

## Additional Nonfat Dry Milk Imports Authorized

Secretary of Agriculture Earl L. Butz called the attention of food processors and other users of nonfat dry milk to a temporary increase in the import quota for that product.

The increase was made effective by a Presidential Proclamation issued by President Nixon under the authority of Section 22(b) of the Agricultural Adjustment Act, as amended. The Proclamation authorizes the importation of 25 million pounds of nonfat dry milk for a temporary period ending February 15, 1973.

Normally, domestic production of nonfat dry milk exceeds commercial demand and the surplus is purchased by the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) which, under the Department's support program for milk, stands ready to purchase non-fat dry milk at a fixed price related to the support price for manufacturing milk. Currently, the milk support price is \$4.93 per hundredweight, and the CCC purchase price for nonfat dry milk is 31.7 cents per pound.

Secretary Butz noted that despite a continuing rise in fresh milk production, the output of

nonfat dry milk has been lower. Increased amounts of fresh milk have gone into fluid use and into the production of certain processed products, especially cheese and frozen dairy products; consequently, smaller amounts of manufacturing milk have reached the plants which produce butter and nonfat dry milk. The present tight supply situation also reflects seasonal variations, since November and December are the low months of dairy production.

Until late November, CCC continued to purchase nonfat dry milk and until October, to sell substantial quantities back to the trade. On October 20, nonfat dry milk was removed from the monthly CCC sales list. In a related action, the Department stopped foreign sales and donations of nonfat dry milk in October. CCC now has no uncommitted inventory.

The current shortage of nonfat dry milk is in some respects comparable to the situation which existed in Europe last year when demand temporarily exceeded supply. In that situation, the U.S. (which normally is not a butter exporter) sold 133.7 million pounds of butter, mainly

to the United Kingdom but also to 18 other countries. More recently, on December 5, 1972, the U.S. sold 1,138,743 pounds to Canada.

Users of nonfat dry milk, such as food processors, ice cream manufacturers, candy makers and pharmaceutical firms, have reported increasing difficulties in obtaining adequate supplies of dry milk. Continued shortages could lead users to shift to substitutes, and experience has shown that such shifts in ingredients formulas tend to be permanent.

"We want to keep people in the habit of using milk products," Secretary Butz said.

Losses of important outlets for nonfat dry milk to substitutes would also have a permanent adverse impact on the dairy support program.

The increase in permitted imports is intended to meet the temporary shortage and has been timed so as to permit the inflow of supplies when they are most needed. Within a relatively few weeks, the cyclical upturn in dairy production should cover all requirements.

The temporary increase of 25 million pounds in the import quota will be on a first come, first-served basis; no licenses will be required. The maximum amount which an individual importer may bring in, however, is limited to 2,500,000 pounds. Imports will not be restricted to specific countries of origin.

The importation of most dairy products is limited by imports quotas established by Presidential Proclamation under the Section 22 authority. Section 22 provides for limitations on imports, following an investigation by the Tariff Commission and a Presidential determination, of items found to be interfering or likely to interfere with the price support program for milk. Imports of nonfat dry milk have been under quota control since 1953, when an annual quota of 1,807,000 pounds was proclaimed by President Eisenhower.

The emergency Section 22 action will, as provided by law, be subject to an investigation and report to the President by the

## British Honduras Gets OK to Ship Meat to USA

The USDA announced last week it was adding British Honduras to the list of countries eligible to ship meat to the United States.

USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) said British Honduras' meat inspection laws and regulations conform to U.S. standards. The one plant that will be exporting meat was found to meet requirements of the USDA inspection program. Chilled fresh beef is the product intended for export.

The Federal Meat Inspection Act requires that a foreign country have a meat inspection program equal to that in the United States before it may export meat here.

British Honduras' inspectors will check each animal before and after slaughter and will check the meat for wholesomeness throughout any processing steps. Members of the APHIS foreign review staff will periodically visit the export plant to check the effectiveness of British Honduras inspection.

U.S. Tariff Commission. The investigation will include a public hearing at which interested parties may testify. An announcement by the Tariff Commission is expected in the near future.

The regular annual import quota of 1,807,000 pounds remains in force and is not affected by the emergency Section 22 action. Imports under that quota continue to be subject to licensing.

Once the meat arrives at a U.S. port of entry, it is again checked for wholesomeness by APHIS inspectors.

The proposal to make British Honduras the 45th eligible export country was published in the Federal Register on Nov. 7. Two comments were received on the proposal.

The addition of British Honduras to the eligible list was effective on Dec. 29.

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