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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**GOVERNOR RICKETTS AND NDA DIRECTOR WELLMAN THANK SECRETARY PERDUE
FOR CROP INSURANCE COVERAGE DECISION CONCERNING
IRRIGATION TUNNEL COLLAPSE**

LINCOLN – Today, Governor Pete Ricketts and Nebraska Department of Agriculture (NDA) Director Steve Wellman thanked US Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue and the Risk Management Agency for the determination of an insurable event for those affected by the collapse of an irrigation tunnel near Fort Laramie. The tunnel collapsed July 17 cutting off irrigation to more than 100,000 acres of farmland in Nebraska and Wyoming at a crucial time during the growing season.

“The canal collapse has been a devastating event for our farm families in the Panhandle,” said Gov. Ricketts. “Thank you to Secretary Perdue and USDA for working to make this an insurable event. This will help impacted farm families as they work to get back on their feet.”

“Farmers have already faced many hardships this past year,” said Director Wellman. “Hopefully this decision takes some stress off the farmers. Secretary Perdue knows that it’s not just the farmers who lose in situations like this, but the loss of crops ripples through local economies, too. Secretary Perdue’s announcement on this situation creates a positive impact on those affected and on our communities, as well.”

Crews are still working to clear debris and make repairs to restore water to the irrigation tunnel canal.

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