Another miracle for farmers

In the closing days of the 106th Congress, U.S. Senator Mitch McConnell scored another huge victory for Kentucky's tobacco farmers. Today, McConnell inserted language in the Agriculture Appropriations Conference Report that will allow the Burley Coop to effectively wipe-out the drought-stricken 1999 tobacco crop.

McConnell, a senior member of the Agriculture and Appropriations Committees, urged his fellow colleagues to accept his measure to wipe-out the Burley Coop's 1999 loan with the Commodity Credit Corporation (COC). Currently, the loan exceeds $500 million and accrues approximately $2 million in additional debt each month.

"This is another McConnell miracle for Kentucky tobacco farmers," said Sam Moore, president of the Kentucky Farm Bureau. "We have been pleased to work with Senator McConnell on this critical issue. We owe him a huge debt of gratitude."

Danny McKinney, CEO of the Burley Coop echoed the Farm Bureau's comments: "This is the single biggest thing that anybody could have done to help Kentucky tobacco farmers. It is simply amazing that Senator McConnell has been able to pull another rabbit out of the hat."

McConnel added: "This is a huge victory for Kentucky's tobacco farmers. This allows the Burley Coop to clear out its 1999 pool stock, which in turn could lead to a tobacco quota increase next year."

Kentucky tobacco farmers have been casualties in the Clinton-Gore war on tobacco. Since 1992, Kentucky tobacco farms have decreased from 60,000 to 45,000. In the last three years alone, tobacco quota has been cut by 65 percent.

In addition to legal and political assaults on tobacco, Kentucky farmers have suffered financial losses due to the poor quality of the 1999 crop, which was severely damaged by the drought. The inability to sell the drought-stricken 1999 crop has contributed to the dramatic quota cut.

McConnell's measure will help get rid of the pool stock by allowing the Coop to forfeit the 1999 tobacco crop on which the loan was made. "If the amount of tobacco in the pool stocks is not decreased, then our farmers will be headed for another devastating cut in quota," said McConnell. "Kentucky farmers could not survive another bad year on the farm, and that's why this measure is so critical."

Will Snell, an economist at the University of Kentucky, estimates that McConnell's legislation could increase basic quota next year by as much as thirty percent.

McKinney added, "Every burley tobacco farmer in Kentucky should thank their lucky stars that McConnell was able to deliver on this one."

McConnell also thanks Congressman Ernie Fletcher for his efforts to secure support for the McConnell language in the House. "Congressman Ernie Fletcher continues to help deliver for Kentucky tobacco farmers. He was instrumental in securing support for my language in the House."

The Agriculture Appropriations Conference Report must now be approved by the House and Senate. Once approved, it goes to the President for consideration.

130th Annual Meeting of Kentucky Baptists Oct. 12th

Submitted by Jack Bruce,
Rockcastle Baptist
Associational Missionary

Bro. Rick Reynolds, Moderator, will call the 130th Annual Session of the Rockcastle Association of Missionary Baptist Churches to order at 7:00 p.m. Thursday, October 12th, at the Scaffold Cane Baptist Church.

Bro. Carl D. Sears, pastor of Macedonia Baptist Church, will deliver the Annual Session. Bro. Dan Garland, Leader of the Evangelism Growth Team for Kentucky Baptists will be the featured speaker and report on our Kentucky Baptists Convention work.

On Friday evening, October 13th, at 7:00 p.m. the meeting will reconvene at the Conway Baptist Church where Bro. Jack Stallsworth is pastor. Bro. Pete Lamon, pastor at the Ottawa Baptist Church will preach the Doctrinal Sermon, followed by reports of our Associational work and other business. Our featured guest for the evening will be Mrs. Joy Bolton, Woman's Missionary Union Director for the Kentucky Baptist Convention, who will report on our KBC Institutions and Agencies.

Rockcastle Association is affiliated with the Kentucky and Southern Baptist Conventions, with 16 million members in more than 41,000 churches in the United States. Baptisms by SBC Churches have exceeded 400,000 three years in a row. We now have approximately 10,000 International and North American Missionaries serving in more than 150 countries of the world. Here in Kentucky our churches provided for 5,000 plus children and many of their families this year through our Kentucky Baptist Homes for Children and gave $8 million for world hunger. This is just a sampling of how we make a difference in the world by working together, ALL IN THE NAME OF CHRIST AND FOR HIS GLORY!

Visitors and friends are invited to attend our 130th Annual Meeting, with the messengers from our churches, and enjoy the blessings of worship and fellowship and rejoice in the Association's work of missions, evangelism and benevolence here and around the world!