

**17 NOVEMBER 2006**

**Ag Appropriations in U.S. Senate**

The fiscal year 2007 appropriations bill to fund U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) programs received considerable attention in the U.S. Senate this week, however, it will not be considered for a vote until after Thanksgiving.

A key issue of discussion was the possibility of approving a bipartisan agriculture disaster amendment, introduced by Sen. Kent Conrad (D-N.D.). The disaster amendment has been slimmed down from previous versions but contains disaster assistance for both the 2005 and the 2006 production years as well as the programs of assistance to sheep producers. The amendment is subject to a budget point of order which requires 60 votes to pass.

Paul Frischknecht, American Sheep Industry Association president, reminds sheep producers that the industry has been active all year in seeking assistance for agriculture disaster areas. Making contact with your U.S senators at this time asking for support of assistance is still very timely. The Senate is expected to resume business Tuesday, Dec. 5, 2006.

"Our industry supports a number of USDA programs that will be funded in the appropriations bill as well as backing the attachment of disaster assistance to the legislation," concluded Frischknecht.