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The pending bill, in their judgment, provides no production restraints. It is thought that within the conference report is the possibility of a staggering overproduction of grain crops in the next 3 or 4 years. The present conservancy base adjustment for all other Western States except Montana will be one of the principal contributors to this problem.

I have also received a letter from an old friend, Jim Stephens, who reiterated the group's desire to get the Montana grain farmers on an equitable basis in "this business of producing grain."

I am also in receipt of a letter from Mr. Robert Brastrup, executive secretary of the Montana Wheat Research & Marketing Committee and I ask unanimous consent that it and a reply from J. A. Asleson be incorporated at this point in the RECORD and also a letter from the honorable Jack Gunderson as well as a letter which I sent to Secretary of Agriculture, Clifford M. Hardin on November 14 along with some enclosures and the reply I received from Mr. Hardin on November 18, 1970.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

MONTANA WHEAT RESEARCH & MARKETING COMMITTEE,
Great Falls, Mont., November 16, 1970.

Hon. MIKE MANSFIELD,
U.S. Senate,
Washington, D.C.

DEAR SENATOR MANSFIELD: Enclosed is a statistical report that is a correction of the original material which you received concerning conserving base acres. You will notice that the percentages in the right hand column are changed slightly. This is a downward adjustment in most cases due to our access to correct figures.

Also enclosed is a letter from the Director of the Agricultural Experiment Station at MSU, Dr. J. A. Asleson. He indicates that the Experiment Station is recognizing the alternate crop fallow method of production may not be the best for Montana in the long run. We are sorry we did not have this information when we visited with you last week.

Thank you for your efforts. We are sure that they will show results.

Yours very truly,
ROBERT BRASTRUP,
Executive Secretary.

MONTANA STATE UNIVERSITY,
COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE,
Bozeman, Mont., November 6, 1970.

Mr. ROBERT BRASTRUP,
Executive Secretary,
Research and Marketing Committee,
Great Falls, Mont.

DEAR BOB: A question has been raised as to the need for a downward adjustment of Montana's conserving acreage base. The method of alternate crop-fallow production

widely used in Montana results in about half of the grain land not being cropped each year. There is some feeling that there is no alternative to the crop-fallow system, therefore the high conserving base creates no real hardship. I should like to reply to this argument using research results of the Montana Agricultural Experiment Station.

Long-term research has shown that yields for two years from continuously cropped land are usually 25-75% greater than the single yield in two years from alternate crop-fallow land. Cost of production could be reduced by adopting systems of continuous or intermittent cropping in lieu of the crop-fallow system in much of Montana, especially areas having over 14 inches of precipitation, or with highly desirable precipitation patterns.

Research has provided improved weed control, production practices, fertilizer usage and improved varieties. When these are combined with adequate production credit many of the benefits attributed to alternate crop-fallow production disappear. Consequently, I feel that many Montana farmers would discard or modify this system if the crop acreage restrictions favoring high yields per planted acre did not act as a retardant to change.

Another important area in this discussion of method of grain production relates to quality of environment, especially in regards to air and water quality. Summer fallowed surfaces are subject to the onset of wind and water erosion. Eroded soil and attached materials become contaminants of both the air and surface water. Snow is not effectively trapped by fallow ground and blows into coulees and other areas where spring runoff may be both wasteful and damaging.

About 80% to 90% of annual precipitation is lost during the fallow year and is not available for plant growth in the succeeding year. Large amounts of water run off the soil surface. Additional moisture is lost by surface evaporation. When water intake is above the water holding capacity of the soil there may be downward movement of water removing soluble materials, including plant nutrients, from the soil. The dissolved materials may move into the ground water supply and become contaminants. This water may move laterally and eventually come to the surface, forming salt spots and ruining valuable land and vegetation. Some 56,000 acres of wet and saline land have become unfit to produce crops in Montana, presumably from this situation. Some 1.8 million acres of land are collecting moisture and contributing to this situation. Contaminated water not coming to the surface may remain in the system with its potential for human, industrial, animal or plant use greatly restricted.

These comments, based on research results and observations, cast doubt on the desirability of leaving large acreages of land in fallow, a practice which is favored by conserving acreage base regulations and other regulations of the farm program.

Very truly yours,
J. A. ASLESON,
Director.

FARM PROGRAM COMPARISON—MONTANA AND COMPETING WHEAT STATES

State	1970 cropland	1970 conserving base	1971 wheat allotment	1971 domestic (45 percent)	1971 set-aside (75 percent)	Conserving base plus set-aside	Free acreage available to plant 1971	Acres to plant as percentage of total cropland
Kansas	29,867,000	5,870,000	8,279,804	3,725,912	2,794,434	8,664,434	21,202,566	70.9
North Dakota	27,235,000	6,412,000	5,710,319	2,569,644	1,927,233	8,339,233	18,895,767	69.3
Oklahoma	12,887,000	1,864,000	3,814,596	1,716,568	1,287,426	3,151,426	9,735,574	75.5
Montana	14,902,000	6,797,000	3,054,998	1,374,749	1,031,601	7,828,061	7,073,939	47.4
Nebraska	20,476,000	3,657,000	2,448,134	1,101,660	826,245	4,483,245	15,992,755	78.1
Texas	35,152,000	2,866,000	3,160,122	1,422,055	1,066,541	3,937,541	31,219,459	88.8
Idaho	5,720,000	1,817,000	922,645	415,190	311,392	2,128,392	3,591,608	62.8
South Dakota	17,725,000	3,364,000	2,143,388	964,525	723,393	4,087,393	13,637,607	76.9
Colorado	10,598,000	3,046,000	2,003,366	901,515	676,136	3,722,136	6,875,864	64.8
Minnesota	22,039,000	3,370,000	778,045	350,120	262,590	3,632,590	18,406,410	83.5

Footnotes on following page.

¹ 1969 cropland figure for Oklahoma, 1970 figure not available.

If Montana had 74.5 percent of its total cropland available, which is the average of its 9 competing States, we would have 11,101,990 acres free to plant in 1971 instead of the 7,073,939-acre total.

1970 cropland and conserving base figures and 1971 wheat allotments were obtained from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Domestic allotments computed at 45 percent of total allot-

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ment because national domestic figure of 19,700,000 acres is 45 percent of national allotment. 1971 set-aside is computed at 75 percent although the law specifies 13,300,000 acres as maximum set-aside in 1971 program and that is 67½ percent of 19,700,000 acres set as national domestic allotment, the USDA is using 75 percent to allow for noncompliers.

MONTANA STATE HOUSE
OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Helena, Mont.

Senator MIKE MANSFIELD,
Senate Office Building,
Washington, D.C.

DEAR SENATOR MANSFIELD: I am sorry I did not have a chance to visit with you while I was in Washington, D.C. Our delegation was very short on time and we thank your staff for the help they gave us while we were there.

I had to leave Washington, D.C. early Wednesday to attend a Health Occupation Conference in Salt Lake City. I, therefore, asked the other members of our delegation to express my thoughts to your staff about the soil conserving acreage problem in Montana and about the farm bill in general.

I believe we presented a very good case to the Department of Agriculture about the unequal competitive position that Montana is in in relation to other wheat states because of the inequities in soil conserving adjustments. Regardless of whether these adjustments are right or wrong, in other states, we will not be able to compete with them, if they are able to raise 3 acres of wheat for only 2 that we can raise.

The Dept. personnel did not dispute the figures we presented, except for 67½% we used to establish the set aside acreage. We should have used 75% because some farmers will not stay in the program. Therefore, the percentage of crop land to plant is less than we show for all of the states we used. They also refused to release the figures for the states, that we did not have, so we could compare them to Montana.

I am sure the Dept. of Agriculture will not, administratively, take action to relieve the situation in Montana, unless pressure can be brought on them, which I hope you can do. Regardless of the outcome of farm legislation, we must do something with the soil conserving acreage in Montana, if we are to possibly compete economically with other states.

The farm bill, in general, is still bad for all producers because of the lack of mandatory production controls that the Secretary of Agriculture must use. This may not be crucial the coming crop year, because the winter wheat crop is seeded and not too much additional acreage can be seeded in the spring wheat states. The following year, though, it could lead to the biggest wheat glut in history. The Secretary is given the authority to impose controls, but he has stated he did not want them and he would not use them.

I therefore believe, the bill should be delayed or killed entirely until the next session of congress. I realize that passage of farm legislation is extremely difficult, but if this bill passes it will be harder to do so in the future, because farmers will be facing bankruptcy and taxpayer costs will raise out of reason.

Dr. Walter Wilcox, of the Legislative Reference Service, has estimated that 15 to 20 million additional acres of wheat production will result under the set aside program and the cost to the government will increase 1 billion dollars. This will lead to the biggest glut of wheat in history and lead to the end of all farm programs.

Senator Mansfield, I know you stated that the farm bill would be passed as soon as Congress reconvened. I believe you could reconsider your position because of information that we and others have developed during the recess. Many Montana farmers are very concerned and I am sure that you will have their full support. The Secretary of

Agriculture has almost unlimited authority, under the bill, and I can not understand why he does not announce program decisions before the bill passes, so we know where we are at.

I know that you are as concerned about this as I, and that you will do everything you can to better the situation.

Sincerely yours,

JACK GUNDERSON.

U.S. SENATE,

OFFICE OF THE MAJORITY LEADER,
Washington, D.C., November 14, 1970.

HON. CLIFFORD M. HARDIN,
Secretary of Agriculture,
Department of Agriculture,
Washington, D.C.

DEAR MR. SECRETARY: The attached statement and figures indicating Montana's position in ranking with other grain producing states have recently been brought to my attention. I find the content of the enclosures to be a distinct indication of blatant and unjust discrimination, affecting not only Montana's individual grain producers, but Montana's continued economic growth and viability as a major agricultural state.

Montanans must be given an equal opportunity in the harshly competitive enterprise of producing, transporting and marketing grain products. The conserving base plays a vital part in the set-aside program embodied in the present proposed farm legislation which will be before the Senate in the immediate future. As provided, the total of conserving base acres serves as an upper limit on acres available for crop production. Within the past three weeks, individual farmers, farm organizations, the Montana Department of Agriculture and the Wheat Research and Marketing Committee have determined the following information:

Montana's conserving base represented 45.6 percent of its total cropland, compared to an average of 19.8 percent for competing states, and approximately 22 percent for the nation.

In the five year history of conserving bases, competing states have had downward adjustments averaging 25.5 percent in such acreage, but Montana has had only 11.4 percent reduction.

As the new farm program couples conserving base with a compulsory set-aside, competing states will have an average of 75 percent of their total cropland available to plant to wheat (or other crops), while Montana will be limited to 48 percent.

I think it imperative that it be clearly understood that Montanans are not seeking a competitive advantage. What they are asking is an equal opportunity to utilize Montana's land resources. At best, economically feasible crops are limited. Montana must remain competitive in wheat terms if the State's agriculture and economy are to grow and prosper.

It would be my hope that I need not elaborate at this time upon the absolute necessity for a firm and forthright commitment from the Department of Agriculture that an equitable adjustment will be made, bringing Montana into line with other states. I would sincerely appreciate being appraised of your decision within the next 48 to 72 hours. I am, of course, appreciative of your attention to this matter and regret that conditions are such as to require a response within the indicated time period.

Thanking you, and with best personal wishes, I am

Sincerely yours,

MIKE MANSFIELD,
Majority Leader, U.S. Senate.

GENERAL COMMENTS RELEVANT TO ATTACHED DATA ON CONSERVING BASE—FARM PROGRAM

Agriculture's importance to Montana's economy needs no verification and wheat income in relation to over-all agricultural economics is also well understood.

What seems to escape us frequently in Montana is the need to protect ourselves as a wheat state in the harshly competitive game of producing, transporting and marketing wheat in relation to other states producing similar classes of wheat.

The accompanying statistical information on conserving bases and projected effect of the new national farm legislation tell a gloomy story of Montana's competitive status.

Farmers and farm organizations are loosely knit and lack the expertise and resources on a continuing basis to keep our state as a whole in the proper competitive perspective.

Our reliance then—properly or improperly—falls upon the governmental, semi-governmental and quasi-governmental bodies and the agricultural establishment at Montana State University to take stock of the over-all picture for wheat growers and keep Montana in the first rank competitively.

Montana's wheat farmers find themselves in dire need of that type of guidance, assistance and direction in the problems herein revealed regarding conserving bases and the new farm program.

Several significant aspects of this development are not related in the accompanying statistical tables:

(1) After the inequities in conserving bases were brought to public attention in late 1969 and early 1970 by the Montana Grain Growers Association, a seven-county group at Chester, and others across the state, indication was given by the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture that an adjustment of 12 per cent, or 850,000 acres, was possible; the Montana ASCS later in making the adjustment indicated it would be 7 per cent, or 500,000 acres; but the actual adjustment (never reported publicly) was 5 per cent, or 366,600 acres!

Also, while it was indicated this was an individual state adjustment to correct an acknowledged inequity in Montana, Kansas received a 9 per cent adjustment (576,300 acres) and Colorado received an 18 per cent adjustment (679,800 acres). These adjustments were made despite the fact Montana's conserving base at that time was 49 per cent of its cropland compared to 22 per cent for Kansas and 35 per cent for Colorado.

(2) The problems of blowing top-soil and alkalinity in connection with double-summerfallow are widely known, yet under the projected terms of the new farm program Montana will have 547,912 acres in the double-summerfallow category in 1971 and even more in 1972 and 1973 when setaside acreages increase.

The terms of the new farm program tend to lock Montana in as a summer fallow state, writing a farming practice into law, so to speak. This comes at a time when many of our farmers are getting away from the practice, plant and soil scientists are increasingly advising against it, and the trend is definitely away from summerfallow rather than hard and fast acceptance. Montana's farmers at least deserve the farm program opportunity to make their own choice.

(3) The only "saving" factor, if there is one, in the new farm program for Montana growers lies in the fact that winter wheat growers are limited to the planting deter-

minations they already have made for next year, while spring wheat states, under set-aside, will be able to increase acreage in vast amounts the coming crop year (Montana, North and South Dakota, Minnesota).

(4) Perhaps any adjustments in conserving bases should be mandatory with each grower being notified of the change in his acreage rather than basing such changes on individual farmer requests. It would appear

such an approach would result in greater equity among the farmers within a community, county, and state.

In summary, what the Montana grain grower wants and is requesting is not an advantage but an equal opportunity to sustain his livelihood as a producer the same as his colleagues in the other wheat states.

The choices in Montana are not great—either our growers stay competitive in wheat

and barley or they face an extremely dismal future.

It is interesting to note, in that regard, that the new farm program permits (with the Secretary's authorization) the growing of wheat to retain cotton acreage history—is there equity in therefore permitting Montanans to grow cotton to retain wheat history when the glut comes and that crop is no longer saleable?

CONSERVING BASE AND CROPLAND RATIOS, A COMPARISON 1966-70—MONTANA AND COMPETING WHEAT STATES

State	Conserving bases			Cropland 1970	1970 conserving base as percent of cropland	Conserving base change 1966-70		Adjustment downward in last 5 years (percent)
	1966	1969	1970			Acres	Percent	
Kansas	7,486.4	6,446.3	5,870	29,867	19.6	1,616.4	78.4	21.6
North Dakota	7,982.4	6,643.4	6,412	27,235	23.5	1,570.4	80.3	19.7
Oklahoma	2,532.0	1,891.9	1,864	12,887	14.0	668.0	73.6	26.4
Montana	7,673.5	7,163.6	6,797	14,902	45.6	876.5	88.6	11.4
Nebraska	4,527.4	3,932.0	3,657	20,476	17.9	870.4	80.8	19.2
Texas	4,663.7	2,869.0	2,866	35,152	8.2	1,797.7	61.5	38.5
Idaho	2,490.3	1,893.8	1,817	5,720	31.8	673.3	73.0	27.0
South Dakota	4,155.0	3,397.7	3,364	17,725	19.0	791.0	81.0	19.0
Colorado	4,592.3	3,725.8	3,046	10,598	28.7	1,546.3	66.3	33.7
Minnesota	4,456.9	3,237.6	3,370	22,039	15.3	1,086.9	75.6	24.4

¹1969 cropland figure for Oklahoma, 1970 figure not available.

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If Montana had 19.8 percent of its total cropland in conserving base, which is the average of its 9 competing States, we would have 2,950,596 acres in conserving base instead of 6,797,000 acres.

If Montana had received the 25.5 percent downward adjustment in conserving base, which has been the average of its 9 competing States, we would have received a 1,957,253-acre adjustment in the last 5 years instead of 876,500 acres. Montana's conserving base then would be 5,718,247 acres instead of 6,797,000 acres. The conserving base in Montana, with such an adjustment, still would be 38 percent of the total cropland—highest of all the 10 wheat States in this comparison and double the average of the other 9.

FARM PROGRAM COMPARISON—MONTANA AND COMPETING WHEAT STATES

State	1970 cropland	1970 conserving base	1971 wheat allotment	1971 domestic (45 percent)	1971 set-aside (67½ percent)	Conserving base plus set-aside	Free acreage available to plant 1971	Acres to plant as percentage of total cropland
Kansas	29,867,000	5,870,000	8,279,804	3,725,912	2,514,991	8,384,991	21,482,009	72.0
North Dakota	27,235,000	6,412,000	5,710,319	2,569,644	1,734,510	8,146,510	19,088,490	70.0
Oklahoma	12,887,000	1,864,000	3,814,596	1,716,568	1,158,683	3,022,683	9,864,317	76.5
Montana	14,902,000	6,797,000	3,054,998	1,374,749	927,956	7,724,956	7,177,044	48.0
Nebraska	20,476,000	3,657,000	2,448,134	1,101,660	743,621	4,400,621	16,075,379	78.5
Nebraska	35,152,000	2,866,000	3,160,122	1,422,055	959,887	3,825,887	31,326,113	89.0
Texas	5,720,000	1,817,000	922,645	415,190	280,253	2,097,253	3,622,747	63.0
Idaho	17,725,000	3,364,000	2,143,388	964,525	651,054	4,015,054	13,709,946	77.0
South Dakota	10,598,000	3,046,000	2,003,366	901,515	608,523	3,654,523	6,943,477	65.5
Colorado	10,598,000	3,046,000	2,003,366	901,515	608,523	3,654,523	6,943,477	65.5
Minnesota	22,039,000	3,370,000	778,045	350,120	236,331	3,606,331	18,432,669	83.5

¹1969 cropland figure for Oklahoma, 1970 figure not available.

NOTES

If Montana had 75 percent of its total cropland available, which is the average of its 9 competing States, we would have 11,176,500 acres free to plant in 1971 instead of the 7,177,044 acre total.

1970 cropland and conserving base figures and 1971 wheat allotments were obtained from the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Domestic allotments computed at 45 percent of total allotment because national domestic figure of 19,700,000 acres is 45 percent of national allotment.

1971 set-aside is computed at 67½ percent because law specifies 13,300,000 acres as maximum set-aside in 1971 program and that is 67½ percent of 19,700,000 acres set as national domestic allotment.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY,
Washington, D.C., November 18, 1970.

HON. MIKE MANSFIELD,
U.S. Senate,
Washington, D.C.

DEAR SENATOR MANSFIELD: This is in response to your letter of November 14 together with enclosures, regarding the conserving bases established for Montana farms.

During 1970, we have reduced conserving bases on Montana farms by a total of 370,000 acres.

The proposed farm bill includes a provision which should be of substantial benefit to Montana farmers. Under the provision which limits the set-aside requirement on farms having 55% of the cropland devoted to summer fallow, Montana farmers would benefit by up to an estimated 250,000 acres.

Over the past several months we have reviewed administrative regulations under prior programs with regard to establishing and adjusting farm conserving bases. As a result of this review, we could not find that such administrative regulations were discriminatory with regard to any State or any county. The provision for adjustment of farm conserving bases under past programs provided a uniform authority to all county committees for making adjustments in farm conserving base under a specified set of guidelines. Every effort was made by our national and field offices to assure uniform interpretation of the adjustment provisions.

A comparison of the ratio of conserving base to cropland of one State to another

would not appear to be valid because of the varied types of farming operations which are normally carried out in widely separated as well as in adjoining States due to varying climatic and rainfall conditions. Even adjoining counties cannot be compared equitably because of varying types of soil and topography. Conserving bases were initially established on an historical basis. This history reflected the varied farming operations being followed throughout the nation. It would appear to be inequitable to provide for a blanket downward adjustment in the conserving bases for all farms in the State of Montana, or any State without regard to the farming operations being followed by each individual producer. Not only would this be inequitable to producers in other States, but in the event that new farm legislation is enacted into law such action on our part would appear to be inconsistent with the intent of Congress and the objectives of the farm bill.

As soon as the farm bill is enacted into law, we plan on issuing administrative regulations which would continue the authority to make adjustments in conserving bases on individual farms.

Thank you for bringing this matter to our attention and for giving us the opportunity to comment on the conserving base provision of past and future program.

Sincerely,

CLIFFORD M. HARDIN,
Secretary.