



## NEWS RELEASE

### **AMERICAN FEED INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION**

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### **MAJORITY OF AFIA PRIORITIES REALIZED AS HOUSE APPROVES FARM BILL 231-191**

**ARLINGTON, VA.**—Most of the American Feed Industry Association's (AFIA) priorities for future federal farm programs were met as the full House approved 231-191 on July 27, HR 2419, the 2007 Farm bill.

AFIA's primary objectives were upheld throughout the Farm Bill committee and floor debate. AFIA President Joel Newman said that overall the bill is a good one for animal agriculture and the feed industry.

"This is a good first step," Newman said. "We're a good way to achieving our goals, but there were a number of important items not addressed by the House. AFIA will work toward securing those objectives as the Farm Bill legislation progresses to the Senate and conference."

Included in AFIA's list of objectives for further work on the Farm Bill are addressing areas of potential WTO challenges as well as the plan for funding increased spending included in the legislation.

Very importantly, Newman noted AFIA and industry coalitions were able to prevent any anti-agriculture animal rights amendments from being added, as well as forestalling efforts to add language to restrict private contracting between grain and meat processors and farmers. According to Newman, the energy title tracks AFIA's priority in dedicating significant new monies to research into farm-based biofuels, with an emphasis on perfecting the use of non-corn feedstocks for ethanol.

Still, AFIA feels the agriculture committee should have taken a more innovative approach to expanding the various land conservation programs in light of the continuing tug-of-war between feed and fuel over corn supplies. AFIA will work with the Senate Agriculture Committee, as well as in conference committee, to achieve a better balance between grain needs in feed and food and those for fuel. A 35% expansion of conservation programs should have included a mechanism to ensure only truly environmentally at-risk acres are enrolled, and that farmers have no-penalty options to remove acres from the program when prices and/or supply pressures warrant.

A comprehensive federal disaster relief program for farmers and ranchers who are victims of natural disasters was dropped; however, there is hope USDA may develop such a program.

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AFIA will work toward that objective with the Senate Agriculture Committee and during conference. The intent is to ensure farmers and ranchers achieve a comprehensive program that provides direct aid to producers, allowing the commercial feed industry to participate.

AFIA reviewed and supported an amendment on rail transportation that was approved. The amendment requires the Secretary of Agriculture to conduct a study in cooperation with the Secretary of Transportation within nine months of enactment of the Farm Bill on the movement of ag products, renewable fuels and “domestically produced resources for the production of electricity” by rail. The study will look at grievance disputes, and the importance of rail in moving equipment, seed, fertilizer and other “such products” (including feed and ingredients) important to ag product development, the movement of these ag products to market, and the accessibility of rail service to customers in rural America. The purpose is to stimulate action on the Freight Rail Infrastructure Capacity Expansion Act (S. 1125, HR 2116) introduced earlier this year to provide tax credits for railroad infrastructure expansion and equipment.

In all, 109 amendments were submitted to the Rules Committee for consideration during floor debate, but the committee voted to grant a “structured” rule – unusual for a Farm Bill -- allowing only 31 amendments to be offered.

AFIA’s Farm Bill Task Force closely monitored the legislation through its various stages and provided input on priorities and messages on behalf of the feed industry. The task force is comprised of Dennis Conlon, Ridley; Rich Degenhardt, Kent Feeds; Mike Engler, Cactus Feeders; Dennis Erpelding; Elanco; Tom Geary, Westway; Steve Krifava, Land O’Lakes/Purina; Teena Middleton, Ag Pro Vision, and Mike Mullins, Cargill.

“AFIA is fortunate to have member company executives to volunteer their time and who can identify within seemingly benign policy proposals those areas which pose a threat and those which can be refined to most benefit the feed industry,” said Steve Kopperud, AFIA’s legislative representative, Policy Directions, Inc.

The Senate must now consider the Farm Bill and is expected to begin markup of its version of the bill in September when it returns from a month long August recess. The 2002 Farm Bill expires on September 30, 2007.

Headquartered just outside the nation’s capital in Arlington, Va. **AFIA is the world’s largest organization devoted exclusively to representing the total U.S. feed industry.** Membership includes nearly 600 domestic and international companies; state, national and regional associations. Firms are feed manufacturers, integrators, pharmaceutical companies, ingredient suppliers, equipment manufacturers and companies which supply other products, services and supplies to feed manufacturers.

The feed industry makes a major contribution to food safety, nutrition and the environment. It plays a critical role in the production of meat, milk and eggs and provides abundant food at the lowest cost. Over 75% of the commercial feed in the United States is manufactured by AFIA members.

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