

Kuhfuss Comments On Energy Bill

The Senate Commerce Committee, in voting to report S. 829, "has taken a giant step backward in meeting the energy needs of this nation," William J. Kuhfuss, president of the American Farm Bureau Federation, said recently. Kuhfuss said the bill,

which is scheduled for floor action within a month, would continue strict price controls on natural gas, extend Federal Power Commission controls to intrastate gas for the first time, and establish prices for gas used by agriculture and industry, which would be higher than

for home heating. "While this bill would remove controls from a very small segment of the gas producing industry," Kuhfuss said, "this is not enough. We need all segments of the industry searching for gas and oil, both onshore and on the Outer Continental Shelf, if we are to avoid massive economic distortions caused by shortages of fuel, fertilizer, and other needed agricultural and industrial goods.

"As an industry which has been subjected to many government controls during the past forty years," he said, "farmers and ranchers know that increased production comes not from government edict and coercion but from incentives created by consumer demand in a free market. These same incentives, which have encouraged American farmers and ranchers to produce enough food and fiber to make this the best fed nation in the world, can help lead it back

to self-sufficiency in energy."

At the same time Kuhfuss urged support for a compromise bill which he said hopes will be substituted on the floor of the Senate. This bill is sponsored by Senator James Pearson (R) of Kansas and others.

"Farmers, ranchers, and others look favorably on the Pearson proposal," Kuhfuss said, "because it would provide for orderly decontrol of prices of all natural gas found by all present and future producers, would provide an interim priority for essential agricultural production and processing, and would phase out low priority uses for natural gas—one of our most precious natural resources.

"Sound energy legislation is one of the most important tasks facing this Congress. Farm Bureau will continue to work with all members of the Congress, the Administration, and with other interested groups in developing and achieving sound energy legislation," Kuhfuss concluded.

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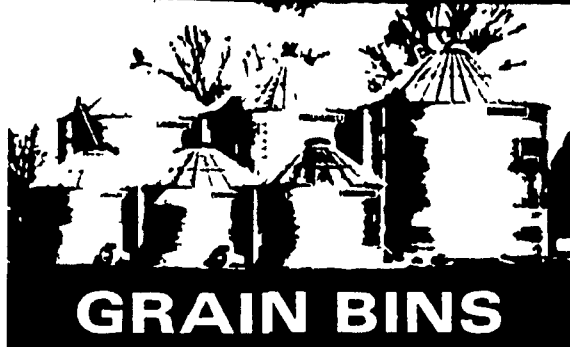


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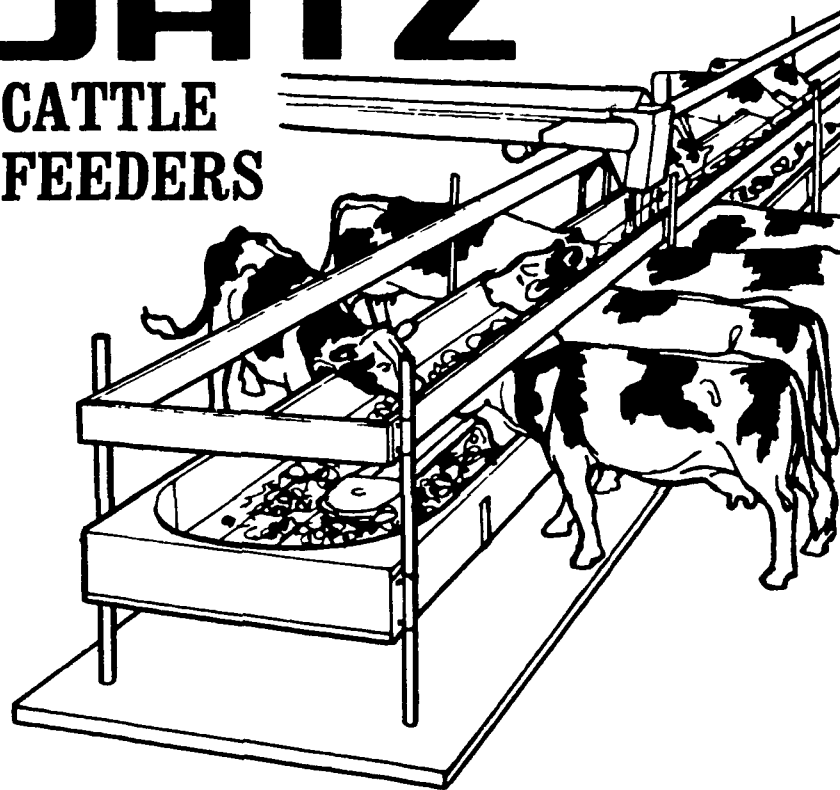
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