

PRESS RELEASE FROM THE OFFICE OF CONGRESSMAN BOB DOLE (R-KANS.)

Room 244 Cannon Office Building  
CA4-3121, ext. 2715

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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Congressman Bob Dole, (R-Kansas) today urged amendment of the Sugar Act of 1962 to encourage a sizable expansion of domestic sugar production.

"Sugar prices are skyrocketing again as the result of a tight world supply situation," Dole said. "In recent days, severe hurricane damage to sugar crops in Cuba, Haiti and the French West Indies has made the problem even more serious.

"The sharp increases in sugar prices last spring and again in the past two weeks make it evident that the United States cannot continue to rely on foreign suppliers to make up, at reasonable prices, the deficit between what we produce domestically and what we consume. We currently import about 40 per cent of the 10 million tons of sugar consumed annually in this country. At present prices, this costs U. S. consumers about \$750 million a year---and accounts for roughly one-fourth of our balance of payments deficit.

"Over a period of years, the United States could build up its sugar industry to a point where we would no longer be so heavily dependent upon imports. Tens of thousands of acres which are now devoted to the production of crops already in surplus could be diverted to sugar beets.

"In Western Kansas alone, it would be possible to produce enough additional sugar beets to warrant the construction of two or three new processing plants, but processors will not make the heavy investments involved in building new plants unless they have reasonable assurance of a permanent supply of sugar beets. Additional permanent acreage allotments must be made to provide the needed incentive for new plant construction.

"The Sugar Act of 1962 provided for increased production in new areas of 325,000 tons of sugar beets on a permanent basis.

"This new allotment is going to California, Texas, North and South Dakota and Arizona with 95,000 tons still unallocated. Under this program, new processing plants are being built at a rate of one or two a year.

"Along with many other Western State Congressmen, I urged last year that a larger increase in domestic sugar production be encouraged. The present world sugar supply situation points up the necessity for such an increase."