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Wisconsin Growers Praise Action on Science-Based Water Policy Legislation WPVGA Applauds the Passage of Senate Bill 76

[MADISON....] The Wisconsin Potato & Vegetable Growers Association (WPVGA) applauds the State Senate's passage of Senate Bill 76, the science-based water policy legislation sponsored by Senate Majority Leader Scott Fitzgerald (R-Juneau).

"This legislation is critical for Wisconsin farmers who rely on high capacity wells to irrigate farmland and feed families across the globe," said WPVGA Executive Director Tamas Houlihan. "It also provides certainty for Wisconsin farmers who rely on the ability to utilize irrigation to grow the nutritious vegetables that are the pride of Wisconsin."

The legislation maintains Wisconsin's stringent environmental requirements and well construction standards for repaired, replaced and reconstructed wells. The bill importantly requires the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources to conduct a critical study of high capacity wells and their potential impacts on surface waters in areas in the Central Sands region of Wisconsin.

"This scientific study will assist with the development of future voluntary measures or regulatory changes and will make sure those decisions are guided by science," said Houlihan. "Wisconsin farmers were strong advocates for this legislation and we commend Senate Majority Leader Scott Fitzgerald for his leadership in authoring SB 76. In addition, the amendment to refine the study area authored by Senator Testin further enhances the quality of the science that will be developed as a result of this legislation."

Houlihan said he and members of his association are hopeful the bill will see swift passage by the State Assembly this Spring.

About Wisconsin Agriculture:

- Agriculture contributes \$88 Billion to Wisconsin's economy
- Provides employment for 827,000 people
- Each job supports 1.4 indirect positions in related industries
- Wisconsin ranks 3rd in potato production and 2nd in processed vegetables
- The Central Sands region is a key area for potato and vegetable production and food security.

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