

Ag economist urges new export expansion

Changes in world agricultural trade patterns are confronting the United States with severe challenges to maintain a high volume of exports to traditional markets, to increase exports to growing markets in less developed and centrally planned areas and to achieve more stable growth in exports of ag products, according to a UNL professor.

Everett Peterson, an economist with the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources Extension Division, said the U.S. position as the world's largest producer and exporter of agricultural products is not likely to be threatened in the near future, but important changes occurring in world agricultural trade have significant implications for U.S. agriculture.

Exports have become increasingly important to farm income, according to Peterson, with the production of from one of three harvested acres in the U.S. going to foreign countries.

Peterson said farm product exports generate domestic employment, stimulate income and have contributed more than \$10 billion to the U.S. balance of trade in the past four years.

The U.S. generally accounts for more

than half of the world's trade in coarse grains and soybeans, Peterson said, although it produces less than a third of the world's total production of coarse grains and only 40 percent of the world's soybeans. Two-fifths of the world's cotton and wheat trade come from the U.S., but only a sixth of world production. Two percent of the world's output of rice is grown in the U.S., but 20 to 30 percent of the rice trade comes from the U.S.

The United States also holds a fourth to a half of all world grain stocks. It accounts for about 44 percent, much more than policy makers believe prudent or the U.S. to hold, according to Peterson.

Accompanying a sharp rise in the volume of U.S. agricultural exports over the past decade have been subtle transition in the sources and composition of foreign demand for U.S. farm products, Peterson said.

The three major shifts include:
-While the volume of U.S. wheat shipments to developing countries has increased by more than a fourth in the early 1960s, there has been a remarkable shift in the mix of commercial sales and concessional sales. Two thirds of all U.S. wheat

exports to developing countries during 1961 to 1965 were under food aid programs, compared with one-tenth during 1971-1975.

-Food products have continued to account for half of U.S. agricultural exports since the early 60s but the composition of the remainder has changed radically. Cotton and tobacco made up a fifth of the U.S. exports during 1960-64, as did feedgrains and soybeans. Since then, cotton and tobacco's share have dropped 50 percent, and the feedgrain and soybean share has nearly doubled. Expansion in exports of feedgrains and soybeans have grown from \$5 billion to nearly \$27 billion in 1978.

-U.S. exports to some markets, particularly the Soviet Union and Red China have grown in importance, but have fluctuated tremendously.

The Soviet Union bought \$18 million in farm products in 1970, \$12 million in 1971, \$954 million in 1973, \$410 million in 1975 and \$1.1 billion in 1977. China went from \$800 million in 1975 to \$44,000 in 1976 to \$64 million in 1977.

Peterson said these changes figure substantially in the demand outlook for U.S. farm products.

Winter swims can cause hypothermia

Many northern cities have their Polar Bear Clubs, with members who strip down to bathing tunks on a winter day and then take an icy dip in a lake or stream. Most people, however, would never consider such a frigid exercise, and if by accident they do take a cold water dip while ice fishing or skating, they are very apt to freeze to death.

The loss of body heat from such an experience is known as hypothermia, and can be recognized by a number of symptoms.

After the body's normal temperature of 98.6 degrees falls to 95 degrees, it starts to fall rapidly. Signs of pain, tiredness, poor coordination, numbness, slurred speech and mental confusion appear.

Falling into the 80s, unconsciousness may result, as well as blueness of the skin, enlargement of the pupils, muscle stiffness, irregular heart rate and a weak, barely detectable pulse. Death may occur when the body's core temperature range is between 80 and 85 degrees, but is more likely to happen when the core drops below 80.

Knowing how to treat hypothermia is especially important to persons who are engaged in winter sports, particularly for those involved in wilderness hiking, camping, skiing, hunting and fishing. Here are some pointers, from the State Civil Defense Agency, for the concerned winter sportsman.

If you come across a hypothermia victim, remove him or her from the cold water or icy place and transfer the victim to as warm a place as possible. Remove their wet clothes only if it involves a minimum of movement to the victim; do not massage them.

Lay any unconscious or semiconscious person in a face up position with their head slightly down. Since the blood pressure will be low, the head-down position will help to ensure an adequate flow of blood to the brain.

Begin to warm the victim immediately; delay may cause death. One method of rewarming is to place the victim in a bath of lukewarm water, about 105 to 110 degrees. Keep the arms, and legs out of the bath to delay the return of blood circulation to the extremities. Heating the limbs causes cold blood to flow from them to the body core, further cooling the core.

Lacking a bath, apply hot towels or blankets warmed by a fire, to the victim's head, neck, groin, chest and abdomen.

Fire, smoke the best signals for snow help

Severe snowstorms or full scale blizzards are as common to Nebraska as death and taxes. The old saying, "If you don't like Nebraska weather, stick around for a minute," is as true as often as not. What would appear to be a peaceful snowfall, within minutes can become a raging storm.

Each year hundreds of Nebraskans find themselves caught in a life and death struggle due to winter storms. People should be reminded, at this time of year, of some of the international signals of distress.

The State Civil Defense Agency says, "If you become lost while hunting or if your

car breaks down along some deserted route, during a storm, you should think about signaling for help immediately. You could be there for a long time, so seek shelter from the elements and establish an emergency signal at once."

The best signal is fire - a large bright fire at night, and a smokey fire during the day.

Black smoke should be used in light colored, open areas. Your spare tire or any petroleum based material will provide a good thick, black cloud of smoke for some time.

White smoke should be used in dark or densely wooded areas. Green wood or pine

needles, added to a well-lighted fire will send billows of white smoke skyward.

Maintain a good supply of fuel, and build the signal fire on the highest point near your shelter. If fuel is plentiful, two fires are better than one. Three fires in a triangular pattern, will always be recognized as a positive signal of distress.

Remember that before you build a fire - be sure to clear a wide area of brush and if possible; circle the "fireplace" with stones to prevent starting a fire that could burn out of its bounds.

A mirror is also a good attention-getter, and a metal signal mirror should be considered standard equipment for any hunter. A car's rear or sideview mirror, a tin can lid or any shiny, reflective object can be used as a signalling device. On a clear day, flashing signals can be seen up to 10 miles away, and even farther by aircraft.

Signals that can be seen from the air may be constructed of stomped-down snow, piled bushes, rocks, tree branches, etc, and should be at least 10 feet high. The following signals for assistance are some that are understood, internationally, by all pilots.

- I - need doctor
- II - need medicine
- X - unable to proceed
- F - need food, water
- Arrow - proceeding in this direction
- LL - all well

If you are ever in doubt of which signal to use, remember that the use of the international distress signal - SOS - is always understood to mean trouble.

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