

Soviet grain crop continues to deteriorate

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Projections for the Soviet grain crop continue on their downward trend, reports USDA.

Planned at 236 million metric tons, once projected at 200-210 million tons, and seen at 185 million tons just a month ago, it is now projected at 180 million tons.

These figures are down 25 percent from plan, 15 percent

below the original projection, 3 percent below last month's estimate and 5 percent below last year's 189 million ton output.

According to USDA, this marks the third straight year of poor grain output for the Soviets. While they produced a record 237 million tons of grain in 1978, output fell to 179 million tons in 1979 and then to 189 million last year. They cite the

current problems as the result of continued hot, dry weather that has plagued this crop since early July.

The Soviet wheat output is now seen at 93 million tons, down from last year's 98 million ton total but above the 90 million tons produced in 1979. Coarse grain production is now seen at 77 million tons, down from 1980's 80.7 million ton output

and the lowest since 1975.

Back in 1978, the Soviet Union produced a record 121 million metric tons of wheat from 63 million harvested hectares — averaging a record 1.92 metric tons per hectare. This year's 93 million metric tons from 61 million harvested hectares reflects the lowest yield since 1977 — an average of 1.52 metric tons per hectare.

In comparison, this year's U.S. wheat production is seen at 74.8 million metric tons from a record 32.7 million hectares. Yield per acre is seen at 2.29 metric tons — 50 percent more per hectare than the Soviets.

In 1976, Soviet production of coarse grains (rye, barley, oats, corn, sorghum and millet) totaled a record 115 million tons that was produced from 61 million harvested hectares. Yield per hectare averaged a record 1.89 tons. This year, production of coarse grains by the Soviets is seen at 77 million tons from 54 million harvested

hectares. Yield per hectare is seen at 1.43 tons.

In the U.S., corn production, alone, is seen at 201.7 million tons from 30 million harvested hectares. Yield is seen at 6.72 tons per hectare — 4 times the Soviet coarse grain average.

Overall, Soviet grain production is projected at 180 million tons from 123 million hectares. U.S. grain output is projected at 324.4 million tons from 77.3 million hectares. U.S. farmers will produce 1.8 times as much grain as the Soviet farmers on 38 percent less land.



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Farm Talk

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easily buy feed, but none of the roughage that grows on his hilly acres is wasted for want of a cow to eat it.

That farm is not suited to all-out crop production and never will be, but it's a darn good livestock farm. There are many farms like that in almost every state. Any sort of

national policy aimed at converting them to crop farms would be a mistake.

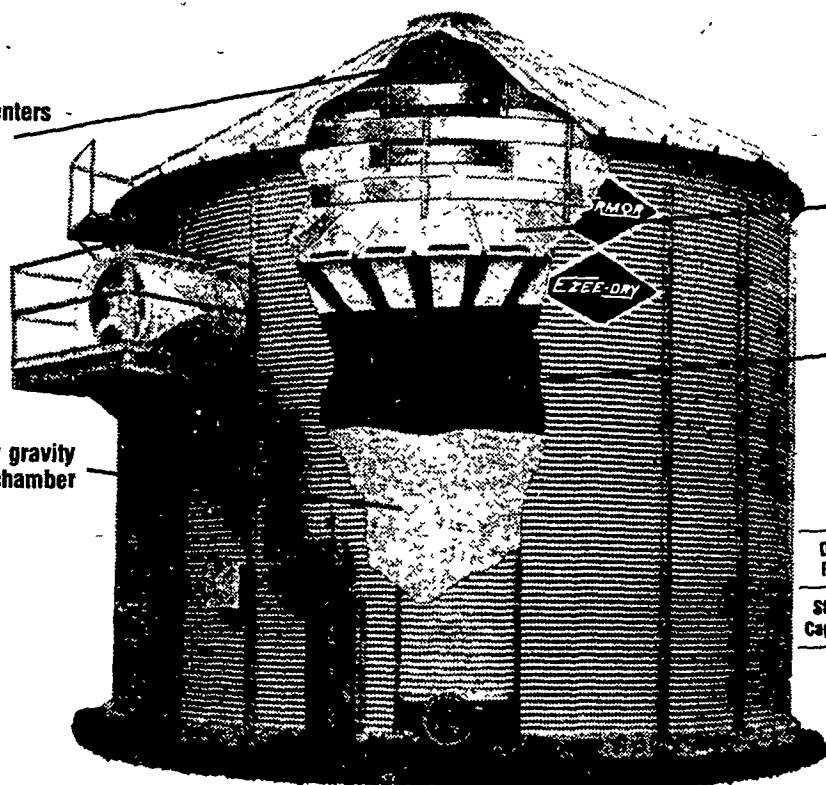
Likewise, any effort on the part of concerned citizens to pressure livestock farmers would be ill-advised. It would be far better to let farmers figure out for themselves what their farms are best suited for.

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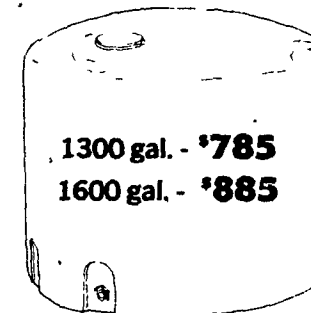
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