

NATIONAL CORN GROWERS ASSOCIATION

632 Cepi Drive

Chesterfield, Missouri 63005

Visit the NCGA Web site, <http://www.ncga.com>, or e-mail at corninfo@ncga.com

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For further information contact:

Janice Tolley Walters, NCGA

202-628-7001, Walters@dc.ncga.com

NCGA Thanks House of Representatives for Passing NPDES Permits Legislation

WASHINGTON (March 31, 2011) – The National Corn Growers Association today commended the House of Representatives for their swift action to pass H.R. 872, the Reducing Regulatory Burdens Act of 2011, with a strong bipartisan vote of 292 to 130. This legislation states National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits are not required when applying pesticides according to their EPA approved label.

“NCGA greatly appreciates the support of Republicans and Democrats in the House to pass this legislation in less than a month since its introduction,” NCGA President Bart Schott, a farmer in Kulm, N.D. said. “We strongly endorse this legislation and are pleased to see Congress understands how significantly farmers could be impacted by burdensome NPDES permits for pesticides.”

For most of the past four decades, water quality concerns from pesticide applications were addressed within the registration process under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA), rather than a Clean Water Act permitting program. H.R. 872 amends both the Clean Water Act and FIFRA in order to restore the previous regulatory framework.

Under a federal court ruling in 2009, pesticide applicators would have to apply for an NPDES permit if the chemical reaches a body of water, which could include ditches and culverts. While NPDES permits will not provide any additional environmental benefits, the complex new requirements will expose farmers to potential citizen action suits for something as simple as paperwork violations.

“Most of today’s farmers use pesticides to help produce a safe, abundant and affordable food supply,” Schott said. “As it currently stands, the NPDES permitting system jeopardizes the farm economy without providing any real protection to water quality and we are pleased to see this legislation makes the necessary changes. We again thank the House for their vote today and urge the Senate to act quickly on this important issue.”

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Founded in 1957, the National Corn Growers Association represents 35,000 dues-paying corn farmers nationwide and the interests of more than 300,000 growers who contribute through corn checkoff programs in their states. NCGA and its 48 affiliated state associations and checkoff organizations work together to create and increase opportunities for their members and their industry. For more information, visit www.ncga.com