

News from Senator

# BOB DOLE



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DOLE: BREAK THE IMPASSE OVER FARM LEGISLATION

SENATOR READIES AMENDMENT ON IMPROVED 1984 WHEAT PROGRAM

WASHINGTON -- Kansas Senator Bob Dole, looking to revive momentum for improved farm legislation, today revealed he has crafted an amendment which will improve the 1984 Wheat Program by boosting PIK payments and expanding the paid acreage diversion program, while at the same time limiting the scheduled increase of target prices.

Dole, the senior Republican on the Senate Agriculture Committee, said: "It's clear that our failure to take legislative action has forced the Administration to define farm programs this year and next in terms of outdated and unpopular laws already on the books. Our continued refusal to find some common ground may be appealing politically in some states, but it is damaging to the interests of our farmers."

The Dole 1984 Wheat Program amendment would: 1) include a ten percent paid acreage diversion program; 2) raise the payment rate for the Payment-in-Kind program to 85 percent; and 3) scale back the scheduled increase in the target price from \$4.45 to \$4.35 per bushel.

In a statement on the Senate floor, Dole pointed to the minimal effect which this year's production program, including PIK, has had on burdensome wheat surpluses and low prices. "With over 1.5 billion bushels of wheat expected to be on hand next June 1, there is an urgent need to cut back on anticipated production to prevent a further collapse in farm prices," Dole said.

The Dole proposal would replace the 30% unpaid acreage reduction plan announced in August by Agriculture Secretary Block with a 20% acreage reduction and 10% paid diversion program. It would also raise the payment rate on the 10-20% PIK program from 75% to 85% of farm yield. In exchange, the minimum wheat target price for the 1984 and 1985 crops would be set at \$4.35 per bushel, up five cents from this year's \$4.30. Target prices for other crops would receive similar increases, with the minimum corn rate set at \$2.92, cotton at 78 cents per pound and rice at \$11.57 per hundredweight.

"There is no benefit to a 15 cent increase in the wheat target price if no one is going to participate in the program," Dole stated. "The only two ways I know to get stocks down and prices up are by increasing exports and restraining production."