

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

THE PRECISION AGRICULTURE RESEARCH, EDUCATION, AND INFORMATION DISSEMINATION ACT OF 1996

HON. RON LEWIS

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 11, 1996

Mr. LEWIS of Kentucky. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce legislation, with my good friend and colleague from Idaho [Mr. CRAPO] and other members of the House Agriculture Committee, a bill entitled "The Precision Agriculture Research, Education, and Information Dissemination Act of 1996."

Mr. Speaker, there is a revolution happening in farm country which many Members of Congress may not be aware of. This technological revolution taking place on farms across the Nation is already improving the environment, and changing the way our farmers and ranchers produce food and fiber. I'm speaking of precision agriculture.

Today is an exciting time to be in production agriculture. This bill will compliment our recently passed farm bill and the new direction our Nations agricultural policy is taking. Farmers will be able to profit from expanding world markets and our country will reap the rewards of this increased trade. Mr. Speaker, my farmers are excited about what the 21st century holds for them. But it's vital that we help provide for research in areas like precision agriculture so that our farmers will continue to be the world's most efficient producers of food and fiber.

WHAT IS PRECISION AGRICULTURE?

Emerging technologies in production agriculture are changing and improving the way farmers produce food and fiber in this country. New technologies such as global positioning satellites, digital field mapping, georeference information systems, grid soil sampling, variable rate seeding and input applications, portable electronic pest scouting, on-the-go yield monitoring, and computerized field history and recordkeeping are just a few of the next generation of tools that make up precision agriculture.

These technologies allow farmers to address hundreds of variables in the field—like soil PH, nutrient levels, and crop yields—on a 3- to 5-meter grid that used to cost far too much to calculate for each field. Today, these technologies can map these variables and data instantly as an applicator or combine drives across the field. In short, each farm field using precision technology becomes a research plot. And in the down-months or winter season, a farmer can use the data from the previous growing season and adjust dozens of important agronomic variables to maximize the efficient use of time, fuel, commercial inputs, water, seed rate, irrigation—the list goes on.

These precision farming tools are helping farmers increase field productivity, improve input efficiency, protect the environment, maximize profitability, and create computerized

field histories that may also help increase land values. Collectively, these and other emerging technologies are being used in a holistic, site-specific systems approach called precision agriculture. Progressive-minded farmers are already using these technologies. In a decade they may be as common on the farm as air-conditioned tractor cabs and cellular phones.

Of course, this is not the first technological advancement to revolutionize American agriculture. Farming has evolved from horsepower to mechanized power, from chemical tools in the 1950's to these new electronic tools in the 1990's. American farmers in the next century will need these new technologies and all the other available tools at their disposal to compete in tomorrow's global marketplace. American farmers will, without hesitation, step up to the challenge to feed and serve the growing number of consumers whose very lives depend on our Nation's tremendous agricultural machine.

PRECISION AGRICULTURE RESEARCH BILL

This legislation my colleagues and I are introducing today is critical to production agriculture, to feed the world's growing population and to protect local and global environments.

This legislation will renew our commitment to further increase the amount of food and fiber which can safely be produced per acre of farmland—not as an end in itself, but as a way of minimizing the economic and environmental costs of meeting global food and fiber needs.

This legislation emphasizes research and education efforts that promote the adoption of precision agriculture technologies, systems and electronic tools. These tools will enhance human health and environmental protection, and are designed to increase long term, site specific and whole farm production efficiency, productivity and profitability.

This legislation was crafted in consultation with a broad array of interested parties that support the legislation and the philosophy behind it. These groups include the Fertilizer Institute, Lockheed Martin, Experiment Station and Extension Service Directors, the National Center for Resources Innovations, and the Open Geographic Information Systems Consortium.

But this legislation is written with the producer in mind. One of the biggest problems with any new technology is the education process, and gathering the information to implement the technology on their farms. One of my goals with this legislation is to assure that producers of all sizes are able to take advantage of precision agriculture technologies.

USDA RESEARCH REFORM

The agriculture research process has continued to reward investments in science and technology. Recent research breakthroughs include conservation tillage, hybrid rice, twinning in cattle, pest-resistant soybeans, precision farming, and biotechnology. These findings are providing new ways to increase agricultural production efficiency, productivity and profitability, control pests, increase our agricultural exports, and feed the world's growing population.

Members of the Committee on Agriculture have a very important question to consider in the near future: Is this country's traditional agricultural research system prepared for the challenges the next century will bring? Let's be honest—with budget constraints, overlapping authorities and competition between ARS, extension and competitive grant recipients, we must very carefully address that question.

I look forward to this legislation becoming part of the reforms and reauthorization of the research title of the farm bill. I'm a strong supporter of our research and extension programs, and believe they must remain an important source of information for farmers and ranchers. Our precision agriculture research bill will help the research and extension communities take American food and fiber producers into the next century.

WORLD HUNGER AND ENVIRONMENTS

Modern agriculture has demonstrated its unique value as mankind's most powerful weapon against human hunger. Since 1950, modern agriculture has helped triple the output of the world's best croplands, sharply reduce soil erosion per ton of food, forestall severe shortages of agricultural water, and preserve millions of square miles of wildlife habitat that would otherwise have been converted to food production. So modern agriculture has played and will continue to play an important role in environmental preservation.

The world has virtually no other strategy as cost effective as modern agriculture for protecting human lives from famine, and wildlands from the expansion of low-yield, environmentally hazardous farming systems. In short, politically correct agriculture will not feed the vast majority of the world's population. Organic farming and 1950's style so-called low input agriculture, will not feed the next century's growing population.

The overwhelming majority of American and world consumers are fed by conventional farmers and livestock producers. These farmers employ the latest technologies to improve production efficiencies. At the same time, they strive for maximum crop yields and livestock production in the daily struggle to produce more food for more people with fewer natural and financial resources. Increased production and new products must be the hallmarks words of American agriculture in the 21st century.

We don't have to look far to understand that new technologies and advances in production agriculture will play a critical role in the next century—and that production agricultural research will have to keep pace. The increasing human population throughout the world, as well as the rising wealth and improving diets of persons in developing countries, are driving a major surge in world food requirements.

The United Nations estimates the world's population could climb from 5.6 billion people last year to more than 9.8 billion people by the year 2050. The planet's population is projected to grow by about 85 million people a year for two or three decades. Ninety percent

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Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

of that will occur in the Third world, doubling demand for food there by the 2025.

High-yield agriculture has already proven to be an environmental success by increasing food production from the safest, most productive, most environmentally sound crop lands. The first and foremost issue of long-term agricultural sustainability is preventing the plow-down of the world's remaining wildlands for low-yield production. High-yield modern conventional agriculture is the most critical factor in preserving millions of square miles of wildlands from the plow. In contrast, low-yield organic farming on a global scale could cost between 20 and 30 million square miles of wildlife—not to mention millions of lives—by the year 2040.

Local environments must also be protected. New precision technologies will further reduce soil erosion and water quality impairment by applying agricultural inputs in an efficient, precise and site-specific manner that will help reduce unwanted runoff and improve surface and ground water quality.

States like Kentucky have been working to address water quality and other environmental concerns within the agricultural community. This legislation will help producers reach that next level of environmental protection. State efforts like Kentucky's water quality plan, along with funding and policies of the new farm bill and precision agriculture technologies, will help provide a safe and clean environment for many generations in the future.

Mr. Speaker, it is my hope that the proposals contained in this bill will be used by the Committee on Agriculture as we reform and reauthorize the research programs in the future.

HONORING ABRAHAM GRABOWSKY

HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 11, 1996

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I am proud today to honor a constituent who has contributed so much to the United States, to Israel, indeed to freedom throughout the world through his actions. Abraham Grabowsky is celebrating his 100th birthday in New York, having come from Poland through Texas, Michigan to Palestine, where he served in the Allenby Brigade in World War I. He is the only survivor of that famous unit, which was formed to liberate Palestine from the Turkish Empire. His recollection of Tel Aviv in that time was of a village of "two or three buildings" surrounded by desert.

On his return from Palestine, he worked throughout the western United States before he "decided I missed New York." He settled in the city, married and raised a family. He fought for Israel 30 years before it existed. I am proud to honor him and to have him as a neighbor and to wish him the very best on his 100th birthday.

ANOTHER MILESTONE FOR
OZALEE PAYNE AND ROSALEE
GEE

HON. DONALD M. PAYNE

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 11, 1996

Mr. PAYNE of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, 5 years ago I was proud to bring to the attention of my colleagues, the birthday of my aunts Ozalee Payne and Rosalee Gee. On Monday, July 15, 1996, they will celebrate their 80th birthday.

The bond that keeps sisters close is a special one. When the twins were born 8 decades ago in what is now Monticello, FL, their two older sisters, Laura and Sallie, took care of them while their mother recuperated. Laura took care of Rosie, while Sallie was in charge of Ozie. Until my Aunt Laura was moved to a nursing home a few years ago, all of the sisters lived in their own apartments in the same building in Newark, NJ. They were always close enough to help each other and enjoy each other's company, yet distant enough to lead their separate lives and enjoy their own interests.

The protection and nurturing they showed each other extended to those of my generation. My mother, Norma Garrett Payne, died when my sister (Kathryn), my brother (William), and I were small children. As you can imagine, our mother's death was devastating to us. Our father's job prevented him from being with us as much as he felt he needed to be. To solve some of the problems, my brother and I went to live with Aunt Rosie and our late Uncle Richard while our sister lived with Aunt Sallie and our late Uncle William. We were eventually brought together—our grandparents, the late William and Ollie Payne Williams, bought a three-family house and the families moved together. It was during these times that our grandmother and aunts had the greatest impact on our value system. We had a Christian upbringing and were taught to take care of and respect each other. Our late father, William E. Payne, was ever grateful for their help. When my wife, Hazel, died when our children were small, the cycle repeated itself. I had the help of my brother and sister and aunts in protecting, nurturing, and teaching values to my son, Donald, Jr., and my daughter, Wanda. I am ever grateful to them.

Mr. Speaker, a loving and supportive family is wonderful. This weekend our family is gathering to celebrate the birthday of our aunts. As we count our blessings for still having them in our lives, I am sure my colleagues will want to join us as we say "Happy Birthday Aunt Ozie and Aunt Rosie".

TRIBUTE TO JOHN DAVID DEBOER II

HON. WILLIAM O. LIPINSKI

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 11, 1996

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to an outstanding scout, John David DeBoer II in achieving the rank of Eagle Scout.

The Boy Scouts of America, Troop 3 presented John DeBoer with the Eagle Scout

Award at the All Saints Episcopal Church in Western Springs, IL on Sunday, June 23, 1996 in the presence of his fellow troop member, his parents, family and friends.

The Eagle Scout Award stands for honor which is the foundation of all character. It stands for loyalty and without loyalty, all character lacks direction. Finally, the award displays courage, which gives character force and strength.

Mr. Speaker, I congratulate John and his parents for the many years of participation in the Scouting program. The Boy Scouts of America has proven to develop a solid foundation for many of our youths, all over this fine country of the United States.

MIDDLETOWN FIRE POLICE OF MIDDLETOWN, NEW YORK, CELEBRATE 100TH ANNIVERSARY

HON. BENJAMIN A. GILMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 11, 1996

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, it gives me pleasure to recognize the Middletown Fire Police of the city of Middletown, NY, on the occasion of its 100th anniversary. The Middletown Fire Police was organized on May 12, 1896. In their constitution, they bound themselves to uphold law and order and faithful performance.

Throughout the past 100 years, the Middletown Fire Police has dutifully detected and prevented fires, assisted the fire department, aided the police department, and protected the safety of citizens. Through its service, the fire police makes possible the incredible work of the Middletown Fire Department. During fire emergencies, the members of the fire police are vested with all the duties that the fire chief sees fit. In addition, they are authorized to act as special officers of the police department whenever the mayor determines it necessary. As special officers, the fire policemen have all the powers and duties of police officers. In this capacity, they further help and protect the members of their community.

The Middletown Fire Police has a long history of dedicated service to its community. By taking on diverse duties, it has provided the citizens of Middletown with greater safety. It has become an integral part of the Middletown community by providing these services.

Mr. Speaker, 100 years after its inception, the Fire Police still dutifully upholds law and order and faithful performance. Along with our community, I am grateful for their service and steadfast dedication to the ideals set forth in its constitution a century ago. I am pleased to take this opportunity to honor the Middletown Fire Police for all that it has done for our community, and I commend all of the members for their hard work and commitment.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. PETER BLUTE

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 11, 1996

Mr. BLUTE. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall 301 I inadvertently voted "yea." I intended to vote "nay."