



Ag Committees continue to make the case for more funding

By Sara Wyant, Editor, Agri-Pulse

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It's still an uphill battle, but the Chairman of the Senate and House Agriculture Committees continue to push Congressional leaders for more farm bill funding. They've been offered \$15 and \$20 billion in reserve funds, respectively, by the Budget Committees, but those dollars will only be available if offsets are found. One of their arguments for additional funding: the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) March 2007 baseline drastically reduces their ability to fund existing and new programs. A preliminary analysis prepared by the House Agriculture Committee illustrates that Chairman Collin Peterson (D-MN) **faces a rather bleak budgetary picture, especially when compared to what appears to be a treasure trove of funding** available when the Republicans were in charge and former Congressman Larry Combest chaired the committee. For example, higher commodity prices resulted in almost a 43% drop in available funds projected by CBO for the commodity title, and rural development is down by over 50%.

(Budget authority, millions of dollars)		Available Funds:		
		COMBEST	PETERSON	
Title	Description	March 2002 Baseline w/Extra Funds 10-Yrs: 02-11	March 2007 Baseline Spending 10-Yrs: 08-17	% Change: March 07 versus March 02 w/Extra Funds
I	Commodities	140,249	80,384	-42.7%
II	Conservation (OCC)	39,168	51,836	32.3%
III	Trade	5,671	4,035	-28.8%
IV	Food Stamps & Child Nutrition	386,877	565,019	46.0%
	<i>HAC Jurisdiction: Food Stamps + Senior Farm Mkt</i>	262,460	397,701	--
	<i>Not HAC Jurisdiction: Child Nutrition</i>	124,417	167,318	--
VI	Rural Development	1,000	481	-51.9%
VII	Selected Research**	1,623	1,600	-1.4%
VIII	Forestry (FLEP ONLY)	100	0	--

IX	Energy	405	0	--
X	Miscellaneous Provisions (Section 32 & FCIC	41,930	66,263	58.0%
	Crop Insurance	34,980	53,853	54.0%
	Section 32	6,785	12,410	82.9%
	Other	165	0	--
	Total Mandatory Budget Authority for Selected Programs			
	HAC Jurisdiction (Exclude Food Stamps)	230,146	204,599	-11.1%
	HAC Jurisdiction (Inc. Food Stamps, Factor FB)	492,606	602,300	22.3%
	Total (Inc. Food Stamps & Child Nutrition)	617,023	769,618	24.7%
	# Does not include discretionary programs provided through annual appropriations ** Most research is funded through annual appropriations			

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