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COTTON FARMERS voted overwhelmingly this week to submit to marketing quotas rather than surrender high price supports next year. Acreage allotments would have been in effect in any case. About 94 per cent of the 478,000 farmers who voted favored marketing quotas. This is the eighth referendum since 1938 in which cotton controls have been approved. The last time was in 1949 when 89 per cent of the vote favored quotas. In the wheat referendum last summer, 87 per cent of the 448,000 voters approved controls under similar circumstances.

In the cotton election farmers ostensibly were choosing between two alternatives: (1) continued price support at 90 per cent of parity, with a 26 per cent reduction in cotton acreage and stiff penalties for overplanting the allotted acres, or (2) price support at 50 per cent of parity if a farmer stayed within his allotment, but no penalty except loss of price support if he overplanted his assigned acreage.

Actually, when the farmers voted, they were reasonably sure that they would not be required to reduce cotton acreage by 26 per cent. Agriculture Secretary Benson had already announced that he would ask Congress to limit the reduction to 11 per cent. The Secretary said that a 26 per cent acreage reduction was too large for one year, and cotton-state congressmen, of course, agree with that--especially since legislation was enacted to make production controls less stringent for wheat growers.

The Commodity Credit Corporation at present owns, or has made loans on, some 6½ million bales of cotton: about half a normal crop. Even if next year's acreage is reduced 26 per cent, it is expected that the CCC hoard will grow to 9 million bales by next August. If the acreage is reduced only 11 per cent, CCC may end up with 12 million bales.

Thus far, farmers have approved production controls on wheat, tobacco, peanuts, and cotton. About 13 million acres will be diverted from these crops next year. If allotments are proclaimed on corn, a minimum of 12 million additional acres will be diverted, making a total of at least 25 million. It is expected that most of these acres will be planted to feed grains and soybeans.

MILK PRODUCTION in November set a new record for the month, 4½ per cent above the previous high established a year ago. Thus, the pattern of last year is being repeated--and with additional emphasis.

Last year, production ran at an annual rate of about 113 billion pounds through the summer and then jumped to 123 billion toward the end of the year. This year, production ran at an annual rate of about 115 billion pounds through the summer and then jumped to 125.6 billion in November. In 1952, production

totaled 115 billion; this year it probably will hit 120 billion (an all-time high), and next year it should be even larger.

The heavy off-season milk production last month was attributed to a contra-seasonal upturn in the proportion of cows milked, as well as to mild weather and the most liberal supplemental feeding of record. Milk production per cow on December 1 set a record for that date.

In late fall, when milk production declined seasonally, a small amount of CCC butter moved back into commercial channels. But now CCC is once more buying butter in order to hold the price at the support level.

The Government now owns about 930 million pounds of dairy products and expects to have fully 5 per cent of a year's milk production by next March 31. That compares with the 3 per cent of a year's production which the Government held on March 31 of this year.

A key to the dairy industry's self-help plan is the "fact" that the dairy surplus is a small percentage of annual output. However, if milk production keeps on rising, that surplus percentage will not stay small.

Milk Production (million pounds)

	1952	1953	Per cent change
October	8,664	8,779	+1
November	7,891	8,255	+5
January-November inc.	106,728	111,407	+4

EGG PRODUCTION also is at a record level. The rate of lay in November continued a trend which has seen a new record set for that month each year since 1944. Both the laying flock and potential layers numbered slightly more on December 1 than a year earlier.

Egg Production (millions)

	1952	1953	Per cent change
October	4,371	4,614	+6
November	4,480	4,803	+7
January-November inc.	55,978	56,695	+1

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