

President's Message

Curt Rakestraw President, PMCGA



Finally, usuage is projected to be around nine billion bushels for 1996-1997. With 82 millioon acres planted and 74 million acres harvested at an average yield of 125 bushels per acre, a total crop would be 937 billion bushels. A crop this size would only add 300 million bushels to the carryover and be the second smallest carryover in history!

I know there are a lot of maybes and assumptions written here. However, with a little luck and the help of God, this season will develop to its fullest potential and be one of the best ever.

> Sincerely, **Curt Rakestraw**

I know most of us grain farmers are beginning to look forward to the spring planting season. The warm spring sun is sure going to feel good after the winter we've had.

This year may be a year to look forward to. In fact, it just might be one of the best years for grain farmers in a long time.

Subsoil moisture looks good and so do grain prices.

I know after the last few short corn crops we have had, the price would collapse the following year. This year, several reasons are making the price look very promising.

First of all, with wheat prices as high as they are, there should not be much substituting wheat for corn. Wheat prices have a good chance of being high for this year's crop because the Kansas wheat crop

is looking poor.

Second, the corn and soybean crop in the southern hemisphere is continually being down-graded. This should lead to a continued good export of U.S. crops.

Next, Dr. Louis Thompson, along with a number of other meterologists, are predicting that weather patterns over the Midwest will not be typical for a big Midwestern corn crop.

Corn Growers Take Seat At Table

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Secretary of Agriculture Dan Glickman named an Ohio farm leader active in the National Corn Growers Association (NCGA) to a newly-formed advisory committee on concentration in agriculture.

Brent Porteus, a corn farmer and immediate past president of the Ohio Corn Growers Association (OCGA), accepted the appointment to serve on the 21-member committee. Glickman formed the group to examine the impact of shrinking competition in meat packing and other segments of agricul-

"I want to represent the best interests of corn growers," Porteus said, "I'm going into this assignment with an open mind and without any agenda."

U.S. farmers produce more com than any other crop. Most of it is used to feed livestock for meat production.

The committee plans on examing competition in many segments of agriculture. Porteus mentioned two that will attract his attention.

"The impact of consolidation and mergers in the meat packing industry can be very significant to the viability of livestock producers who also rely on us," Porteus said.

"But I want the committee to look further than just that. I want us to examine the increased consolidation of the transportation sector, especially the rail system and the impact it's having on corn and other grain producers."

Corn growers across the country express concern about railroad car shortages and other problems which slow the movement of grain and depress prices.

Porteus farms 1,000 acres of corn, soybeans, and alfalfa in eastern Ohio with his father and brother. They also run a cow-calf operation. He led the Ohio corn growers in 1995 and now serves on the board of directors and government relations committee of the NCGA.

The Coshocton County, Ohio farmer holds a bachelor's in agricultural economics from Ohio State University.



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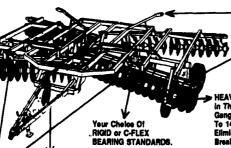
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