

Ag chariman discusses new farm bill

ORLANDO, Fla — Making his first major address since assuming the position of Chairman of the House Agriculture Committee, U.S. Congressman Kika de la Garza told the National Farmers Union Convention last week "the farmers of this country have carried the economy of the United States for so long that they have a right to ask for justice."

The House will begin hearings on the new 1981 Farm Bill in March in Washington with the Ag committee facing a battle in maintaining support for agricultural commodities against an overall mood of controlling government spending and inflation.

The congressmen from rural South Texas said farmers needed a support program which will include "an honest figure which reflects their cost of production taken from the farmers' books

themselves."

The task will be difficult in a Congress which "does not realize the seriousness of the situation" facing American producers, de la Garza explained.

Personally, the Agriculture Committee Chairman said he would prefer an eight year bill but said a four year Farm Bill was the best he could expect.

The new Farm Bill will be an continuation of the 1977 Farm Bill "with some minor adjustments," the Congressman stated. The reserve program will be continued along with the price support program.

Also, Congressman de la Garza said "we must provide more emphasis on research. Agriculture begins and ends with the scientist in the laboratory."

Commenting on the Russia grain embargo, Congressman de la

Garza said he was personally opposed to embargoes and the overwhelming sentiment in Congress is against them."

He added he would like to include in the 1981 Farm Bill a provision which would protect producers in some instances.

"But we have to remember in a case of national security, we have to yield to the president. He is the one with the most information," he said.

The House Agriculture Chairman said more export markets should be developed for commodities, including the dairy program.

"Our dairy program is basically sound, but it is resulting in a buildup of surpluses and an increase in costs," the congressman noted. He stated the Reagan administration has already asked Congress to pass a bill eliminating

a scheduled mid year adjustment in dairy supports due on April 1. Other changes are predicted in the coming year although de la Garza said "we do not know what the final results will be."

Congressman de la Garza said additional work and support were needed for pesticide programs.

"Sometimes I think the world is going to be overrun by consultants and insects," the Congressman joked. "We need pesticides which will be effective yet compatible with the environment," he stated.

Relating his early childhood as a

poor boy from a large family who shined shoes to his rise to the Texas House of Representatives and the U.S. Congress, de la Garza told the convention the problems facing the nation could be overcome.

"We still have the greatest nation in the world," he stated.

"The people who are involved in agricultural production can have a direct input into the new Farm Bill which is a reflection of the freedoms and the decision making process in the United States," Congressman de la Garza concluded.

Berks dairy club meets

READING — The Western Berks 4-H Dairy Club held their February meeting at the home of Jonathon Grimes.

Officers were elected. They are as follows: president, Mark Moyer; vice president, William Leshner; secretary Lori Leshner;

treasurer, Karen Leshner; and reporter, Donna Stump.

The next meeting will be held at the home of Tammy Balthaser, on March 6 at 7:30 p.m. All members are asked to think of a place to attend for the 4-H tour.

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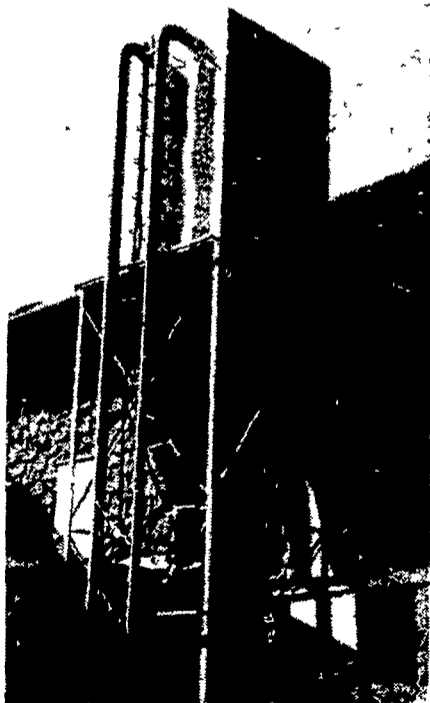
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