



## Washington Report October 2, 2009

### SRA News...

**Industry Representatives Meet in Des Moines.** Crop insurance companies met this past week in Des Moines, Iowa for further discussions on the Standard Reinsurance Agreement (SRA). The industry is likely to receive an initial draft from the Risk Management Agency (RMA) sometime in early or mid-November. As reported previously, Mike Torrey, CIRB's Executive Vice President and Federal Affairs Representative, participated in this week's round of discussions.

**USDA Pursuing New Direction for Crop Insurance.** The Agri-Pulse newsletter included a report this week that RMA Administrator Bill Murphy is looking to "rebalance" the federal crop insurance program as part of this round of SRA negotiations. Murphy is interested in increasing incentives for insurers and agents to offer crop insurance coverage in regions outside the Midwest, particularly in the Southeast and High Plains areas. The full article is attached to this email.

### USDA News...

**USDA Issuing Livestock Forage Disaster Payments.** Agriculture Secretary Vilsack announced this week that ranchers signed up for the Livestock Forage Disaster Program are now receiving disaster payments for forage losses that resulted from severe drought. The sign-up deadline for 2008 losses is December 10, 2009, and the deadline for 2009 losses is January 31, 2010. For more information, click [here](#).

**USDA Designates 31 Wisconsin Counties as Primary Natural Disaster Areas.** For more information, click [here](#).

### Congressional News...

**House Agriculture Committee to Host Discussion on Crop Insurance.** House Agriculture Chairman Collin Peterson and General Farm Commodities and Risk Management Subcommittee Chairman Leonard Boswell are holding a roundtable meeting with crop insurance industry representatives on Wednesday, October 7. Invited participants expect to discuss the upcoming negotiations on the Standard Reinsurance Agreement and the challenges facing the industry. Mike Torrey and Steve Rutledge, President of Farmers Mutual Hail Insurance Company, will represent CIRB at the discussion.

**Congress Poised to Pass Final Agriculture Appropriations Bill.** The House and Senate have successfully reconciled the differences between their respective versions of the Fiscal Year 2010 Agriculture Appropriations Bill. As a result, both chambers may take up and pass the final bill next week. The measure totals \$23.3 billion in discretionary spending and \$97.3 billion in mandatory spending, and does not include any language affecting the federal crop insurance program.

**House Outlook.** Besides Agriculture Appropriations, the House may vote on several other **final Appropriations measures** next week, including Interior-Environment and Homeland Security. Additionally, House Leadership is still working behind closed doors to prepare a **healthcare overhaul package** for floor consideration.

**Senate Outlook.** The Senate is also expected to focus next week on **Appropriations legislation**, with a possible vote on the final Energy and Water measure. Additionally, the Senate Finance Committee is likely to complete its work on **healthcare legislation**, clearing the way for Senate Leadership to merge the bill with a proposal passed out of the Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee before bringing a combined measure to the floor.

## **Industry & Field News...**

**Barnaby Comments on Wheat Insurance Deadline.** Kansas State University Agricultural Economist Art Barnaby recently discussed the deadline for wheat insurance in a radio interview. To listen, click [here](#).

**Warm Weather to Boost Lubbock Cotton Harvest.** The Lubbock Avalanche-Journal reported this week that incoming warm temperatures are likely to improve conditions for cotton growers. This year's cotton crop is expected to yield four million bales, keeping up with the region's 10-year average. To view the article, click [here](#).