

AAM Senter On The Hill 1-16-19

AAM had a great meeting in Lubbock and had a bigger crowd with several new folks attending along with several of our grandchildren. I was a proud grandpa showing my grandson Kade the AAM Heritage Exhibit. He came with my daughter Amy and her husband Mike.

As you know, Congress passed the new Farm Bill before adjournment. The bill is a step in the right direction and included several provisions AAM supported. The Farm Bill passed by large bipartisan majorities and I don't remember any Farm Bill passing by that large a vote. AAM's position paper for the 2018 Farm Bill called for increased Loan Rates, because farmers don't want subsidy checks, they want a fair price in the marketplace. The Loan Rates were not raised enough but for wheat almost 15% increase, corn nearly 13% increase, grain sorghum nearly 13% increase, rice 7.5% increase and soybeans a 24% increase, at least they were raised.

AAM's newsletter is coming out soon and it will contain more information on the new Farm Bill. The problem is with USDA shutdown, the new Farm Bill is not getting implemented. Producers can't apply for and get both Direct and Loan Guarantees. They cannot apply for the Trade Adjustment payments or get disaster payments. The Shutdown is the final nail in the coffin for thousands of family farms. Government employees aren't getting paid, but Congress is. Because of these issues, USDA is going to temporarily open most of the County Offices for 3 days. The employees will be working without pay but will provide help for loans, 1099 IRS documents and a few other items. The FSA Offices will be open Thursday January 17th, Friday January 18th and Tuesday January 22. My message is, don't be silent, Congress and the Administration need to find a solution and reopen Government.

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