

7/17/2008 Moran Works to Provide Additional Feed Options for Kansas Ranchers

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Introduces Legislation to Continue Critical Feed Use on Conservation Reserve Program Acres

WASHINGTON, D.C. - Congressman Jerry Moran today introduced legislation to override a recent court order that halted Critical Feed Use of Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acres authorized by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). The court order removed a needed feed option for Kansas producers.

"Critical Feed Use was authorized to address rising feed costs after reasonable planning by USDA to address conservation concerns," Moran said. "This legal action is short-sighted and harmful to Kansas producers, many of whom had already made stocking decisions. These producers expended time and money to fence and prepare CRP acres for grazing and haying. During this time of high feed prices, our livestock producers do not need one more thing to worry about."

Critical Feed Use was announced by USDA on May 27 for certain CRP acreage to be available for hay and forage after the primary nesting season ended for grass-nesting birds. More than 24 million acres of land were made eligible for Critical Feed Use to provide feed and forage to help alleviate the escalating price of feed for livestock producers. On July 8, a federal judge issued a 10-day temporary restraining order that called for all Critical Feed Use activity to immediately stop. The court order was a result of legal action by the National Wildlife Federation.

On July 17 the judge ordered the temporary restraining order to remain in place until July 22, at which time the judge will issue a modified preliminary injunction. Based on the judge's order, it is unlikely the Critical Feed Use initiative will continue in its original form after July 22.

Moran continues working with USDA officials and other Members of Congress to resolve this issue. He is a senior member of the House Committee on Agriculture.

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