

## Farm bill passes

Written by Holyoke Enterprise

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The 2013 farm bill was narrowly passed by Republicans—a 216 to 208 vote—in the House last Thursday, July 18.

“I applaud the passage of the farm bill in the House today,” said Congressman Cory Gardner last Thursday. “It is an important piece of legislation that provides certainty for America’s farmers while modernizing and streamlining our agricultural policy.”

He said that though it is by no means perfect, this legislation represents a major step forward in consolidating and reducing outdated or inefficient programs, while reforming and improving programs like crop insurance.

“The bill reduces spending and eliminates direct payment subsidies and counter-cyclical farm payments,” said Gardner. “Today’s vote was a win for Colorado farmers, ranchers and rural communities.”

The bill includes two amendments authored by Gardner. One would provide greater assistance and prioritization for wildfires through the Emergency Watershed Protection Program. Earlier this year, Gardner was able to secure emergency funding for Colorado’s fire mitigation efforts through that program.

Gardner’s other amendment included in the farm bill would make it easier for rural electric cooperatives to comply with federal environmental law by allowing more flexibility to perform environmental reviews.

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