

# Bergland praises cooperatives

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** The following information is taken from the National Farmers Union's WASHINGTON NEWSLETTER, dated April 29, 1977.

WASHINGTON, D.C. - "As a farmer who uses cooperatives, I know their value," U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Bob Bergland

said in a policy statement on cooperatives. "I have both a public and a personal interest in stating that the Department's policy is to offer maximum encouragement and support to family farmers and their cooperatives."

Bergland directed administrators of all USDA

agencies to demonstrate that USDA "is now and always will be an advocate of cooperatives."

He said that this support should be reflected through expanding cooperative development, strengthened research and technical assistance, promotion of the knowledge of cooperative principles and practices, making full use of cooperatives in farm programs, and providing loan funds to cooperatives.

"Few acts serve our farmers as well as the Capper-Volstead Act of 1922 and the Cooperative Marketing Act of 1926," Bergland said.

Bergland's reference to using cooperatives more fully in farm production and income programs is significant in that he recently proposed that the right of cooperatives to obtain CCC loans on behalf of their producers should be extended to wheat and feed grains. Pool loans are now



Robert Bergland

available on cotton, rice, honey, and soybeans.

This is the first major reaffirmation of the USDA commitment to farm cooperatives since August, 1963, when Agriculture Secretary Orville L. Freeman issued his famed directive to all agency heads to spur the growth of cooperatives. Freeman maintained that it was

"more essential than ever that the farmers' bargaining power be strengthened due to the trend towards greater concentration of economic power in the non-agricultural sectors of the economy."

## Taxes are big item of electric bill

HARRISBURG, Pa. - Out of every dollar Pennsylvania consumers pay for electric service 15 cents goes for taxes, the state's top electric utility executive said here this week.

"Taxes are second only to fuel in the consumer's cost of electricity, and they take a larger bite than most people imagine because they aren't visible on the consumer's bill," said Eugene J. Bradley, president of the Pennsylvania Electric Association.

Bradley addressed some 250 Pennsylvania consumer group leaders at the sixth annual Pennsylvania Power Conference co-sponsored by The Pennsylvania State University and the Pennsylvania Electric Association. He explained in detail the elements of the consumer's electric utility bill.

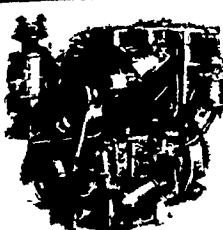
The smallest item, Bradley said, is one-and-a-half cents for retained earnings. "In other words," he said, "after all payments for fuel, taxes, wages, operating expenses, interest and dividends, much less than two per cent of the consumer's electric dollar

remains for the electric utility to set aside for future financing."

Bradley said electric rates trended downward during the fifties and sixties. "Bigger broilers, bigger generators, greater efficiencies—all contributed to offsetting other expenses and to lowering the unit cost of power generation," he said.

"But by 1970 the technological gains ran out and inflation problems mounted for the industry and its customers," he continued. "This impact of inflation on electric utilities is too easily overlooked by some people who are paying today, compared with 10 years ago, 95 per cent more for a new car, 85 per cent more for a gallon of gas, 107 per cent more for a physician's office call, 52 per cent more for a loaf of bread, and on and on."

The utility executive said he expects electric bills to continue to rise as long as inflation persists, adding that some of the burden could be lessened if state government reduced or removed special taxes that electric customers pay.



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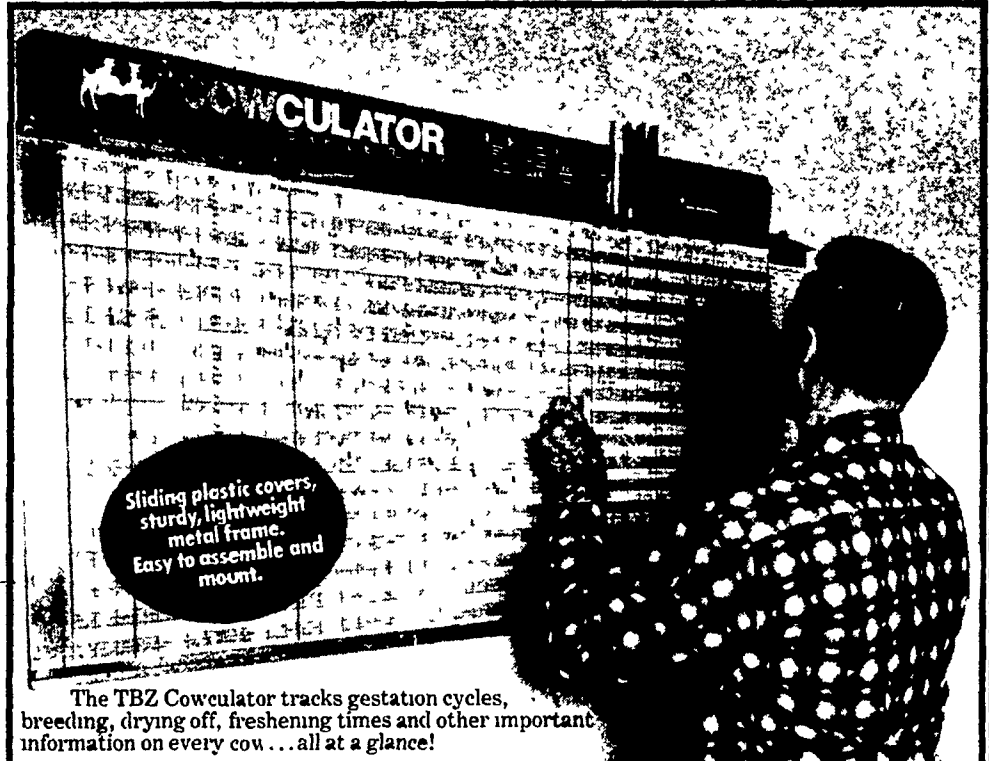
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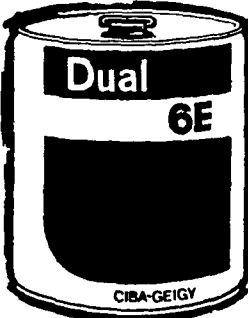


## Bean exports down

The marketing year ended last August wasn't a good one or U.S. exporters of dry edible beans and peas. Shipments of dry edible beans, at 123,000 metric tons, proved the lowest since 1967 and made up only 53 per cent of the 1974-75 record. Shippers of dry edible peas watched their exports drop 20 per cent below the

preceding 10-year average of 91,000 metric tons. The little lentil fared a lot better, setting another record with nearly 42,500 metric tons. Roughly 70 per cent of the 1975 lentil crop left our shores for Algeria—the biggest buyer—and West Germany, Venezuela, Greece, Italy, Columbia, and Spain.

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