



## Washington Report October 30, 2009

### USDA News...

**November 20 Sales Closing Date Nears.** The Risk Management Agency (RMA) reminded producers this week of the upcoming November 30 sales closing deadline for crop insurance for perennials and horticulture products. Producers are being urged to consult with crop insurance agents to discuss their insurance options. For more information, click [here](#).

**RMA Announces New Tobacco Provisions for 2010 Crop Year.** RMA recently announced that it has removed the Quota Tobacco Crop Provisions and replaced the Guaranteed Tobacco Crop Provisions with new Tobacco Crop Provisions. Approved Insurance Providers must notify policyholders that the previous provisions are no longer applicable for the 2010 Crop Year. For more information, click [here](#).

### Congressional News...

**House Outlook.** After months of debate and discussion, the full House of Representatives is slated to debate and vote next week on **healthcare overhaul legislation** totaling nearly \$1 trillion. It is not yet clear whether or not Members will be able to propose amendments on the floor. For more information on the healthcare legislation, click [here](#).

**Senate Outlook.** The Senate is likely to take up **Fiscal Year 2010 Appropriations legislation** next week, possibly the Commerce-Justice-Science measure. Discussions continue on **healthcare legislation**, and the chamber may also complete work on an **extension of unemployment benefits**.

**Vilsack Will Not Seek Senate Seat.** Christie Vilsack, wife of Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack, announced this week that she would not challenge Sen. Charles Grassley (R-IA) next year. While she noted earlier this month that she felt she was qualified to run, she will not be a candidate in 2010.

### Industry News...

**Corn and Soybean Harvests Below Five-Year Average.** DTN reported this week that the top five corn producing states – Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Minnesota, and Nebraska – are running between 32 and 63 percentage points behind the five-year average for harvesting. Additionally, the soybean

harvest is 31 percentage points behind last year's rate and 36 points behind the five-year average; the same states facing difficulty with the corn harvest are also having trouble with soybeans. The Wall Street Journal reported that rain and freezing temperatures are hindering the harvest season. The pace of the corn harvest is the slowest since 1985, when USDA started keeping records. For more information, click [here](#).

## **CIRB Member News...**

**AAIC CEO Weighs in on Key Initiatives.** In a recent newsletter, American Agricultural Insurance Company Executive Vice President & CEO Janet Katz provided an update on recent initiatives that AAIC has been pursuing in order to help Farm Bureau insurance companies weather the difficult economy. These include the Emerging Issues Task Force, which tracks multiple issues of important to Farm Bureau companies, and Predictive Modeling Seminars, which AAIC hosted this fall to help companies price and underwrite their business more accurately. For more information, click [here](#).

**Guy Carpenter Reports Move to Enterprise Risk Management.** Since last year's financial crisis, reinsurers and insurers are moving increasingly toward Enterprise Risk Management (ERM), according to a recently updated study published by Guy Carpenter and Company, LLC. Since Guy Carpenter's initial study was published in April 2009, rating agencies have stepped up their emphasis on ERM-related disciplines, with the intent of furthering transparency. For more information, click [here](#).

**Farmers Mutual Hail Announces Spring Update Meetings.** In its September/October 2009 newsletter, "The Cloud," Farmers Mutual Hail Insurance Company laid out a schedule for its spring meetings to allow agents to earn continuing education hours for state licensing requirements and training hours for Federal Crop Insurance Corporation requirements. Meetings will be posted online after invitations are mailed.