

# High-Production Agriculture Can Save The Planet, Insists Analyst

(Continued from Page A1)

stock production. This puts the demands on growing more grain and other crops.

The poultry industry in Indonesia is expanding at double-digit rates, according to Avery.

"In North Africa, it is fed lamb. In Indonesia, it is poultry meat," said Avery. "But everywhere there is apparently an inherent human appetite for the high quality protein found in livestock products."

World population keeps expanding, and the world is about to "triple its demands on farming resources."

"With more people, they're all going to want the high-quality protein from your industries," he said.

In Asia alone, 2.5 billion people are gaining affluence more rapidly than any large group of people ever have in the history of the planet.

If the world's farm trade barriers were removed, according to Avery, America could trade to a tune of about \$100 billion per year, of which \$50-60 billion could come from selling more commodities overseas.

"There's no other country that can expand its agriculture output for free trade like we could," he said.

But severe trade restrictions that other countries have imposed are doing more harm to the environment than ever before. For instance, in Indonesia, they are busily chainsawing tropical forests to make room for farmland to grow soybeans for the broiler enterprises that are increasing exponentially, according to Avery.

Because of the rapidly changing demographics and social structures of many countries (including the end of the Cold War and communism and the rapid development of so-called third world countries), the U.S. has stumbled over its policies regarding free trade. With the passage of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and the steady progress of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), more markets are opening. But the transition period has become difficult.

"The U.S. has the second dumbest farm policy in history," said Avery. "Stalin was number 1, but he's retired."

The U.S. has positioned itself to become a leader regarding high-producing agriculture and could be the key to feeding the billions of people that will exist in the world of tomorrow.

He told the animal scientists that we have the best technology, the best land, and the best infrastructure.

But we have the problems of the environmentalists, many who blame the problems on too many people.

Also, funding is

being cut for research when the need is most crucial for it, said Avery.

Avery spent time doing research to debunk the theory that too many people have led to the demise of wildlife and the environment. He told them that, instead, "low

input, organic farming" has caused the problems.

For educators to get agriculture's point of view across, it may be necessary to let the environmentalists know that wildlife, in the end, could be saved by making most intensive use of the ag land we have,

so land doesn't have to be taken from wildlife to produce food. In fact, he said, high-yield farming is already saving 10 million square miles of wildlife habitat.

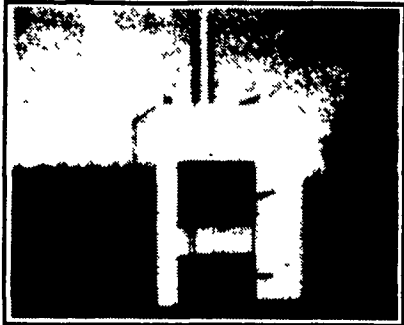
But to achieve the high-production agriculture, pesticides and fertilizers must be used. Also, producers must learn to radically intensify pasture and forage management, curtail overgrazing, and search for ways to get higher rates of gain in both pas-

ture and feedlot with the help of chemistry and biotechnology. Also, producers will need to explore new ways to market meat animals for a world market, including methods to slaughter, cut, ship, and package it.

Whatever plan is decided upon to feed the world, agricultural science must prevail, and that includes an intensive use of public relations to educate the public about the facts.

Avery directs the Center for Global Food Issues at the Hudson Institute, a think-tank headquartered in Indianapolis, Ind. Avery served as senior agricultural analyst for the U.S. Department of State and policy analyst for the USDA.

Editor's Note: More coverage of the meeting will be included next issue.



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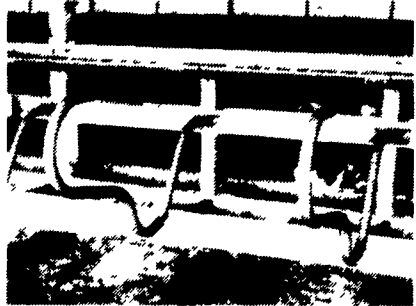
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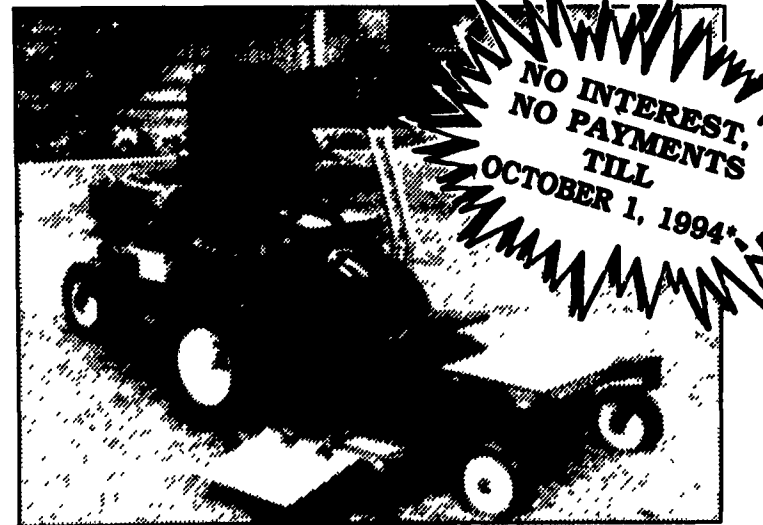


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