1943

Forecasting Textile Supply

Elizabeth Peterson

Iowa State College

Follow this and additional works at: http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/homemaker

Part of the Home Economics Commons

Recommended Citation

Peterson, Elizabeth (1943) "Forecasting Textile Supply," The Iowa Homemaker: Vol. 23 : No. 10 , Article 12.
Available at: http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/homemaker/vol23/iss10/12

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Student Publications at Iowa State University Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Iowa Homemaker by an authorized editor of Iowa State University Digital Repository. For more information, please contact digirep@iastate.edu.
Forecasting

Textile Supply

Elizabeth Peterson of the Extension Service surveys the curtailment of wartime clothing

THE impact of war on the clothing situation was suddenly brought home to Iowa farm families the day Mrs. Homemaker walked into the store only to hear the clerk say, "Sorry we have no 80-thread-percale today." It was brought home again last fall when she could find no underwear in the stores for "Johnny." Yes, war has brought many changes in our clothing market.

Not only must certain amounts of goods be sent abroad for lend-lease, but in addition large stockpiles must be built up for the day when Hitler's European fortress caves in.

Here on the home front civilians are currently using fabrics at the rate of approximately 70 yards per person per year. This is about 20 or 30 per cent above average. It is due to higher wages and particularly to the fact that individuals in the lower income groups are for the first time in years able to purchase many items they had wanted and needed.

Total supply of clothing available to civilians will be adequate in 1944—but only if we practice conservation of the clothing we have and waste nothing. For certain kinds of clothing we will not have all that we may desire.

COTTON: This country never has produced sufficient long staple cotton to fill our requirements. Today the shortage of long staple cotton is acute. Early in 1943 it seemed necessary to restrict the use of all 80-thread count cotton print cloth to military, industrial and essential aviation fabrics. This order directly affected homemakers. Thus with 80-square percale for house dresses and yardage for making them no longer available, we must get along with coarser types of materials.

We have plenty of short staple cotton, however. Chief limitation here lies in the shortage of manpower and spindles to manufacture the cotton into cloth.

Work gloves in greater quantity than have been available for the past few months may also be on the way. Manufacturers' prices that allow a profit equal to that received during a normal year have been established as a means of stepping up production.

Many consumers have been puzzled about the disappearance of garments in certain price lines from stores. Retailers must abide by an OPA ruling called "the highest price line limitations." This rule prevents retailers from selling goods of any kind or quality above the price at which they sold similar goods in March, 1942. As a result retailers frequently have not been able to adjust the price to cover the rise in cost of garment. Unable to do this they have been forced to stop carrying the garment completely.

WOOL: Supplies of wool are ample. Government and private holdings at the beginning of 1944 totaled over 500 million pounds.

Wool products must be labeled as required by the Federal Trade Commission. When the thrifty homemaker shops she will look for the label.

Wool under the act is defined as the fiber from the fleece of sheep or lamb or hair of angora, cashmere goat, and camel. The term wool may also include the hair from the alpaca, llama, and vicuna, which has been reclaimed from a woven or felted wool product.

Reprocessed wool is the fiber recovered from the woven or felted wool products which have never been used in any way by the ultimate consumer.

Reused wool is the fiber recovered from the old rags that have been used in any way by the ultimate consumer.

Percentage of the above and any mixture with other fibers must be stated on the label.

RAYON: Production of rayon cord for tires has curtailed the rayon supply available to civilians. To further complicate the rayon situation, supplies of wood pulp, a basic raw material in the rayon industry, have continually become scarcer. Although cotton linters, also a basic raw material, seem plentiful, consumers can anticipate a continued shortage of rayon to meet civilian needs.

YARDAGE: All washables not labeled will have to be shrunk before making. This means cotton and rayons. It means, too, that in ready-to-wear, this problem will have to be carefully considered when buying.

RUBBER: Some synthetic rubber has been released for foundation garment and other clothing purposes. The big trouble centers in the inability to find manpower needed to process the rubber into form clothing. Until this bottle neck is solved, supplies of foundation garments and elastics will remain short of demands.

ARALAC: This man-made fiber is made from casein, a by-product of skim milk. Since it is a protein fiber, aralac has the basic characteristic of wool—softness, resiliency and drape. It must be cared for in the same manner as wool, even to moth prevention. Resembling wool closely, it is being mixed with wool and spun rayon, and is being used in place of wool.