

Corn grower officials travel to Moscow

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Representatives of the National Corn Growers Association travelled to Moscow, USSR, this week to discuss a variety of issues with Soviet agricultural trade officials.

William R. Mullins, a corn farmer from Shabbona, Illinois, and the current president of the NCGA, and Michael L. Hall, Washington Representative for the NCGA will meet with officials from the Ministry of Procurement, Exportkhleb, Ministry of Agriculture, and the State Bank for Foreign Trade while in Moscow.

Prior to departing for Moscow, the NCGA officials met with Secretary of Agriculture John R. Block and officials from the U.S. Trade Representatives office, including Deputy Ambassador

David Macdonald. During these meetings, the NCGA representatives discussed the issues they hoped to cover in the series of meetings in the USSR, and reviewed U.S. trade policy pertaining to long-term US-USSR agricultural trade.

"The trip is similar in nature to the visit we held with Soviet officials in September 1980, and is arranged to allow for a further exchange of views on the many issues affecting US-USSR agricultural trade," Mullins commented.

The upcoming negotiations for a new long-term grain agreement between the U.S. and USSR, which are reportedly scheduled for early 1982, and the issues affecting long-term agricultural trade between the two countries are expected to

dominate the discussions in Moscow. In addition, the NCGA officials anticipate some time will be devoted to an exchange of views on the prospects for world grain production and trade in the 1981/82 season.

"It is imperative that we maintain lines of communication with Soviet grain procurement officials, and to express our desire that trade relations between the two countries resume a more normal posture," Mullins stated. "If we are to ever re-gain the lost market opportunity resulting from the January 1980 grain embargo,

we must exhibit to Soviet officials that we are committed to a resumption of normal trade and that we can once again be considered a reliable trading partner."

"We are hopeful this trip to the Soviet Union will reinforce the commitment of American corn farmers to maximize trade with the USSR, especially at a time when so little progress can be identified," Mullins concluded.

The National Corn Growers Association is made up of corn producers from 16 states, with the purpose of promoting the general welfare of U.S. corn farmers by

maintaining and developing domestic corn production and price and income support programs consistent with a market-oriented grain economy. The activities of the organization are conducted through two offices, located in Des Moines, Iowa, and in Washington, D.C. State members of the National Corn Growers Association include Colorado, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia and Wisconsin.

Pa. woodcock breeding grounds decrease

UNIVERSITY PARK — Last year, more

Pennsylvanians hunted woodcock than in 1979, but according to government figures,

fewer hunters met with success. Penn State wildlife biologists believe the decrease is due to declining habitat needed for woodcock breeding.

The decrease in woodcock breeding grounds occurs with the loss of young and shrubby growth typical of the early stages of forest development, according to wildlife scientists at Penn State. James S. Wakeley and Gerald L. Storm report that young forests, dominated by shrubs, are ideal breeding grounds for woodcock.

According to Wakeley, increased urbanization is taking some land.

"Between 1965 and 1977, government sources showed land used for urban expansion in Pennsylvania increased 50 percent while forest and pasture land decreased by 6 percent," Wakeley stated.

He commented that the urban land-use figure includes land being used, or intended for use, in highway construction. He said land developers should be dissuaded from using locations where forests meet open fields in areas such as valley bottoms.

According to Storm, since 1970 the number of woodcock hunters participating in the hunting season has increased. He said that from 1970 to 1975, there were less than 150,000 hunters going after the cagey bird. Last year, there were more than 225,000 woodcock hunters in the state.

There are more hunters going after woodcock, but they are bagging less birds than before, he said.

Figures amassed by State Game Commission Field Researcher Bill Shope indicate that the number of woodcock harvested last year was down approximately 10 percent from 1979.

Whether the actual woodcock population is dropping remains to be seen. Nonetheless, a national spring breeding census done last year suggests there's a decline in the woodcock population, Storm commented.

Pennsylvania's woodcock season runs through December 19.

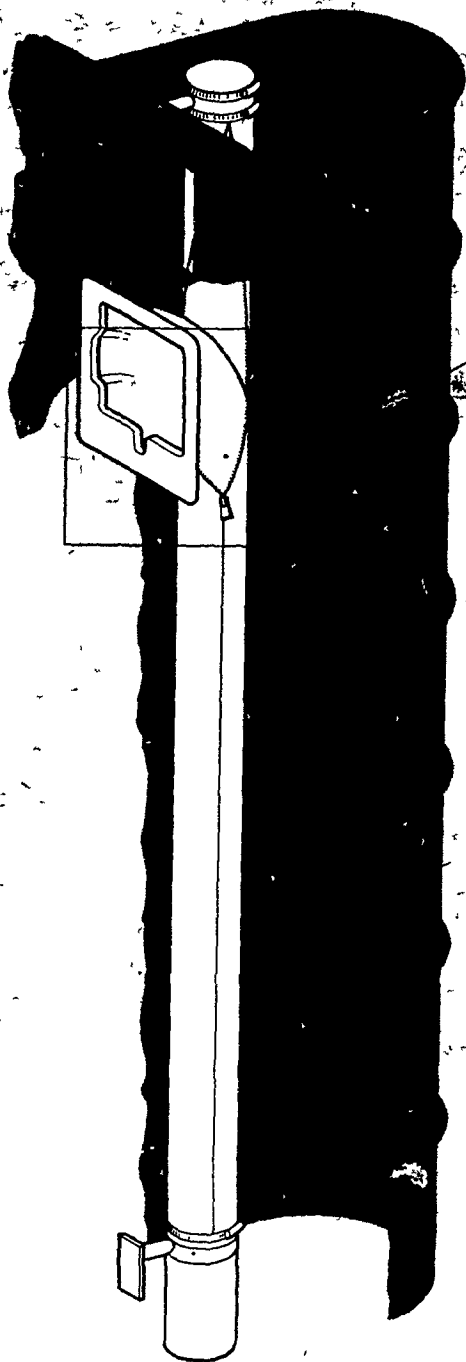
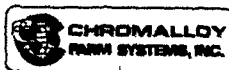
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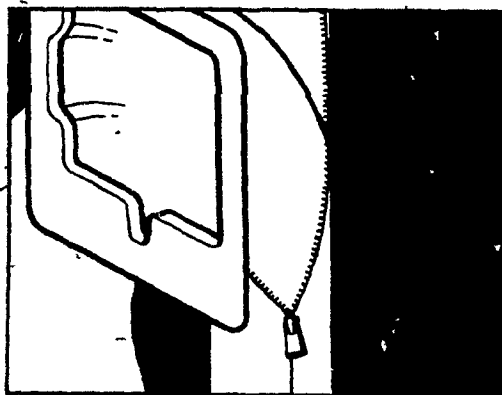
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