

## A Question for Sugarbeet Growers

**I**RRIGATION farmers in some Montana sugar-factory districts are coming face to face with the question of whether the factories are to continue to operate, or are to move to other regions where growers are more "beet minded."

Beet acreage in most of the irrigation districts has been on a downward trend in recent years. On some projects the loss of beet production has been moderate. On others the acreage reduction has been so large that the sugar companies say they are operating at a serious loss. In at least two instances, the companies are giving consideration to moving to some other area where there is greater assurance of enough beet production to permit a profitable run.

A variety of reasons have been voiced by growers for reducing or eliminating their beet acreage. These include uncertainty of labor supply, insufficient acreage to justify purchasing the new mechanical equipment, greater immediate profits from some other crop because of currently favorable prices, a series of seasons in which late or early frosts or cool weather lowered acre yields, and lack of interest in carrying on feeding and other operations that are necessary in order to secure maximum profits from beets.

On the other hand, many growers who have continued to produce beets as a part of a balanced rotation program, to feed livestock and to apply adequate amounts of fertilizer, and who have grown a sufficient acreage to make efficient use of mechanical harvesters and other equipment, firmly believe that beets are essential to maximum profits in any continuing program of irrigation farming.

Others who have temporarily withdrawn from beet production plan to return to the crop when the abnormally high prices now prevailing for certain other products are no longer available.

But sugar factories cannot continue to operate at a loss year after year on the vague hope that beet acreage will get back to profitable processing levels some time in the future. And it is becoming apparent that farmers in some of the factory districts are going to have to decide very shortly whether they want to grow beets as a part of their future farm programs or whether they are willing to give them up permanently.

If they want to stay with beets and keep the factories operating it is going to be necessary to increase total beet acreage quite substantially. In some factory districts the answer cannot be postponed much longer.

## Will Price Controls Work?

**A**MONG the significant debates in which the American people are engaged, as national defense policies continue to crystallize, is the one on price control. While there are innumerable variations of public opinion on this important subject the principal viewpoints may be summarized as follows:

1. Some contend that price controls alone will be sufficient to check inflation. These are largely the naive souls who think government can control economic law by merely waving a bureaucratic wand or issuing a set of regulations. They are in the minority, at least among thoughtful citizens.

2. There is a substantial segment of public opinion that holds to the belief that price controls are both inappropriate and ineffective in a democracy that is not engaged in all-out war, and that practical inflation control can best be exercised through the avenues of taxation and control of money supply.

3. Many others believe the way to control inflation is to establish a three-way combination of price controls, pay-as-you-go taxation and measures of financial policy that will have the effect of reducing the supply of money in circulation.

While congress could wipe out price lids when it decides what to do about extending

the inflation control program, the probability is that there will be continuing provision for the three-way plan of price controls to be used in connection with taxation and control of money.

Whether price controls will work in this democracy in a period of half-peace and half-war remains to be seen. Such controls were at least reasonably successful during World war 2 when every American was acutely aware of the tremendous national emergency. And when the sons and fathers of many families were in the front lines. Even then, black markets were becoming a serious problem as the war neared its end. When the fighting stopped it soon became apparent that the control program could no longer be administered because of lack of public support.

There are some indications that America's tremendous productive capacity may largely remove the threat of inflation within the next 12 or 15 months in spite of the stimulating effect of the vast defense program. In the meantime, loyal citizens will cooperate to the best of their ability with government control efforts. And continue to exercise the right of a free people to express opinions as to the best way to attain the objectives all are trying to achieve in this period of great national crisis.

## Enough Water In The Missouri

**T**HERE is an adequate water supply in the Missouri for the development proposed for the next 50 years under the army engineers-bureau of reclamation program. That is the opinion of the subcommittee of the Missouri Basin Inter-Agency committee, which was directed last October to "review and consolidate prior studies of flows in the

Missouri river and draft reports thereon."

The report which has now been issued indicates that the river can provide water for necessary sanitation and municipal use, irrigation for more than 5,000,000 acres of new land, and supplemental water for 1,000,000 acres now irrigated. Water is also sufficient for development of the agricultur-

al phases of land and water utilization, flood control and satisfactory navigation from Sioux City to the mouth.

The planned water releases will provide for the generation of about 13,000,000,000 kilowatt hours of electrical energy annually from an installed power plant capacity of 3,200,000 kilowatts, of which 1,500,000 will be at main river dams.

In making its study the committee used stream-flow records of the geological survey for the period 1898 to 1949, as well as weather bureau data on precipitation, and other available material. It learned that at Sioux City, Ia., the flow of the Missouri, after adjustment for the effects of present level of irrigation development and the effects of regulation by the Fort Peck reservoir, has averaged as follows:

For the 32-year period from 1898 to 1929—27,500,000 acre-feet.

For the 12-year period during the great drought from 1930 to 1941—15,500,000 acre-feet.

For the 8-year period following the drought from 1942 to 1949—26,200,000 acre-feet, or very nearly the same level as the pre-drought period.

For the entire 52-year period from 1898 to 1949—24,600,000 acre-feet. Those values are at Sioux City. The corresponding value for the 52-year period at Kansas City is about 41,000,000 acre-feet, and at the mouth near St. Louis is about 59,000,000 acre-feet.

While the period covered by the river flow studies is as but a moment in the long life of the Missouri, this record is the best that is available. The story it tells is an encouraging one if we may assume that this 52-year period is a fair indication of what the Big Muddy will produce in the future.

There has been a lull in consumer buying but don't think the danger of inflation is over. By fall a much larger percentage of the nation's production will be going into the defense program. Equipment and appliances made of metal as well as other merchandise manufactured from materials that will be in restricted supply will be harder to get. Better buy anything you need along this line now while dealers are well stocked. It will be scarcer and higher priced later.

\* \* \*

Grain stealing, cattle rustling and farm and ranch thievery in general is on the increase, according to reports received in recent months. Be as vigilant as possible to avoid loss but if someone steals from your or your neighbor's place do everything possible to give the law enforcement officers definite clues or evidence with which to work in catching the thieves.

\* \* \*

That scrap metal pile is becoming valuable once more. The defense program needs it badly. You can be both patriotic and thrifty by hauling it to town.

### Montana Farmer-Stockman

—COVERS MONTANA AND NORTHERN WYOMING—  
OFFICE: 124 4th St. N., Great Falls, Montana.

LESTER COLE . . . . . Editor and Manager  
DON E. BOSLEY . . . . . Assistant Editor  
LARRY GILL . . . . . Livestock Editor  
JERRY LESTER . . . . . Rovins Reporter

Department Editors: AMY MARTIN, Rural Homes Department; DR. HOWARD WELCH, Veterinary Department; RALPH D. MERCER, Soils and Crops; H. E. CUSHMAN, Poultry; I. W. DICKERSON, Farm Mechanics; DR. JOHN W. HOLLAND, Thoughts on Life; GILBERT GUSLER, Market Analyst; H. L. DUSENBERRY, Irrigation; F. M. HARRINGTON, Garden and Orchards.

Advertising Representatives: Western Associated Farm Papers—CHICAGO 5: Fred Toof, National Adv. Manager. 28 E. Jackson; NEW YORK 18: William T. Woodhull, Manager. 500 Fifth Avenue; SAN FRANCISCO 5: J. J. Mattus, Manager. 707 Sharon Building.

Members of Associated Farm Papers, Audit Bureau of Circulations and Agricultural Publishers Association

SUBSCRIPTION PRICE—\$3 for five years, \$2 for three years, \$1 for one year; Canadian, one year, \$2.  
RENEWALS AND CHANGES—If the date on your label is not changed within three weeks after sending in your remittance, please write us. If you wish a change of address, give both new and old postoffice.

ADVERTISING—Full information regarding advertising rates, etc., sent on application. Subscribers are requested to mention promptly to us any advertiser who fails to live up to his advertising agreement.