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WASHINGTON, D.C., July 18 -- U.S. Senator Bob Dole (R-Kans.) today said the decision of the U.S. Department of Agriculture to lower the export price of ordinary and higher protein hard red winter wheats at Gulf and East Coast ports and a supporting reduction in soft red winter wheat "will help the U.S. regain a competitive position in world wheat markets."

The U.S. decision is a result of a July 11 meeting on the International Grains Arrangement (IGA). The five major exporting countries were represented at the meeting here.

Today's decision, Dole said, "recognizes that serious inequities, particularly disadvantageous to the U.S., had developed and that positive action to correct the situation was needed and needed soon."

In March, Dole urged Agriculture Secretary Clifford Hardin to make "a complete review and evaluation of the IGA to help make the U.S. more competitive in world wheat markets."

"Frankly," Dole said, "the IGA had become the object of increasing criticism as a major impediment to wheat trade expansion."

The USDA decision, he added, "will go a long way toward better preserving producer income and increasing export earnings. It will also bring about more orderly marketing and price stability."