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Selected Speeches and News Releases

July 23 - July 29, 1992

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News Releases

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Roger Runningen (202) 720-4623

Marcie Gerrietts (309) 685-4011

NEW PESTICIDE USE PROMISES FARMER, ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

WASHINGTON, July 23—Secretary of Agriculture Edward Madigan today announced the U.S. Department of Agriculture is licensing production of the first starch-coated pesticides designed to stick to the leaves of plants — a new technology that promises to reduce the risk of contamination of groundwater and trim pest-control costs.

“The process puts the pesticide where the bugs will eat it and keeps it there longer,” Madigan said. “This increased pest-killing efficiency reduces the amount of chemical and the number of applications needed, and so reduces the cost of pest control for individual producers.

“Just as important, starch-coated pesticides greatly reduce chemical runoff and the risk of contaminating groundwater.”

Licensing agreements for the new technology were signed here today by USDA’s Agricultural Research Service and the Biotechnology Research and Development Corporation, an Illinois-based consortium of biotechnology companies.

The technology was invented by Dr. Baruch S. Shasha and Dr. Michael R. McGuire, both with the ARS National Center for Agricultural Utilization Research in Peoria, Ill., and is being patented by USDA.

The process allows pesticides to be combined with or encapsulated by starch that will stick to plant leaves if applied when wet, and that will not wash off once it has dried.

Madigan said the technology also will expand the market for corn, from which the encapsulating starch is derived.

Studies at the Center for Agricultural Utilization Research have focused on starch encapsulation of both natural insect pathogens and chemicals, Shasha and McGuire said. Natural pathogens studied include *Bacillus thuringiensis*, or Bt, effective against European corn borers, and grasshopper entomopoxvirus, a virus that kills grasshoppers. Chemical insecticides that can be encapsulated include carbaryl and malathion.

The encapsulation process has no adverse effects on chemical or biological pesticides. Studies show that encapsulated Bt provides equal or better insecticide control than biological and chemical products currently on the market.

The sticky substance is made with a combination of pre-cooked starch or flour and very small amounts of water. Water is dispersed throughout the starch by means of dispersing agents. The pesticide may be introduced with the water or the starch. As the combination mixes, small granules are formed that entrap the pesticide.

Originally, Shasha and McGuire worked with two dispersants, but subsequent work conducted under a cooperative research and development agreement with BRDC led to the discovery of several other effective additives.

One of the two agreements signed today licenses production formulas using the original two dispersants discovered by Shasha and McGuire. This license is non-exclusive, and other companies can be licensed to use these dispersants in encapsulating formulations. The second agreement licenses production formulations using the array of other dispersants discovered under the cooperative research and development agreement. This license is exclusive to BRDC.

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Janise Zygmunt (202) 720-7954

Leslie Parker (202) 720-4026

USDA ANNOUNCES PREVAILING WORLD MARKET PRICE AND USER MARKETING CERTIFICATE PAYMENT RATES FOR UPLAND COTTON

Washington, July 23—Keith Bjerke, executive vice president of USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation, today announced the prevailing world market price, adjusted to U.S. quality and location (adjusted world price), for Strict Low Middling (SLM) 1-1/16 inch (micronaire 3.5-3.6 and 4.3-4.9, strength 24-25 grams per tex) upland cotton (base quality), the coarse count adjustment and the user marketing certificate payment rates in effect from 12:01 a.m. Friday, July 24, through midnight Thursday, July 30.

The Agricultural Act of 1949, as amended, provides that the AWP may be further adjusted if: (a) the AWP is less than 115 percent of the current crop year loan rate for base quality upland cotton, and (b) the Friday through Thursday average price quotation for the lowest-priced U.S. growth as quoted for Middling (M) 1-3/32 inch cotton, C.I.F. northern Europe (USNE price)

exceeds the NE price. The maximum allowable adjustment is the difference between the USNE price and the NE price.

Based on data for the week ending July 23, a further adjustment to this week's calculated AWP may be made in accordance with this provision. The calculated AWP is 95 percent of the 1991 upland cotton base quality loan rate, and the USNE price exceeds the NE price by 4.77 cents per pound.

Following are the relevant calculations:

I. Calculated AWP	48.13 cents per pound
1991 Base Loan Rate	50.77 cents per pound
AWP as a Percent of Loan Rate	95
II. USNE Price	67.20 cents per pound
NE Price	<u>-62.43</u> cents per pound
Maximum Adjustment Allowed	4.77 cents per pound

Based on a consideration of the U.S. share of world exports, the current level of cotton export sales and cotton export shipments, and other relevant data, no further adjustment to this week's calculated AWP will be made.

Based on data for the week ending July 23, the AWP for base quality upland cotton and the coarse count adjustment are determined as follows:

Adjusted World Price

NE Price	62.43
Adjustments:	
Average U.S. spot market location	12.05
SLM 1-1/16 inch cotton	1.90
Average U.S. location	0.35
Sum of Adjustments	<u>-14.30</u>
Calculated AWP	48.13
Further AWP adjustment	<u>-0</u>
ADJUSTED WORLD PRICE	48.13 cents/lb.

Coarse Count Adjustment

NE Price	62.43
NE Coarse Count Price	<u>-57.13</u>
	5.30
Adjustment to SLM 1-1/32 inch cotton	<u>-4.20</u>
COARSE COUNT ADJUSTMENT	1.10 cents/lb.

Because this week's AWP is below both the 1990 and 1991 base quality loan rates of 50.27 and 50.77 cents per pound, respectively, the loan repayment rate during this period is equal to the AWP, adjusted for the specific quality and location plus applicable interest and storage charges on the 1990 crop. The AWP will continue to be used to determine the value of upland cotton that is obtained in exchange for commodity certificates.

Based on data for the week ending July 23, the USNE current price exceeded the NE current price by more than 1.25 cents per pound and the AWP did not exceed 130 percent of the current crop year base quality loan rate for four consecutive weeks. Therefore, the user marketing certificate payment rate, based on current shipment prices, is 5.14 cents per pound. The user marketing certificate payment rate, based on current shipment prices, is applicable during the Friday through Thursday period for bales opened by domestic users and for cotton contracts entered into by exporters for delivery prior to September 30, 1992. Relevant data used in determining the user marketing certificate payment rate, based on current shipment prices, are summarized below:

Week	For the Friday through Thursday Period Ending	USNE Current Price cents per pound	NE Current Price	USNE Minus NE	Current Certificate Payment Rate 1/
1	July 2, 1992	71.45	65.77	5.68	4.43
2	July 9, 1992	71.15	65.38	5.77	4.52
3	July 16, 1992	72.00	65.47	6.53	5.28
4	July 23, 1992	71.60	65.21	6.39	5.14

1/ USNE current price minus NE current price minus 1.25 cents.

Based on data for the week ending July 23, the USNE forward price exceeded the NE forward price by more than 1.25 cents per pound and the AWP did not exceed 130 percent of the current crop year base quality loan rate for four consecutive weeks. As a result, the user marketing certificate payment rate, based on forward shipment prices, is 3.52 cents per pound. The user marketing certificate payment rate, based on forward shipment prices, will be applicable during the Friday through Thursday period for cotton contracted by exporters for delivery after September 30, 1992. Relevant data used in determining the user marketing certificate payment rate, based on forward shipment prices, are summarized below:

Week	For the Friday through Thursday Period Ending	USNE Forward Price	NE Forward Price	USNE Minus NE	Certificate Payment Rate 1/
		cents per pound			
1	July 2, 1992	67.70	63.42	4.28	3.03
2	July 9, 1992	67.00	62.93	4.07	2.82
3	July 16, 1992	67.75	62.88	4.87	3.62
4	July 23, 1992	67.20	62.43	4.77	3.52

1/ USNE forward price minus NE forward price minus 1.25 cents.

The next announcement of the AWP, coarse count adjustment and user marketing certificate payment rates will be made on Thursday, July 30.

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Stella Hughes (202) 720-7117
Phil Villa-Lobos (202) 720-4026

USDA SPONSORS SECOND ADP SMALL BUSINESS SUBCONTRACTING FAIR

WASHINGTON, July 24— The U.S. Department of Agriculture today announced a subcontracting fair to help small, small disadvantaged, and women-owned businesses obtain contracts with USDA.

USDA's Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization will host the fair on Friday, Aug. 7, at the Hyatt Regency Hotel on Capitol Hill, 400 New Jersey Ave., N.W. Washington, D.C., from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Pre-registration is required.

Jo Ann Jenkins, director of USDA's Office of Advocacy and Enterprise, said, "USDA is aggressively moving to meet its small, small disadvantaged and women-owned business subcontracting goals."

The aim of the fair is to assist the small business community to be more successful in acquiring subcontracts and automated data processing prime contracts. Several of USDA's prime contractors and procurement specialists will be on hand to serve as panelists and to provide one-on-one consultations.

Representatives from over 250 small businesses are expected to attend. For more information, contact OSDBU at (202) 720-7117.

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Rebecca Broeking (202) 720-3448

Leslie Parker (202) 720-4026

EGYPT ELIGIBLE FOR MORE FROZEN POULTRY UNDER EXPORT ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM

WASHINGTON, July 24—Acting Under Secretary of Agriculture R. Randall Green today announced an opportunity for sales of an additional 25,000 metric tons of U.S. frozen poultry to Egypt under the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Export Enhancement Program.

Sales of frozen poultry will be made to buyers in Egypt through normal commercial channels at competitive world prices. The export sales will be facilitated through the payment of bonuses by USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation. The subsidy will enable U.S. exporters to compete at commercial prices in the Egyptian market.

This allocation will be valid until Dec. 31, 1993. Details of the program, including an invitation for offers from exporters, will be issued in the near future.

For more information call Randy Baxter, (202) 720-5540, or Larry McElvain, (202) 720-6211

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Kendra Pratt (301) 436-6573

Phil Villa-Lobos (202) 720-4026

USDA WORKING WITH STATES AND INDUSTRY TO PREVENT SPREAD OF HORSE ILLNESS

WASHINGTON, July 24—The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service is investigating the cause of an outbreak of an unidentified horse illness at race tracks in Massachusetts and New Hampshire.

To quickly halt the spread of the disease, quarantines have been set up at the race tracks in the affected states. Other states not affected by the illness, including Delaware, Maryland, New York, New Jersey, Kentucky, Pennsylvania and Florida, have imposed temporary restrictions on the importation of horses from several northeastern states.

"APHIS is coordinating efforts with state officials and the horse industry to prevent further spread of the illness," said Billy G. Johnson, deputy administrator for APHIS' veterinary services program. "Initial results from tests

conducted at APHIS laboratories are inconclusive. However, samples from the sick horses have tested negative for foreign animal diseases of equine. Tests for domestic illnesses are continuing.”

Johnson said it is essential that horse owners be on the lookout for any signs of viral infection, including swollen limbs, muscle soreness and high fever. Preventative measures include thoroughly cleaning equipment, tack, sponges and handling areas as well as preventing exposure to horses with unknown origins.

Sixty-three cases of the illness have been reported at Rockingham Park Race Track in Salem, N.H. The track is under state quarantine.

One hundred and twenty-two horses out of 550 have exhibited similar symptoms at Suffolk Downs Race Track in E. Boston, Mass., while 18 horses at Foxboro Race Track in Foxboro, Mass., have become ill. Both tracks are under state quarantine.

APHIS continues to analyze specimens from the sick horses at its Foreign Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory in Plum Island, N.Y., and its National Veterinary Services Laboratory in Ames, Iowa.

Any horse owners who suspect their animals may be infected with this illness should immediately contact their veterinarian or federal, state or local animal health officials.

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Alicia L. Ford (202) 720-8998
Edwin Moffett (202) 720-4026

USDA POSTPONES MUSHROOM RESEARCH AND PROMOTION PROGRAM REFERENDUM

WASHINGTON, July 27—The U.S. Department of Agriculture announced today it is postponing the referendum on mushroom research and promotion scheduled July 22-Aug. 12, among mushroom producers and importers.

“The referendum will determine whether the proposed national mushroom promotion, research and consumer information program for fresh mushrooms will go into effect,” said Daniel D. Haley, administrator of USDA’s Agricultural Marketing Service.

As soon as USDA establishes a new timetable, the new dates for the referendum will be announced and referendum ballots will be sent to all eligible producers and importers.

For additional information, contact Richard Schultz, Research and Promotion Branch, Fruit and Vegetable Division, AMS, USDA, Room 2533-S, P.O. Box 96456, Washington, D.C. 20090-6456; telephone (202) 720-5976.

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Gene Rosera (202) 720-6734
Charles Hobbs (202) 720-4026

USDA ANNOUNCES PREVAILING WORLD MARKET RICE PRICES

WASHINGTON, July 28—Acting Under Secretary of Agriculture Randall Green today announced the prevailing world market prices of milled rice, loan rate basis, as follows:

- long grain whole kernels, 9.53 cents per pound;
- medium grain whole kernels, 8.64 cents per pound;
- short grain whole kernels, 8.50 cents per pound;
- broken kernels, 4.76 cents per pound.

Based upon these prevailing world market prices for milled rice, rough rice world prices are estimated to be:

- long grain, \$5.87 per hundredweight;
- medium grain, \$5.45 per hundredweight;
- short grain, \$5.06 per hundredweight.

The prices announced are effective today at 12:00:01 A.M. EDT until 12:00:00 a.m. EDT Tuesday, Aug. 4. The next scheduled price announcement will be made Aug. 4 at 7 a.m. EDT. The price announced at that time will be effective from 12:00:01 a.m. EDT Tuesday, Aug. 4.

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USDA SELLS BUTTER TO RUSSIA

WASHINGTON, July 27—A sale of 34,600 metric tons of U.S. salted butter to Russia was announced today by Christopher Goldthwait, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's acting general sales manager with the Foreign Agricultural Service.

The sale was made by USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation to the Association for Foreign Economic Affairs (PRODINTORG).

This butter was sold for \$1,567.50 per metric ton, freight inclusive to Baltic Sea ports. Deliveries are scheduled for August through November.

Goldthwait also said CCC extended three-year deferred payment terms at commercial rates of interest. After allowance for the contractual loading tolerances, this sale reduces the amounts available to Russia under the GSM-102 Credit Guarantee program by \$55.35 million—\$54.25 million unallocated and \$1.1 million available to cover the additional value of commodities sold on either a C&F or C.I.F. basis.

The sale announced today brings the total amount of U.S. dairy products sold by CCC for export during fiscal year 1992 to 81,650 metric tons.

For more information telephone Donald W. Street, or Mark Rowse, (202) 720-5540.

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Julie Corliss (510) 559-6069
Leslie Parker (202) 720-4026

LAWNS OF THE FUTURE WILL NEED LESS WATERING, MOWING

WASHINGTON, July 28—Lawn grasses that thrive on very little water and stay green in summer heat have been bred by U.S. Department of Agriculture scientists.

"They need only about a third of the water required by most lawns," said Kay H. Asay, a plant geneticist of USDA's Agricultural Research Service. "And because they grow slower, the lawns won't need to be mowed as often."

He said the new grasses are strains of crested wheatgrass, *Agropyron cristatum*, originally from Iran and Turkey. Seeds and sods from the grasses

could be ready for commercial use in the next five years, said Asay.

Lawns of crested wheatgrass would likely grow best in the northern half of the country from California to Pennsylvania, using Interstate 70 as the dividing line, he said. “These grasses would also be excellent for golf course fairways and soil stabilization along roadways in those states,” he said.

Asay’s research usually focuses on forage grasses for stabilizing soils and as food for livestock grazing Western range land. He is based at the ARS Forage and Range Research Laboratory in Logan, Utah. But while evaluating grasses native to other countries, he and colleagues found several crested wheatgrasses that looked promising for lawns and turfs.

He said the foreign crested wheatgrasses have “extensive underground stems, known as rhizomes, so they form a sod like a lawn.” In contrast, crested wheatgrasses common in North America grow in small, distinct bunches.

Over the last 10 years, the researchers bred and grew the grasses in the greenhouse and field. They selected several crested wheatgrasses that stayed green and had fine to medium-size blades that aren’t sharp or prickly like some coarser grasses. Asay and colleagues are continuing to evaluate and refine the new grasses.

He said the grasses fend off common lawn pests, like sod webworms and billbugs that nibble grass roots. That means gardeners could likely use fewer chemicals to keep their lawns healthy.

Crested wheatgrass grows on rangelands throughout temperate regions of the world. An important food source for grazing cattle, sheep, deer and elk, it also provides ground cover and habitat for nesting birds.

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Leslie Parker (202) 720-4026

USDA WITHDRAWS PROPOSAL TO REVISE KIWIFRUIT STANDARDS

WASHINGTON, July 28—The U.S. Department of Agriculture today announced it will withdraw a proposal to revise U.S. standards for grades of kiwifruit.

Daniel D. Haley, administrator of USDA’s Agricultural Marketing Service, said USDA is withdrawing the proposal because the record does not support the proposed changes.

USDA sought comments on the proposal from Dec. 18, 1991, to Feb. 18,

1992. If implemented, the revisions would have separated alligator skin from other types of discoloration; not allowed any black sooty mold in the U.S. Fancy grade; would have tightened the allowances for lower grades; and eliminated soluble solids tests for maturity.

“USDA is ready to work with the kiwifruit industry at any time to consider new or modified proposals which might receive more general acceptance,” Haley said.

AMS establishes grade standards and provides official grading for a wide variety of agricultural products. The use of USDA grading services is voluntary, i.e., industry requested and paid for by the user.

A withdrawal notice of the proposed rule will be published in the July 29 Federal Register. Inquiries should be addressed to Thomas G. Gambill, Fresh Products Branch, Fruit and Vegetable Division, AMS, USDA, Room 2056-S, P.O. Box 96456, Washington D.C. 20090-6456; tel. (202) 720-5024.

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MEDIA ADVISORY: AQUACULTURE RESEARCH DIRECTORY NOW AVAILABLE

WASHINGTON, July 28—A directory of 139 U.S. and Puerto Rican institutions involved in aquaculture research is now available from the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Aquaculture Information Center at the National Agricultural Library.

The “Directory of Research Institutions in Aquaculture” lists addresses of the institutions and the type of research they are conducting. It was created for aquaculture scientists and researchers, students, government agencies and others interested in current areas of research in aquaculture in the United States. USDA compiled the directory from information provided by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Sea Grant College Program, and the American Fisheries Society.

Copies of the directory are available by sending a request with a self-addressed mailing label to: Aquaculture Information Center, National Agricultural Library, 10301 Baltimore Blvd., Beltsville, Md. 20705-2351.

Contact: Brian Norris, (301) 472-2966.

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USDA ANNOUNCES PAYMENT PROPOSAL FOR SCRAPIE-INFECTED SHEEP FLOCKS

WASHINGTON, July 29—The U.S. Department of Agriculture today proposed an indemnity payment plan for sheep and goat flocks infected with or exposed to scrapie.

The indemnity proposal was developed through consensus agreement among members of the Scrapie Negotiated Rulemaking Advisory Committee, a cooperative effort of producers, industry representatives, researchers, state veterinarians and USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. The committee also developed a voluntary flock certification program for scrapie.

APHIS would pay indemnities of \$150 per animal in registered flocks, and \$50 per animal in nonregistered flocks. Animals used for diagnostic testing to identify infected or exposed flocks also would be eligible for indemnity payments.

To assist with the identification of other potentially infected flocks, applicants for indemnities would be required to provide APHIS, within 30 days of the request, records indicating when animals had moved into and out of their flocks. Owners who maintain flocks after receiving indemnity payments would have to participate in a flock certification program.

To prevent flock owners from acquiring scrapie-affected animals solely for the purpose of obtaining indemnity, the proposed rule prohibits payments for animals obtained within six months of the date of application (excluding animals born into the flock during that period). Similarly, producers who have owned flocks for less than a year prior to the date of application would be unable to obtain indemnity.

In a related issue, USDA is beginning a voluntary certification program for scrapie in sheep and goats (see USDA release #0713-92).

Notice of the proposed indemnity program is scheduled for publication in the July 30 Federal Register. Comments on the proposal will be accepted if they are received on or before Sept. 15. An original and three copies of written comments referring to docket 91-150 should be sent to Chief, Regulatory Analysis and Development, PPD, APHIS, USDA, Room 804 Federal Building, 6505 Belcrest Road, Hyattsville, Md. 20782.

Comments may be inspected as soon as received at USDA, Rm. 1141-S, 14th St. and Independence Ave., S.W., Washington, D.C., between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays.

Contact: Alan Zagier, (301) 436-7255

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SCRAPIE CONTROL PROGRAM SEEKS SHEEP OWNER COOPERATION

WASHINGTON, July 29—The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service is encouraging sheep and goat owners to use a new voluntary certification program for scrapie.

The program will enhance the economic value and marketability of the animals while maintaining APHIS' focus on disease prevention and eradication of scrapie, a degenerative neurological disease of sheep and goats.

"Scrapie control efforts will now include a voluntary certification program developed by producers, researchers, industry representatives and state and federal animal health officials," said Billy Johnson, acting deputy administrator of APHIS.

"Voluntary certification will encourage flock owners to participate actively in the flock cleanup process," Johnson said.

Certified flocks will progress through several phases of scrapie-free certification (Class C, Class B, Class A) over a period of five years, culminating in scrapie-free status (Class Certified). The 5-year certification period is necessary because clinical signs of scrapie are often not apparent for two to five years following infection. There is no live animal test, vaccine or treatment for the disease.

The certification plan includes periodic inspections, comprehensive health recordkeeping requirements and official identification marks necessary for the interstate movement of some flocks.

"The long incubation period of scrapie and the similarity of clinical signs to other diseases makes the participation of producers and veterinarians essential," Johnson said.

Infected animals may exhibit subtle changes in behavior or temperament during the early stages of scrapie. Later signs include scratching and rubbing against fixed objects, loss of coordination, weight loss despite retention of appetite, biting of feet and limbs, lip smacking and gait abnormalities, such as high-stepping of the forelegs and bunny hop movements of the rear legs.

Infected animals can live from one to six months or more following the onset of clinical signs. Diseases such as listeriosis and ovine progressive pneumonia can also cause reactions similar to those characteristic of scrapie.

A final rule establishing the voluntary flock certification program will be published in the July 30 Federal Register and will be effective Oct. 2.

In a related matter, USDA proposed an indemnity payment program for scrapie-infected sheep and goat flocks (USDA release #0712-92).

USDA ANNOUNCES 1992-CROP PRICE SUPPORT LOAN RATES FOR SUGAR BEETS AND CANE

WASHINGTON, July 29—The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Commodity Credit Corporation today announced that the national (weighted average) price support loan rates for the 1992 crop of domestically grown sugarcane and sugar beets will be 18 cents per pound for raw cane sugar and 23.33 cents per pound for refined beet sugar.

These loan rates have been adjusted to reflect the processing location of the sugar offered as collateral for a price support loan. The processing regions and applicable 1992 crop regional loan rates for refined beet sugar are:

Region number and description	Cents per pound of refined sugar
1. Michigan and Ohio	24.17
2. Minnesota and the eastern half of North Dakota	23.39
3. NE quarter of Colorado; Nebraska; and the southeastern quarter of Wyoming.	23.03
4. Texas.	23.87
5. Montana and the northwestern quarter of Wyoming and western half of North Dakota.	22.95
6. That part of Idaho east of the eastern boundary of Owyhee County and of such boundary extended north.	22.74
7. That part of Idaho west of the eastern boundary of Owyhee County and of such boundary extended north; Oregon.	22.74
8. California.	23.66

Except for sugar processed in Hawaii or Puerto Rico but pledged as collateral while stored under loan on the mainland of the U.S. where the applicable loan rate is 18.00 cents per pound, the processing state and applicable 1992 state crop loan rates for cane sugar, raw value, are as follows:

State	Cents per pound, raw sugar value
Florida	17.99
Hawaii	17.76
Louisiana	18.38
Texas	18.20
Puerto Rico	18.45

The price support level is the minimum amount that must be paid to growers by processors participating in the price support loan program. Based on the established regional loan rates, the minimum price support levels for sugar beets and sugarcane are as follows:

State and Region Sugar Beets Region	Support Prices Dollars per net ton
1	34.28
2	33.16
3	35.73
4	38.40
5	35.86
6	36.07
7	36.07
8	37.06

Sugarcane	Dollars
Florida	26.15 per net ton
Hawaii	22.95 per net ton
Louisiana	22.96 per gross ton
Texas	20.37 per gross ton
Puerto Rico	17.62 per gross ton

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USDA ALERTS POULTRY FARMERS OF DISEASE THREAT TO FLOCKS

WASHINGTON, July 29—Poultry farmers in the Great Lakes Region are urged to step up efforts to prevent their flocks from coming into contact with colonial nesting birds after hundreds of wild birds died from a strain of Newcastle disease virus earlier this month, a U.S. Department of Agriculture official said today.

USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service and the U.S. Department of Interior's Fish and Wildlife Service have identified the strain and determined the magnitude of the spread of the disease. Federal officials have found dead pelicans and cormorants in nesting colonies in Minnesota, South Dakota, Michigan, and Ontario, Canada.

"At this time no poultry flocks have been reported as having this strain of the Newcastle virus," said Billy G. Johnson, deputy administrator of APHIS' Veterinary Services. "Nevertheless, we are strongly encouraging producers to increase protective measures for their flocks."

"At this time, no poultry flocks have been reported as having this strain of the Newcastle virus," said Billy G. Johnson, deputy administrator for APHIS' veterinary services program. "Nevertheless, we are strongly encouraging producers to increase protection measures for their flocks."

Scientists at the APHIS' National Veterinary Services Laboratory, Ames, Iowa, have characterized the virus as a "velogenic neurotropic" Newcastle strain that affects the nervous system of wild birds and poultry. While this viral strain is not known to have affected poultry, domestic flocks could be susceptible, scientists said. This strain is also distinct from the traditional exotic Newcastle agent known as "velogenic viscerotropic."

Johnson recommended that poultry producers take the following precautionary measures to protect their flocks: — Keep all birds in houses that have no openings or holes in order to prevent any possible contact with wild birds.

- Permit only essential personnel and vehicles to enter the farm.
- Sanitize all vehicles and tires.
- Clean and disinfect all poultry houses before bringing in new birds.
- Avoid using water for poultry from streams or ponds where wild birds such as cormorants and pelicans are found.
- Provide clean clothing and disinfection facilities for all employees.
- Control the movement of all poultry and poultry products from farm to farm.

APHIS is charged with diagnosing and preventing the spread of diseases such as varieties of Newcastle disease. Almost any bird, especially birds from species of the parrot family, can carry the infection.

Additional information about exotic Newcastle disease and biosecurity measures can be requested from USDA, APHIS, LPA-Public Information, Room 613 Federal Building, 6505 Belcrest Road, Hyattsville, Md. 20782.

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USDA TO APPROVE ADDITIONAL PRIVATE QUARANTINE STATIONS

WASHINGTON, July 29—The U.S. Department of Agriculture has announced openings for 13 additional privately operated quarantine facilities for imported birds and ratite (e.g., ostrich, emu, etc.) hatching eggs.

With certain exceptions, USDA requires that imported birds and ratite hatching eggs must be quarantined at a federal quarantine station or at a private facility approved and monitored by the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. The number of approved private facilities is limited to a level that federal inspectors are equipped to handle.

Increased interest in importing ratite hatching eggs has led to a need for additional private quarantine stations. The agency has determined it can service six additional private quarantine stations to meet demand in Miami, Fla.; two in Newark, N.J.; one in Nogales, Ariz.; one in Phoenix, Ariz.; one in Del Rio, Texas; one in Laredo, Texas; and one in McAllen, Texas.

Individuals interested in operating quarantine stations in these locations should complete Veterinary Services Form 17-11, "Application for Approval of Quarantine Facilities for Birds." The form is available from the Import-Export Animals Staff, VS, APHIS, USDA, Room 759 Federal Building, 6505 Belcrest Road, Hyattsville, Md. 20782. Applications must be received by the Import-Export Animals staff on or before Sept. 28.

Contact: Courtney Billet, (301) 436-4446.

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