

Soybean growers demand end to embargo

LANCASTER — The Soviet grain embargo has denied U.S. soybean growers a \$500 million market and should be lifted immediately according to American Soybean Association President Frank Ray.

"It's obvious the Soviet embargo has failed," Ray said in a letter to President Ronald W. Reagan.

"Soviet troops remain in Afghanistan. The Soviets have been able to import all their needs. Other food exporting countries have taken advantage of our embargo and are freely shipping grain and soybeans to the Soviets."

Ray, a soybean grower from Baker, Florida, told President Reagan that the embargo discriminates against soybean producers.

"Because of our reliance on free trade, soybeans are not included in the Soviet grain agreement," he said. "As a result, the embargo has been complete and unlike corn and wheat farmers, we've not been able to sell any soybeans to the Soviets."

"While it's difficult to calculate direct costs, soybean farmers have lost a market valued at more than \$500 million during the last full year of normal trading."

The soybean leader says soybean farmers have not forgotten Reagan's campaign pledge to lift the embargo.

"We've patiently waited for you to fulfill your campaign statements," Ray said. "You and your advisers have had 60 days to consider all the facts. The continuation of the Soviet embargo only encourages U.S. soybean farmers to abandon their free trade principles and join other farmers in asking for government handouts and price supports."

In a speech before former President Carter announced the grain embargo, ASA Chief Executive Officer Ken Bader projected the Soviet Union would become the largest U.S. soybean market. His speech noted the

Soviets would purchase more than \$1 billion of soybeans and soybean products by 1985.

"The longer the embargo continues, the more damage it creates for U.S. soybean farmers," Ray says.

"The Soviets are developing trade ties with Argentina and Brazil as a replacement for U.S. soybeans, soy oil and soybean meal. For example, the Soviet Union will purchase 60 percent of this year's Argentina's total farm exports."

"These trade ties encourage South American farmers to increase their soybean production and will ultimately reduce profits for U.S. soybean farmers."

Ray says another result of the embargo is loss of profits for U.S.

soybean processors which means lower prices for soybean farmers.

He noted soybean processing plants in Europe and Brazil are running at full capacity while those in the U.S. are only 75 percent utilized.

"We deplore the Soviet Union's imperialistic activities in Afghanistan, Poland and El Salvador," Ray said.

"A food embargo obviously does not counter Soviet aggression, it only penalizes American farmers. We urge you to replace the impotent embargo with some other signal to the world that the U.S. will take strong and direct action to counter Soviet aggression."

"In restoring trade with the Soviets, you will be able to use their currency to improve our economy and balance of trade situation," he concluded.

New Jersey meat plant loses inspection services

UNION CITY, N.J. — The U.S. Department of Agriculture will withdraw meat inspection service for 30 days from a Union City, N.J., packing company because of felony convictions against the firm and one of its officers.

The firm, Toscony Provision Co., Inc., can not process meat products without Federal meat inspection.

Service will be withdrawn April 4 unless Toscony appeals the decision to the USDA Judicial Officer.

Donald L. Houston, Administrator of USDA's Food Safety and Quality Service, said the decision also orders Henry Dei, the firm's president, to completely separate himself from the com-

pany or it will face indefinite withdrawal of inspection.

Houston also said if the firm violates any provision of the Federal Meat Inspection Act within two years - involving the preparation, sale, transportation or attempted distribution of any adulterated or misbranded products - inspection service may be withdrawn indefinitely.

In 1979, the firm and Dei were convicted in the U.S. District Court for the District of New Jersey of a felony for knowingly distributing adulterated meat products.

The Federal Meat Inspection Act requires all meat products sold in commerce to be wholesome and properly labeled.

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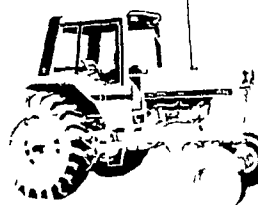
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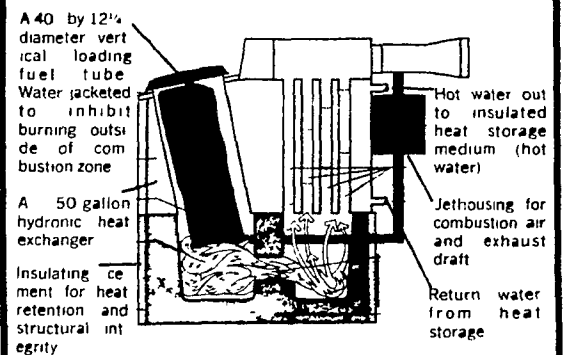
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