

WEEKLY LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY FOR:

September 10, 2001

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LAST WEEK:

SENATE AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE BRIEFING ON ANIMAL FEEDING OPERATIONS – On Wednesday, September 5, 2001, NRCS provided a follow up briefing to the Senate Agriculture Committee staff regarding proposed changes to regulations regarding animal agriculture and non-point source pollution. NRCS Director of Animal Husbandry and Clean Water Programs Division, Tom Christensen, and Associate Deputy Chief for Programs, Carole Jett led the NRCS portion of the briefing. Mr. Christensen gave detailed analysis of NRCS' concerns with proposed changes to the regulations, including the number of new farms that would be covered by the regulations; the economic impact of the changes; and also the flexibility states would have to implement them. The Committee asked numerous questions about the use of third party providers for nutrient management, and also emerging technology for dealing with animal waste.

OGALLALA AQUIFER BRIEFING – On Thursday, August 30, 2001, NRCS State Conservationist for New Mexico, Rosendo Treviño III and Mark Berkland, Director of Conservation Operations Division, provided a briefing to staff for Sen. Jeff Bingaman (NM), Rep. Tom Udall (NM) and Rep. Jerry Moran (KS) about groundwater conservation issues on the High Plains. The briefing included a review of programs, which are providing or have the potential to provide enhancements in water quality and quantity in the Ogallala Aquifer.

AGRICULTURAL TRADE - The House International Relations Committee marked up sections of the House draft farm bill (H.R. 2646) that affect overseas programs. The House Agriculture Committee approved the bill July 27. It calls for a 10-year, \$73.5 billion rewrite of the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform Act of 1996 (P. L. 104-127)

