

The impact on the American producers of strawberries is tremendous but there is also a considerable impact on the labor used in harvesting the strawberries. The increased imports have reduced the acreage planted to strawberries in the United States from 80,070 to 67,020 acres planted in 1967, a reduction of 13,050 acres.

The background material for U. S. Department of Agriculture Statistical Bulletin No. 233, "Changes in Farm Production and Efficiency" states that in the United States an average of 703 man hour per acre were used annually for the production, harvesting and the processing of strawberries in 1954. It is estimated that 670 man hours per acre were used in 1959. Applying the 670 man hours per acre data to the 13,050 acre reduction, we have a loss of 8,743,500 man hours of employment by the strawberry industry, due to the reduction in acreage planted in the United States because of the impact of imports.

This is only a partial picture for one must take into consideration the effect of these imports on the lessened use of the packaging, packaging materials manufactured and other allied industries concerned with this industry.

Tomatoes.—In 1963 there was imported into the United States 249,216,000 lbs. of tomatoes which compare with 389,571,687 lbs. imported during the 1966-67 season, an increase of 59,644,313 lbs. or 56% in this short period of time. The imports of these tomatoes during the winter and spring months had a terrific impact on the prices received for winter, early and late spring tomatoes produced in the United States. In fact, prices reached such a low level in December 1967 that the U. S. Department of Agriculture announced a plentiful food program for tomatoes in order to increase fresh tomato consumption.

The importation of tomatoes also had an impact on our labor situation with respect to the number of persons employed in the production of and the marketing of tomatoes, in that we had a reduction of 12,400 acres planted to tomatoes between 1963, when 62,850 acres were planted, and 1967 when 50,450 acres were planted.

According to U.S. Department of Agriculture Statistical Bulletin No. 341, "Labor Used to Produce Vegetables", 186 man-hours were used to produce an acre of tomatoes in 1959. In other words, the reduction in man-hours employed amounted to 2,306,400 man-hours.

Again, we want to emphasize that the importation of these strawberries, tomatoes, and other vegetables, not only creates a hardship for the American producer but it also is curtailing the employment of labor in connection with the production of these commodities and contributing to our unemployment situation.

The vegetable industry does not have any price support programs nor has it ever asked for such and no requests for assistance are contemplated. However, the potential of increased production in Mexico of fruits and vegetables is so great that in years to come the producers of greenhouse products, winter, early and late spring vegetables and fruits, may find their competition from those low cost labor producing areas becoming extremely burdensome, resulting in greater losses to our producers.

On behalf of the Vegetable Growers Association of America I want to take this opportunity to express to the Committee our appreciation to state our case and we trust that you will seriously consider the plight of the fruit and vegetable growers of the United States of America.

STATEMENT OF THE U.S. DRY PEA AND LENTIL INDUSTRY

RECOMMENDATIONS

This industry recommends to the Committee that every effort be made to relax and eliminate trade barriers between the United States and all other countries wishing to enter into buying and selling relationships with the United States.

This industry believes that freer trade, not more restrictive trade, is the cornerstone of our future well-being, both in the agricultural and industrial spheres.

Believing this, the industry raises its voice as one to oppose those who would again build walls of protectionism, be they in the form of quotas, duties or any other special measures, labeled differently but just as negative.