

# Price-Sensitive Corn Growers to Pursue Grassroots Trade Campaign

DENVER, Colo. — The National Corn Growers Association (NCGA) met here last week to discuss four serious "can'ts" confronting corn growers preparing for this fall's harvest: can't sell, can't export, can't ship, and can't

store.

Corn Growers nationwide are deeply concerned about near record-low corn prices, drops in world demand for U.S. corn, high carry over stocks, and worrisome forecasts that critical rail transportation will be unable to meet harvest shipping demands.

NCGA's Corn Congress met Aug. 27-28 to determine immediate action growers nationwide should take to deliver a strong and clear message regarding global competitiveness and trade concerns which impact grower profitability to political leaders in Washington.

NCGA will coordinate a comprehensive grassroots campaign to address these critical shortfalls. "NCGA's strategy is to call for important legislative and policy solutions that can remedy current low price concerns," said NCGA President Ryland Utlaut from Grand Pass, Mo.

Trade policy, according to Utlaut, is a top priority that Washington must address immediately if farmers are to survive globally. "Since last fall, corn exports for the 1997 crop have fallen 550 million bushels, which significantly was also when Congress failed to pass fast track authorization for the next



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President to negotiate new, better agreements," noted Utlaut.

Without fast track authority, most nations will not negotiate with the United States for fear they will then have to go back and renegotiate with the entire Congress. "I don't blame them. The fact of the matter is that our bread and butter is linked to international trade," Utlaut said, "If we are locked out of foreign markets, or if international monetary conditions

keep our product uncompetitive, then corn growers are left twisting in the wind."

NCGA's immediate priority is to influence Congress and responsible government agencies to pursue sound and strong trade policy objectives, which include:

- Passage of fast track and International Monetary Fund (IMF) support which are both scheduled for deliberation in late September.

- Meaningful trade sanctions reform, streamlining biotech trade approval policies, World Trade Organization (WTO) negotiations, Foreign Market Development (FMD) and Market Access Program (MAP) funding.

- Equally sound and strong domestic solutions like crop insurance reform, flexible loan policy and Loan Deficiency Payments (LDPS) to provide more timely relief.

- In the area of grain transportation, NCGA is calling for enactment of a Federal Emergency Preparedness Plan, emergency repeal of the Jones Act, passage of the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA), and close monitoring of the nation's railroads to ensure adequate service.

"This ambitious plan takes advantage of our proven grass-roots capability, but we can't do it alone," said Utlaut. "The outcome great of these workshops. Upon completion, it will become a "living" document, that can change and grow as new discoveries and research breakthroughs are made.

The final step will be the actual research and business development efforts that will make renewable technologies and products a reality.

For more information on the Renewable Vision or a copy 2020 or a copy of the "Plant/Crop-Based Renewable Resources 2020" document, contract the NCGA at (314) 275-9915 or visit its web site at <http://www.ncga.com>



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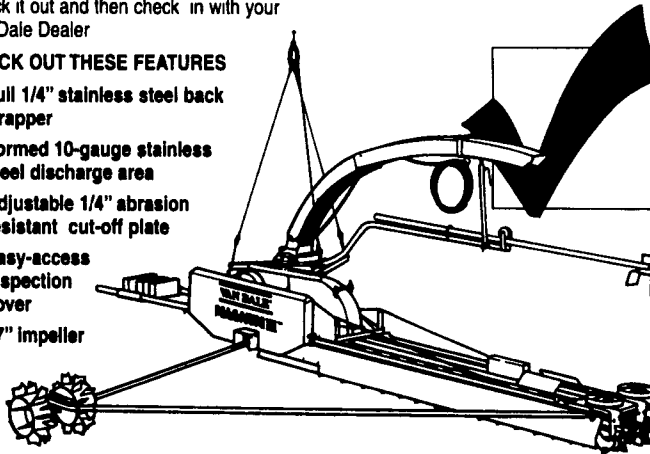
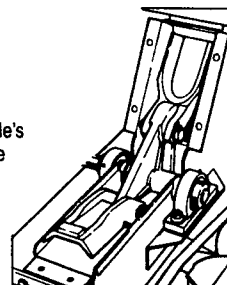
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