

Capitol LINK

CURRENT ISSUES AFFECTING WISCONSIN AGRICULTURE & AGRI-BUSINESS

May 28, 2010

Governor Signs Four Agriculture Bills

By Jordan Lamb – DeWitt Ross & Stevens

On May 12, 2010, Governor Jim Doyle signed Assembly Bills 756, 757 and 746 and Senate Bill 527 into law.

- Assembly Bill 756 extends the Dairy Farm Tax Credit for two years, ending with taxable years beginning in 2011, and raises the limit on aggregate credit claims from \$50,000 to \$75,000. The original tax credits expired in January 2010.
- Assembly Bill 757 provides a refundable food processing and distribution tax credit equal to 10% of modernization or expansion cost for Wisconsin food processors and distributors.
- Assembly Bill 746 creates the framework for a statewide Farm to School Program, establishes a statewide Farm to School Advisory Council within the Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection (DATCP) and creates a statewide Farm to School coordinator and grant program.
- Senate Bill 527, the Producer Security Legislation, provides updates and enhancements to Wisconsin's Agricultural Producer Security program within DATCP.

Raw Milk Legislation Vetoed

By Jordan Lamb – DeWitt Ross & Stevens

Governor Doyle vetoed legislation that would have allowed the sale of raw milk in Wisconsin. In his May 19, 2010 veto message, the Governor cited "interests of public health and the safety of the dairy industry" as the reason for his veto. Recent press reports on the raw milk legislation:

- Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, *Doyle Vetoes Raw Milk Bill*: <http://www.jsonline.com/business/94272169.html>.
- Capital Times Article, *Capitol Report: Governor vetoes raw milk bill*: http://host.madison.com/ct/news/local/govt_and_politics/blog/article_012d59f4-62b8-11df-a333-001cc4c03286.html.
- Capital Times Article, *Raw milk fans say Wisconsin's dairy industry is too powerful*: http://host.madison.com/ct/news/local/govt_and_politics/article_d1dacc0-66eb-11df-a1fe-001cc4c002e0.html.

Who's In and Who's Out – 2010 State Election Update

By Jordan Lamb – DeWitt Ross & Stevens

GOP Endorses Walker: The Wisconsin Republican Party formally endorsed Milwaukee County Executive, Scott Walker, for Governor at the State GOP convention. 91.3% of the convention delegates voted to give Walker the party's nomination.

Legislature = 23 Open Seats: Twenty members of the State Assembly (eleven Republicans, eight Democrats, and one Independent) and three members of the State Senate (two Republicans and one Democrat) will NOT seek reelection in the fall.

Most recently, Rep. Scott Newcomer (R-Pewaukee) and Rep. Pedro Colon (D-Milwaukee) announced on Wednesday, May 26, 2010, that they will not seek reelection this fall. On May 23rd, Representative Polly Williams (D-Milwaukee) announced that she would not seek reelection after nearly 3 decades in the State Assembly. (See details regarding all legislative open seats below.)

ASSEMBLY:

- Rep. Chuck Benedict (D-Beloit) announced his retirement on April 14, 2010.
- Rep. Spencer Black (D-Madison) announced his retirement on May 9, 2010.
- Rep. Pedro Colon (D-Milwaukee) announced his retirement on May 26, 2010.
- Rep. Brett Davis (R-Oregon) announced on February 22, 2010, that he is running for Lt. Governor.
- Rep. Don Friske (R-Merrill) announced his retirement on March 5, 2010.
- Rep. Mark Gundrum (R-New Berlin) will take office as a Circuit Court Judge for Waukesha County on August 1, 2010.
- Rep. Steve Hilgenberg (D-Dodgeville) announced his retirement on April 23, 2010.
- Rep. Mary Hubler (D-Rice Lake) announced her retirement on May 3, 2010.
- Rep. Tom Lothian (R-Williams Bay) announced his retirement on March 4, 2010.
- Rep. Phil Montgomery (R-Ashwaubenon) announced his retirements on May 7, 2010.
- Rep. Thomas Nelson (D-Kaukauna) filed to run for Lt. Governor on April 27, 2010.
- Rep. Scott Newcomer (R-Pewaukee) announced his retirement on May 26, 2010.
- Rep. Kitty Rhoades (R-Hudson) announced her retirement on March 17, 2010.
- Rep. Roger Roth (R-Appleton) announced on December 1, 2009, that he will run against US Rep. Steve Kagen (D-Wisconsin).
- Rep. Gary Sherman (D-Port Wing) resigned from the Assembly on April 30, 2010, after being appointed by Governor Doyle to fill a vacancy on the Court of Appeals for the 4th District, which is based in Madison. It is unlikely that a Special Election will be held to pick his successor, so the office will be filled instead at the November election.
- Rep. John Townsend (R-Fond du Lac) has announced that he will retire.
- Rep. Leah Vukmir (R-Wauwatosa) is running against Sen. Jim Sullivan (D-Wauwatosa).
- Rep. Annette "Polly" Williams announced her retirement on May 22, 2010.
- Rep. Jeff Wood (I-Chippewa Falls) has announced that he will retire.
- Rep. Rich Zipperer (R-Pewaukee) is running for the 33rd Senate District seat being vacated by retiring Sen. Ted Kanavas (R-Brookfield).

SENATE:

- Sen. Ted Kanavas (R-Brookfield) announced his retirement on January 25, 2010.
 - Sen. Alan Lasee (R-De Pere) announced his retirement on January 11, 2010
 - Sen. Judy Robson (D-Beloit) announced her retirement on January 27, 2010
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