

\$4 Billion To Former USSR 'More Than Any Nation'

ORLANDO, Fla. — The U.S. has provided \$4 billion in credit or food assistance to the republics of the former Soviet Union during the past 13 months and will continue its aid efforts to "help their evolution to democracies and market-based economies," Secretary of Agriculture Edward R. Madigan said.

The U.S. effort is greater than those of "any other country or combination of countries," he said, and it is important not only because it will help assure stability in the world but because it "could be an important market for American agriculture."

Madigan, speaking to delegates at the 63rd annual meeting of the National Council of Farmer Cooperatives, addressed critics who said the U.S. food and humanitarian aid effort has been too slow.

"We have to do it right," he said. "We have to protect the integrity of the programs we are using or we could risk losing those programs which are important to American agriculture."

He said USDA experts this week are in the St. Petersburg area of Russia to begin plans for a model farm, in Armenia to build an agricultural extension education effort, and in Moscow to plan for delivery of the next shipments of food assistance.

The secretary also said:

- The so-called "Dunkel text" being considered in multilateral trade negotiations is a "framework from which we can negotiate a successful agricultural conclusion" and one which "goes a long way toward" his goal, which is "a substantial reduction and ultimate elimination of export subsidies."

- President Bush will face up to the challenge of "getting the economy moving again" without risking the loss of improvement in employment, interest rates, and inflation during the last 10 years. "All the agencies and departments of government are trying to move money out to spur the economy," he said.

- If the president proposes reinstatement of the investment tax credit and reduction of the capital gains tax rate, Madigan urged more appreciation of "how it will be very beneficial to agriculture,"

stimulating investment in equipment and buildings. "We need to get the story out because we've been taking a terrible beating from the impression that these are only for millionaires."

- He wants USDA to become an agency "where we really care about people and where we really are responsive to their needs." He cited a four-point program includ-

ing several pilot efforts to learn ways of offering farm programs at the county level in a more "farmer-friendly" manner. He also cited efforts to find new markets for

farm products, "make agriculture more credible as an environmentally friendly agency," and improve nutrition education and food safety education efforts.

Automatic's Row Crop Guidance System Allows Stress-Free Planting

PENDER, Neb. — The design of a new row crop guidance system, the Navigator II, introduced by Automatic Equipment Mfg. Co., allows for stress-free planting and cultivating without implement wear and tear, according to Automatic's president.

"The Navigator II's three-point guidance system is accurate, versatile and reliable," Jay Hesse said. "The heavy-duty construction of the Navigator II, along with its cam follower design, will deliver years of maintenance-free guidance."

Automatic purchased the rights to manufacture and sell the Navigator II from HR Manufacturing of Pender, Neb.

The Navigator II's quick-attach coupler establishes a moving interface between the tractor and the implement, he said. That enables the Navigator II to keep the implement positioned correctly, traveling parallel with the row, while allowing lateral movement of the tractor.

Hesse said an advantage of traveling parallel with the row, in comparison with guidance systems that angle the toolbar, is that the damaging side pressure that is transferred to the stabilizing coulters is eliminated.

The Navigator II is available in two models — heavy duty 3-point narrow and heavy duty 3-point wide. The heavy duty 3-point wide model should be used on tractors with more than 180hp, especially on 12 row or larger ridge-till equipment and with large 4-wheel drive tractors. Two custom-made sizes are also available.

Other design advantages include:

- Eliminates excessive stress

and pull on hydraulic components that are designed into other guidance systems.

- Few moving parts. One cylinder, one electro-hydraulic valve and eight needle-bearing cam followers ride on a track of high carbon steel to provide smooth, friction-free lateral movement,

eliminating wear points.

- Versatile enough to work on pull-type equipment.

- Can be used with or without stabilizing or steering coulters, eliminating the unnecessary expense of additional equipment.

- Works efficiently and effectively on 4-row cultivators, up to 16-row ridge-till cultivators and

4-wheel drive articulated tractors.

- The Navigator II's Auto Slope utilizes a slope-sensing pendulum that automatically compensates for sidehill draft.

For more information, contact Ryder Supply Co., P.O. Box 219, Chambersburg, Pa. 17201-0219, (717) 263-9111.

Grange Testifies For Nutrient Legislation

BLOOMSBURG (Columbia Co.) — The time has come for the passage of a statewide nutrient management law to benefit farmers and consumers alike, according to a representative of the Pennsylvania State Grange.

John Walter, a farmer from Lewisburg and a member of Buffalo Valley Grange, testified before Sen. Edward Helfrick (R) and other members of the Senate Agriculture Committee at a hearing on HB 496, which would establish a statewide nutrient management plan.

"For the last 20 years, the Grange has supported using a nutrient management plan on the farm," Walter said. "Since nutrient management is a growing problem involving commercial fertilizer use and the excess application of animal waste to the land, the Grange continues to support policy involving a statewide nutrient management program."

Walter highlighted several good points of HB 496 and also discussed slight variations which the Grange believes would strengthen the legislation.

A key point of HB 496 is that State Conservation Districts approve and enforce farm nutrient

management plans, according to Walter. The Department of Agriculture should run the nutrient management technicians' certification program, he continued.

"In fact, a farmer himself can become certified and write his own plan," Walter said. "This will defray the costs of hiring an outside technician."

Because of the danger of local ordinance unknowingly thwarting the intent of HB 496, Grange policy states that any nutrient management legislation should include provisions preempting all local governments from establishing rules, regulations or ordinances.

"As a member of the East Buffalo Township Planning Commission, I would hate to see the township be the governing body for nutrient management because we do not have the technical expertise to be effective," Walter said.

Walter emphasized the importance of the section in HB 496, which recognizes that nonagricultural nutrient problems continue to the non-point source problem. The Grange believes that DER should be required to assess these nonagricultural nutrients and identify what regulating initiatives are necessary to correct the problem.

In closing, Walter warned the committee about several points:

- Time frames for implementing nutrient management should not be too stringent. In the onset, it will be difficult to predict the workload of conservation districts or the funding which will be made available.

- A provisions should be added to the legislation stating that the person who farms the land should be responsible for the nutrient management plan, regardless of whether he owns or rents the land.

- A current definition of animal equivalent unit should be used in HB 496.


- Farmers should not be forced into specific times and dates for spreading manure because of weather and other factors.

- The legislation discusses a periodic soil and manure analysis which the Grange believes is too broad and could be interpreted to mean that a test is required before each land application.


"The fact is that nutrient management will save farmers money in the long run," said William Ringer, state master (president) of the Grange. "Years ago a farmer may have applied 2,000 pounds of fertilizer per acre to a crop.

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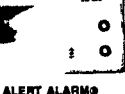
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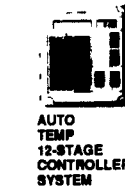
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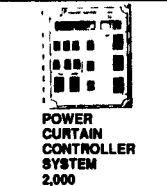
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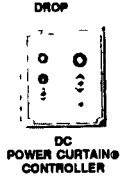
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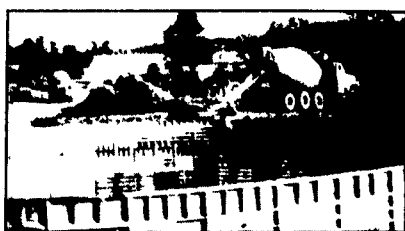
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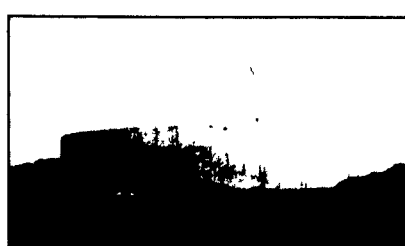
Far Left: 1-Million Gallon Circular Manure Storage Tank



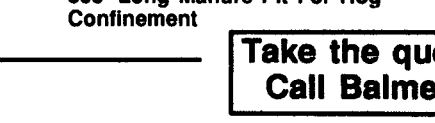
Far Right: 2 Silage Pits In-Barn Manure Receiving Pit




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