

Wheat Exports

(Continued from Page D2) the 1981 farm bill as a reason. That bill provided for annual increases in the loan rate and target price. "As the dominant exporter, we set the price. Other countries were guaranteed continuing price increases, and thus had an environment, created by this country, that encouraged production increases."

Several exporters, especially the EC, also have boosted their share of the market through export subsidies.

U.S. Policies Have Changed

The 1985 farm bill is a different story, however. If the goal is to restore U.S. competitiveness, Shane says, the bill was a step in the right direction.

U.S. wheat sellers would like to return to the competitive peak they reached about 15 years ago, when they had about 50 percent of the export market. (That was a time of big sales to the Soviet Union, which had been hit by crop failures.) The U.S. export share stayed above 40 percent for the next two years, until falling to 38 percent in 1983/84.

The volume of U.S. wheat exports reached a record 49 mil-

lion tons in 1980/81. Then the big skid began. U.S. sales were almost halved in 4 years, falling to 25 million tons. Total world exports also fell, though only by 15 percent, to 85 million tons.

Many countries have been increasing their wheat production, and this has hurt several of the major exporters—especially the United States. World production this year is likely to break the record of 512 million tons set 2 years ago. About 17 percent of the wheat grown this year is expected to enter the export market.

The wheat trade remains highly concentrated, Shane notes, with just 13 countries accounting for more than 95 percent of wheat exports, and 18 countries buying more than 71 percent of the imports.

Export Club Has New Members

Only a few countries export substantial amounts of wheat, but the makeup of that group has changed. Shane notes that 8 of the 13 exporters in 1981/83 had been importers in 1961/63. Another example of the volatility of the trade is the shift by the Soviet Union from major exporter status in the early 1960s

to major importer more recently.

Several EC countries are among the most striking examples of the rapid changes that have occurred in the wheat trade. The United Kingdom bought 11 percent of world wheat imports 25 years ago, but has become an exporter. And France increased its share of the exports from 4 percent to 15 percent in the same time period. The 10 leading importers in one recent year were the Soviet Union, China, Egypt, Brazil, Poland, Algeria, Iraq, Iran, Morocco, and South Korea.

Shane sees some irony in the EC trend because Europe has not traditionally been a producer of surplus amounts of wheat. "With high population density and expensive price tags on land in much of Europe, grain production has been a fairly inefficient use of the resources," Shane says. He adds, however, that a political decision was made to pay the price of building up the wheat sector of the EC farm economy. But this has resulted, especially in France, in strengthening the wheat industry to the point that it is now highly competitive.

This means trouble for U.S. wheat growers, who will have a difficult time regaining the portion of the wheat trade that was lost during the last few trying years.

Consider Pets At Vacation Time

NEWARK, Del. — If you're planning a trip this summer, what arrangements will you make for your pet? You could solve the problem with the help of a friendly neighbor. Or, you might leave your pet at a boarding kennel. But if you decide to take it along, Dr. Paul Meckley, a veterinarian in the department of animal science and agricultural biochemistry at the University of Delaware, has some advice about traveling with an animal.

Before the trip, make sure your pet has had a rabies vaccination and a distemper-hepatitis booster. Have a veterinarian check the animals for minor skin ailments, ear infection or anything else that could become an acute problem on the trip. Remember to pack any medication your pet needs to take regularly, particularly heartworm medication.

It's also wise to find out about regulations regarding pets in the area you plan to visit, especially if you are leaving the United States. Before you leave, make sure pets are permitted at the motels and camping areas where you plan to stop, Meckley advises.

If your pet is not accustomed to automobile travel, prepare it by taking it on several afternoon rides before the vacation.

Consider the pet's comfort while traveling. It's unfair to expect a frisky animal to stay cooped up in a small cage for long periods, the veterinarian says. Include exercise and relief stops in your driving schedule. When the animal is allowed out of the vehicle, be sure it is on a leash. Many a vacation has been ruined when a pet darted off at a rest stop.

"It is not advisable to allow a pet to put its head out of the window while you are driving," Meckley says. "Although it may seem cooler for the pet, it is dangerous for several reasons." The animals may jump out, and if it's wearing a leash, the pet may choke itself. Foreign objects may get in its eyes, or they may dry out and become irritated.

Make sure the animal gets enough water and, if possible, its regular food. "If you leave your pet in a parked car," Meckley says, "park in the shade and leave a window open to give the pet some air and to relieve it from the intense heat." The temperature inside a car parked in the direct sunlight can rise to 160 degrees in 20 to 25 minutes.

Keep these precautions in mind and your pet can be a good traveling companion.

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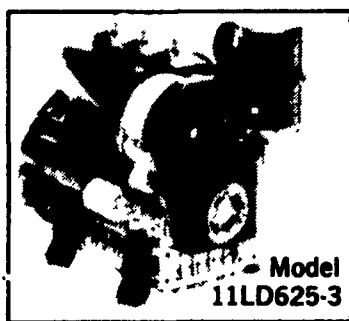


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