

News from Senator

BOB DOLE



(R - Kansas)

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DOLE ANNOUNCES DROUGHT AID FOR 35 KANSAS COUNTIES

WASHINGTON -- Kansas Senator Bob Dole today announced that 35 drought-stricken counties in eastern Kansas have been approved by the U.S. Department of Agriculture to receive low-interest disaster loans.

"I am gratified that Secretary Block has acted promptly on these first applications for relief from the severe crop losses caused by this summer's searing heat," Dole said. "Eligible farmers in these counties will now be able to finance next year's operating expenses at well below commercial interest rates."

The announcement followed notification by the Farmers Home Administration that 35 of the 41 counties formally requested by the State on October 13 had been reviewed and approved. Farmers in eligible counties who suffered at least a 30% crop loss due to the drought will be able to receive loans at 5% interest on the first \$100,000 and 8% on the balance up to \$500,000, if unable to find credit elsewhere. The regular FmHA interest rate is currently 13-3/4%.

"I have asked the USDA to further review the six requested counties which were not approved today," said Senator Dole. "In addition, a damage assessment of other counties in central Kansas is being made by state Farmers Home officials in Topeka, and should be completed soon."

"More government loans may not be the best answer for many Kansas farmers," Dole said, "but anyone who lost their crops in this summer's heat wave should have the same option as producers in the counties approved today."

The counties approved for low-interest disaster loans in today's announcement include:

Allen	Elk	Miami
Anderson	Franklin	Montgomery
Atchison	Geary	Nemaha
Bourbon	Greenwood	Neosho
Brown	Jackson	Osage
Chase	Jefferson	Pottawatomie
Chautauqua	Johnson	Riley
Cherokee	Labette	Shawnee
Clay	Leavenworth	Wabaunsee
Coffey	Linn	Woodson
Doniphan	Lyon	Wyandotte
Douglas	Marshall	

Dole said the USDA is deferring determination on six other counties: Butler, Cowley, Crawford, Marion, Morris, and Wilson. A decision is expected within two weeks.