

Crop insurance program being overhauled

WASHINGTON - Senator Herman E. Talmadge (D-Ga.), calling for a major overhaul of the Nation's farm disaster programs, recently introduced the Carter Administration's comprehensive crop insurance bill.

Talmadge, chairman of the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry, said he hoped the Administration's proposal, along with other crop insurance bills already introduced, would provide the basis for the development of a "workable, nation-wide program of disaster protection that will be available to all farmers when and where they need it."

An Agriculture subcommittee headed by Senator Walter D. Huddleston of Kentucky began hearings last week on new farm disaster legislation. Along with the other proposals, it will consider the Federal Production Protection Act of 1979, which was introduced by Senator Talmadge at the Administration's request.

Beginning with the 1981 crop year, the Administration bill would make available to all U.S. farmers protection against loss of production of major crops due to unavoidable or natural causes with coverage available for up to 90 per cent of the cost of production. The program would operate similar to the

existing limited Federal crop insurance program, but with the government paying a part of each farmers' premium for the insurance.

While terming the Administration's proposal, "not the final or complete

answer," Talmadge said in a Senate statement that a "thorough and comprehensive overhaul of the Nation's farm disaster programs is long overdue."

"The existing programs are confusing and cumbersome," Talmadge said.

"The protection and assistance they are supposed to provide farmers sometimes overlap, but more often are inadequate or non-existent to meet emergencies when and where they arise."

Talmadge said the existing Federal crop insurance program, which was established during the Depression era, has fallen "woefully short" of the goal of providing basic crop protection to all of the Nation's farmers.

"Today, 40 years later, Federal crop insurance exists in only one half of the Nation's counties," he said. "Nor does the program cover all major commodities even where the insurance is available."

Talmadge noted that in his own State of Georgia, only 44 of 159 counties are included in the Federal crop insurance program at the present time. He has urged the U.S. Department of Agriculture to extend

coverage to 12 additional counties next year.

Talmadge said the development of new disaster legislation is "priority business for his Committee." He noted that the disaster payment provisions of the Food and Agriculture Act of 1977 will expire with the 1979 crop year unless extended by Congress. The Administration proposes a one-year extension of those provisions in the interim before its proposed program would begin operation.

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beef, pork, poultry, liver, fish, eggs, dried fruits (raisins, apricots, and prunes), dried vegetables (beans and peas), leafy greens, green peas and molasses. Other foods contribute significant amounts of iron because they're generally eaten in large quantities. These included enriched bread macaroni and spaghetti. Hamburgers and french fries should be only part of a teenager's diet: he or she needs an ample supply of iron-rich foods in addition.

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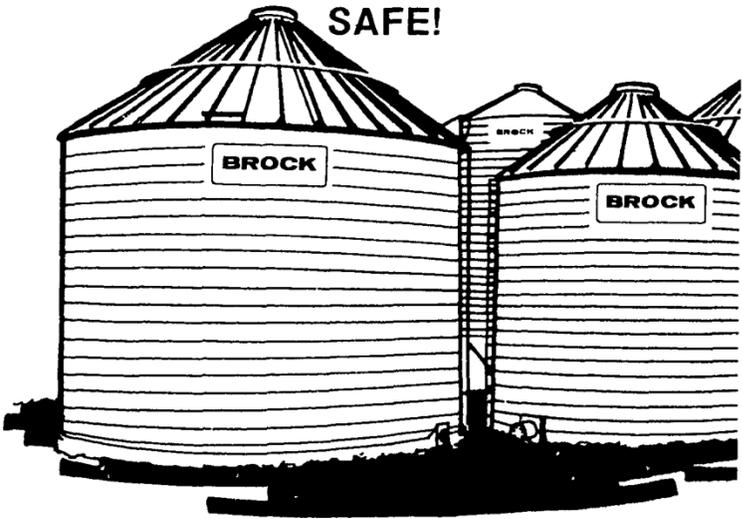
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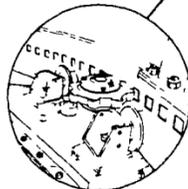
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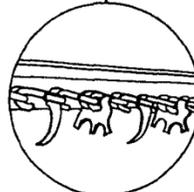
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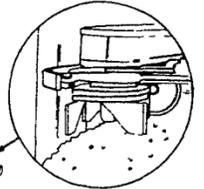


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