

Wheat producers headed for good export year

"With continued strong world demand, U.S. wheat producers appear headed for another good export year in 1976, provided there is no further government interference with access to global markets," William J. Kuhfuss, president of the American Farm Bureau Federation, said here recently. He addressed the annual meeting of the Oregon Farm Bureau Federation.

"Our record crop production and our increasing dependence on export markets pose the question of a possible return of surpluses, but if the U.S. can maintain and improve our access to world markets, we should be able to avoid any serious surplus problem for wheat in the coming year," the national farm leader said.

Government projections indicate U.S. wheat exports will reach a new high of 1.3 to 1.4 billion bushels in 1975-76. This would account for almost 50 per cent of the world's projected 1975-76 trade in wheat.

One of the encouraging factors in the U.S. farm export picture, Kuhfuss said, is lack of support for a bill introduced by James Weaver (D-Ore.) that would have the commodity credit corporation the sole marketing agency for U.S. grain exports.

"At one time there were some 50 co-sponsors of this legislation, which was supported by the AFL-CIO," Kuhfuss said, "but when hearings were held before the House Agriculture Committee, support for putting the government in charge of the grain business withered and died."

"The Weaver bill would have substituted the inefficiencies of government management for the efficiencies of the market system. The restrictions on private trade would have throttled market expansion. For example, all deals involving exports of more than 50,000 bushels of grain would have required the prior approval of the Secretary of Agriculture. The private trade would not have been permitted to negotiate prices or terms unacceptable to the CCC. This would have put the government into the price-fixing business."

"Fortunately, the Weaver bill appears dead for this year, but farmers need to be on the alert for similar proposals to restrict exports if export sales are blamed for food price increases," Kuhfuss said.

"Another favorite trade restriction proposed by politicians who favor government management over the market system calls for international commodity agreements," Kuhfuss said.

"Here again we have good news in the findings of the International Trade Commission's report to the Senate Finance Committee that labeled such agreements, 'wasteful and inefficient.'"

Secretary of State Henry Kissinger said Sept. 1, that the Ford Administration was interested in new international commodity agreement initiatives in tin, sugar, coffee and cocoa. The United States, he indicated, would join the tin pact, if Congress approved.

Rep. Thomas Rees (D-California), who heads the House Subcommittee on Trade and Related matters, wants the United States to join the tin agreement and to "consider" stabilization schemes for wheat and coarse grains.

"Farm bureau is strongly opposed to international commodity agreements because such agreements are cartels that inhibit market expansion and limit exports to a specific amount or a stipulated share based on some arbitrary and politically determined base rather than on the

economic ability to compete," Kuhfuss said.

The International Trade Commission supports this view, pointing out that the restrictive provisions of commodity agreements such as quotas and contracts, cause various degrees of waste and inefficiency.

"Export quotas, a basic feature of most commodity pacts, promote resource misallocation, because quota shares often reward inefficient producers and penalize efficient ones, the ITC reported," Kuhfuss said.

The farm leader pointed out that a healthy farm export market benefits consumers as well as farmers because the expanded outlets permit farmers to make maximum use of land and machinery, thus promoting efficiency with accompanying lower unit costs.

The tieup of the golf ports this summer by the AFL-CIO and maritime unions ban on grain shipments to the Soviet Union, points up the need for federal legislation to settle strikes in the transportation industry, Kuhfuss said.

"There is a need to reintroduce legislation similar to that sponsored by Sen. Robert Packwood, (R) of Oregon in 1972," Kuhfuss said.

The Packwood bill would have provided procedures for settling transportation strikes after the end of a 80-day "cooling off" period provided by the Taft-Hartley Act.

"This legislation seemed destined for affirmative action in the Senate in the late summer of 1972, but the Nixon administration suddenly decided not to press for action before the November election," Kuhfuss said.

Public sentiment was behind the Packwood bill following the blockade of the U.S. ports in 1971 and 1972 by strikes called by the International Longshoremen's Association.

"If the U.S. export market is to be maintained or expanded, foreign purchasers must have the assurance that the U.S. will be able to deliver our goods anywhere and on schedule, otherwise they will fill their needs elsewhere," Kuhfuss said.



Andrew King, Canterbury, New Zealand, is spending a few months as a guest of Clint Krebs, lone. King was the captain of the rugby team and Krebs managed to talk King into coming to the United States for a few months. King plans to return to New Zealand in February to attend college, where he is majoring in Agricultural Economics.

Books presented to library

Mr. and Mrs. Walter Wright, McKinney Creek donated five old, rare books to the public library last week. These books are from the Walter Wright family; the pioneer Albert Wright was his

grandfather.

The books have been shelved with gifts from the Gilliam and the Cohen families and others. Some of these books are over 100 years old.

The books donated by the Wrights are: an early story "On the Way, or, Places Passed by the Pilgrims" by A.L.O.E. (This author evidently didn't feel like giving his or her name.) Another includes 500 thrilling incidents, humorous stories, personal experiences and adventures, touching home scenes and tales of tender pathos drawn from the bright and shady sides of life, its title is "Platform Echoes, or, Living Truths for Head and Heart." The first of these has no publishing date; the second, which is superbly illustrated with 225 engravings was printed in 1867.

They are on display and may be perused in the library, but cannot be taken from the institution.



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