

Population Explosion Influences Ag Production

By ROBERT P. SPIVEY
Special Writer

"Population growth is the key factor in determining our nation's agricultural production needs for the year 2010," contends R. L. Skrabanek, professor, Department of Agricultural Economics and Sociology at Texas A&M University.

Currently about 180 million people are residing in the United States. It is projected that the U. S. will have a population of 230 million by 1975 and 370 million for 2010. These figures assume a rate of growth for the next 50 years about equal to the growth which occurred during the first 50-year period of the present century. Numerically, the increases are 50 million more

people by 1975 and 190 million more by 2010.

Many factors are involved in the estimation of agricultural needs for 2010. The factors may change at any time. It is necessary to make the following assumptions so that this report will be valid: (1) A population of 370 million in 2010; (2) A healthy growth in the nation's economy, with a per capita income of \$4,900 by 2010; (3) Per capita consumption of food remaining about the same as 1960 consumption levels; (4) An export level for 2010 about the same as in 1960, and (5) No major wars.

Using these assumptions Skrabanek predicts the agricultural needs for 2010 are about 2.4 times today's production levels.

Livestock and livestock products needs will be about 2.5 times today's levels, with the crop output needs doubling those of today. A major factor entering into the smaller proportionate increases needed in output for crops than for livestock is predicted further gains of between 15 and 20 per cent in the efficiency of feed conversion by livestock.

"We may get a hint as to what extent farmers and ranchers will be able to produce enough for an additional 50 million people by 1975 and for 190 million more by 2010 by reviewing what has happened in the past," said Skrabanek.

U. S. population doubled from 1900 to 1950, just as it is being predicted to do for the next half-

century. The farmers and ranchers of America ably met this increased production challenge.

However, the U.S. called largely upon expanded cultivated acreage for the increased output from 1900 to the end of World War I. From World War I to about 1937, most agricultural gains came through the shift from animal power to machine power. This shift also released large acreages formerly used to produce food for animal power to the production of food for human use. The third basic factor largely instrumental in increased production was the application of research findings and technology.

"We must depend on research to aid us double our output to keep up with the population," said Skrabanek.

Further expansion of cultivated acreages in sizable proportions does not appear to be in the picture. The second source, making additional cultivated land available for the production of food items for human consumption through shifting from animal power to machine power, has likewise about run its course. Thus, the nation must turn to

new technological developments to meet the needs of 2010.

"As if we did not have a challenge big enough in the United States alone, we must also look to the world situation and what is happening," pointed out Skrabanek.

There are 3 billion inhabitants in the world today. This is six times the number living on the earth at 1650. The alarming thing about world population is the rate at which it is growing. It took hundreds of thousands of years for the world population to reach one-half billion (about 1650). It took about 200 years for this number to double (1 billion by 1850); only about 80 years for it to double again (2 billion in 1930); and at the present rate, the third doubling will take only 40 years (4 billion by 1970).

Thus, world population is a basic problem of our time, as many nations cannot supply enough food for the growing masses.

It is a problem that must be solved if people expect to go on living on the world as they know it.

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Dr. Jack A. Dabbs will attend the annual meeting of the Modern Language Association and the American Name Society in Chicago Dec. 27-30.

The head of the A&M department of modern languages will present a paper, "The Berlin Document Center." The center was the repository for government documents and files captured by U. S. soldiers during the closing months of World War II.

Dr. Richard E. Thomas of Texas A&M will attend a conference of the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics Monday in San Diego, Calif.

Prof To Conduct Astronomy Meet

Mathematics Professor J. T. Kent will instruct an in-service astronomy institute in Temple this spring.

The National Science Foundation-sponsored series will be offered in cooperation with the university.

An organizational meeting for the course will be held at Temple High School Jan. 17. Day and hour of the once-weekly class-meetings will be set at that time.

Any science teacher for grades 7-12 is eligible to enroll for the course, which carries 3 hours of credit. Applicants may contact C. M. Loyd at Texas A&M's National Science Foundation office for enrollment procedure.

Students accepted will receive book and travel allowance. No tuition will be charged.

The professional organization of aerospace conference will be on "Aerothermo Chemistry of Turbulent Flows." Around 150 persons are expected for the international meeting. Dr. Thomas, associate professor of aerospace engineering, said.

Fireman Wants White, Not Red

Texas A&M Firemen's Training Instructor Tou Robinson "sees red" when he sees red. Robinson, in fire service for 23 years, thinks firefighters should discard traditional red-splashed equipment in favor of white colors.

The reason? White is easier to see. He says it would improve the margin of safety for firemen.

"Why not squealers for fire trucks instead of traditional sirens and bells?" he asks. "Why not distinctive flashing blue lights instead of red for fire trucks?"

Robinson subscribes to this motto: "If you have been doing something the same way for 10 years . . . change. There is a better way."

8 To Attend Dallas Meetings

Eight Texas A&M professors and students will attend a joint meeting of the Texas Academy of Sciences and the state branch of the American Association of Physics Teachers in Dallas Friday and Saturday.



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