SECTION 22, AGRICULTURAL ADJUSTMENT ACT OF 1933

The President's authority to limit imports under section 22 of the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1933 (7 USC 624) is now limited to situations where excessive imports interfere with a government-control program. We support amendment of section 22, as proposed by bills now pending in Congress, so as to extend possible relief under that section to commodities not under a domestic-control program. These include, at present, sweet cherries and figs.

CONCLUSION

Consideration of future U.S. trade policy, and proposed continued or new trade legislation, must not disregard those United States industries, such as the five specialty tree-crop industries above named, which unavoidably are dependent upon reasonable protection from possibly ruinous unfair imports competition.

It must be clearly recognized that the growers of perennial tree crops cannot be "adjusted" to loss of import protection through any type of "adjustment assistance." Reduction of present duty rates, or other relaxation of present import protection, of any of the commodities on the assumption that any resulting injury to growers and others would be amply compensated for, and any disruption of the industry could be satisfactorily remedied, through some type of "adjustment assistance," is entirely unwarranted, and would be cruelly delusive.

The five perennial tree crops here represented should, in fact, be excluded from any further tariff reduction legislation and negotiations. Government clearance and assistance for the U.S. producers of these commodities in exploring commodity agreements with producers in other countries would offer far better prospect of contributing to freer international trade, on a basis consistent with the legitimate interests of these U.S. industries, than would tariff reductions.

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STATEMENT OF RON KLAMM, MANAGING DIRECTOR, CALIFORNIA FIG INSTITUTE, AND MANAGER, CALIFORNIA DRIED FIG ADVISORY BOARD

This Statement is being submitted on behalf of all Dried Fig Producers and Processors in California who produce and market 100% of California's and the United States' Dried Fig Production. It is the recommendation of these two groups that the California Dried Fig Industry be excluded from any legislative or other measures which would serve to have a detrimental affect upon an already depressed Specialty Crop Industry and that either the existing tariff rate of 4½ cents per pound on dried figs and 5 cents on fig paste be increased or some form of import limitation be established as a means for developing an orderly market at a stabilized price.

AREAS OF U.S. DRIED FIG PRODUCTION

The Dried Fig Industry of California and the United States is concentrated in the San Joaquin Valley with Fresno, Madera and Merced Counties producing approximately 98% of the total tonnage. The balance of the commercial production is located in the Sacramento Valley, although most growers in this area have indicated that, out of economic necessity, their trees will be removed within the next several years and the acreage devoted to more profitable crops.

BEARING AND NONBEARING ACREAGE TRENDS

The California Dried Fig Industry, which has a history dating back to 1769, has historically accounted for 100% of the United States Dried Fig Production. From a maximum of 47,000 bearing acres in 1930 there has been a continual downward trend to the point where present bearing acreage, as estimated by the California Crop and Livestock Reporting Service, is 19,200 acres. Between 1930 and 1967 there were two sharp periods of acreage decline. The first such period occurred between 1930–36, when the reduction was approximately 10,000 bearing acres; the second period occurred between 1948–52, with the decrease being 8,000 bearing acres. In the last 15 years the rate of decline has been at a more moderate rate with reduction totaling approximately 6,000 acres. Detailed statistical information on California acreage trends, for the past 30 years, is shown in Table 1.