D16—Lancaster Farming, Saturday, October 11, 1980

Farm leaders pool ideas to expand ag exports

WASHINGTON, D.C. -Thirty prominent leaders representing every major segment of agriculture met · in Washington last week to begin drafting a long-range "Blueprint for U.S. Farm Export Expansion" due for completion next February.

Those participating in the two-day meeting at the Capitol included representatives of the grain cooperatives and grain companies, presidents of major grower organizations, agribusiness executives, academic leaders and top government officials.

At the group's closing session its Chairman, Don Charier, President of Far-Mar-Co, the nation's largest grain cooperative, noted, "To my knowledge a group such as this has never been assembled before. We have a great opportunity and a real responsibility to develop the kind of plan that can greatly benefit our entire country.'

Chartier is heading-up a special Blue Ribbon Committee named as a part of the U.S. Farm Export Education Project. The project is being coordinated by the Agriculture Council of America in an effort to obtain "maximum feasible farm export expansion over the next decade."

The group meeting here this week reviewed a working draft plan prepared by Michael Cook of Texas A & M University under the direction of a small Steering Committee.

Members of the Blue Ribbon Committee made numerous suggestions that will provide the direction for mittee, noted that the group

January in Washington.

The final draft will be presented at a National Conference on Export Strategies for the Future. February 9 to 11, 1981 at the Mayflower Hotel in Washington.

Some 50 members of Congress have already announced their support for the project, and many of them attended a reception for the Blue Ribbon Committee in the Rayburn House Office Building on Wednesday night. Supporting Members of Congress are naming five to 10 prominent non-farm constituents to review and make suggestions on the first draft Blueprint discussed here this week.

"This is an excellent way to get the thinking of a very select group of non-farm leaders from around the country," Chartier commented. "This involves a fundamental part of the whole approach with this project. We're going to develop a plan that we can take to the American people something that shows conclusively that farm exports don't just benefit the

entire country. "We also expect to show what specifically can be done to expand farm exports as a means of reducing inflation, creating new jobs strengthening the and dollar."

Jerry Rees of the National Association of Wheat Growers, a spokesman for the Project Steering Comproviding active support by the end of the year.

In presenting the project timetable, Rees noted members of the Blue Ribbon Committee will have 60 days to provide further written comment on the first working draft Blueprint.

The Steering Committee and Cook will evaluate this response as well as that from prominent constituents named by Members of Congress for inclusion in the second draft to be presented to the Blue Ribbon Committee in January.

Another member of the Steering Committee, Warren Lebeck, representing the Chicago Board of Trade, described plans for the development of a series of radio and television commercials on important points emphasized in the Blueprint. Lebeck said complete details on this part of the program will be presented at the

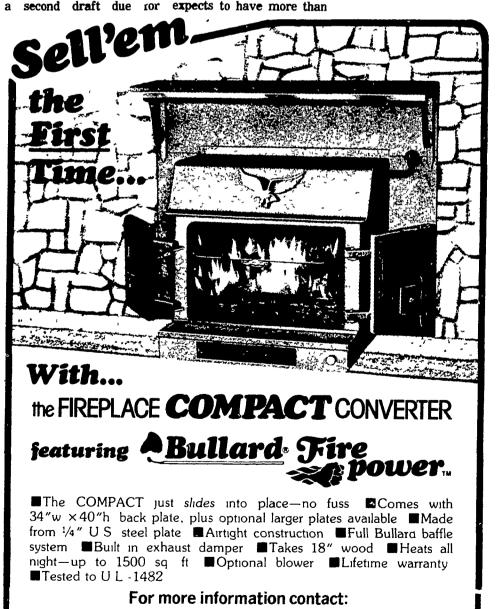


presentation at a second 100 Members of Congress conference in February. meeting of the Committee in providing active support by Further information on the project may be obtained by writing Farm Export Education, Box 23421,

Washington, DC 20024, or by calling the Agriculture Council of America at 202/466-3100. ACA serves as a communications link to the

non-farm public. It is supported by a broad cross-section of farm commodities and agribusiness companies.





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