

G.B. Crawford: Every five years Congress enacts legislation that sets national agricultural policy. This legislation is known as the Farm Bill. Florida Farm Bureau President John Hoblick explains why the Farm Bill is an important policy statement.

John Hoblick: “The foundation and the basis of the Farm Bill originally was to help give farmers assurance that they indeed would make a profit for their crops and also ensure that this country would have food going forward into the future to sustain this country’s nutritional needs.”

Crawford: Hoblick noted that the bill also provides supplemental assistance for families that are food insecure.

Hoblick: “For the general public, the Farm Bill has a big impact, too. That’s the nutritional side of this bill that helps actually feed those that are impoverished and cannot afford food.”

Crawford: The process of crafting this legislation is always a challenge. But farmers and ranchers hope the Congress can adopt a new bill soon so they can plan their production in the next five years. Hoblick said national lawmakers have a big job facing them.

Hoblick: “There are a lot of complicated things that go into a Farm Bill, so it is not just as easy as turning on and off a light switch. However, just two weeks ago we had a Farm Bill hit the Congressional floor. It was quite honestly defeated by not only all of the Democrats voting no, but also the Freedom Caucus of the Republican Party. The primary reason was tied to an immigration arm of that – and a valid point that needs to be addressed.

We have until September to try and get a good Farm Bill in place. That means Congress is going to have to scramble in the next few weeks and months to really put this package together.”

Crawford: This is G.B. Crawford for Florida Farm Bureau’s *Newsline*.