



STATE OF IDAHO

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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NEWS RELEASE

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FARM BILL, FINANCIAL STABILITY OF AG SECTOR REMAIN HOT TOPICS FOR 2006, SAYS TAKASUGI

(BOISE) Idaho State Department of Agriculture Director Pat Takasugi predicted Monday that developments in biotechnology, the rewrite of the Farm Bill and the financial stability of the entire agriculture industry will remain hot topics for 2006. Takasugi made the comments at the Northwest Alfalfa Clover Seed Association meeting in Reno, Nevada.

"These are exciting, and certainly also, stressful times for American agriculture," Takasugi said. "On one hand, agri-technological developments are moving at breathtaking speed, and those developments will forever reshape and provide new opportunities for agriculture. On the other hand, there are several real unknowns on the horizon, in particular how Congress will reshape the Farm Bill."

"Either better financial relationships will be established between farmers and companies, or the traditional landscape of American agriculture will take on major changes in composition and financial well-being," Takasugi said. "The advent of biotechnology and its new line of products can offer a brighter future for agriculture, especially in the West."

Takasugi noted that the Idaho State Department of Agriculture is doing its part to provide stability to farm economics, including the continuing management of the state's Seed Indemnity Fund, which offers protections to producers in the event of a seed buyer failure. The department is also reminding Idaho growers about the importance of carrying revenue insurance to protect against income loss due to natural disasters and market fluctuations.

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