Bergland announces new delay in deciding sugar growers fate

United Press International
WASHINGTON — Agriculture Secretary Bob Bergland yesterday
announced a second delay — this time until Aug. 15 — in his deadline for decision on a controversial administration proposal to make
direct support payments to sugar growers and processors.

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Bergland initially had set July 14 as a deadline for public comment on regulations for operating the program. The date was later pushed back to Aug. 1, and Bergland yesterday announced another two week delay.

delay.

Officials said the second delay was granted at the request of a corn refining industry representative so his group's comments could be held back to await "possible developments" in Congress and the administration

The "possible developments" included the fact that a Senate-House conference committee currently is considering a House-approved plan which would effectively shelve the administration program by substituting a different system.

The House plan, instead of allowing market prices to fluctuate freely and giving direct federal subsidy payments to growers and processors, would put a 14 cent a pound floor under the market price of sugar.

Another factor involved is the Agriculture Department's currently-pending request for a Justice Department ruling on whether the proposed direct subsidy payments to growers and processors would be legal.



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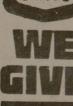


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