

USDA Approves Additional EEP Allocation For Pork Sales To Russia

DES MOINES, Iowa — U.S. Agriculture Secretary Mike Espy announced an additional 20,000 metric ton allocation under the Export Enhancement Program (EEP) of U.S. pork for various republics of the former Soviet Union.

The National Pork Producers Council (NPCC) has been working closely in recent weeks with pork industry supporters in the Congress and the U.S. Department of Agriculture to secure this additional EEP allocation.

"We are extremely pleased that Secretary Espy has announced the approval of the additional 20,000 metric ton allocation under the Export Enhancement Program," said NPCC President Glen Keppy, a pork producer from Davenport, Iowa. "Given the low market hog prices which producers are currently experiencing, this EEP allocation is especially critical to our industry."

The EEP is expected to result in an increase in value of approximately \$1.38 per head in the fourth quarter of 1994. The 20,000 metric

tons is equal to 44 million pounds of pork. It represents more than 220,000 head of live hogs, which is equivalent to every hog going to market in Iowa and southern Minnesota for two full days. It takes little more than 2.9 million bushels of corn to feed the number of hogs represented in the allocation.

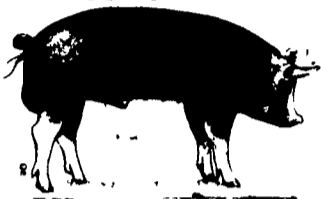
Rep. Tim Johnson (D-SD) and Sen. Bob Kerrey (D-NE), along with approximately 60 other members of Congress, recently wrote to Secretary Espy requesting the additional U.S. pork EEP allocation. NPCC representatives met with Secretary Espy to discuss the need for an additional EEP allocation in response to the recent 22-year low in market hog prices.

"U.S. pork producers appreciate the leadership of the members of Congress who wrote to Secretary

Espy and called the White House to press for this additional pork EEP," Keppy said. "It will help level the playing field for U.S. pork products against foreign competitors who receive export subsidies and fill a need in Russia where there is an extremely high commercial interest in additional EEP sales."

Last year, NPCC worked to secure an initial EEP allocation of 20,000 metric tons of U.S. pork for the former Soviet Union. That allocation was approved in January of 1994 and sales were completed last month.

In 1993, Russia was the fourth largest importer of U.S. pork in volume and value of sales, according to USDA. Russia purchased 16,895 metric tons of U.S. pork, valued at more than \$26 million.



Farm Link Program Holds Regional Workshop For Beginning Farmers

HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — Hoping to reverse the decline in family in Western Pennsylvania and in turn contribute to the revitalization of our rural communities, the Pennsylvania Farm Link program is sponsoring a beginning and retiring farmer workshop at the Armstrong County extension office, in Kittanning, on Dec. 9.

According to Farm Link Coordinator Marion Bowlan, "The number of farms in Pennsylvania has declined by 55 percent since 1960. Half of our farmers have to work off the farm to make ends meet and over 65 percent of our farms gross less than \$40,000 annually." She says these adverse economic conditions have caused people to leave the farm sector, some involuntarily.

USDA economic research indicates that as much as 25 percent of the recent decline in farm numbers is primarily due to reduced farm entry. Just as adverse economic conditions in farming caused people to leave the sector, they also discouraged new people from entering farming.

Bowlan said the future of Pennsylvania agriculture depends on young people being able to enter farming. Because it is a capital-intensive business, many young people do not have the economic resources needed to start — up a farm. At the same time, many older farmers are finding it difficult to

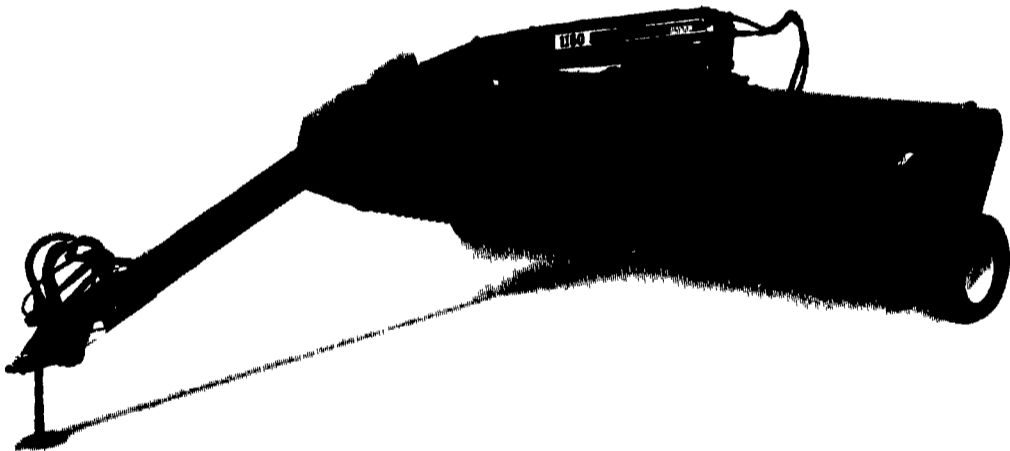
phase out of farming and maintain adequate resources for retirement.

Pennsylvania Farm Link brings together experienced farmers nearing retirement, or other interested landholders, with beginning farmers looking to operate their own farm. Hoping to help beginning farmers realize their dream of obtaining their own farm, Bowlan said the program "needs farmers nearing retirement and landholders who would like to leave a living legacy—a working farm family—on their land."

The regional beginning farmer workshop will address farm transfer issues, estate planning, business planning, farm loan resources, marketing ideas, start-up strategies, and goal setting. Participating agencies and individuals include Pennsylvania Farm Link, Armstrong County Cooperative Extension, Pennwest Farm Credit, Armstrong County Farmers Home Administration, and a panel of local farmers.

Individuals from the western region of Pennsylvania who would like to enter farming or farmers considering retirement are invited to attend this workshop, from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Lunch will be on your own. The Armstrong County Extension Office is located on Route 85, two miles east of Kittanning. Please contact the Farm Link program at (1-800)9PA-FARM to make reservations.

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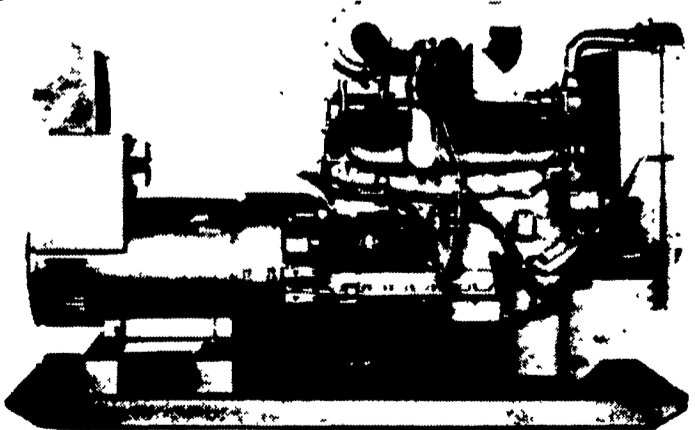
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