

Japan's Purchase of U.S. Farm Products Recognized

Lancaster County residents are well aware that U.S. Japanese trade is extensive. Fred G. Seldomridge, Chairman of the Lancaster County Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation (ASC) committee, commented recently.

"Almost everyone recognizes that Americans are important customers for Japanese goods. I wonder how many of us realize that the Japanese are major customers for American goods, especially for American farm commodities.

"In fact, Japan imports more U.S. agricultural products than any other country in the world — a record \$11 billion worth during the 1970 fiscal year," Seldomridge said.

He pointed out that feed grains, soybeans, wheat and tobacco are important farm crops and that exports of these farm products to Japan have gone up dramatically in recent years.

More than six million tons of feed grains were shipped to Japan last fiscal year — just about one-third of U.S. feed grain exports. Soybean exports to Japan had a \$251 million value, and wheat exports \$136 million. Japan is our best cotton customer, taking one-fourth of its cotton from the U.S. and Japan bought \$50 million worth of tobacco from the U.S. during the last fiscal year.

The ASC Committee Chairman reported that Secretary of Agriculture Clifford M. Hardin recently took note of the America-Japanese trade story, calling it unprecedented.

Secretary Hardin also said: "The Japanese economy has paralleled that Nation's growth in trade. In the years between 1960 and 1965, Japanese shipments in world trade more than doubled. By 1969, they had almost doubled again, reaching \$16 billion. Shipments to the United States increased in those nine years by more than four times — \$4.9 billion.

"The Japanese householder's disposable income has more than tripled since 1960. His demand for meat, milk, and eggs — a good 'horseback' measure of consumer prosperity — has increased by more than four times in 15 years. He is diversifying his eating habits as his income goes up.

"For example, per person consumption of wheat flour in this traditionally rice-eating society has increased by 30 percent in a decade and a half. Ten years ago, Japan's agricultural imports from the U.S. were \$200 million. In the fiscal year just past, they were more than ten times as great — nearly \$1.1 billion.

"But the agricultural exports are only one aspect of a special trading relationship that can be summarized very simply. In terms of total exports, the U.S. is Japan's best customer, and Japan is the United States' best off-shore customer. You might expect, two-thirds of the shipments to Japan last year were raw materials, fuels, and foodstuffs, which represent 10 per cent of Japan's shipments to the U.S. were manufactured goods. This is the basis of beneficial world trade — a change of goods based primarily on production efficiency. It is this principle that led us to look to efficient production on the broad farmlands of

feed grains needed to satisfy its people's rising demand for livestock products.

"As a result, imported feed grains have triggered a rapid expansion of Japanese livestock production. This has brought Japanese consumers more meat and poultry at better prices; it has opened opportunities for Japanese farmers for new and profitable livestock enterprises; it has meant an important and expanding feed grain market for world agriculture.

Almost the whole range of U.S. farm commodities finds Japan a leading customer. Japan wants, needs and can afford these products, and the U.S. can

supply them in any system of international trade in which price, quality, and availability are the primary factors.

In a world of competition, export expansion means salesmanship and service as well as price, quality and availability. The producers and marketers of the major U.S. agricultural products have understood this, and they support some 68 private trade organizations formed to develop markets overseas in cooperation with the Department of Agriculture. This is, of course, a mutual effort — with many strong Japanese organizations bringing to it their special

knowledge, their special abilities."

In closing, Agriculture Secretary Hardin gave special recognition to the trade organizations

for the three commodities which last year accounted for two-thirds of total U.S. agricultural exports to Japan — feed grains, soybeans, and wheat.

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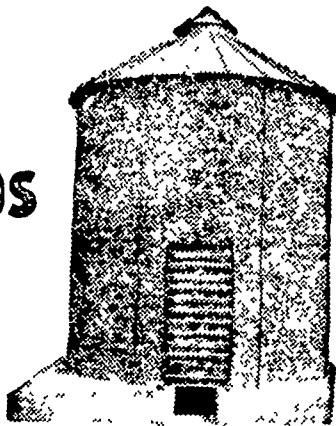
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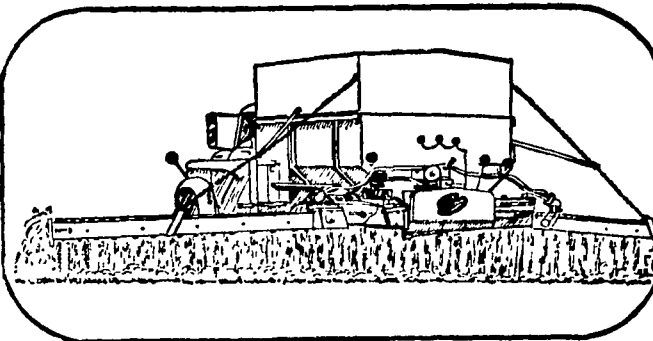
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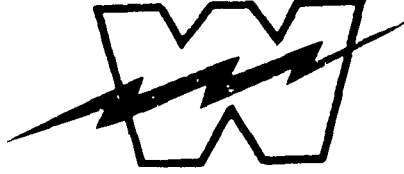
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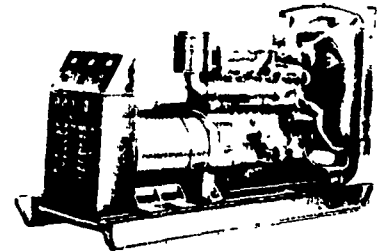
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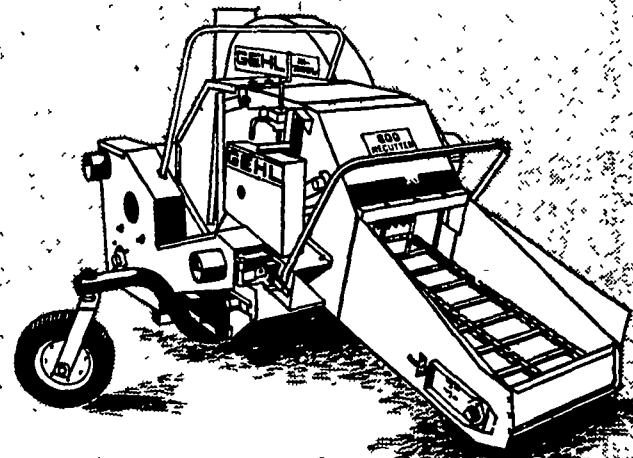
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