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Farm Bill Conference Report Gains Sorghum's Support

The National Sorghum Producers is urging Congress to vote for the proposed Farm Bill Conference Report and give farmers the stability they need to continue to provide the safest, most affordable food supply in the world while contributing to America's fuel independence.

"Our organization would like to thank House Committee on Agriculture Chairman Collin Peterson and Senate Committee on Ag, Nutrition and Forestry Ranking Member Saxby Chambliss for their interest in the sorghum industry and their leadership in reaching an agreement on this farm bill," said NSP President Dale Murden. "They and their staffs worked tirelessly to protect the commodity safety net throughout the farm bill process."

Details of an agreed-upon farm bill package were released yesterday by the House and Senate agriculture committees. Provisions impacting sorghum include key language requiring USDA to review how it sets price elections and reevaluate the current system with the input of the sorghum industry. The bill also includes an increase in the sorghum target price and incentives for cellulosic ethanol production and advanced biofuels. The Research Title of the bill includes a provision allowing grants to study sorghum for use as a bioenergy feedstock, its environmental impacts, and its water-sipping qualities.

"We especially thank Senator Pat Roberts and Congressman Jerry Moran for their work in securing vital crop insurance language for the sorghum industry," Murden said. "This industry has struggled under USDA's system for setting crop insurance price elections for many years, and through Roberts' and Moran's efforts, we finally have the opportunity to affect change that will improve insurance prices for sorghum farmers."

NSP fully supports quick and unified passage of the farm bill, and has signed a bipartisan letter expressing this desire. Over 550 organizations representing the interests of agriculture, conservation and nutrition rallied to sign one letter urging the House and Senate to pass the Farm Bill Conference Report.

"This is by no means a perfect piece of legislation, and none of our organizations achieved everything we had individually requested," the letter stated. "However, it is a carefully balanced compromise of policy priorities that has broad support among organizations representing the nation's agriculture, conservation, and nutrition interests."

"NSP and farmers all over the country are working with their Congressmen and Senators on Capitol Hill to encourage a veto-proof vote on this farm bill," says Murden.

NSP represents U.S. sorghum producers. The organization works to ensure the profitability of sorghum production coast to coast through legislative representation, market development, research and education. To learn more about NSP, visit www.sorghumgrowers.com.