



NEWS from U.S. Senator Bob Dole

(R.-Kans.)

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HIGHER TARGETS SOUGHT FOR GRAIN SALES TO SOVIETS

WASHINGTON, D.C.--Eight million tons of grain per year should be the minimum instead of the maximum annual sales figure negotiated between the Soviet Union and this country according to Senator Bob Dole, ranking Republican of the Senate Agriculture and Forestry Committee.

Dole was joined in a letter to this effect nd Monday to President Ford, by the Committee Chairman Herman Talmadge (D-Ga), and committee members Milton Young (R-N.D.), Carl Curtis (R-Neb) and Henry Bellmon (R-Okla). The letter also urged that the U.S. Department of Agriculture be given "equal status with the State Department in the negotiations" in Moscow because USDA has "the expertise to determine the appropriate level of grain exports."

The five asserted that grain sales to Russia from U.S. sources in the past four years have run at "an average of about 8 million metric tons...(and) might have been even higher if government intervention last year had not discouraged Soviet buying."

"Future import needs of the U.S.S.R.," they added, "should be considerably higher" than the eight million minimum the Senators proposed. "An unpublished forecast by the Economic Research Service of the USDA predicted an annual average of 12 million metric tons of grain imports would be necessary to meet Soviet requirements over the next five years," they told the President.

The Senators indicated that sales within the 8 million ton range would "be well within the productive capacity of American farmers... (who) could fill these sales as well as other domestic and export requirements. Exports beyond the minimum," they added, "would continue to be carefully monitored under the export monitoring system instituted under the Agriculture and Consumer Protection Act of 1973."

The five Agriculture Committee members also requested their Committee be consulted before any U.S. - U.S.S.R. trade agreements were finalized.