

Capitol LINK

CURRENT ISSUES AFFECTING WISCONSIN AGRICULTURE & AGRI-BUSINESS

November 19, 2010

Republican Wave Sweeps Wisconsin's Elections

By Jordan Lamb -- DeWitt Ross & Stevens

It's a new political landscape in Wisconsin following the November elections. The Republicans swept both houses of the State Legislature and the Governor's office. The 2011-2012 legislative session will begin with a 19-14 Republican majority in the State Senate and a 60-38 majority in the State Assembly, with one independent.

Milwaukee County Executive, Scott Walker (R) is now the Governor-Elect. He has formed his transition team and is beginning to work on legislative priorities for next session. His first piece of legislation, which is expected to be introduced within days of the January inauguration, is likely to be a job creation bill, aimed at growing the Wisconsin economy. Then, he will be faced with writing a budget bill that addresses the projected \$3 billion structural deficit. Governor Walker is expected to start naming his cabinet secretaries in the next several weeks.

Not only did the Republicans win the majorities in both legislative houses, seated Speaker of the State Assembly, Mike Sheridan (D-Janesville), and the pre-election Majority Leader in the State Senate, Russ Decker (D-Schofield), both lost to challenger Republicans.

New leaders for next session have been named. Representative Jeff Fitzgerald (R-Horicon) will be the new Speaker of the State Assembly. His older brother, State Senator Scott Fitzgerald (R-Juneau) is the new Senate Majority Leader. Senator Alberta Darling (R-River Hills) and Representative Robin Vos (R-Racine) will be the new co-chairs of the Joint Committee on Finance, the committee that will review the forthcoming budget bill, which will be introduced in early February.

Wisconsin's new Congressional delegation also has some new Republican faces. Republican Ron Johnson, an Oshkosh plastics manufacturer, defeated three-term incumbent United States Senator Russ Feingold. Republican Sean Duffy, former Ashland County District Attorney, defeated State Senator Julie Lassa in the 7th Congressional District and will replace retiring U.S. Representative David Obey, who held the seat for more than 40 years. In the 8th Congressional district, Republican roofing contractor, Reid Ribble, defeated two-term incumbent U.S. Representative Steve Kagen.

Our new Governor and Legislature will be sworn in on January 3, 2011. Expect a very active legislative session to begin the next day!

DATCP Moves Ahead with Livestock Facility Siting Rule (ATCP 51) Revision

By Jordan Lamb -- DeWitt Ross & Stevens

In October, the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) published a Scope Statement indicating their intent to promulgate amendments to Wisconsin's Livestock Facility Siting Rule (ATCP 51). The [DATCP Board](#) approved the ATCP 51 scope statement at their October Board meeting.

A [technical expert panel](#) has been working since July to develop suggested technical changes to the current rule. This committee was convened to evaluate the siting standards and determine whether they provide for responsible growth of an operation while correctly balancing environmental and other considerations such as public health and safety. They are required to issue a report with recommendations on clarifications of the standards.

The technical committee released its draft report on November 11th. The report is available online at http://www.datcp.state.wi.us/arm/agriculture/land-water/livestock_siting/pdf/LS_ExpertCommitteeRecommendationsDRAFT11-11.pdf. The Committee is expected to approve a final version at their full committee meeting on December 16, 2010 in Madison.

Capitol Link Details

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