

Senate Passes Farm Bill By Wide Margin

Thu. May 15, 2008

Completing action on a farm bill President Bush has vowed to veto, the Senate this afternoon passed the conference report, 81-15, a margin comfortably above the two-thirds majority needed for an override.

It even got more votes than the Senate's original version, which passed 79-14 in December.

The House adopted the conference report Wednesday, 318-106 - nearly 30 votes more than the two-thirds majority it would take to override a veto. Democrats voted 218-15 for it and Republicans supported it 100-91.

House Agriculture Chairman **Collin Peterson** said Wednesday he expects the bill to go to the White House Tuesday and hopes that override votes can be held before Congress leaves a week from Friday for the Memorial Day recess. Bush returns Sunday from his trip to the Middle East.

The \$289 billion five-year measure includes a \$10 billion increase in domestic and international nutrition programs over 10 years. The bill also reauthorizes the food stamp program and basic farm programs. It includes a large tax package that reduces existing agricultural tax breaks and creates new ones.

The bill also simplifies a measure in the 2002 farm bill that requires country of origin labeling at the final point of retail sale for several meats, fruits and vegetables and other products.

by Jerry Hagstrom