



1973

Foreward

Earl L. Butz

Follow this and additional works at: <https://commons.und.edu/ndlr>



Part of the [Law Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Butz, Earl L. (1973) "Foreward," *North Dakota Law Review*. Vol. 50 : No. 2 , Article 2.

Available at: <https://commons.und.edu/ndlr/vol50/iss2/2>

This Introduction is brought to you for free and open access by the School of Law at UND Scholarly Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in North Dakota Law Review by an authorized editor of UND Scholarly Commons. For more information, please contact und.common@library.und.edu.

FOREWORD

HON. EARL L. BUTZ

When tillage begins, other arts follow. The farmers, therefore, are the founders of human civilization. — Daniel Webster, Remarks on Agriculture, January 13, 1840.

Thomas Jefferson called agriculture “the first and most precious of the arts.” And Charles Dudley Warner exclaimed, “Blessed be agriculture! if one does not have too much of it.”

For the last 40 years, the Nation thought it had too much of agriculture, that it had a “farm problem.” More often than not, the solutions proposed were Federal laws which restricted production and offered subsidies to participating farmers. The marketing quota and acreage allotment system evolved through four decades into an integrated and rigid structure of Federal control.

The problem itself was a measure of the Nation’s capacity to produce food and fiber. Farmers simply were not able to find buyers at reasonable prices for all they produced. The Government paid farmers not to produce certain crops—there was a “soil bank” program—but surpluses still accumulated. Although prices were fairly stable, taxpayers were saddled with billions of dollars in farm program payments. Many farmers were dependent on such programs in order to stay in business.

Today, that situation has changed; there are signs, both abundant and strong, that agriculture has reached a vantage point where it can see sustained growth, profitable production, and income that that is commensurate with the nonfarm sectors of our economy.

Agriculture has been making giant strides recently, teaming up hard-working farmers with far-sighted leadership. We have overhauled Federal statutes that restricted production, making it possible for farmers to produce for markets instead of for Government loans and subsidies. Farmers have been freed from restrictive controls; they now have greater freedom to plant and seek profit-making opportunities in the marketplace. A combination of vision, negotiating skill, and plenty of hard work also reversed the course of farm exports from a downtrend in 1969 to a sharp upturn resulting in all-time high records for export sales.

Farm exports benefit both farmers and consumers. The more we export, the more our farmers can produce. Since we have the farm capacity to produce far in excess of domestic needs, exports are the only way to utilize fully our farm resources. In a society in which consumers will not stand for high food prices, farm income can improve only by increasing volume and added efficiency. Increased farm exports enable farmers to produce more nearly at their optimum efficiency and reduce their costs per unit. Thus, farmers can still cover their costs and make an acceptable profit with a reasonable level of prices. Consumers benefit by having available the food they desire at prices that are acceptable.

The cornerstone of the evolving Federal farm policy which encourages production for markets instead of production for the Government subsidy is the Agricultural Act of 1970, as amended by the Agriculture and Consumer Protection Act of 1973. Three of the articles in this symposium are about this important legislation.

The other articles in the symposium deal with various aspects of agriculture and agricultural law, all serving to underscore the importance of agriculture to the economic, social, and political well-being of the Nation and the rest of the world. Agriculture remains the Nation's largest industry. As pointed out by President Nixon in his proclamation of National Farm-City Week, 1973:

Never before in history has so much of the world looked to the American farmer for its food supply. The ability of less than three million farmers to keep Americans the best-fed people in the world, while simultaneously meeting the demands of countless millions overseas, is one of our Nation's greatest success stories. This success has contributed significantly not only to our own economic well-being but also the peace and progress of all mankind.

This symposium should contribute greatly to an understanding of the role played by farmers and of the problems they face. I congratulate the Editors of the *Law Review* and the authors of the articles for undertaking such a task.