

More government

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the top of President-elect Jimmy Carter's list for the time, but his nomination will need confirmation in the Senate. If approved, the Minnesotan will become Secretary of USDA.

to Congress in 1971, the 48-year-old Bergman is known as a political liberal closely related to labor. He is an outspoken critic of the Nixon-Ford-Butz farm

since he was elected, Bergland has served on the Agriculture Committee and is currently chairman of the committee on Conservation and Credit. In addition, he may hold the top agriculture post after Jan. 20 when he served on the Subcommittee for Dairy and Poultry and the committee on Livestock and Grains.

ing to many observers, this change in Washington is expected to result in more government involvement in food - a situation entirely different than what American farmers have known for the previous eight years. According to Bergland, this not only means more government involvement, but also more government planning. It's unlikely, however, that major changes will be seen during the first year of the administration, since it will require some sort of legislation to bring new programs on the books and then have them operate.

It has been reported that Carter may be considering a

brand new department in Washington, of which agriculture would be only one segment. The other concerns of this proposed department would revolve around food aid, research-education, rural resources, and human, natural resources.

Observers generally agree that the Carter administration will strive to make agriculture a more stable industry - where more predictions can be made and supplies kept in check. That's why the grain reserves program is likely to come into existence again. Increased support prices are designed "to share the risks with farmers."

The Carter Administration's ideas have found support among some farmers, but there is also considerable opposition, since many farmers are willing to take the risks themselves in order to have a freer agricultural economy and have opportunities to make a little bigger than average profit in some years. On the other side of the coin, this also means having to take a licking once in a while. But American agriculture has for the most part been happy and prosperous with those terms. This new direction is not going to be implemented without causing a few harsh words to be spoken, agricultural leaders say.

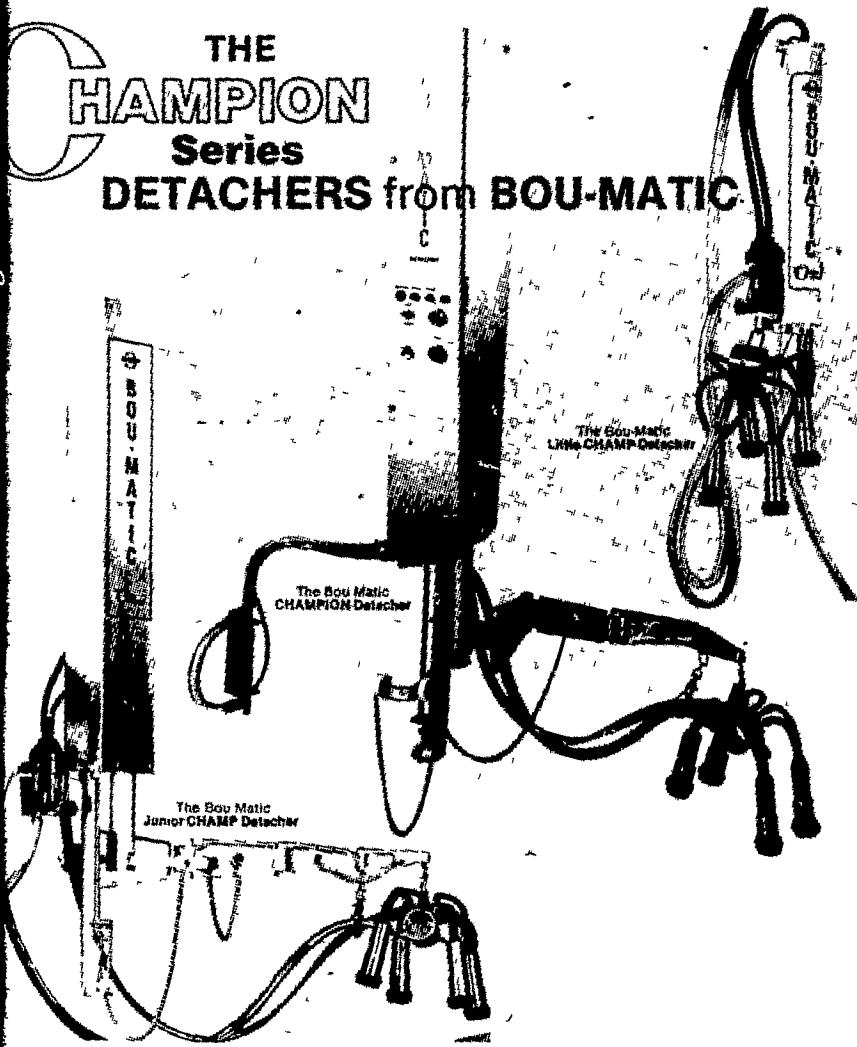
As for exports, this area of farm production is not likely to change much, if at all. American agriculture is geared to sales overseas, and doing away with that outlet would lead to severe repercussions at home.

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No-till meeting detailed

Farmers and industry representatives from Delaware, New Jersey, Maryland, Pennsylvania, West Virginia and Virginia are expected for the third annual Mid-Atlantic No-Tillage Convention on Friday (Jan. 7) at Gettysburg, Pa.

Speakers from outside of the Mid-Atlantic area will include Dr. Donald K. Myers, Extension agronomist at Ohio State University; Bruce A. McKenzie, Extension agricultural engineer at Purdue University, and David A. Harris, a chartered mechanical engineer from England.

Harris is manager for the machinery development group in the plant protection division of Imperial Chemical Industries, Ltd., headquartered at Fernhurst, southwest of London, in southern England. ICI United States, Inc., is headquartered at Wilmington, Del.

Tickets for a free box lunch at noon during the Gettysburg meeting are available from county Extension offices and many agribusiness dealers throughout the Mid-Atlantic area. They should be picked up not later than Friday (Dec. 31, 1976)

One source of information believes that consumers will have a greater say at USDA in the upcoming years. Also, the National Farmers Union and National Farmers Organization are likely to be more influential than during Republican administrations.

Although Carter himself has a background in farming, and admirers like to think of him as a farmer, Washington observers say that this well-known Carter trait won't have much to do with eventual farm programs since the President has far too many things to be concerned with than just agriculture. Carter is described as a very hard driving man with plenty of determination and intensity. He studies issues carefully from all sides, and sticks to his guns when he makes up his mind.

Now, for more detailed outlooks on various segments of agriculture:

An outlook on the dairy situation for 1977, as seen by Charles N. Shaw, of the Economic Research Service, USDA, is presented on page 79 of this issue.

WHEAT

Wheat is really plentiful this year - not just in the U.S., but all around the world. Consequently exports are expected to be weak for much of 1977 and prices are likely to be down. It is also reported that the wheat crop in the Southern Hemisphere is coming along well, and with that in the future, wheat prices and exports will be in the cellar for quite some time to come - possibly all the way in 1978.

One report says:

Total world grain production increased nearly 11 per cent in 1976-77 crop year versus 1975-76 crop year. World wheat production was up 16 per cent and feed grains up 8 per cent from year ago levels. World demand for wheat is forecast to increase 6 per cent from 1975-76 level, leaving ending stocks at 104 million metric tons versus 62.6 million on July 1, 1976. This will be a new world record for wheat stocks on July 1, 1977. Thus, wheat supplies will likely keep pressure on feed grain prices in 1976-77. Feed grain demand is expected to be up seven per cent from 1975-76 levels, leaving stocks at 52.3 million metric tons on July 1, 1977 versus 47.6 million tons on July 1, 1976. This could be the largest feed grain stocks figure since July 1, 1974 when 55.1 million metric tons were on hand.

EGGS and POULTRY

The United Egg Producers, with headquarters in Decatur, Ga. have the following to say about the future of the egg industry:

"The UEP Industry Outlook Committee has reported that the egg industry is headed for another serious financial crisis in 1977 if chick hatch and placement rates continue as they have in the past three months. The potential for greater hatches and placements is evident in statistical reports and UEP members should be aware of the economic consequences, the Committee reported.

"To keep 1977 profitable, the industry needs to slow down the rate of increase in chick hatch and remove the 2 million older hens from production that were held to take advantage of the above-normal prices in November and December. Our members can take the lead by booking old fowl now for January and February slaughter as plants could get filled quickly."

USDA's Economic Research Service says:

"Egg producers have had a good year, but the broiler and turkey growers have lived up to their reputation as 'boom and bust' industries. A year ago poultry producers' profits were good and the outlook favorable. Producers' responded by stepping up 1976's output to record levels. However, prices suffered and poultry producers found themselves in a price-cost squeeze by late summer. Prospects for first half 1977 are not very favorable for broilers and turkeys. Egg producers' profits turned positive in late 1976 and have continued so throughout 1977. And unlike poultry producers, prospects look favorable for egg producers in 1977.

Prospects for the second half of 1977 look favorable for egg producers unless they expand output too rapidly. The level of output will depend on producers' profit margins in the first half of 1977 and prospects for the 1977 crops. Output is expected to continue to expand and may average two per cent or more above July-December 1976. The expected continued gain in general economic conditions will help bolster egg prices; however, the increased output in the first half is expected to result in egg prices averaging below second half 1976 levels. If output expands as expected, second half 1977 prices may average about a nickel below the 69 cents a dozen (wholesale Grade A large eggs in New York) estimated for the second half of 1976.

Broilers will continue to face increased competition from pork in the first half of 1977 and prices may average 4 to 6 cents below the 42-cent average for January-June 1976.

The lack of profits in recent months and a dismal outlook for at least the first half of 1977 probably will cause producers to reduce poultry production in coming months. However,

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