

Corn Growers Outline Agenda For Farm Bill

NASHVILLE, Tenn.—The 1995 farm bill should provide corn growers with more flexibility, greater market orientation, and a variety of voluntary conservation options, according to delegates attending the National Corn Growers Association's (NCGA) annual Corn Classic.

For the first time, the voting body called for a combined farm program payment base, giving growers the option of planting any mix of approved crops while remaining eligible for program payments. In addition,

they called for targeted, flexible conservation programs to replace annual acreage reduction programs.

"These policies represent a look into the future on behalf of the nation's corn growers," said NCGA President Rod Gangwish, Shelton, Neb. "More than 250 delegates from 24 states signaled that they are ready to consider policy options to move away from current farm programs for transitioning to policies that are more flexible and workable," he said.

"We came through some vigorous debate, but we are walking out of the door tonight with a new policy manual that the organization can be proud of," said Gangwish. "We have a policy development process second to none." After completing an extensive resolutions process, delegates debated resolutions from member states for several hours on Sunday and again on Tuesday afternoon.

In light of federal budget cutting pressures, corn growers



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re-emphasized the importance of agriculture to the economic viability of rural communities and to the U.S. economy.

Delegates also strongly opposed taking a disproportionate share of federal budget reductions. Other highlights of the NCGA's 1995 farm bill proposals:

- Provide full flexibility to allow producers to shift productive resources in response to market, agronomic, environmental, and conservation considerations. They'd like to see a farm program payment base created by combining all historic plantings and permit participating producers to plant any combination of crops on the whole farm. Deficiency payments would be based on historic program crop payments acres and program yields.

- Create a targeted, flexible conservation program that addresses one or more of the multiple environmental challenges of soil erosion, water quality, wildlife habitat and allows producers to continue to make environmentally compatible improvement under an approved plan.

- Continue marketing loans for feed grains. Provide for the nine-month loan to be eligible

for an extension of an additional six-months with an interest rate adjustment.

- Use a targeted conservation program to meet anticipated water quality requirements contained in the proposed reauthorization of the Clean Water Act.

- Combine various incentive programs into a single program to promote voluntary adoption of resource conserving management practices.

- Strive for the implementation of additional market-based farm program policies that are developed to accelerate the competitiveness of U.S. producers in domestic and world markets and provide for an orderly transition in farm program policy. Place increased emphasis on expansion of both domestic and foreign market development and utilization of U.S. bulk and value-added agricultural products.

- Expand the U.S. government's support for agricultural research in the areas of production, utilization, nutrition and other areas.

- Increase educational efforts relating to income protection and risk reduction tools through programs like USDA's Option Pilot Program.



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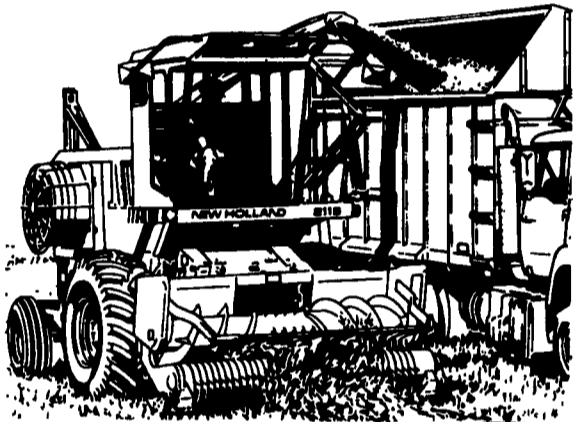
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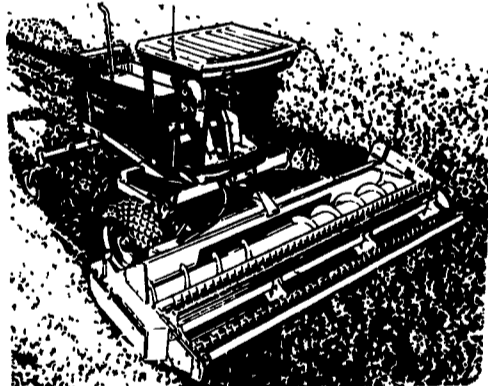


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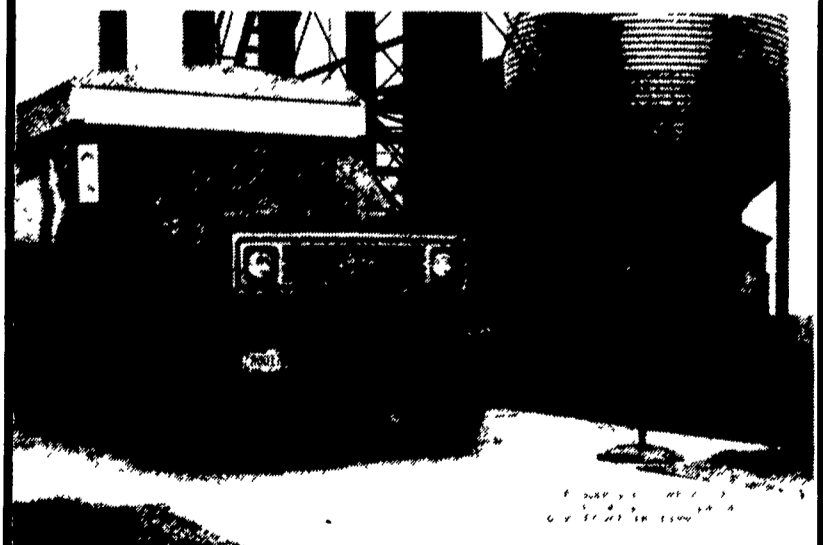
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