

USDA Studies Alternative Policies for Beef Imports

Several alternative policies for meat imports, ranging from liberalized trade to zero imports, are examined in a report issued today by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Meat import quotas, which allow importation of roughly 7 to 8 percent of domestic meat production, have been challenged as to whether they effectively protect domestic livestock prices while insuring adequate supplies of lean meat. In general, imported beef competes directly only with manufacturing beef. However, imported beef also has an indirect price impact on Prime and Choice beef and on pork as well.

The alternatives analyzed in the report by the Economic Research Service included

Zero imports and liberalized trade, the extreme policies

analyzed, each lowered prices received by producers. Average 1978-80 choice steer prices were projected to be \$1.84 and \$4.23 lower per hundredweight, respectively, than a base projected price under the import policy in effect through 1970. Under zero imports domestic fed beef production increased causing prices to fall somewhat. With liberalized trade, beef cow inventories declined as competing supplies of imported beef lowered prices.

A quarterly quota, somewhat more restrictive than today's market share arrangement, reduced imports, resulted in a slightly larger domestic beef industry in 1980, and lowered steer prices due to inventory build-ups.

Using imports to maintain a target supply of low grade beef

led to lower domestic steer and hog prices and caused only a slight increase in the size of the domestic cattle industry.

Importing beef to minimize cyclical price fluctuations led to moderately larger herds of steers and hogs, stable prices, and rather erratic imports which fluctuated with our own cattle and hog cycles. However, exporting countries might not be able to supply us beef because of extreme variations in import requirements.

A copy of "Effects of Alternative Beef Import Policies on

After spending a whole day picking (and munching on) apples, a real dessert treat would be these Glazed Autumn Pears. Halve and core four peeled pears and dip each in lemon juice to prevent them from turning brown. Place in a 9-inch square buttered baking dish and sprinkle with ½ cup sugar. Dot each half pear with ½ tablespoon of butter. Bake 45-60 minutes or until pears are tender, basting occasionally with syrup. Serve hot, topping each with a dollop of tangy dairy sour cream.

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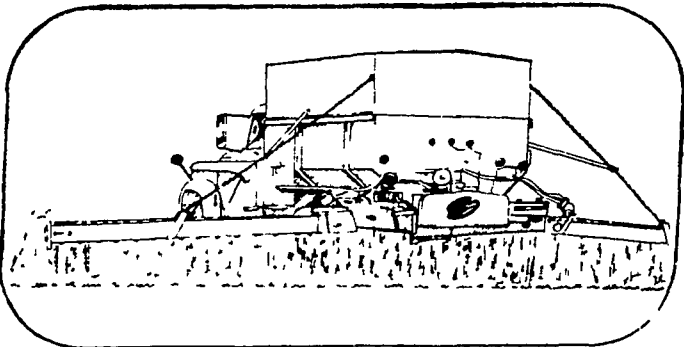
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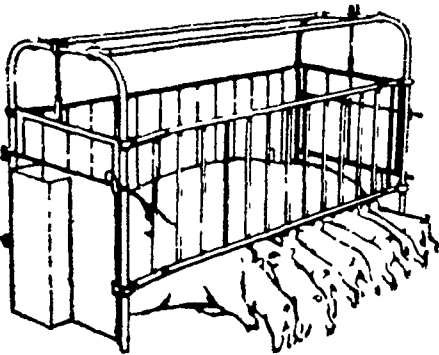
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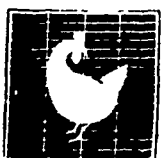


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