHARLOTTE.—The N. C. State Motor Club has estimated that 50 persons could lose their lives in traffic accidents on N. C. highways during the Christmas and New Year's holiday periods. "That is a lot of deaths," motor club president Thomas B. Watkins said, "but it represents a decrease from last year because both holiday periods are longer this year."

A total of 49 persons died last year during the two holidays, both of which were counted during 78-hour spans. This year each holiday's death toll will be counted during 102-hour periods.

The official Christmas week ends runs from 6 p. m. Friday, December 21, until midnight December 25. New Year's runs from 6 p. m. Friday, December 23, until midnight January 1.

Watkins said he was optimistic that there would be fewer fatalities for several reasons. "First, there should be less traffic on the highways because of the energy crisis and secondly, cars will be traveling at a slower rate of speed." He said that about half of last year's accidents were caused by excessive speed.

He stated that the only question mark is the weather. "If the weather is good," Watkins commented, "we could have the safest holidays in a long time."

Officials statistics, at this writing, indicated that there have been 101 less highway traffic deaths this year than in 1972.

Watkins also cautioned motorists that many service stations will be closed during the holidays and that gasoline may be hard to find. He also warned against driving while drinking. "This is the party season," he said, "but partying and driving are not compatible to highway safety."

### Beef, Pork Prices Strong For 1974

North Carolina hog and beef cattle producers are likely to enjoy the first half of the New Year considerably more than the second half.

Prices for most categories of animals are expected to hold up well as the year begins and, in some cases, even strengthen before beginning to weaken as 1974 wears on.

North Carolina State University extension economists suggest that consumer demand for beef may be up in the first half of the year by 6 to 8 per cent. During the second half, lower prices for pork and broilers may dampen the demand increase to a modest 3 to 4 per cent.

Markings of red cattle are expected to be up substantially in the second half of the year. Prices at Omaha may average around \$15 - \$17 per hundred pounds in the first quarter of 1974, move up slightly to the \$18 - \$20 range before settling to an average of around \$18 to \$19 in the last half of the year.

North Carolina produces far more feeder cattle than fed cattle, and prices for these younger animals are heavily influenced by the fed cattle market. Feeders averaging 500 pounds could bring \$52 - \$54 per hundred pounds during the first quarter and \$53 - \$55 in the second. In the last half of the year, prices are expected to fall below \$50 and average around \$46 - \$48.

Hog farmers, like producers of beef and practically all farm commodities, have enjoyed a record high market at times in recent months, but it won't last.

Pork producers can expect the N. C. slaughter hog price to average around \$13-\$15 early in '74. It may drop to \$11-\$13 after early spring, decline further to \$9-\$11 around mid-year and sink to around \$8 to \$9 by the fourth quarter.

Feeder pig prices will follow a similar pattern, although they may pick up in the fourth quarter. In the first quarter, they may average \$88 - \$92 per hundred pounds for 56-60-pound pigs. A decline to around \$84-\$88 is expected in the second second quarter and another drop to the neighborhood of \$80-\$84 may come in the third quarter. Some recovery to \$83-\$87 may set in after that.

### Mini Trees Are Hobby Of Rieck

MINI TREES — with 2 col cut. According to John Rieck, a New York interior designer who has made a hobby out of creating and decorating miniature Christmas trees, this can be an endless, absorbing and fascinating pursuit.

Mr. Rieck collects miniature decorations whenever and wherever he can find them. Many antique and curio dealers have learned of his interest, and notify him immediately when any tiny toys or other miniature objects turn up.

One of the best sources for tiny toys are antique doll houses. But other prospects are endless because not all tiny objects are necessarily antiques. When he travels, Mr. Rieck often makes surprising finds. For instance, he found a shop in San Salvador that had hundreds of tiny Mickey Mouses, which are now part of his collection.

Some ornaments are rare and valuable. For example, he discovered some Austrian wax figures. Hansels and Gretels, that were barely an inch high.

Among the other miniature objects Mr. Rieck is on the lookout for are wax angels, teddy bears, toy dogs, mice, animals of all types, shoes, doll furniture, snowmen, soldiers, sleighs, musical instruments, bells, birds, fruit, trains and cars.

Most of these ornaments are made of wood, wax or porcelain. A few are ivory. Birthday cake candles are cut down to represent tree lights, and colored pipe cleaners are twisted to form interesting shapes.

There are also many inexpensive, small ornaments to be found in variety stores, which is where Mr. Rieck gets the small, artificial Christmas trees. Usually, he enhances them by adding branches for greater fullness

and to accommodate more ornaments. The more ornaments the better, according to Mr. Rieck, because people get great pleasure, discovering each individual one.

kept under glass bell jars.

His elaborate creations are probably quite beyond most of us. However, simpler versions can be done by anyone and children, especially. The same type of inexpensive trees can be used as decorations. Stars, angels, and Santa Clauses abound on these cards, many of which are expensive hobby to enjoy throughout the year-round.

They can be mounted on firm cardboard for extra support before cutting them out. (Use gift boxes for this). Hanging loops can be attached with a needle and green thread. They should then be filed in their proper categories in envelopes or small boxes. This should prove an absorbing project for children and result in an interesting and expensive hobby to enjoy throughout the year-round.



### GREETINGS

This Christmas, let the bright rays of love, peace and understanding enter our hearts and shine there always. We extend grateful thanks to our loyal customers.

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### Merry Christmas

May the joys of home and hearthside fill your holidays... and your hearts... with gladness. To know you and serve you is our sincere pleasure. Thanks, friends, for your generous, loyal support.

JOSEPH R. SMITH RUBY H. BAKER

BRENDA LOVELACE DURANT B. GOFORTH DEBBY HOUSTON

BETH HUGHES KATHY BUTLER



### Kings Mountain

Savings & Loan Association

P. O. BOX 746 KINGS MOUNTAIN, NORTH CAROLINA 28086

# NOTICE PENALTY

ON UNPAID 1973

## City Taxes

APPLIES

January 1, 1974

AT RATE OF

# 2%

## City of Kings Mountain

TAX DEPARTMENT