

## Change noted in grain reserve program

**By JOANNE SPAHR**  
**HARISBURG** — Beginning March 1, farmers will no longer have to wait for their 1977-crop barley, oats, or wheat loans to mature or for their purchase agreements to expire to participate in the federal grain reserve program.

Secretary of Agriculture Bob Bergland has announced that beginning on that date, those crops may be placed directly into grain reserve. Previously, farmers who wished to enter grain in the program needed to wait until a government loan on the crop matured.

The final date to obtain a loan and become eligible to enter the reserve on 1977-crop barley, oats, and wheat

is March 31, 1978. Farmers with 1976-crop barley, oats, and wheat not yet under a loan may request price support by February 28, 1978, obtain a loan and immediately enter the reserve.

For 1976 corn and sorghum, the grain may be placed in the reserve program through April 30, 1978. 1977-corn and sorghum producers may request price support through May 31, 1978 and be eligible to enter the grain reserve program.

Secretary Bergland has also announced a change in the farm storage facility loan set up for reserve program participants which will increase the amount of storage for which they may qualify.

Under the change, a farmer will be able to obtain a loan for a storage structure to store two years' crop production. However, in determining eligibility, existing capacity used to store grain in the reserve program will be excluded. Previously, in determining eligibility, all existing facilities were included.

On February 8 the storage payments for grains held in the farmer-owned reserve program increased from 20 to 25 cents per bushel per year for major grains, and from 15 to 19 cents for oats.

According to information from Secretary Bergland, farmers now storing grain in the reserve will be offered new contracts to reflect the 25 cent rate.

At the present time, price support loan activity in Pennsylvania indicates that farmers have placed 5,498,063 bushels of corn; 166,674 bushels of wheat; 32,879 bushels of barley; 157,694 bushels of oats; 61,974 bushels of soybeans, and 9928 hundredweight of sorghum in the annual loan program. Four thousand six hundred-forty-two bushels of wheat and 39,629 bushels of corn have been placed in the grain reserve program through February 17.

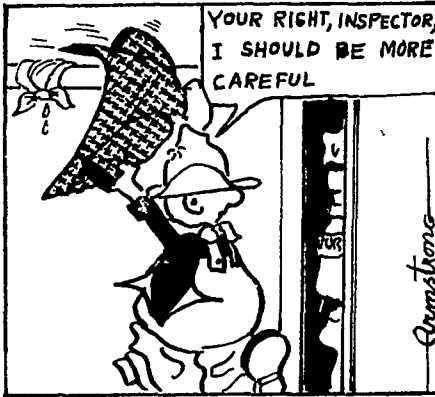
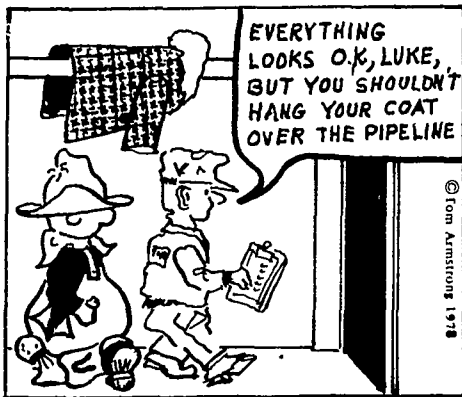
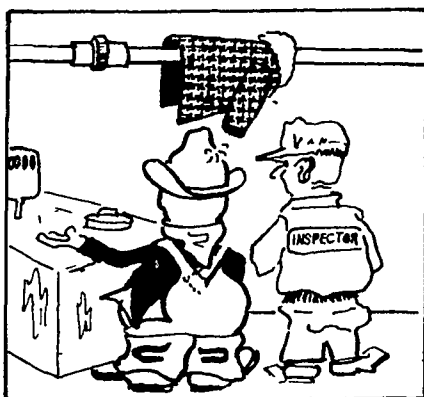
Nationally, producers have placed 513 million bushels of wheat, 927 million bushels of corn, 191 million bushels of sorghum, and 210 million bushels of other grains produced in 1977

under price support loan through February 8, 1978.

Price supports are a marketing tool for farmers to use in helping to obtain fair market prices, promote orderly marketing, and

provide price floors for commodities. Full details of the price support programs are available at County offices of the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service.

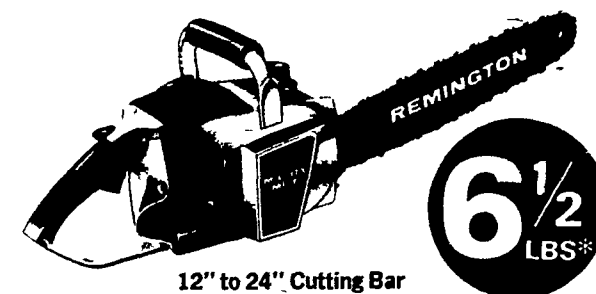
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By Tom Armstrong

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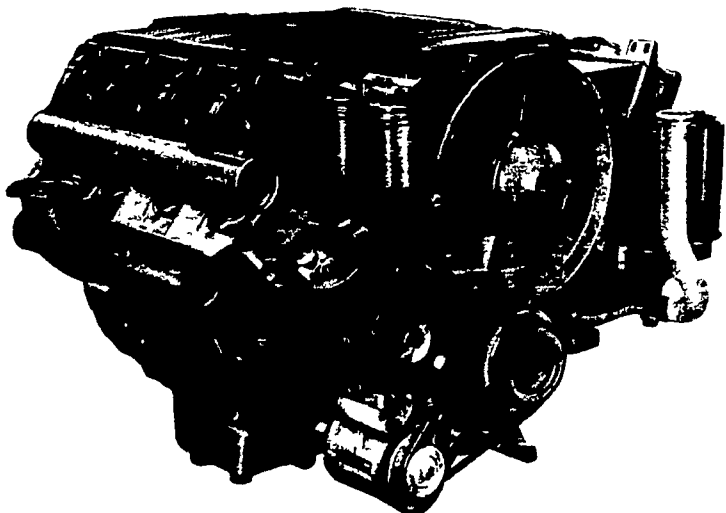


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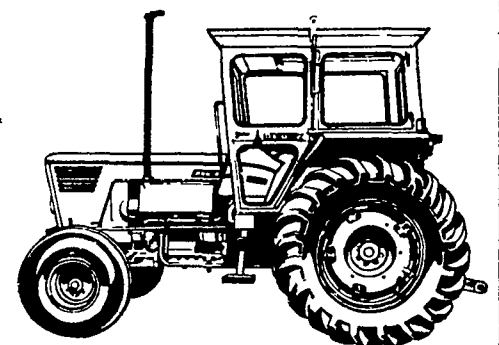
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