



NEWS from U.S. Senator Bob Dole

(R.-Kans.)

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SENATE AND HOUSE CONFEREES REACH AGREEMENT ON FARM CREDIT LEGISLATION

WASHINGTON, D.C.....A Senate-House Conference Committee has approved a bill, originally introduced by Senator Bob Dole (R-Kan), to expand the farm credit programs of the Farmers Home Administration and to establish a new program of emergency credit for farmers who need help to survive the economic squeeze which has gripped many segments of the agricultural economy in recent years.

"I am very pleased the major work on the farm credit legislation has now been finished," Senator Dole said. "This bill is the result of several years work. I introduced several bills in the Senate during this time that have been combined into this one major farm credit bill."

The Conference bill, the broadest farm credit measure passed by Congress in recent years includes provisions which would:

- (1) Raise the FmHA real estate loan ceiling from \$100,000 to \$200,000 on direct loans and to \$300,000 on federally-guaranteed loans,
- (2) Raise the FmHA farm operating loan ceiling from \$50,000 to \$100,000 on direct loans and to \$200,000 on federally-guaranteed loans,
- (3) Make family-farm corporations, partnerships, and cooperatives eligible for FmHA credit for the first time,
- (4) Authorize cattlemen to approve a beef promotion checkoff program by a simple majority of producers voting in a referendum, this was an admendment by Senator Dole,
- (5) Extend a special cattle industry credit program for one year, through September 30, 1979,
- (6) Authorize an economic emergency loan program for farmers who have suffered losses due to low farm prices, the loan total would be limited to \$400,000 per farmer, loans could be used to refinance debts and to pay for operating expenses,
- (7) Create a special farm real estate loan for beginning and low-income farmers with interest rates set at 5 percent or less, a reduced principal payment schedule could apply during the early years of each loan to allow the new farm family to get on its feet,
- (8) Authorize the ceiling on federal rural water district grants to be raised from 50 per cent to 75 percent.

"Increased credit is by no means the cure all for the farmers problems," Dole said, "we must continue efforts to increase farm income. This bill will provide farmers with a more realistic, more flexible, and broader agricultural credit program than has been available."