

BOB DOLE



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DOLE MEETS WITH CHINESE AMBASSADOR, REVEALS CHINA MAKING UP WHEAT PURCHASE DEFICIT

WASHINGTON -- Kansas Senator Bob Dole today revealed that the People's Republic of China (PRC) is currently stepping up its purchases of U.S. wheat in an effort to meet the requirements of the long-term grain agreement between the two countries.

After meeting with Chinese Ambassador Zhang Wenjin in his Senate office, Dole said, "I must say I was pleasantly surprised by what I learned from my meeting with the Ambassador. Even though China is having difficulties finding room for its own harvest this year, the Ambassador told me they will make every effort to buy eight million tons of U.S. wheat this year, including the 2.2 million tons left from last year's shortfall. That's good news."

"The Chinese buying team now in Kansas, Missouri and other states has already reached the halfway point of 4.1 million tons of wheat, or 650,000 tons more than had been sold by the end of June," Dole added.

The current four-year agreement between the U.S. and the PRC expires at the end of 1984, and calls for minimum purchases of six million tons of wheat annually. Sales were suspended by the Chinese in 1983 during a seven-month dispute over U.S. textile import quotas. As a result, the PRC fell behind in its purchasing. It was first thought that the Chinese were holding back on a vigorous return to the U.S. market, but Ambassador Wenjin assured Senator Dole that the PRC is now trying to make up the difference in addition to its 1984 obligation.

"The Chinese Ambassador said his country is still 'not 100% happy' with the status of our textile trade," Dole stated. "I indicated we would do what we can to smooth things out, and we both will be looking for ways to expand trade in other sectors, such as food processing and transportation. I believe the Chinese are making a good faith effort to satisfy their obligations, and will be good and reliable trading partners for the U.S. in the future."