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NEWS from U.S. Senator Bob Dole

(R.—Kans.)

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DOLE REQUESTS FERTILIZER INVESTIGATIONS

WASHINGTON, D.C.--In letters today to the Director of the Cost of Living Council and the Comptroller General, Senator Bob Dole requested an investigation of fertilizer companies and an intensive study of the shortage.

Dole asked John T. Dunlop, Director of the Cost of Living Council, to investigate by all means available, including the Internal Revenue Service, "the supply allocations of the fertilizer companies and the regional distribution which affects the State of Kansas." Dole said a report he compiled, from responses to telegrams sent to 21 fertilizer companies supplying Kansas, indicates that the "October agreement is not being lived up to." The October agreement refers to an agreement by nearly 40 fertilizer companies to provide over 1,150,000 additional tons from January to June, 1974 to the domestic market, and was made in conjunction with price decontrol of fertilizer on October 25, 1973.

A survey of fertilizer dealers and farmers in Kansas, Dole said, "shows that most farmers are receiving less than 30% of last year's supply and many are not receiving any at all. The withdrawal of several companies from the State would indicate that other regions may be receiving product at the expense of Kansas farmers."

In his letter to Elmer B. Staats, Comptroller General, Dole said a comprehensive study by the General Accounting Office could be of great help in answering questions of farmers and fertilizer dealers about the causes of the shortage and the role of the fertilizer companies in the shortage.

Dole asked that the written report include "a general accounting of production and distribution... to determine what proportion farmers are receiving. The issues of exporting or storing fertilizer in order to obtain a higher price should be specifically addressed," Dole added.

Dole also specifically requested an investigation of allegations of price gouging; documentation of import and world market prices, normal shipping costs; and evaluation of the required expansion in the fertilizer industry to meet future needs and the amounts of raw materials needed for the projected expansion.