

LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY FOR:**January 16, 2001**

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LAST WEEK

HOUSE REPUBLICANS MAKE COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS – Committee assignments were made for House Republicans last week. There are several new members to the House Committee on Agriculture. House Democrats should complete their committee assignments this week. The Republican Members are as follows:

Larry Combest, TX (Chairman)	John A. Boehner, OH
Bob Goodlatte, VA	Richard W. Pombo, CA
Nick Smith, MI	Terry Everett, AL
Frank D. Lucas, OK	Saxby Chambliss, GA
Jerry Moran, KS	Bob Schaffer, CO
John R. Thune, SD	William L. Jenkins, TN
John Cooksey, LA	Gil Gutknecht, MN
Bob Riley, AL	Michael Simpson, ID
Doug Ose, CA	Robin Hayes, NC
Ernie Fletcher, KY	Charles Pickering, MS
Tim Johnson, IL	Tom Osborne, NE
Mike Pence, IN	Dennis Rehberg, MT
Sam Graves, MO	Adam Putnam, FL
Mark Kennedy, MN	

CHAIRMAN COMBEST NAMES SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRMEN AND SUBCOMMITTEE JURISDICTIONS – On January 8th, 2001 House Committee on Agriculture Chairman Larry Combest (R-TX) designated subcommittee chairmen and made changes to the subcommittee jurisdictions to better reflect the Committee's focus for the 107th Congress.

Rep. Frank Lucas (R-OK) was named chairman of the newly formed Conservation, Credit, Rural Development and Research Subcommittee of the House Committee on Agriculture. This new subcommittee is expected to increase congressional focus on conservation issues and legislation.

LEGISLATION OF NOTE – The following legislation pertinent to NRCS was introduced in the past week:

Bill Number	Sponsor	Purpose
H.R. 32	Bereuter, NE	To amend the Agricultural Market Transition Act to establish a flexible fallow program under which a producer may idle a portion of the total planted acreage of the loan commodities of the producer in exchange for higher loan rates for marketing assistance loans on the remaining acreage of the producer.
H.R. 33	Bereuter, NE	To amend the Agricultural Market Transition Act to authorize a program to encourage agricultural producers to rest and rehabilitate croplands while enhancing soil and water conservation and wildlife habitat.

THIS WEEK

VENEMAN CONFIRMATION HEARING SET – The Senate Agriculture Committee will hold a confirmation hearing on January 18th, 2001 for President-elect Bush's nomination of Ann Veneman to be the Bush Administration Secretary of Agriculture. If confirmed, Veneman will become the first female Secretary of Agriculture. She has received support from both parties including outgoing Secretary Dan Glickman who said of Veneman, "I think we got about the best person we could for the job, since the other team won." Ms. Veneman, a native of California, served as USDA Deputy Secretary during the Bush administration in 1991-1993.

LOOKING AHEAD

AGRICULTURE COMMITTEE HEARINGS – The full House Agriculture Committee is expected to begin to hold hearings in early February. The hearings are expected to address low commodity prices and should be the beginning stages for the crafting of the 2002 Farm Bill.
