

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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DROUGHT RELIEF DRYING UP AS CONGRESS DELAYS
"LESS BUDGET SAVINGS MEANS LESS DOLLARS
FOR KANSAS WHEAT FARMERS"

WASHINGTON -- SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADER BOB DOLE TODAY PREDICTED FAR LESS DROUGHT ASSISTANCE WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR WHEAT PRODUCERS WHEN THE NEWEST BUDGET FORECASTS ARE RELEASED LATER THIS MONTH.

IN MID JULY, THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IS SCHEDULED TO RELEASE A SO-CALLED MID-SESSION BUDGET REVIEW WHICH WILL INCLUDE UPDATED CROP ESTIMATES AND FARM PROGRAM COSTS.

"THE MID JULY FORECAST WILL PROBABLY SHOW THAT BECAUSE OF RISING COSTS IN OTHER COMMODITIES -- MAINLY FEEDGRAINS -- POTENTIAL FUNDS FOR DROUGHT RELIEF HAVE BEEN CUT IN HALF.

"INDICATIONS ARE THAT AVAILABLE SAVINGS WILL NOT ADEQUATELY COVER WINTER WHEAT PRODUCERS IF ASSISTANCE IS PRO-RATED WITH MORE THAN 500 OTHER CROPS AS AUTHORIZED BY THE HOUSE BILL. THE HOUSE-PASSED DROUGHT BILL IS FAR TOO EXPENSIVE FOR THE PRESIDENT TO SIGN AND FAR TOO GENEROUS TO CROPS THAT HAVE NOT YET EXPERIENCED MAJOR DISASTER."

"THE PROBLEM WAS OBVIOUS MONTHS AGO: THE WINTER WHEAT CROP WAS DOOMED. THE ANSWER WAS ALSO CLEAR -- IMMEDIATE, TARGETED RELIEF FOR WINTER WHEAT PRODUCERS. UNFORTUNATELY, SUCH COMMONSENSE SOLUTIONS ARE THE RAREST OF ALL COMMODITIES ON CAPITOL HILL. I HOPE WHEAT FARMERS WON'T HAVE TO PAY THE PRICE FOR CONGRESSIONAL DELAY AND POLITICS," DOLE CONCLUDED.

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