



NEWS from U.S. Senator Bob Dole

(R.—Kans.)

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FUEL FOR AGRICULTURE DISCUSSED IN HEARINGS CALLED BY DOLE

WASHINGTON, D.C.--In hearings called by Senator Bob Dole into the agricultural fuel situation, Dole today stressed the importance of readily available fuel for agriculture.

Commenting on the broad ranging effects of agriculture Dole said, "Without high agricultural production, our domestic food markets will suffer, the American people will have less of a food choice and still higher food prices, and our international balance of trade picture will darken."

Dole also suggested an allocation plan change that he had earlier recommended to the FEO, that the allocation of fuel for agriculture be taken from the national base rather than the state allocation. Dole said both agricultural and non-agricultural users in agricultural states like Kansas, "will suffer disproportionately the burden of the fuel shortage," unless this action is taken.

Kansans testifying before the Senate Subcommittee on Agricultural Credit and Rural Electrification were Bert Regier of Hillsboro, Frank Lightner of Finney County, Bob Pearson of Beloit and E.J. Brubacher of Newton.

The four men represent farmers and agricultural fuel suppliers and testified to the effects of the fuel situation on various aspects of the agricultural industry in Kansas.

Dole questioned witnesses from the Department of Agriculture and the Federal Energy Office what is being done to provide farmers with the fuel they need. The Kansas Senator urged "that we do not limit our thinking and the actions of FEO to just the production of field crops."

"The job is not over when the crop is harvested. Unless the processing and distribution channels are maintained under equal priority, the agricultural capacity of this nation is negated."

Citing a study by the Kansas Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, Dole said the 35.5% increase in planted acres "is only one aspect of increased fuel needs. Higher prices for farm commodities have encouraged farmers to use techniques which produce higher yields but which are also more fuel intensive."

"In addition to the more than 35% increase in farm fuel requirements, the ASCS study shows that in Kansas since January 1973, 156 farm fuel outlets and 57 distributors providing on-farm fuel deliveries have closed their doors. The increased burden on the remaining distributors and farm fuel outlets is obvious."

Calling regulations of the allocation program "cumbersome," Dole said "they have complicated what would be a simple process under normal supply and free market conditions."

Dole also criticized Regional and Federal FEO offices as being "unresponsive to the needs of the agricultural consumer."