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## Agriculture News Release - 1975-03-11

United States. Congress. House. Committee on Agriculture

E. De la Garza

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# news release

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE  
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
Room 1301, Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

NEWS RELEASE

FOR USE TUESDAY PMS, MARCH 11, 1975

WASHINGTON, MARCH 11 .....Concerned that energy shortages might curb or seriously disrupt the movement of food to America's dinner tables and fiber to clothing manufacturers, a House Agriculture Subcommittee today announced public hearings to see what might be done to make sure such a situation does not arise.

Spokesmen not only for farmers and ranchers, but also for handlers and processors and others with vital roles in the flow of agricultural products who could run into a breakdown in operations if energy supplies were curtailed have been invited to participate in discussions of the Subcommittee on Department Operations, Investigations and Oversight, headed by Rep. E de la Garza, D-Tex.

The hearing will be held at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m., Monday, March 17, in Room 1301 Longworth House Office Building, and at 10 a.m. the following day. Subsequent hearings may be scheduled later. All persons interested in expressing their views should promptly contact the Committee staff. Although no specific legislation will be under consideration, the Subcommittee will take such action as it deems advisable.

Pointing to the vulnerability of present day agriculture in regard to energy, Subcommittee Chairman de la Garza noted that aside from the obvious need for gasoline and diesel oil to plant, cultivate and harvest crops, petroleum goes into other wideranging items such as pesticides and fertilizer. Energy is required in irrigation. Crops have to be transported and processed in still other energy-requiring steps on their way to the consumer. Any breakdown in the chain could cause waste, shortages and higher prices.

"I have called this hearing to discuss the energy problem as it affects our ability to provide all the food and fiber we need in this country," said Mr. de la Garza.

"I am concerned that the producers of food and fiber have not had a proper forum to present their views and recommendations with regards to the energy problems and how the different proposals would affect them.

"We would like all organizations and any interested individuals to present not only their views on how curtailment of fuel would affect their productivity, but also to present their ideas for cooperation not only towards a solution of the problem, but their ideas as to how they can best continue to produce the food and fiber for the people of the United States and the world."

Opening statements as the discussion gets underway are expected to be made by Department of Agriculture and Federal Energy Administration officials. While agriculture has been designated by government agencies as having top priority in allocation of fuels, the Subcommittee wants to make sure that a disastrous break doesn't occur somewhere along the food-fiber chain in the event of an acute energy shortage, said Congressman de la Garza.