

News from Senator

BOB DOLE



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DOLE URGES 1989 ACTION ON 1990 FARM BILL:
LETTER TO AG CHAIRMAN SEEKS TO DODGE 1990 POLITICS AND TO GIVE
FARMERS PROGRAM BEFORE PLANTING

WASHINGTON -- On the opening day of the Senate Agriculture Committee's consideration of the 1990 Farm Bill, Senate Republican Leader Bob Dole, in a letter to committee chairman Pat Leahy, urged the Committee to ready the bill for the President's signature yet this year.

In addition to underscoring the fact that nine of the panel's members will be running for re-election in 1990, Dole also emphasized that the current drought in Kansas may have to be addressed in the new farm bill if separate legislation does not offer relief for farmers plagued by critically dry conditions in the Midwest.

Following is the text of Senator Dole's letter:

"I would urge the Committee to proceed with writing a multi-year farm bill this year, if possible, to achieve a target date for the President's signature by late 1989 or early 1990. Unfortunately, past farm bills have not been enacted until well after winter wheat farmers have made their planting decisions. In fact, many times winter wheat farmers have already planted a crop before the program provisions are even known. Knowing the program details in advance of planting will help ensure the financial security of many family farmers.

As you are aware, nine of the nineteen members of the Senate Agriculture Committee are up for re-election in 1990. I believe this should give the Committee added incentive to deal with the Farm Bill as expeditiously as possible. Passing the 1990 farm bill late this year or early next year will ensure farmers of a responsible and bipartisan approach to farm policy that is free from campaign politics.

Producers in Kansas have additional concerns with the severe dry weather now persisting in our state. If the winter wheat crop suffers a disaster this year, as appears possible, and if separate legislation is not enacted to address the resulting financial stress, we may need to look at enhancing disaster relief authorities for the current dilemma as well as improving the federal crop insurance program for future disasters in the context of the 1990 Farm Bill.

I would also urge the Committee to continue the objectives of the 1985 Farm Bill especially in the areas of protecting farm income, promoting exports and controlling budget outlays. In addition, many farmers would like to see greater planting flexibility while protecting base acres," said Dole.

Dole added that he has visited with Secretary Yeutter about the need to pass the 1990 Farm package this year. According to Dole, the secretary was supportive of the idea.