

Public hearings slated for grain inspection

WASHINGTON - Chairman Thomas S. Foley, D-Wash., of the House Agriculture Committee announced recently that the Committee would conduct public hearings September

18, 19, 22, and 23 on legislative proposals to update and improve the grain inspection procedures under the 59-year old U.S. Grain Standards Act. While consideration of

such changes follows recent scandals in inspection of grains being exported out of the United States, the Committee also plans to look into methods of handling and inspecting grains at interior or inland terminals.

"This is a matter of much concern to the Committee," said Chairman Foley. "Disclosure of irregular activities at ports where American grains were being loaded aboard ships threatens the credibility of the United States as the World's largest exporter of agricultural commodities. We are also concerned about the effectiveness and reliability of the present inspection system and weighing procedures from the farm to interior and export terminal points."

Chairman Foley, along with Senator Hubert H. Humphrey, D-Minn., head of a Senate Agriculture and Forestry Subcommittee on Foreign Agriculture Policy, recently asked the General Accounting Office to make an in-depth study of irregularities which were reported in grain inspection at New Orleans and other points. They noted that the U.S. last year exported \$22 billion of agricultural products, of which \$12.5 billion was in grain, and that but for these shipments the U.S. trade deficit of \$5.8 billion would have been far worse. The lawmakers asked for a final report back from the GAO by February 15, 1976.

Carried out under the 1916 Grain Standards Act, the

inspections are made by employees of state agencies, trade groups or private companies which have been licensed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. There are 111 officially licensed inspection agencies, 23 of which are operated by states, 41 by grain exchanges, chambers of commerce and boards of

trade, and 47 through private inspection agreements. The USDA itself employs 226 supervisory type inspectors, in the Department's marketing service grain inspection branch, but they do not do original grain inspection. They supervise the licensed inspectors and work on appeals from original decisions. Prior to the 1916

Act, all grain inspection was done by unsupervised private agencies, and lack of uniformity of standards over the country led to enactment of the law.

Persons wishing to testify at the hearing should contact the Committee staff, Room 1301 Longworth House Office Building, Washington D.C. 20515.

Square dancers to appear at Long Park

The National Champion Tennessee Bicentennial Dancers will present a community performance at Long Park on Saturday, August 9.

This group of young people from the hill country of Tennessee have preserved the traditional mountain style square dances that are so much a part of Appalachia. Wearing special clog shoes and country costumes, the dance group presents a colorful, fast-moving glimpse of America's mountain culture. They are being sponsored in Lancaster by Sperry New Holland in a free public performance.

Formerly known as the Rutherford County Square Dancers, they have performed throughout the U.S., Canada, and Mexico and have represented the U.S. Government in Rumania. They have appeared on television with both Dinah Shore and Dean Martin and have performed with Nancy Sinatra at Lake Tahoe, Nevada.

Depicting the traditional peasant dances and games of the Appalachian region, they sing and play "Old Dan Tucker," "Skip To My Lou," and the "Pawpaw Patch" while clog dancing to old fiddle tunes like "Flopeared Mule," "Bile Dem Cabbages Down," and "Old Joe Clark."

The square dance group started as a 4-H activity when a group of 4-H club members met at camp and started practicing the traditional folk dances of their area.

The first members of the original dance group are now married or in college. But the performing group they started continues and is now composed of students from many schools in Murfreesboro and Rutherford County, Tennessee.

The present group has reached beyond the dances of the early settlers and now also performs English Country Dancing, including Sword and Morris Dancing.

Newspapers around the country have described their show as "rousing, exuberant and done with

gusto and sheer pleasure." As the Rutherford County Square Dancers, the group made a brief stop in Lancaster last summer, for a performance at the Lancaster Farm and Home Center.

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