

Oregon Wheat Growers League Position on 2012 Farm Bill

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The Oregon Wheat Growers League represents nearly 1100 farmers who account for the majority of the wheat grown in Oregon. Our members depend on the Farm Bill programs to manage risk and provide a safety net for producers, ensure market access overseas, and offer incentives for conservation. Continued funding for these programs in the 2012 Farm Bill is critical to maintaining the production of vital food crops, the productivity of our farmlands, and the continued flow of jobs, investment and tax revenues from our operations and supply chains.

Although the current costs of farm programs in the federal budget are running well below historic highs, we recognize that agriculture may be asked to contribute its fair share to the essential effort to reduce federal spending and get our deficits and debt under control. In that regard, the League's policy recommendations for the 2012 Farm Bill are as follows:

- **Crop Insurance.** The highest priority for Oregon's wheat growers is to maintain and improve the crop insurance program as the central component of the farm safety net. Crop insurance helps producers to manage both price and production risk, to market effectively, and to secure needed credit. A strengthened crop insurance program can serve as the foundation of the farm safety effort in a way that serves both producers and taxpayers.
- **MAP/FMD.** Nearly 90 percent of Oregon's wheat production is exported, and thus funding for the Market Access Program and the Foreign Market Development program is essential to ensuring U.S. competitiveness in foreign markets.
- **Commodity Loans/Countercyclical Payments.** The commodity loan and countercyclical payment programs operate at minimal cost in the current price environment, but offer important revenue protections in the event of a catastrophic decline in commodity prices. These tools should be preserved.
- **Conservation.** Conservation programs provide important environmental benefits to the general public as well as supplemental income for producers. These programs should be maintained and appropriately targeted.
- **Balance.** If funding for farm programs is reduced, the reductions should be proportionate to reductions in other federal programs and should maintain the existing balance of farm program funding among States and sectors within the agricultural community.