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## USDA Actions

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*USDA regularly implements operational and regulatory changes that affect the status of food and nutrition in the United States. Here are some recent actions.*

**Medfly Restrictions:** All Federal restrictions relating to the Mediterranean fruit fly quarantine in Dade County, Florida, have been lifted. Fresh fruits, vegetables, and plants can again move interstate. USDA officials imposed emergency regulations May 8, 1985, on 90 square miles after Medflies, a destructive pest of fruits and vegetables were found in the area.

**Unshu Oranges:** All Unshu oranges imported into Alaska from Japan must now meet stringent requirements to guard against the possibility of introducing citrus canker into the United States. Formerly, these safeguards concerning growing, packing, inspecting, treating, labeling, and certifying Unshu oranges were not required for those brought into Alaska for consumption there, but were required for those brought into Hawaii, Oregon, Washington, Idaho, and Montana. Unshu oranges are not permitted elsewhere in the United States. Inspections by USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service have shown that some Unshu oranges imported for Alaskan consumption have been taken to other places in the continental United States. Therefore, the import requirements on these oranges were tightened to protect U.S. citrus-growing areas from citrus canker.

**Greenhouse Cucumbers:** USDA has updated its 51-year-old grade standards for greenhouse cucumbers to match 1980's technology. The new voluntary standards delete age/maturity requirements from all grades; establish a definition for "injury" by specific defects for U.S. Fancy grade; establish minimum standards for cleanli-



ness, defined as "practically free from dirt or other foreign material"; require that U.S. Fancy grade cucumbers be free from cuts, and the U.S. No. 1 and No. 2 grades be free from unhealed cuts; establish a minimum length that, unless otherwise specified, will not be less than 11 inches; redefine the "standard pack" provision to reflect current packing practices; set forth definitions for "permanent defects" and "condition defects"; and update the format for the standards.

**National Dairy Promotion Order:** Dairy farmers across the United States have voted overwhelmingly in favor of continuing the Dairy Promotion and Research Order. The continuation was approved by 107,926 dairy producers, or

89.7 percent of those voting. The Dairy and Tobacco Adjustment Act of 1983 required that a nationwide referendum be held to determine whether the order should be continued after September 30, 1985. Only those farmers who were engaged in dairy production during April 1985 were eligible to vote. The order was established to implement a national program for the promotion of dairy products and nutritional education. The program is financed by a 15-cent-per-hundred-weight assessment on all milk produced in the 48 contiguous States and marketed commercially by dairy farmers. It is administered by the Dairy Promotion and Research Board, comprised of 36 dairy producers appointed by the Secretary of

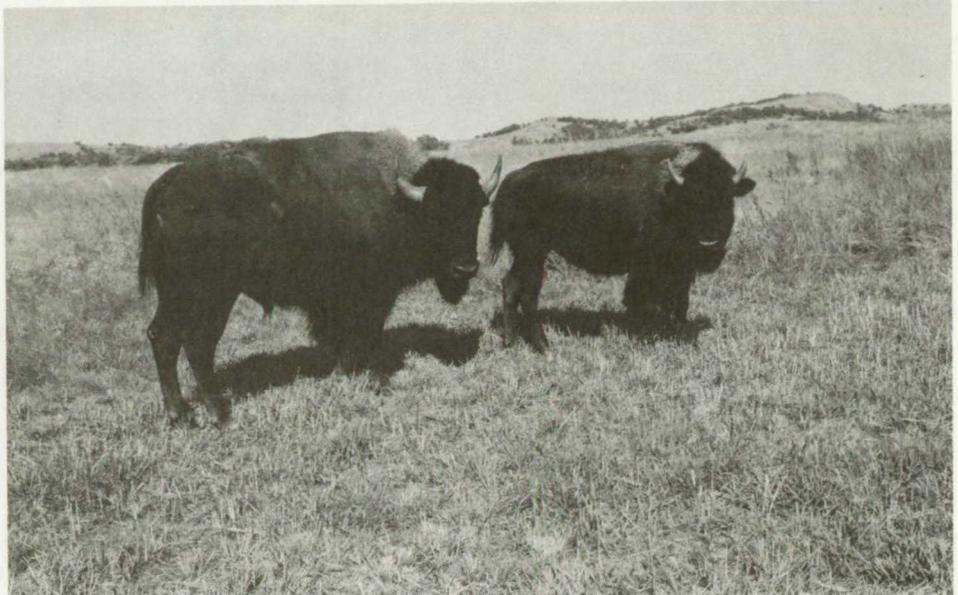
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Agriculture to represent the dairy industry.

**Turkey Inspection:** USDA has adopted an alternate slaughter inspection system for turkeys that is more efficient than traditional inspection and just as effective, according to Donald L. Houston, administrator of USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service. The new system will allow plant employees to independently trim bruises and other defects after the turkey has passed USDA inspection. Under the traditional method, inspectors identified defects, directed plant employees to trim them, and then verified that the trimming was done properly. The change will allow one inspector to inspect up to 25 light birds per minute (those weighing less than 16 pounds), up from the 20 possible under the traditional method. USDA inspectors will continue to check the outside, inside, and internal organs of all turkeys for signs of disease to determine which birds should be condemned. Plants wishing to be considered for the new system must use a USDA-approved quality control program on their processing line.

**Sugar Import Quota:** The base import quota for sugar during the 10 months beginning December 1, 1985, will be 1.72 million short tons, raw value. Minimum boatload shipments plus "specialty" sugar imports of 2,000 short tons may bring total quota imports to about 1.85 million short tons, raw value.

**Farm Marketing Grants:** USDA has awarded grants to the Massachusetts Department of Food and Agriculture and the Iowa Department of Agriculture to help those States develop direct wholesale and retail markets for their farm products. The \$50,000 Massachusetts grant will be used to establish a wholesale-retail market outlet in the Worcester area.



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The \$73,468 Iowa grant will be used to fund surveys of Iowa fruit and vegetable producers to determine their interest in developing centralized post-harvest handling and marketing facilities. The grants were awarded under the USDA's Federal-State Marketing Improvement Program, which provides Federal matching funds to qualifying States for research and experiments in marketing, transportation, and distribution of agricultural products.

**Buffalo Inspection:** USDA has adopted more flexible rules for the Federal inspection of buffalo before slaughter. Under the new rules, inspection of live buffalo will no longer be required to take place only on plant premises. Instead, USDA inspectors can check live buffalo at three alternative locations: on the producer's premises, outside the transport vehicle at the slaughtering plant, or in a pen at the plant. Also, Federal and cooperating State plants are allowed to use a new triangular brand to indicate inspected and passed buffalo meat and meat products. The triangular brand is to be used instead

of the Federal mark traditionally used on inspected and passed red meat animals. USDA provides voluntary inspection services for game animals such as buffalo for a fee. The buffalo industry uses the voluntary program to ensure that buffalo meat and meat products are safe, wholesome, and accurately labeled.

**Oriental Fruit Fly:** On October 22, 1985, USDA imposed a quarantine in parts of California's Los Angeles and Orange Counties to help prevent the spread of the oriental fruit fly, one of the world's most destructive fruit and vegetable pests. Male and female adult flies and larvae were found in the two mainly residential areas. The quarantine regulations restrict the movement of oriental fruit fly hosts—approximately 100 kinds of fruits, nuts, vegetables, and berries—as well as soil and some other items out of the infested areas. Before any of the regulated items can be moved interstate, a permit must be obtained from USDA.

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