

**Bob Dole**



**NEWS**

**U. S. SENATOR FOR KANSAS**

**FROM:**

**SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADER**

*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*  
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## **FARM BILL**

### **DOLE LEADS SENATE TO PASS LANDMARK LEGISLATION PROVIDING AMERICA'S FARMERS WITH CERTAINTY, SIMPLICITY, & FLEXIBILITY; BIG WIN FOR RURAL AMERICA, U.S. TAXPAYERS, & ENVIRONMENT**

The first question that must be asked of any farm bill is, "is it good for agriculture." And this historic farm bill is good for agriculture.

It is also good for taxpayers. It is good for the environment. And it is good for America.

I congratulate Senator Lugar and Congressman Roberts--the Chairs of the Senate and House Agriculture Committees--for their countless hours of hard work in producing this bipartisan legislation.

Congratulations as well to the ranking minority members, Senator Leahy and Congressman de la Garza, for making this legislation a truly bi-partisan effort.

Crafting this historic bill has required patience and perseverance -- qualities which farmers and ranchers also must possess.

#### **Farmers Finally to Plant for Market - Not for Government**

The legislation before us will transition America's farmers into the 21st century, without disrupting the farm economy or land values. Farmers will finally plant for the market and not for the government.

In addition, this legislation provides farmers with what they have asked for most -- certainty, simplicity and flexibility. As I travel across America, farmers and ranchers tell me the same thing -- keep it simple. All government programs -- and especially all regulations -- must be simpler and less intrusive. Farm programs should pass the common sense test.

And, as I said, another big winner in this bill is the American taxpayer. This legislation ensures reasonable and responsible spending through a capped entitlement. If we are to balance the budget--and we will--the American farmer will tell you that everyone must contribute.

Farmers often remind me that they are taxpayers, too. And as taxpayers, farmers want a balanced budget. Under a balanced budget, spending on interest payments are projected to decline \$15 billion over seven years.

For family farmers who often struggle to make ends meet, the money saved through reduced interest payments could make the difference between success and failure.

#### **Commonsense Conservation Approach**

This bill is landmark legislation. The bill contains one of the most significant conservation packages ever enacted. Instead of mandates and the heavy hand of government, this bill reflects a commonsense approach. This historic farm bill is one that conservationists can be proud of.

This legislation includes many elements from the conservation bill authored last year by Senators Lugar, Craig, Grassley and Dole--also known as S. 1373, the Agricultural Resource Enhancement Act.

For example, this farm bill continues the Conservation Reserve Program which, at 36.4 million acres makes the program twice the size of the National Wildlife Refuge System. This program is the nation's biggest and most successful private lands conservation program.

The bill streamlines cost share incentive programs into one revitalized program, the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP). The program will spend \$200 million per year on cost share assistance for crop and livestock farmers as they work to control pollution and erosion.

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