

BOB DOLE



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DOLE COMMENDS EARLY 1985 WHEAT PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENT

WASHINGTON -- Kansas Senator Bob Dole today hailed Agriculture Secretary John Block's decision to announce final details for participation in the 1985 wheat program. "This early announcement will provide wheat farmers with a full picture of what next year's program will be, and should contribute to increased participation," Dole said. "With the 1984 wheat harvest still in its early stages, producers can now make their planting decisions early enough to really benefit from the program's income support and production control provisions."

The announcement deadline under existing legislation was July 1, but Dole had sent a letter to Block on June 1 urging an even earlier release. The 1985 program will include major provisions adopted in the "Agricultural Programs Adjustment Act of 1984," sponsored by Dole and other wheat state Senators and passed into law earlier this year. They include terms similar to the 1984 program, including a \$4.38 target price, a 10% paid land diversion at a \$2.70 per bushel payment rate with one-half paid in advance at the time of sign-up, and a 20% unpaid acreage reduction. There will be no change in treatment of summer-fallow producers from 1983, a USDA concession urged by Dole during the Senator's swing through northeast and central Kansas last February.

Unlike 1983, next year's program will not include a Payment-in-Kind (PIK) program option. Wheat was the only commodity to be offered a second year of PIK in 1984, and the program had been initiated in 1983 as at most a two-year program. In addition, grazing privileges will be offered, but will be restricted to exempt the six principal growing months.

"Knowing what the next year's program is going to be has been one of the main problems for Kansas wheat farmers in recent years," Dole stated. "With program sign-up set for the October 15 through March 1, 1985, period, Kansas wheat producers should have ample time to make their plans and get in the program."