

July 1983

WHEAT

Straw Stubble Protects Moisture

Do you still cultivate summer-fallowed land because you fear standing grain stubble will take moisture out of the soil? Then this Colorado research should be of interest.

"Contrary to the belief of some, chemical fallowing, which leaves standing stubble, preserves the most water," says Dr. Darryl Smika, a USDA scientist who conducted the research. "Many years of research show that chemical fallowing is the most efficient and effective way to control weeds and increase water storage in soil."

Canadian Cut Coming?

Recent statements by the Canadian Wheat Board urging farmers in Canada to reduce 1983 plantings have drawn quick support from the National Association of Wheat

Growers. Don Loeslie, association president, called the idea a "solid step toward recovery" for all North American wheat producers. He noted that a unified multi-country effort is vital in reducing surplus stocks, which have held down prices in recent years.

More Insect Resistance Coming

The war with Hessian flies and greenbugs, the two insects most damaging to wheat, basically has been a contest to see who could come up with new genes first—the insects or the scientists.

Now scientists believe they are winning. "Both insects have proved more than once that they can adapt genetically and attack formerly resistant wheat varieties," says Dr. J. H. Hatchett, a USDA research entomologist stationed at Kansas State University.

But Hatchett adds that researchers are managing to stay a step or two

ahead of the insects by discovering a series of resistant genes to pit against each new form of resistance.

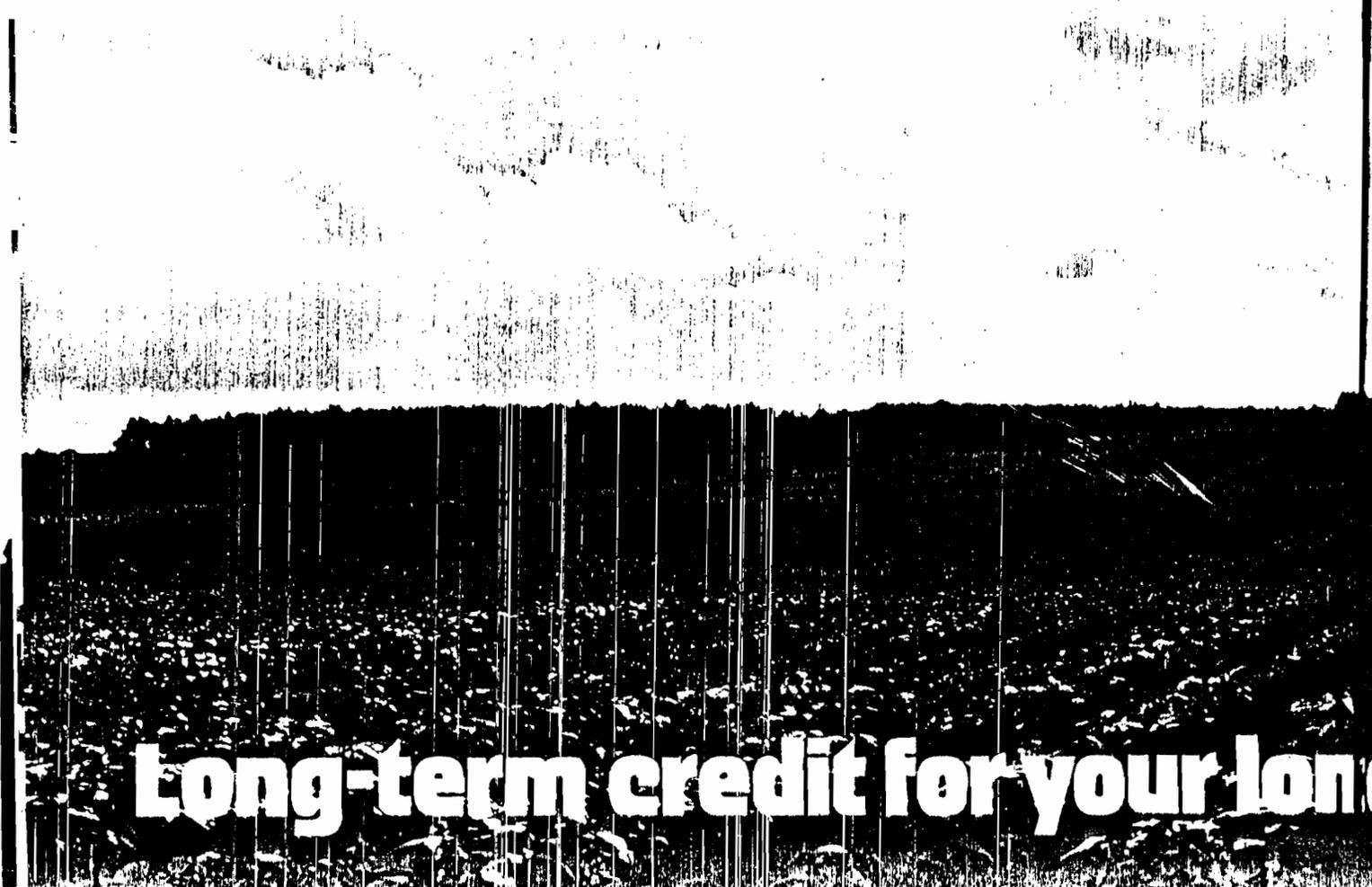
Grade Standards Reviewed

The purity of wheat types reaching customers of U.S. wheat is at issue in debate about whether to change U.S. wheat standards.

As the grading system stands, No. 2 hard red winter or No. 2 hard red spring wheat may contain up to 5% soft red winter wheat. Since the soft wheat is cheaper, it's not uncommon for shippers to mix tolerable allowances in with shipments of the more expensive red wheats.

If the proposed change is made, the level of tolerance will be reduced from 5% to 2%.

Proponents of the change believe it would help improve the reliability of wheat classification and purity. Opponents argue that a 2% tolerance is not enough to allow for normal variances in shipments.



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