
From Washington

Peanut acreage quota to be increased

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has decided to increase peanut acreage allotments about 8% for 1981 crop peanuts, but the national poundage quota for 1981 will again be the legal minimum, 1,440,000 tons. Drought conditions led to a reduced 1980 crop, hence the acreage increase for 1981. Each state's acreage allotment will rise about 8%, the USDA announcement said. Details of the 1981 quotas are in the *Federal Register*, Friday, Dec. 5, 1980, p. 80479. On Dec. 4, 1980, U.S. Trade Representative Reubin Askew agreed to allow up to 100,000 tons of peanuts to be imported under a temporary quota that will expire on July 1, 1981. In mid-December, however, general reports were that peanuts were hard to buy anywhere, with some news media articles focusing on the lack of peanuts as treats for elephants and other zoo animals. Some news media reports cited shortages of peanut butter on supermarket shelves.

Soybean cost \$5.28 a bushel to grow in 1980

It cost U.S. farmers an average of \$5.28 per bushel to grow soybeans during 1980, USDA economist Robert Olson told the USDA 1981 Outlook Conference last November. That figure excludes land costs; including land raises the cost to \$7.43 per bushel. Flaxseed cost \$8.28 and \$10.21 per bushel, without and with land costs, respectively, and peanuts cost 33.2 cents and 38.5 cents per pound, respectively. All those figures are considerably higher than 1979, primarily because of reduced yield. Per acre production costs can be expected to rise 10-13% for 1981, Olson said; per-unit production costs should rise less sharply and, with a sharp increase in yield per acre, could actually fall, Olson said.

New procedure used to approve pesticide

The federal Environmental Protection Agency has agreed to exempt the microbial insecticide, Nuclear Polyhedrosis Virus of *Heliothis zea*, in crops attacked by *H. zea* or *H. virescens* larva, such crops including soybeans. The EPA said a new safety testing format was used and may be used on future "biorational" pesticides that may reduce the amount of testing needed for approval. Details: *Federal Register*, Wednesday, Nov. 26, 1980, p. 78687.

EPA takes ammonia off candidate list

The federal Environmental Protection Agency has removed ammonia from the list of chemicals it might add to the toxic pollutant list. The EPA said that ammonia is not long-lasting in aquatic environments and "poses no human health threat at levels typically found in ambient water as a result of point source discharges." The original proposal to add ammonia to the list had been published Jan. 3, 1980; the latest action was published in the *Federal Register* of Monday, Dec. 1, 1980, p. 79692.

Upland cotton import set through Feb. 25

Because prices of upland cotton were above the predetermined level to permit imports of upland cotton, the office of the President on Nov. 26 issued a proclamation permitting the import of up to 238,633,290 pounds of upland cotton between Nov. 28, 1980, and Feb. 25, 1981. Details: *Federal Register*, Wednesday, Nov. 26, 1980, p. 78617.