



GENERAL AGREEMENT ON
TARIFFS AND TRADE

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UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL TRADE
COMMISSION INVESTIGATIONS

Asparagus

The following communication has been received from the United States Mission.

My authorities have asked me to inform you that the United States International Trade Commission on 12 January concluded its investigation of charges by the asparagus industry of serious injury from imports. After an extensive investigation, the Commission was equally divided in its vote. Under the provisions of the Tariff Act of 1930, as amended, when the Commission's vote is evenly split, as in this ruling, the President may consider either position as the official finding.

Commissioners George M. Moore, Catherine Bedell and Italo H. Ablondi joined in voting in the affirmative. Voting in the negative were Commissioners Will E. Leonard, Daniel Minchow and Joseph C. Parker. Those voting in the affirmative included with their finding the recommendation that an import quota be imposed on fresh asparagus which would allow no more than 700,000 pounds to be imported in any one month during February, March or April of the next three years. This quota would be increased by 175,000 pounds for the fourth year and by 350,000 pounds for the fifth year. At the beginning of the sixth year, the quota would expire.

The Commission opened its investigation under the "escape clause" provisions of the Trade Act into charges of serious injury to a domestic industry resulting from imports of asparagus following receipt of a petition from the California Growers Association, the Washington Asparagus Growers Association, and a number of unaffiliated West Coast growers. The investigation included public hearings in both San Francisco and Washington, D.C. The Commission already had substantial information available as a result of a previous asparagus industry study requested by Committee on Ways and Means of the House of Representatives.

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Asparagus growers and processors in the United States were responsible for about 30,000 jobs in 1974, located chiefly in California, Oregon, Washington, and Michigan. Domestic production in 1974 for the market totalled about 260 million pounds. An additional 19.1 million pounds was imported, originating primarily in Mexico and Taiwan.

Executive agencies will analyze the report and formulate a recommendation to the President. The President may accept, modify or reject the proposal for the imposition of quantitative limitations on fresh asparagus imports.

The President has sixty days from 12 January to accept the findings of either Group of Commissioners as the findings of the International Trade Commission.