

# U.S. pledges 4.4 million tons food aid to developing nations

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Secretary of Agriculture Bob Bergland Tuesday signed the international Food Aid Convention of 1980 for the United States, pledging a minimum of 4.47 million tons of U.S. grains a year as food aid for developing countries.

"This convention almost doubles the international commitment to food assistance," Bergland said. "It is the first major accomplishment of the international wheat negotiations and represents a substantial improvement in world food security."

The 1980 convention, negotiated as part of the International Wheat Agreement, will replace the Food Aid Convention of 1971 on July 1. In the new pact, 19 countries, including the 9-country European Economic Community, pledge a total of at least 7.6 million tons of food grain yearly to the

developing countries. This is about 3.4 million tons more than the annual commitments under the 1971 convention, Bergland said.

Bergland said the increase in food aid commitments is a step toward meeting the food needs of the hungry and a long stride toward the convention's objective of a guaranteed level of at least 10 million tons of wheat and other grains for human consumption for use in the developing countries.

"That level was set by the World Food Conference and the World Food Council as the absolute minimum to reach a measure of food security in the poor countries," Bergland said. "To provide it, we join with the Food Aid Committee in encouraging other nations to become donors, especially the OPEC countries."

Bergland said legislation to establish a 4 million ton

U.S. food reserve to insure that this country can meet its food aid commitments is before the Congress.

"I hope the signing of the new Food Aid Convention will speed the passage of this legislation so we can be sure of meeting our commitments in any crop situation," he said.

Bergland said the commitments under the Food Aid Convention are not aid targets but rather pledges by the donors that their annual food assistance will not drop below the level specified.

The United States, for example, was committed to contributing a minimum of 1.89 million tons of grain under the 1971 convention, but actual shipments that met convention aid requirements have far exceeded that level, totalling about 5.3 million tons in fiscal year 1979.

Food aid under the convention may be supplied as gifts of grain or of cash with which to buy grain; as sales to the recipient country for non-convertible currency, or sales on credit for at least 20 years with a down payment of not over 15 percent and interest rates below

prevailing commercial rates in world markets.

Members may contribute through international organizations or on a country-to-country basis.

The Public Law 480 program is the channel for the U.S. contribution. The United States normally ships about 6 million tons of grain and grain products a year under PL 480, but not all of it is for human consumption and not all meets the convention's sales terms criteria.

The convention, which was agreed to by the negotiators in March, is subject to ratification by governments of the member countries. Senate approval is required in the United States. It will become an element of the International Wheat Agreement of 1971, which last year was extended through June 30, 1981.

The extension came after negotiators failed to reach agreement on a new Wheat Trade Convention, the second element of the International Wheat Agreement. The new food aid pact is scheduled to expire on that same date, but there is a provision for extending it.

## Wildlife group opposes use of Compound 1080

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The National Wildlife Federation has taken a stand

against Congressional passage of a bill that would legalize the use of a poison, Compound 1080, against coyotes and other livestock predators.

In a letter to Rep. E. de la Garza, chairman of a House Agriculture subcommittee studying livestock losses, Thomas L. Kimball, executive vice president of the NWF, asked the committee to reject H.R. 6725, a so-called animal damage control bill.

Since it was developed in 1944 to control coyotes, Kimball said, Compound 1080 has killed "many thousands" of dogs and animals other than coyotes, while the coyote "is flourishing".

Coyotes, Kimball argued, subsist mainly on rodents, rather than livestock.

Coyote populations are greatest where there are large rodent populations, he added, and therefore elimination of the coyotes could be "disastrous to the other elements of the environment."

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