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Farm Broadcasters Letter

Letter No. 2176

August 16, 1984

**TOTAL WORLD
GRAIN OUTPUT**

The projected 1984/85 total world grain output was lowered this month by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, but the expected output of nearly 1.6 million tons would still be a record and almost 3 pct. above the previous high. Global grain output is projected 12 million tons lower this month with two-thirds of the change in coarse grains, the rest in wheat, and no change in rice. The major change is a 10-million ton decrease in the Soviet grain projection due to unfavorable weather which stressed spring crops, especially wheat and barley.

**WORLD TRADE -
COARSE GRAINS**

An improving outlook for coarse grain demand points to a rebound in world trade after two seasons of depressed levels, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. World trade is now forecast at just over 95½ million tons, up about 3 million tons from last month. An increase of 4 million tons in the USSR's forecast imports is the major change in the 1984/85 picture. On the export side, the U.S. and West Europe are expected to be the primary beneficiaries of stronger USSR import demand since Canadian and Australian export prospects have diminished.

**USSR ANTICIPATED
GRAIN IMPORTS**

In the USSR, anticipated grain imports for 1984/85 are now forecast at a near-record 43 million tons. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, this is well above the nearly 33-million tons imported in the past two seasons. Large feed requirements from a strong livestock sector and another reduced crop are forcing the Soviets to turn increasingly to imports. Soviet grain purchases for July-June 1984/85 delivery from all origins are already approaching 20 million tons, marking the heaviest ever early season buying. U.S. sales for shipment after July 1, 1984 already exceed 9 million tons.

**1985 FEED
GRAIN PROGRAM**

Sec'y of Agriculture John R. Block will announce details of the 1985 feed grain program soon after the September 12 crop production estimates are released by the USDA. Block said, "This will be the earliest in the history of farm programs that farmers learn the details of a USDA acreage reduction program. This early announcement will give farmers the additional time they need to make intelligent decisions in marketing their 1984 crop and planning production for 1985."

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Radio-Television Division

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Washington D.C. 20250

U.S. CROP
PRODUCTION

The following are highlights of the Aug. 10 crop production report of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

All wheat production is forecast at 2½ billion bushels, 4 pct. more than 1983. Winter wheat is placed at just over 2 billion bushels, up 3 pct. from 1983. Other spring wheat production is forecast at 386 million bushels, up 8 pct. Durum wheat is forecast at 97 million bushels, up 33 pct. from the 1983 crops.

Food grain production (wheat, rice, rye) is expected to total nearly 76 million metric tons in 1984, up 7 pct. from a year ago.

Corn for grain is forecast at over 7½ billion bushels, 84 pct. above last year's drought-stricken crop.

Feed grain (corn, sorghum, oats and barley) is expected to total 235 million metric tons, up 73 pct. from a year earlier.

Soybean production is forecast at 2 billion bushels, 30 pct. larger than 1983 but 7 pct. smaller than 1982. (For more information, call 202/447-2127.)

OCT-JUNE
TRADE

U.S. agricultural exports were \$29.8 billion during Oct.-June of fiscal 1984, 12 pct. higher than the same period in fiscal 1983. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the increase was due to higher prices since export volume was 2 pct. below the 1983 level. Export volume through June was nearly 110 million tons which compares to 112.6 million tons for 1983. U.S. agricultural imports through June were 13 pct. above 1983 and now stand at \$14 billion. The resulting trade balance for agricultural products was \$15.9 billion for the first nine months of the year.

LISTENING
IN DAVENPORT

The sixth in a series of U.S. Department of Agriculture "listening sessions" to discuss future food and agriculture policy will be Sept. 6 in Davenport, Iowa. The session will begin at 11 a.m. at the Davenport Holiday Inn. Persons wishing to participate should call or write before Aug. 30 to: John Kermicle, Room 4076-South Bldg., USDA, Washington, D.C. 20250. Phone: 202/447-3287.

U.S. SOYBEAN
EXPORT PROSPECTS
CUT

Soybean export prospects for Argentina were raised ½ million tons this month, while expected European Community imports were cut. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the net effect is a reduction in prospective 1984/85 U.S. soybean exports of 700 thousand tons (25 million bushels).

U.S. SOYBEAN
ENDING STOCKS

Expected 1984/85 U.S. soybean carryin stocks were lowered almost 300 thousand tons because of an upward revision in the 1983/84 crush estimate. While this lower carryin was offset by an almost equal gain in U.S. 1984/85 production prospects, the lower export forecast resulted in a 700 thousand ton rise in carryout stocks, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

LOWER SOYBEAN
PRICES

The U.S. season average producer prices for soybeans were reduced slightly this month to a forecast \$205-\$280 a metric ton (\$5.60 - \$7.20 a bushel), according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Weaker soybean meal price prospects, forecast at \$145 - \$170 a short ton, account for the lower soybean prices. Soybean oil prices are unchanged from last month, as a tight supply-use balance for vegetable oils is expected to support a firm tone, particularly in the first half of the marketing year.

FROM OUR TELEVISION
SERVICE

"Soviet Agriculture - Why It Doesn't Work - I"...USDA economist Jim Cole talks about some of the shortcomings of the Soviet food production system, particularly natural factors such as shorter growing seasons, and harsh weather conditions. Don Elder interviews. (186)

"Soviet Agriculture - Why It Doesn't Work - II"...USDA economist Jim Cole continues his discussion on why Soviet agriculture doesn't work - focusing on some of the administrative and bureaucratic factors that work against this country. Don Elder interviews. (187)

"South Asia Outlook"...U.S. farm exports to South Asia are expected to decline from last year's high of \$1.1 billion to about \$930 million this year. USDA economist Rip Landes focuses on factors contributing to this situation. Victor Powell interviews. (188)

"Soybean Oil Crop Situation"...U.S. soybean production is expected to exceed two billion bushels in 1984. USDA economist Roger Hoskin talks about factors contributing to this current outlook. Victor Powell interviews. (189)

"Farm Safety"...Safe operation of farm equipment is an important key to eliminating farm accidents. Safety extension specialist Rollin Schneider of Lincoln, Nebraska, talks about the importance of farm safety. DeBoria Janifer interviews. (190)

WORLD WHEAT
TRADE

World wheat trade in 1984/85 is currently projected by the U.S. Department of Agriculture to reach an all-time high of nearly 103 million metric tons. Much of the year's growth is due to record import requirements in the USSR which more than offset expected reduced import demand for a number of other countries. Feed wheat imports are expected to continue to be an important factor in world trade, although maybe not as significant as a year ago. The estimate of world wheat production at 492 million tons is down from a month ago, but still slightly above the 1983/84 record.

MAJOR WHEAT
EXPORTERS

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, there is a prospect for another reduced wheat crop in the USSR and another increase in the estimate of Soviet imports to a record 24 million tons. Reports of a larger than expected European Community wheat crop is likely to reduce import requirements as to the lowest level in years. Crop outturn and procurements in India continue exceptionally well, likely eliminating the need for any additional imports in 1984/85. Drought continues to plague the wheat crop in the Middle East and North Africa with a number of countries expected to turn increasingly to the import market.

WHEAT EXPORT
PROSPECTS

The U.S. wheat export forecast by the U.S. Department of Agriculture was increased by about 2 million tons, to 40.1 million. This is attributed to some growth in the world wheat import demand, and to some reduction in the exportable wheat supplies in the major competitors. The export outlook for U.S. hard wheats has improved sharply over the past month.

WHEAT EXPORTERS...
ARGENTINA,
AUSTRALIA,
CANADA

Total Argentine, Australian and Canadian wheat exports for 1984/85 are forecast by the U.S. Department of Agriculture at about 40 million tons, more than two million below last month's forecast. Total wheat output for these countries is now expected to reach about 47 million tons, compared to the 52 million ton July forecast.

OFF MIKE

Lisa Vermillion is the new farm director at KMZU-AM/FM in Carrollton, MO. She replaces Joy Brownfield who left about a year ago to get married. Lisa had been working at Brownfield Network in Centertown ... Wey Simpson is now working at KXYL in Spokane, WA. He had been at KHQ, same city. Wey says he's working the farm radio side right now but will be getting into television, too, later. He joins Bob Hoff in what now has become a 2-person farm department ... There's something about opening your mail and finding a nearly life-size familiar face staring back at you from the cover of a newspaper. That's what happened to us this week, and the familiar face was that of Ray Wilkinson (WRAL-TV/Tobacco Net, Raleigh, NC). Ray was the subject of a Carolina Farmer profile in the paper's August issue. The article points out, "After 37 years, Ray Wilkinson is certainly familiar to North Carolinians." And Ray is quoted saying, "A lot of times I've been on the kitchen table radio while the whole family grows up." He still looks mighty young to use ... Nice note from Davonna Oskarson (The Martin Agency, Richmond, VA). Among other things, she commented on her chicken flying experiences. She said 10 years ago, while at WRFD, she flew a chicken donated by a listener. "The hen flew over the fence and into the woods, never to be seen again. But I kept the listener!" ... Kinda by way of the south forty we learned that the Chicago Tribune carried an AP story about Hal Hanna (KXEL, Waterloo, IA). The article points out that Hal is a believer in radio reporting and is good at it, and the article also says, "Hanna has developed a reputation for adding zaniness to events, such as interviewing a marshmallow farmer on April Fools' Day." It goes on to say you might see him atop a grain elevator, wearing a pig mask while taking bows at a banquet, flipping pancakes in a tuxedo or standing at an intersection to help collect funds for a worthy cause.

FROM OUR RADIO
SERVICE

AGRICULTURE USA #1420...(Weekly 13½ min documentary) The outbreak of Avian Flu that occurred in Pennsylvania and Virginia this past winter is still affecting the poultry industry...however, some positive things have come out of this. Brenda Curtis reports on the positives and negatives of the Avian Flu outbreak.

AGRITAPE/FARM PROGRAM REPORT #1408...(Weekly reel of news features) USDA news highlights; Update on farmers acreage reports; The ups and downs of poultry; Pesticide safety program; Super alimentation.

CONSUMER TIME # 902...(Weekly reel of five 2½-3 min features) New Child Nutrition Center; Magazine advertising; In a fog; Big big cucumbers!; Part-time parents.

USDA RADIO NEWS SERVICE...Mon, Aug. 27, Cotton and wool report; Tues, Aug. 28, World ag. report; Fri, Aug. 31, Agricultural prices report; Tues, Sept. 4, Ag. outlook report and weekly crop and weather report. Dial the USDA National News lines 202/488-8358 or 8359. All material changed at 5 P.M. EDT each working day.


JAMES L. JOHNSON
Chief, Radio-Television