

ACTION ITEM FORM

Subject of Action Item: **_Speedy Implementation of the Farm Bill**
(Policy Title)



Submitted By _____ SASDA _____
(Name) (State)

NASDA asks the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) for clarification and speedy implementation of the Farm Bill. NASDA also requests that USDA recognize and include stakeholders as a part of the implementation team.

NOTE: NASDA sent a letter to Secretary Schafer on June 2, 2008 and received a response from Secretary Schafer on July 7, 2008. Since implementation procedures are still needed in several priority areas, NASDA reiterates its desire that more of its members be included on implementation teams, particularly those areas of highest priority to the states. Letters attached.

Adopted _____
Adopted w/ Amend. _____
Not Adopted _____

June 3, 2008

Honorable Ed Schafer
Secretary, U.S. Department of Agriculture
The Whitten Federal Building, 12th & Jefferson Drive, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Mr. Secretary:

The Commissioners, Secretaries and Directors of the National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA) are writing to express our interest and support as you begin to implement the new Food, Conservation and Energy Act of 2008. As the chief agricultural officers in our respective states and territories, we are ready to help you and USDA ensure that the delivery of services to the agricultural community and consumers is effective and efficient.

The new Farm Bill establishes many new programs and authorities that will significantly impact farm services, natural resources, nutrition, food safety, research, pests and diseases, and international trade. The new law also provides important new tools and policies that state agriculture departments and others are eager to use.

Our members understand that implementing these provisions will be an enormous task, requiring additional rules, regulations and procedures. We share your commitment to appropriate planning, coordination and implementation of the new law. NASDA urges you to publish implementation plans and hold outreach sessions to provide agricultural constituents with up-to-date information and opportunities to provide input throughout this process.

State agriculture departments have long-standing cooperative partnerships with USDA and we would be pleased to assist you in any way possible during the implementation process. Our members are particularly interested in working with USDA on many of our Farm Bill priorities, such as the disaster assistance program, interstate meat sales, specialty crop block grants, school nutrition, and energy production.

We greatly appreciate your efforts to deliver the benefits of the 2008 Farm Bill to all stakeholders in a timely and efficient manner.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Roger Johnson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Roger Johnson
NASDA President
Commissioner, North Dakota Department of Agriculture



United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

JUL 07 2008

The Honorable Roger Johnson
President
The National Association of State Departments of Agriculture
1156 15th Street, NW.
Suite 1020
Washington, D.C. 20005

Dear Commissioner Johnson:

Thank you for your letter of June 2, 2008, and, in particular, your expression of support for the Department of Agriculture (USDA) as we begin implementation of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008. Your letter also states that National Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NASDA) members would be pleased to assist in any way possible during the implementation process.

Implementing a 1,100-page conference report is a huge undertaking as you indicate in your letter. USDA employees are showing great initiative and working hard to ensure that we provide the best possible programs and service to producers, consumers, and other constituencies. We appreciate very much your communication of your organization's priorities regarding disaster assistance, interstate meat sales, specialty crop block grants, school nutrition, and energy production.

USDA has already published several notices in the *Federal Register* and is in the process of drafting regulations, which will provide specific definitions and implementation details regarding farm bill provisions. I am communicating your interest to the agencies which administer the specific programs you mention in your letter. I know they will welcome the opportunity to work directly with NASDA members to help craft the best possible programs.

Again, thank you for writing.

Sincerely,

Edward T. Schafer
Secretary

Thanks Roger
I look forward
to working with
you on
the implementation!