U.S. Senator Deb Fischer

Producing Responsible Energy and Conservation Incentives and Solutions for the Environment (PRECISE) Act

F A C T S H E E T

Precision agriculture can increase productivity, optimize water usage, decrease inputs, and lower greenhouse gas emissions all while providing an economic return for farmers. The expansion of affordable precision agriculture technologies and applications can substantially increase adoption by small to midsize farmers. The Producing Responsible Energy and Conservation Incentives and Solutions for the Environment Act would encourage greater adoption of precision agriculture technologies by increasing cost share, practice payments, and loan opportunities under existing USDA programs.

I S S U E

Precision agriculture is a farm management practice to help producers become more efficient with inputs and time, while reducing cost and environmental impact. Precision agriculture technologies allow producers to use less resources to grow higher quality products. These technologies are essential for implementing climate-friendly production practices.

The aggregate benefits of precision agriculture technologies have a huge environmental benefit. According to an industry analysis, the current adoption of precision agriculture technologies has prevented the application of 30 million pounds of herbicide, 100 million gallons of fossil fuels, and 500,000 million gallons of water through the use of variable rate technologies, auto-steer, and sensor driven pivots.

The cost and implementation of precision agriculture technology is a large financial commitment for small to mid-size farmers. According to a USDA Economic Research Service (ERS) study, large corn and soybean farms have doubled the adoption rates of precision agriculture. However, very few small to midsize farms are adopting precision agriculture technologies. Small farms make up more than 90 percent of farms in the U.S. Many of these farmers are unable to make the investments needed to implement precision agriculture. Increasing the adoption of precision agriculture technologies can enhance environmental stewardship while helping producers reduce costs.

S O L U T I O N

The PRECISE Act will provide funding through existing USDA loan programs to help producers purchase precision agriculture equipment.

- Includes precision agriculture technologies within USDA's existing Conservation Loan and Guaranteed Loan program, with up to a 90% guarantee to incentivize the private sector.
- Increases cost share and practice payments for precision agriculture technologies under the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)
- Funds 100% of precision agriculture projects through joint participation of conservation cost share programs and the Conservation Loan Program
- Requires the Secretary of Agriculture to emphasize the use of third-party providers for technical assistance for soil health planning