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Department of Agriculture

Farm Economics Branch

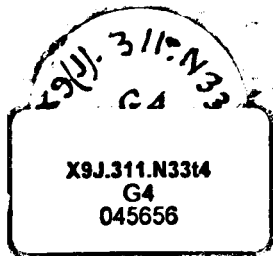
Report No. 22

(Issued July, 1934)



An Economic Survey of
Agriculture in the Eastern
Counties of England

1933



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PREFACE

THIS *Report* represents the third of a series covering the results of the most extensive Farm Management Survey hitherto undertaken in Great Britain. Commencing with the year 1931, financial and economic data relating to the organisation of more than 1000 farms in the Eastern Counties of England have been secured for each of three successive years. To obtain this information approximately 3500 visits have been made to individual farms, nearly 80,000 miles have been travelled, and replies have been obtained to upwards of one million questions.

The results published here and in *Reports* 19 and 21 (for list of contents of these earlier *Reports* see pages 74 to 77) cover a wide variety of information. But the fact that the research organisation has had to work to a definite, and rather crowded, time-table during these three years has precluded the possibility of exploring as exhaustively as is desirable the data secured. Much yet remains to be done in this respect, and it is hoped that from time to time further publications may be issued giving the results of more detailed studies.

From the information provided in Chapter II of the present *Report* it will be clear that the net returns obtained by farmers in 1933 were very much better than those secured in either of the two preceding years. This more encouraging position has been achieved in spite of a further fall in the price index, and well illustrates the point that unit prices are only one factor influencing the prosperity of the industry. In point of fact the better net returns in 1933 are due wholly to quantitative changes in production brought about partly by favourable climatic conditions and partly by deliberate changes in organisation on the part of the farmers themselves.

Chapters III and IV are devoted to a description of the organisation of certain individual farms. No two farms and no two farmers have identical capabilities or opportunities, and the contents of these chapters are not intended to provide models of what should or should not be done in any particular case. They are included here primarily to illustrate certain general tendencies which appear to underlie financial success or failure at the present time.

It remains only to acknowledge gratefully the help of all those who have assisted in one way or another in the preparation of this *Report*. First in this list must be placed the 1140 farmers who have co-operated, and each of whom has gone to a considerable amount of trouble to provide the necessary

information. To the County Organisers thanks are also due for their friendly assistance and advice. In this connection special mention must be made of the help provided by J. Hunter-Smith, of Hertfordshire, and J. C. Leslie, of Essex, whose staffs assisted in the collection of farm records. . The exacting duty of recording, which involved the overstepping of any known Trade Union hours, was undertaken by the following :—Messrs. J. R. Finlay Best, R. F. Edwards, D. J. Ewing, R. B. Ferro, H. W. Gardner, M. Halcrow, R. P. Hawkins, R. K. Kerkham, R. W. Kettlewell, A. W. Menzies-Kitchin, E. G. D. Pritchett, J. W. Reid, D. F. Stewart, E. C. Voysey, and N. M. Wight. T. J. Hunt has assisted in the statistical analysis, while Miss Edith Whetham prepared the diagrams and gave much valuable help in collating the material.

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