

News from Senator

BOB DOLE



(R - Kansas) SH 141 Hart Building, Washington, D.C. 20510-1601

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 21, 1988

CONTACT: ROBERT BORTHWICK
(202) 224-6521

STATEMENT BY SENATOR DOLE ON NATIONAL AGRICULTURE DAY

TODAY BEGINS THE CELEBRATION OF NATIONAL AGRICULTURE DAY AND NATIONAL AGRICULTURE WEEK, A TIME TO HONOR THE CONTRIBUTIONS THAT AMERICAN FARMERS MAKE TO OUR SOCIETY.

HONORING AMERICA'S PROVIDERS

OVER THE YEARS, THE NUMBER OF FAMILIES MAKING A LIVING DIRECTLY FROM THE LAND HAS STEADILY DECLINED. HOWEVER, THROUGH THE USE OF IMPROVED TECHNOLOGIES, BETTER FARMING PRACTICES AND NEW SEED VARIETIES, OUR FARMERS HAVE BECOME THE MOST PRODUCTIVE IN THE WORLD, ASSURING AMERICAN CONSUMERS OF AN ABUNDANT SUPPLY OF WHOLESOME FOOD.

STATISTICS SHOW THE AVERAGE AMERICAN FARMER PRODUCES ENOUGH FOOD TO FEED 114 PEOPLE INCLUDING 92 IN THE U.S. AND 22 OVERSEAS. AMERICANS SPEND ONLY 14 PERCENT OF THEIR DISPOSABLE INCOME ON FOOD PURCHASES. AMERICAN AGRICULTURE EMPLOYS 21 MILLION PEOPLE AND GENERATES 17 PERCENT OF THE NATION'S GROSS NATIONAL PRODUCT. IN FISCAL YEAR 1987 U.S. FARM EXPORTS WERE VALUED AT \$28 BILLION DOLLARS, GENERATING A POSITIVE TRADE BALANCE OF OVER \$7 BILLION DOLLARS.

CONCLUSION

IT IS OBVIOUS THAT AGRICULTURE AND RELATED INDUSTRIES ARE A MAJOR CORNERSTONE OF A HEALTHY NATIONAL ECONOMY. PUBLIC POLICIES THAT ENSURE A VIBRANT AND COMPETITIVE FARM ECONOMY WILL LEAD TO HIGHER PRICES FOR FARMERS, MORE JOBS IN RURAL AREAS AND A BROADER TAX BASE TO SUPPORT STATE AND LOCAL SERVICES NEEDED TO ENHANCE RURAL COMMUNITIES. I URGE MY COLLEAGUES AND ALL AMERICANS TO JOIN IN CELEBRATION OF AMERICAN AGRICULTURE.