LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY FOR:

May 14, 2001

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LAST WEEK

FY 2002 BUDGET RESOLUTION – The FY 2002 Budget Conference was completed and passed by both chambers. This resolution does not require Presidential approval. The mandatory agriculture conservation budget authority is increased to \$350 million for FY 2002 and a reserve of \$350 million each year for FY 2003-2011. The budget authority for conservation is increased by \$1.76 billion, an to be shared by many federal conservation programs. The resolution provides a reserve of \$66 billion for reauthorizing farm bill programs for FY 2003-2011, in addition to \$12.5 billion in additional budget authority for FY 2001 and FY 2002 to address low agriculture income concerns.

WATER QUALITY BRIEFING - Rep. Walter Jones (NC) held a briefing with NRCS and farmers on the impact of NRCS nutrient management policy on livestock operations in North Carolina on May 10, 2001. Tom Christensen, Director- Animal Husbandry and Clean Water Programs, responded to questions about NRCS role in CAFO/AFO rulemaking.

LEGISLATION OF NOTE

The following Bill of significance to NRCS and conservation have been introduced.

BILL	MEMBER	PURPOSE
H.R. 1689	Schaffer, CO	Grassland Reserve Program
		To amend the Food Security Act of 1985 to establish a
		grassland reserve program to assist owners in restoring
		and conserving grassland.

THIS WEEK

ANIMAL FEEDING OPERATIONS HEARING - The Water Resources and Environment Subcommittee of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee (Chairman Duncan, TN) will hold a hearing on management options for confined animal feeding operations. Federal agency witnesses are not scheduled to testify.

May 16 2:00 p.m. 2167 Rayburn

RURAL DEVELOPMENT – Rep. Marcy Kaptur is holding an FY 2002 budget briefing on the condition of rural America. Three panels will discuss rural water, rural infrastructure, and conservation focusing on urban encroachment. One panel will include an NRCS representative along with other USDA agencies. Other panels will come from academic and non–profit organizations.

May 17 10:00 a.m. 2362 Rayburn

CONSERVATION SECURITY ACT – The Conservation Security Act of 2001 is expected to be introduced at a public event on May 15, 2001 by Sen. Tom Harkin (IA) and Sen. Gordon Smith (OR). The bill establishes a program of incentive payments for voluntarily adopting and maintaining environmentally beneficial conservation practices on private lands in agricultural production.

May 15 10:00 NE Capitol Lawn

LOOKING AHEAD

AGRICULTURE CONSERVATION PROGRAMS - The Conservation, Credit, Rural Development and Research Subcommittee (Chairman Lucas, OK) of the House Agriculture Committee will hold a hearing on agricultural conservation programs.

May 23 2:30 p.m. 1300 Longworth

AGRICULTURE FREE TRADE PROPOSALS -The House Agriculture Committee (Chairman Combest-TX) will hold an oversight hearing on agriculture trade in the western hemisphere, including a review of the planned Free Trade Association of the Americas and Administration proposals on trade. The witnesses are Secretary of Agriculture, Ann M. Veneman and Robert B. Zoellick, U.S. Trade Representative.

May 23 10:00 a.m. 1300 Longworth

FEDERAL FARM POLICY- The General Farm Commodities and Risk Management Subcommittee (Chairman Chambliss, GA) of the House Agriculture Committee will hold a field hearing on federal farm policy.

June 23 9:00 a.m. Macon, GA
