

**MARKETING AND FARM CREDITS:
PROCEEDINGS OF THE FIRST
NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON
MARKETING AND FARM CREDITS, IN
CHICAGO, APRIL 8, 9 AND 10, 1913**

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Marketing and farm credits: proceedings of the first National Conference on Marketing and Farm Credits, in Chicago, April 8, 9 and 10, 1913 by Various

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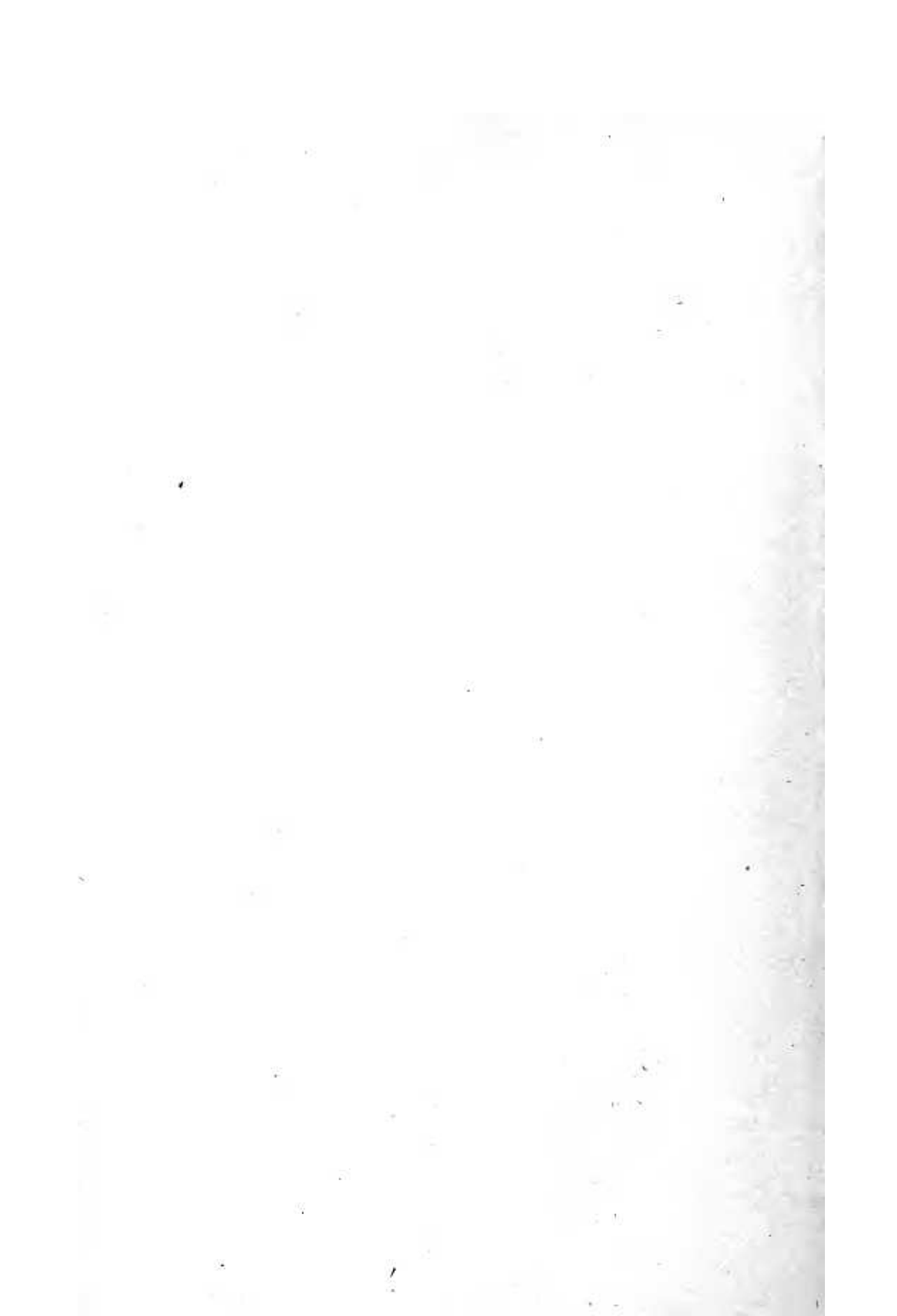
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A WORD TO THE PUBLIC

In calling the First National Conference on Marketing and Farm Credits the publishers of the farm journals that sponsored and financed the undertaking had no pet scheme to foist upon the public; neither was it their purpose to inaugurate a fight upon any special interests connected with present methods of marketing farm products or financing farm business.

Recognizing certain defects, and believing that from the common counsel some light might be thrown upon the ways, they undertook the responsibility of initiating this national movement. Believing that in a multitude of wisdom truth may be born, they brought the people together to diagnose evils and to propose remedies.

From the very beginning the promoters of this conference took every precaution to keep it apart from any touch of sensationalism and free from evidences of hasty action. The manner in which the delegates went about the work was gratifying beyond the promoters' dreams.

The call received a generous response; the delegates who attended were pioneers blazing the first national trail to redirect economic forces for the readjustment of the farming population to harmonious relations with the industrial world.

At all times the conference was within the control of delegates who represented the business interest of farmers, and as such the deliberation of the delegates cannot but be recognized as of supreme importance. For this reason, also, the sentiment of the gathering must have great influence with those in the legislative halls who represent the whole body of the people.

When the gavel fell on the first session the foster-relation of the farm journals who promoted this conference ceased and they became as others—joint participants in a mighty work.

A CALL FOR A CONFERENCE

To the People of the United States, and particularly those directly interested in the growing and distributing of farm products:

While the people are complaining of the high cost of living many farmers are finding that their business does not yield profitable returns on labor and investment.

This constitutes the giant paradox of our time, and is so because of certain remediable defects in the economic structure of the Nation. We believe these defects come from a crude organization of the farmers' way of doing business. The losses occurring yearly amount to millions and affect producers, transportation lines and many business interests. This waste not only makes for exorbitant retail prices of foodstuffs, but also makes impossible a healthy growth of the farming industry.

A generation ago the neighboring village or the county seat offered fair markets to the individual farmer; but such a method of distribution today is in disharmony with the business world. Yet, in but few sections have farmers made the necessary adjustment to modern conditions. Through no fault of their own, this situation reacts harmfully upon all.

Compared with European countries, the business organization of American agriculture must appear crude. We remember, however, that our Nation is still young, and just emerging from an era when farmers might exploit the land without regard to soil conservation. Even now a large part of the Nation has not reached the "settling down stage." A constructive program, therefore, is necessary, since both our marketing methods and our provision for the financing of farmers have been outstripped by other countries, and by the evolution of other industries within the confines of the Nation—a pathologic condition of supreme importance.

Our investigations have led us to believe that conditions, such as we have described, can be improved with the least delay by cooperation with farm producers from others interested in the growing and distribution of farm products, and by the creation of a bureau of markets in the United States department of agriculture.

We believe that any attempt to reconcile the high cost of living with the earning powers of the people must be founded upon a normal condition of the agricultural classes. But the present season offers little hope either to producers or consumers unless the people take quick action.

Therefore, acting upon the authority delegated us, we call a conference of all people interested to meet in Chicago, April 8, 9 and 10, 1913, to counsel together and devise some acceptable plan of action.