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States, considerable quantities of oats and barley (as well as of wheat and rye) were imported from Canada. Canadian *net exports* of feed grains were the largest on record and United States *net imports* were larger than ever before except in the drought year 1936–37. At the end of 1943–44 feed-grain carryovers in the United States and Canada were substantially smaller than a year earlier, and the United States carryover was only about half the size of the record year-end stocks of 1940 and 1941. Nevertheless, the feed-grain carryovers in North America in 1944 were well above prewar average levels and probably larger than immediately needed in view of the excellent new grain harvests secured by both Canada and the United States.

The feed-grain position of Argentina in 1943–44 stood out in marked contrast to that of the two major producers of North America. Early shortage rather than abundance of supplies characterized the Argentine position because of the notably poor corn crop harvested in April–May 1943. That crop, the smallest since 1917, amounted to no more than a fifth of the high annual average production of the three preceding years. And since corn normally represents almost 85 per cent of Argentina's total production of feed grains, the small corn crop harvested in 1943 could not be compensated for by relatively large crops of other grains. Yet Argentina had ample supplies of feed grains in April–March 1943–44 for her own record livestock population, for the diversion of about a million tons of corn to fuel, and for small exports to the limited foreign markets still open to grain shipments from that country. The policy of the Argentine government in 1943–44 was to restrict corn exports and to subsidize the use of inferior wheat for fuel in order to conserve sufficient quantities of corn for feeding and for other normal domestic uses.

After April–May 1944, when a good new corn crop was harvested in Argentina, the feed-grain position of the country eased. With feed-grain supplies larger than on the average in prewar years and with shipments to Europe restricted by blockade conditions and shortage of tonnage, the Argentine government faced anew the problem of maintaining feed-grain prices. To meet this problem, the government established a guaranteed minimum price for new-crop corn, which was initially fixed at a level above the prevailing market prices of old-crop grain.

XIII. UNITED STATES: HUGE FEED REQUIREMENTS

Record livestock numbers and economic factors that encouraged heavy feed use of grain per animal unit resulted in an unusually large demand for feed grains in the United States in 1943–44. The national feed position was therefore tight despite near-record domestic supplies of feed grains, large imports of oats and barley from Canada, and additional heavy sales of Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) wheat for feed purposes.

PRODUCTION OF MAJOR FEED GRAINS

The 1943 feed-grain crop of the United States was the third largest on record—smaller only than the crops of 1920 and 1942. Moderately good weather and increased planting of hybrid corn were the chief factors responsible for the heavy production. Although the harvested area of the four principal feed grains was substantially above the restricted levels of the five preceding years, it was considerably smaller than in most other interwar years and well below the inflated wartime acreages of 1917 and 1918.

The important corn crop (normally about 75 per cent of the aggregate feed-grain production) exceeded the 3-billion-bushel mark for the fourth time in the country's history (Table 40). Acreage limitations under the agricultural adjustment program, which had effectively kept sowings of corn down in recent years, were first relaxed and later abolished for 1943. Freed from the earlier restrictions, farmers expanded their plantings of corn by 6 million acres, or 7 per cent, over the preceding year and by a similar amount as compared with average sowings in 1938–42. But this expansion would not have resulted in a 3-billion-bushel crop if the national yield of corn per acre had not been abnormally high. For the third year in succession, the yield was above 30 bushels, and this level was again exceeded in 1944. Earlier official forecasts of the last two corn crops were sharply raised during the growing seasons of these crops; successive forecasts in July–October showed a net increase of 349 million bushels for the 1943 crop, an increase of 217 million for the crop of 1944 (Chart 31, p. 155).

Without favorable weather, these yields could not have been secured. But the enterprise shown by American farmers in rapidly increasing their use of hybrid-corn seed also tended to raise the level of corn yields. In 1933 only 0.1 per cent of the corn acreage in the United

States had been seeded with hybrid corn, and by 1937 the portion was still less than 8 per cent. Then came the rapid increases to 23 per cent in 1939, to 39 per cent in 1941, to 51 per cent in 1943, and to 57 per cent in 1944.[1] We infer that a less significant but not negligible contribution to the high corn yields of the past few years came from the soil-building practices actively developed in certain areas under the soil-conservation program.[2]

More oats and less barley was planted in 1943 than the government's "food-for-freedom goals" called for. Yet the oats crop proved to be only moderate in size, while the barley harvest ranked as the fourth largest on record. Although the outturn of grain sorghums was historically large, it still represented an unimportant fraction of the total feed-grain production.

TOTAL SUPPLIES AND DISAPPEARANCE

A large carryover of feed grains at the beginning of the 1943–44 marketing year brought the total domestic supplies for the year to 131 million short tons, only 11 million less than the record figure for 1942–43. This was substantially above the supply level of any other year (Chart 29).

On many occasions, smaller annual supplies of feed grains had been associated with distinct ease in the national feed position. Indeed, the record feed-grain carryover of 1941 had been built up from surpluses drawn from considerably smaller feed supplies in the four preceding years. Yet the large feed-grain supplies of 1943–44 were associated with distinct tightness in the general feed position—tightness that persisted in spite of the diversion of an unprecedented amount of wheat and rye to feed and in spite of the importation of very large quantities of oats and barley from Canada.

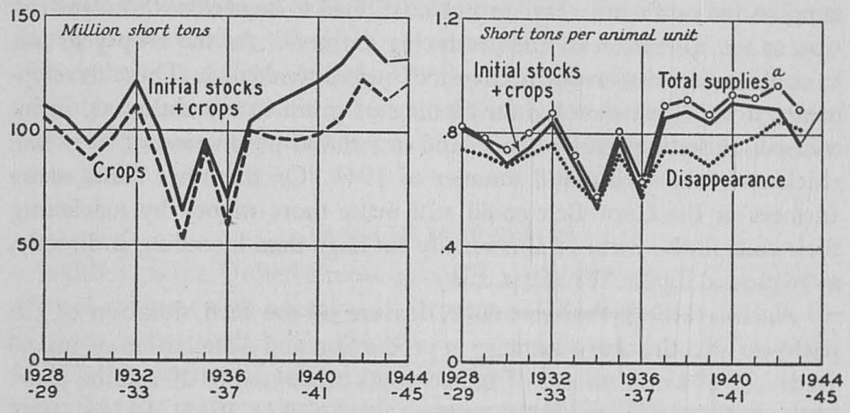
The tight feed position of 1943–44 was due in large measure to the sharp increase in livestock numbers that had taken place since 1941. From 133 million grain-consuming animal units on January 1, 1941, there had been an increase to 160 million on January 1, 1943 and to 171 million at the beginning of 1944. Never before had the United States tried to feed so many animals. In relation to the huge livestock population then existing, the sizable domestic feed-grain supplies of 1943–44

[1] U.S. Dept. Agr., Press Release 2712–44, July 11, 1944; U.S. Dept. Agr., Bur. Agr. Econ., Crop Reporting Board, "1944 Annual Summary: Acreage, Yield, and Production of Principal Crops . . . . ," *Crop Production*, Dec. 18, 1944, p. 7.

[2] U.S. Dept. Agr., War Food Administration, Food Production Administration, Soil Conservation Service, *Report of the Chief . . . . 1943* (Oct. 12, 1943), esp. pp. 4–9.

appeared distinctly moderate or even somewhat small (Chart 29). But with imported oats and barley added to the domestic supply, and the total enlarged by abnormally heavy feeding of domestic and imported wheat and rye, the supply of feed grain available per animal unit was moderate to moderately large in 1943–44. The tightness that developed in the feed-grain position during the past crop year cannot, therefore, be attributed wholly to the size of the livestock population.

CHART 29.—UNITED STATES CROPS, SUPPLIES, AND DISAPPEARANCE OF FEED GRAINS, FROM 1928–29*



* Data as in "Feed Statistics, Supplement to the 1944 Issues," *Feed Situation* (U.S. Bur. Agr. Econ., FDS-59, June 1944), p. 17, with late revisions. For data on the three principal feed grains, see Table 54.

[a] Crops and stocks plus net imports of barley, corn, and oats, plus wheat and rye fed.

Scarcely less important was the abnormally heavy rate of feeding livestock and poultry that prevailed during 1943–44, particularly during the first six months. The average disappearance of feed grain per animal unit (including wheat and rye fed) was higher than in any preceding marketing year except 1942–43.[3] Price relationships, the distribution of the feed supplies, and other factors favored heavy feeding of grain to produce hogs of above-average slaughter weights and to produce high yields of milk per cow and heavy production of eggs per laying hen.

These factors declined in importance as the year advanced and as tightness in the feed-grain position became more severe. As early as October 1943 the War Food Administration (WFA) announced a general policy for insuring the flow of necessary quantities of commercial

[3] Disappearance of all grains per animal unit was high not only absolutely, but also in relation to the available feed supply of grains and in relation to some of the more important livestock-feed price ratios.

feed grains and meals to dairy cattle and laying hens, with greater restrictions on sales of feed for finishing range and feeder cattle, for feeding hogs to heavy weights, and for the production of turkeys, ducks, broilers, and other chickens.[4] This was followed several months later by the introduction of an allocation program for sales of feed wheat.[5] Although these government-sponsored restrictions presumably contributed to the decline in the rate of grain feeding during the latter part of 1943–44, they were considerably more important in influencing the flow of commercial feed to different animal groups. The much larger grain supplies fed on farms where grown continued to be used without restriction at the discretion of the producing farmers. As the crop year advanced, grain prices rose and livestock prices weakened. These developments were reflected in lighter feeding of grain in certain areas, in increased marketings of livestock, and in reduced production of hogs and chickens in the spring and summer of 1944. On the other hand, many farmers in the Corn Belt could still make more money by marketing their corn in the form of abnormally fat hogs than by selling it directly, as requested by the WFA (p. 151).

An interesting, though minor, feature of the feed situation of the past year was the sharp increase in production and distribution of mixed feeds. In 1943 the output of mixed feeds amounted to 29 million short tons, or practically twice the amount produced in 1941. Before 1941 only about one-third of the livestock and poultry raisers had used mixed feeds regularly, whereas in 1943–44 the number was reported to be close to two-thirds.[6] This expansion promoted economy of utilization of the short protein feeds, and facilitated scientific substitution of the less scarce grains for corn in line with recent feeding experiments.[7]

Nonfeed uses of the major feed grains, which normally account for 10–15 per cent of the annual utilization of corn and oats and 40–45 per cent of the utilization of barley, took somewhat less grain in 1943–44 than in the preceding year but more than on the average in late prewar

[4] *Feed Situation* (U.S. Dept. Agr., Bur. of Agr. Econ., FDS–51, October 1943), pp. 7–8.

[5] *Ibid.* (FDS-56, March 1944), p. 13.

[6] *Feedstuffs* (Minneapolis), June 24, 1944, p. 2.

[7] Accumulating evidence indicates that the range of substitution of the different feed grains is much wider than many feeders formerly believed and that for many feeding purposes a ration that combines several feed grains gives better results than any single grain. Summaries of recent feeding experiments can be found in the *Experiment Station Record* (U.S. Dept. Agr., Office of Experiment Stations), and also in various issues of *Feedstuffs* (e.g., G. B. Willgeroth, J. L. Halpin, and J. C. Fritz, "Grains and Grain By-Products in Chick Starting Rations," Mar. 18, 1944, pp. 32, 34–35; C. E. Aubel, "Substitute Value of Grains for Profitable Hog Feeding," Apr. 8, 1944, pp. 26, 28–30; H. L. Lessard, "The Use of Oats in Poultry Feeding," May 13, 1944, p. 29).

years (Table 57). The use of corn for food remained at its previous high wartime level, largely because of continued heavy utilization of corn sugar, syrup, and breakfast food. Moreover, the quantity of domestic and imported barley used for alcoholic beverages (beer) and industrial alcohol apparently reached a new high wartime peak in 1943–44—the highest peak recorded during the 15 years for which data are readily available. In contrast, the amount of corn diverted to the production of alcohol (industrial only in 1943–44) was sharply reduced under War Production Board (WPB) restrictions, which prohibited such use of corn from July 10 to December 1, 1943 and again from July 1 to November 29, 1944. Even during the intervening months (December–June 1943–44) the WPB permitted only certain groups of distillers to use corn, and it restricted their utilization of corn and/or grain sorghums to a maximum of 45 per cent of the total grain consumed.[8]

TRADE IN FEED GRAINS

Although the United States normally ranks as a small net exporter of feed grains (with average net exports of 586,000 short tons in the 15 years ending with 1941–42), she was a sizable net importer in 1943–44. In the absence of official trade statistics for the United States, we infer that the net imports of this country approximated 2 million short tons in 1943–44[9]—imports exceeded only in the drought year 1936–37.

The great bulk of the feed-grain imports of the past crop year consisted of Canadian oats and barley (pp. 159–61). A little additional barley and something like 6 million bushels of corn came from Argentina. Exports of Argentine corn were under embargo until April 3, 1944, and thereafter shipments to the United States were apparently curtailed by action (or lack of action) of the United States Department of State. In late May the WFA was said to be formulating plans for the importation of some 40 million bushels of Argentine corn prior to November 1, 1944,[10] but an official announcement in the following month reported only the probable importation of about 6 million bushels in July and "contemplated" additional imports in later months.[11] In actual fact, no corn imports reached this country until August, and the total in August–September probably did not materially exceed 6 mil-

[8] *Feed Situation* (U.S. Dept. Agr., Bur. Agr. Econ., FDS-62, September 1944), p. 6.

[9] Net trade for June–May in the case of barley, for July–June for oats, and for October–September for corn.

[10] *Feedstuffs*, May 27, 1944, p. 1.

[11] *Feed Situation* (U.S. Dept. Agr., Bur. Agr. Econ., FDS-59, June 1944), p. 12.

lion bushels. We infer from data on Argentine corn shipments that an additional 5 million bushels may have been imported in the first months of the new corn-crop year—October and November 1944.

Concerned over the evident tightness of the current feed position, Congress suspended existing import duties on grains for feed for 90 days beginning December 22.[12] The duty-free period was later extended to June 20, with modifications which permitted the free importation of oats to be milled for food. Temporary uncertainty as to whether Congress would extend the duty-free period beyond June 20 led the WFA to agree to absorb any import duty imposed on the 6 million bushels of Argentine corn, for which import arrangements were made in late May or early June. Since no further extension was authorized by Congress, this agreement made it possible for Argentine corn to move farther into the interior of the United States than otherwise would have been possible in the face of existing transport costs and corn-ceiling prices.

United States gross exports of feed grains in 1943–44 were apparently limited to shipments to Canada (roughly 5 million bushels of corn), shipments to Mexico (less than 5 million bushels of corn), and lend-lease shipments. Data on deliveries for lend-lease shipment are shown in the following table.

DELIVERIES OF SPECIFIED GRAINS AND GRAIN PRODUCTS FOR LEND-LEASE SHIPMENT, APRIL 1941–JUNE 1944*
(Thousand short tons of grain equivalent)

Delivery period	Corn		Oats		Barley		Total
	Feed	Grits, flour	Feed	Cereals	Feed	Pearl, malt	
Apr. 1941–June 1942.....	352	0	0	58	1	..[a]	411
July 1942–June 1943.....	144	5	1	42	3	26	221
July 1943–June 1944.....	27	8	2	21	7	10	75

* Data from Table 60.
[a] Less than 500 tons.

In terms of bushels, deliveries of corn and corn products (exclusive of starch) came to only 1.3 million bushels as grain in July–June 1943–44 and to 1.0 million in the corn-crop year, October–September. These various figures suggest that the United States was a *net importer* of substantial quantities of oats and barley in July–June 1943–44 (something like 75 and 40 million bushels respectively) but that she was a small *net exporter* of corn.

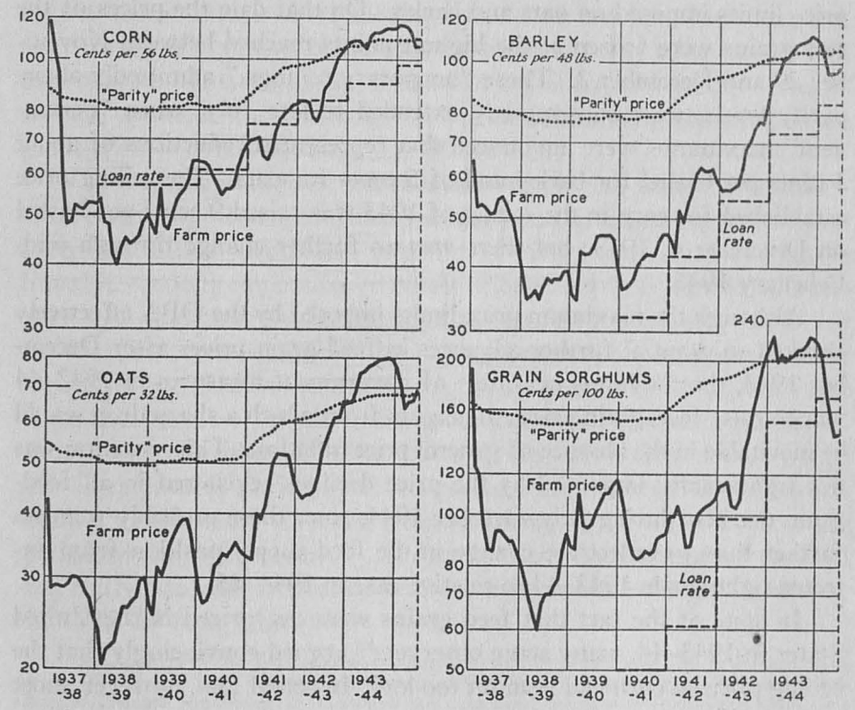
12 Public No. 211, 78th Cong.

FEED-GRAIN PRICES

In 1943–44, feed-grain prices reached their highest levels since 1920, and for the second time in 20 years stood above the widely publicized and excessive "parity" levels. Although these prices were lower than the peaks recorded during World War I, they may well have been as high in relation to costs of grain production, which have apparently declined markedly during the past quarter of a century.

The high feed-grain prices of 1943–44 were more than double the corresponding average prices of 1939–40 (Chart 30). They represented

CHART 30.—AVERAGE FARM AND PARITY PRICES OF FEED GRAINS IN THE UNITED STATES AND CCC LOAN RATES, MONTHLY FROM JULY 1937*



* Data for prices from the U.S. Bur. Agr. Econ.; data for loan rates in Table 63.

the culmination of an irregular but continued upward price movement of five years' duration—a climb from abnormally depressed levels in 1938–39 to artificially inflated levels in 1943–44.

By the middle of 1942–43, the advancing corn prices had reached a level at which Office of Price Administration (OPA) maximum price

restrictions could legally be imposed,[13] but such maximum prices could not be set on oats, barley, or grain sorghums until the prices of these grains reached full parity levels in the late summer or fall of 1943. This was due partly to the fact that corn was the only feed grain included among the "basic" crops on which conservation and parity payments had been and were continuing to be made under the agricultural adjustment program. For such crops maximum prices had to be established in accordance with Executive Order 9250 to reflect parity prices minus "appropriate deductions" for soil-conservation payments, parity payments, and subsidies. Since no benefit payments were being made on barley, oats, or grain sorghums, ceilings for these crops had to be set to reflect full parity levels. Not until December 6, 1943 were maximum price limits imposed on oats and barley. On that date the prices of the two grains were frozen at the highest points reached between November 29 and December 3. These "temporary ceilings," admittedly above parity levels, were subsequently extended to late July, when "permanent" maximums were announced that represented reductions of about 3 cents per bushel for barley and of 5 cents for oats. The ceiling price established for corn in the spring of 1943 was raised 9 cents per bushel on December 6, 1943; but there was no further change through mid-February 1945.

Although the maximum price limits imposed by the OPA effectively checked substantial further advances in feed-grain prices after December 1943, the combined net effect of government measures in 1942–44 was to raise feed-grain prices to heights from which a sharp drop would be inevitable in the absence of general price inflation. This situation was not significantly improved by the price declines registered in all feed-grain markets during July–October 1944, since these probably went no farther than to reflect the change in the feed-supply position from extreme tightness in 1943–44 to relative ease in 1944–45.

In spite of the fact that feed grains were overpriced in the United States in 1943–44, many acute observers[14] argued convincingly that the ceiling price on corn had been set too low. In actual fact, however, most

[13] On Jan. 12, 1943 the OPA froze corn prices on all exchanges at the levels recorded for the preceding day, and on Mar. 12 the agency established an official maximum price of $1.02 for No. 2 yellow corn, Chicago basis, with provision for increases of one-half cent per bushel twice a month from May 1 to September 15. In mid-April, 1943, the corn ceiling was immediately raised to the Sept. 15 level of $1.07 and future increases disallowed. This last action represented one of a number of official moves to get farmers to market sufficient corn to supply the essential processing industries and the most pressing needs of feed-deficit areas normally dependent on corn.

[14] Among them were President O'Brien of the Chicago Board of Trade and some of the leading agricultural economists of Cornell University.

of these observers were concerned not about the corn ceiling being too low, but about it being out of line with prevailing hog prices, which were kept at an inflated level by the WFA support price of hogs.[15] In short, the WFA had set such a high support price for hogs (and more or less similarly high support prices for eggs and other livestock and animal products) that animal production was overstimulated and the feed position seriously strained. This situation was made worse in certain respects by the fact that the OPA, under Presidential direction, set the ceiling price for corn at a level that permitted Corn Belt farmers to get 30–40 cents more per bushel for their corn if they marketed it in the form of hogs or certain other animal products than if they sold it as grain. This drastically curtailed the flow of corn from the Corn Belt to deficit areas, where feeding operations had long been based on Corn Belt feed grains. It also cut the market supply of corn available to producers of starch, syrup, corn meal, and other corn products needed for the nation's war economy, and it simultaneously encouraged the production of overly fat hogs in the Corn Belt.

These maladjustments, which clearly originated with the establishment of too high a support price for hogs, first assumed serious proportions in the late spring and summer of 1943, when corn processors found it virtually impossible to obtain enough corn for continued operation. At that time the WFA tried to secure the necessary grain for the essential corn industries by calling outstanding corn loans,[16] by requisitioning elevator stocks of corn,[17] by guaranteeing to reimburse Corn Belt farmers for any subsequent increase in the ceiling price of corn prior to October 31, 1943 (later to November 30) if they would sell, as requested, during specified periods, and by requiring elevators to offer the bulk of the corn secured during these periods to certain groups of corn processors.[18] In combination, these measures resulted in a fairly adequate flow of corn to processors in the closing months of the 1942–43 corn year.

[15] In April 1943 the WFA raised its support price for Good and Choice butcher hogs of 240–270 pounds to $13.75 per 100 pounds at Chicago. This support price remained unchanged through September 1944, though the designated weights were changed from time to time to meet special market conditions or to encourage the delivery of lighter-weight hogs. From October 1, 1944 the basic support price for hogs was reduced to $12.50, as had been planned and publicly announced in the summer of 1943. This new support price was subsequently extended to March 31, 1946.

[16] U.S. Dept. Agr. Press Release 2289–43, May 5, 1943, and 2603–43, June 16, 1943.

[17] *Ibid.*, 2662–43, June 25, 1943.

[18] *Ibid.*, 2713–43, June 30, 1943, and 672–44, Sept. 28, 1943. More than twice as much corn has been utilized in recent war years by wet-processing plants in the production of starch, syrup, and sugar as by the dry-processing plants that produce corn meal, flour, and hominy grits (U.S. Dept. Agr., Bur. Agr. Econ., "Feed Statistics, Supplement to the 1944 Issues," *Feed Situation*, FDS-59, June 1944, p. 21).

After the harvesting of the 1943 corn crop, marketings increased somewhat slowly, partly because of widespread anticipation of an increase in the corn ceiling. Effective December 6, 1943 the ceiling was finally raised—but only by 9 cents per bushel. This considerably stimulated corn marketings in late December and in January–February. But since the new ceiling was still far out of line with hog prices, Corn Belt farmers kept much larger quantities of corn than usual for feeding on their own farms.

Faced with marked curtailment of the flow of corn to feed-deficit areas, the WFA undertook to meet the deficiency partly by direct sales of government-owned grain. This would have been simple if the CCC had owned as much defaulted-loan corn at the beginning of the 1943–44 corn year as it had two or three years earlier, when such holdings had totaled 165 and 107 million bushels respectively. But on October 1, 1943, the amount of government-owned corn was down to 1.1 million bushels. This meant that if the CCC wanted to sell in deficit areas more than a million bushels of corn, it would have to secure such extra grain through farmers' deliveries against earlier loans or through direct purchases of corn. Since the market position of corn was extremely tight and the WFA was more anxious to supply corn to the essential processing industries, the CCC actually limited its sales of corn for feed to 2.7 million bushels during October–September 1943–44. This quantity was quite insignificant in relation to the 269 million bushels of CCC *wheat* sold for feed during the same months (Table 9).

In the early spring of 1944 the market position of corn became so tight that some of the essential corn-processing plants were again forced to curtail operations. To meet this difficult situation the WFA issued Food Distribution Order (FDO) 96, effective March 24, which required all country and terminal elevators in 124 specified counties in the Corn Belt to set aside 35 per cent of existing stocks and future receipts for purchase by persons or firms named by the WFA. Since it soon became clear that this measure would not provide enough corn for the processing industries, the portion of future receipts to be set aside was raised to 60 per cent effective April 1. But even this higher percentage failed to insure an adequate flow of grain to the essential industries. This led the WFA to suspend FDO 96 and to substitute therefor War Food Order (WFO) 98, which required all farms and elevators in 125 major producing counties to offer to the CCC or to specially designated purchasers all the corn they sold during the sixty days beginning April 25. Although the WFA wanted to obtain 80 million bushels of

corn for essential processors under WFO 98, only 71.5[19] million bushels were finally secured. This was true in spite of government arrangements to supply free shelling and transportation services for corn sold under the new order, in spite of a joint appeal to farmers by the War Department, the WPB, and the WFA, and in spite of extension of the period for signing government corn-delivery contracts from June 23 (when the restriction on sales was lifted) to July 8.[20] The grain obtained under the program was expected to permit war-essential processors to operate at 85–90 per cent of their normal rate until the new corn crop became available.

The high feed-grain prices of 1943–44 were far above the season's official loan rates for corn, barley, and grain sorghums (Chart 30, p. 149). As in earlier years, no government loans were offered on oats. For the other three grains, CCC loans were available in 1943–44 to all farmers in the major producing areas who had met 90 per cent of their war-crop goals for 1943; these loans did not depend, as had those of former years, on compliance with special grain-acreage allotments. But although loans could be obtained more easily in 1943–44 than before, the high market prices for feed grains and livestock products encouraged farmers to market or feed their grain instead of pledging it under loan. This is evident from the accompanying table.

QUANTITIES OF GRAIN PLEDGED UNDER CCC LOANS AND AMOUNTS REMAINING UNDER LOAN AT THE END OF EACH CROP YEAR, 1939–44*

(*Million bushels*)

Crop year	Corn		Barley		Grain Sorghums	
	Amount pledged	Under loan Sept. 30	Amount pledged	Under loan June 30	Amount pledged	Under loan June 30
1939–40	302	374	..[a]	..[a]	..[a]	..[a]
1940–41	103	239	7	3	..[b]	..[b]
1941–42	111	149	16	5	..[b]	..[b]
1942–43	56	7	15	5	..[b]	..[b]
1943–44	8	4	1	..[b]	..[b]	..[b]

* U.S. Dept. Agr., War Food Administration, Commodity Credit Corporation, *Table I: Loan Programs from Date of Organization through June 30, 1943, and Loans Outstanding June 30, 1943; ibid., June 30, 1944;* and *Statement of Loans and Commodities Owned . . . .*, various issues.

[a] No loan available on 1939 crop.

[b] Less than 500,000 bushels.

Although year-end corn stocks in all positions in the United States had reached a peak in 1940 and had declined each year thereafter, the percentage reduction in these stocks to September 30, 1944 was much

[19] *Northwestern Miller*, Oct. 11, 1944, p. 16.

[20] U.S. Dept. Agr. Press Release 2738–44, July 17, 1944.

smaller than the concurrent decline in CCC holdings of old-crop corn. Despite the tight market position of corn in the last half of 1943–44 and the unsuccessful appeals of government officials for increased farm marketings, the corn carryover of September 30, 1944 was relatively large in comparison with the carryovers of most years prior to 1938. Old-crop stocks of the other two major feed grains (barley on June 1, oats on July 1) were also of good size as compared with most prewar years.

NEW-CROP DEVELOPMENTS

In the fall of 1943 government officials set up the nation's agricultural production goals for 1944. They decided that sowings of barley should be practically the same as in 1943, that the areas sown to oats and grain sorghums should be moderately reduced, and that the corn acreage should be almost correspondingly increased.[21] In March 1944 farmers expressed intentions to plant less barley than in the preceding year but considerably more oats, corn, and sorghums. Thus, both the official goals for 1944 and farmers' early-planting intentions pointed to a prospective feed-grain acreage about as large as or larger than in 1943.

These prospects became less clear as the spring advanced. Persistent heavy rains during March–April so seriously delayed the seeding of early-sown crops that many observers questioned the possibility of fulfillment of earlier sowing plans in the face of existing shortages of agricultural labor. In actual fact, however, farmers managed to plant a full acreage to feed grains by prolonging seeding operations and by working long hours, both day and night, during the short periods of favorable planting weather. In July it was officially reported that in the Corn Belt oat seeding extended from March to May, corn planting from early May to late June.[22]

No sooner did it become evident that the acreage sown to corn and other feed grains would be large than the growing crops were threatened by spreading drought. Some observers began to point out analogies to the drought year of 1930, when official forecasts of the nation's corn crop had been cut from 2,802 million bushels as of July 1 to 1,983 million two months later (Chart 31). Even the official crop report of August 10, 1944 called attention to the fact that the existing drought area

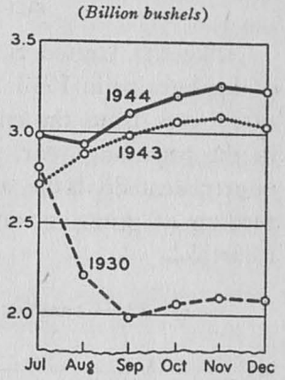
[21] U.S. Dept. Agr., War Food Administration, *Food Program for 1944* [1944], p. 20.

[22] *Crop Production*, July 10, 1944, p. 4. This remarkable achievement was made possible by the greatly increased number of tractors in service on United States farms. See [U.S.] Office of War Mobilization and Reconversion, *Problems of Mobilization and Reconversion, First Report . . . . by the Director* (Jan. 1, 1945), pp. 27–28.

centered in Kentucky and Tennessee, as it had in 1930, and that dry weather was also threatening late crops over a large area "extending into the Eastern Corn Belt States, Missouri, Arkansas, parts of Texas . . . ."[23] But the heavy grain-producing areas west of a line drawn southwest from Chicago, Illinois, to Dallas, Texas, were favored with excellent growing weather; and generous, widespread rains during August brought marked improvement in the outlook for production in areas to the east.[24]

After August 1, therefore, official forecasts of the growing corn crop were advanced from month to month even more strikingly than in the preceding year (Chart 31). The final crop estimates issued in December indicated new record harvests of corn and grain sorghums and large outturns of oats and barley. The total production of these four grains was estimated at 121 million tons, only 1.5 million less than the standing record of 1942.

CHART 31.—SUCCESSIVE ESTIMATES OF THE UNITED STATES CORN CROPS OF 1930, 1943, AND 1944*



* Data of the U.S. Bur. Agr. Econ.

[23] *Ibid.*, Aug. 10, 1944, p. 3.

[24] "1944 Annual Summary: Acreage, Yield, and Production of Principal Crops . . . ," *ibid.*, Dec. 18, 1944, p. 4.