

## 01/08/2003 Moran Working to Provide Drought Assistance

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Washington, D.C. - Congressman Jerry Moran today announced that, as the new session of Congress begins, he has introduced legislation to provide drought assistance to Kansas farmers and ranchers. Moran worked throughout the past year to assist the struggling agriculture economy during one of the driest periods in history.

"Kansas communities are feeling the effects from two years of exceptionally dry conditions," Moran said. "Times have not gotten better for Kansas farmers and ranchers, and the damage is now being felt by ag-related businesses and on main streets in many communities."

Last year, Congressman Moran worked with Congressman Tom Osborne (R-NE) to sponsor legislation to provide drought assistance, but no bills were passed by the House or Senate. This new legislation, introduced this week by Congressman Moran, would provide drought assistance to crop and livestock producers in either 2001 or 2002.

Experts estimate that the Kansas agriculture economy lost nearly \$1.4 billion due to drought, last year alone. According to the Kansas Farm Management Association, net farm income is down 75 percent from the previous five year average.

This week, Congressman Moran has been meeting with Kansas agriculture groups, Speaker of the House Dennis Hastert and other Congressional leaders to discuss the need for drought assistance.

"Things are tough in farm country," Moran said. "The new calendar year cannot erase the red ink from the past few years. We need to step up and do what we can to assist the Kansas economy."

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