

# If the Russians Want More Meat

*Lauren Soth, The Des Moines Register, Feb 10, 1955*

Nikita Khrushchev, who seems to be the real boss of the Soviet Union now, signaled his emergence to power by a well-publicized speech before the central committee last month lambasting the performance of the Soviet economic managers. In this speech, Khrushchev especially attacked the management of agriculture. And in doing so, he took the rare line of praising the United States.

Khrushchev advocated the development of feed-livestock agriculture as in the United States. "Americans have succeeded in achieving a high level of animal husbandry," he said. He urged Soviet collective and state farms to plant hybrid corn to provide more feed for livestock. And he demanded an eightfold increase in corn production by 1960.

Speaking as an Iowan, living in the heart of the greatest feed-livestock area of the world, we wish to say that, for once, the Soviet leadership is talking sense. That's just what the Russian economy needs — more and better livestock so the Russian people can eat better.

We have no diplomatic authority of any kind, but we hereby extend an invitation to any delegation Khrushchev wants to select to come to Iowa to get the lowdown on raising high quality cattle, hogs, sheep and chickens. We promise to hide none of our "secrets." We will take the visiting delegation to Iowa's great agricultural experiment station at Ames, to some of the leading farmers of Iowa, to our livestock breeder, soil conservation experts and seed companies. Let the Russians see how we do it.

Furthermore, we should be glad to go to Russia with a delegation of Iowa farmers, agronomists, livestock specialists and other technical authorities. Everything we Iowans know about corn, other feed grains, forage crops, meat animals, and the dairy and poultry industries will be available to the Russians for the asking.

We ask nothing in return. We figure that more knowledge about the means to a good life in Russia can only benefit the world and us. It might even shake the Soviet leaders in their conviction that the United States wants war; it might even persuade them that there is a happier future in developing a high level of living than in this paralyzing race for more and more armaments.

Of course the Russians wouldn't do it. And we doubt that even our own government would dare to permit an adventure in human understanding of this sort. But it would make sense.

*This editorial, written by then-editor of the editorial pages, Lauren Soth (1910-98), won the Pulitzer Prize in 1956, and led to a series of exchange visits between the Soviets and Americans on agricultural issues, and later the visit of Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev to Iowa, including the farm of Roswell Garst near Coon Rapids in 1959.*