

# Soybean growers ask Congress to cut government intervention

WASHINGTON, D.C. — American soybean growers have asked Congress and the administration to minimize government intervention in soybean production and marketing.

During their annual spring meeting in Washington, DC, grower directors of the American Soybean Association voted unanimously to request an immediate end to the Soviet grain embargo, voted to continue to oppose the inclusion of soybeans in any bilateral trade agreements and urged Congress to limit government intervention to increased support for research and export promotion programs.

"Soybeans have become America's No. 1 cash crop simply because farmers have increased or decreased production to meet demand," says ASA President Frank Ray, a Baker, Florida, soybean producer.

"There has never been a soybean target price, a federally-financed soybean reserve or a soybean set-aside. Federal outlays to support soybean farmers have been minuscule and, in fact, there hasn't been a net federal price support outlay for soybeans since 1973. As a result, soybeans have been profitable and President Reagan's budget cuts will have little direct effect on soybean growers."

During congressional visits and in testimony before the Senate Agriculture Committee, the Soybean Association pressed for the creation of two new sections in the 1981 Farm Bill.

"Title I of the 1981 Farm Bill should be designated an International Title devoted entirely to policies aimed at expanding world demand for U.S. agricultural commodities," Ray testified.

"Past farm bills have been almost exclusively devoted to treating the illness of low farm income. The new farm bill should assure the highest possible profit for our production from the international market place so the illness of low farm income can be prevented.

"Enormous potential demand for U.S. agricultural commodities exists overseas and we must do everything we can as a nation to develop and service that demand."

ASA's proposal for an International Title includes provisions for establishment of a revolving fund for Commodity Credit Corporation short-term export credits; increased international market development funding based on a percentage of exports; and restrictions on the president's power to sign bilateral trade agreements.

ASA also proposed a separate soybean title in the farm bill. Soybeans are currently included in a title of non-basic commodities such as tung nuts and honey.

"Soybeans are the No. 1 cash crop, No. 1 U.S. export and second largest crop in acreage," Ray says. "As a result, soybeans should have a separate title that includes provisions establishing continued reliance on a market-oriented approach."

ASA's version of the soybean section would establish a formula for setting the soybean loan rate; prohibit soybean set-asides; prohibit soybean target prices; prohibit a federally-financed soybean reserve; and prohibit acreage limitations or mandatory conservation practices as a condition for receiving a soybean loan.

Under the Soybean Association plan, the soybean loan would be set automatically through a market price formula similar to the current cotton loan. The loan would be equal to 75 percent of the average Chicago cash price for each of the last five years, excluding the high and low valued years.

"The soybean loan should serve as a source of farmer credit," Ray says. "It should provide farmers with a source of financing for their new crop so they don't have to sell their previous soybean crop at unprofitable prices. The loan rate should not be so high that it interferes with normal soybean marketing nor encourages foreign

soybean production. Using the formula we propose, the 1981-82 soybean loan could be \$5.22."

Soybean growers from 27 producing states attended the Soybean Association spring meeting. In addition to their business sessions, the growers called on representatives, senators and members of the Reagan administration.

"We received an excellent response from both Congress and the administration," Ray says. "We want to increase profits for soybean farmers by building exports and moderating production costs through research. Unlike many special interest groups, we're asking for less — not more — government involvement."

## Milk production climbs one percent

HARRISBURG — Milk production in Pennsylvania during February 1981 totaled 693 million pounds, up one percent from a year earlier, according to the Pennsylvania Crop Reporting Service.

The number of milk cows in the Commonwealth during February was 714,000 head, up 1000 head from a year ago.

Milk production per cow averaged 970 pounds in February, up 10 pounds from a year ago. The

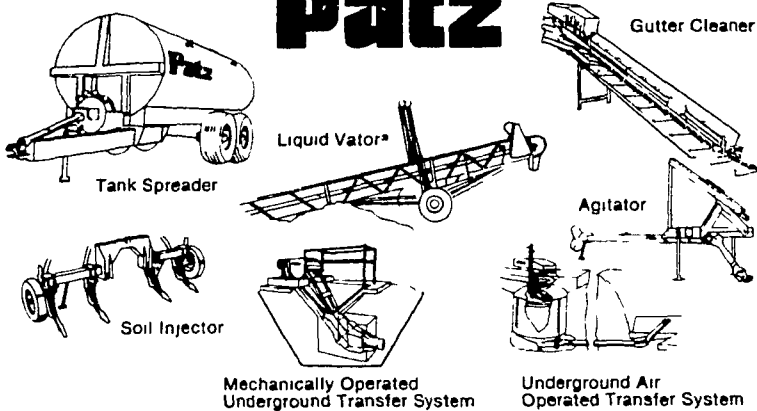
extra day last year increased production by 3.6 percent during February 1980.

United States milk production during February totaled 10.1 billion pounds, one percent above February 1980.

Milk production per cow averaged 928 pounds, two pounds more than a year earlier and 66 pounds above February 1979. Milk cows on farms totaled 10.9 million, one percent above last year.

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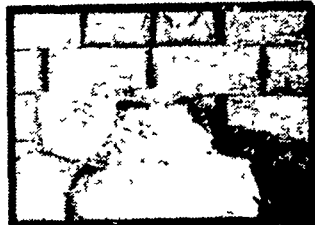
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