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Growers Planning and Planting - Without a Safety Net

NAWG President John Thaemert wrote Members of the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry Tuesday to officially request a provision in the upcoming continuing resolution to temporarily extend the Department of Agriculture's authority to issue advanced direct payments. The letter also reiterated NAWG's policy priorities, chiefly the need for a strong direct payment program.

Authority for most farm policy programs will terminate with the 2002 Farm Bill on Sept. 30 unless a temporary extension or new farm policy is enacted. USDA officials have indicated that the Department does not intend to request extension of authority to provide advanced direct payments or other programs under the 2002 law in absence of new farm policy.

"Though most major commodity groups would like to see new farm policy as soon as possible, this probable series of events is particularly troublesome for wheat growers, who are planting their 2008 winter crops now with no certainty about the farm safety net for this crop," Thaemert's letter said. "Similarly, a number of bankers who serve our grower-members have called our office to inquire about the safety net, and we have no answer to give them."

Thaemert also reminded Senators of NAWG's policy priorities, including the continuation and enhancement of the direct payment program and opposition to revenue proposals due to unrefined triggers, the elimination of the nonrecourse loan and the likelihood that a revenue program would be considered Amber Box by the World Trade Organization.

To read the full letter and a similar letter sent by a commodity coalition last week, please visit:

<http://www.wheatworld.org/html/info.cfm?ID=20>

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