

Wisconsin Farm Bureau: Pleased with action on farm bill in House and Senate

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MADISON – Wisconsin Farm Bureau Federation is pleased with the passage of the 2018 Farm Bill in both the House of Representatives and the Senate.

“The passage of the farm bill is welcomed news to Wisconsin farmers,” said WFBF President Jim Holte. “Farmers have not had much for good news lately, with depressed prices and tariff threats. Farmers need certainty and the passage of the farm bill is a step in the right direction.”

Both versions of the farm bill include language beneficial to farmers. Three key areas of the farm bill Wisconsin Farm Bureau is most encouraged by is additional support for dairy risk management, the legalization of industrial hemp and continued support of crop insurance programs.

Dairy Risk Management

With farm income at the lowest level in more than 10 years, it is essential that farmers have appropriate risk management tools. Both versions of the 2018 Farm Bill offer additional support to dairy farmers through dairy risk programs. Once conference committee members have been named, WFBF will be weighing in on the changes that make the most sense for Wisconsin dairy farmers.

Industrial Hemp

The Senate version of the farm bill includes all the language from the Hemp Farming Act, including the legalization of hemp and hemp-based products such as CBD oil. The House Farm Bill did not include language for hemp, among other differences. WFBF is optimistic about Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell leading the fight to have the Senate hemp language added to the final version by the conference committee.

Crop Insurance Programs

Crop insurance programs are necessary tools for farmers to manage risk associated with weather- and pest-related damage. WFBF is pleased that the Senate and House Farm Bill both keep crop insurance programs intact. It is necessary to continue providing support for crops, especially with a severe downturn in market prices.

“Wisconsin Farm Bureau would like to thank Representatives Paul Ryan, Sean Duffy, Mike Gallagher, Glenn Grothman and Jim Sensenbrenner along with Senator Tammy Baldwin for voting, ‘yes’ on their respective versions of the 2018 Farm Bill,” said Holte. “Wisconsin farmers will be looking for continued support and passage of the farm bill to ensure uninterrupted access to risk management tools, research funding and other essential resources.”