

WORLD AND NATION

U.S leads Soviet Union in agricultural efficiency

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The latest figures show the United States continues to lead the Soviet Union in agricultural efficiency, although the Soviets dominate in the production of some commodities.

According to recent U.S. Department of Agriculture reports, for example, Soviet milk production is expected to increase again from last year's 97.6 million metric tons to about 99 million metric tons for this year.

In the United States, which is plagued by dairy surpluses, production also is expected to show an increase, possibly to 62.5 million tons from 61.4 million tons in 1984.

But the difference, according to

the department's Foreign Agricultural Service, is that the Soviet Union's milk supply will come from 43.5 million cows, while U.S. milk production will be from about 10.8 million cows.

In other words, the Soviets will use four times as many cows to produce only about one-third more milk than American dairy farmers.

While not a new development, the productivity superiority of the United States over the Soviet Union shows little indication of narrowing significantly.

Grain production is a classic example.

In 1984, the Soviet Union after decades of exhortation and plan-

ning, had another poor year because of weather problems.

Total grain production, according to USDA estimates, was about 170 million tons.

That was down from 195 million tons in 1983, a relatively good year in the Soviet Union.

The 1984 U.S. total grain harvest was 312 million tons, up sharply from 206 million tons in 1983 when drought and government acreage curbs reduced production.

A metric ton, the unit commonly used in international production and trade, is about 2,205 pounds.

That would be equal to 36.7 bushels of wheat or 39.4 bushels of corn, or slightly more than 22 hundred weight of milk.

Democrats want extension of unemployment benefits

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — With federal benefits for 339,000 jobless Americans set to expire at week's end, House Democrats are trying to buck President Reagan by pushing an extension of the program he wants to let die.

The House Ways and Means subcommittee on unemployment last week approved a bill extending through June 30 supplemental unemployment benefits for those who have already exhausted their regular 26 weeks of payments. The program is to expire Saturday.

Reagan announced his opposition to the extension at his March 21 news conference, saying "the place now for people who are having problems is our job-training program, particularly job training directed at those who have to be relocated because something has happened to the industries that they formerly worked in."

House Majority Whip Thomas Foley, D-Wash., says action could come as early as Tuesday on the House floor. However, the attempt could be blocked if Republicans in-

voke a rule requiring a two-thirds vote for bills moved that quickly.

The Republican-controlled Senate Finance Committee has scheduled a meeting on the unemployment compensation issue on Tuesday, but Chairman Robert Packwood, R-Ore., has said he will oppose anything more than a phase-out of the current program.

A phase-out limited to people already on the rolls would cost about \$100 million, compared to the \$270 million price tag of the Democratic plan.

House Majority Leader Jim Wright, D-Texas, noted that the Democratic proposal is only a temporary extension and said last week he hoped for a compromise.

Meanwhile, the Senate's get-tough attitude toward trade with Japan could spread to the House this week. The Senate last week voted 92-0 to approve a non-binding resolution urging President Reagan to retaliate with quotas and tariffs if Japan doesn't open its markets to more American products.

The vote came on the heels of Japan's announcement that it would

increase its automobile exports to the United States by 25 percent.

House members will watch closely Japan's expected announcement Monday of rules for U.S. companies seeking to sell telecommunications equipment in Japan. U.S. trade negotiators have said the announcement would be a guidepost to Japan's long-term attitude.

Minority Leader Robert Michel, R-Ill., has already indicated the prospects for passage in the House are good.

Budget negotiations continued Monday between Republican senators and White House officials seeking to fashion a compromise spending plan. Friday congressional leaders conceded they didn't expect to finish before Congress begins its Easter recess at the close of business Thursday.

A plan devised by Republicans on the Budget Committee is an alternative to Reagan's proposal would allot less than the president wants for defense and more for domestic programs.

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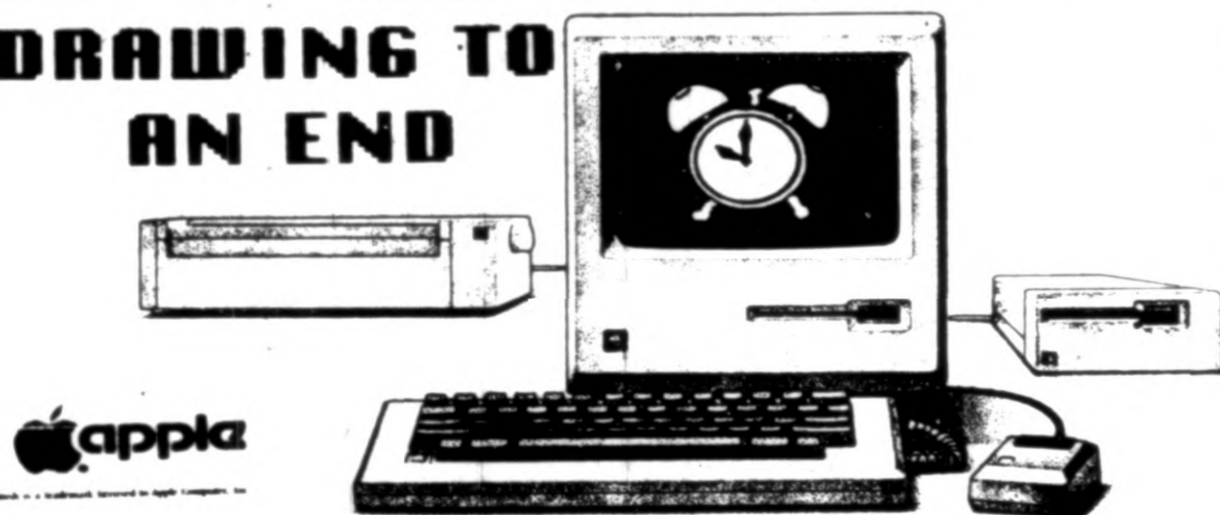
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