

To Ida M. [unclear]

For release at 12 noon
Wednesday, March 9, 1966

WASHINGTON -- Congressman _____ (Party-State) _____, has warned Secretary of Agriculture Orville L. Freeman that recent actions of the Department, allowing unlimited imports of foreign sugar during the first quarter of this year, could hurt domestic sugar producers.

In a letter to the agriculture chief, Congressman _____ said the Department's "shotgun attack" in its campaign to roll back recent refined sugar price hikes in a few Northeast states could have repercussions in the rest of the country that would slash income for American producers of sugar crops in more than 25 states. Sugarbeets are grown in the Midwest and West, while sugarcane is produced in the South.

Congressman _____ said the Department's actions in opening the gates to more foreign sugar for the Northeast have driven down the raw sugar price to 12 cents below the "target" set by Congress, without reducing the price of refined sugar in the Northeast. He explained that the raw sugar price underpins the entire sugar price structure of the United States. The "target" price, defined by Congress in the Sugar Act, is geared to farmers' cost of production.

USDA's actions, taken last month, first added 100,000 tons to authorized imports for the first three months of this year, already at 700,000 tons, and then lifted the ceiling entirely on foreign sugar for the first quarter.