

News from Senator

BOB DOLE



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
THURSDAY, MARCH 1, 1984

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DOLE: IMPROVED WHEAT PROGRAM STILL POSSIBLE

WASHINGTON -- Kansas Senator Bob Dole today indicated that an improved 1984 wheat program remains a "live possibility."

"I believe the Administration still has some flexibility on putting some balance into this year's commodity programs," said Dole. "If we can make some adjustments in program incentives, we can increase participation and reduce stocks while also bringing down government outlays. I have asked concerned farm state Senators to meet with Agriculture Secretary Block and OMB Director David Stockman next Monday to see if we can get agreement on improved programs for both 1984 and 1985 farm programs."

Dole's remarks referred to provisions of a proposed two-year plan for major commodity programs, including wheat, feed grains, cotton and rice, based on the Administration's request for a freeze on target prices at their 1983 levels. The proposal includes substituting a 10% paid land diversion for part of the current 30% wheat acreage reduction requirement for 1984. Other crops would be treated in the same manner, with the combined reduced acreage and diversion totalling the current cut-back requirement.

"One attractive feature of the proposed plan for producers is the option to sign-up for both the 1984 and 1985 programs at the same time. A two-year sign-up would get the program details announced before farmers begin planting preparations, and they would also be able to receive diversion payments on both 1984 and 1985 crops in advance, and in one payment," said Dole.

Dole added that "there are still some differences to work out -- particularly on target price levels and on haying and grazing privileges."

"I believe we can finally get a balanced program for wheat producers if their representatives here in Washington will show the necessary flexibility on Monday," said Dole.