(Continued from Page A1)

pay off --- he said that work to get a vote in the U.S. Senate for corn growers, as related to ethanol as a fuel additive, came down to a tie. all because of work done earlier to convince a certain Senator about the importance of ethanol use.

The tie was broken in favor of corn growers by Vice President Al Gore, who presides over the U.S. Senate. Wagner said the key, however, was the fact that it took lobbying efforts to first achieve the tie.

The Farm Bill negotiations are mixed and Wagner said that, among others, goals sought for corn growers are for flexibility in the new Farm Bill, to allow planting for markets and not support programs, and to create a sevenyear weaning program to eliminate support programs that would coincide with a seven-year budget balancing transition. (In later remarks he said dairy objectives include eliminating the milkcheck assessment that was part of the budget reconcilliation act.

Among the political things of which producers should be aware is the fact that production farmers represent less then 2 percent of the

voting citizenry and that representation is decreasing, therefore requiring more strength from representative organizations and more of a solid agreement within the industry.

However, no matter what, he said that change is coming.

In effect, what Wagner said was that political maneuvering is holding up progress on effectively dealing with a Farm Bill.

He said that with Sen. Richard Lugar, Sen. Bob Dole and others running for president, as well as President Clinton running for reelection, and the differences between Senate and House Republicans over the budget and Farm Bill, "We have a mix of scenarios we've never seen before."

Some of the problem has been attempts to ram through legislation without opportunity for debate by not only other legislators of both parties, but also without allowing review and comment by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

And, while some are making efforts to extend the 1990 Farm Bill, the National Corn Growers can't support extending the program, because changes are sought and it's too close to planting. People have to know what to expect tive, the Farm Bill needs to be

Washington Political Extremes before they start putting seeds into the ground, that what is done won't hurt them for making decisions amid indecision and political positioning by the nation's legislators.

The extremism of the so-called freshman Republicans and the unyielding, irrational or even childish actions of some of those in political power in Washington is somewhat unnerving, according to

'In all the years, I don't believe I've seen people dug in so hard and so firm as on this issue," he said of the budget the Farm Bill and those issuing positions.

And while, Wagner said that Sen. Lugar introduced into the Senate a proposal called the Agricultural Market Transition Program (the new Farm Bill) that would having sweeping changes, Wagner said he didn't think it would pass.

"Right now I don't think it will pass the Senate, and the President will veto it as it stands," Wagner

Sen. Bob Dole said he didn't think he could get it put on to a continuing resolution, according to Wagner.

Also, Wagner said that from the corn and grain growers' perspecsettled now. "They start harvesting wheat about May 10 in Texas," he said, and producers need to know where they stand.

Or else, without a Farm Bill or an extension, he said the program would automatically revert to 1948 Farm Bill provisions which would include a parity payment for wheat and the price would go to \$7 per bushel — an unlikely scenario.

Wagner said that if the most recent proposal is not passed and the nation's politicians can't resolve the issue, Dan Glickman, the USDA secretary, is pushing for the extension of the 1990 Farm Bill, which Wagner said is unacceptable to corn growers.

If an extension of the '90 Farm Bill is done, Wagner said he didn't expect any participants in Ohio, as the high price of corn is expected to cause more people to plant corn and more on land that had been included under the Conservation Reserve Program under the Farm Bill. Which could very well mean increased problems with soil erosion in some areas.

He said the political position on

the Farm Bill in Washington is "changing almost hourly."

Feb. 26 is the target date for passing legislation to change the federal government's debt limit. Wagner said, "My guess is (a Farm Bill) will be attached to that bill."

Some others say "no," Wagner said, unless there is some "tweaking" of loan rates and more money for rural development.

Wagner said that with \$3.50 per bushel corn, and with 1994 production being a record and no carryover into 95 that wasn't used. and because of increased uses thanks to research efforts of the the corn check-off, there is going to be a need for corn.

However, the position of the corn growers is to establish a stable market. "Our philosophy is we'd rather have \$2.85 corn year after year, than \$3.50 one year and \$1.50 the next."

He urged the audience to go home and write to their federal representatives and to say, "We support (Senate Bill 1541 and House Bill 2854), and we need them as an industry.'

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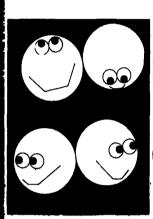
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