

News from Senator

BOB DOLE



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DOLE GETS AGREEMENT ON WHEAT BILL DEADLINE,
WORKS OUT COMPROMISE ON WHEAT VOTE DELAY

WASHINGTON -- Kansas Senator Bob Dole scored two victories on behalf of Kansas farmers by getting the Senate Agriculture Committee to agree to report out the 1986 wheat bill by July 15 and in getting Secretary Block's agreement to postpone the national "wheat referendum" until later this year.

Senator Dole, citing the need for quick action on the new farm bill so wheat farmers would know where they stand prior to the planting of the winter crop, urged the Agriculture Committee to report out the wheat bill by July 15 so the Senate could act on it before the August recess. Current farm law expires October 1.

Dole told the panel, "I represent a wheat state, and my farmers need to know what the new program is going to be so that they can finalize their planting decisions. With planting just around the corner, we're running out of time for Congress to act before the August recess. So I think we need to be responsible to them, and impose a deadline on ourselves."

Dole later met in his Majority Leader's Office with 10 farm state senators in an effort to reach a consensus on the 1986 farm bill. As a result, staff members will labor during the July 4 recess and present recommendations to the senators prior to the July deadline.

Senator Dole then arranged a compromise between Agriculture Secretary John Block and House leaders to postpone the wheat referendum. The referendum was originally scheduled to be held in July, but Senate legislation introduced by Dole gives Secretary Block authority to delay the vote until 31 days after adjournment of the current session of Congress.

"It does no good to conduct a meaningless referendum that only confuses farmers and wastes tax dollars," said Dole. Secretary Block will send letters to the House and Senate Ag Committee chairmen confirming that he will not schedule the referendum before October 1, and that it is not his desire to hold the referendum, according to Dole.