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FROM: THE OFFICE OF U.S. SEN. BOB DOLE  
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WASHINGTON, D.C., June 16 ---U.S. Sen. Bob Dole (R-Kans.) told members of the Senate Agriculture Subcommittee on Rural Development today that "in devising a rural development plan" every effort should be made "to assure fair, if not preferential treatment to the farmers."

In a statement prepared for the Subcommittee hearings on rural community development, the Kansas Senator said:

It is time the farmers of this nation are allowed to share in the benefits of our prosperous economy in the same manner as the urban population of the nation. The first and most important consideration in any rural development plan should be: "What will this do to improve the income and living conditions of our farmers."

Dole stated the average farm income is about \$5400 a year, some \$100 less than what many urban welfare lobby groups feel should be the national guaranteed income level. He said that although farm income for all farmers has risen in the past two years, farmers are still leaving their farms in large numbers because "the small increase in their net income has not kept pace with the increases in the price they have to pay for farm implements, seed, fertilizer, chemicals and other requirements for production of our nation's food and fiber." Referring to a USDA report, Dole said "while total farm income increased \$1.6 billion during 1970, the cost of production increased \$2 billion, resulting in a per capita average net income for 1970 that was \$39 less than in 1969. Farmers, therefore, earn only about 78 per cent as much income as individuals in the non-farm segment of our economy, and in most cases, their hours are longer, and their work much harder."