

News from Senator

BOB DOLE



(R - Kansas)
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DOLE CALLS AG SECRETARY: MORE BAD NEWS FROM KANSAS ON AILING
WHEAT CROP -- SENATOR RENEWS CALL FOR DROUGHT AID AS RECORD HEAT
BAKES STATE

WASHINGTON -- WITH TEMPERATURES BREAKING THE 100 DEGREE MARK IN KANSAS, SENATOR BOB DOLE SPOKE BY TELEPHONE TODAY WITH SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE CLAYTON YUETTER TO BRING HIM A PERSONAL UPDATE ON THE TROUBLED WHEAT CROP.

"As if the drought wasn't bad enough, now Kansas farmers are watching what's left of their wheat burn up in a wave of record-setting temperatures -- it's a double whammy that produced an alarming 11 percent jump this weekend in the 'very poor' category for our wheat crop. Now, more than half of our wheat is officially designated 'very poor'," Dole said.

According to Dole, Secretary Yuetter was just beginning an intra-agency meeting on crop and weather conditions when the Kansas Senator called.

"I visited with Secretary Yuetter today to again stress the importance of allowing farmers haying and grazing privileges during the principal growing months. I also asked him to approve implementation of emergency livestock feeding programs for the current year. Having been in Salina this past Friday, I told the Secretary that the state is looking much worse than it did when we toured drought-stricken areas a week and a half ago.

"Many farmers and ranchers are becoming increasingly concerned about the lack of grass and water for their cattle which will cause them to sell their herds or move cattle into feedlots much earlier," noted Dole.

"It is obvious that many of the counties that were approved for drought relief last year will be even harder hit this year, especially in the northcentral and western parts of the state. I have asked USDA to act quickly in these areas," Dole said.

USDA can approve livestock feeding programs on a county-wide basis after determining amount of losses. The Emergency Feed Program (EFP) provides up to 50% of the cost for replacing feed loss due to drought. The Emergency Feed Assistance Program (EFAP) provides CCC-owned grain at 75% of the county loan rate to producers in drought-designated counties. Individual producers must have suffered a 40% loss to qualify under both programs.