

PRESS RELEASE FOR THE OFFICE OF
CONGRESSMAN BOB DOLE (R-KANSAS)

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This will be a critical week for farm legislation, Congressman Bob Dole (R-Kansas) reports from Washington.

"The House Committee on Agriculture, of which I am a member, may have a showdown vote soon on reporting out the Administration farm bill," Dole said. "The Committee has held extensive hearings on this controversial measure and appears to be about evenly divided on sending the bill to the House for debate.

"The Senate Agriculture Committee has already reported out a measure which differs in several important respects from the House Bill. The Senate proposal, for example, would give wheat farmers a choice between a continuation of the present program for two years and a two-price plan. The House bill, as it presently stands, gives wheat growers no acceptable alternative. It provides that if farmers reject the wheat certificate plan in a referendum, they will get no price support at all and, in addition, the Secretary of Agriculture would be authorized to dump 200 million bushels of government-owned wheat on the market each year to depress prices even further.

"The dairy section has been eliminated completely from the Senate bill. The House bill seeks to set up a voluntary milk production control plan.

"The Senate bill provides for a voluntary feed grain program. The House measure calls for mandatory controls on the production of corn, grain sorghums and other feed grains. The House proposal was made even more distasteful for many farmers when the Committee adopted an amendment which would permit the Secretary of Agriculture to require no reduction in feed grain production in the so-called 'feed deficit' areas.

"This amendment was designed to win support for the measure from a number of Southern Congressmen. If allowed to stand, the amendment would have the effect of forcing feed grain producers of Kansas and other Midwestern states to cut their acreage by about 20 percent, while growers in such states as Arkansas, Alabama and Georgia would not be called upon for any reduction.

"This amendment also takes the heart out of the two-price plan for wheat. Kansas wheat growers would look to the feed deficit areas as the natural market for feed wheat. The market would be sharply reduced if producers of the deficit feed areas are not required to take the same cutback as other feed grain growers.

"In my opinion, the bill needs further improvement before being reported out of Committee but it is doubtful there will be an opportunity to offer further amendments until it reaches the floor.

"The House Agriculture Committee this week may also finally get the long-awaited recommendations on sugar legislation from the Administration. The present Sugar Act expires June 30. The Administration has waited so long in coming forward with its proposals it seems doubtful Congress can act in time to give sugar producers this year the additional permanent acreage allotment increases which are needed."

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