



CORN TALK NEWS

PENNSYLVANIA MASTER CORN GROWERS ASSOC., INC.

Council Fills Chemurgists' Shoes

ST. LOUIS, Mo. — A half a century ago, people like Henry Ford, Thomas Edison and agriculture editor Wheeler McMillan attempted to develop industrial markets for renewable resources.

These "Farm Chemurgists" applied new knowledge in science to farm surpluses in order to design a variety of improved products. They urged USDA to adopt the "new uses" research and development program.

However, supporting legislation was blocked by the oil industry's intense lobbying. In addition, their initiation failed because there was no economic incentive for industry to use renewable resources. Petroleum, as an industrial feedstock, was cheaper and domestically plentiful. Environmen-

tal damage was not a consideration at that time.

Unfortunately, the story of industrial uses of renewable resources has been one of America's best-kept secrets. However, the economics of renewable resources and agriculture research has changed.

"The price of a barrel of oil is still relatively low, but environmental damage, lost jobs, economical opportunities, and the threat to national economic security caused by ever higher oil imports, must now be considered," said Jeff Gain, chairman of the New Uses Council and National Corn Growers Association (NCGA) chief executive officer. In an effort to increase corn markets and improve profitability, NCGA became a founding organiza-

China Faces Poor Corn Quality

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moisture from the 1992 drought.

South Africa imported 134 million bushels (mbu) of corn during CY1992, 114.3 mbu from the United States. The threat of another small crop means imports could reach at least 59.1 mbu by May 1, 1994, unless South Africa gets more favorable weather conditions for the rest of the season.

UK Corn Market Remains Strong

U.S. corn gluten feed exports to the United Kingdom (UK) remain strong, but dropped slightly in 1992 due to the uncertainties created by the European Community's classification changes. Overall, U.S. corn gluten feed exports to the UK are valued at \$112 million, making them an important market for the United States.

In addition, U.S. corn exports to the UK increased seven-fold to more than 7.8

million bushels, a result of drought-driven, high-priced French corn.

Philippines Increase Corn Imports

Although corn production in the Philippines for 1993-1994 has been estimated at approximately 193 million bushels (mbu), an increase of 9 percent over the 1992-1993 estimate, imports of corn are still projected at 11.8 mbu for next year in order to bridge the shortfall between production and consumption.

Estimates of 1992-93 corn imports have also been raised to 11.8 mbu, based on evidence of increasing domestic shortages and strong sustained demand.

Market Opportunity For Corn Exists in Slovenia

It is estimated that Slovenia will need 3.2-3.9 million bushels (mbu) of feed grains this year from non-traditional suppliers, which could open opportunities for the United States.

Slovenia usually produces around 13.8 mbu of corn annually with any shortfalls being imported from neighboring Croatia and Serbia. However, the drought in 1992 coupled with war throughout the region is forcing Slovenia to import feed grains from other sources.

Corn Export Numbers Up From Last Year

Corn exports are up 207 million bushels from last year at this time. So far in MY1993, which began Sept. 1, 1.327 billion bushels (bbu) were exported compared to 1.120 bbu in MY1992.

tion of the New Uses Council.

In this testimony before the Subcommittee on Agricultural Research, Conservation, Forestry and General Legislation, Gain said, "Also to be considered is the cost of idling 60 million acres of cropland each year rather than using the land to produce renewable resources for industrial markets.

"Greater coordination of renewable resources development activities is needed among federal departments and agencies," Gain said.

He proposed creation of a national renewable resource development policy to reduce demand for imported non-renewable resources; create jobs and economic opportunity for Americans, particularly rural Americans; secure net environmental benefits for the nation; and expand market opportunities for American agriculture.

He also proposed that a cabinet or subcommittee-level coordinating group be formed to insure that programs work together without duplication.

As a first step, Gain suggested that the Office of Technology Assessment review government agencies to determine how to coordinate activities to accelerate development and commercialization of industrial resource-based products.

The New Uses Council has launched a nationwide effort to build public awareness of the uses and benefits of using renewable agricultural resources for industrial purposes. The council strongly supports the Alternative Agriculture Research and Commercialization (AARC) Center program and urges Congress to substantially increase funding for AARC from its current \$10 million to as much as \$1 billion.

Just as the Farm Chemurgists led the USDA in forecasting the industrialization of agriculture, the New Uses Council and federal programs, such as the AARC Center, now play a primary role in the use of renewable agricultural resources for environmentally-friendly industrial and consumer products.



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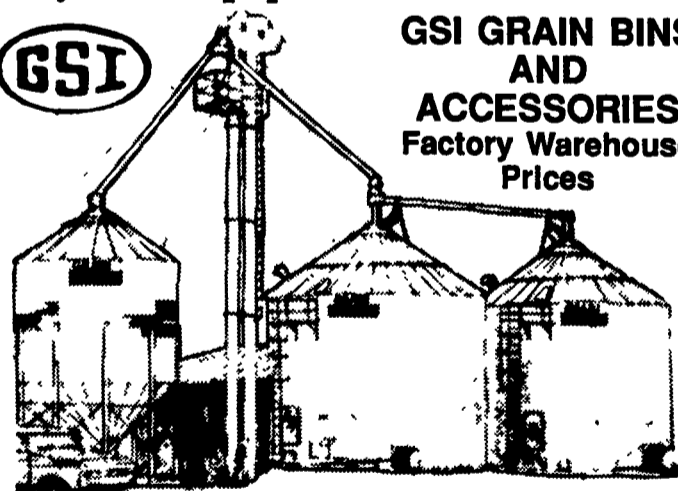
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