



Sen. Roger Marshall, R-Kan., left, is interviewed by Commodity Futures Trading Commission Chairman Rostin Behnam at the CFTC 2024 Agricultural Commodity Futures Conference on Friday in Overland Park, Kan. (Jerry Hagstrom/The Hagstrom Report)

Marshall: Extend farm bill, write it under GOP leadership

By JERRY HAGSTROM

OVERLAND PARK, Kan. — Sen. Roger Marshall, R-Kan., said here Friday that Congress may need to extend the 2018 farm bill for another year, and that the next farm bill will be better for the farmer if it's written with a Republican majority in the Senate and a Republican in the White House.

In an interview here after he spoke at the Commodities Futures Trading Commission's 2024 Agricultural Commodity Futures Conference, Marshall told *The Hagstrom Report*, "It's very possible we will have to extend" the farm bill after the current extension expires September 30.

"I think we will have a better farm bill for the farmer if we have a Republican majority [in the Senate] and a Republican president in the White House," Marshall added.

Both Democrats and Republicans are "pretty dug in" to their positions on the bill, but he added that the conflicts "are not personal."

Democrats have resisted any cuts to nutrition and climate-related conservation programs to fund commodity and crop insurance programs, but Marshall said he believes there can be cuts to the

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) because there are “healthy adult men who have not worked for years” who are getting SNAP benefits. There is a lot of waste and fraud in SNAP, he added.

In his speech, Marshall emphasized that he thinks the most important priority for farmers is to increase crop insurance premium subsidies. Marshall praised Sen. John Hoeven, R-N.D., the ranking member on the Senate Agriculture Appropriations Subcommittee, and Sen. John Boozman, R-Ark., the ranking member on the Senate Agriculture Committee, for introducing last week the FARMER Act, which would raise the premium subsidies. Marshall is a co-sponsor of that bill.

In agriculture, Marshall said, “There are lots of uncertain things and very little certainty.” He noted that the uncertainties include the price of fuel, whether farmers can use the pesticides they want, and “overregulation from government.”

Marshall said one of the tools underutilized by farmers is the futures market, and he urged more education for smaller producers. Less than 30% of farmers in Kansas are using the futures and options markets regulated by the CFTC, he said.

With high interest rates, the markets regulated by the CFTC “can be the icing on the cake” in managing risk, he said.

“Using futures markets is scary to small producers,” Marshall said. “I can’t imagine my grandfather doing it, but today is different.”

He described extension agents from Kansas State University as “the most trusted officers out there,” but said they should receive more education about the futures markets so that they can educate farmers.

Marshall said he did not want to end his speech without mentioning farmer mental health.

“We don’t do a job of educating people on how people look before they become suicidal, “ said Marshall, a physician.

He noted that loan officers know that people who are only paying interest on their loans are under stress. If someone stops going to church, going to basketball games or has a change in appearance, “it is OK to ask that person how ‘how are you doing.’ ” He also noted they can call 988, the national Suicide and Crisis Lifeline, and talk to a professional.



Sen. Roger Marshall, R-Kan.