

**THE FUTURE OF U.S. FARM POLICY:
FORMULATION OF THE 2012 FARM BILL**

HEARINGS

BEFORE THE

**COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

ONE HUNDRED TWELFTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

MARCH 9, 2012, SARANAC LAKE, NY
MARCH 23, 2012, GALESBURG, IL
MARCH 30, 2012, STATE UNIVERSITY, AR
APRIL 20, 2012, DODGE CITY, KS

Serial No. 112-30

Part 1



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* **Editor's note:** Where possible the form letters submitted have been attributed to the originating organization. Signatories to the letters are in alphabetic order. **However**, due to printing constraints the signatories are not listed in this *Table of Contents*.

THE FUTURE OF U.S. FARM POLICY: FORMULATION OF THE 2012 FARM BILL

FRIDAY, MARCH 9, 2012

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE,
Saranac Lake, NY.

The Committee met, pursuant to call, at 9:00 a.m. (EST), at the Sparks Athletic Complex, North Country Community College, 23 Santanoni Avenue, Saranac Lake, New York, Hon. Frank D. Lucas [Chairman of the Committee] presiding.

Members present: Representatives Lucas, Goodlatte, Conaway, Gibson, David Scott of Georgia, Owens, and Pingree.

Staff present: John Goldberg, Tamara Hinton, Nicole Scott, Debbie Smith, Pelham Straughn, John Konya, Margaret Wetherald, Keith Jones, Mary Knigge, Jamie Mitchell, and Caleb Crosswhite.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. FRANK D. LUCAS, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM OKLAHOMA

The CHAIRMAN. This hearing of the Committee on Agriculture entitled, *The Future of U.S. Farm Policy: Formulation for 2012 Farm Bill*, will come to order. I'll speak into the microphone and try to make that work.

Good morning, thank you all for joining us today for our first farm bill field hearing of 2012.

Field hearings are one of the most important parts of the farm bill process. Not only do they allow the Members of our Committee to hear directly from farmers and ranchers, but they give us a chance to see the diversity of agriculture across this great country.

These field hearings are a continuation of what my good friend and Ranking Member Collin Peterson started in the spring of 2010. Today we'll build upon the information we've gathered in those hearings as well as the 11 farm policy audits we conducted this past summer.

We used those audits as an opportunity to thoroughly evaluate farm programs to identify areas where we could improve efficiency.

The field hearings serve a slightly different purpose. Today we're here to listen.

I talk to producers all the time back in Oklahoma. I see them in the feed store. I meet with them in my town hall meetings. And of course, I get regular updates from my boss, Linda Lucas, back on our farm in western Oklahoma. But the conditions and crops in Oklahoma are different from what you'll find in New York or Illinois or California, for that matter.

That's why we hold field hearings, to meet farmers and ranchers from different regions who produce a broad range of products.

New York is a fitting place to kick off these hearings because of the variety of food produced here.

New York farmers produce a wide range of specialty crops that generate \$1.34 billion annually and make up $\frac{1}{3}$ of the state's total agriculture receipts. New York ranks second in apple production, third in wine and grape juice production, and among the top vegetable producing states in the country. New York is also among the nation's top dairy states, and I'm pleased we'll hear from representatives of each of those commodities this morning.

While each sector has unique concerns when it comes to farm policy, I'd like to share some of my general goals for the next farm bill. First and foremost, I want to give producers the tools to help you do what you do best and that is to produce the safest, most abundant, most affordable food supply literally in the history of the world.

To do this we must develop a farm bill that works for all regions and all commodities. We've repeatedly heard that a one-size-fits-all program will not work. The commodity title must give producers options so that they can choose the program that works best for them.

And I'm also committed to providing a strong Crop insurance program. The Committee has heard loud and clear about the importance of crop insurance and we believe it is the cornerstone of the safety net. Today we hope to hear how we can improve crop insurance, especially for specialty crops.

Last, we'll work to ensure that producers can continue to use conservation programs to protect our natural resources. I'm interested to hear how producers in this area of the country use the conservation programs. I'm particularly curious as to your thoughts on how to simplify the process so they are easier for our farmers and ranchers to use.

Beyond those priorities, I know there are a number of universal concerns facing agriculture across the country.

For instance, my producers in Oklahoma are worried about regulations coming down from the Environmental Protection Agency and how they must comply with those regulations.

I'm also aware that the death tax is creating difficulties for farming operations. I want to hear how these Federal policies are affecting producers in the Northeast, but the main concern of our hearing will be how the farm bill affects specialty crops and dairy producers.

While specialty crops do not participate in traditional commodity programs, there are other Federal programs that play an important role in helping American fruit, vegetable and nursery crop growers to stay competitive.

These programs give specialty crop growers access to vital research programs and help protect their crops from pest and disease. Additionally, they provide assistance in maintaining and opening international markets and increasing consumption of the best fruits and vegetables in the world. I look forward to hearing your perspective on those programs.

For dairy producers, the ongoing discussion of dairy reform is of particular importance. The recent decline in prices coupled with rising production costs have once again demonstrated the need to improve and modernize our dairy safety net. While I do not expect unanimity among dairy industry participants, we never get unanimity among farmers in general, I do encourage all industry participants, producers and processors alike, to find some level of consensus regarding the type of reform that is needed.

The exact nature of the reform we include in the next farm bill will rely heavily on input we receive today and in future hearings. While there are several proposals that have been introduced, and we have had some level of agreement on a starting point for discussion, we do not claim to have all the answers.

With your help and guidance, we would hope to develop a comprehensive package of reforms that are fiscally responsible and balanced with regards to size and region.

Today we'll hear from a selection of producers. Unfortunately, we just don't have time to hear from everybody who would like to share their perspective, but we have a place on our website where you can submit your comments in writing to the House Agriculture Committee. You can find that—well, visit agriculture.house.gov/farmbill to find that place. And I believe we have, at the back of the room, some post cards that have that e-mail address on it so you can send your comments in.

As I said before, we don't have an easy road ahead of us, but I'm confident that by working together we can craft a farm bill that continues to support the success story that American agriculture is. [The prepared statement of Mr. Lucas follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. FRANK D. LUCAS, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS
FROM OKLAHOMA

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To do this we must develop a farm bill that works for all regions and all commodities. We have repeatedly heard that a one size fits all program will not work. The commodity title must give producers options so that they can choose the program that works best for them.

I also am committed to providing a strong crop insurance program. The Committee has heard loud and clear about the importance of crop insurance and we believe it is the cornerstone of the safety net. Today, we hope to hear how we can improve crop insurance, especially for specialty crops.

Last, we'll work to ensure that producers can continue using conservation programs to protect our natural resources.

I'm interested to hear how producers in this area of the country use the conservation programs. I'm particularly curious as to your thoughts on how to simplify that process so they are easier for our farmers and ranchers to use.

Beyond those priorities, I know there are a number of universal concerns facing agriculture across the country.

For instance, my producers in Oklahoma are worried about regulations coming down from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and how they must comply with those regulations.

I'm also aware that the death tax is creating difficulties for farming operations. I want to hear how these Federal policies are affecting producers in the Northeast.

But the main focus of our hearing will be how the farm bill affects specialty crops and dairy producers.

While specialty crops do not participate in traditional commodity programs, there are other Federal programs that play an important role in helping American fruit, vegetable and nursery crop growers stay competitive.

These programs give specialty crop growers access to vital research programs and help protect their crops from pest and disease. Additionally, they provide assistance in maintaining and opening international markets and increase consumption of the best fruits and vegetables in the world. I look forward to hearing your perspective on these programs.

For dairy producers, the ongoing discussion of dairy reform is of particular importance.

The recent decline in prices coupled with rising production has once again demonstrated the need to improve and modernize our dairy safety net.

While I do not expect unanimity among dairy industry participants, I do encourage all industry participants—producers and processors alike—to find some level of consensus regarding the type of reform that is needed.

The exact nature of the reform we include in the next farm bill will rely heavily on the input we receive today and in future hearings.

While there are several proposals that have been introduced, and we have had some level of agreement on a starting point for discussion, we do not claim to have all of the answers. With your help and guidance, we would hope to develop a comprehensive package of reforms which are fiscally responsible and balanced with regards to size and region.

Today, we'll be hearing from a selection of producers. Unfortunately, we just don't have time to hear from everybody who would like to share their perspective. But we have a place on our website where you can submit those comments in writing. You can visit <http://agriculture.house.gov/farmbill> to find that place. You can also find that address on the postcards available on the table here.

As I said before, we don't have an easy road ahead of us. But I'm confident that by working together, we can craft a farm bill that continues to support the success story that is American agriculture.

The CHAIRMAN. With that, I turn to my Ranking Member today, a gentleman from Georgia, Mr. Scott, for his comments.

**OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. DAVID SCOTT, A
REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM GEORGIA**

Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, and I'd just like to say, at the outset, what a wonderful part of the country this is. My first time into the Lake Placid, Saranac Lake area, and I must say it is a beautiful and very interesting visit. I certainly also want to say how great it is to be in the home

and the districts of my fellow Representatives, Representative Owens and Representative Gibson, both of whom are just doing a marvelous job for you back in Washington.

As the Chairman clearly stated, we're here to hear from you. This is very important for us to hear. We are engaging in this farm bill at a very, very challenging time. Because we not only have to go back through to the 2008 Farm Bill, but we have to do it at a time when we're also faced with significant budget constraints. At the same time, we want to hear on the many areas of dairy, conservation, specialty crops, which are very, very important for this area of New York.

And also we want to hear from you about some of the regulations. All regulation is not bad, but at the same time we can sit in Washington in our wonderful offices and we can make great policy, but you have to let us know how it is working. We want to make sure that policies and regulations from the EPA and others are done in a way that allows our farmers and ranchers to be able to be productive, to be able to be profitable and not be over-burdensome. So we look forward to hearing from you on that.

Again, Mr. Chairman, thank you very much, and we look forward to a wonderful hearing.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman yields back, and as is the custom, we will listen to very brief opening statements from our two colleagues who represent New York on the House Agriculture Committee. I will first recognize Mr. Owens.

**OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. WILLIAM L. OWENS, A
REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM NEW YORK**

Mr. OWENS. I thank you, Mr. Chairman. First let me say that I, and I think everyone in attendance here, is extraordinarily excited at this opportunity. This is unique and it allows northern New York and much of Vermont and other states that surround us to have an opportunity, as you said, to listen to the other side. And I think that that's very important.

As I was explaining to some of the folks I was talking to before the hearing, this is unique in that we have the opportunity to talk to people from throughout the country. This is very important that we get all perspectives into this farm bill.

You know, people don't recognize how important ag is in northern New York. It is an extraordinarily important part of what we do and what happens in our communities. It affects everything. It affects real property taxes, it affects the farm dealers. It has real impact on all of our lives on a daily basis.

I can only tell you how thankful I am that you are here, that we are here collectively. And in particular, I'd like to thank Mr. Gibson for his participation and his assistance in this process. And let me also say that I hope that as we listen today, we take those skills back to Washington with us. Thank you very much.

The CHAIRMAN. With that, the chair now recognizes Mr. Gibson.

**OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. CHRISTOPHER P. GIBSON, A
REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM NEW YORK**

Mr. GIBSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and let me just echo the comments of my colleague, Bill Owens. This is a historic day for

this part of the state and indeed for our state in general. You know, the Chairman listed some of the data, that second in the nation with regard to dairy, second in the nation with regard to apples, third in the nation with regard to grapes, fifth in the nation with regard to specialty crops. We are a leader in the nation when it comes to farming in the agriculture sector of the economy.

And what Bill Owens mentioned is absolutely correct, it's that we're here today to listen and to work together. And you turn on the news today, doesn't matter what channel that you happen to turn on, whether it's Fox or MSNBC, you hear all this negativity about the status of the country and the Democrats and Republicans won't work together. Let me just tell you that I really value my friendship and the work that I do with Bill Owens. What we're doing here today, with regard to farming, is critically important.

As the Chairman mentioned, we're here today to make sure that we have the right input, because we're getting ready to write a bill this year that's going to impact this sector of the economy for the next 5 to 6 years and we need to get it right.

And so, Mr. Chairman, thank you for—you're only doing four of these across the entire United States of America, and the fact that you chose to come here, right here to Saranac Lake and into the Adirondack region, that really means a lot to me, and I want to thank you personally and professionally. I look forward to this hearing. I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman yields back his time.

The chair would request that other Members submit their opening statements for the record so the witnesses may begin their testimony and to ensure there's ample time for questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Peterson follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. COLLIN C. PETERSON, A REPRESENTATIVE IN
CONGRESS FROM MINNESOTA

As we begin writing the next farm bill, we will hear directly from farmers and ranchers across the country on the issues they face every day.

Writing a new farm bill will not be an easy task most notably due to budget constraints. Everybody is being asked to do more with less and, it seems to me, that agriculture is being asked to cut even more than others.

The agriculture economy is the shining success of our nation's economy. We should not let those outside of agriculture try to mess up the only part of the economy that's actually working.

It is my hope that everyone in agriculture—producers in all regions, representing all commodities—come together. We need to be united to pass a good farm bill.

I thank the witnesses for making the time to testify hear today.

The CHAIRMAN. With that, I'd like to welcome our first panel of witnesses to the table: Mr. Eric Ooms, a dairy producer, Partner in Adrian Ooms & Sons, Incorporated, Old Chatham, New York. We also have Mr. Neal Rea, dairy producer, Chairman, Agri-Mark Dairy Cooperative, Salem, New York. We also have Mr. Jeremy Verratti, a dairy and crop producer, Verratti Farms, LLC, Gasport, New York. And with us also is Ms. Michele Ledoux, a beef producer, Adirondack Beef Company, New York.

With that, Mr. Ooms, begin when you're ready, please.

**STATEMENT OF ERIC OOMS, DAIRY PRODUCER; PARTNER,
ADRIAN OOMS & SONS, INC., OLD CHATHAM, NY**

Mr. OOMS. Thank you. I would like to start by thanking the Chairman, and Congressmen Peterson, Gibson and Owens for the opportunity to testify here today.

My father, two brothers and I are partners in a 450 cow dairy farm in Kinderhook, New York. We raise approximately 1,800 acres of corn, alfalfa and various grasses for our own herd as well as for cash crops. In 2011, we erected a grain dryer and storage to further diversify our business. My wife, Catherine Joy, and I have two children, Arend who is 4, Grace who is 2, and it's my goal as a farmer and a dad that my kids have the same opportunities to work on a farm like I did with my dad.

Dairy farming has been on a veritable roller coaster for my family and everyone else in the dairy industry for quite some time. Dairy prices in 2009 caused indescribable pain in the industry. I think you all know this. While the past 2 years brought considerably better dairy prices to farmers, high inputs have tempered the average dairy farmer's optimism. This year's forecast shows softening prices paid to farmers, but our inputs are not going down. In fact, the price of fuel is rising. This is very concerning.

As we look forward, it's imperative to remember that we are now in a new paradigm of higher feed prices, so as policy makers and farmers, we need to keep this in mind as we build our farm business plans as well as formulate policy. It's also important to remember that while 2009 was a horrible experience, we cannot set policy for the next 5 years based solely on 1 year, but rather look at long-term trends. It is vitally important, as we go through this farm bill process, Congress not make things worse through their action or inaction.

While there are some programs and structural pricing aspects that need to be changed, some programs are working for dairy farmers. For instance, the Federal Order System has been working. To dramatically change or eliminate the Federal Order System would result in pricing and market chaos that is not needed. EQIP has proven itself to be a valuable and effective program and funding should be maintained at adequate levels in the next farm bill. The vision of Capper-Volstead may have not worked a hundred percent perfectly, but overall, my cooperative has played a key role in helping my farm market my product as well as working with my neighbors in filling its market while balancing those farms' production. We need to protect this relationship.

Credit is vital to any dairy farm. The cooperative structure of the Farm Credit System is in the long-term best interest of agriculture across the country. I urge no new regulatory burdens on Farm Credit. These are some policies that work reasonably well.

Here are some items that could be reworked: In a perfect world with perfectly balanced budgets, we should work to improve MILC as a safety net. However, if we eliminate MILC, what are we putting in its place? Margin insurance programs have promise. LGM is very effective, although it has a critical flaw of being inaccessible due to severe under-funding. If MILC is eliminated, there must be something workable and equitable to replace it.

Price discovery remains a concern. Theoretically, the CME and NAS Survey should work. However, with so little trading on the CME, producers are skeptical. Competitive pay price modeled after the former M–W could be a way to go here. USDA’s recent rule on electronic price reporting is a step in the right direction. I appreciate the Committee’s work in bringing this reform to reality. We will see in the next few months or years what tweaking is needed. The Price Support Program seems to have outlived its usefulness and it seems as though there is a national industry consensus to eliminate it. These savings could be used to bolster whatever safety net replacement vehicle the farm bill puts in place.

There are also some initiatives that we are not doing that we should be doing, such as since the 1960s, California has been fortifying milk with higher solids, non fat. With study after study showing that kids are not getting enough calcium, this is a common sense idea that we should have been doing for years.

The Dairy Security Act should be a major focus of farm bill discussions. Farm Bureau supports the Dairy Security Act because the supply management component of this proposal is voluntary. A voluntary supply management plan gives producers the freedom to make the best decision for their farm free of D.C. bureaucrats.

Before I close, I would not be doing my job if I did not at least mention the need for labor in agriculture, not just dairy. In addition to the DOL’s proposed regulations for youth labor, just need to point out if there is to be an E-Verify bill there needs to be an agricultural guest-worker component. Overall, we need immigration and H–2A reform. While this is not in the jurisdiction of the Agriculture Committee or the farm bill, I urge each of you as Members of Congress to remember that we have a choice in America to import labor or import food.

I applaud those Members of the Committee like Congressman Gibson and Congressman Owens, who are working toward that end and would urge all of you to help us in this endeavor.

Thank you again for giving me the opportunity to comment here today.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Ooms follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ERIC OOMS, DAIRY PRODUCER; PARTNER, ADRIAN OOMS & SONS, INC., OLD CHATHAM, NY

Good morning. I would like to start by thanking Chairman Lucas, Congressman Peterson, Congressman Gibson and Congressman Owens for the opportunity to testify here today.

My name is Eric Ooms. My father, two brothers and I are partners in a 450 cow dairy farm in Kinderhook, NY. We raise approximately 1,800 acres of corn, alfalfa and various grasses for our own herd as well as for cash crops. In 2011, we erected a grain dryer and storage to further diversify our business. My wife Catherine Joy and I have two children, Arend who is 4 and Grace who is 2. It is my goal as a farmer and a father that my kids have the same opportunities to work on the farm with their dad, like I did with mine.

In my role as Vice President of New York Farm Bureau, I would like to thank the Committee for holding one of its farm bill field hearings here in the Empire State where the economic impact of agriculture is well over \$4 billion to our state’s economy. New York can boast about its diversity in food products as well as its national rankings for certain commodities. We are the second largest apple producer, third largest grape producer, fourth largest dairy producer and sixth largest vegetable producing state.

In addition, New York has become the new hot destination for yogurt processing with our local milk supply and proximity to major east coast populations. You are

probably familiar with the recent success stories of Greek yogurt manufacturers Chobani and Fage, but New York has also recently welcomed the international corporations of Alpina and Mueller to our Genesee Valley Agri-Business Park in Batavia. Our own Upstate Niagara Milk Cooperative is also revitalizing the former Kraft plant in St. Lawrence County for Greek yogurt production. All this yogurt activity brings opportunity for more sourcing of local milk which New York farmers hope to meet.

I have been asked to talk about dairy policy as it pertains to the farm bill and I am happy to do so. Dairy farming has been a veritable roller coaster for my family and everyone else in the dairy industry for quite some time. Dairy prices in 2009 caused indescribable pain and suffering in the dairy industry, I think you all know this. While the past 2 years brought considerably better dairy prices paid to farmers, high inputs have tempered the average dairy farmers' optimism. This year's forecast shows softening milk and cheese prices paid to farmers, but our inputs are not going down. In fact, the price of fuel is rising . . . this is very concerning.

As we look forward, it is imperative to remember that we are in a new paradigm of higher feed prices. So as policy makers and farmers, we need to keep this in mind as we build our farm business plans as well as formulate policy. It is also important to remember that while 2009 was a horrible experience for all of us, we cannot set policy for the next 5 (or fifty) years based solely on one year, but rather look at long term trends.

It is vitally important as we go through this farm bill process that Congress not make things worse through their action or inaction. While there are some programs and structural pricing aspects that need to be changed, some programs are working for dairy farmers (even if they are imperfect):

- The Federal Order System has been working and to dramatically change or eliminate the Federal Order System would result in pricing and market chaos that is NOT needed. I would further add, that component pricing in the Federal Orders has worked as well.
- In regards to the Federal pricing formula, the current Class I price differentials are working. As a New Yorker, I would always like to see them a little higher and would welcome decoupling of Class I from manufacturing milk for price determination. I do realize that this is not politically realistic and would recommend Congress not adjust them significantly.
- The continued inclusion and importance of dairy products in the School Meals Program. There is no better source of calcium, potassium, protein and vitamins A, D and B₁₂. This is a win for kids and farmers.
- The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) has proven itself to be a valuable and effective program that has helped every dairy farmer in one form or another meet their environmental regulatory obligations. These EQIP dollars are a smart and cost-efficient investment of taxpayer money for agriculture and the environment. EQIP funding should be maintained at adequate levels in the next farm bill.
- The vision of the Capper-Volstead Act may have not worked out 100% perfect, but overall my Cooperative has played a key role in helping my farm market my product as well as working with my neighbors in filling niche markets while balancing those farms production. We need to protect this relationship.
- Credit is vital to any dairy farm. Over 65% of ag credit in the Northeast is provided by the Farm Credit System. The Cooperative structure of the Farm Credit System is in the long-term best interest of agriculture across the country. I urge no new regulatory burdens on Farm Credit.

Those are some of the policies and programs that work reasonably well. Here are some items that could be re-worked:

- Milk Income Loss Contract Program (MILC). In a perfect world with perfectly balanced budgets, we should work to improve MILC as a safety net for producers, but we are faced with real-world fiscal issues where money does not grow on trees. If we eliminate MILC, what are we putting in its place? Margin insurance programs have promise, and the Livestock Gross Margin insurance program (LGM) is very effective although it has the critical flaw of being highly inaccessible due to severe under-funding. Many producers would like to take advantage of LGM only to find themselves shut out of the program. If MILC is eliminated, there must be something workable and equitable to replace it.
- Price Discovery remains a concern. Theoretically, using the Chicago Mercantile Exchange and National Ag Statistics Survey should work; however with so little trading on the CME, producers are skeptical, rightly or wrongly there is a real

lack of faith. A competitive pay price modeled after the former Minnesota-Wisconsin pricing formula could be a way to go here. USDA's recent rule on auditing and electronic price reporting is a step in the right direction. I appreciate the Committee's work in bringing this reform to reality and we will see in the next few months or years what tweaking is needed.

- Dairy Price Support Program (DPSP). DPSP seems to have outlived its usefulness and it seems as though there is national industry consensus to eliminate it. The savings could be used to bolster whatever safety net replacement program vehicle the farm bill puts in place.
- Import assessment for dairy promotion. We certainly appreciate the inclusion of a \$.075 per cwt assessment on imported dairy products in the most recent farm bill. I would just remind the Committee that domestic producers are still paying \$.15 per cwt for the same promotion.

There are also some initiatives that we are not doing that we should be doing:

- California Standards for Fluid Milk. Since the 1960's California has been fortifying milk with higher solids non fat. With study after study showing that kids are not getting enough calcium, this is a common sense idea that we should have been doing for years.
- Farm Savings Accounts. This tax strategy tool helps farmers manage risk voluntarily by shifting income during profitable years via tax-deferred deposits into a savings account for withdrawal during less profitable years.

To comment on the Dairy Security Act, a proposed bill to reform existing pricing and safety net policies which should be a major focus of farm bill discussions. Farm Bureau supports the Dairy Security Act because the supply management component of this proposal is voluntary. If an individual producer chooses to limit production and the Federal Government wants to incentivize this, that is the producer's decision and we support that. Earlier, I mentioned the rapid growth of the yogurt sector here in New York and the opportunity it brings for more sourcing of local milk. A voluntary supply management plan gives producers the freedom to make the best decision for their farm operation—whether that is to enroll in the voluntary supply management/margin insurance program or increase production to meet new market demand from yogurt processing.

Before I close, I would not be doing my job if I did not at least mention the need for labor in agriculture (not just dairy). One of the most serious issues facing farmers today is the U.S. Department of Labor's (DOL) proposed youth agricultural labor regulations. Despite a re-proposal of the parental exemption, farmers have no indication that our concerns will be addressed. Also, the hazardous occupations orders are set to be finalized in August and the original proposal places serious restrictions on the activities youth can do on the farm—things that are safe and part of the learning process on farms. How these will be finalized is a major concern. It is important that the Committee remain vigilant on both these issues to protect our family farms.

Similarly, if there is to be an E-Verify bill, there needs to be an agricultural guest-worker component. Overall, we need immigration reform and H-2A reform. While this is not in the jurisdiction of the Agriculture Committee or the farm bill, I urge each of you as Members of Congress to remember that we have a choice in America to import labor or import food. I applaud those Members of the Committee like Congressmen Gibson and Owens who are working toward that end and would urge all of you to help us in this endeavor.

I know the road to a new farm bill is long and time is short. NYFB stands ready to help you and Committee staff craft a thoughtful and workable farm bill to serve our family farms. Thank you again for giving me the opportunity to comment here today. I would be happy to answer any questions you have at this time.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Mr. Rea, proceed when you're ready.

STATEMENT OF NEAL REA, DAIRY PRODUCER; CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD, AGRI-MARK DAIRY COOPERATIVE, SALEM, NY

Mr. REA. Thank you. Chairman Lucas and House Agriculture Committee Members, thank you for allowing me to testify today about dairy policy as it impacts me, my family, my farm, and my cooperative.

I'm Neal Rea. I own a dairy farm with my wife Carol, our two sons Thane and Travis, and our daughter-in-law Karen. Our dairy is located in Washington County, New York, and has been in our family for more than 200 years. It is because of the unselfish dedication of my family to the success of our dairy that I am able to serve as the Chairman of the Board for my cooperative, Agri-Mark, and on the Board of Directors for NMPF.

Agri-Mark is a dairy cooperative here in the Northeast with more than 1,200 members in New York and the New England States. Our members are proud owners of McCadam cheese, an award-winning cheddar produced in Chateaugay, New York, only a short distance from here. Our members also own our fabulous flagship brand, Cabot of Vermont. The 2012 Farm Bill is discussed at nearly every monthly Agri-Mark board meeting. Today's hearing is timely and greatly appreciated.

First, I would like to share our farm experiences of 2009 and the progression of events leading up to today. Our farm has very little new equipment. We rely on good used equipment which we maintain ourselves. We have milk cow facilities to house about 190 cows. Construction of these facilities was accomplished over many years with some approaching 45 years old. Our most recent addition was completed during the winter of 2010 and 2011. Our milking center is housed in our original stanchion barn.

As 2009 progressed, we've joined the thousands of dairy farm operations that became victims of negative cash flow. Our milk checks were considerably less than the corresponding bills. There were tears, sleepless nights, frustration and tension. Carol's philosophy was, and still is, that we must pay for cows' feed, we must pay for electricity, and we must pay for herd health. All other creditors will be paid as possible. Some months we would only pay a hundred dollars on a bill that was over a thousand dollars. Our own pay was delayed by months. It was extremely difficult to face our agriculture supply and service providers with partial payments knowing they too had to borrow huge sums of money to cover their operating expenses and deficit income.

When the situation became overwhelming, we went to Farm Credit for operating capital. This had a residual effect through much of 2010 and even into 2011 because of the need to pay back borrowed money. Our margins were squeezed.

The difference between the farm milk price and feed cost are often referred to as dairy margins. These margins determine if a dairy can pay its bills and stay in business. Severely low or even negative margins in 2009 and 2010 made capital and land investments impossible. The average margin in 2009 was \$3.66. Even when margins improved in 2010, they were insufficient to cover costs. Margins did a fair recovery to a degree in 2011 to \$7.59, but are shrinking as we speak and are projected to be about \$5.80 this year.

Given this dire situation on our farm, I was extremely proud to be selected to the NMPF task force several years ago whose goal was to develop a new dairy policy for 2012 Farm Bill. I truly believe it was the affirmation of adversity that brought dairy farmers from New York and New England together with dairymen from all over the country to design policy that would provide a better safety

net, reduce extreme volatility and cost less to government. I have gained friends and confidants from all across the country with the same goal.

Margin protection is the key to a successful national dairy policy. This is exactly why Agri-Mark designed a marginal milk pricing plan, which later became a vital part of *Foundation for the Future* and eventually today's Dairy Security Act. Combined with an adequate Margin Insurance Program, dairy farmers will have a key management tool to navigate the current and future extreme farm milk and feed price volatility climates.

Margin insurance should allow farmers to chose their level of participation as well as be affordable and encourage all sizes and types of operations to be protected. However, a break in premium for producers would be greatly appreciated.

The secret ingredient, from my perspective, is compromise, consensus and commitment. Remarkably, farmers representing about 80 percent of U.S. milk production have come to a consensus, and we urge you to support the principles of the Dairy Security Act. Thank you for your attention.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Rea follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF NEAL REA, DAIRY PRODUCER; CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD,
AGRI-MARK DAIRY COOPERATIVE, SALEM, NY

Chairman Lucas, Ranking Member Peterson and House Agriculture Committee Members: thank you for allowing me to testify today about dairy policy as impacts me, my family, my farm, and my co-op.

I am Neal Rea. My wife, Carol, and I own a dairy farm with our two sons, Thane and Travis, and daughter-in-law Karen. Our dairy is located in Washington County, and has been in our family for more than 200 years. It is because of the unselfish dedication of my family to the success of our dairy that I am able serve as the Chairman of the Board for my cooperative, Agri-Mark and on the board of directors for National Milk Producers Federation.

Agri-Mark is a dairy cooperative here in the Northeast with more than 1,200 members in New York and the New England states. We have many member farms north of us along the St. Lawrence River basin; from the Vermont border to Lake Ontario. Our members are the proud owners of McCadam cheese, an award winning cheddar produced in Chateaugay, NY—only a short distance from here. Our members also own our fabulous flagship brand Cabot of Vermont.

Very seldom does an Agri-Mark monthly board meeting conclude without the 2012 Farm Bill debate being mentioned, so on my own behalf as well as on the farmers I represent through Agri-Mark, we sincerely appreciate the House Agriculture Committee Members and staff traveling to New York to hear from dairy producers like myself.

First, I would like to share our farm experiences from 2009, and the progression of events leading up to today's very timely House Agriculture Committee hearing. We have very little new equipment on our farm; we rely on good used equipment which we maintain ourselves. We have milk cow facilities to house about 190 cows. Construction of these facilities was accomplished over many years; some of our housing is 45 years old. Our most recent addition was completed during the winter of 2010/11. Our milking center is housed in the original stanchion barn; the equipment was used and expanded over the years to a current double 9 herringbone.

As the terrible conditions of 2009 played out (progressed) we became the victim of negative cash flow. Our milk checks were considerably less than the corresponding bills. There were tears, sleepless nights, frustration and tension. Carol's philosophy was and still is: we must pay for the cows feed, we must pay for electricity, and we must pay for herd health. All other creditors were on an allotment program. Some months we could only pay \$100 on a bill that was over \$1,000. Sometimes our own pay was delayed by months. It was extremely difficult to face your agriculture supply personnel with partial payments, knowing they themselves had to borrow huge sums of money to cover their own operating expenses and deficit income. When the situation became overwhelming, we went to Farm Credit for oper-

ating capital. This had residual effects through much of 2010, because of extended credit and the need to pay back borrowed money.

Dairy farmers are a resilient breed, and I have a deeper appreciation for those who survived 2009.

Margins (the difference between the feed costs and the milk price) became ever so important. This is exactly why Agri-Mark designed a program which later became a vital part of the National Milk Producers Federation's *Foundation for the Future*, which is now the basis for the Dairy Security Act.

What has become clear to the dairy producer community from this extraordinary strain is that we need a combination of approaches to deal with the current situation. To address the underlying problems that caused this crisis and the many industry factors that contributed to its depth and protracted nature, we need to focus on solutions that avoid recurrences of this situation in the future.

Toward that end, NMPF created a Strategic Planning Task Force to seek consensus across the dairy producer community and create a solid "Foundation for the Future." I and my co-op, Agri-Mark, have been an integral part of this process. The goal of the Strategic Planning Task Force was to analyze and develop a long-term strategic plan for consideration by the NMPF Board of Directors that would have a positive impact on the various factors influencing both supply and demand for milk and dairy products. It is extremely important to develop workable and realistic solutions that will garner broad support from dairy producers nationwide in order to unify behind an approach as this Committee begins to consider the next farm bill.

I was extremely proud to be selected to the NMPF task force, designed to develop a new dairy policy for the 2012 Farm Bill. I truly believe it was the aforementioned adversity that brought dairy farmers from NY and Vermont together with dairymen from all over the country to design a dairy policy that would be less costly to the government and with the ability to correct the extreme volatility that caused the wreck of 2009. Throughout the process, I have gained friends and confidants from other major milk-producing regions of the country including New Mexico, California, Idaho, Michigan, Wisconsin, Nebraska and Indiana.

Margin protection is the key to the success of a dairy policy. The secret ingredient from my perspective now is compromise, consensus and commitment.

Rather than offering just one solution, dairy policy must be multi-faceted: it must refocus existing farm-level safety nets; create a new program to protect farmers against low margins; and establish a way to better balance dairy supply and demand. I would like to touch on each aspect of this approach.

1. *Refocusing Current Safety Nets*

Both the Dairy Product Price Support Program and the MILC program are inadequate protections against not just periodic low milk prices, but also in confronting the destructively low profit margins that occur when input costs, especially feed prices, shoot up. The Dairy Product Price Support Program, in particular, has outlived its usefulness and hinders the ability of U.S. and world markets to adjust timely and effectively to supply-demand signals.

Discontinuing the Price Support Program (DPPSP) would allow greater flexibility to meet increased global demand and shorten periods of low prices by reducing foreign competition in the marketplace. Additionally, shifting resources from the Price Support Program toward a new margin protection program would provide farmers a more effective safety net.

As the Chairman and Ranking Member may recall, NMPF vigorously defended the importance of the price support program, albeit modified to make improvements in certain respects, in the 2008 Farm Bill process. But at the end of the day, it is clear that the dairy product price support program is not the best use of Federal resources to establish a safety net to help farmers cope with periods of low prices and is not the most effective way of achieving this goal.

- **The DPPSP reduces total demand for U.S. dairy products and dampens our ability to export, while encouraging more foreign imports into the U.S.**

The price support program effectively reduces U.S. exports, by diverting some of our milk flow into government warehouses, rather than to commercial buyers in other nations. It creates a dynamic where it's harder for the U.S. to be a consistent supplier of many products, since sometimes we have products to export, and at other times, we just sell our extra production to the government.

- **The Program acts as a disincentive to product innovation.**

It distorts what we produce, *i.e.*, too much nonfat dry milk, and not enough protein-standardized skim milk powder and whole milk powder as well as specialty milk proteins such as milk protein concentrate, that are in demand both domestically and internationally. Because the price support program is a blunt instrument that will buy only nonfat dry milk—and because that’s what some plants have been built to produce, as opposed to other forms of milk powder—it puts the U.S. at a competitive disadvantage to other global dairy vendors.

- **DPPSP supports dairy farmers all around the world and disadvantages U.S. dairy farmers.**

Further aggravating measures, the current program helps balance world supplies, by encouraging the periodic global surplus of milk products to be purchased by U.S. taxpayers. Dairy farmers in other countries, particularly the Oceania region, enjoy as much price protection from the DPPSP as our own farmers. Without USDA’s CCC buying up an occasional surplus of dairy proteins in the form of nonfat dry milk, a temporarily lower world price would affect our competitors—all of whom would be forced to adjust their production downward—and ultimately hasten a global recovery in prices.

- **The DPPSP isn’t effectively managed to fulfill its objectives.**

Although the DPPSP has a standing offer to purchase butter, cheese and nonfat dry milk, during the past 12 years, only the last of that trio has been sold to the USDA in any significant quantity. In essence, the product that the DPPSP really supports is nonfat dry milk. Even at times when the cheese price has sagged well beneath the price support target, cheese makers choose not to sell to the government for a variety of logistical and marketing-related reasons, such as overly restrictive packaging requirements. We have tried to address these problems, but USDA has to date been unwilling to account for the additional costs required to sell to government specifications. Once purchased, powder returning back to the market from government storage also presents challenges, and can dampen the recovery of prices as government stocks are reduced.

- **The price levels it seeks to achieve aren’t relevant to farmers in 2012.**

Even though the \$9.90 per hundredweight milk price target was eliminated in the last farm bill, the individual product price support targets: \$1.13/lb. for block cheese, \$0.85 for powder, and \$1.05 for butter—essentially will return Class III and IV prices around \$10/cwt. But in an era of higher cost of production, that minimal price isn’t acceptable in any way, shape or form.

In summary, discontinuing the DPPSP would eventually result in higher milk prices for U.S. dairy farmers. By focusing on indemnifying against poor margins, rather than on a milk price target that is clearly inadequate, we can create a more relevant safety net that allows for quicker price adjustments, reduced imports and greater exports. As a result of our DPPSP, the U.S. has become the world’s balancing plant—and dairy suppliers in other countries know this all too well. As time marches on, so, too, must our approach to helping U.S. farmers. It is because of this that America’s dairy producers and coops are focused upon a transitional process that shifts the resources previously invested in the dairy product price support program and the MILC program, to a new producer income protection program.

2. Dairy Producer Margin Protection Program

As mentioned above, existing safety net programs (the price support program, and the MILC program) were created in a different era. Neither was designed to function in a more globalized market, where not just milk prices, but also feed costs and energy expenses, are more volatile and trending higher. In the future, the solvency of dairy farms will depend more on margins than just the milk price alone. In order to address this dilemma, dairy farmers and cooperatives are supporting a revolutionary new program called the Dairy Producer Margin Projection Program. It will help insure against the type of margin squeeze farmers experienced not only in 2009, and also at other points in the past when milk prices dropped, feed costs rose—or both conditions occurred in tandem.

In developing the Dairy Producer Marge Protection Program, a few important principles have been followed:

- Losses caused by either low milk prices or high feed costs need to be covered.
- A farmer's cost for basic protection must be kept low or nonexistent.
- The level of protection available should be flexible, and producers should be able to purchase a higher level of protection if they choose.
- The program should be voluntary, national in scope, and open to all dairy farmers, regardless of size.
- The program should not provide incentives to create artificial over-production.
- The program must be easy to access by all producers through a simple application process or through the assistance of their cooperative.

3. *Market Stabilization*

Farmers have worked together since 2003, through the Cooperatives Working Together (CWT) program, to address both the supply and the demand sides of the equation that ultimately determines milk prices. But more is needed.

The Dairy Security Act contains a market stabilization program that prompts dairy farmers, only when absolutely needed, to adjust their milk output during periods of low margins.

To prevent steep and prolonged price declines—the likes of which we suffered from literally every day in 2009—the stabilization program encourages farmers to trim their milk output. This allows supply and demand to more quickly align, prevents dramatic price volatility, and avoids a prolonged l-margin environment. It also contains provisions that would make the program export-sensitive, meaning that if the U.S. risks losing its share of world dairy sales because of a misalignment of prices, the market stabilization program will trigger back out.

And it's also important to remember that in the absence of the price support program, U.S. and world milk prices will naturally be in much greater alignment.

Now, this type of system is not for everyone, and the best part is, it's voluntary. Only those producers who opt for the margin protection program would have to reduce their output. Those who don't want any government safety net won't be subject to the stabilization program.

All of these potential changes will ultimately require a new way of thinking about dairy economics. The dairy farmers I know recognize something has to be done before all the farms are gone and if there is one lesson to be learned from 2009; it's that change is needed.

Thank you again for your time and attention.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Mr. Verratti, when you're ready.

STATEMENT OF JEREMY L. VERRATTI, DAIRY AND CROP PRODUCER, VERRATTI FARMS, LLC, GASPORT, NY

Mr. VERRATTI. Thank you. Good morning. My name is Jeremy Verratti. I'm a dairy and crop farmer from Gasport, New York, in Niagara County. I received my 4 year bachelors of science degree in business administration from the University of Buffalo. I'm a member of the Asset Liability Committee at Cornerstone Community Federal Credit Union and an active member of the Lockport Alliance Church. I have also been a leader of the Young Cooperators Program at our dairy cooperative, Upstate Niagara, along with my late wife, Stephanie, who passed away in a car accident a bit over a year ago.

Members of the Committee, thank you for giving me this opportunity to testify about the future of family farms in America. The farm policies that guide your formulation of the 2012 Farm Bill will have a major impact on sustaining family farms such as ours.

We are a fourth generation farm called Verratti Farms. At the moment, my father Dan, my two brothers Daniel and Ben, and I support our families by working on our farm. To help all of our families do all of the work on the farm, we have seven full-time employees and about two part-time employees. We milk over 450 cows. This means that there about 50 cows to generate enough income for each family that is depending on our farm for their livelihood.

Our farm's main source of income comes from milking cows. We feed our cows corn and hay that we grow on our own farm. In addition, we generate cash by selling some of our corn, soybeans and wheat. We grow these crops on about 1,400 acres of land that our farm owns and rents.

Verratti Farms has been recognized as a dairy of distinction for 20 years and has won various awards for the high quality of milk we produce. Our farm has been a member of a cooperative for decades. As our cooperative has grown, so has the markets for our milk, both in terms of geography and in terms of the numbers and types of customer.

For example, instead of just selling fluid milk to retail chains in western New York, as we did successfully for decades, nowadays our cooperative sells many different products throughout the United States and overseas. Among these products are traditional dairy products such as yogurt, cottage cheese, chip dip and ice cream mix as well as a number of shelf-stable innovative products such as sports drinks and dairy-based alcoholic beverages. It is essential that the 2012 Farm Bill help cooperatives and farms such as ours continue to benefit from these growing markets for dairy products in the United States and overseas.

The package of ideas called *Foundation for the Future* achieves this goal and is the basis for the Dairy Security Act. The package of ideas set forth in *Foundation For the Future* is being supported by National Milk Producers Federation and many others including myself, Verratti Farms, and my cooperative, Upstate Niagara.

In my brief time with you today, I want to emphasize one of the essential policies advocated by the *Foundation for the Future* that should guide your formulation of the 2012 Farm Bill sustaining family farms such as Verratti Farms.

Why do I care so much about sustaining family farms? Our farm in Gasport is now supporting its fourth generation of Verrattis. We want to stay dairy farmers and we want to stay in Gasport. Not only is western New York our home and a great place to live, but our family is heavily invested financially and emotionally in this farm that has been our home for 75 years.

Financially, here are some of the keys to sustaining family farms: In the long run, the price level of milk depends on demand growing for dairy products in the United States and overseas. But in the short run, from time to time, there are bumps in the road in pricing that cause great financial and emotional stress on family farms. Sometimes these bumps are the price we are paid for our milk, sometimes these bumps are the price we must pay for feed, fuel and fertilizer.

A key part of the *Foundation for the Future* is to focus on the margin between milk prices and input cost such as feed. Margin in-

insurance that is promoted and partially subsidized by the Federal Government would be very helpful in weathering these bumps in the road that disrupts normal market pricing. In fact, sometimes, as in 2009, these bumps are more like a boulder in the field you're plowing, a seismic shake, or even a widespread earthquake that threatens the foundation of an entire industry. As a young dairy producer, I will never forget the financial hardship of 2009.

However, sustaining family farms is more than a matter of good financial policy. Sustaining family farms is a matter of good public policy in the broadest sense of the term. We must work to keep our farms in the communities they are in and we must do it now.

Being widowed at the age of 26 changed my view of life and time. Time is short. God gives us days to work as farmers and He gives us days to work as elected officials. However, none of us knows how long that particular opportunity will present itself.

I want to marry again, have children, and be able to raise those children around the farm. Members of this Committee, please move forward with meaningful change so that I may realize these dreams. Thank you for your time and attention.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Verratti follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JEREMY L. VERRATTI, DAIRY AND CROP PRODUCER,
VERRATTI FARMS, LLC, GASPORT, NY

My name is Jeremy Verratti. I am a dairy and crop farmer from Gasport, New York near Lockport.

I received my 4 year Bachelor's of Science Degree in Business Administration from the University at Buffalo. I am a member of the Asset Liability Committee (ALCO) at Cornerstone Community Federal Credit Union and an active member of the Lockport Alliance Church.

I have also been a leader of the Young Cooperators program at our dairy cooperative, Upstate Niagara, along with my late wife, Stephanie, who passed away in a car accident a bit over a year ago.

Members of the Committee, thank you for giving me this opportunity to testify about the future of family farms in America. The farm policies that guide your formulation of the 2012 Farm Bill will have a major impact on sustaining family farms such as ours.

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We milk over 450 cows. This means that there are about 50 cows to generate enough income for each family that is depending on our farm for their livelihood.

Our farm's main source of income comes from milking cows. We feed our cows corn and hay that we grow on our own farm. In addition, we generate cash by selling some of our corn, soybeans and wheat. We grow these crops on about 400 acres of land that our farm owns and about 1,000 acres of land that we rent.

Verratti Farms has been recognized as a Dairy of Distinction for 20 years and has won various awards for the high quality milk we produce.

Our farm has been a member of a cooperative for decades. As our cooperative has grown, so have the markets for our milk—both in terms of geography and in terms of the numbers and types of customers.

For example, instead of just selling fluid milk to retail chains in western New York as we did successfully for decades, nowadays our cooperative sells many different products throughout the United States and overseas. Among these products are traditional dairy products such as yogurt, cottage cheese, chip dip, and ice cream mix, as well as a number of shelf stable, innovative products such as sports drinks and dairy-based alcoholic beverages.

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Thank you for your time and attention.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Mr. Verratti.
Ms. Ledoux, whenever you’re ready.

**STATEMENT OF MICHELE E. LEDOUX, BEEF PRODUCER,
ADIRONDACK BEEF COMPANY, CROGHAN, NY**

Ms. LEDOUX. Good morning, Mr. Chairman, Congressman Gibson, Congressman Owens, my Congressmen, and Members of the Committee. My name is Michele Ledoux and I am a beef producer from Croghan, New York.

Before I begin, I’d like to thank you for traveling to the North Country to hold this field hearing on the farm bill. Most people don’t think of New York when they think of agriculture, but it is one of the state’s most important industries.

I’m particularly grateful that Congressman Owens and Congressman Gibson are Members of the Agriculture Committee, especially as Congress begins to rewrite the farm bill this year. They are an important voice for this region, where agriculture is the driving force of our local economy.

I appreciate the opportunity to testify on issues related to the livestock industry in upstate New York. My farm, the Adirondack Beef Company, is located outside of Croghan. It’s a small village that may be best known as home of the American Maple Museum. During this time of the year, you can see steam rising from many sugar houses in and around the village. Croghan is located in

Lewis County which has twice as many cows as people, though most are dairy with only about 800 beef cows in the county. This is not surprising. Nationwide, New York is the third largest dairy state, but ranks 34th for cattle production.

With my husband Steve, son Jake, daughter Camille, our extended family and partner Ralph Chase, we operate a natural beef operation. We have not used any antibiotics or growth promotants for the past 12 years. We run approximately 50 shorthorn brood cows, with an Angus bull, as a cow/calf operation. We calve out in the spring, market the feeder calves in the winter, and finish some for the direct-to-consumer and restaurant markets.

Our family also raises natural lamb and pork. Our children have their own egg-laying operations and meat-bird business. This diversity allows us to offer a selection of meat products that consumers want when we sell at the farmers' market.

Our farm is a member of the Pride of New York Program, the New York State Beef Producers Association and Adirondack Harvest, all organizations that help us with branding, marketing and promotion of our products. Our children are involved in both the Lewis County 4-H Youth Program and the Beaver River FFA Program. We hope that they can stay on the farm, but know that agriculture is a tough business for young people who have many other opportunities. The policies that you enact in Washington this year will help determine whether my son can make his living as a family farmer.

As an aside, my daughter wants to be a large-animal veterinarian, helping to fill a shortage of these professionals in upstate farm communities. As a beef producer, I'm delighted there will be a new veterinarian in the pipeline. For Camille's sake, I hope you keep reauthorizing the Veterinarian Medicine Loan Repayment Program until she's ready for it.

In addition to running our farm, both my husband and I have full-time jobs in ag-related industries. Steve works for Shur-Gain, an animal feed company, and I work for the local Cornell Cooperative Extension office, for the past 26 years, where I am currently the Executive Director of Lewis County.

I want to make it clear that I am not testifying on behalf of Cornell University or Cornell Cooperative Extension system, but as an independent beef producer who happens to work for extension. My hands-on farm experience makes me a better extension agent because I know firsthand what educational programs, resources and support are most relevant and needed for beef producers in our region. This is important because the Continuing Education Programs offered through Cornell Cooperative Extension and the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets help us maintain a quality operation and a competitive edge.

For example, my family has completed the Masters of Beef Advocacy and the Beef Quality Assurance Certification Programs. We also work with our veterinarian, Dr. Deanna Fuller, to attain our status as a bovine viral diarrhea and Johne's-free herd through the New York State Cattle Health Assurance Program. This program, sponsored by Agriculture and Markets and managed by the New York State Animal Health Diagnostic Laboratory at Cornell, ensures that ours is a clean, certified herd. It goes without saying

that the livestock and dairy industries rely on a comprehensive and well-funded animal health network that conducts routine surveillance, monitoring and research to protect our herds from outbreaks and emerging diseases.

Research, Education and Extension Programs at land-grant universities like Cornell are among the several farm bill programs that are of critical importance to the New York livestock industry. Farmers' Market Programs, that direct to consumer market, is a very important source of income for us. Our farm sells at the Central New York Regional Farmers' Market in Syracuse, and we also are considering starting a Community-Supported Ag Program to support our local sales.

We found that our consumers are willing to pay a premium for our natural beef. The higher prices we receive in farmers' markets allows us to cover the added costs of producing beef by these methods. Grants from the Farmers' Market Promotion Program to the Farmers Market Federation of New York has helped us with training and joint marketing. It's also supported region groups working on CSA models. In addition, cooperative extension is involved in these efforts by providing direct marketing training, seminars and workshops to farmers who have no experience selling to consumers.

The Farmers Market Nutrition Program is an important source of income and a critical resource in helping expand farmers' markets into new areas. New York State has the most successful FMNP Program in the country and should serve as a model for other states.

I urge you to reauthorize and fully fund the FMNP Program for both seniors and for WIC families. As the demand for local food grows, farmers' markets and other forms of direct sales have helped increase the viability and profitability of many farms like mine. Reauthorization and expansion of these programs should be a top priority in the farm bill.

The 2008 Farm Bill finally included Permanent Disaster Assistance Programs that should be included, should be continued in 2012. Farmers need some assurance of protection when a catastrophic disaster strikes. *Ad hoc* assistance is too uncertain, especially in the current budget environment in Washington, D.C., and the state, and often takes too long to access.

We took advantage of Disaster Programs when a drought hit our farm a few years ago. New York State most recently had to deal with flooding from Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee last summer. While my farm was not affected, I know many producers in other parts of the state who lost entire crops including forage for their herds. The New York State Soil and Water Conservation District and Cornell Cooperative Extension office stepped in to provide help, information and resources to farmers and citizens.

As a beef producer, I know that the Livestock Indemnity Program and the Emergency Livestock Assistant Program are the most useful programs for me if disaster strikes and should be reauthorized in the farm bill. Programs in the farm bill that help beginning farmers as they are getting established are important when you consider the nation's aging farmer base. These programs provide resources, training, education, and loans for new farmers.

I think of Casey Nelsen, an animal science major in his junior year of college, who has been up to our farm for the experience. He is not from a farm background but wants to farm when he graduates. Without support of the Beginner Farmer Programs, his barriers to entry would be difficult for him to overcome.

Through my work with cooperative extension, we have posted a Beef 101 series of workshops for beginner beef farmers in such basics as vaccinations, fencing, equipment, worming and feeding. It has been such a success that it's been replicated in other parts of the state. The 2008 Farm Bill made the Beginner Farmer Program a mandatory program to ensure that it received funding every year.

As you know, all the mandatory programs are zeroed out in the President's 2013 budget because their authorization expires at the end of the current fiscal year. Extension and reauthorization of this program would help provide new farmers with the resources they need to get started. In addition, training programs provided through the formula-based programs like Smith-Lever for extension and Hatch for research are vital sources of information for beginner farmers.

The CHAIRMAN. Can you summarize, Ms. Ledoux?

Ms. LEDOUX. If you'll indulge me, the Department of Labor's youth labor regulations are not technically part of the farm bill, but several Smith-Lever Programs, including the 4-H Youth Development and Youth Farm Safety touch on these issues, and I ask that you think about the fact that we need to keep young teenagers participating in education and training to address these safety issues and those are very important. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Ledoux follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MICHELE E. LEDOUX, BEEF PRODUCER, ADIRONDACK BEEF COMPANY, CROGHAN, NY

Good morning, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Peterson, Congressman Gibson, Congressman Owens—my Congressman—and Members of the Committee. My name is Michele Ledoux. I am a beef producer from Croghan, New York. Before I begin, I'd like to thank you for traveling to the North Country to hold this field hearing on the farm bill—most people don't think of New York when they think of agriculture, but it is one of the state's most important industries. I am particularly grateful that Congressman Owens and Congressman Gibson are Members of the Agriculture Committee, especially as Congress begins to rewrite the farm bill this year. They are an important voice for this region, where agriculture is the driving force of our local economy. I appreciate the opportunity to testify on issues related to the livestock industry in Upstate New York.

My farm—the Adirondack Beef Company—is located outside of Croghan, a small village that may be best known as the home of the American Maple Museum. During this time of the year, you can see steam rising from the many sugarhouses in and around the village. Croghan is located in Lewis County, which has twice as many cows as people—though most are dairy, with only about 800 hundred beef cows. This is not surprising: nationwide, New York is the third largest dairy state, but ranks 34th for cattle production.

With my husband Steve, son Jake, daughter Camille, our extended family, and partner Ralph Chase, we operate a natural beef operation. We have not used any antibiotics or growth promotants for the past 12 years. We run approximately 50 Shorthorn brood cows with an Angus bull as a cow/calf operation. We calve out in the spring, market the feeder calves in the winter, and finish some for the direct-to-consumer and restaurant markets. Our family also raises natural lamb and pork. Our children have their own egg laying operation and meat bird business. This diversity allows us to offer a selection of meat products that consumers want when we sell at farmers' markets.

Our farm is a member of the Pride of New York program, the New York State Beef Producers Association, and Adirondack Harvest—all organizations that help us

with branding, marketing, and promotion of our products. Our children are involved in both the Lewis County 4-H Youth Program and the Beaver River FFA Program. We hope that they can stay on the farm, but know that agriculture is a tough business for young people who have many other opportunities. The policies that you enact in Washington this year will help determine whether my son can make his living as a family farmer. As an aside, my daughter wants to be a large animal veterinarian, helping to fill a shortage of these professionals in Upstate farm communities. As a beef producer, I'm delighted that there will be a new veterinarian in the pipeline. For Camille's sake, I hope you keep reauthorizing the Veterinary Medicine Loan Repayment Program until she's ready for it!

In addition to running our farm, both my husband and I have full time jobs in agriculture-related industries. Steve works for Shur-Gain, an animal feed company, and I have worked for the local Cornell Cooperative Extension office for the past 26 years, where I am currently Executive Director of the Lewis County office. I want to make it clear that I am not testifying on behalf of Cornell University or the Cornell Cooperative Extension System, but as an independent beef producer who happens to work for Extension. My "hands on" farm experience makes me a better Extension agent, because I know firsthand what educational programs, resources, and support are most relevant and needed for beef producers in our region. This is important because the continuing education programs offered through Cornell Cooperative Extension and the NY State Department of Agriculture & Markets help us maintain a quality operation and a competitive edge.

For example, my family and I have completed the Master of Beef Advocacy and the Beef Quality Assurance Certification programs. We also work with our veterinarian, Dr. Deanna Fuller, to attain our status as a Bovine Viral Diarrhea- and Johnes-Free Herd through the New York State Cattle Health Assurance Program. This program, sponsored by Agriculture & Markets and managed by the New York State Animal Health Diagnostic Laboratory at Cornell, ensures that ours is a clean, certified herd. It goes without saying that the livestock and dairy industries rely on a comprehensive and well-funded animal health network that conducts routine surveillance, monitoring, and research to protect our herds from outbreaks and emerging diseases.

Research, education, and extension programs at land-grant universities like Cornell are among several farm bill programs that are of critical importance to the New York livestock industry. Let me tell you about some others:

Farmers Market Promotion Programs. The direct-to-consumer market is a very important source of income for us. Our farm sells at the Central New York Regional Farmers Market in Syracuse, and we are also considering starting a Community Support Agriculture (CSA) program to improve our local sales. We've found that our customers are willing to pay a premium for our natural beef.

The higher prices we receive in farmers markets allow us to cover the added costs of producing beef by these methods.

Grants from the Farmers Market Promotion Program to the Farmers Market Federation of New York have helped us with training and joint marketing; they have also supported regional groups working on CSA models. In addition, Cooperative Extension is involved in these efforts by providing direct marketing training, seminars, and workshops to farmers who have no experience selling to consumers. The Farmers Market Nutrition Programs is an important source of income and a critical resource in helping expand farmers' markets into new areas. New York State has the most successful FMNP program in the country, and should serve as a model for other states. I urge you to reauthorize and fully fund the FMNP program for both Seniors and for WIC families. As the demand for local food grows, farmers markets and other forms of direct sales have helped increase the viability and profitability of many farms like mine. Reauthorization and expansion of these programs should be a top priority in the farm bill.

Disaster Assistance Programs. The 2008 Farm Bill finally included permanent disaster assistance programs that should be continued in 2012. Farmers need some assurance of protection when a catastrophic disaster strikes. *Ad hoc* assistance is too uncertain—especially in the current budget environments in Washington DC and the states—and often takes too long to access. We took advantage of disaster programs when a drought hit our farm a few years ago. New York State most recently had to deal with flooding from Hurricane Irene and Tropical Storm Lee last summer. While my farm was not affected, I know many producers in other parts of the state who lost entire crops, including forage for their herds. The New York State Soil and Water Conservation Districts and Cornell Cooperative Extension offices stepped in to provide help, information, and resources to farmers and citizens. As a beef producer, I know that the Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) and Emer-

agency Livestock Assistance Program (ELAP) are the most useful programs for me—if disaster strikes—and should be reauthorized in the farm bill.

Beginning Farmer Programs. Programs in the farm bill that help beginning farmers as they are getting established are important, when you consider the nations' aging farmer base. These programs provide resources, training, education, and loans for new farmers. I think of Casey Nelsen, an animal science major in his junior year of college, who has been up to help on our farm for the "experience." He is not from a farm background, but wants to farm when he graduates. Without the support of the beginning farmer programs, the barriers to entry would be difficult for him to overcome. Through my work with Cooperative Extension, we have hosted a "Beef 101" series of workshops for beginner beef farmers on such basics as vaccinations, fencing, equipment, worming, and feeding. It has been such a success that it is being replicated in other parts of the state.

The 2008 Farm Bill made the Beginning Farmer program a mandatory program, to ensure that it received funding every year. As you know, all the mandatory programs are "zeroed-out" in the President's 2013 budget because their authorization expires at the end of the current fiscal year. Extension and reauthorization of this program will help provide new farmers with the resources they need to get started. In addition, training programs provided through the formula-based programs like Smith-Lever for extension and Hatch for research, are vital sources of information for beginning farmers.

Country-of-Origin Labeling. Country-of-Origin Labeling ("COOL") is an important program for both livestock producers and consumers. In my experience with direct sales, people want to know where their food comes from, to be sure that it is safe and healthy. Since the World Trade Organization has ruled that COOL requirements for beef and pork are not WTO-compliant, USDA needs to write rules that preserve the intent of COOL while conforming to our international trade agreements. We know that it is possible for COOL to be WTO-compliant, because other countries have successfully instituted COOL programs. Even apart from the farm bill, it is important that Congress instruct USDA to fix the problems with the U.S. system as soon as possible, so that producers across the country aren't harmed by retaliatory tariffs from Canada and Mexico.

Youth Labor Regulations. Although the Department of Labor's youth labor regulations are not technically part of the farm bill, several Smith-Lever programs—including 4-H Youth Development and Youth Farm Safety—touch on these issues. If you will indulge me, I would like to tell you that the Labor Department's recent proposal to change the youth agricultural labor regulations threatens the operations of family farms. Youth safety on farms—because of the Smith-Lever programs I mentioned—has been improving.

The DOL's proposal, however, cuts at the heart of family tradition by preventing young people from working on their family's farm. My children have been in the barn with us doing chores and learning responsibility since they were young. We have taught them how to work safely around machines and animals, so that they have grown up to be as safety-conscious as my husband and I. As a farm mother, I can tell you that the best way to ensure a future generation of farmers is to teach them safety while they are young, so that it becomes a lifelong habit.

DOL's proposal, however, will prevent young teenagers from participating in the education and training programs that have been developed specifically to address safety issues. For example, the Cornell Cooperative Extension 4-H program sponsors a Tractor Safety Program each spring in many New York counties to teach young teenagers how to operate farm equipment safely. My 15 year old son will be taking the program this year. These are the kinds of educational programs that need to be supported and continued.

Conclusion. In conclusion, I know that you will be faced with many difficult decisions as you write the farm bill this year. Mr. Chairman, I'd like to thank you and the Committee—especially Mr. Owens and Mr. Gibson—for giving me the chance to tell you about some of the programs that have helped my family and me run a successful beef operation in Upstate New York. I hope that you will take these views into consideration as you move forward.

I would be please to answer any questions you have.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

I now recognize myself for 5 minutes.

Probably a good way to start this give-and-take questioning is to observe something that really comes clear in Ms. Ledoux's comments, and that is the challenges of the budget process.

If we just were to extend the existing farm bill for another 5 years, we would be about \$9 billion short. In the way the previous farm bill was put together, there was not a permanent stream of funding for all programs, as she correctly noted, and a number of those programs are not funded, even if the authorization is in force, we have that challenge.

We also will be spending less money on the next farm bill, whether it's the \$23 billion reduction in spending compared to the previous farm bill that was agreed to by the principals of the Agriculture and Senate Committee or the President's \$32 billion proposed reduction, or the \$40+ billion reduction suggested last year by the House Budget Committee, we'll have less money to spend. So that makes our challenges tougher trying to be responsible and keep the good things.

That said, I must note, Ms. Ledoux, I'm always happy to see a fellow shorthorn producer, someone who is working also very hard to address some of the diseases and genetic issues, not just within our breed but within all breeds. That's responsible stewardship and that's part of our responsibilities.

I would first start by asking this question, and my colleagues who served on these panels with me for a number of years know that by my nature as an ag economist, a western Okie, there are a few fundamental things I'm always very curious about. Can you tell me, for just a moment, about land prices in your particular areas, the farmland? Up, down, sideways, it's all being bought by developers? Just a quick observation.

Mr. OOMS. Well, I'm in Kinderhook, which is just south of Albany. I can be parked at the Statue of Liberty in 2 hours on a Sunday morning.

The CHAIRMAN. Oh, my goodness.

Mr. OOMS. Land prices are down in our area, but land and farm land are not necessarily the same thing. But farm land that's developable is way down and some farm land, a good tract of farm land in our neighborhood, beautiful, it's great soil, about 80 percent tillable, went for \$4,500 an acre. And there is some other land, if it's preserved and the development rights extinguished, you're talking between a \$1,000 and \$2,000 an acre. That's what I would pay. I don't know exactly what others would pay. So, but land values are down because that \$4,500 in 2008 would have been—\$10,000 would have been pretty much in the ball park.

The CHAIRMAN. Anyone else wish to comment?

Mr. REA. I'd like to make a comment. It depends pretty specifically on the region. We have an area just 30 miles away where it seems to be quite popular to have a lot of horse farms, and it's certainly escalated the value of land there. Our land right in our particular Washington County is pretty stable. We've—we've purchased farm land for about the same price recently as we did 10 years ago.

Mr. VERRATTI. Not a lot of development pressure, but I know in our neck of the woods, in Niagara County, open ag land is limited. So open agriculture land, the rents are on their way up. As far as the prices in our particular county for purchase, they range between \$2,000 and \$3,000, depending on the quality of the acreage,

but seem to be heading up in correlation with soybean and corn prices.

Ms. LEDOUX. Obviously, I'm in a more rural county, and it's about \$800 to \$1,000 for tillable land.

The CHAIRMAN. Fair enough.

For those of you who deal with the crop side of the equation, and we'll talk about dairy in just a moment, tell me your opinions, your observations about what you hear in regards to how present crop insurance works and where you'd like to go on the crop side.

Mr. OOMS. Personal—personal opinion, we signed up for the catastrophic coverage that FSA requires and maybe someday we'll figure out the rest of it. So we don't really worry about it.

The CHAIRMAN. Understandable answer. Yes.

Mr. REA. We have not used crop insurance in the past just because there would have to be a catastrophic loss to get a third of what you would lose, and we just haven't thought that that was a fair exchange for the premiums.

Mr. VERRATTI. We do—the premiums seem to be cheap enough for us for catastrophic—the cat insurance that we have been signing up for it. Actually, particularly this year, roughly 2 weeks ago, we had a crop insurance rep come in from ADM, and we are looking at it. It seems to be, because of the subsidy on that crop insurance, it seems to be very reasonable and at some lower reasonable levels for production on the crops side, we are looking at going in that direction.

As far as the other sort of programs and payments, direct and countercyclical payments, not a big deal. They seem to be a drop in the bucket in the grand scheme of things with the increase in crop income. They don't seem to be very effective. It's money, we'll take it, but it's not a game changer.

The CHAIRMAN. With that, my time has expired. I would now recognize the gentleman from Georgia, Mr. Scott, for 5 minutes.

Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and let me just say that each of your testimony has been very, very interesting and very, very informative.

I'd like to touch upon a couple of areas that I'm equally vitally concerned about, and that is the threats to our family farms. And I think each of you are certainly, you Mr. Verratti and Ms. Ledoux, I hope I pronounced that right, mentioned that. What are the one or two major threats that you see right now to the existence of our family farms? I think you went into a couple of those, but just for the record.

Mr. VERRATTI. I'll go ahead and go first. That's a great question, Congressman Scott. I would say the two top for me would be milk pricing, which I addressed in my testimony. More specifically, the margin between your—the income from the milk and the expenses. I do the books. I'm kind of the account manager at the farm, which sometimes has caused me to grind my teeth, but it's been a generally good experience. But you're always going to have your labor and—and your feed at the very top of your expenses, so that's why there's so much discussion between the income from milk and the cost of feed. That margin is very, very important.

Second thing would be regulation. I'd like to see less regulation on small businesses in general in this country, especially farms.

For us specifically, we put a lot of money last year into CAFO, getting ourselves in line as far as regulations between manure quality, manure water quality, and these types of things.

And I just want to continue to make the point that dairy farmers and farmers in general were the original recyclers. We invented sustainability, if I dare say so myself. We take a not-so-nice product from the back end of a cow and reuse it and make crops and—and move forward that way. And it's an important thing and I don't want to see that stifled by high, high amounts of regulation.

Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia. Let me ask you real quickly about the Labor Department's proposed regulation dealing with child labor, I know that they put a parental exemption into it. Tell me what effect would this regulation, this new rule by the Labor Department regulating child labor affect a family farm?

Mr. VERRATTI. It would definitely affect it. You saw in my testimony I look forward to raising my kids, God willing, on the farm. I was raised, I worked on the farm, I lived right on the farm since—my entire life. I would love to see that regulation go away just because I think it's a great way to train kids how to work, and to show them the business and to teach them a great work ethic.

Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia. Now one of the things that we're looking at in this new farm bill is to be able to, in addition to our research grants that we give to our universities and colleges, that we can put some language in there that would allow some of this money to go into scholarships to give the young people who would go into agriculture related areas, which I think would be very helpful. Would that be helpful?

Mr. VERRATTI. That would be fantastic, sir. I would love that.

Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia. And before my time goes up, Ms. Ledoux, you—you—you made an interesting comment of you don't use antibiotics.

Ms. LEDOUX. Correct.

Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia. And what's the result of that? That's—I mean, how do you treat your sick animals?

Ms. LEDOUX. First of all, we run a—a Vaccination Program for our animals, so we are—just like you would vaccinate your children, we vaccinate our cows. And so we have been very fortunate, that we look at our animals. We see them every day. And if we do have an animal that is sick, we will treat it with antibiotics, but we pull it out of the general population. And so it's not something that we would sell to our consumers.

Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia. So—

Ms. LEDOUX. So I would not let that animal die—

Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia. Right.

Ms. LEDOUX.—if it needed antibiotics.

Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia. Well, I get a feeling that you may sense that there's something wrong with using antibiotics?

Ms. LEDOUX. No, absolutely not. I think, you know what? Everybody needs to do what is good for them. Our consumers would prefer animals that are antibiotic-free and no growth hormones.

Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia. Right.

Ms. LEDOUX. And so that meets our consumers that we deal with. There's nothing wrong with using antibiotics.

Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia. Very good. And Mr. Ooms, you mentioned in your testimony about EQIP, which I think is an extraordinarily important program that we've got to give incentives to ranchers and farmers so that we can keep the animal waste out of our rivers and streams.

What impact do you believe would have if we cut—because there is a feeling in the new farm bill, as the Chairman mentioned, budgetary—and I mentioned in my opening comments, budgetary restraints, and there's a uniform figure maybe we have to cut things by ten percent. What would cutting the incentives by ten percent, what effect would that have on this excellent program?

Mr. OOMS. Sure. If I could just, I have a 4 year old and a 2 year old, and when my—when I was a kid—as far as the Department of Labor regulations, when I was a kid, my dad would take me on a Massey-Harris 33 with just the steel fenders, and you held on for dear life.

My 4 year old goes with me on our 4850 John Deere, which is a 30 year old tractor with a cab, and I wouldn't even dare to take him on the other tractor. According to the Department at Labor regulations, my kids could—I realize mine are really small. I'm probably not legal anyway. But—the point—the point is, that they couldn't be on any power—they couldn't use any power equipment. That's a big concern.

As far as EQIP, on our farm, the reason why EQIP is great is because we have—we are—we milk 400 cows and therefore we are a medium-sized CAFO in New York. New York has some of the leading CAFO rules in the country, and we've done a lot of storage and management, nutrient management on our farm. And EQIP has helped pay for the cash investment, but we've had a 50 percent sweat investment in what—and some cash of our own. We just wouldn't be able to do some of these things because we're protecting everyone's environment, it's everyone's investment. And while we want a good environment, some of these things are reasonable, but we talk about profitability all the time, that if we had profitability, then we wouldn't need EQIP.

Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia. So the bottom line is a ten percent cut, if we did that, would have a very devastating impact?

Mr. OOMS. Yes, and I consciously mentioned EQIP in my testimony, but not any other funding for that reason, because EQIP is important.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman's time has expired. The chair now recognizes the gentleman from Virginia, Mr. Goodlatte, for 5 minutes.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Thank you—thank you Mr. Chairman, and I want to thank you for bringing the Committee to this beautiful part of New York State and it's a pleasure to be here. When I was Chairman of the Committee, prior to the writing of the last farm bill, we held a hearing in New York, but it was much further west, in the Finger Lakes region, and so it's great to see this part of New York. And such a great turn out here, too. This is a really good response from folks interested in agriculture here in New York.

I want to say that, as has already been said, the financial pressures on the Agriculture Committee, in fact on the entire Congress, with regard to our entire budget with the fourth year in a row now

that we're going to have deficits in excess of a trillion dollars, will—of necessity mean that we will have fewer resources when we work on this farm bill. So I want to focus on some of the things that we can do that, either don't cost as much money or cost some money but replace programs that might cost a lot more.

One of those areas was mentioned by Mr. Scott and was mentioned by Ms. Ledoux, and just a—a moment ago by Mr. Ooms, and that's regulatory issues. I just introduced this—this week legislation to halt the effort of the EPA that affects some parts of New York, again, further west from here, but also the other five states in the Chesapeake Bay watershed, which includes my district in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia, from usurping power from the states and imposing mandatory regulations in an area where the states have made considerable progress in reducing sedimentation and phosphorus and nitrogen going into the Bay and attempting to replace that with mandates for which they've done no cost-benefit analysis and no effort to make sure that this will actually help the Bay in any significant way. Which we certainly want to do, but not at the expense of, in the Commonwealth of Virginia, an estimated \$16 billion in cost to the state, to localities, to farmers, to other businesses, home builders, and so on.

All of that is very important as are some of the other regulations we talked about here. But we can't do some of those things in the farm bill, because of the fact jurisdiction, for example, with the Chesapeake Bay, rests primarily with other committees. So we'll be working with Members in those committees to push forward on that.

But in the farm bill, I want to ask what each of you do with regard to risk management. What kind of risk management practices, if any, do you currently implement in your dairy operations, in your beef cattle operation?

We'll start and go right down the room.

Mr. OOMS. Well, like I said earlier, we—we have the catastrophic coverage just because it's so cheap and you have to do it to get any program of any—any kind. But essentially, what we do for risk management is we have our corn spread out over 12 miles, so therefore the rainfall—we basically self-insure on that. And we always try to have a buffer of feed from year to year. And, for instance, this year we're selling less feed because we didn't have as much feed from last year.

And I mentioned in my testimony building a dryer and grain storage. That's a cushion for our dairy farm. One of the things that, in the dairy industry, with higher feed prices, there's an opportunity for us in the Northeast to grow our own crops, because we have natural rainfall, so we self-insure.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Do you use the RMA's Livestock Gross Margin Program?

Mr. OOMS. No. And the only—the—the honest answer is no. And the reason why not is because it's so—I've heard the horror stories about trying to get into it. There is some real opportunity there, but—we have friends that have been in line. I have a friend that's a broker. He has 40 clients he was trying to get it for. This is somebody who does it professionally. He had 40 people in line, he got

number one and number two on his priority list and that was it. So we are interested in that, but we haven't bothered because—

Mr. GOODLATTE. Okay. If you would address that too, Mr. Rea, and we'll go right down the row here, but I'm only going to be able to ask because of—

Mr. REA. Sure. Thank you. For risk management, we do forward contracting with either fuel or grain, depending on what the market situation is. We also have had a program in the past with—through our cooperative where we could forward contract some of our milk, but as far as LGM, we've not used that. And we do not use the futures market on selling our milk.

Mr. VERRATTI. We do forward contract some of our expenses as far as some of input cost on feed, also at some point fuel. And we have forward contracted with a small program just simply through our dairy cooperative on roughly ten percent of what we produce. We did that in 2009 and 2010.

However, as far as the RMA's Livestock Gross Margin Insurance Program, the complexity is there and I—I'm a guy that likes computers. I'm 27. I'd love to watch markets all day, but I have a dairy farm to run. And some of this stuff—I don't feel like paying people high amounts of money to consult on these different things to figure these programs out. So if it's simple and the premiums are reasonable, I'll use it.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Ms. Ledoux?

Ms. LEDOUX. Obviously I talked about the Livestock Indemnity Program, the Emergency Livestock Assistance Program. And they're available for beef producers if they need them. And you know, we had a lot of issues here in New York State that happened this past summer, and Soil and Water, and Cooperative Extension was there to assist people.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

This area of insurance is very complex unfortunately, but it also is an area where, because you can have participation by both the government with some of the cost of it and the producer with some of the cost, it may well be the fairest way to spread risk over a wide area with a lot fewer resources moving ahead. So we're going to have to devote a lot of effort to making it work in a fairer and more open and, I would say simple, but I know how complex it is because each crop is different in each part of the county, and people raise livestock differently in different places and the weather conditions are different in different places. So it will be a real challenge, but I think that's where we need to focus.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman's time has expired. The chair now recognizes the gentleman from New York, Mr. Owens, for 5 minutes.

Mr. OWENS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to echo Mr. Goodlatte's comments, that I'm glad my colleagues have gotten to see such a beautiful part of the world as part of their farm bill hearing adventure for this year.

Mr. Ooms, I have to say that your comment, "import labor or import food," I think that that's an extraordinarily succinct description of the crisis that we face in the farm labor area, and we would certainly like to have your permission to use that on an ongoing basis.

Mr. OOMS. It's not copyrighted.

Mr. OWENS. Thank you. Thank you.

A question to Mr. Ooms and to Mr. Verratti. We've talked a little bit about issues related to regulation. My question is: How do we strike a balance between the regulatory issues and, if you will, preserving clean water and other environmental issues? It seems to me that that's where we should be trying to go, is to reach a balance, and I'm wondering if you have any specific suggestion that you could offer to us that would help us reach that balance?

Mr. OOMS. Go first.

Mr. VERRATTI. Make it simple. If we can keep the water clean, the manure where it should be, I think everybody will be happy.

Mr. OWENS. My question is: How do you do that? I really want to know what you would recommend to actually accomplish that goal?

Mr. VERRATTI. You're very quickly going to get above my pay grade, but the—the programs that are here now, we are very close to CAFO compliant on our farm. That program seems to work. We seem to see the benefits of the implementation as far as keeping some of the runoff from our silage piles where it should be, keeping the manure where it should be and not mixing with rainwater, these types of things.

But we need to be able to spread manure on our fields and use that as fertilizer, and we need to have a place to go with it. And we desire to see the water clean and a lot of the other resources clean, but the—the regulation that we hear rumors of seems to be way more than that. So I guess what I'm saying is, the way—the things we're seeing in New York, as far as this specific system, seem to be okay. Much more regulation, way beyond the money that we should be spending, is more than I want to pay for.

Mr. OOMS. I personally think, and we've had the opportunity in New York to, out of necessity, we've worked with a lot of environmental organizations to try to find ways we can get to the same place, because everybody wants clean water. But everybody also needs to eat, okay? And there's a mentality—I won't get specific. There's a mentality in some places in Washington, at EPA, what the heck, that the environment is for the environment and then ag is for the ag guys. And the fact is, we live in the environment and we need the environment. We have to protect the environment.

As far as specific issues, I'm not trying to shill for a specific program, but EQIP has worked because our nutrient management plan, our CAFO situation, we didn't have to do CAFO, but we're to the point, like Verratti's, we're getting to the point where we need to. We have a nutrient management plan. There's a lot of things that we were doing already, we just put them on paper.

But the fact of the matter is now, we always learn things when you do these types of things, but it cost time and money and effort, and just working through that process has been great. So I would hold up EQIP just because it's something we've talked about already and it really has had—everyone has skin in the game.

Mr. OWENS. Thank you.

Mr. Rea, you testified that dairy farmers support the Dairy Security Act in the range of 80 percent. I'm curious as to where that statistic comes from?

Mr. REA. National Milk Producers Federation represents 31 dairy cooperatives, and we think that that's about 80 percent of the total U.S. supply of milk.

Mr. OWENS. And do you think that if that were implemented that that would in effect give adequate stability to milk prices?

Mr. REA. I think the market stabilization plan, we have to realize that we all, now, from the discussions this morning, that we in our own industries have to take active roles in how we see the future playing out. And I think if dairy farmers take an active role in stabilizing the market, then I think we can make this work.

Certainly, it's a lot different than what we've been accustomed to, with paying premiums for the insurance program, but if we can make the stabilization part of it work, I think we can be successful. There are no rules in there that say you have to reduce your production, but one way or another, if we can't bring the market into a balance with the supply, then we're going to be facing issues that we faced in 2009.

Mr. OWENS. Does anyone on the panel have any contrary view? I want to see if there's anybody who fits in the 20 percent.

Mr. OOMS. I would just say as long as the supply management portion is voluntary, it's up to that farm to figure out what they want to do. I have concerns if it's mandatory, though my family has no intention to milk more cows. But if it's voluntary, you're going to get a Margin Insurance Program that's going to be subsidized on some level. That's a carrot-and-stick approach and seems like a reasonable middle ground.

Mr. VERRATTI. So much focus has been on milk price and we've seen in various years price be pretty nice and yet expenses be well over that. So changing it from price focus to margin focus is a big, big part of the Dairy Security Act.

Mr. OWENS. Thank you.

Ms. Ledoux, I'm sorry, but my time has expired. I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman's time has expired. The chair now recognizes the gentleman from Texas, Mr. Conaway, for 5 minutes.

Mr. CONAWAY. Well, thanks, Mr. Chairman, and it's great to be here. I want to thank the Chamber of Commerce for last night's snow. You may not be all that keen on it. We've had 19 inches in west Texas, which was stunningly unusual and I missed all of it. So it's great to see the 1 inch of snow out there. I appreciate being here.

Mr. Verratti, I'm a CPA by background, and so your angst with the business side of it is understandable. If we go to a Margin Insurance Program, is there a standard definition of *margin*, and can you walk me through what you believe, each of you, what components go into margin, in determining that?

Mr. VERRATTI. To me, it's between the milk price we're being paid and the expense below that. Now the common one is feed, because that's generally the top. The big 3—my two biggest expenses are, everyday in the dairy, are labor and feed. So that's why they generally use that—and my definition would be between feed and some of the other high expenses and between the actual milk price we're getting paid.

Mr. CONAWAY. But what are some of those other high expenses? I mean, do you amortize or depreciate the cost of your equipment?

Mr. VERRATTI. Yes, equipment is a big one. The big ones for us are—fuel is huge, and we know that's going to be even bigger this year. Fertilizer for our crops. We are cash cropping some, but remember a lot of that fertilizer is being used to grow crops to feed our dairy cows.

Mr. CONAWAY. Now would you want the regulations to require that that be netted against your—your margins so that your—Mr. Owens talked about complicating regulations and this gets complicated—trying to figure out how you insure a margin, if there's no common definition of margin among the industry.

Mr. VERRATTI. The difficulty is going to be, sirs, when you get into places, like I—I have a good friend in Arizona. He's buying in a lot more feed than I am. I can grow a lot of my feed here.

Mr. CONAWAY. Right.

Mr. VERRATTI. So the difficulty is going to be when you go across the nation, the difficulties from state to state or from region to region.

Feed is a pretty good one in that, excuse me, purchased feed, because everybody needs to feed their dairy cows. As far as fertilizer, fuel, some of these other expenses, some of these places aren't using feed and fertilizer, they're buying all their feed in a truckload.

Mr. CONAWAY. Sure. I represent a bunch of processors as well, and so obviously there's push back from those guys who—and they say they represent the consumer, those kind of things. So as we walk through this change in—in this policy, most of us on the dais have friends on both sides of this issue and we generally try to stick with our friends. And so that's as about as funny as a CPA is going to get.

So as we walk this path, your relationship with your processors is going to be an important tool as well.

A couple of you mentioned using forward contracting. The CFTC, of which our Committee has jurisdiction of oversight for, has recently been writing extensive rules to implement the Dodd-Frank Act that affects commodities. And have you yet been seeing an increase in your cost or lack of availability, or have your folks that you're working with been communicating to you at all about what the impact the CFTC's new regulations are having on your ability to manage risks with the forward contracts?

Mr. VERRATTI. In regards to your first comment, I'm involved with both a co-op and a processor all in one, and I am willing to be your friend. Even though you're a CPA, I'm willing to be your friend.

No, all kidding aside, as far as the—the fix forward pricing within our co-op, that was a free program. It was simply, I believe, somebody who wanted to purchase milk from our cooperative or processor, depending on how you look at the definition, at an even keel throughout the year, so that was not something as far as this—this Gross Margin Program that you're discussing, so I would have no premiums from that. This program seemed to be complex for me at the time.

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Rea, you mentioned—I'm sorry, Mr. Rea, you mentioned you forward contracted as well. Any impact from the CFTC's new rules?

Mr. REA. No, I don't think that affects our forward contracting of corn or fuel, but I have seen no impact.

Mr. CONAWAY. Well, it hasn't been implemented yet, so it's still just a proposal for the most part, and I didn't know if you had been warned yet about any increases in your cost of doing business?

Mr. REA. I have not.

Mr. CONAWAY. Okay. Mr. Ooms?

Mr. OOMS. I just said we self-insure, but we do forward contract fuel and feed. I thought you were talking about USDA programs earlier. And we haven't—the only thing I have heard, the only concern I've heard, is to make sure that we are looking at it from a basis of, we're using this product on our farm and there's some talk about having a reserve for whatever you forward contract. And our deal has always been, we contract our urea always in December for delivery sometime in the spring, usually March, April, May. And we pay it as we get it, cash on delivery.

I've heard that there's some talk, and if I'm stepping into a highly, hot issue, so be it, some talk about us having to back whatever we book. That would be a concern because we book feed sometimes 13, 16 months out and we don't have the cash on hand to pay for it. The urea is a little different because it's for the coming year. But I think part of the key is if you're an end-user of product, let us use it.

Mr. CONAWAY. Our Subcommittee, which has regulatory jurisdiction and the Chairman of the full Committee will try to make sure the end-users are not impacted by these new regulations.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman's time has expired. The chair now turns to the gentlelady from Maine, Ms. Pingree, for her 5 minutes.

Ms. PINGREE. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, too, Mr. Gibson and Mr. Owens, for welcoming us to their region of the country. And thank you all, really, for being here in this room and—and for all of the people who have come to testify. Really articulate, useful commentary for all of us, so thank you very much.

I'm from Maine which has a small number of dairy producers, but pricing and margin issues are just as important to all of us and a huge concern, so I really appreciate the thoughts that you've brought to us today. But I want to address a slightly different issue. I'm interested in the local food and farming aspect of this.

I've introduced a title to the farm bill. It's got about 70 cosponsors, both—some on the Agriculture Committee, but a lot of people from around the country, all different regions, where people are seeing this huge growth in the interest in the market; both what consumers are interested in and then the opportunities available to farmers who sell more of their produce and dairy products and value-added products locally. So I want to address a few questions around that.

I—as I said, I come from Maine, and because of this interest, we've seen the average age of our farmer going down and the number of farms and production growing up—going up. So to us it looks like a huge opportunity.

I'll ask Ms. Ledoux a couple of questions, but if any of the rest of you are also interested in this, please feel free to comment.

You mentioned in your testimony that you sell at the Central New York Regional Farmers' Market, but you're also considering starting a CSA, and that, for me, is particularly interesting. Can you tell us a little about some of the barriers that you face in your production in terms of scaling up? Are there other problems you deal with, with marketing chains or distribution networks in terms of expansion?

Ms. LEDOUX. We brand our meat in the sense that it's natural, and so we just decided that moving from doing the farmers' market, which has been great, but it ties up a Saturday. And so I have a 12 year old and a 15 year old at home who are very active on the farm, but we thought that the next step for us was to do a community supported ag, which would allow us to have them be involved in the farm, but not tie up every Saturday going to a farmers' market. And that's really why we felt the next move for us was to do the community supported ag.

We have a good following down at the farmers' market down in Syracuse that are very interested in that, and they would like to have a steady supply of our meat and the other things that we could offer them, the eggs and things like that. So we just thought that was the next step up that worked out very well for our farm.

Ms. PINGREE. Anyone else on that?

Mr. OOMS. Just about that you mentioned the Farmers' Market Nutrition Program, we have a lot of neighbors who participate and we are actually looking into the potential, being so close to New York City. That is always identified as something. It's just amazing how many people are using that to purchase food at markets. So I just know that from all my friends and neighbors who participate, that that is a key program.

Ms. PINGREE. Great. Great, certainly.

Mr. REA. I'd like to follow up a little bit. We're a little bit of a different animal, being a cooperative, but we've found the ability to have 1,200 of our members be farmer owned with our great Cabot brand and we get into stores with our farmers and they hand out samples. And we have a great relationship with our retailers, and it all comes from this farmer-owned and grassroots part of it.

Mr. VERRATTI. Yes, and I would echo that. I love local—and people in our community that know me, that see me at church or at other organizations love to buy our product, talk to me about it, and I can educate on it—on it some, and—and it's a great relationship.

Ms. PINGREE. Thanks.

Ms. LEDOUX. And I guess if I was to follow up, people truly want to know where their food is coming from. They want to talk directly to that farmer. They want to look them in the face and they want to say, I bought this product from you. I want to know that you grew it or you raised it, and you took care of it from the beginning to where it was processed and—and brought that—you know, whatever that is, if it's a vegetable or it's meat, that they know that you were the one that was involved in it. And we can do that.

Ms. PINGREE. That's great. The chair mentioned that one of the big issues we're dealing with is budgetary constraints and what this new farm bill will look like. And I guess my particular interest is in figuring out, given the fact that this is where a lot of growth

in the market is, where farmers are seeing huge opportunities, how do we make sure that some of the programs you've already been talking about, are there and available to farmers who want to expand into this market as we're sort of balancing out where our budgetary challenges are.

So are there other things that you think, and I know some of them have already been mentioned today, even programs like EQIP or Farm Credit, are certainly critical, but in my brief time available, anything else you want to throw in there that you just think, when it comes to helping farmers sell more locally, is of great advantage?

Ms. LEDOUX. I mean, I guess I'm going—I'm going to put in my plug for Cooperative Extension and the Hatch Programs because they are directly working with farmers. They are directly out there talking with them. We are working with them, if it's telling them how to put in their vegetables, how to work with a small beef operation.

I mean, the reality is most beef operations in the United States are 20 cows, and New York State lends itself to that size operations. They're talking to them about doing rotational grazing. They're talking with them about having a small livestock operation, whether it's sheep or hogs, and people want to get involved with that kind of direct marketing.

Mr. OOMS. Applied research. Very simply, the Specialty Crop Block Grant is relatively new. It was an 2008 Farm Bill or the one before. And realize, you only have so much money in the world, you can't reinvent the wheel. But for future reference, I served on the New York Farm Viability Institute board and it's a farmer-led group that helps divvy up applied research dollars. And a lot of the grants that we're giving out are for new concepts or new ways even to help everyone though, but to help find new ways to skin the cat, I guess. So anything on applied research is always good because states have problems too.

Ms. PINGREE. Thanks. I think I'm out of time. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentlelady's time has expired. The chair now recognizes the gentleman from New York, Mr. Gibson, for 5 minutes.

Mr. GIBSON. Thanks, Mr. Chairman, and I thank my colleagues for being here today and to say that this has been a very productive hearing already. In addition to what you've communicated this morning, we have detailed written statements from all of you and that's all going to be part of the record as we work through the farm bill for 2012, and I want to focus in on profitability.

We've hit on this in a number of different dialogues, but I'd like to have the opportunity to get you on the record in some areas that I think would also potentially help with profitability. As I look at it—and of course I'm biased—I think we've got the smartest, hardest working farmers in the world.

It's not an issue of knowledge. It's not an issue of work ethics. You guys work 24/7 and so we, I think it's incumbent upon us to really be looking at ways that we can ease the burden on you and to look to ways to facilitate your profitability. So let me throw out a few areas and then the panel can really just follow up. This is an opportunity to get you on the record.

Regulations, specifically CAFO, if you have recommendations on how that might be revised. Conservation, tremendous way for us to balance, ensuring that we bequeath future generations an environment that we can be proud of at the same time that we're helping you with your profitability.

We've mentioned EQIP here this morning. Might there be other ways to administer it? Is it best done in the NRCS or might we consider perhaps the FSA to administer that?

We haven't talked too much about the Farmer-Rancher Protection Program, but I can tell you in our district this is really a valued program that has helped us on that score.

Energy, are there ways—certainly we talked about margin, we talked about price for milk and how much you profit in the end, and energy has a certain component of this. And there have been programs, particularly with the photovoltaic and anaerobic digester, are these worthy and should we continue, and do you have recommendations on that end?

Broadband, we're working really hard to expand rural broadband. Is that helping? And do you have recommendations on that? And finally, markets. Is there anything specific, creative ideas that you have that may help get your product out to other areas that, all of this inclining towards profitability. I'll throw that open to the panel.

Mr. REA. I'll take the first stab. Thank you for the question.

Regulations, it just so happens that our farm is bumping right up against an area where we need to invest heavily in CAFO, and we are reluctant to do that and I think that's probably tempering our growth. You go from 200 cows to 201 cows, all of a sudden you have to invest hundreds of thousands of dollars in—into the CAFO.

If we could phase this in somehow, Congressman Gibson, to—I mean, 20 cows isn't going to cover this cost of the CAFO, and we are in an area which, disappointing, has very little EQIP funds available. So everything has kind of taken on a new perspective when you have to pay for everything, whether you get any help or not through the government. And I'm not looking for help from the government, but I'm looking for ways where we can phase into this.

We're seeing attrition in the dairy industry, so we know that we need to have increased production from farms that are going to be viable. And if there's a way we can kind of move into this, you know. We—we have dug a manure pit. We did it with our own excavator. And if you get 201 cows, you got to have an engineer that's going to engineer that manure pit. Our pit holds more, and you know, we need just a little common sense here as we go forward into it, because we would like to produce milk for the future and be profitable.

Mr. VERRATTI. He's exactly right about, and I'll just talk about it, as far as CAFO. There's no doubt you're tempering growth with that—with that regulation just because it costs a lot more money, you get to certain sizes. I'm not sure what they are exactly, but I know that we're a medium CAFO, so we're going to have different regulations than—than Mr. Rea. So those regulations, all things shared, they cost money.

So EQIP's a help, it's definitely—it's a program we've received money from. It's definitely a help. But it's difficult when you need

such a large organization to “bury” some of those costs to be able to move on with productivity and profitability. So that’s important.

And you mentioned markets. I just think it’s very important to allow us to continue to export as a nation. We need to be sending this milk overseas. We believe we have the most nutritious, best product in the world. And we want to be sending it out along with our—along with our discussion earlier about allowing it go to local markets also.

Mr. OOMS. It’s pretty—I try to answer questions, but that was pretty open-ended, so it’s probably intended that way.

I just want the panel to know that Congressman Gibson, before he was actually elected, said he wanted to spend time on a farm. And he’s about, what, 3 miles from our place, so he came at quarter to 4:00 one morning and he ran the gamut. He milked cows and then he came back a couple months later because, he said, well, we milked cows with the machine, but I want to practice milking one manually because I’m in a cow milking contest. So we’ve got—I was going to bring the pictures for you, but we’ll keep them for another time.

As far as—I guess from my family’s perspective is, we try to be reasonable. We try to work with people. And we have a Right To Farm Law in New York that says we have a right to farm in certain areas. That doesn’t mean we have a right to do whatever we want. We still need to be a good neighbor. And I guess I just can’t get over all the different regulations that come upon us.

And the one that really gets me is: I make a choice to stay home on the farm. Somebody said earlier, they didn’t get paid, I think it was the Chairman talking earlier about he didn’t get paid until he went to work for someone else. And you know, I don’t know if I should admit this or not, but I was 30 before I got paid on the farm. And it was only because I said to my dad, “Dad, I’m thinking about getting married here. So I’m going to be moving out. So I’m going to need to get paid.”

And so my whole purpose of doing this was so I could—my kids could have the opportunities that I’ve had. And this is just one example. We are incorporated because that’s just what makes sense for our business, so my kids legally couldn’t work on the farm.

Now, whoever is enforcing this, Hilda Solis can come and pry my kids out of the farm and barn all they want. We’re going to do it until they do that. But just let us have the opportunity to be—and again, we want to work with the people. You mentioned—I could go on for hours.

This is my last point, is: You mentioned the Chesapeake, the clean up of the Chesapeake, and see you’re coming at it from a southern vantage point. I’ll give the northern vantage point.

Our New York State DEC, which we in ag and DEC don’t always get along, it’s saying to me, that we could remove all human life forms from the Chesapeake Bay area that New York—just covered in New York, I think it’s 21 counties. It’s a good swath. Not where I am. They could remove all human life form and the water still won’t be clear, clean enough. You know, let’s use a little common sense. And you know, again, none of us want dirty water, so I’ll just—there you go.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman's time has expired. The time for the first panel has expired. And I might note, Mr. Ooms, you could actually be an Okie if you want to come live with us some day too, by the way.

Mr. OOMS. No way.

The CHAIRMAN. With that, the Committee would like to thank the first panel for your insightful presentations and the questions and your answers, and you're dismissed. And we will ask the second panel to prepare to come forward.

The CHAIRMAN. We will now hear from our second panel of witnesses.

Mr. Eckhardt, whenever you're prepared, please begin.

**STATEMENT OF LARRY ECKHARDT, VEGETABLE, FIELD CROP,
AND BEEF PRODUCER; PRESIDENT, KINDERHOOK CREEK
FARM, INC., STEPHENTOWN, NY**

Mr. ECKHARDT. Well, good morning, and thank you, Chairman Lucas, and other Members of the Committee for being here, and thank you for inviting me to offer some comments and ideas regarding the 2012 Farm Bill.

My name is Larry Eckhardt, and I'm a farmer from Stephentown in Rensselaer County in eastern New York. I also provide crop consulting and planning services to farms in my area as a certified crop adviser.

There are several pieces of the farm bill that are important to our farm and to vegetable growers in the state that I would like to highlight today.

Some general farm bill concerns: The farms in our area, including our own farm, were hit really hard last year by tropical storms of the summer and fall. In trying to recover from this damage, I think it's important that the 2012 Farm Bill continue to include Permanent Disaster Assistance and Emergency Conservation Programs. These are very important to helping farmers recover after unimaginable disasters, whether through the replanting of trees, with the help of the Tree Assistance Program, or replacing soil and fixing fields that were washed away through help with the Emergency Conservation monies, ECP.

We can't go back to *ad hoc* disaster assistance. Farmers need disaster assistance they can count on and which arrives in a timely manner. Programs that are sometimes years in getting financial assistance to farmers, like the SURE Program, are not very helpful in efforts and these types of programs would be better spent elsewhere.

Conservation is also an important piece of the farm bill, and New York farmers have worked hard to meet extremely lofty Federal and state standards. As been said before, the Environmental Quality Incentives Program, EQIP, has provided critical funding and has helped leverage state and local monies to make sure farmers in the state continue to meet the ever increasing standards.

During these difficult economic times, I know there are going to be cuts to the farm bill, so I think it's important for Congress to focus on its conservation efforts on working lands programs like EQIP and the Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program. Over the other programs, like Land Retirement, keeping vital and pro-

ductive lands in production and protecting the environment at the same time should be where goals, the goals where funds are limited.

I would further suggest that the 2012 Farm Bill, that the role of NRCS be returned to its real and original purpose, and that's providing technical assistance to farmers for installing their needed practices, and leave the handling of the funding—the funds for cost sharing the projects, to the FSA. NRCS personnel have time and again told me that they are not trained in administering the funding of conservation, they're trained to help farmers make conservation practices work. I agree and believe that the FSA is better trained in handling the funds for conservation programs.

While mentioning FSA, I'd like to voice a strong opposition to the closing of local FSA offices in our region and around the country. These critical offices administer all the programs that are now in effect including insurance and other reporting and new requirements for farms to comply with programs. How can we do this with fewer offices and what little, if any, money is going to be saved? I'm all for saving, and I think everyone else is, but let's begin where it might make a difference. Not by eliminating the people and offices that, for us, are the front line, and for most real farmers are the real face of USDA.

I move to some specialty crop specific concerns. New York is largely a state of dairy and specialty crops, and that's why it's important that the farm bill reflect the type of agriculture we have here in New York and around the Northeast. Specialty crops have been notoriously under-served in previous farm bill legislation and that's why it's so important that specialty crops was included in the 2008 Farm Bill and I hope will remain in the 2012 Farm Bill.

The Specialty Crops Block Grants have been important to many farmers, both large and small, by supporting research, marketing and market development, and critical Pest Management Programs that help increase our profitability and our sustainability. The funds from other public sources for research and development in the area of specialty crops have been cut dramatically over the past 2 decades.

These Specialty Crops Block Grants have made substantial contributions to new business development, new products, new and improved growing methods for the producers in New York. I hope for continued and perhaps increased funding for this important part of the new farm bill.

I don't think it's any secret that crop insurance doesn't serve specialty crop farmers very well, especially not multi-crop farms like my own. The devastating weather events of 2011 have only served to highlight the need for some major changes in several areas.

I would suggest a few ways for the farm bill to be more responsive to specialty crop risk management needs and they are: First, I'm not an economist or an actuary, I can only suggest some ideas for a crop insurance program that will meet our specialty crop needs. But we'll need to help the USDA figure out how to make them actuarially sound.

I think Congress should instruct the USDA in the next farm bill to research and development with input from actual growers of specialty crops, risk management tools that will work more effectively

for diverse crop farms. Being diversified helps manage our risks to a large degree, but as we saw last year, there are no options that work well in near complete or complete losses that help farmers get back on their feet.

The Noninsured Disaster Assistance Program, known as NAP, is the only coverage offered for most nontraditional specialty crops. But in the event of a complete loss, it really only provides remuneration for $\frac{1}{4}$ or less of the lost crop. When there is a partial loss—loss in a crop, most often there is no coverage at all. There should be a buy up option so farmers can better protect themselves and manage their own risks.

Although NAP is pretty cost effective, the record keeping can become overwhelming for farmers who have many crops, and on my case, maybe 30 or more. And record keeping should be streamlined so more farmers would participate and be eligible for disaster assistance programs. Other revisions such as sign up deadlines, acreage reporting, yield history, type of production, whether you're organic or conventional, multiple planting dates and training of loss adjusters would have to be addressed to make the program more appropriate for growers.

And while we're talking about crop insurance, it seems it would just—we would pay less indemnification on insurance policies or NAP or at least more or would less frequently pay out if some of our rivers and streams were better maintained. We have seen extreme sediment deposits and obstructions in our many streams and tributaries caused by a lack of planned and routine care. Although allowing the trained NRCS staff to help farmers responsibly clear and shape these waterways to prevent widespread flooding, it would substantially benefit our farms and help mitigate the effects of the excessive rainfall in our communities in the future. This benefit can only be accomplished if the U.S. Corps of Engineers and the EPA are required to cooperate, perhaps through the 2012 Farm Bill.

Some nutrition programs in the farm bill are also important to specialty crop farmers. The Fresh Fruit & Vegetable Snack Program for Schools and the Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program are two of the many programs that help link our farmers with the people who most need the access to fresh and healthy foods. Any program that supports local food purchases and helps develop new distribution networks will be a great benefit to both farmers like myself and the people who need the access to the food I grow.

There are a number of provisions in the present farm bill for organic certification and research and is certainly an important piece of specialty crop agriculture, and I hope it continues. In this economy, I see many farmers using organic methods, but not able to spend enough money or commit the time to complete the certification. Instead, their focus, and that of many farms, has shifted to serving a market seeking out local foods.

Whether it's certified organic, organically grown or grown conventionally, consumers want to know where their food is coming from and who grew those crops. Because of this, I think it's important for the 2012 Farm Bill to include funding for the programs that help all farmers who direct market, no matter what produc-

tion techniques they use. This means developing food distribution networks, supporting the Farmers Market Promotion Program, supporting the food-based entrepreneurship programs and other grant opportunities. These programs help provide—improve the vitality of all farms—family farms in the areas of the country.

And finally, the proposed new regulations for food safety are due out soon and diversified farms like mine are concerned how this will change our business. Food safety begins on the farm and is certainly a primary concern on my farm. We work hard to ensure it every day in whatever way we can, but not knowing what is in these regulations and how hard it will be to comply with them scares me.

If the farm bill can provide farmers assistance in meeting these new standards, whether with needed training on the ground assistance from USDA or tools to implement new procedures, this farm bill would certainly help in that effort.

Thank you again for the invitation to speak today, and any questions, I would be happy to answer them.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Eckhardt follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF LARRY ECKHARDT, VEGETABLE, FIELD CROP, AND BEEF PRODUCER; PRESIDENT, KINDERHOOK CREEK FARM, INC., STEPHENTOWN, NY

Chairman Lucas, Congressman Peterson, Congressman Owens, Congressman Gibson, and Members of the Committee, thank you for inviting me today to offer comments and ideas regarding the 2012 Farm Bill. My name is Larry Eckhardt and I'm a farmer from Stephentown, Rensselaer County, in Eastern New York State. I also provide crop consulting and planning services to farms in my area as a certified crop advisor.

There are several pieces of the farm bill that are important to our farm and to the vegetable growers in the state that I would like to highlight for you today.

General Farm Bill Concerns

The farms in our area, including our own farm, were really hit hard by the tropical storms of last summer and fall. In trying to recover from this damage, I think that it is important the 2012 Farm Bill continue to include **permanent disaster assistance and emergency conservation programs**.

These are very important to helping farmers recover after an unimaginable disaster, whether through replanting trees with the help of the Tree Assistance Program (TAP) or replacing soil or fixing fields that were washed away through help from the Emergency Conservation Program monies (ECP). **We can't go back to ad hoc disaster assistance**; farmers need disaster assistance they can count on and which arrives in a timely manner. Programs that are sometimes years in getting financial assistance to farmers (like SURE) are not very helpful and the efforts in these types of programs would be better spent elsewhere.

Conservation is an important piece of the farm bill and New York farmers have worked hard to meet extremely lofty Federal and state standards. The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) has provided critical funding and has helped leverage state and local monies to make sure farmers in the state continue to meet ever-increasing standards.

During these difficult economic times, I know there will be cuts in the farm bill, so I think it is important for Congress to focus its conservation efforts on **working lands programs**, like EQIP and the Farm and Ranchland Protection Program, over the easement and land retirement type programs. Keeping vital and productive lands in production and protecting the environment at the same time should be our goals when funds are limited.

I would further suggest for the 2012 Farm Bill that the **role of NRCS** be returned to its real and original purpose—providing technical assistance to farmers for installing needed practices—and leave the handling of the funds for cost-sharing these practices to FSA. NRCS personnel have time and again told me that they are not trained in administering the funding of conservation—they are trained to help farmers make conservation practices work. I agree and believe that FSA is better trained in handling the funds for conservation programs.

While mentioning FSA, I'd like to voice **strong opposition to closing local FSA offices** in our region. These critical offices administer all the programs now in effect, insurance, reporting and any new requirements for farms to comply with programs—how can we do this with fewer offices? And what little, if any, money is saved? I'm all for saving, but let's begin where it might make a difference, not by eliminating the people and offices on the front lines, who, for most of the real farmers, are **the face of the USDA**.

Specialty Crop-Specific Concerns

New York is largely a state of dairy and **specialty crops**, that's why it's important that the **farm bill reflect the type of agriculture we have here in New York and the Northeast**. Specialty crops have been notoriously under-served in previous farm bill legislation and that's why it was so important that a specialty crops title was included in the 2008 Farm Bill and I hope will remain in the 2012 Farm Bill.

The **Specialty Crops Block Grants** have been important to many farmers, large and small, by supporting research, marketing and market development, and critical pest management programs that help increase our profitability and sustainability. The funds from other public sources for research and development in the area of specialty crops have been cut dramatically over the last 2 decades.

These **Specialty Crops Block Grants** have made substantial contributions to new business development, new products and new and improved growing methods for producers in New York. I hope for continued, and perhaps, increased funding for this important part of the new farm bill.

I don't think it's a secret that **crop insurance** doesn't serve specialty crop farmers well, especially not multi-crop farms like mine. The devastating weather events of 2011 have only served to highlight the need for some major changes in several areas. I would suggest a few ways for the farm bill to be more responsive to specialty crop risk management needs:

- First, I'm not an economist or an actuary. I can only suggest some ideas for a crop insurance program that will meet our specialty crop needs, but we need the help of USDA to figure out how to make them actuarially sound. I think Congress should instruct the USDA in the next farm bill to research and develop, with input from **actual growers of specialty crops**, risk management tools that will work more effectively for diverse crop farms. Being diversified helps manage our risk to a large degree, but as we saw last year, there are no options that work well in near complete or complete losses to help farmers get back on their feet.
- The **Non-Insured Disaster Assistance Program (NAP)** is the only coverage offered for most nontraditional specialty crops, but in the event of a complete loss, it really only provides remuneration for a quarter or less of my lost crop. When there is a partial loss, most often there is no coverage at all. There should be a **buy-up option** so farmers can better protect themselves and manage their individual risk. Although NAP is pretty cost-effective, the record-keeping can become overwhelming for farmers who have many crops—maybe 30 or more—and **recordkeeping should be streamlined** so more farmers would participate and be eligible for the disaster assistance programs. Other revisions, such as sign-up deadlines, acreage reporting, yield histories, type of production (organic or conventional), multiple planting dates and training of loss adjusters would have to be addressed to make the program more appropriate for growers.
- While we're talking about crop insurance, it just seems we would have to pay less indemnification on insurance policies or NAP, much less frequently, if some of our rivers and streams were better maintained. We have seen extreme sediment deposits and obstructions in many of our streams and tributaries caused by the lack of planned, routine care. Allowing the trained NRCS staff to help farmers responsibly clear and shape these waterways to prevent widespread flooding, it would substantially benefit our farms and help mitigate the effects of excessive rainfall on all our communities in the future. This benefit can only be accomplished if **the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers and the EPA are required to cooperate**, perhaps thru the 2012 Farm Bill.

Nutrition programs in the farm bill are also important to specialty crop farmers. The Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Snack Program for schools and the Seniors Farmers Market Nutrition Program are two of the many programs that help link our farmers with the people who most need access to fresh, healthy foods. Any program that supports local food purchases and helps develop new distribution networks will be a great benefit to both farmers like myself and the people who need access to the food I grow.

There are a number of provisions in the present farm bill for **organic certification and research** and this is certainly an important piece of specialty crop agriculture. However, in this economy, I see many farmers using organic methods, but not able to spend the money or commit the time to complete their certification. Instead, their focus and that of many farmers has shifted to serving a market seeking out **local foods**.

Whether it's certified organic, grown organically, or grown conventionally, consumers want to know where their food is coming from and who grew the crops. Because of this, I think it is important for the 2012 Farm Bill to include funding for programs that **help all farmers who direct market**, no matter what production techniques they use. This means developing food distribution networks, supporting the Farmers Market Promotion Program, supporting food-based entrepreneurship programs, and other grant opportunities. These programs all help improve the viability of all family farms in all areas of the country.

And finally, the proposed new regulations for **food safety** are due out soon and diversified farms like mine are concerned with how this will change our business. **Food safety begins on the farm** and is certainly a primary concern on my farm. We work hard at ensuring it every day, in whatever way we can, but not knowing what is in these regulations and how hard it will be to comply with them scares me. If the farm bill can provide farmers assistance in meeting these new standards, whether with needed training, on-the-ground assistance from USDA, or tools to implement new procedures, this farm bill could certainly help that effort.

These have been several of the issues of the upcoming farm bill that I think are most important to diversified vegetable farms like mine. Thank you again for the invitation to speak today and if you have any questions, I am always happy to answer them.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.
Mr. Osborn, you're recognized.

**STATEMENT OF SCOTT OSBORN, WINE GRAPE PRODUCER;
PRESIDENT, FOX RUN VINEYARD, INC., PENN YAN, NY**

Mr. OSBORN. Thank you. Good morning. Thank you for asking me to speak here today. I would like to thank you for taking the time to come all the way up here to listen to our thoughts on the upcoming farm bill.

My name is Scott Osborn, and I own Fox Run Vineyards, which is a medium-sized winery in the Finger Lakes of New York. I have 50 acres of vinifera grapes which are the classic European varieties that I can grow due to the maritime influence of the large and deep Finger Lakes.

I'm the current President of the New York Wine Industry Association and the past President of the Finger Lakes Wine Alliance, past President of the Seneca Lake Winery Association, and I was presented with an industry award from the New York Wine & Grape Foundation for my contributions to the New York wine industry. I'm also a member of Wine America and the New York Farm Bureau.

The 2008 Farm Bill was historic in that for the first time ever specialty crops were officially recognized and supported in various ways. Grapes are a specialty crop, yet are the sixth largest dollar volume crop produced in the U.S. In New York alone, grapes, grape juice and wine generates more than \$3.76 billion in economic benefits to the State of New York. And the national industry generates more than a \$162 billion for the American economy.

For the new farm bill, my main concerns are crop insurance, research and market access programs. Crop insurance for grape growers is a big issue here on the East Coast. Although it has improved significantly in New York over the last 5 years, there are still a number of problems which need to be addressed.

We are asking that you continue the premium subsidy to continue to get more buy in by growers. If you remove it and it costs too much, no one will participate.

It would be nice if the harvest deduction was removed. Currently, grape growers are getting hit twice with this cost: Once when it is subtracted from the indemnity they get, and then again by the adjuster.

This is a fee that is just charged grape growers for not picking their grapes. And every grape grower picks their grapes, so it is sort of problematic.

The price per ton we are paid on a claim should be based on a 5 year average on either the contracted price or a regional average to reflect the real time market value as opposed to the current 10 year average. I also think that RMA and the USDA need to better educate their employees in other states where there is an emerging grape and wine industry, so they can understand the grape industry and they can be of help rather than an obstacle.

We could use insurance for our new plantings. And this is something many people don't understand, we are a permanent crop, which makes us very different from other agriculture.

Our installation costs are extreme. For example, it costs approximately \$18,000 per acre to plant an acre of grapes, and it is around 4 years before the first harvest. We still have to farm it all this time, which runs \$4,000+ per acre per year to farm, So the investment over 4 years is about \$30,000 per acre. If you add in that we may be removing an under-performing variety and replanting for a more profitable variety, you are looking at, easily, a \$50,000 investment per acre.

If there's an environmental event which significantly damages or destroys the new vines, we have no way of recouping our investment. So some form of insurance would be a great help for that.

In addition, moving the closing date for the MPCI, Multiple Peril Crop Insurance policies, to December 1st. The current date of November 20th is very close to the end of grape harvest, and in some cases people are still harvesting. Having an extra 10 days or so would be helpful by allowing the grower to make an intelligent decision rather than an impulse one.

The specialty crop title of the farm bill was an important addition to the last bill, and I hope this remains. The Northeast is mostly made up of specialty crop producers, and this recognition is helpful to the success of farming in our area.

The Specialty Crops Research Initiative, the Agricultural Research Service, IPM programs and block grants are all very important for grapes and other fruit and vegetable crops. A number of northern universities, through their grape breeding programs, have been able to develop grape varieties which can withstand subzero temperatures. This has allowed areas in the Northeast to develop a grape and wine industry that did not exist 5 years ago. The more funding towards research gives us more opportunities to develop our industry, providing more jobs and making our businesses more profitable and more competitive.

The farm bill should continue to include export assistance programs such as the Market Access Program, which allows farmers to be competitive in a global market. Both the New York Wine &

Grape Foundation and Welch's grape juice have received MAP funding in recent years, and this allows our wines and juice products from New York to expand current markets and explore new opportunities. Driving demand for our grape products directly helps farmers become more profitable.

In summary, the last farm bill was a promising start, but needs to be continued and expanded so that specialty crops can contribute even more to the American agricultural economy.

Thank you for letting me testify today.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Osborn follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SCOTT OSBORN, WINE GRAPE PRODUCER; PRESIDENT, FOX RUN VINEYARD, INC., PENN YAN, NY

Good morning! Thank you for asking me to speak here today. I would like to thank you for taking the time to come all the way up here to listen to our thoughts on the upcoming farm bill.

My name is Scott Osborn and I own Fox Run Vineyards which is a medium sized winery in the Finger Lakes of New York. I have 50 acres of vinifera grapes which are the classic European varieties which I can grow because of the maritime influence of the Large and deep Finger Lakes. I am the current President of the New York Wine Industry Association, past President of the Finger Lakes Wine Alliance, Past President of the Seneca Lake Winery Association and was presented with the Industry Award from the New York Wine and Grape Foundation for my contributions to the New York Wine Industry. I am also a member of Wine America and the New York Farm Bureau.

The 2008 Farm Bill was historic in that for the first time ever "specialty crops" were officially recognized and supported in various ways.

Grapes are a specialty crop yet are the 6th largest dollar volume crop produced in the U.S. In New York alone grapes, grape juice, and wine generates more than \$3.76 billion in economic benefits to the state of New York, and the national industry generates more than \$162 billion for the American economy.

For the new farm bill my main concerns are Crop Insurance, Research, and Market Access programs.

Crop insurance for grape growers is a big issue here on the East Coast. Although it has improved significantly here in New York over the last 5 years there are still a number of problems which need to be addressed. We are asking that you continue the premium subsidy to continue to get more buy in by growers. If it costs too much no one will participate.

It would be nice if the harvest deduction (\$30) was removed. Currently grape growers are getting hit twice with this cost once when it is subtracted from the indemnity they get and then again by the adjuster.

The price per ton we are paid on a claim should be based on a 5 year average on either the contracted price or a regional average to reflect real time market value as opposed to the current 10 year average. I also think that RMA and USDA need to educate their employees in other states, where there is an emerging grape and wine industry, better so they can understand the grape industry so they can be of help rather than an obstacle.

We could use insurance on our new plantings. We are a permanent crop. Our installation costs are extreme. For example it costs approximately \$18,000 per acre to plant an acre of grapes. It is around 4 years before you get your first harvest. We have to farm it all this time which runs \$4,000+ an acre each year to farm. So the investment over 4 years is \$30,000. If you add in that we may be removing an under performing variety and replanting for a more profitable variety you are looking at easily a \$50,000 investment per acre. If there is an environmental event which significantly damages or destroys the new vines we have no way of recouping our investment. So some form of insurance would be a big help.

Also move the closing date for MPCCI (multiple peril crop insurance) policies to Dec. 1. The current date of Nov 20th is very close to the end of grape harvest and in some cases people are still harvesting. Having an extra 10 days or so would be helpful by allowing the grower to make an intelligent decision rather than an impulse one.

The specialty crop title of the farm bill was an important addition to the last bill and I hope this remains. The Northeast is mostly made up of specialty crop producers and this recognition is helpful to the success of farming in our areas. The

Specialty Crops research initiative, the Agricultural Research Service, IPM programs, and Block Grants are all very important for grapes and other fruit and vegetable crops. A number of Northern University's through their grape breeding programs have been able to develop grape varieties which can withstand subzero temperatures that have allowed areas in the North East to develop a grape and wine industry that didn't exist 5 years ago. So the more funding towards research gives us more opportunities to develop our industry providing more jobs and making our businesses more profitable and more competitive.

The farm bill should continue to include export assistance programs, such as the Market Access Program (MAP), which allow farmers to be competitive in a global market. Both the New York Wine and Grape Foundation and Welch's grape juice have received MAP funding in recent years and this allows our wines and Juice products from New York to expand current markets and explore new opportunities. Driving demand for our grape products directly helps farmers become more profitable.

In summary, the last farm bill was a promising start, but needs to be continued and expanded so that specialty crops can contribute even more to the American agricultural economy.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Mr. Child, you may begin when you're ready.

STATEMENT OF RALPH CHILD, SEED POTATO AND LEAFY GREENS PRODUCER, OWNER/OPERATOR, CHILDSTOCK FARMS, INC., MALONE, NY

Mr. CHILD. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

My name is Ralph Child. I'm a fourth-generation produce farmer from Malone, New York. I grow 300 acres each of seed potatoes and leafy greens. I am active in the Empire State Potato Growers and the National Potato Council. Both organizations are active members of the Specialty Crop Farm Bill Alliance, a coalition of more than 100 specialty crop associations, companies and cooperatives across the U.S.

I want to highlight the importance of several key issues included in the farm bill and a couple of issues that, while beyond the scope of the farm bill, remain critical to my continued success as a specialty crop grower in upstate New York.

Prior to the 2008 Farm Bill, the needs and concerns of the specialty crop producers were not considered while establishing national farm policy. The inclusion in the 2008 Farm Bill of specialty crop programs designed to improve industry competitiveness was an important first step in making modern farm programs accurately reflect the mix of agriculture in the United States. Importantly, specialty crop producers requested Federal support for industry programs that were designed to maintain and improve competitiveness and not to provide compensation to growers nor to distort the specialty crop marketplace.

Research is critically important to our industry's ability to continue to improve our productivity and to make nutritious fruits and vegetables available to consumers as economically as possible. The 2008 Farm Bill established two important programs that are producing research results that meet key needs for growers. The Specialty Crop Research Initiative provides competitive funding for multi-disciplinary, multi-state research projects that address critical industry needs. These are large projects that cover problems in a multi-state area.

Since specialty crop production is so regionally diverse, Congress also wisely included the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program in the

2008 Farm Bill to address local needs. This program, as administered by the State Departments of Agriculture, is meeting the priorities of smaller growers like me whose needs for research and technical assistance might otherwise be overlooked.

Increased access to foreign markets is also vital to the overall health of the industry. Many of our global competitors are able to produce and deliver specialty crops in a more cost effective way due to assistance from their own governments. Programs that enable U.S. producers to gain a foothold in a developing market are essential to growing our business domestically and contributing to a strong economy. The Market Access Program allows U.S. growers to do just that.

MAP funds have enabled potato growers in the United States to market and export potatoes and potato products to significant economies all over the world, including the top export markets of Japan, China, Korea, and Mexico. U.S. potato industry is able to complement the funding it receives through MAP with other trade promoting programs including the Technical Assistance for Specialty Crops Program.

TASC is crucial to maintaining market access in the face of sanitary and phytosanitary issues that can threaten to block U.S. specialty crops from critical markets. The value of TASC to the specialty crop industry cannot be overstated.

Like any part of agriculture, and perhaps even more so, specialty crops are susceptible to plant pests and disease. Pests and disease can cut yield, hurt quality, and if the pest is a quarantined pest or a highly regulated pest, it can completely close off markets for our products.

An example of a regulated pest that has the potential to wreak havoc on market access and devastate our local economy is the golden nematode. Since the quarantine is working, we are able to conduct business without serious consequences. With proper pest and disease programs, many of these issues can be identified early and possibly avoided altogether.

A significant step forward for our industry in the 2008 Farm Bill was the increased investment in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service. The Plant Pest and Disease Management and Disaster Prevention Program allows APHIS to address plant pests early and proactively.

Although it is not addressed directly in the farm bill, I do want to call the Committee's attention to need for adequate appropriations for the APHIS line item that funds the Golden Nematode Program in New York. That funding is important both to New York growers as well as to potato growers across the U.S.

Finally, with the expected movement in the 2012 Farm Bill towards reliance on insurance products and away from direct and countercyclical payments, there needs to be a thoughtful discussion about crop insurance needs in the specialty crop industry. For specialty crop growers, annual planting decisions are based upon market indicators. There is a significant risk of distorting or destabilizing markets when incentive exists to make planting decisions based on crop or revenue insurance instead of those market indicators. I hope the Committee will look closely at the potential market

distorting impacts of insurance programs using price or revenue loss triggers.

Major policy strides were made in the 2008 Farm Bill for specialty crops, and we hope to build on those strides in the 2012 Farm Bill. However, without a skilled agricultural work force, the best farm bill policies will not have their intended effect. The specialty crop industry is labor intensive and programs like mandatory E-Verify, without an agricultural worker program, would have extraordinarily negative consequences to growers like me.

Since I farm close to the northern border, I understand firsthand the consequences of an enforcement-only immigration policy. I currently participate in the H-2A Program out of necessity, not because I think it is a viable long-term option. Any desire to further invest in my business is dampened by concerns about the long-term direction of immigration policy. I urge you to work with your colleagues in the House of Representatives to approve a comprehensive immigration policy that provides an opportunity for existing agricultural workers to earn a legal status, creates a viable Guest Worker Program, and secures our nation's borders.

Thank you for the opportunity to address this Committee. I respectfully request that the entirety of my remarks, which are more specific on key issues, be included in the record.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Child follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF RALPH CHILD, SEED POTATO AND LEAFY GREENS
PRODUCER; OWNER/OPERATOR, CHILDSTOCK FARMS, INC., MALONE, NY

My name is Ralph Child. I grow 300 acres each of seed potatoes and leafy greens in Malone, New York. I am active in the Empire State Potato Growers and the National Potato Council. Both organizations are active members of the Specialty Crop Farm Bill Alliance (SCFBA)—a coalition of more than 100 specialty crop associations, companies, and cooperatives across the United States. I want to highlight the importance of several key issues included in the farm bill and a couple issues that while beyond the scope of the farm bill remain critical to my continued success as a specialty crop grower in Upstate New York.

Prior to the 2008 Farm Bill, the needs and concerns of specialty crop producers were not considered while establishing national farm policy. The inclusion in the 2008 Farm Bill of specialty crop programs designed to improve industry competitiveness was an important first step in making modern farm programs accurately reflect the mix of agriculture in the United States. Importantly, specialty crop producers requested Federal support for industry programs that were designed to maintain and improve competitiveness and not to provide compensation to growers nor to distort the specialty crop marketplace.

Research is critically important to our industry's ability to continue to improve our productivity and to make nutritious fruits and vegetables available to consumers as economically as possible. Improvements in our nation's health are directly linked to expanding the availability and consumption of more fruits and vegetables. The 2008 Farm Bill established two important programs that are producing research results that meet key needs for growers. The Specialty Crop Research Initiative (SCRI) provides competitive funding for multidisciplinary, multi-state research projects that address critical industry needs. These are big projects with big promise to solve big problems. Since specialty crop production is so regionally diverse, Congress also wisely included the Specialty Crop Block Grant (SCBG) program in the 2008 Farm Bill to address local needs. This program as administered by the state departments of agriculture is meeting the priorities of smaller growers like me whose needs for research and technical assistance might otherwise be overlooked.

Increased access to foreign markets is also vital to the overall health of our industry. Many of our global competitors are able to produce and deliver specialty crops in a more cost effective way due to assistance from their own governments. Programs that enable U.S. producers to gain a foothold in a developing market are essential to growing our businesses domestically and contributing to a strong economy. The Market Access Program (MAP) allows U.S. growers to do just that. MAP

funds have enabled potato growers in the United States to market and export potatoes and potato products to significant economies all over the world, including the top export markets of Japan, China, Korea, and Mexico. The U.S. potato industry is able to complement the funding it receives through MAP with other trade promoting programs including the Technical Assistance for Specialty Crops (TASC) program. TASC is crucial to maintaining market access in the face of sanitary and phytosanitary issues that can threaten to block U.S. specialty crops from critical markets. The value of TASC to the specialty crop industry cannot be overstated.

Like any part of agriculture and perhaps even more so, specialty crops are susceptible to plant pests and disease. Pests and disease can cut yield, hurt quality, and if the pest is a quarantine pest or a highly regulated pest, it can completely close off markets for our products. An example of a regulated pest that has the potential to wreak havoc on market access and devastate our local economy is the Golden Nematode. Since the quarantine is working, we are able to conduct business without serious consequences. With proper pest and disease programs, many of these issues can be identified early and possibly avoided altogether. A significant step forward for our industry in the 2008 Farm Bill was the increased investment in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS). The Plant Pest and Disease Management and Disaster Prevention program allows APHIS to address plant pests early and proactively. Although it is not addressed directly in the farm bill I do want to call the Committee's attention to the need for adequate appropriations for the APHIS line item that funds the Golden Nematode Program in New York. That funding is important both to New York potato growers as well as potato growers across the U.S.

Finally, with the expected movement in the 2012 Farm Bill toward a reliance on insurance products and away from direct and counter cyclical payments, there needs to be a thoughtful discussion about the crop insurance needs in the specialty crop industry. For specialty crop growers, annual planting decisions are based upon market indicators. There is a significant risk of distorting or destabilizing markets when an incentive exists to make planting decisions based on crop or revenue insurance instead of those market indicators. I hope the Committee will look closely at the potential market distorting impacts of insurance programs using price or revenue loss triggers.

Major policy strides were made in the 2008 Farm Bill for specialty crops and we hope to build on those strides in the 2012 Farm Bill. Without a skilled agricultural workforce, the best farm bill policies will not have their intended effect. The specialty crop industry is labor intensive. A skilled labor force on a seed potato and leafy green farm is not very accessible to begin with and programs like mandatory e-Verify without an agricultural worker program would have extraordinarily negative consequences to growers like me. Since I farm close to the northern border, I understand firsthand the consequences of an enforcement-only immigration policy. I currently participate in the H-2A program out of necessity, not because I think it is a viable long-term option. Any desire to further invest in my business is dampened by concerns about the long-term direction of immigration policy. A flexible, realistic, and market-based agricultural guest worker program would enable me to more effectively do what I do best. I urge you to work with your colleagues in the House of Representatives to approve a comprehensive immigration policy that provides an opportunity for existing agriculture workers to earn a legal status, creates a viable guest worker program and secures our nation's borders.

Thank you for the opportunity to address this Committee. I respectfully request that the entirety of my remarks which are more specific on key issues, be included in the record.

Specialty Crop Research Initiative

The specialty crop industry accounts for half the farm gate value of plant-based agriculture in the United States. While many of our global competitors enjoy state subsidization, U.S. producers prefer support and funding for essential programs that enable the industry to be competitive at home and in foreign markets. The Specialty Crop Research Initiative (SCRI) has emerged as an essential tool to foster competitiveness. In the U.S. potato industry for example, \$2,381,759 provided by an SCRI grant allowed researchers from USDA's Agricultural Research Service in Ithaca and cooperators from across the country to develop and implement management strategies for Potato Virus Y as well as the eradication of necrotic variants of the virus that were introduced into the United States. Other research priorities have also been addressed through SCRI, including Zebra Chip research with project leaders in Texas and the development of varieties of potatoes with lower acrylamide as a result of research directed from Wisconsin. The program has been so successful and universally popular in the specialty crop industry that specialty crop producers rec-

ommend increasing the funding to \$100 million per year of mandatory funds. Under current farm law, SCRI is not included in baseline funding and will not continue in the next farm bill unless action is taken to address funding. The effectiveness of SCRI could be improved by allowing greater flexibility in the administration of the program. Specific improvements include reduction of the 100 percent matching requirements, increasing stakeholder input, the inclusion of Federal and state marketing orders and commissions for consideration, and review by industry stakeholders for relevance prior to the scientific review.

Specialty Crop Block Grants

The Specialty Crop Block Grant (SCBG) program is also of critical importance to the specialty crop industry by empowering regionally-specific research to be conducted on a state-by-state and multi-state basis. In 2011, there were ten projects valued at a total of just over \$1 million awarded in the state of New York, including extensive partnerships with researchers at Cornell University. Nationwide, about \$55 million for the SCBG projects will be available in 2012. The program's effectiveness is clearly understood by the specialty crop industry, and with a few minor improvements could be even more responsive to the needs of the industry, including grower-level projects, strengthened definitions and the use of designated funds according to those definitions, increased emphasis on competitiveness and expansion of multi-state projects. Based on this experience, the specialty crop industry supports increasing funding by \$5 million per year. This would translate to \$350 million in mandatory funding over 5 years.

Market Access Program

The specialty crop industry is heavily reliant upon a robust export economy for continued success in the United States. For example, one in six rows of potatoes grown in the country today are destined for foreign markets, or more than double the amount we exported in 2000. One of the most important tools in this success story is the Market Access Program (MAP), which provided \$6.1 million in funding for the U.S. Potato Board, the national marketing and promotion organization for the U.S. potato industry. Since 2000, potato exports to countries targeted with MAP funds has grown by 68%. Exports are a major reason that the agricultural economy has been so strong in recent years and a much-needed bright spot during the current national economic downturn. Not only does it make economic sense as an investment, it also allows U.S. growers to more effectively compete with their global competitors, many of whom enjoy significant advantages in the form of subsidization. As you might expect, MAP enjoys an immense level of popularity within the specialty crop industry and the Alliance fully supports continued mandatory funding at the current level of \$200 million per year.

Technical Assistance for Specialty Crops

Considering the significant stake that the specialty crop industry has in the export market, the industry is always looking out for technical barriers to trade that can close down markets for sanitary and phytosanitary reasons. The Technical Assistance for Specialty Crops (TASC) program is the vehicle to address these trade barriers in a timely fashion. TASC was originally designed to be a nimble and effective way to help the private sector resolve technical barriers to trade. These barriers can emerge unexpectedly and require fast action to prevent market closures and trade disruptions in established markets. Given the value and effectiveness of TASC, the Alliance recommends continued mandatory funding at \$9 million per year.

Plant Pest and Disease Management and Disaster Prevention

Commonly referred to as Section 10201, the Plant Pest and Disease Management and Disaster Prevention program in the 2008 Farm Bill allows funds to be used for early plant pest detection and surveillance, for threat identification and mitigation of plant pests and diseases, and for technical assistance in the development and implementation of audit-based certification systems and nursery plant pest risk management systems. This program is highly effective and allows USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service to address potential pest and disease issues proactively rather than reactively. Section 10201 is currently funded at a level of \$50 million per year and the Alliance recommends \$75 million in mandatory funding per year.

National Clean Plant Network

The National Clean Plant Network (NCPN), or Section 10202, is a program also administered by USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service under which a partnership of clean plant centers are organized to provide high quality asexually

propagated plant material free of targeted plant pathogens and pests that cause economic loss to protect the environment and ensure the global competitiveness of specialty crop producers. NCPN is funded through 2012 at \$5 million per year but does not have baseline funding in the next farm bill. The Alliance recommends mandatory funding of \$10 million per year for the National Clean Plant Network.

The CHAIRMAN. They will indeed be included in the record, and thank you, Mr. Child.

Mr. Sullivan, begin whenever you're ready.

**STATEMENT OF ADAM F. SULLIVAN, APPLE PRODUCER;
ORCHARD FOREMAN, SULLIVAN ORCHARDS, INC., PERU, NY**

Mr. SULLIVAN. Good morning, Mr. Chairman, distinguished Members of the Committee. I'd also like to recognize Congressmen Bill Owens and Chris Gibson, and thank you both on behalf of the industry. If you could please let Ranking Member Peterson know that a grower from upstate New York wore purple so that the Minnesota Vikings can get the stadium passed, I would be most appreciative.

I appreciate the opportunity to speak to you today about the impact of the 2008 Farm Bill and priorities for 2012 legislation. My name is Adam Sullivan of Sullivan Orchards, and I'm a fourth-generation apple grower from Peru, New York. Due to the time constraints, I'd like to encourage all of you, if you have not had the opportunity, to review and read the written testimony that I have submitted.

The written testimony provides excellent detail of many issues facing and impacting growers across this country in which the farm bill has been very effective in assisting growers, whether it is the Specialty Crop Research Initiative, which is playing a critical role in slowing down the damage caused by the newly invasive brown marmorated stink bug, or the Tree Assistance Program which help growers, many of whom are located in the Champlain Valley, recover losses from catastrophic tree loss sustained from an early thaw followed by extensive cold weather, which in turn killed the trees.

Today I'd like to spend the remainder of my time teaching you about three specific issues regarding the farm bill. These issues are the Market Access Program, crop insurance and, of course, labor.

Exports are extremely important to the apple industry with nearly 30 percent of the fresh crop destined for overseas markets. The export market is critical for the Empire variety, which is the second most grown variety in New York State. Empires are exported throughout the European Union, recently as far as Singapore, to name a few, and all thanks to MAP funding.

The apple industry strongly supports the Market Access Program which has helped level the playing field as we compete with countries such as China and Chile who have a much lower cost of production. MAP is a public-private partnership with growers contributing \$2 for every Federal dollar the industry receives. While my company only exports a small portion of our crop, every apple exported is one less apple I have to battle shelf space for.

Now I'd like to change gears and tell you a brief story. In 1983, on a Saturday afternoon in late August, about 3 o'clock in the afternoon, a storm fell over the orchard and we could hear the hailstones pinging off the metal roof. I remember seeing my father

watch as the stones piled in the driveway. After about 5 minutes it stopped. Dad went out to evaluate the crop. He came back “annoyed” that this had happened, but the crop was salvageable. Then 5:30 came, and the real storm began.

I don’t remember how long it lasted, but I remember him staring out the window with my mother consoling him. It was determined that a tornado landed less than a mile away and pummeled the apples. I was 6. The crop was so severely destroyed that mom and dad were only able to sell one load of juice. That year’s crop fermented on the orchard. The real kicker was that he didn’t have crop insurance. It took them more than a decade, through hard work and God’s good will, that they got the orchard financially secured again.

The second issue I’d like to discuss is the Federal Crop Insurance Program. Over the years, the industry has worked closely with USDA’s Risk Management Agency. As a result, significant improvements to the apple policy have been made, such as fresh fruit buyout, specific grades and a list of what actually constitutes a defect.

Crop insurance is an excellent tool to help the grower manage risks. With farming, challenging weather is part of the deal and crop insurance makes the grieving process a little easier. Input costs are so high today, the margin so tight, that a grower could not back—excuse me—a grower could not come back from a loss suffered like my parents without crop insurance.

Last, most importantly, I would like to discuss labor. Clinton County, which is where Sullivan Orchards is located, has more cows than people. The youngest full-time employee at Sullivan Orchards is 35 and he’s sitting here before you today. The next youngest employee is 58.

The younger generation is not coming to work in agriculture in Peru. Due to our climate, soils, and I like to believe, skills, the Champlain Valley is known for growing the highest quality McIntosh apples, and I see many of you eating them today.

The Champlain Valley harvest is approximately 1 million bushels of Macs in a 4 week window. Unfortunately, there is not a local work force to harvest a crop. As a result, our farm and all the apple growers in the region have relied on the Jamaican H-2A Program.

For approximately 30 years, the program has worked for Sullivan Orchards. We have the same men returning year after year. Last year marked the 25th season for James Hahn who was the last of the original men.

Since I returned to the farm, and even prior to that time, there has been constant rhetoric about the need for an efficient Guest Worker Program. We are no closer now than we were 10 years ago. Instead, we are threatening people with E-Verify, scaring growers using the only legal Guest Worker Program, and are taking away health insurance from our Jamaican guest workers.

The subject of immigration reform has been talked to death. I understand it is an election year, and I understand that unemployment is high. I understand that immigration is a very sensitive issue. Unfortunately, myself and the other growers in the Champlain Valley don’t have an alternative way to get the crop grown and harvested.

We need an effective Guest Worker Program. I depend upon the men coming year after year. They plant the trees. They operate the tractors. They mow the orchard floor. They know the fields. They go to the local church. They purchase groceries at the local Grand Union. They buy clothes at the local store. They pay Federal and state taxes. They are as much a part of the success of Sullivan Orchards as I am, my father is, or Gramp was.

The time for rhetoric is over and action needs to be taken concerning a Guest Worker Program. Let's get an effective Guest Worker Program passed for 2012 for all commodities, including dairy.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak. I will be happy to answer any questions, and enjoy those Macs.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Sullivan follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ADAM F. SULLIVAN, APPLE PRODUCER; ORCHARD FOREMAN, SULLIVAN ORCHARDS, INC., PERU, NY

Good morning, Chairman Lucas, Ranking Member Peterson, and distinguished Members of the Committee. I would also like to recognize Congressmen Bill Owens and Chris Gibson and thank you both on behalf of the industry. It is great to have two New Yorkers on this important Committee and we look forward to working with both of you on the new farm bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak today about the impact of the 2008 Farm Bill and priorities for the 2012 legislation. My name is Adam Sullivan of Sullivan Orchards and I am a 4th generation apple grower from Peru, New York. My Great Grand-father started the farm with a handful of cows, some apple trees, a few vegetables and potatoes—a good Irishmen. When “Gramp” took over, he sold all the cows to grow strictly apples, which is how the farm remains today. My father and mother are still the primary stakeholders and participate in much of the functions of the orchard. I returned to the orchard in 2003 to serve as the orchard foreman and run the day to day activities.

From New York to Washington State and Michigan to California the industry is comprised of independent business owners, many of whom are third or fourth generation. We strongly support programs that build long-term competitiveness, drive innovation and grow demand of our products. Apple growers and the produce industry are not seeking a government farm program to support grower income or market prices. That would not be in the best interest of my business or our industry. The 2008 Farm Bill made a number of important strides toward each of these goals.

Research

Research and extension activities supported by USDA provide the apple industry with a competitive edge by enabling the introduction of new cultivars, implementation of improved pest management strategies, genomics and plant breeding and science-based improvement of food safety.

One of the most successful programs of the 2008 Farm Bill is the Specialty Crop Research Initiative (SCRI), which provides funding for a variety of research programs throughout the specialty crop industry. For apple growers, this program played a critical role in slowing down the damage caused by the newly invasive Brown Marmorated Stink Bug (BMSB).

The SCRI funded a 3 year, \$5.7 million research grant involving over 50 scientists and ten research institutions nationwide to develop methods to control this destructive pest. The research has already yielded significant benefits. Information provided to growers from SCRI researchers resulted in a dramatic reduction in losses in 2011. U.S.Apple estimates that information from SCRI researchers saved apple growers alone at least \$35 million in 2011—that is over six times the amount of the total 3 year grant. Much more research needs to be done to develop a long term solution to the BMSB problem, but this research project alone promises to save agriculture from potentially billions of dollars of losses nationwide.

This is only one example of the impressive return on investment that the SCRI has provided during its first 4 years. Advances made in SCRI research projects on mapping the apple genome, mechanizing orchard practices such as pruning and harvesting, and prevention of other disease and insect pest threats promises to result

in even greater savings to agriculture that translates into a direct benefit to the U.S. economy and U.S. jobs.

Another important program is the National Clean Plant Network, which serves as the single nationally-certified source of plant material free of potentially devastating diseases and pests. Enabling the nursery industry to produce clean plants is of critical importance because a number of serious diseases can enter into the United States through nursery stock. Once such pests and diseases become established in a region it is very difficult to eradicate them.

A strong commitment to research is critical to the future of the apple industry, but the benefits of a strong and coordinated research program flow directly into the U.S. economy.

Crop Insurance

The apple industry is one of a handful of specialty crops that participates in the Federal Crop Insurance Program. Over the years, the industry has worked closely with USDA's Risk Management Agency (RMA) and as a result, significant improvements to the apple policy have been made. USApple and the RMA collaborated to provide growers with an insurance program that better addresses the unique needs of the industry. Just this past season, Hurricane Irene came for a visit. The storm damaged our fresh fruit production through hail stones piercing the fruit and wind knocking apples into each other causing bruises. Nine inches of rain fell with 50 mph wind gusts blowing trees over. Through having the Fresh option with our crop insurance policy, Sullivan Orchards is able to recoup some of our loss.

No crop insurance program will make a grower devastated by a natural disaster financially "whole," but it will allow them to survive a devastating loss and continue to support the economic engine of rural America. Let me be clear, crop insurance enables me to manage risk, but it should never be designed in a way that distorts the market or encourages sub-par production. The apple industry is also concerned that as discussions in Washington, D.C. have moved to further expand crop insurance programs, there will be additional requirements attached, such as cross compliance with other Federal programs. What we need is less government regulation, not more.

Tree Assistance Program

When severe weather occurs, apple growers can experience not only lost crops, but damaged or destroyed trees. That is exactly what happened in 2004 when a January thaw of December's heavy snow fall, followed by 30 below zero temperatures, caused moisture in the ground to freeze and snap roots of more than 30,000 trees in Clinton County.

The replacement cost alone for those trees, was estimated at nearly \$3 million, and when you add the lost crop revenue, the total loss is much greater. This was also a multi-year loss, as new trees take 3 to 5 years to produce fruit. The Tree Assistance Program (TAP) offered a lifeline by providing funds to growers to partially offset the cost of tree replacement. However, securing those funds was a tough lift and it was only because there was a large disaster bill already moving through Congress that TAP funds were allocated.

That is why the apple industry urged Congress to include mandatory funding for TAP in the 2008 Farm Bill. This program is a success and must be maintained and expanded if possible to reach more growers.

Export Programs

Exports are extremely important to the apple industry, with nearly 30% of the fresh crop destined for overseas markets. While our company only exports a small portion of our crop, a strong export market strengthens domestic prices for growers nationwide. For many growers in New York, the export market represents a significant portion of their business.

The apple industry strongly supports the Market Access Program (MAP), which has helped level the playing field as we compete with countries such as China and Chile that have a much lower cost of production.

As a direct result of the MAP program funding, New York companies have been able to identify and supply key importers in Singapore—who are looking for new products for their stores and for the past three seasons they have been stocking apples from New York State. Growers and shippers from New York would not be able to conduct activities or develop a market such as this without the support of MAP funds that allowed us to bring buyers to the U.S. to meet with suppliers. MAP also funded sampling programs in supermarkets to educate consumers in Singapore about apples and their unique flavors. MAP is a public-private partnership, with growers contributing \$2 for every Federal dollar the industry receives.

The Technical Assistance for Specialty Crops (TASC) is another important farm bill program which provides funds to resolve phytosanitary and technical barriers that prohibit or threaten access to a foreign market. The New York apple industry used TASC funds to maintain an important foothold in the Israeli market when pest and disease concerns threatened to shut down the market. The U.S. Apple Export Council worked with Cornell University to develop new pest mitigation guidelines which allowed trade to continue without interruption.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Congressman Owens for introducing H.R. 3914 to amend the Apple Export Act. This bill would eliminate the USDA inspection requirement for bulk apples into Canada. The requirement, which dates back to 1933, is no longer necessary or required by the Canadians. If passed, this bill will save money and time for the grower and, in the process, increase exports.

Nutrition Programs

Programs like the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable program are a win-win for the apple industry and the children that are served. This highly successful national program reaches more than four million low-income elementary school children, many of them in New York City. Apples have consistently been one of the most popular fruits in the program.

The program is popular with parents, students and educators alike. Many of the students who participate take what they learn home with them by asking their parents to buy fresh fruits and vegetables. There is a bipartisan focus on reducing the rate of childhood obesity and diabetes through improved nutrition and this program accomplishes those goals.

Marketing Programs

The 2008 Farm Bill includes a number of important marketing programs which have proven beneficial to the apple industry both in New York and nationally. The Specialty Crop Block Grant program focuses on regional and local priorities to improve the competitiveness of specialty crop producers. Nationally, the apple industry has utilized these grants for food safety programs as well as marketing initiatives and state programs including "Pride of New York."

The Value-Added Grant program is also helping growers here in the north country. Red Jacket Orchards, which is located in Geneva, received such a grant which they used to expand their operation and create new jobs in the process.

Labor—Our #1 Issue

I would be remiss if I did not raise the issue of agricultural labor and the concerns that apple growers have from coast-to-coast as to whether they will have adequate labor to pick the crop. In other parts of the country you hear a lot about migrant workers but we here in the Champlain Valley are a little different.

Clinton County has more cows than people. The youngest full time employee at Sullivan Orchards is 35 and he is sitting before you today. The next youngest employee is 58. The younger generation is not coming to work in agriculture in Peru.

Due to our climate, soils, and I like to believe skills, the Champlain Valley is known for growing the highest quality McIntosh apples. Unfortunately, the harvest window for McIntosh lasts only 4 weeks. The Champlain Valley harvests approximately 1 million bushels in this 4 week window. As stated earlier, there is not a local work force to harvest the crop. Most migrant workers do not want to travel to this area because of the short work period.

As a result, our farm and most all of the apple growers in this part of New York have relied on the Jamaican H-2A program. It is not uncommon to have the same workers return for 10 or even 20 years. The program, while expensive and bureaucratic, has supplied us a reliable and consistent workforce and up until about 2 years ago it worked pretty well.

In August of 2010, just as we were gearing up for harvest, the program came to a standstill and workers were delayed in arriving because the U.S. Government began questioning the legitimacy of voluntary fees which had always been paid by the workers to the Jamaican Central Labor Organization (JCLO) to pay for health insurance, and liaison services provided by the JCLO to the workers. The JCLO also coordinated a program for workers to send money home at no charge if they chose. The JCLO is affiliated with the Jamaican Government and the program and voluntary fees had been in place since the 1990s. When the Department of Labor began questioning these services and specifically the fees, we almost lost our workers. Finally, due to the intervention of a number of senior Members of Congress, an agreement was reached that no fees would be taken out and the workers arrived.

This "compromise" is still in effect and we are now getting our workers on time. However, they are coming without health insurance and if they want to send money

home, they have to pay exorbitant fees through Western Union. I have had workers come to me and express concern that they no longer have health insurance. They don't understand—and neither do I—why our government would take that right away from them.

Though the program is mostly working again, I have strong concerns about what will happen if mandatory E-Verify legislation is passed without agricultural labor reforms and suddenly all of agriculture is forced into the H-2A program at once. Currently, the program only supplies about 50,000 of the estimated one million agriculture workers needed in this country. Sullivan Orchards has been in this program for over 30 years, and I can tell you first hand that it does not have the capacity to double let alone increase twenty-fold without major reforms. What the industry needs is a stable, adequate, able and predictable supply of agricultural labor able to participate legally in the U.S. workforce.

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to testify before this Committee. These discussions and the reauthorization of the farm bill offer an exciting opportunity to further improve important specialty crop programs and support increased growth and competitiveness of the apple industry.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Mr. Sullivan.

I now recognize myself for 5 minutes.

Your memories of going to the field after the catastrophe reminds me of being a 7 year old and following my father to the wheat field nearest the house one night and watching him stand in that field with his flashlight and realizing every stalk was broken over and that quiet walk back. Even as a 7 year old, like yourself, there are some things you remember forever. The fact that he said nothing for 2 days made a great impression on me. That said, that's what we're here about, and that's what we're here to try to address.

Mr. Eckhardt, let's begin with you. You mentioned the SURE Program and you talked about your experiences. Could you expand on that just a little bit, and not only your experience with SURE, but expand for a bit on where you think the money would be better spent, perhaps you think the money would be better spent somewhere else?

Mr. ECKHARDT. Right. I think as we look at eligibility for coverage under certain programs, the paperwork and record keeping trail, along with whether or not SURE will be released, is just so burdensome that many people back away from any insurance coverage whatsoever. I mean, it may be that the only reason they sign up for CAT for their field crops or for NAP for their vegetable crops is that their banker may require that they have some type of coverage.

But when it gets right down to push come to shove, for instance, with NAP, the first 50 percent of your loss is yours. You take it in the shorts for 50. If you have 51 percent loss, you will get indemnification for one percent. Do you understand what I'm saying?

So when you look at the calculations, and SURE Program has some of the same issues, only it's usually 2 years later that those funds start to become available, and through the process of qualification and the review by the county committees and the FSA county and state committees, that you get some indemnification through the SURE Program.

My seed company really is looking to get paid that year for the seed I bought from them, not 2 years later. My fertilizer company wants their money sometimes up front. When we look at these kind of indemnification programs that are that long in getting funds back to those people who have had losses, sometimes catastrophic losses, it just isn't working.

You know, what could we spend it better on? Perhaps on some type of process or policy NAP process, that would allow the grower to purchase a higher level of coverage. Much like we have in the crop insurance programs. NAP would, for lack of a better term, I call it NAP Plus. But these would be things that we could tweak to this program to make it so that it's more acceptable.

And the other thing is, is it's very difficult when you try to put together what is referred to as APH, actual production history, for your farm. You know, you produce potatoes or sweet corn or whatever, you have to come up with documentation year after year to justify that.

So it's—it's extremely difficult and time consuming for the producer and those people in the FSA and the crop insurance people to come up with speciality crop insurance that's going to work. SURE has it. It just is too time consuming and too late.

The CHAIRMAN. Switching gears for a moment, gentlemen. I'd be honest, if I did not admit this to you, I would not be honest. The northwest half of the great State of Oklahoma is what I represent. And when I stand up in front of this building, I can see more trees than there are in my entire Congressional district, so understand I think they're amazing things, these trees.

Could you tell me for a moment about your experiences with the Tree Assistance Program, TAP, if anyone has experience?

And by the way, I like trees. I'm not opposed to trees. I just don't have any.

Mr. SULLIVAN. I think it was 2003 or 2004. Don't hold—hold me to the actual year it happened. We had an extensive snowfall in December and then we had a wonderful January thaw, which was nice. I mean, it went from 20° below up to into the nice 30° and 40°. It was a nice, nice, nice little break. But then January decided to come back with full vengeance and froze up the ground, which in turn snapped the roots and killed the trees.

So in the Champlain Valley, we had close to 30,000 trees that—that snapped off at—in the root system and the trees had to be removed and replaced. And so we did the Tree Assistance Program. It helped. It assisted, and I mean, it didn't pay for the loss by no means, but I mean it was extra money that was certainly needed and it was nice.

The CHAIRMAN. This, of course, is one of the many reasons we have these hearings. I come from an area where this is not really utilized, but obviously it is an important program.

Mr. SULLIVAN. It has its place, of course—I didn't get into it in my speech, and I'm glad to hear that we're really trying to be financially and fiscal responsible. All these policies are great to have and regulations are great and the Tree Assistance Program is great. But the \$30,000 that we got from putting—from the Tree Assistance Program, it was nice. It helped. I'm not going to say no, because it's there.

But if it wasn't there, I am still going to be farming. I mean, call me thick-headed and dumb, I mean, but I'm still going to make a go of it. That I think it's more important as you're doing the farm bill that you look and you say is it worth putting my kids and everybody else's kids here further in debt for giving a little Band-Aid aid or is it better that maybe we don't put the money out there.

The CHAIRMAN. Your insights are very appreciated. My time has expired. I now recognize the gentleman from Georgia for 5 minutes. Mr. Scott.

Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Seems to me that the two most pronounced areas of great challenge to the specialty crop industry here is the need for crop insurance because no area of agriculture is more susceptible to storms and weather conditions than specialty crops. And the other one is your challenge with labor because it's labor intensive. It's getting out there, picking and harvesting these crops. So let me start off with the crop insurance.

Mr. Eckhardt, I think you probably hit some of this: How many lenders now require crop insurance, and would this be the way to go, that lenders require the growers to have insurance if they lend them money for their operating cost?

Mr. ECKHARDT. I don't think I've ever been told by a lender that I was not going to get a loan if I didn't have crop insurance.

Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia. Okay.

Mr. ECKHARDT. But you can tell by body language and interest rate just how important they make that: It would be a great idea, Mr. Eckhardt, to have some crop insurance. And you're nodding your head like this, going, yes, you're absolutely right.

So to say that in some writing some place, crop insurance was required by my lender, I don't think I've ever seen that. And if it is, what the big print giveth, the little print taketh away. But I still think that as we go forward, it certainly gives them the option to say this person has some coverage should there be a catastrophic loss and we might actually ask to be named as one of the people who receive those funds.

Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia. Do you think that with us in Washington, in Congress, as we develop policy, that some kind of way that we approach with this farm bill some effort to require that?

Mr. ECKHARDT. Well, perhaps—perhaps through a—if it was required by a lender, the farm bill could look at how there might be a reduced interest rate to that grower who's borrowing operating or capital funds, a reduced interest rate if you do have some type of workable crop insurance. But it needs to be something that's actually going to pay you something if you have a loss.

Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia. Right. All right. Now let's turn to the labor issue, because, Mr. Sullivan, I really think that you hit the nail on the head here with this. Because we can no longer continue to hide from this issue. If we do not address the labor issue for specialty crops, how devastating would this be? I mean, we've another Farm—we got this farm bill. I mean, there may be some things we could do with this, I don't know. We certainly can bring that discussion up, but this farm bill comes around every 4 years. How urgent is this problem to develop a Guest Worker Program for specialty crop producers?

Mr. SULLIVAN. I think Mr. Child has probably a pretty good example on how urgent the, if you don't mind telling your experience with—a couple of years ago, about the H-2A Program and how our government decided to take it upon themselves to invoke rules that nobody knew about to not allow the men to get in here.

Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia. I did want to get to that because, Mr. Child, I was getting to you next. And as you respond to this, you said securing the borders, and that was the only reference that you made in your testimony to what might be judged upon as dealing with this immigration issue. I want to ask you that, but I also wanted to ask you which borders? Are you talking about Canadian border?

Mr. CHILD. I do live near a high priority enforcement zone on the Canadian border, but I fully recognize most of the people that are coming into the country to work are coming in on the southern borders. The fact that I live so close to the border, with a border patrol station in my town, just makes me very vulnerable to enforcement.

I think it was back in 2004 was the last year that I hired crews from labor contractors that were green-carded people. It's a pretty well known fact that approximately 70 percent of the migrant workers in agriculture are probably here with forged documents. And we might as well bring out the facts and tell it straight.

I currently use the H-2A Program which Mr. Sullivan alluded to that he uses—for his Jamaican work force. I still hire Mexican workers for my vegetable farm.

The H-2A Program has allowed me to have a continuity from one year to the next without concerns about enforcement from Immigration, but the Administration, through the Department of Labor, has been quite difficult. There are a lot of hoops to jump through.

Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia. Right?

Mr. CHILD. It's been really frustrating the last couple of years, where the rule changes from one year to the next, make it quite difficult, and—

Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia. Let me just—I know my time is getting around the Chairman's back. I don't want him to cut me off. But may I make one suggestion that might be helpful, is that you get these specialty crop block grants coming down through your state, and you also—we also have Specialty Crop Research Initiative, and you have some excellent universities and research groups here. It might be useful to do some documentation, engage in some study of this impact of the labor issue with the specialty crops in this region. And it could qualify for that, to begin to give us in Washington more substantive information and credibility on how we move forward with this, because, I assure you, I grew up on a farm. I used to come up. Matter of fact, I used to come up here a long time ago when I was a kid, in around Utica. And they used to have a lot of bean picking up there then. I don't know if they still do. And even back then, it was migrant labor coming up from the south, and they used to have what they called bean camps up here.

So you're very unique in this regard, and it could be a wise utilization of your block grants to get some information on this. Thank you, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman's time has expired. The chair now recognizes the gentleman from Virginia for 5 minutes.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I'd like to follow up on the questions of the gentleman from Georgia, again, on the issue of the H-2A Program and Guest Worker Programs in general.

I have, in the last few Congresses, introduced legislation to reform the H-2A Program to change the adverse effect wage rate, which seems like a bureaucrat's dream, to the prevailing wage rate which it seems like most businesses pay their workers based upon what the prevailing wage is in—in the marketplace. It also would reform a number of these other issues.

Unfortunately, it's also not something that will come up in the farm bill because it's the Judiciary Committee's jurisdiction. But since I am a Member of the Judiciary Committee, I can be helpful in that regard, and I would love to hear some of the particular problems that you had here in the last 2 years with the H-2A Program.

One example that I've heard, from my apple growers in the Shenandoah Valley, has been that they have no ability to determine whether or not the worker can actually do the work of climbing a ladder and picking apples. In fact, when they attempted to determine that the people they were going to be hiring would indeed climb a ladder, they were told that they were imposing a requirement that was inappropriate.

This kind of problem really makes a program which was struggling to begin with, the H-2A Program, even more unworkable and why I think it needs to be reformed. But Mr. Child, Mr. Sullivan, any of you want to jump in and talk about the experience you've had lately in dealing with the workers you need under the H-2A Program?

Mr. CHILD. Yes, there are a few hurdles that have come up in the last couple years. A lot of times with this program we're being regulated by multiple agencies, both at the Federal and state level. In the past, the H-2A Program required a certain—required that the producer provide housing for the workers, but left the inspection of the housing up to the state departments of health.

That changed a couple years ago where, then before you could receive certification, the inspection of the housing had to be done at that time. Since you have to apply so far ahead before your date of need for the workers, that meant going out in the snow banks and working on the labor camp just to get certification rather than having the facilities ready when the workers arrived, and that's been a bit of a hardship.

I have heard horror stories. Some of my colleagues in Idaho have had some very bad issues along those lines, where for very minor, not even what you would normally consider infractions, they're denied a housing permit. And then that backs up the whole process and you have to start all over again.

Some of the regulations may have good intent, but the way they're administered is really off base.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Agreed. Let me, since I'm going to be limited in time here.

Mr. CHILD. Okay.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Let me shift over to another topic I'd like to raise that we haven't had a lot of discussion about, and that's the conservation programs. And I'll give Mr. Eckhardt and Mr. Osborn

an opportunity to tell us about which of those programs producers in this part of the world take part in and what conservation programs we should focus on with the limited resources we have.

Mr. OSBORN. I just want to add something just from the last on the H-2A, and that is for a small producer like me, H-2A doesn't work. It's too expensive and when I need three employees for 1 week and then a month and a half later I need ten, the H-2A doesn't fit. And there are a lot of small grape growers and specialty crop producers that H-2A just doesn't work, so there's nothing there for us to get the extra help that we need.

In terms of conservation, we've worked with the Soil and Water. We've got our drainage ditches put in. Those are all very effective. The Cooperative Extension and their help in bringing and letting us know what is available to us in terms of education and the programs like mulching and things like that that help our conservation are all very effective. I mean, I appreciate everything that's being done.

Mr. ECKHARDT. The EQIP Program is critically important, but it also has a component that the producer contributes. There are other matching funds that might be available from state or local municipalities, so that when you look at the funding for EQIP, as we tweak the program to make it work better, especially in the specialty crops, I think there are lots of opportunity to leverage other programs to fund that.

I think the critical part is, is we are all conservationists at heart. We want to have something left for our children and our grandchildren to farm. But if we don't have these critical programs and practices in place, in some cases there may not be much left, and the environment is important to us.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. The chair now recognizes the gentleman from New York, Mr. Owens for 5 minutes.

Mr. OWENS. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Gentlemen, thank you for testifying today.

It seems to me that the two issues we're hearing most about are crop insurance and farm labor issues. I know that certainly with Mr. Sullivan we've had many, many conversations about this as it goes, and some cases go back to your father in the 1980s, when we were having those same discussions.

In terms of the crop insurance issue, is there some analysis, that you've seen that's out there, that would give us a good road map to establishing a workable crop insurance program? Obviously understanding it may have to be modified regionally, and may also have to be modified in terms of the type of agricultural program we're facing. It just strikes me that we've had a lot of conversation about it, but when you look at the crop insurance programs, it's not clear to me that there is in fact an analysis that we could utilize to really, in a major way, revamp these programs to make them more functional.

Mr. ECKHARDT. You're asking for a template that we can apply across the board, with specialty crops, with field crops like corn, soybeans, wheat, cotton. I think it's going to be a group effort to come up with a—we have a base, and I look at that base as being, like the NAP Program, for those programs that do not have any in-

insurance, and the possibility of having more crops added to the insured programs rather than relying on NAP. But as a template, I think it's going to have to come down to a consensus among specialty crop growers, region by region, what works. And I think that looking at some of the things that don't work and tweaking them to get them so they do work.

I wish I could say I had a template, and be able to hand it to the Committee and say, here, this will work. This is my idea as how it's going to work. I have some ideas, but it is not a template, but it is some ideas on how we can tweak it and make it work better. It's very difficult because there are so many thousand of specialty crops that we would have to include in something like that.

Mr. OWENS. Well, let's start with the ideas that you do have, and let's lay them out and then get some analysis done to determine whether or not that works.

One of the things that struck me in your testimony, when you talked about and having read about this before, is if you have a 51 percent loss but you have, in effect, a deductible of 50 percent and you're getting paid one percent, it hardly makes sense, I would think in most cases, to buy the insurance.

Mr. ECKHARDT. That's correct. And I think when you look at specialty crop growers and NAP insurance in general, whether it be for a hay crop for dairy farmers, I mean, if you wanted NAP insurance on your hay in 2012, you're already too late, because you had to sign up by the 30th of September in 2011 to have that crop insured.

To me, the first step is changing sign up dates. I mean, just like Ralph said, to be able to look at the market situation just prior to planting or planning to plant and say okay, this crop, that crop, going to dropped, but you had to buy it or at least sign up for the insurance 6 months ago, kind of odd.

But also, what I would refer to as NAP Plus, where you would actually, as an individual grower, choose to buy additional insurance, maybe insure it to 65 percent, so you had a 35 percent loss, and then you would have indemnification kick in, you know. It's \$250 per crop, per county, up to a maximum of three crops. Okay, let's move it to a situation where you would pay \$500 or maybe a thousand, and you, as an individual, would be able to choose that based on your need for protection.

Mr. OWENS. Thanks. Want to move to the labor issue for just a minute. I'm curious, from all of the panelists, whether or not they would support a program that would provide for the allowance of individuals currently in the country, potentially illegally in the country, to obtain a work visa? Is that something that the farm community would support?

Mr. ECKHARDT. Oh, yes. I mean, for us it would be a—I don't have any migrant workers right now. My work force is almost entirely locals and especially teenagers.

You know, we're just holding our breath on how we're going to farm in 2012 if I can't hire my teenagers. First of all, we're one of the few employment opportunities for them. But the biggest concern for us always is the fact that they're in school until the end of June. They go back to school at the end of August or early Sep-

tember, and what do I do to get crops planted and what do I do in the fall to finish the harvest?

And having some—a few people available just for that short period of time would be extremely helpful. Just like the H-2A doesn't work. I mean, we need something that will work, and I think anything you can do to help us with that.

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Child, looks like you have a comment.

Mr. CHILD. Yes, yes, I would like—I would like to speak in favor of that type of movement. I'm not talking about a fast track to citizenship. Most of these people do not care to become citizens of the U.S., or if they do, that option could be there. But I don't think it should be fast tracked. It's not what the workers are interested in, nor is it politically going to happen.

But we do have a trained work force in the country, and to start all over with new workers just to have a legal status would also be burdensome. I think there should be a provision to give these people that are currently here, illegally or not, the opportunity to stay and work in the country. They are doing the jobs that most Americans choose not to do.

Mr. OWENS. I'd like to go back to Mr. Ooms' statement, we either import labor or we import food. I yield back, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. OSBORN. Just a quick—

The CHAIRMAN. The gentlemen, may finish. Yes, please.

Mr. OSBORN. Quick comment on that. One, the government doesn't have the infrastructure to do the paperwork for a new work force, if you kicked everybody out. So to have the ability to get legal working papers for people who are already in the country, who are already working would be an excellent thing to have.

Mr. OWENS. Thank you very much.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman's time has expired. The chair now turns to the gentleman from Texas, which should be noted for the record, are amazed when they see the number of trees we have in Oklahoma in the third district. Mr. Conaway is recognized for 5 minutes. And a response before his 5 minutes begins.

Mr. CONAWAY. Exactly. I actually—I gave the previous Chairman, Mr. Goodlatte, a picture of myself standing by the city limits signs of the city of No Trees, Texas, so in addition to snow this morning, there are even trees in it as well.

Mr. Sullivan, I couldn't help but notice the name Isabella on, or Isabel, on your pink and white tote that you brought in, and much—and then your comments about the debt that we're laying on them and the struggles that we have across this entire country as to how we hand off the legacy, of the American legacy, to her—I'm assuming it's your daughter—to my grandchildren. I have seven grandkids, that legacy of debt that we are on the path to do that.

I offered up the last farm bill, 2008, an amendment in Committee that would have said if you only get—if your check, your maximum check, that you get from the non-crop insurance portion of the support system is \$100 or less, that you wouldn't get it. That the payments would have to be more than \$100 or we wouldn't pay you.

And we had a pitched battle in the Committee how cruel that was for me to argue that, that \$100 was the difference between

making it and breaking it on a farm. And in your comment, that the \$30,000 for the Tree Assistance Program, while helpful, had you not had it you would still be growing apples today.

And as we look at these programs, we need to focus on which ones—because we can't afford them all, what are those that are really the make/break kinds of issues involved. We fought them all the way down to \$25 a check, so that, if the check is less than \$25, which it costs USDA \$30 to write each check, you don't get it.

We stripped about \$6 billion out of the Crop Insurance Program over the last couple of years. And I want to know if any of you have seen an impact on the private delivery system, that I think most of us support, where you've got private folks selling the insurance, doing the adjustments and working with you on those programs. Have you seen an impact yet from that reduction of some \$6 billion from the crop insurance side?

Mr. OSBORN. I would just like to talk about the paperwork. Doing the—the grape—insuring grapes is, and I don't know about other crops, but when my insurance agent comes to talk to me about the crop insurance, he—he says what level do you want? Do you want 95 percent, 90s all the way down to 60, 50 percent? And then I say, well, what's it going to cost? He goes, well, I don't really know because RMA hasn't really told us yet. I have a good idea.

I mean, 5 years ago, they had no knowledge. Now they sort of have an idea, and they'll get up a quote and they'll say, here's your quote. And I'll say, okay, I'll take the 75 percent, that one.

Well, then that goes to RMA, and then they come back and say this is the price. And I only get one shot on that. If I don't like the price, then I—I don't get insured, or I have to take it. The insurance agents not having a clear picture of what the cost of that insurance is going to be is problematic.

Mr. SULLIVAN. We're pleased with the Crop Insurance Program. USApple worked with RMA and the crop insurance providers to work to improve the apple policy. You will have some apple growers who say they're not happy with it, of course, and there's minor glitches in the system. But I mean, overall, it's a very functional program.

As for how you save \$6 billion—

Mr. CONAWAY. No, no. We've already done that. I'm just saying what impact has that had? Have you seen the impact?

Mr. SULLIVAN. Well, no, I have absolutely no idea. I did—people in Kansas City at the RMA office are a great group of individuals. I worked with them and just appreciate the hard work that they do at that office. And they're really working very, very hard for the growing community.

It may not seem that way, and you've got a lot of actuarial people in there who can do circles with numbers in there. But I mean, it's a good group. And I think as you're doing the Crop Insurance Program, you've got to get their insight in it. I mean, they've got oodles of experience.

I mean, I want to tell you, yes, we need to be—color of the apples, I'm going to tell you that's a green apple *versus* a red apple, and we need to get some of the loss end of it. But when it comes to the number ends of it and how stuff is going to work on the actuarial thing, you really need to get RMA's involvement in there.

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Eckhardt?

Mr. ECKHARDT. In delivery, I think that the private insurance company people have done a reasonably good job, even with some of the cuts that we've seen. I still say that our biggest issue is the fact that we have—if it's apples, an apple—have we got apples or we have grapes.

But when you come to a diversified farm like my own, where we may have close to 30 crops or those people who are growing non-traditional crops like hops or, here in the Northeast, arugula or Belgian endive or the list just starts—goes from A to Z, arugula to zucchini, if you want to call it that.

It's just one of the issues that perhaps the best people that have the best knowledge of the crops grown in that area is the FSA County Committee, and their input, and growers' input into what is a good yield, what's a good price, how can we insure this crop, would probably be best, a good way is spend some time with those people.

Mr. CONAWAY. Thank you. Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman's time has expired. The chair now turns to the gentlelady from Maine, Ms. Pingree, for 5 minutes.

Ms. PINGREE. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you again to another wonderful panel for your articulate thoughts. I do want to take a quick aside here so this doesn't get lost, is follow-up on one of the dairy things.

I didn't know before that Representative Gibson had entered into a cow milking contest, and I just want to challenge him here in his home district. I do have a blue ribbon and a red ribbon from a politician's cow milking contest and would ask if we can have a little match-up.

The CHAIRMAN. The gauntlet is thrown down.

Ms. PINGREE. Exactly. Maine against New York.

But thank you very much. As I said, I mentioned earlier that one of my interests on the aspects of local food and local production in the growing market there, but I also support all of my colleagues' questions on crop insurance.

In the bill that I submitted, we asked the USDA to analyze this problem, because I do think there are a lot of good ideas and data out there. There are good thoughts from actuaries, farmers themselves, and I do think having a whole farm crop insurance program—Mr. Eckhardt, you've had a lot of good ideas for us today—but it would be very beneficial to many of the farmers that I represent. And I think we could resolve this issue with a little bit of resources put behind it and then provide something that would really be useful to many of the farms and the farms that are actually growing today.

I also represent a lot of organic growers and as many of you in the room know, organic growers have to pay a premium, but then a reduced price when they recover anything from crop insurance, which is completely backwards and upside down. So I think there's an opportunity there, particularly, again, with this being a fast-growing market and a lot of investment being made in organic production today.

So just to the panel generally, and any of you who have thoughts on this, as I mentioned, I'm interested in how we spend our re-

sources on programs that allow you to expand in the local food market, to use more CSA, farmers' markets.

Many of you have already talked about some of the areas where you're benefiting or using some of the programs that are out there. One thing I'm interested in is that there are about 2,000 Farm-to-School Programs around the country that are providing more local foods for schools, also universities and hospitals. That's a great market and a local market.

And I know there are some barriers there, and so I'm interested in that, but also just any of your input on these particular programs and where we should be directing our resources. I'll just open it up to any of you.

Mr. OSBORN. I'm a big proponent of local, just to talk a little bit about marketing, marketing to the American consumer, that buying local is important, not only from knowing where their food is coming from, but what the impact is.

For every bottle of wine that you buy local, you return \$10.60—or \$10.05 to the local community. When you buy a wine from another country, you return 67¢. So the impact of buying local is huge, and I don't think the American public really understands that, and I think that's probably the most important thing we need to do.

The other is people have to understand the difference in cost. I had a Chilean grape grower in visiting last year, and he said to me, said, Scott, how much do you pay your vineyard help? And I said, well, I give them \$10, \$12 an hour plus medical benefits. And he sat there and looked at me, and he goes, wow, I pay mine, \$8 a day.

I can't compete with \$8 a day. And I think the American public needs to understand that everybody needs a good living and we just can't compete with these people, and they shouldn't buy their products that are basically exploiting the workers.

Ms. PINGREE. Thank you for that. And I do think it helps to emphasize that this is a—this is a jobs issue, and especially in many of our local communities and certainly an economic benefit, so thank you for that. Go ahead.

Mr. CHILD. One comment on encouraging local marketing: The State Specialty Crop Block Grants are a good avenue for that.

In New York State, over the past few years, approximately 20 percent of that block grant money has gone into marketing and promotion, much of which is on a, probably, a local type scale. It also has helped fund improvements at the Hunts Point Terminal market in New York City for those producers that choose to market there. So that is one approach that the Federal Government can help on that line.

Mr. ECKHARDT. And the research for the nutrition portion of it, especially when we talk about School Lunch Program, as we try to get more local products into our schools, collaborating with people so that we can use products. An apple is an apple from—if your school is right here locally and you produce apples locally, they should be able to use those local apples.

The Vegetable Growers Association, along with several other groups, are trying to make cookies that go into School Lunch Programs. How do you make butternut squash into a really good nutri-

tious cookie that kids want to eat? Like, you put chocolate chips in it.

But the idea is that we try to come to these research things to help with School Lunch Programs and what makes children want to eat nutritious things. They have to taste good, they have to look good, they have to be good for them.

Ms. PINGREE. Okay. Thank you. I'm out of time, but thank you very much.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentlelady's time has expired. We now turn for the final 5 minutes allotment to the gentleman from New York, Mr. Gibson.

Mr. GIBSON. Well, thanks, Mr. Chairman, and I thank the panel.

It's just been very detailed, a productive testimony. I also want to take the opportunity on behalf of my colleague, Bill Owens, to thank our hosts here today, that the North Country Community College, very proud of this institution. Indeed, number one in the state, 22 in the nation.

A few comments, and then I'll throw out the questions for the panelists. But it's certainly some discussion here this morning about our situation with deficit and debt, and I keenly appreciate what has been communicated this morning.

It's so important, though, that we take a comprehensive approach to this, a thoughtful comprehensive approach, as we go about that very serious question in recognizing the fact that, even in the last 5 years there have already been significant savings in this area. And the fact that when you look at it in total outlays, you're talking $\frac{1}{2}$ of 1 percent of outlays into a sector of our economy that's so vitally important.

Absolutely, we need to scrutinize every single program to make sure we're doing what's right, but we also recognize no farms, no food. We need to get this right or we're going to end up growing food overseas. So certainly appreciate that's not to negate anything that's been said here today, but just that how important it is we get that balance right.

I want to make a few comments. This testimony, I deeply appreciate all that was communicated here.

Disaster relief: we were hit very badly by a storm, including up here in the North Country, in August. And having the Emergency Conservation Program, the Emergency Watershed Program available to us, it took some fight to get that funding there, but it helped us in terms of debris removal, money for fences, for reimbursement there, and cleaning out streams.

And Mr. Chairman, just say that going forward, I think it's important we budget for this because this was a situation we were at zero balance and it took us a couple of months to fight our way to get that money available. As we think about this bill, that we think about paying that forward, in making sure that those programs are available to us.

But we also know that even after that assistance was available, we ran up against this insurance, so no farmer was made whole. And you know, Bill Owens put a marker down that we should pick up and continue to work, and he said, well, what would that template look like?

And I've got here today a couple folks who work on my ag advisory panel who are also part of the New York Farm Bureau, Julie Suarez and Eric Ooms, and I'd ask that we think about is there some way that New York could work on a proposal that may flesh this out in greater detail, that we can get into the national narrative. Something to think about. Certainly, I have no tasking authority over you, but just to say that maybe we can work together on that to provide a recommendation.

The next thing is, Mr. Eckhardt mentioned that NRCS, he was talking about the EQIP Program and that he thought it may be administered in the FSA. Mr. Chairman, that I just want to tell you that I move all about the 137 towns in my district. I do hear that quite often.

I just want to submit it, that I want to reinforce and affiliate myself with the remarks of Mr. Eckhardt. And something to think about, it's really just a common sense approach, and recognize that this is looked at differently in different parts of the country. But here, we like to have our foot soldiers out and working issues, and then the folks who are helping facilitate, those are the ones who are helping with the paperwork. And that's sort of the view here in upstate New York as it relates to how we delineate duties.

I might also say that it might be worth looking at, we're talking about bureaucratic reorganization, that we also consider the labor issue that we've talked about so much. And I know, Mr. Sullivan, we worked with you, you've come down to D.C. I appreciate that. We've worked with Mr. Owens, the New York delegation, as we try to sort through this. I wonder if that program, H-2A, isn't better administered in the USDA instead of the DOL. I think we might have more empathy in trying to solve the problem if it was the same folks who come from the farming community. Something to think about.

I want to affiliate myself with remarks of Mr. Eckhardt in terms of FSA closings. You know, as the guy who was a soldier for many years, I think we should be looking to the headquarters in D.C. Before we come out here. You know, we have offices that have two people in it, but those two personnel are so vitally important to the farmers all throughout the community. And as we look to consolidate, I would say are there savings first that we can get in the headquarters before we come out to where we're actually providing the services?

Organic was mentioned. I want to say today I had Mike Kilpatrick here. He's about 24 years old. He's an incredible young man, bright future ahead of him. Took a really hard hit in this storm. He represents the future, I think. He's just a representative of the future of organic farming in our area.

We need to support him. And I'd ask Mike Kilpatrick, since we weren't able to get you as a witness here today, if you could provide your recommendations—I'd ask, Mr. Chairman, if we could submit that for the record for consideration.

[The information referred to is located on p. 894.]

Mr. GIBSON. And I'm sorry about the lengthy statement, but I did want to make these points. And I just want to ask the panelists for—we haven't gotten on the record yet as far as the energy programs and broadband. These are just other areas where we can try

to help the profitability in extending the reach of our agricultural community. I'd ask that—we've had some farmers in our district take advantage of the energy incentives, none of which were in the USDA, somewhere in Treasury, to help with photovoltaic—to help drive down energy costs. I'd ask for any kind of comment from the panelists.

The CHAIRMAN. And a prompt answer would be appreciated.

Mr. OSBORN. Which kind of answer? A short one?

I think there should be more funds devoted to help either with tax credits or something for alternative energy. You know, at this point in time, I'm considering working out a solar project. I'd like to have the whole farm to be solar. But it's pretty hard to work out the numbers to come up with \$150,000 to put in a solar thing. To wait for tax credits down the road is problematic.

I'm working with a leasing company. If I can get the lease prices down, below what my cost of utility would be, I would do that.

But I just want to address the FSA closings. In Yates County, we're losing our FSA office, and it's going to be tragic. There are a lot of Mennonites in our county and these folks use horse and buggy, and for them to have to now travel 25 to 30 miles in a horse and buggy is really problematic. And we only have two people in the office, and they're very, very effective. And they're very communicative, they stay on top of every farmer, and we know exactly what's going on. And to lose that is going to be tragic in Yates County.

Mr. ECKHARDT. Just real quick, probably the most important crop that every farm in this area of the Northeast produces is their children. And without the ability to put these young people in a position of responsibility for working on our farms, whether they're our own kids or our neighbors', we've had three generations of young people that have worked for us: Their grandparents, their parents and now the kids are working for us. And I think as we go forward, if we're going to have anybody take over in agriculture, we've got to have young people involved in agriculture, and we can't exclude them. A 14 year old with a size 15 shoe at 6' 1" is not an infant.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman's time has expired, the panel's time has expired. The chair would like to note that before we adjourn it has been my custom to allow the Members whose district we are in a closing comment. Not all of us are fortunate enough to live in New York State and we are scattering to the airports very shortly. Mr. Owens, 2 minutes, sir.

Mr. OWENS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

First, again, thank you to all of you for attending today. Thank you to the panelists.

I want to say that from my perspective, I enjoyed listening and learning today. This is very important to all of us to bring back to Washington. I also want to say as we talk much in Washington about buy America, this is the penultimate product to be purchased in America. And Mr. Osborn, your suggestion that we buy America, particularly in the wine area, where you're competing with other countries at a cheaper price, I think we all should take that to heart. We also should focus on that when we're going into Wal-Mart and other places and we're picking up foreign made products.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman yields back. I would note to all of our good folks participating in the back of the room today in this hearing, anyone watching or listening, you can visit the House Agricultural Committee's website to learn more about the 2012 Farm Bill. In addition, you may submit comments to be considered a part of the Committee's field hearing record. Your comments must be submitted using the website address by May 20, 2012, and that is <http://agriculture.house.gov/farmbill>. Look it up on our website.

Under the rules of the Committee, the record for today's hearing will remain open for 30 calendar days to receive additional material and supplemental written responses from witnesses to any questions posed by a Member.

This hearing of the Committee on Agriculture is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:57 a.m. (EST) the Committee was adjourned.]

THE FUTURE OF U.S. FARM POLICY: FORMULATION OF THE 2012 FARM BILL

FRIDAY, MARCH 23, 2012

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE,
Galesburg, IL.

The Committee met, pursuant to call, at 9:00 a.m. (CDT), in the Gymnasium, Building F, Carl Sandburg College, 2400 Tom L. Wilson Boulevard, Galesburg, Illinois, Hon. Frank D. Lucas [Chairman of the Committee] presiding.

Members present: Representatives Lucas, Conaway, Hultgren, Schilling, and Boswell.

Staff present: Bart Fischer, Tamara Hinton, John Porter, Matt Schertz, Nicole Scott, Debbie Smith, Pelham Straughn, John Konya, Margaret Wetherald, C. Clark Ogilvie, and Caleb Crosswhite.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. FRANK D. LUCAS, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM OKLAHOMA

The CHAIRMAN. This hearing of the Committee on Agriculture entitled, *The Future of U.S. Farm Policy: Formulation of the 2012 Farm Bill*, will come to order.

Good morning and thank you all for joining us today for this farm bill field hearing. And I would like to thank Congressman Schilling for hosting this hearing here in Illinois.

These field hearings are a continuation of what my friend and Ranking Member Collin Peterson started in the spring of 2010. Today, we will build upon the information we gathered in those hearings, as well as 11 farm policy audits we conducted this past summer.

We used those audits as an opportunity to thoroughly evaluate farm programs to identify areas where we could improve efficiency.

The field hearings serve a slightly different purpose though. Today, we are here to listen.

I talk to producers all the time back in Oklahoma. I see them in the feed store and I meet with them at my town hall meetings. And of course I get regular updates from my boss back home on the farm. Yes, that is Linda Lucas. But the conditions and crops in Oklahoma are different than what you will find here in Illinois.

And one of the reasons we hold field hearings is to get a sense of the diversity of agriculture across this great country.

Let me tell you—in some ways, Illinois and my home state of Oklahoma could not be more different. Back home—and I say this respectfully—back home, we do not measure our soil in feet and

our rain in inches like you do here. That is called a little bit of envy.

The broad range of agricultural production makes our country strong, and it also creates challenges when you are trying to write a single farm bill to support so many different regions and so many different commodities.

While each sector has unique concerns when it comes to farm policy, I would like to share some of my general goals for the next farm bill.

First and foremost, I want to give producers the tools to help you do what you do best, and that is produce the safest, most abundant, most affordable food supply in the world.

To do this, we must develop a farm bill that works for all regions and all commodities. We have repeatedly heard that a one-size-fits-all program will not work. I can tell you from experience that what works here in Illinois will not work as well for my constituents in Oklahoma. So the commodity title must give producers options so that they can choose the program that works best for them.

I am also committed to providing a strong crop insurance program. The Committee has heard loud and clear about the importance of crop insurance and we believe it is the cornerstone of the safety net. Today, we hope to hear how we can improve crop insurance.

And last, we will work to ensure that producers can continue using conservation programs to protect our natural resources. I am interested to hear how producers in this area of the country use the conservation programs. I am particularly curious as to your thoughts on how to simplify the process so they are easier for farmers and ranchers to use.

Beyond those priorities, I know there are a number of universal concerns facing agriculture across the country.

For instance, my producers in Oklahoma are concerned and worried about regulations coming down from the Environmental Protection Agency and how they must comply with those regulations.

I am also aware that the death tax is creating difficulties for farming operations. And I want to hear how these Federal policies are affecting producers here.

Today, we will hear from a selection of producers. Unfortunately, we just do not have time to hear from everybody who would like to share their perspective. But we have a place on our website where you can submit those comments in writing. You can visit agriculture.house.gov/farmbill to find that place. And you can also find the address on the postcards available on the table here.

As I said before, we do not have an easy road ahead of us. But I am confident that by working together, we can craft a farm bill that continues to support the success story that American agriculture is.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Lucas follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. FRANK D. LUCAS, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS
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As I said before, we don't have an easy road ahead of us. But I'm confident that by working together, we can craft a farm bill that continues to support the success story that is American Agriculture.

The CHAIRMAN. And with that, I would like to turn to my colleague, my senior Democratic Member at the hearing today, for any opening statement that he may offer. The gentleman from Iowa, Mr. Boswell.

**OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. LEONARD L. BOSWELL, A
REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM IOWA**

Mr. BOSWELL. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank all of you for being here. I am not trying to stand in for the Ranking Member Collin Peterson, but I am very pleased to be here.

This will probably surprise our Chairman, I do not think so though—might embarrass him. But I think we have an excellent Chairman of the Agriculture Committee that is committed to making it the best we can make it. And I like what he just said, I want to repeat it in my own words.

You know, everybody in this country—everybody in this country—has a vested interest in agriculture. We all eat. And we are not making more land, we are making a lot more people. And I will comment just very briefly, but what we all get, whether it is that guy or lady in downtown New York or L.A. or Dallas or wherever, is the most plentiful, least expensive, safest food in the world. Make no mistake about it. Does not seem like it when you go to the grocery store, but that is true. Just check it out. So we are all invested in it and we ought to be appreciative of that and remember how important it is to all of us. And that is something I think we all need to be promulgating constantly, so I hope you will do that.

It is kind of neat for me to be back in Galesburg, it has been a long time. I came here one time with a Farm Progress Show. Now that takes you back a few years, some of you. Was anybody here at the Farm Progress Show? Well, I had just gotten out of spending a career in the military, come home and started farming again and I bought me a motorcycle, and I brought about six guys on motorcycles to Galesburg and we arrived—it has been a number of years ago—pouring down rain and muddy on the grounds and everything. And here I am on a two-wheeler trying to get around and find a place to park where when you put the kickstand down, it will not just sink.

[Laughter.]

Mr. BOSWELL. But so much for that. It was a good experience and I feel some real affection for it and you do a lot of things here like we do, just a little bit west of here.

Chairman Lucas made a comment about his soils and so on from Oklahoma. Well, I spent a lot of time at Fort Sill, not too far from him—a lot of time. I have some stewardship over some land. We measure topsoil by the inch as well. So everybody thinks Iowa's topsoil it is feet. Well, some places it is and some places it is here in Illinois, but not everywhere.

The farm program is very important to us and I am just going to close here and just say this: there is room for everybody in this. You know, I was in the state legislature on the Agriculture Committee and got very involved. I came back to do what I love to do and that is agriculture. We have gone through a time when there is production agriculture, sustainable agriculture, organic agriculture, so on. And there has been a lot of head bumping over it. Let me tell you this is what I think, I think there is room for all of us. We can stop that, we do not need to do that. The farmers' markets are growing like crazy, people want that. The population growth is unbelievable. We are going to be stressed to be able to provide food and fiber for the people of this world. There is room for all of us. So let's work together and let's make it the best we can.

And I certainly agree that the safety net is what we are probably going to be focused on. I think I will be interested in what you have

to say so that we understand. You know, Federal crop insurance is available, affordable and so on, and make it work.

So I am just very pleased to be here, Mr. Chairman, I want to thank you. I am glad to be in my colleague's district, I appreciate it. I am anxious to hear what you have to tell us so we can do the best we can with the leadership of the Chairman here to bring forth a farm bill.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman from Iowa yields back his time and I appreciate those very thoughtful words, and we now turn, as is my custom when we are doing a field hearing, to the Member who represents the district that we are in. You would be impressed at how hard and diligently he worked to help make sure that the Agriculture Committee came to his district, the gentleman from Illinois, Mr. Schilling is recognized.

**OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. ROBERT T. SCHILLING, A
REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM ILLINOIS**

Mr. SCHILLING. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

First, I would like to start out, this week the Illinois ag community lost a very special woman and I wanted to dedicate this opening statement to her. Maralee Johnson was an effective voice for the Illinois Beef Association. Her kindness and passion were always appreciated and her efforts for beef producers across this state will be remembered. Our strongest thoughts and prayers go out to her family. And with that, this one is for Maralee.

First, I want to thank Chairman Lucas for holding this farm bill hearing. I also want to welcome my colleagues, Congressmen Boswell, Conaway and Hultgren. Thank you for coming and welcome to the Illinois 17th District.

This district is blessed with some of the most fruitful and productive soil in the world. In fact, when it comes to the value of sales for corn and soybeans, we rank 14th out of 435 Congressional Districts. We host the Farm Progress Show every other year. We are home to ag manufacturers John Deere and Caterpillar and are among the leading districts for livestock in the country. In short, we are an agricultural powerhouse.

I cannot tell you how much our community appreciates the opportunity to be one of four locations throughout this great nation to discuss the next farm bill. It is good to see that we have some friends from Iowa, Indiana, Ohio, Minnesota in attendance with us today as well.

Before we get started, I also want to thank the fine folks at Carl Sandburg College for opening up their doors for this event. I especially want to thank President Lori Sundberg, Julie Van Fleet, Bill Gaither, Aaron Frey, Robin DeMott, Mary Ann Nelson, Anthony Law of the campus security, Bobby Frederick, my ag specialist and the countless others who helped set this up. Many thanks to the Knox County Sheriff's Department and the Galesburg Police Department as well.

I also want to recognize a great leader in the community, the Mayor of Galesburg, Mayor Sal Garza. We really appreciate all the efforts that he helps with our community to bring and liven up our economics here.

Again, I want to welcome all of our farmers, producers, guests and witnesses here today. I have the honor of representing Deb Moore from Roseville, Dave Erickson from Altona, Gary Asay from Osco and Terry Davis from Roseville, all of whom are here to testify today.

I look forward to hearing from all of you about the 2008 Farm Bill, how it has been effective and how we can improve the future of ag.

Before we get to the testimony, I want to address the issue of bipartisanship and offer insight to the question that almost all of you are asking. Can Congress get a farm bill done this year? In the spirit of Mark Twain, reports of the death of bipartisanship have been greatly exaggerated. After all, it was this Congress that passed the three free trade agreements, repealed the onerous 1099 tax reporting requirement, passed the VOW to Hire Heroes veterans jobs bill, passed the STOCK Act, passed a 4 year FAA reauthorization, and passed a defense bill that will promote workload and jobs for Rock Island Arsenal. All of these laws were bipartisan, I might add.

Do we have our work cut out for us? Absolutely. But this is a bipartisan Committee and we will work together to produce a farm bill that works great for America. We have an economy struggling to regain its footing and a budget crisis to solve. Fortunately, ag has been very, very bright for us; yet, we know the economic production and cycles in ag require us to plan for the future.

At \$136.3 billion in 2011, ag exports have never been higher, and according to the USDA, for every \$1 billion in ag exports, that provides for 8,400 related jobs for men and women here and across America. That is why it is so important that the next farm bill continue to allow producers to do what they do best. At a time when rural populations are looking for new ways to grow our communities, our voice must be stronger than ever and I believe this Committee is up to the task.

With that, Mr. Chairman, I look forward to listening to our farm panels today. I yield back.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Schilling follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. ROBERT T. SCHILLING, A REPRESENTATIVE IN
CONGRESS FROM ILLINOIS

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

The Illinois Ag Community lost a very special woman this week and I want to dedicate this opening statement to her.

Maralee Johnson was an effective voice for the Illinois Beef Association. Her kindness and passion were always appreciated—and her efforts for beef producers across this state will be remembered.

Our strongest thoughts and prayers go to her family. And with that, this one is for Maralee.

I want to thank Chairman Lucas for holding this farm bill hearing. I also want to welcome my colleagues, Congressmen, Boswell, Conaway and Hultgren.

Thank you for coming and welcome to Illinois' 17th District.

This District is blessed with some of the most fruitful and productive soil in the world. In fact, when it comes to the value of sales of corn and soybeans, we rank 14th out of 435 Congressional Districts.

We host the Farm Progress Show every other year, are home to ag manufacturers John Deere and CATERPILLAR, and are among the leading districts for livestock in the country.

In short, we are an agricultural powerhouse.

I can't tell you how much this community appreciates the opportunity to be one of the four locations throughout this great nation to discuss the next farm bill. It's good to see that we have some friends from Iowa, Indiana, Ohio and Minnesota in attendance today as well.

Before we get started, I also want to thank the fine folks of Carl Sandburg College for opening up their doors for this event. I especially want to thank:

President Lori Sundberg,
 Julie Van Fleet,
 Bill Gaither,
 Aaron Frey,
 Robin DeMott,
 Mary Ann Nelson,
 Anthony Law of Campus Security,
 And countless others who helped set up this great venue.

Many thanks to the Knox County Sheriff's Department and the Galesburg Police Department as well.

Again, I want to welcome all of our farmers, producers, guests and witnesses here today.

I have the honor of representing Deb Moore from Roseville, Dave Erickson from Altona, Gary Asay from Osco and Terry Davis from Roseville—all of whom are here to testify today.

I look forward to hearing from all of you about how the 2008 Farm Bill has been working and how we can improve things for the future of Agriculture.

Before we get to testimony, I want to address the issue of bipartisanship and offer insight to the question that almost all of you are asking . . . "Can Congress get a farm bill done this year?"

In the spirit of Mark Twain, reports of the death of bipartisanship have been greatly exaggerated.

After all, it was THIS Congress that:

passed the THREE FREE TRADE AGREEMENTS,
 repealed the onerous 1099 tax reporting requirement,
 passed the VOW to Hire Heroes veterans' jobs bill,
 passed the STOCK ACT,
 passed a FOUR-YEAR FAA reauthorization
 and passed a Defense bill that will promote workload and jobs at the Rock Island Arsenal.

All of these laws were bipartisan I might add.

Do we have our work cut out for us? Absolutely. But this is a bipartisan Committee and we will work together to produce a farm bill that works for America.

We have an economy struggling to regain its footing, and a budget crisis to solve. Fortunately agriculture has been a very bright spot, yet we know the economic and production cycles in agriculture require us to plan carefully for the future.

At \$136.3 billion dollars in 2011—ag exports have never been higher. And according to USDA—every \$1 billion in AG exports provides for 8,400 related jobs for men and women here in America.

That is why it is so important that the next farm bill continue to allow producers to do what they do best.

At a time when rural populations are looking for new ways to grow our communities, our voice must be stronger than ever and I believe this Committee is up to the task.

With that Mr. Chairman, I look forward to listening to our farm panels today.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Congressman Schilling, for yielding back.

The chair would request that other Members submit their opening statements for the record so the witnesses may begin their testimony, and to ensure there is ample time for questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Peterson follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. COLLIN C. PETERSON, A REPRESENTATIVE IN
CONGRESS FROM MINNESOTA

As we approach the current farm bill's expiration date, we will hear directly from farmers and ranchers across the country on the issues they face every day.

Writing a new farm bill will not be an easy task. Everybody is being asked to do more with less, and, it seems to me, that agriculture is being asked to cut even more than others. I'm particularly troubled by the House Republican budget released this week which, in addition to massive cuts to agriculture and nutrition programs, includes reconciliation instructions asking our Committee to make unrealistic budget cuts. I just don't see how we can make these cuts and then turn around to write a strong farm bill.

The agriculture economy is perhaps the only part of our nation's economy that has remained strong over the last few years. It is amazing to me that those outside of agriculture are trying to mess this up.

Passing a farm bill this year or even next year if it comes to that, is going to be incredibly difficult. We need producers of all regions, representing all commodities, to work together to get a new farm bill across the finish line.

I thank the witnesses for making the time to testify hear today.

The CHAIRMAN. I would like to welcome our first panel of witnesses to the table—Mr. David C. Erickson, corn and soybean producer, Altona, Illinois; Ms. Deborah L. Moore, corn, soybean, and beef producer, Roseville Illinois; Mr. John Mages, corn and soybean producer, Belgrade, Minnesota; Mr. Blake Gerard, rice, soybean, wheat, and corn producer, McClure, Illinois; and Mr. Craig Adams, corn, soybean, wheat, hay, and beef producer—you are a busy man—Leesburg, Ohio.

Mr. Erickson, please begin when you are ready.

**STATEMENT OF DAVID C. ERICKSON, CORN AND SOYBEAN
PRODUCER, ALTONA, IL**

Mr. ERICKSON. Thank you. My name is David Erickson, I am a Knox County farmer from Altona, Illinois. And as a life long resident here in Knox County, I want to welcome the Committee and in particular Chairman Lucas, Ranking Member Peterson, all the other Members of the Committee. We appreciate your commitment to come here to our community for this hearing. And in particular, I want to thank Congressman Schilling for his persistence in not only serving the district, but in making sure that this all-important hearing is here, as well as the work of his staff. Thank you very much.

My wife Nancy and I operate a corn and soybean farming operation and a farm management business that serves absentee landowners. Our businesses are truly family owned and established through the work of the previous two generations of our families. We continue to enjoy the involvement of three generations of our families in production agriculture and work with multi-generations of landowners through our farm management business. We are extremely optimistic about the future of agriculture.

I believe that farm businesses should be rewarded for their work in the global marketplace and that we need to continue to support efforts to open, develop and further expand markets for agricultural products and commodities, both domestically and globally. The impacts that these products have had here locally is beyond question. Agricultural exports support jobs here at home and particularly when we add value through enhancing our basic commodities.

I urge Congress to continue to support trade agreements and initiatives that provide increased access, improved acceptance and fair trade policies for U.S. agriculture. Congress has an important job ahead of it.

As farmers, we protect and enhance our environment because we know the importance of sustained rich soil and clean water that supports our family and our consuming public. Some current conservation programs are over-burdened with rules and procedures and do little to impact programs except use up limited budget allocations. I urge Congress to consider simplifying, consolidating our current conservation programs to allow for the most effective use of those funds budgeted for these efforts.

As a taxpayer, I want Congress to cut spending, reduce waste and improve results with our investment. I believe that the Federal budget deficits must be eliminated and debt reduced. I feel strongly that agriculture should do its part to help Congress in this endeavor.

I know that much of the discussion to date about the farm bill has led to proposed elimination of direct payments. While I understand the need for change, I also must report how direct payments in our farming operations are beneficial and effective. Without the assistance of any other government programs, we invested these direct payments back into our farming operation to reduce soil erosion, improve drainage, limit nutrient runoff and manage price risk. We made effective use of those dollars and taxpayers reap the rewards with a safe, abundant, low cost supply of food and fiber.

I understand the importance of Federal crop insurance as a part of risk management and I know that too much emphasis also on any single approach can be dangerous. Federal crop insurance should provide risk coverage for crop losses but not for poor marketing and overall risk management. Farming is a risky business. We need tools to help us manage these risks but those risks can never be totally eliminated.

I urge you to consider streamlining farm program paperwork. A vast majority of Illinois farmland is owned by someone other than who physically operates it. Absentee landowners are reaching the end of their desire to comply with all the requirements of farm program participation. Their frustration will only lead to lower participation and the increased likelihood of cash only rental arrangements that do nothing but compound the risk already that farmers must bear.

I encourage your continued work to complete the farm bill legislation this year and to make it a 5 year program that does not rely on temporary extensions. No aspect of the commodity title fits all operations or regions, but I trust you to work diligently to craft legislation that provides flexibility for the inherent diversity that encompasses U.S. agriculture.

I thank you for the privilege to address the Committee and appreciate the great efforts involved in bringing this hearing to my home.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Erickson follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DAVID C. ERICKSON, CORN AND SOYBEAN PRODUCER,
ALTONA, IL

My name is David C. Erickson. I am a Knox County farmer from Altona, Illinois. As a life-long Knox County resident, I want to extend a warm welcome and sincere appreciation to Chairman Lucas, Ranking Member Peterson and all the Members of the Committee for bringing this most important Field Hearing to Galesburg. I applaud your efforts to seek input from constituents on the important issues facing agriculture policy and your willingness to bring the inner workings of Congress to the people in their home communities. I also want to recognize the efforts of Congressman Schilling and his staff for their persistence in serving the 17th Congressional District in Illinois and in hosting the Committee in the District for this important Farm Policy Hearing. I am very proud of Knox County and hope that you will find the people here friendly, engaged and thoughtful just as I have.

My wife, Nancy, and I operate a corn and soybean farming operation and manage farmland for absentee landowners with our farm management business. Our businesses are truly family owned and were established through the work of the prior two generations in our families. We continue to enjoy the involvement of three generations of our families in production agriculture and work with multiple generations of active landowner participation in our farm management business. We are extremely optimistic about the future of the agriculture industry and are confident in the ability of the agriculture industry to support a significant portion of our local, state and national economy.

After college and a 4 year experience as a high school and community college teacher, I began to farm full-time in 1984 with the 1985 crop year being my first full season. Production and prices have certainly changed considerable from that era of sub \$2 corn, sub \$5 soybeans and idled acres (set aside) of 10% to 20% very common. Through many years of involvement in leadership positions in agriculture organizations, I have had the opportunity to participate in Farm Policy discussions and have been actively involved with farm bills since 1990. The change from one farm bill to the next has been mostly evolutionary, but looks rather revolutionary from a rearview perspective. I enjoy farm policy discussions and still find the process as interesting as it was to me that first time.

I believe that farm businesses should be rewarded for their work in the global marketplace. I continue to support the efforts to open, develop and further expand markets for all agriculture commodities both domestically and globally. I know that historical efforts to limit production to improve prices only hurt U.S. production capabilities and encouraged our competitors. I have no doubt that through research, development and challenging competition, farmers will meet the growing needs and tastes of the world population. We are a country of many resources and our ability to effectively use those resources will be paramount to our future and that of our neighbors throughout the world. Agricultural exports support jobs here at home particularly when we add value to those basic commodities through processing and enhancements. U.S. agriculture must be allowed to participate in the growing global marketplace. I urge Congress to continue to support trade agreements and initiatives that provide increased access, improved acceptance and fair trade policies for U.S. agriculture products and commodities.

Congress must limit unnecessary and burdensome regulations that increase costs, reduce productivity and decrease opportunities for current and future generations. Something as simple as protecting young people from the threat of workplace accidents or abusive working conditions can lead to over-regulation that sacrifices developing a strong work ethic in our youth. Young people must be allowed to learn how to work and work safely or we risk losing an effective, motivated workforce in future generations. Work on the family farm is rewarding and builds life lessons that lead to future successes for young people. Employers have long recognized the strong work ethic of young people from rural areas as a positive skill for future employees. Regulations protect us in everyday life, but when overused, serve no purpose to a productive society.

We must be prudent stewards of our natural resources. Farmers protect and enhance our environment, because they know the importance of sustaining the rich soil and clean water that supports their family and the consuming public. I feel that conservation programs are important to the farm policy decisions that we make. Some current conservation programs are overburdened with rules, procedures and standards that do little to impact the programs except to use up limited budget allocations. Congress must not lose sight of the positive impact that past voluntary incentive conservation programs have provided. I urge Congress to consider simplifying and consolidating current conservation programs to allow for the most effective use of funds budgeted to these efforts.

As a taxpayer, I want Congress to cut spending, reduce waste and improve results with our investment. I believe that Federal budget deficits must be eliminated and debt reduced. I feel strongly that agriculture should do its part to help Congress achieve those goals.

I know that much of the discussion to date about the new farm bill has led to the proposed elimination of direct payments. While I understand the need for change, I must also report to you how direct payments in our farming operations were beneficial and cost effective. As farmers and farmland owners, we used those payments to implement conservation plans, develop needed grassed waterways, utilize grid soil sampling to manage nutrient use, invest in equipment upgrades for conservation and no-till farming while also developing risk management marketing practices. Without the assistance of any other programs, we invested these direct payments back into our operation to reduce soil erosion, improve drainage, limit nutrient run-off and manage price risk. We made effective use of those dollars and taxpayers reap the rewards of a safe, abundant, low cost supply of food and fiber.

A reasonable safety net must still be a part of the farm bill to ensure that production agriculture can withstand the inevitable variability in prices and production, neither of which are in our complete control. I understand the importance of Federal Crop Insurance as a part of risk management, but I also know that too much emphasis on any single approach to risk management is dangerous. We have not used Federal Crop Insurance because the associated cost has not been calculated into a sound business decision for us. We have worked to improve our financial stability, we are fortunate to have long term relationships for land rental and our environment has produced fairly consistent yields. There may have been times when we might have received insurance payments, but those payments would pale in comparison to the accumulated cost of premiums over the years. Federal Crop Insurance should provide risk coverage for crop losses, but not for poor marketing and overall risk management. Farming is a risky business subject to weather, price, political, trade, speculation and other influencing factors. We need tools to help us manage these risks, but those risks can never be nor should be totally eliminated.

I urge you to consider streamlining farm program paperwork and the near endless amount of information that must be provided. A vast majority of Illinois farmland is owned by someone other than who physically operates the land. Absentee landowners are reaching the end of their desire to comply with all of the requirements for farm program participation. Their frustration will only lead to lower participation or increase the likelihood of cash only rental arrangements which only compounds the risk that farmers must bear.

I encourage your continued work to complete the farm bill legislation this year and to make it a 5 year program that does not rely on a temporary extension. All the programs contained within the legislation must have the ability to plan for the future and know that a multi-year farm bill is the key to that confidence. No aspect of the commodity title fits all operations or regions. I trust you to work diligently to craft legislation which provides flexibility for the inherent diversity that encompasses U.S. agriculture.

I thank you for the privilege to address the Committee today and appreciate the great efforts required to bring this important hearing to my home.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Mr. Erickson.

Ms. Moore, you may begin when you're ready.

STATEMENT OF DEBORAH L. MOORE, CORN, SOYBEAN, AND BEEF PRODUCER, ROSEVILLE, IL

Ms. MOORE. Good morning. I would like to start by thanking Chairman Lucas, Congressman Peterson, Congressman Schilling, and the other Members of the Committee for the opportunity to testify here today.

My name is Deb Moore. I farm near Roseville in western Illinois with my husband, Ron, and his brother, Larry. We farm about 2,000 acres of corn and soybeans and have a beef cattle operation.

I thank you for the opportunity to talk about the value and importance of farm programs to operations like ours. For more than 30 years, we have been active family farmers who are concerned about caring for our land and sharing our farm story. I was actually born and raised in Chicago suburbs and moved to the farm

after marrying Ron, who is a third generation Warren County farmer.

Farmers like us face many challenges and opportunities in today's global marketplace. We must continue to become more efficient and also manage more risk. As crop prices have increased over the last couple of years, so have expenses. We must find ways collectively to manage these risks.

From 2010 to 2011, our income increased 50 percent but our expenses increased 58 percent. Our major expenses each year are cash rent, fertilizer, seed and crop protectants. All of these have doubled in cost over the last few years. Last year, we purchased all of our farm inputs for our 2012 crop, a full year before that crop will need to be harvested.

Another major challenge we face is educating consumers about agriculture and the importance of our industry to food production and the economic well-being of our country. I am involved with Ag in the Classroom programs and Illinois Farm Families.

Illinois Farm Families invited Chicago moms to have their questions about food and farming answered by Illinois farmers. After making their own judgment about our methods and procedures, they share their experience using social media.

I share this information with you because it is important for you to know as we educate consumers about agriculture, they gain a better understanding of why it is important for tax dollars to be used for agriculture. When consumers see for themselves how we care for our animals, the land, the environment, and gain a better understanding of how agriculture bolsters the national economy, we see more support for U.S. agriculture in the Federal budget.

My family believes that farm programs play an important role in underpinning the strength of the farm economy, which supports the overall U.S. economy. The importance of an effective safety net for farm income has grown with the rise in cost of farm inputs. We recognize that in the present budget environment, farm programs are a target of interest from either groups that oppose them in principle or who want to use those funds for other projects.

Let me review five of the farm bill titles and my position:

In the commodity title, we support risk management proposals and other programs that enable us to better manage risk, maintain planting flexibility, avoid restructuring of existing crop insurance programs, and are compliant with current U.S. WTO commitments.

We use Federal crop insurance, marketing loans, futures and options, hedge-to-arrive contracts to protect our financial investment in times of extreme volatility of commodity prices and input costs.

Let me also add that credit for new farmers is important to the future of agriculture. With the expenses we face, it would be very difficult for a new farmer to secure enough credit to take over an operation from an existing farmer.

In conservation, we support practices on working land. We would like to reduce the acreage cap on CRP in order to achieve budget savings and allow U.S. producers to respond to growing demands.

Conservation projects that protect the environment are extremely important to farmers. Our farm is 30 percent no-till, 70 percent minimum-till.

We have relied on cost share programs that reduce erosion through stream bank restoration, CRP waterways and dry dams. But there are not enough resources to do all the necessary work.

In energy, we support reauthorization and funding for Biodiesel Fuel Education Program and Biobased Market Program and would like to see reauthorization of the Bioenergy Program for Advanced Fuel.

In research, we would like to see the Agriculture & Food Research Initiative reauthorized and funding maintained for research at land-grant universities to help us better manage production challenges.

For trade, we need reauthorization and funding for the Foreign Market Development Program and the Market Access Program and continue Food for Education and food aid programs.

Again, let me emphasize that I strongly support these and other titles be part of the 2012 Farm Bill, including support for commodity programs, conservation, research, energy, export promotion and food assistance programs.

I thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Moore follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DEBORAH L. MOORE, CORN, SOYBEAN, AND BEEF
PRODUCER, ROSEVILLE, IL

Good morning. I would like to start by thanking Chairman Lucas, Congressman Peterson, Congressman Schilling, and other Members of the Committee for the opportunity to testify here today.

My name is Deb Moore. I farm near Roseville in western Illinois with my husband, Ron, and his brother, Larry. We have about 2,000 acres of corn and soybeans and a feeder cattle operation with 200 acres of pasture. I am a member of the Illinois Soybean Association and the Illinois Farm Bureau. Ron and I are also members of the corn and beef associations.

I want to thank you for the opportunity to be here today to talk about the value and importance of farm programs to modern U.S. agriculture operations like ours. For more than 30 years, we have been active family farmers who are concerned about both caring for the land and sharing the farm story with the public. I was actually born and raised in suburban Chicago and moved to the farm after marrying Ron, who is a third generation Warren County farmer. Both of his grandfathers farmed in Warren County. We like to tell our sons' friends that there are more steers per square mile than there are people in Section 5 of Roseville Township.

Farmers like us face many challenges and opportunities in today's global marketplace. As we continue to become more efficient and grow food for the world on the same number of acres, we must be innovative and also manage more risk. As crop prices have increased over the last couple of years, so have expenses. We must find ways collectively to manage such challenges.

Currently our only income is from the farm. With higher commodity prices has come a higher input cost. From 2010 to 2011, our income increased 50 percent, but our expenses increased 58 percent. Our major expenses each crop year include cash rent, followed by fertilizer, seed and crop protectants. Fertilizer expenses have more than doubled in the last 4 years, crop protectants costs are up 30 percent, cash rent, seed and fuel have doubled in cost over the last few years. I would also add that we have not increased our production acres during this time either, only the expense per acre of planting the crop. In the fall of 2011, we purchased our seed, fertilizer and crop protectants for the 2012 crop, a full year before that crop will be harvested. We pay for crop expenses a year ahead to guarantee supply and prices.

We do what we can to manage the financial risk as much as possible, but every year is different. Weather, disease and prices play a major role in our profitability. High commodity prices are of absolutely no use to us if we lose a crop to extreme weather conditions. One storm can wipe out an entire crop and jeopardize a farm in a matter of minutes. We have had several wind storms that have taken down buildings and flattened our crops. In those situations, we had to run the combine in one direction with a reel to harvest most of our crop. We were luckier than many

other farmers, we still had a crop to harvest but the expense increased greatly with added fuel and additional wear on the machinery.

Another major challenge we face is in educating consumers about agriculture and the importance of our industry to food production and the economic well-being of our country. I taught school when we were first married and then stayed home to raise our three sons. I did go back to teaching for 8 years while the boys were in college to help pay their tuition. My teaching position was eliminated 2 years ago, but I still have a passion for teaching others about farming. I am involved with the Ag in the Classroom program and have hosted multiple school field trips, participated in classroom visits, and hosted urban teachers to our farm.

I also have become involved with Illinois Farm Families, a group that focuses on a different way of communicating with consumers than in the past. Illinois Farm Families are actively seeking a dialogue with urban consumers about food and farming concerns.

In this last year, Illinois Farm Families invited Chicago-area moms to see a variety of farms and get their questions answered. More than 70 interested moms applied for the program and nine were chosen to spend the year touring Illinois farms. I am one of the farm mom hostesses spending time with these field moms while they tour our farms. Each tour allows the moms to dig into food and farming topics and make their own judgments about our methods and performance. After the tours, the moms share their experiences with others using social media.

Last summer, my family was one of five Illinois farm families featured in an on-line program where consumers watched a video tour of our farm to learn about farming. We know more than 135,000 Illinois consumers viewed the farmer videos, many of whom we still communicate with through e-newsletters. In June, we will host the field moms for a closer look at our family farm.

I share this information with you because it is important for you to know that as we educate consumers about agriculture, they gain a better understanding of why it is important for tax dollars to help support agriculture. When consumers see for themselves how we care for the land, our animals and the environment and gain a better understanding of how agriculture bolsters the national economy and feeds their own families as well as those around the world, we see more support for making sure U.S. agriculture is a wise investment in the Federal budget.

My family believes that farm programs play an important role in underpinning the strength of the farm economy which supports the overall U.S. economy. The importance of an effective safety net for farm income has grown as the rising cost of farm inputs has increasingly pressured farm profitability. We recognize that, in the current budget environment, farm programs are a target for interests that either oppose them in principle or want to fund other priorities. I am willing to accept our fair share of budget costs, but in proportion with other programs that may be explored for budget cuts. Our family supports ways to make farm programs more efficient, effective and defensible.

Let me review five of the farm bill titles and my position:

- Commodity title. We support Risk Management proposals and other programs that enable us to better manage risk, maintain planting flexibility, avoid restructuring of the existing crop insurance program, and are in compliance with current U.S. World Trade Organization (WTO) commitments.

We use Federal Crop Insurance (Revenue Assurance), hail insurance, market loans, futures and options and Hedge-to-Arrive contracts to protect our financial investment in times of extreme volatility of commodity prices and input costs.

Our farm usually takes loans out every year for corn and soybean production to help with cash flow. We get our loans through our local Farm Service Agency office and the Commodity Credit Corporation.

Let me also add that credit for new farmers is important to the future of agriculture. With the expenses we face, it would be very difficult for a new farmer to secure enough credit to take over an operation from an established farmer. Farmers borrow more money each year than most Americans will borrow in a lifetime.

- Conservation title. We support programs for conservation practices on working lands. We would like to reduce the acreage cap on the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) in order to achieve budget savings and allow U.S. producers to respond to growing demand.

Conservation projects are extremely important to farmers. We emphasize conservation projects that protect the environment. Our farm is 30 percent no-till and 70 percent minimum till. But there are not enough resources to do all of the necessary work.

We have relied on the cost share programs available through USDA and the Illinois Department of Agriculture. We have done stream bank restoration to reduce erosion on pasture land and have CRP waterways to reduce field level erosion on 200 acres. We also installed seven dry dams on 140 acres to reduce erosion and improve productivity.

- Energy title. We support reauthorization and funding for the Biodiesel Fuel Education Program and Biobased Market Program and would like to see reauthorization of the Bioenergy Program for Advanced Biofuels.
- Research title. We would like to see the Agriculture & Food Research Initiative (AFRI) reauthorized for competitive research grants and funding maintained for research at land-grant universities. I believe that we need to continue investing in research with Illinois universities to advance research that can help us better manage production challenges. We need public funding and researcher support to maintain a comprehensive research program.
- Trade title. We need reauthorization and funding for the Foreign Market Development (FMD) Program at \$34.5 million annually and the Market Access Program (MAP) at \$200 million annually and continue Food for Education and food aid programs.

Again, let me emphasize that I strongly support these and other titles be part of the 2012 Farm Bill, including support for commodity programs, conservation, research, energy, and export promotion and food assistance programs.

That concludes my comments today. I look forward to working with you and other Members of the Committee as you write the next farm bill. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have. Thank you for your time.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Mr. Mages, whenever you are prepared, you may begin.

**STATEMENT OF JOHN MAGES, CORN AND SOYBEAN
PRODUCER, BELGRADE, MN**

Mr. MAGES. Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee, I want to thank you for letting me testify today. Ranking Member Peterson is actually my Congressman in my district in Minnesota.

My name is John Mages and my wife, Cindy, and I farm in central Minnesota near Belgrade. We farm 1,200 acres of corn and soybeans.

If I had to sum up my views on the next farm bill, it would be as follows:

Pass a 5 year farm bill this year.

Give farmers a menu of policy options to choose from.

Be sure that every one of those options has protection against long periods of low prices.

Do not change the pay limit or AGI rules again.

And above all, do not do anything to hurt crop insurance.

We need a 5 year farm bill for the same reason we need long-term tax policy. We need to be able to go to the banker and be able to make plans for the future.

Farmers need a choice, because it is obvious to almost everyone that you cannot squeeze the same crop into the same program and make it work for all crops. If the farm bill does not work for all crops, then I think the chances of it passing Congress and becoming law are low.

This past week, I made the rounds on Capitol Hill with fellow farmers from seven states growing nearly every crop and I want each one of them to have a policy that works for them as well as one that works for myself. Whatever options farmers have to choose from, there needs to be a mechanism to deal with the long-term low prices.

None of you wants to be in Washington writing emergency assistance legislation because the farm bill was not designed to handle a financial crisis.

On pay limits and AGI, the new rules that just came out about 2 years ago, I know this sort of thing is cast off as being friendly for the family farmer, but these rules are now hitting the family farmer. More and more of those advocating these kind of rules seem like the real goal is to adjust the real farm policy. Now they want to put these rules on crop insurance. I doubt any home, business or car owner would want his identity means tested or his pay limited because of the measure of his loss.

Finally, do not hurt crop insurance. I know this is the mantra these days, but we do need to make sure, for example, that revenue programs do not duplicate crop insurance, which would hurt us. But supplement it by helping to ease parts of the farmer's deductible which can get high in some parts of the country, especially if the producer's actual production history lags.

Thank you again for inviting me and I will look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Mages follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JOHN MAGES, CORN AND SOYBEAN PRODUCER, BELGRADE,
MN

Chairman Lucas, Ranking Member Peterson, Members of the Committee, thank you for this opportunity to appear before the House Agriculture Committee to share our views on the 2012 Farm Bill.

My name is John Mages and I am a corn and soybean farmer from near Belgrade, Minnesota in Stearns County. I am also President of the Minnesota Corn Growers Association.

I believe that farm policy designed to support a strong and dynamic U.S. agriculture sector is vital. Federal Crop Insurance and the farm policies that have been in place for more than a decade have generally served this nation and producers well. I am proud to stand by a policy that has been under budget for the past 10 years, accounts for only about one quarter of one percent of the Federal budget, guarantees American consumers the lowest grocery bills, as a percentage of disposable income, of any consumer in the world, and constitutes the one bright spot in our economy and our nation's balance of trade.

However, I understand that budget and other pressures may require that a new approach be taken in the 2012 Farm Bill and, as such, I would like to set out the policy priorities of Minnesota producers like me.

First and foremost, please do no harm to Federal Crop Insurance, which should be preserved, protected, and strengthened. We strongly oppose any further legislative or administrative cuts to Federal Crop Insurance, and we oppose carrying conservation compliance or other rules applicable to the farm bill over to this critical risk management tool that we as producers help pay for. We also believe that improvements to Actual Production History (APH), continued availability of enterprise units, and the ability to stack supplemental area-wide coverage on top of individual coverage can all work to help erase at least a part of a producer's deductible.

Second, the triggering mechanism under farm policy needs to be updated to provide tailored and reliable protection in the event of multiple-year low prices such as we experienced in the late 1990s and early 2000s. Price protection over multiple years is the main point of a farm bill because it is the one thing that Federal Crop Insurance is not designed to do. We need price protection under any option a producer might be given in the farm bill. If there is not price protection and prices collapse, we will see a repeat of what we saw in the mid 1980s and late 1990s which is a financial crisis followed by very costly and inefficient *ad hoc* disaster assistance.

Third, it is apparent that farmers need options in the 2012 Farm Bill. It is clear, for example, that revenue programs may work for some producers, but not for others. Even among producers who like the idea of a revenue program, there is a split on whether it should be done on a national, state, crop reporting district, county, or on an on-farm level. Within Minnesota alone, there is probably a rough geographic line where producers may prefer area wide revenue on one side and on-farm

revenue on the other, while some Minnesota producers may prefer a price-based option instead. We think allowing producers to choose from options in order to best meet the risks they face on their farms is a good approach.

Whatever options are made available in the 2012 Farm Bill, they should be plain and bankable, tailored to losses and, thus, defensible, and built to weather prolonged periods of low prices. Toward this end, we generally feel that the 2011 Farm Bill proposal that you developed last fall met these goals.

Fourth, since the farm bill options under discussion would only kick in to cover actual loss situations, whether revenue or price losses, it seems that arbitrary payment limits and means tests for producers should be eliminated. It is one thing to limit or means test Direct Payments paid on historical bases and yields but it makes no sense to do this against revenue or price losses that a farmer sustains on his operation. Farm policy is intended to help U.S. producers compete against heavily subsidized and protected foreign competitors and arbitrary rules frustrate this goal rather than advance it.

Fifth, we very much need a 5 year farm bill passed into law this year. The prospect of having to make plans, secure loans, and plant under a short term extension or no law at all is not a good one for producers.

Thank you once again for the opportunity to offer testimony on the crafting of the 2012 Farm Bill.

The CHAIRMAN. Absolutely, thank you.

Mr. Gerard, begin whenever you are ready, sir.

**STATEMENT OF BLAKE GERARD, RICE, SOYBEAN, WHEAT, AND
CORN PRODUCER, McCLURE, IL**

Mr. GERARD. Chairman Lucas, Members of the Committee, good morning and thank you for inviting me to testify today.

The CHAIRMAN. Pull your microphone up just a little closer, sir. These things seem to be very directional.

Mr. GERARD. My name is Blake Gerard and I am from Alexander County in Illinois, the southernmost county in the State of Illinois. I am a rice, soybean, corn and wheat producer. I appreciate the opportunity to come here today and give you my top five priorities for the 2012 Farm Bill.

The first of which being I would like to see us pass a 5 year farm bill this year. We farmers are businessmen and we depend on the stability and certainty of long-term farm policy.

Second, we farmers need a choice of policy options. Producers of some crops face different risks than producers of other crops. In fact, sometimes producers of the same crop coming from different regions of the country face different risks. We have an opportunity right now to craft a farm bill that will address the risks on the farm. It is not so easy for me to go home and craft my risk to match farm policy. The proposal that was developed last fall would have worked for all producers, from my perspective.

Third, each farm policy option that we present to producers needs to have price protection that will address periods of prolonged low prices. This is the very purpose of the origination of the farm bill, but what has happened since the 2008 Farm Bill was enacted, the production costs have increased significantly to the point that they are not adequate to prevent a financial crisis in the agriculture industry if prices were to collapse, such as they did in the late 1990s. Target price and loan rates are much too low at this point to be relevant. The ACRE program has not worked, as evidenced by current participation rates. Direct payments, while they have been helpful, cannot respond to a collapse of prices. Along with that, crop insurance is not designed to work effectively in prolonged periods of low prices.

Okay, fourth, the farm bill should not change payment limitations. We just made major changes in the last farm bill, which were not fully implemented up until 2 years ago, and I am competing in a global marketplace with competitors that benefit from rising subsidies and protectionist tariffs, while at the same time funding for my farm bill has decreased to record low levels.

And fifth, I would like to see crop insurance strengthened to where it will work equitably for all commodities. Fortunately, I can say as a corn and soybean producer that crop insurance is working effectively for me. But for my rice enterprise, crop insurance has not been working effectively and I think we need to put all hands on deck to focus on improving crop insurance to where it can work effectively for all commodities.

The bottom line for me is when I look at the farm policy options that are on the table today, from my rice enterprise, the revenue program totally does not work. My risks on my rice enterprise are price risks and production cost risks. I need a price-based safety net.

Then when I analyze it and I step over to my corn and soybean production and I look at the options that are on the table, I am concerned about the current revenue programs that are in place, that are on the table today because there is still yet no price-based protection in these programs that are offered. In other words, if we get into a period, which I feel like we will with the cyclical nature of agriculture, of prolonged low prices, the revenue guarantee under the current revenue programs that are proposed will fall along with those low prices. At that point, we have no safety net. At that point, we will have people requesting *ad hoc* disaster legislation, which is not fiscally responsible, it is not fair to the American farmer or the American taxpayer.

So summing it up, let me just say this; I feel like the proposal that was put together last fall by this Committee, with what you had to work with, the time frame you were working in and the funding level that you had to work with, you did a very effective job putting a proposal together that will work for all producers. And also it saved money, a significant sum of money, for the American taxpayers. You offered up a program that gave the producers a choice and both choices, the revenue program and the price-based program had a price protection built into it. I think we are on the right track and I think we need to stay on that track.

I appreciate the opportunity to come here and express my beliefs today. Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Gerard follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF BLAKE GERARD, RICE, SOYBEAN, WHEAT, AND CORN
PRODUCER, McCLURE, IL

Introduction

Chairman Lucas, Ranking Member Peterson, and Members of the Committee, thank you for holding this hearing concerning farm policy and the 2012 Farm Bill. I appreciate the opportunity to offer testimony on farm policy from the perspective of a diversified grain producer.

My name is Blake Gerard. I raise rice, soybeans, wheat, and corn in Alexander and Union counties in southern Illinois and I have been farming on my own now for 16 years. I am the fourth generation in my family to farm this land and this is my 13th year to farm rice in Illinois. I am also co-owner in a seed conditioning facility that does contract seed production, conditioning, packaging & warehousing.

All of our soybeans are raised for seed along with about 75% of our rice. In addition to my farm and seed business, I also serve as the commissioner for the East Cape Girardeau/Clear Creek Levee & Drainage District, the Illinois Crop Improvement Association and am a member of the USA Rice Producers' Group Board of Directors.

Importance of Agriculture and Cost-Effective Farm Policy

U.S. agriculture shares a certain amount of pride for what we do for the nation's economy. Agriculture still matters.

Over the course of the current economic downturn, here is an excerpt of what objective sources ranging from the Federal Reserve to *The Wall Street Journal* had to say about what America's farmers and ranchers have been doing to help get our nation back on track and people back to work:

"In 2010, rural America was at the forefront of the economic recovery . . . '[R]ising exports of farm commodities and manufactured goods spurred job growth and income gains in rural communities . . . If recent history holds true, rural America could lead U.S. economic gains in 2011.' *Federal Reserve of Kansas City, 2010 report.*"

"Growers' improved lot is rippling out to other industries." *The Wall Street Journal*, October 12, 2010.

We read the same kinds of reports during the last recession when the manufacturing sector was in crisis:

"Farm Belt Is Becoming a Driver for Overall Economy . . . The present boom is proving that agriculture still matters in the U.S. Rising farm incomes are helping to ease the blow of the loss of manufacturing jobs in Midwest states . . . 'The farm sector is a significant source of strength for the U.S. economy,' says Sung Won Sohn, chief economist of Wells Fargo Bank . . . Although farmers themselves are a tiny part of the population, they have an outsize impact on the economy because farming is such an expensive enterprise. A full-time Midwest grain farmer often owns millions of dollars of equipment and land, and spends hundreds of thousands of dollars annually on supplies." *The Wall Street Journal*, December 17, 2003.

And, for those old enough to remember the 1980s, publications such as *The Economist* recalled the impact on the rest of the economy when agriculture was not doing well:

"The 1990s were so good [for Chicago] partly because the 1980s had been so bad. 'Everything that could possibly have gone wrong did' says William Testa, the senior economist at the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago. The region was hit by a crushing combination of high energy prices, a strong dollar, high interest rates, and a farm recession." *The Economist*, May 12, 2001

Last year alone, U.S. farmers and ranchers spent nearly \$320 billion in communities across the country to produce agriculture products valued at some \$410 billion. Put in perspective, the value of total U.S. agriculture production was greater than the 2010 GDP of all but 25 nations, and total production cost was greater than all but 28. And, according to the Department of Agriculture, U.S. agriculture is expected to positively contribute \$26.5 billion to the U.S. balance of trade in Fiscal Year 2012 after having contributed over \$40 billion just the year before.

And, one of the reasons we are here today, I expect, is because while U.S. agriculture is critically important to America, farm policy is also critically important to U.S. agriculture.

Without farm policy, U.S. producers would be unilaterally exposed to global markets distorted by withering high foreign subsidies and tariffs, and have no comprehensive safety net. In fact, DTB & Associates issued a report last fall, similar to the study on tariffs and subsidies developed and maintained by Texas Tech University (<http://www.depts.ttu.edu/cei/index.aspx>), which found that:

"U.S. subsidies . . . have dropped to very low levels in recent years. In the meantime, there has been a major increase in subsidization among advanced developing countries . . . Since the countries involved are major producers and consumers of agricultural products, the trade-distorting effects of the subsidies are being felt globally. However, because the run-up in subsidies is a recent development, and because countries have not reported the new programs to the WTO or have failed in their notifications to calculate properly the level of support, the changes have attracted little attention. We believe that when trade officials examine these developments, they will discover clear violations of WTO commitments."

This aggressive increase in foreign subsidies and tariffs might also explain why foreign competitors worked to derail WTO Doha Round negotiations, causing then Chairmen and Ranking Members of the Senate Finance Committee and House Ways & Means Committee to register their opposition to pursuing a lopsided agreement against the U.S. interests:

“Since the WTO Doha Round was launched in 2001, we have supported the Administration’s efforts to achieve a balanced outcome that would provide meaningful new market access for U.S. agricultural products . . . particularly from developed and key emerging markets. Unfortunately, the negotiating texts currently on the table would provide little if any new market access for U.S. goods, and important developing countries are demanding even further concessions from the United States.” *Ways & Means Committee Chairman and Ranking Member Rangel and McCrery and Finance Committee Chairman and Ranking Member Baucus and Grassley.*

Moreover, while many successfully negotiated trade agreements have promised market access gains for agriculture, much of what was promised has yet to materialize or is continually threatened by artificial sanitary, phytosanitary (SPS) and other non-tariff barriers. This is why programs such as the Market Access Program and Foreign Market Development Program are of vital concern to the rice industry and must be reauthorized in the 2012 Farm Bill. It has not gone unnoticed that budget reductions currently being considered (such as the elimination of the Direct Payment) will result in a dollar for dollar loss in farm income. Producers must be provided the tools not only to attack these obstacles to trade but to increase exports through market promotion and thereby increase farm income through increased open and fair trade.

But, beyond even these barriers that are imposed by foreign competitors are barriers to exports imposed in whole or in part by the U.S. Government. For example, rice was completely excluded from the free trade agreement negotiated with South Korea, foreclosing for the foreseeable future any new market access for U.S. rice producers in that country. Iraq, once a top export market for U.S. rice, has instituted restrictive specifications on rice imports that have led to a 77 percent drop in sales of U.S. rice to that country. In the pending Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) negotiations, Japan has indicated an interest in joining. The U.S. rice industry supports Japan joining the negotiations, but only if additional market access for U.S. rice into Japan is part of the agreement. Our industry cannot support an agreement where market access for our product is categorically off the negotiating table. Another market that has the potential to become a top five export market almost immediately is Cuba. Unfortunately, the U.S. Government maintains restrictions on our agricultural exports to this country. Cuba was once the number one export market for U.S. rice prior to the embargo and we believe it is potentially a 400,000 to 600,000 ton market if normal commercial agricultural exports are allowed to resume.

In total, U.S. rice exports to date for the current marketing year are down 24 percent compared to last year.

And, while the rice industry is still a long ways off from having a crop insurance product that is relevant to rice producers, the general need for Federal involvement in insuring crops where losses are highly correlated is also obvious, as even the American Enterprise Institute has admitted:

“The empirical evidence on the viability of either area-yield or multiple-peril crop insurance seems clear. When normal commercial loading factors are applied, the premiums required by insurers to offer an actuarially viable private crop insurance contract are sufficiently high to reduce the demand for such contracts to zero . . . Thus, private markets for multiple-peril crop insurance are almost surely infeasible, and the weight of the empirical evidence indicates that area-yield contracts are also not commercially viable . . .” *American Enterprise Institute, “The Economics of Crop Insurance and Disaster Aid,” 1995.*

Fortunately, for the American taxpayer, in addition to all of these justifications on why we have a farm policy in this country, we can add to the list at least one more reason: farm policy is cost-effective.

In fact, U.S. farm policy has operated under budget for over a decade and accounts for only ¼ of 1 percent of the total Federal budget. Not including additional cuts scheduled under sequestration, U.S. farm policy has, to date, been cut by about \$18 billion over the past 9 years, including in the 2004 and 2010 Standard Reinsurance Agreements (SRAs), the FY2006 reconciliation package, and the 2008 Farm Bill.

In the most recent 5 years, average funding for U.S. farm policy, based on real funding levels, including crop insurance, was \$12.9 billion per year, which is 28% less than the previous 5 year average of \$17.9 billion and 31% less than the average of \$18.8 billion that incurred in the preceding 5 years. In the current year, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) estimates that crop insurance policy will cost slightly more than the current commodity policies. And according to CBO projections for the next 10 years the estimated annual cost for commodity policy in the farm bill is \$6.6 billion on average (before the expected reductions are made as part of this farm bill process), while the estimated annual cost for crop insurance policy is \$8.8 billion on average. With the current suite of crop insurance policies not working effectively for rice producers, this puts our industry at a further disadvantage and highlights the need to maintain an effective commodity policy in the farm bill that will work for rice.

Funding of that portion of farm policy that assists rice producers has declined from \$1.2 billion a decade ago to about \$400 million annually, with this amount largely reflecting Direct Payments.

Meanwhile, U.S. consumers are paying less than 10% of disposable income on food, less than consumers in any other nation.

This is why I believe so firmly that future cuts must focus on areas of the budget outside of farm policy that have not yet contributed to deficit reduction yet comprise a significant share of the Federal budget. This is also why I would urge lawmakers to reject cuts to U.S. farm policy that would exceed the level specified by the House and Senate Agriculture Committee Chairs and Ranking Members in their letter to the Joint Committee on Deficit Reduction last fall.

2008 Farm Bill Review

The Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (the Farm Bill) continued the traditional mix of policies consisting of the non-recourse marketing loan, loan deficiency payments, and the direct and countercyclical payments. The farm bill also included the addition of Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) as an alternative to counter cyclical payments for producers who agree to a reduction in direct payments and marketing loan benefits. The bill also added Supplemental Revenue Assurance (SURE) as a standing disaster assistance supplement to Federal crop insurance.

The 2008 Farm Bill made very substantial changes to the payment eligibility provisions, establishing an aggressive adjusted gross income (AGI) means test and, albeit unintended by Congress, resulting in the very significant tightening of "actively engaged" requirements for eligibility. USDA was still in the process of implementing many of the provisions of the 2008 Farm Bill in 2010, and the final payment eligibility rules were only announced in January of that same year, a mere 2 years ago. As a consequence, we are still adjusting to the many changes contained in the current farm bill, even as Congress considers the 2012 Farm Bill.

Regarding ACRE and SURE, frankly, neither policy has proved much value to rice farmers. Specifically, in the first year of ACRE signup, only eight rice farms representing less than 900 acres were enrolled nationwide. With changes, this revenue program may provide more value for some rice growing regions like California. And SURE has provided little, if any, assistance to rice producers, including those producers in the Mid-South who suffered significant monetary losses in 2009 due to heavy rains and flooding occurring prior to and during harvest, or the significant losses last year as a result of spring flooding in the Mid-South. SURE's inability to provide disaster assistance for such catastrophic events further highlights the continuing gap in available programs designed to help producers manage or alleviate their risk.

Regarding the traditional mix of farm policies, the nonrecourse marketing loan, loan deficiency payment, and countercyclical payments have not yet provided payments to rice farmers under the 2008 Farm Bill. The new price paradigm has, as a practical matter, greatly limited the protections afforded to producers under these farm policy features. In fact, if the protections provided were ever to trigger for rice farmers, the protections would help stem some of the economic losses but, frankly, not enough to keep most rice farms in business through even a single year of severely low market prices.

As such, whatever its imperfections, the Direct Payment alone has assisted rice producers in meeting the ongoing and serious price and production perils of farming today.

For rice producers, as for most other producers, the existing levels of price protection have simply not kept pace with the significant increases in production costs, costs such as energy and fertilizer that are exacerbated by escalating government regulations. It is for this reason that rice farmers believe strengthening farm poli-

cies in the 2012 Farm Bill would be helpful in ensuring that producers have the ability to adequately manage their risks and access needed credit.

Crop Insurance

Risk management products offered under Federal Crop Insurance have been of very limited value to rice producers to date due to a number of factors, including artificially depressed actual production history (APH) guarantees, which I understand is also a problem for many other producers; high premium costs for a relatively small insurance guarantee; and the fact that the risks associated with rice production are unique from the risks of producing many other major crops.

For example, since rice is a flood-irrigated crop, drought conditions rarely result in significant yield losses as growers simply pump additional irrigation water to maintain moisture levels to achieve relatively stable yields. However, drought conditions do result in very substantial production cost increases as a result of pumping additional water. As such, what rice farmers need from Federal crop insurance are products that will help protect against increased production and input costs, particularly for energy and energy-related inputs. For example, fuel, fertilizer, and other energy related inputs represent about 70 percent of total variable costs.

In this vein, many in the rice industry have been working for over the past 4 years now to develop a new generation of crop insurance products that might provide more meaningful risk management tools for rice producers in protecting against sharp, upward spikes in input costs. I serve on a rice industry task force that has been working to develop and improve crop insurance products for rice, and although the objective was to gain approval from the Risk Management Agency (RMA) of at least two new products that could be available to growers in time for the 2012 crop year, this has not materialized. But, it is important to stress that even if these products had become available this year, we do not believe that they would have put rice producers anywhere near on par with other crops in terms of the relevance that crop insurance has as a risk management tool.

As such, rice producers enter the 2012 Farm Bill debate at a very serious disadvantage, having only a single farm policy that effectively works and that farm policy being singled out for elimination.

2012 Farm Bill

With the foregoing as a backdrop, the U.S. rice industry developed a set of farm policy priorities in September of last year to guide us during consideration of the 2012 Farm Bill. The U.S. rice industry is unified in its firm belief that farm policy designed to support a strong and dynamic U.S. agriculture sector is absolutely vital. We also believe that the planting flexibility provided under the 1996 Farm Bill and the countercyclical policies that have been in place for more than a decade now have served this nation and its farmers well. In particular, as we noted earlier, the 1996 Farm Bill's Direct Payments have provided critical help to rice farmers—offering capital farmers could tailor to their unique needs. We are very proud to stand by this farm policy.

However, given budget pressures and other considerations facing Congress that have caused policymakers to consider altering this approach in favor of more directed and conditioned assistance, we developed the following priorities:

- First, we believe the triggering mechanism for assistance should be updated to provide tailored and reliable help should commodity prices decline below today's production costs, and should include a floor or reference price to protect in multi-year low price scenarios.
- Second, as payments would only be made in loss situations, payment limits and means tests for producers should be eliminated.
- Third, Federal crop insurance should be improved to provide more effective risk management for rice in all production regions, beginning with the policy development process.

More specifically relative to each of these points, we believe that:

Price Protection is a Must

Given price volatility for rice is the primary risk producers face that they do not have other good means of protecting against, with price fluctuations largely driven by global supply and demand; given rice is one of the most protected and sensitive global commodities in trade negotiations, thus limiting access to a number of key markets; given costs of production have risen to a point where the current \$6.50 (loan rate)/\$10.50 (target price) assistance triggers are largely irrelevant, we believe the first priority should be to concentrate on increasing the prices or revenue levels

at which farm policy would trigger so that it is actually meaningful to producers, and would reliably trigger should prices decline sharply.

The reference price for rice should be increased to \$13.98/cwt (\$6.30/bu). This level would more closely reflect the significant increases in production costs for rice. And we believe this reference price should be a component of both the price-loss policy and the revenue-loss policy to ensure downside price protection.

Options for Different Production Regions

In addition, there should be true options for producers that recognize that a one-size-fits-all approach to farm policy does not work effectively for all crops or even the same crop such as rice in different production regions.

In the Mid-South and Gulf Coast production regions, a price-based loss policy is viewed as being most effective in meeting the risk management needs of producers. Specifically, this policy should include a price protection level that is more relevant to current cost of production; paid on planted acres or percentage of planted acres; paid on more current yields; and take into account the lack of effective crop insurance policies for rice.

In the California production region, although the existing revenue-based policy still does not provide effective risk management, efforts to analyze modifications which will increase its effectiveness continue. Since rice yields are highly correlated between the farm, county, crop reporting district, and state levels, we believe the revenue plan should be administered for rice at either the county or crop reporting district level to reflect this situation rather than lowering guarantee levels to use farm level yields. By setting loss triggers that reflect local marketing conditions, delivering support sooner, and strengthening revenue guarantees that account for higher production costs as well as the absence of effective crop insurance, California rice producers are hopeful that an effective revenue program can be developed.

While I have focused on the need for a choice for rice producers in different regions, this also applies for producers of most other grains. I support having policy options available for corn, soybeans, and wheat, which I produce, and believe that both a price-based policy and a revenue-based policy should be offered as options for these crops.

Whatever is done should be plain and bankable. The current SURE has too many factors and is not tailored to the multiple business risks producers face—it is not plain. The current ACRE, while offering improved revenue-based protection, is complicated by requiring two loss triggers; providing payments nearly 2 years after a loss; and provides no minimum price protection—it is not bankable. The marketing loan and target prices are plain and bankable—unfortunately the trigger prices are no longer relevant to current costs and prices.

Whatever is done should be tailored and defensible. We believe it makes sense to provide assistance when factors beyond the producer's control create losses for producers. We generally think more tailored farm policies are more defensible. For this reason, we like the thought of updating bases and yields or applying farm policies to planted acres/current production and their triggering based on prices or revenue, depending on the option a producer chooses. However, policy choices should not result in severe regional distortions in commodity policy budget baselines from which reauthorized commodity policies must be developed.

Whatever is done should be built to withstand a multi-year low price scenario. Whether in a revenue-based plan, or a price-based plan, reference prices should protect producer income in a relevant way in the event of a series of low price years. Ideally, this minimum could move upward over time should production costs also increase, this being of particular concern in the current regulatory environment.

Whatever is done should not dictate or distort planting decisions. Direct payments are excellent in this regard. SURE or similar whole farm aggregations tend to discourage diversification, which could be a problem for crops like rice. Any commodity specific farm policy that is tied to planted acres must be designed with extreme care so as to not create payment scenarios that incentivize farmers to plant for a farm policy. Whatever is done should accommodate history and economics and allow for proportional reductions to the baseline among commodities. Some commodities are currently more reliant on countercyclical farm policies (ACRE/CCP) while others are receiving only Direct Payments in the baseline. Generally, the least disruptive and fairest way to achieve savings across commodities would be to apply a percentage reduction to each commodity baseline and restructure any new policy within the reduced baseline amounts.

There have been concerns raised about higher reference prices distorting planting decisions and resulting in significant acreage shifts including for rice. We are unaware of any analysis that shows significant acreage shifts resulting from the ref-

erence price levels included in the 2011 Farm Bill package. In fact, for rice specifically, a reference price of \$13.98/cwt that is paid on historic CCP payment yields and on 85% of planted acres results in a reference price level well below our average cost of production, so I find it hard to imagine why someone would plant simply due to this policy given these levels.

Pay Limits/Eligibility Tests Should Be Eliminated

The likely outcome of new farm policy is that it will provide less certainty for the producer (a likely decrease or elimination of Direct Payments). Since it will likely be designed to provide assistance only in loss situations, the second priority is that the policy should not be limited based on arbitrary dollar limits. Assistance should be tailored to the size of loss. A producer should not be precluded from participating in a farm policy because of past income experience. Any internal limits on assistance should be percentage-based (*i.e.*, 25% of an expected crop value) and not discriminate based on the size of farm.

Crop Insurance Should Be Maintained and Improved

Although crop insurance does not currently work as well for rice as it does for other crops, the third priority would be to improve availability and effectiveness of crop insurance for rice as an available option. I would also support improvement to the product development processes (we have struggled with two 508(h) submissions for over 4 years and are still not completed with the process), and to the APH system such that any farmer's insurable yield (pre-deductible) would be reflective of what that farmer actually expects to produce. In no case should the crop insurance tools, which are purchased by the producer, be encumbered with environmental/conservation regulation or other conditions that fall outside the scope of insurance.

2011 Budget Control Act Efforts

Although the details of the 2011 Farm Bill package that was prepared by the House and Senate Agriculture Committees in response to the Budget Control Act were not disclosed, based on discussions and reports we believe that that package at least represents a good framework on which to build the 2012 Farm Bill. The 2011 package included a choice of risk management tools that producers can tailor to the risks on their own farms, providing under each of those options more meaningful price protection that is actually relevant to today's production costs and prices. It also included provisions to improve crop insurance and expedite product development for under-served crops such as rice.

We are concerned that effective support for rice producers under the price-based option was set well below cost of production that late changes to the revenue-based option minimized its potential as an effective risk management tool for rice producers, and that pay limits and AGI rules would still serve as an arbitrary constraint upon U.S. competitiveness, globally. Still, even with these areas for improvement, the U.S. rice industry very much appreciates the Members and staff who put enormous time and effort into what we believe represents a good blue print for ongoing farm bill deliberations and we thank you.

Again, thank you for this opportunity to offer my testimony. We certainly look forward to working with you on an effective 2012 Farm Bill we can all be proud of.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much. And thank you in particular for the kind comments about the October–November discussion. Apparently not everybody in America quite agrees with that, but thank you.

Mr. Adams, you can begin whenever you are ready, sir.

**STATEMENT OF CRAIG ADAMS, CORN, SOYBEAN, WHEAT, HAY,
AND BEEF PRODUCER, LEESBURG, OH**

Mr. ADAMS. Chairman Lucas and Members of the Committee, thank you for holding this hearing on U.S. farm policy and the formulation of the farm bill.

I am Craig Adams, and my family has been in production agriculture starting as sharecroppers for at least four generations in southern Ohio, and have grown our business to 1,700 acres, of which 900 are owned. We have a diversified operation raising corn, soybeans, wheat, hay, pasture, commercial beef cows, and kids. My wife is an educator and we have three children still in school.

Because of the 1980s farm crisis, poor yields, 18 percent interest and no functional crop insurance, I am the only Wilmington College agriculture graduate of 1979 still engaged in full time production. All of us who started farming in this time frame are survivors of or near bankruptcy. Without the 1985 Farm Bill and a community bank that believed in young men with dreams, I would not be here today.

With high commodity prices and an over-extended Federal budget, there is a push to eliminate or substantially reduce government support of agriculture. I believe everyone receiving Federal USDA dollars should share equally in reductions. During the late 1990s, there was a public outcry over Congressionally approved crop disaster payments.

Crop insurance in its current form is the most effective answer to short crop years. Any producer who desires an effective risk management tool can purchase crop insurance. Agriculture will accept reductions in FSA programs for crop insurance to survive. Independent companies servicing independent agents who dispense advice to farmers using 30 to 40 year historic yield databases to get true production patterns, not weather fluctuations, helping mitigate premium increases stemming from catastrophic loss. We need an insurance program that is affordable to all producers across the United States.

Commodity markets are cyclical and our self-produced food is a national asset. If all risk is removed I fear some of the unintended consequences could be the loss of affordable insurance for U.S. farmers.

Spring is the time of renewal, with baby animals entering the world and crops peaking through the warm soil seeking the sun's energy. Be like a farmer, Chairman Lucas, and nurture this farm bill to passage.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Adams follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF CRAIG ADAMS, CORN, SOYBEAN, WHEAT, HAY, AND BEEF
PRODUCER, LEESBURG, OH

Chairman Lucas, Congressman Peterson, and Members of the Committee thank you for holding this hearing on the future of U.S. farm policy and the formulation of the 2012 Farm Bill.

I am Craig Adams, am my family has been in production agriculture starting as sharecroppers for at least four generations in southern Ohio and have grown our business to 1,700 acres of which 900 are owned. We have a diversified operation raising corn, soybeans, wheat, hay, pasture, commercial beef cows, and kids. My wife Kim is an educator with a master in curriculum supervision. We have two children in college and one in middle school.

Because of the 1980's farm crises, poor yields, 18% interest, and no functional crop insurance, I am the only Wilmington College agriculture graduate of 1979 still engaged in full time production. All of us who started farming in this time frame are survivors of or near bankruptcy. Without the 1985 Farm Bill and a community bank that believed in young men with dreams, I would not be here today.

With high commodity prices and an over extended Federal budget, there is a push to eliminate or substantially reduce government support of agriculture. I believe everyone receiving Federal USDA dollars should share equally in reductions. During the late 1990's there was public outcry over Congressionally approved crop disaster payments. Crop insurance in its current form is the most effective answer to short crop years. Any producer who desires an effective risk management tool can purchase crop insurance. Agriculture will accept reductions in FSA programs for crop insurance to survive. Independent company's servicing independent agents whom

dispense advice to farmers using 30–40 year historic yield databases to get true production patterns, not weather fluctuations, helping mitigate premium increases stemming from catastrophic loss. We need an insurance program that's affordable to all crop producers across the U.S. Commodity markets are cyclical and our self-produced food is a national asset. If all risk is removed via shallow loss I fear the unintended consequence could be the loss of affordable insurance.

Spring is the time of renewal, with baby animals entering the world and crops peaking through the warm soil seeking the sun's energy. Be like a farmer Chairman Lucas and nurture our farm bill to passage.

Thank you,

CRAIG ADAMS.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Mr. Adams.

I now recognize myself for 5 minutes and I would start by observing, Mr. Erickson, I promise you in the House of Representatives all spending is going down this year. And that is part of the challenge we face on this Committee, whether we have \$23 billion less or \$33 billion less or \$40+ billion less to spend when we put that next 5 year farm bill together, that is one of the challenges that we face.

I have a question though, being an old wheat and cattle guy from western Oklahoma, that I have to ask the panel. And my colleagues are always tired of this after awhile. But tell me in a snapshot, what are land prices doing in your core areas, the last 2, 3, 4 years? Up, down, sideways, stable?

Mr. ERICKSON. Dramatically higher and not all driven by agricultural prices, but in fact you have to look at the larger picture of the economy and lack of investment opportunities for those people who have been conservative in their approach to their personal finances invested into their future and now have the opportunity to invest into something larger at a rate of return that is better than they can find at the local bank.

So I think it is driven perhaps more by the opportunity to invest and some current tax laws than it is by its ability to pay for itself as farmland, that is for sure.

The CHAIRMAN. I see the exact same thing at home, 10 years ago, 5 years ago, it was to have a place to go hide on the weekends or a place to hunt. Now it is a safe place to put your money.

Ms. Moore, your area.

Ms. MOORE. A few months ago there was some land that sold in the Roseville area and it was \$12,000 an acre and a farmer bought it. No, that does not cash flow but—

The CHAIRMAN. No.

Ms. MOORE.—as Mr. Erickson said, it is an investment. At \$12,000 an acre, that is a big investment.

The CHAIRMAN. Exactly.

Mr. Mages.

Mr. MAGES. Mr. Chairman, in our area in Minnesota, I am in central Minnesota and there has been land sales in the \$5,000 to \$6,000 range, which seems like a bargain compared to Illinois evidently. But some land in Minnesota is a few thousand dollars higher, but it is driven by the farmer basically. You know, years ago, it was a 1031 exchange that drove the land sales and today it is the farmer and for the reasons like Mr. Erickson said also. They look at it as a place to put their money because the return in the bank or whatever is a lot lower.

Thank you.

Mr. GERARD. And in southern Illinois, we are seeing the exact same thing, rapid escalation in land prices from both the investor and from the farmer. Not too many years ago, we were buying land for \$2,000 to \$3,000 an acre in our area and 2 weeks ago, we had one 10 miles up the road that sold for \$7,700 an acre, which is phenomenal for Alexander County, Illinois. So same story.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Adams.

Mr. ADAMS. Mr. Chairman, I must be living in a depressed part of the world. I jokingly say we can look out our back door and see Appalachia and we can look north about four counties and see the Corn Belt. Our prices have generally increased in southern Ohio. Two weeks ago, I had a friend purchased a farm for \$3,400 an acre, about 95 percent tillable, had not been farmed for several years. It is in that mid to low \$3,000 to \$3,700–\$3,800 an acre in southern Ohio. Now you go two counties to north central Ohio and you are talking \$5,000 to \$7,000 an acre for crop ground.

The CHAIRMAN. You have to remember, being an Okie, I live between my friends in Texas and my friends in Kansas, so I see—we will not flatter them at this moment here.

[Laughter.]

Mr. BOSWELL. Mr. Chairman, will you yield a moment?

The CHAIRMAN. I would yield to Mr. Boswell for a moment.

Mr. BOSWELL. What do you suppose you and I would do, you have your ranch down there, if we were cow/calf operators, some crops, if somebody wanted to come to your place or mine and offer us \$10,000 or \$12,000, we would probably say come on in, let us talk.

The CHAIRMAN. Then my wife would take me aside and explain to me why I could not do that, Leonard; yes, exactly. But yes, absolutely.

Another question. One of the topics of great discussion as we work on options in the next farm bill, as we try to craft this concept of insurance, both revenue and traditional weather, yield issues, and we take into consideration all the other factors that drive farm policy. You are a very diverse group of farmers obviously.

Tell me, when you make your decisions about what to plant, how much of it is soil and past growing history, how much of it is what the insurance rates are, how much of it is what kind of demand the Renewable Fuel Standard creates? Tell me about how you make your decisions in your diverse operations, about what to produce. And as Chairman, that light is yellow, but you can go a little longer with me. Whoever is brave, step up.

Mr. MAGES. Mr. Chairman, the way we do it, I guess basically we are corn and soybeans and it is economics. We plant about $\frac{2}{3}$ corn and $\frac{1}{3}$ soybeans and we do that on a rotational basis. It seems to work out pretty well, so that is one of the reasons. And the corn, we seem to make a little more money on corn and the risk is a little bit less on corn for some reason, weather risk in our area. Soybeans tend to have issues with high alkaline soils and things like that. So that is what makes our decision.

Mr. ERICKSON. We have a corn and soybean rotation and we look at our business from a holistic approach. Not only does the rotation

provide for we think better opportunities for revenue generation, but we also think it allows us to manage risks, both from weather, diseases, other pests that might attack the crop. So we tend to look at a long-range approach there and have the opportunity with long-term landlord relationships to keep those in place. So we make our decisions based on what works best for our operation and the signals in the marketplace tells us.

Mr. ADAMS. Mr. Chairman, we raise basically a 50/50 ratio of corn and soybeans. Back in 2008 when corn prices took off upward, we messed up our rotation and when the end of the year was over, soybean acres had been purchased up similar to what they are doing right now, should have stayed with what we are. Wheat is not competitive in that kind of a rotation. We do some different things because of the cow/calf operation, things like that for forage. But the wheat is basically a conservation tool and it also allows us to rebuild waterways, terraces and things like that.

Mr. GERARD. Mr. Chairman, where I farm, we have variable soil types, so I guess the primary, the first consideration is soil type. We have some soils that are solely suited for rice where we cannot really rotate, it is continuous rice production. We have other soils where we can rotate rice and soybeans. And then on the third soil type, we can rotate corn, wheat, soybeans. We have much more flexibility. So on those acres that we do have flexibility, the first thing I look at is what is going to reap me the best net income and the market will dictate what we plant on those acres. Fortunately we have that flexibility.

One thing that really is irrelevant to my consideration is the safety net that is provided based on the target price or loan rates because what was proposed last fall is support to help keep us in business, but still yet, it is below cost of production. So there is no influence from the safety net or target price proposed, has really no bearing on what I am going to plant. Crop insurance the same.

The CHAIRMAN. So basically what you are telling me is what I have always known and what I have tried to explain to my colleagues back east; and that is, a typical farmer has to be an outstanding agricultural economist and calculate all these things every time to survive, and also a pretty darn good soil scientist based on his or her property and property history.

Thank you very much. I now recognize my friend from Iowa for 5 minutes, Mr. Boswell.

Mr. BOSWELL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the dialogue you just had, that was helpful.

There is quite a lot of concern, as the Chairman mentioned, about the adjustments we will have to make, and I want you to understand and appreciate that his and our colleagues' worked, we tried to have that super committee action before the last holiday and it did not happen. But I think you need to know that of all the committees that were asked to bring their resolve to that super committee, the one that succeeded was the Agriculture Committee. So back to that whole comment about bipartisanship, we feel good about that.

We talked for some time about how we will step up and take a hard look at what we can—set our priorities. We know we will have to make an adjustment. We would like to do it, you would like

to do it rather than having somebody sitting at a desk in some far away place deciding for you. So I am very appreciative and complimentary that we came up with that \$23 billion. That is a lot.

But then I think it is fair, we have to talk about some of this. Now the rest of you step up to the plate and do your part before you come back to us. There is a lot of discussion, lot of concern. I am an old soldier, I spent a career in the military and I am lucky to be here, very lucky. And I am big on defense, but when we have a Secretary of Defense stand up and say we might need to make some adjustments here. And I am on the Eisenhower Commission which is setting up the memorial, I was asked to do that some years ago and it is not an easy thing to do. You might see something on the news on it.

But I made a comment some years ago about the military industrial complex and what it might do to us and I think we are faced with some of that. You are going to hear a lot of debate on this and I just want you to know a little bit of background. Chairman Lucas and Ranking Member Peterson, and Ms. Stabenow and Pat Roberts over in the Senate side stepped up to the plate and so we have to deal with that. So you will hear a lot about it and things will be discussed on that probably, if you just stop and think about it, it will probably end up going to a conference committee and be worked out there. So I just want to say this to you so you know that this debate is going to take place and it will probably be fairly lively.

Having said that, if you want to comment, fine, but I am a big advocate for alternative fuels and have been for a long, long time. I was still in uniform years ago on a NATO assignment when we had the 7 day war and the big fuel crisis and I was in a foreign country. Amazed me what people just like us will do if you cannot get fuel for your car, your delivery truck or your tractor. It is amazing. So I have really been engaged in alternative fuels—all the above. And I have really been enthused about what we can grow out of the ground and turn into fuel and turn around and grow it again next year and so on.

Seeing what we have done in production yields and so on in our lifetime, I guess I am the oldest one on the panel up here. I am not waving that flag, but I remember when I came back from the Army, I had been gone for 20+ years, came back and I was so anxious to get into row crops and I was getting ready to plant and my father came out and he dug around down the row and he said, "How much are you planting, what kind of seed count?" And I do not remember what it was. He said, "You cannot do that, you cannot do that." And I told him why I thought I could and so on. So we watched it very close and I did not want to spend a lot of time on it, then he came back and crawled up on the combine when the harvest was going on and of course it was coming out pretty full and he said, "How much is this yielding?" We did not have the fancy gadgets we have now but I said, "It is probably about 125 to 135 bushels to the acre, probably." I said, "Why don't you just go into the elevator, it is all going across the scales, just go in there, we just finished that 80 over there, and check it." So he was gone quite a bit and he come back and he said, "It is making that." He just shook his head.

But look what we can do now. Look what some of you have done. So I do not know this question about, can the livestock sector exist with us doing a successful domestic ethanol industry, for example? I would like to hear your comments on that, just briefly, anybody and everybody. Can we do this?

Mr. ERICKSON. I think so.

Mr. BOSWELL. And I will tell you what I think when we get to the end. Go ahead.

Mr. ERICKSON. Thank you. I think that we can and we have demonstrated that we have been able to thus far. Our ability to increase yields without sacrificing soil loss or nutrient mismanagement, I will call it. We also have to recognize the key role that alternative fuel production plays in providing feedstocks for livestock. We must have a strong livestock industry here at home. Not only does it provide excellent food for our own people, but we are able to add value by processing those things locally.

But I think the alternative fuels market has also provided us the opportunity to provide feedstocks at a lower cost. Today's DDG provide a big percentage of rations for hog operations, swine diets and have significantly reduced the cost of just corn base. When you are looking at \$6+ corn, the DDG provides a very economical alternative to the diet for swine. So I think we have been able to accomplish both.

Mr. MAGES. Congressman, I think it is a very workable system. You know, in the past 10 years, the demand for ethanol has increased dramatically, ten percent of the nation's fuel basically is ethanol now. And with that 14 billion gallons of ethanol being produced, it comes from approximately 5 billion bushels of corn, but we are raising a tremendously larger amount of corn than we did in the past and on the same amount of land. And we are also doing it with using less fertilizer and we are doing it in a fashion that is very friendly, environmentally friendly to the land.

So I think the future of ethanol looks bright. I think with the livestock sector they are still a big customer, one of the biggest customers and through the DDGs and through the livestock, the value-added livestock, but also we get the nutrients from the livestock to put back on the land. And it is a tremendous circle of economic success.

Mr. BOSWELL. In respect to the rest of the Members, I am going to stop here, maybe we can come back to it later, but that little red light means I have used up my time for this round.

But I think we can too and I appreciate it. Just nod your head, do you think we can do it? Or shake your head this way—okay, we think we can do it.

I want the rest of you to know, media and so on, we feel like we can do this. We can continue to take steps to get out of bondage to OPEC and so on. So anyway, so much for that. I just wanted to see what you thought about it.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman's time has expired.

I now recognize the gentleman from Texas, who I would note for the record has even fewer trees than I have in my district in Oklahoma, Mr. Conaway.

Mr. CONAWAY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is good to be here. We measure our rain in hundredths of inches and we are proud to get $\frac{5}{100}$ of an inch from time to time. Thank you all for being here this morning.

I chair the Subcommittee on General Farm Commodities and Risk Management and while things that are going on at the CFTC are not directly related to what we are going to do these coming months in this farm bill, Ms. Moore, you mentioned that you bought your inputs last year for the 2012 crop.

Can you walk me through basically how you did that and the rest of you, have you seen yet impacts of the CFTC's rulemaking on your ability to do that at a price that makes sense for you?

Ms. MOORE. Even before we finish our harvest, our seed salesmen are at our door trying to get our order for next year because seed is at such a premium for certain seed numbers, that if we can use those seed numbers, we really have to book them. We have the option of paying for them, but of course, it is at a reduced rate if we pay for it earlier than if we pay for it later next fall.

Mr. CONAWAY. Okay, so you are not using futures contracts, you are actually buying them directly from the—

Ms. MOORE. We buy our seed.

Fertilizer costs, most of the time they are predicting they are going up so we will book and pay for our fertilizer.

Mr. CONAWAY. And how do you do that?

Ms. MOORE. Through our local co-op.

Mr. CONAWAY. Okay, so you are relying on the co-op to be able to provide those services to you?

Ms. MOORE. Yes.

Mr. CONAWAY. Have they talked to you about increased prices? Do any of the rest of you use futures markets to hedge?

Mr. MAGES. Yes, I do, Congressman.

Mr. CONAWAY. Are you seeing anything yet from the impact of the rulemaking on the CFTC?

Mr. MAGES. I am not familiar with that.

Mr. CONAWAY. Okay.

Department of Labor has recently stepped into your business with respect to, I will not call them children, but young people working on farms. Where should those decisions be made about how do you regulate, how do you take responsibility for children working on farms?

And maybe help us understand how old were you when you first started meaningfully working on your properties.

Mr. ERICKSON. I am not sure how meaningful it was, but I am a graduate of a half day kindergarten and I know after a half day kindergarten, I used to sit on the tractor and I thought I was driving, but I think it was a way to keep me occupied while my dad fed hay to the cows.

I think that the problem with some of these—and I alluded to it in my written testimony—the problem with some of these regulations is they appear before they are thought through. And if given the opportunity for people who have an understanding, beginning in Congress like the gentlemen before us today, if this Committee had had an opportunity to comment on some of those regulations before they had been introduced, I am sure that you would have

been able to shed light to those regulatory agencies to say, hey, I think you need more information here.

It is important to keep young people safe in working on the farm, but it is also important that we grow that work ethic in our young people and employer after employer will tell you the importance of that work ethic in young people today. And I think that is what makes us such a good workforce in the Midwest.

Mr. CONAWAY. Ms. Moore.

Ms. MOORE. I think the responsibility should be with the parents. My husband told me when he was 8, he started raking hay and doing that. And when our oldest son was 8, I looked at him and said, "Do you really think Steve is ready?" And he agreed that no, maybe at that time he was not ready. But our boys all worked on the farm just building fence or raking hay or doing whatever needed to be done, when it was age appropriate, and that was our decision. And I can tell you that when they went out to college or went looking for jobs and people found out that they grew up on a farm, their eyes kind of light up, like oh somebody who knows how to work. That has been a real plus. They come back and say, "Mom, they like that I grew up on a farm. You know, they think that I have learned how to work." And I think that we instill that in our children and I think that is really important.

Mr. CONAWAY. Yes, the struggle is going to be obviously you making a decision for your children to work on your farm.

Ms. MOORE. Right.

Mr. CONAWAY. The restrictions should be different than someone who lives near and they are going to be using children who are not theirs, but still age appropriate. How do you put in place the protections that are appropriate but also allow the flexibility to children whose parents do not actually own the land or are actually farming, to be that labor in the summer time that they need to learn that work ethic.

Ms. MOORE. Well, I think the parents of the children should have that.

Mr. CONAWAY. Sure.

Ms. MOORE. So if they said yes, I think my child is mature enough and responsible enough to do that job on the farm, that they should have the ability to say yes.

Mr. CONAWAY. My experience was not on the farm but it was on a drilling rig. And I had the same experience, while I worked on a drilling rig as a roughneck, I did not really think with either one of my boys that was a good idea. So I mean, it was my decision, my call to make there.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. I would simply note, like many people in this room, I started at a young age with my father and grandfather. And when I got to work for the neighbor as a teenager, that was wonderful, I got paid.

[Laughter.]

The CHAIRMAN. Wonderful.

I turn to the gentleman from Illinois for his 5 minutes.

Mr. HULTGREN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you all for being here. This has already been very informative.

I just want to briefly say, before I get started, it is such a privilege to be serving on the Agriculture Committee, thank you, Mr. Chairman. It has been such a great learning experience for me. My district is just east, it starts a little bit north of here in Henry County and then goes east all the way over to DuPage County. But great to be here today.

I also know, Congressman Schilling and I, it has been a wonderful little over a year that we have been serving out in Washington, D.C., but we also really appreciate the opportunity to work with our Senators here from Illinois. Specifically, I just want to recognize a couple of guys who are here from Senator Kirk's office, who just do a great job on ag policy—Rob Johnson and also Randy Pollard, along with Senator Kirk's ag advisory group is here as well. We got to meet with them for a few minutes before. So we all know Senator Kirk is doing great and we want him back in Washington quickly, and he is still passionate about serving people here in Illinois. So glad you guys are here. But again, thank you all for being here.

A couple of quick questions and a lot of stuff has already been covered, but I wanted just to talk with Mr. Erickson briefly about exports. I was very excited with, as Congressman Schilling said, the passage of the free trade agreements. I wondered if you could talk more specifically how you would see that impacting your family farm.

Mr. ERICKSON. We have the advantage in this part of Illinois that we have a strong domestic demand for commodities and we also have the ability to export via river transportation. I will not even go into all that because that is a whole other topic.

But exports have clearly been a driving force. When I first started farming in 1985, I think we had the feeling generally that we could control production, and therefore, control price. In the meantime, our competitors decided that if they are not going to do it, we will. And I think that we have finally come around to the fact, quite some time ago, that competing in the global marketplace is what we are all about and we obviously need to work here at home first. Exports clearly provide a lot of opportunities, not only for the producers, but the developers of products, the value-added, the transportation industry, the construction industry, and the list goes on and on that supports those export markets.

Mr. HULTGREN. Thanks. I agree with you as well. Along with serving on the Agriculture Committee, I also serve on the Transportation Committee and so I am really helping try to get a farm bill passed and also a surface transportation bill passed. I see how important our canals are, our rivers are, our roads are, our rails are. All of these are interconnected clearly and impact other industries, such as agriculture. So we need to make sure that we get some things done on the farm bill but also on the transportation bill.

Ms. Moore, I wondered if I could ask you briefly, you talked in your testimony about the difficulty of securing credit especially for new farmers. I wonder, how hard is it to get started, for a new farmer to get started these days in this economy? And do you have any suggestions that would help prospective farmers or things that we should keep in mind as we work on the 2012 Farm Bill?

Ms. MOORE. Well, with the changes in the banking industry, for a new farmer to go in without much collateral, it is almost impossible for them to get the kind of money that we are talking about.

Several years ago, it might have been a little easier, but as costs have gone up, they need to borrow more and more to get started. If there is a program that would support a young farmer and back them and give them some security at hopefully a lower interest rate too. But it is mostly getting the collateral backing for that loan that really could be a stumbling block for a lot of producers to get started.

Mr. HULTGREN. Mr. Gerard, in your testimony you said "If all risk is removed via shallow loss, I fear that the unintended consequences could be the loss of affordable insurance."

I wonder if you could elaborate on that possible unintended consequences and why you believe a shallow loss program would not be beneficial.

Mr. ADAMS. Congressman, I am sorry, but I think that was my testimony.

Mr. HULTGREN. Was that yours? I am sorry.

Mr. ADAMS. My intent was on the shallow loss, I misstated, shallow loss or other changes in the insurance program that would increase cost to the farmer. The concern is that if you have an indemnity payment every year, then your premiums are going to go up. That was the concern.

Mr. HULTGREN. Okay.

Mr. ADAMS. It is with the loss ratio. You know, do no harm, it is working right now, is the concept; yes.

Mr. HULTGREN. Okay, thank you.

Real quickly if I could sneak one in. It just turned red.

Let me get back to Mr. Erickson real quickly. You talked about the importance of direct payments. We have also heard so much about the importance—maybe a greater importance—of crop insurance right now. Obviously, many would like to have both.

I wonder if quickly, if you could say is there a way that you could do without direct payments if crop insurance was strengthened?

Mr. ERICKSON. I think my testimony led us to discuss the fact that direct payments, while under attack for a number of reasons currently, I think they were a good investment and I think my feeling has always been that you have to have personal responsibility for your own business and the things that you are responsible for. And I think the direct payments put the onus on the producer and the landowner to make sure that those payments were properly used and that those payments went to things that I outlined, which included risk management.

In our operation, we do not utilize Federal crop insurance. And the reason that we do not is that we have had the opportunity to become financially stable. We have used those direct payments as a way to do marketing programs that have reduced price risk and the premium and reward from the Federal crop insurance has not worked for us. That is not to say that it is not a good program and it does have a place in risk management. I was just hopefully shedding light on the fact that there is opportunity for flexibility for all of the program.

Mr. HULTGREN. That is helpful. My time has expired. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman's time has expired. We now turn to Mr. Schilling for his 5 minutes.

Mr. SCHILLING. Thank you, Chairman.

Mr. Erickson, it is interesting, you brought up a little bit about regulation and before I got going, I had a meeting with Senator Kirk's ag advisory board and I was telling them the story of how we had a meeting with Ms. Jackson, and it was kind of interesting because what happened was we were talking about the masks that they were trying to force the farmers to wear and one of my colleagues had asked, do you know how much they cost. And she says well, no, I do not. Are they \$50, are they \$500, are they \$5,000. And anyway, as this thing went on and on, it was both Democrats and Republicans alike that were kind of going after her and I was sitting there thinking—I was kind of feeling sorry for her and then I remembered that she was with the EPA.

[Laughter.]

Mr. SCHILLING. But one of the things that is really critical is that we all want clean air, clean water. And any time you come in and you try to get some of this over-regulation under control, you get attacked. And I think it is imperative when they are trying to regulate farm dust and things like that, we have really got to keep a good eye and keep this under control because those all end up being more inputs and cost to people that do not necessarily need to be there.

But what I wanted to start out, Mr. Erickson, do you think—I want to talk about crop insurance because that is the number one thing I continually hear as I go throughout the district. But do you think more parity in crop insurance premiums in Illinois would make you more likely to purchase crop insurance?

Mr. ERICKSON. Crop insurance is all about risk/reward, just like any insurance is. I would give full review to what the opportunities provided for our business and how it could potentially lay off risk, and what the potential reward was down the line. And I think that is the importance of keeping the flexibility in crop insurance in the mixture, that it is a sound program that does not become overly subsidized or overly regulated. If you try to fix it too much, you might actually hurt the parts that work the best for the majority of people.

So I am not being critical of the program, but I just think that it could be dangerous if we try to make too many changes there to fix everyone's problem, and in effect you have a costly program that maybe does not suit all at any cost.

Mr. SCHILLING. An unintended consequence basically.

Mr. ERICKSON. Yes.

Mr. SCHILLING. I have heard quite a bit about the re-rating issue from producers in the district who believe that the MRAs approach is just the beginning in addressing a long-standing rate issue here in Illinois. And basically would encourage the process to continue.

Five minutes goes so fast. I want to try to get to Ms. Moore here.

You mentioned too much emphasis on any single approach, which is great. So I am going to flip over to Ms. Moore.

In your testimony on risk management, you mentioned that you utilize the revenue assurance to protect against loss, which is basically what we talked about here, which I think is great. But one of the things that I think that you are doing a really awesome job on and I just want you to kind of touch on, and I applaud your work here in Illinois with the Farm Families and your educational efforts on farm policy because I think that is something that is critical, that we can get outside of our farm communities and educate people.

Can you just highlight some of your most successful practices for us, Ms. Moore, on educating folks about the farm bill?

Ms. MOORE. Well, probably the latest is Illinois Farm Families where we have sat down with mostly moms, we think that moms are the most influential, and sat down with them and answered their questions. And this month, we did a tour to a hog facility with them and while we are on the bus, we talk. So those are our times. And one of the questions was, "Tell me about farm subsidies." Well, that is all they hear, that is all they have in their mind about the farm bill, they did not understand all the titles that are involved. So I had the opportunity to explain to them everything that was encompassed in the farm bill and they said, "Oh, so it is more than just paying some money to farmers." So we did get that dialogue and they did understand how much of it is including the nutrition programs and the SNAP program and got them to see.

But every time I talk to consumers and they hear farm bill, oh, you mean subsidies. And that is all that they are hearing. So we need to do our part to let them know there is a lot more to this farm bill than just subsidies.

Mr. SCHILLING. Very good. You know, I appreciate that answer because part of our job on this Committee is to make really the strongest arguments for rural America I believe, and just the importance of the farm bill to our colleagues. We have a lot of colleagues who do not truly understand what is going on with ag.

I can see I am running out of time, but I really appreciate everyone being here. Thank you. I yield back, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Mr. Schilling.

One last observation or one question. Mr. Boswell and I have been discussing a point up here and I would recognize him to make a quick inquiry of the panel on this policy point.

Mr. BOSWELL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Something we are hearing some talk about as we talk about the Federal crop insurance and so on, is conservation compliance. A lot of talk across the country and a lot across my state, a lot of people think we are all flat, but you know, we have a lot of highly erodible ground and so on. I would like to hear your response, there is not too much land and it has to have some conservation practice put on it. So should this be something we should be considering as we talk about Federal crop insurance? Should the producers be required to be in compliance?

The CHAIRMAN. Should it be a mandatory requirement, that's the question back east. No not participating in the program if you are not vested in the conservation programs—not voluntary. There is a big difference there. Whoever, anybody.

Mr. MAGES. Mr. Chairman, I think conservation compliance does not belong in crop insurance. I think crop insurance is something that we pay for part of it and, say you had a problem one year and you have a big crop insurance payment coming in, and for some reason they do a compliance check in the back 40 and you did something wrong years ago and you are out of compliance. And now the banker is waiting for his money or you are waiting to pay the bills and now they are going to refuse to pay. So for all of them reasons, I think compliance should not be an issue with crop insurance.

Mr. ERICKSON. I almost hate to say this. I would differ in the fact that I think regardless of how we feel about them as producers, subsidy or incentive that we are provided financially from the government may entitle us to fall within the framework of certain programs. In our scenario, we have done conservation programs without government funding, but that is not the case for everyone. If we want to provide subsidy in any regard, in my estimation, it may come at a cost. And I do think we have a responsibility to farm responsibly. I think the vast majority of farmers do. But I also can understand the need for programs to be designed so that there is a certain amount of accountability for those who want to participate.

That is a pretty wide area I guess.

Mr. BOSWELL. I think you both made valid remarks. And perhaps if we go into this and I am quite confident we are going to hear about it. And by the way, for whatever it is worth to you, the land I have stewardship over, I complied before we had all this set aside business and I did not—I had already done it. That is beside the point.

I think some of our folks—we are back to we all have an investment in agriculture, whether you are in the city or wherever—are going to bring this up, so we might need some expertise, Mr. Chairman, if we get to that point on how to qualify or design it where it would—

The CHAIRMAN. Very valid point, Mr. Boswell, and this question takes us to the very core issue of what a farm bill is. When in a time that 75 percent of all farm bill spending in the last 5 years go to the social nutrition programs, some in my district refer to them as the feeding programs, perhaps when all the bills are added up for this year and last year, 80 percent of all farm bill spending will be the feeding programs. Is it still a farm bill when we become that small a portion. And by the same token, is the farm bill, part of the farm bill intended to help us meet the food and fiber needs of this country and the world, or is it a tool with which to compel us to follow other people's guidelines about how we should live on our land.

Those are all big philosophical discussions that will be sorted out on the floor or in the Committee and certainly on the floor of the United States House.

You look like, Mr. Adams, you have some insights to lay on us. You will get to finish this.

Mr. ADAMS. Well, Mr. Chairman, in response to Mr. Boswell, as a producer I would be willing to have linkage between crop insurance and conservation if recipients of food feeding programs would

submit themselves to drug tests and things of that nature to be able to qualify.

[Applause.]

The CHAIRMAN. On that thought—

[Laughter.]

The CHAIRMAN.—the time for this panel has expired and we thank you for your insights.

And we now call our second panel of witnesses to the table.

[Brief pause.]

The CHAIRMAN. The hearing will return to order and I would like to thank all of not only our participants in the hearing today but the folks who are with us today and who may be observing this process, and remind you once again everyone can visit, and anyone can visit, the House Agriculture Committee website to learn more about the 2012 Farm Bill process. Additionally, anyone is welcome to submit comments to be considered as a part of the Committee farm bill field hearing record. Your comments must be submitted using the website address by May 20, 2012, so it can be incorporated in the permanent record. That address is *agriculture.house.gov/farmbill*.

With that, I would like to welcome our second panel of witnesses to the table. Mr. John Williams, sorghum, corn, wheat, and soybean producer from McLeansboro, Illinois; Mr. Gary Asay, pork, corn, and soybean producer, Osco, Illinois; Mr. Terry Davis, corn and soybean producer, Roseville, Illinois; Mr. David W. Howell, corn, soybean, pumpkin—pumpkin? This is going to be a good diverse topic—pumpkin, and tomato producer, Middletown, Indiana. By the way, my grandfather was born in Miami County, Indiana 113 years ago. And Ms. Jane Weber, specialty crop producer, Bettendorf, Iowa.

And as Chairman, you can offer comments as you go along, it is one of the privileges that are left.

Mr. Williams, please begin when you are ready.

**STATEMENT OF JOHN WILLIAMS, SORGHUM, CORN, WHEAT,
AND SOYBEAN PRODUCER, MCLEANSBORO, IL**

Mr. WILLIAMS. Good morning. I would like to thank you for giving me the opportunity to sit here before you today to discuss the impact of the next farm bill, and what it will have on our operation.

I farm at home with my mom, dad, my son, and my daughter in Hamilton and White Counties near McLeansboro, Illinois, where we grow grain sorghum, corn, wheat, and soybeans. Grain sorghum is an integral component in our rotation and is a crop I use as a foundation for defense. I am blessed geographically to be able to sell our grain sorghum at a premium of 30¢ to 70¢ over corn each year. It is less expensive to plant and is more resilient to varying weather conditions, whether they be wet or dry. It is a dependable crop and has been a staple on our farm now for four generations.

As a farmer, I realize the vast impact this one piece of legislation has on our day-to-day operations, and I want to ensure farmers benefit from the next farm bill. So I applaud you for holding this hearing today, and thank you.

On our farm, I plan defensively and understand the upside and downside of risk. I have seen what can happen to friends and neighbors when they do not plant for risk, which underscores the need for meaningful risk management tools that farmers can utilize. With that said, I firmly believe that the number one goal for the next farm bill should be “do no harm” to Federal crop insurance.

I believe a personal T-yield system, which would allow a farmer’s APH to more accurately reflect his yield potential, would be a more productive way to improve the APH.

I would also encourage RMA to include sorghum in the trend-adjusted yield pilot program. It is inequitable to allow competing crops to have trend-adjusted yields while sorghum farmers’ APHs are left unadjusted.

Crop insurance is a safety net in a time of disaster. It is also an integral part of our overall marketing strategy. Because of revenue protection insurance, I can market aggressively and still be protected against market shifts. I remember having a glut of grain in the 1980s and I do not want to be caught in a position like that again where it affects our bottom line.

In the 1980s with high interest rates and low grain prices, our crop was worth less than it cost to produce it. While interest rates are not the problem today, the cost of basic farm inputs has skyrocketed over the last 2 years. That is why it is critical to have some protection in the next farm bill against a steep drop in commodity prices, since input prices are sticky and slow to follow declining commodity prices.

Whether that protection is a reference price system or a revenue-based system, it is important that it be in the new farm bill safety net and farmers have the option to choose what fits their operation and risk appetite the best. In a revenue-based program, it is critical to have a reference price and plug yields. The reference price will protect against a long-term, large commodity price drop and plug yields will help in times of consecutive years of yield losses.

As for ACRE and SURE, these programs are not widely used in our area because they are too complex. I would have rather gone with a guaranteed route that direct payments provided. But given the situation, any new program that results from the next farm bill should be simple and transparent.

With that said, sorghum is an agronomically important crop to our farm and likewise to those in the Sorghum Belt. However, it is not always the primary crop for many farmers and is extraordinarily sensitive to any incentives that are created in the farm program. No matter which form of policy is pursued, I believe special care must be taken to encourage crop diversity and to avoid a monoculture system that rejects agronomics in favor of farm policy incentives.

And finally, I support the continuation of a farm bill energy title. As I mentioned earlier in my testimony, I sell my grain sorghum at a premium by rail. The market is limited to my area but stands to improve by generating competition through the biofuels industry which already has created a positive economic impact in the High Plains area. This Bioenergy Program for Advanced Biofuels from Section 9005 of the 2008 Farm Bill should be continued as it

incentivizes eligible biofuel producers to use non-conventional feedstocks such as sorghum.

Thank you again and I welcome your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Williams follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JOHN WILLIAMS, SORGHUM, CORN, WHEAT, AND SOYBEAN PRODUCER, MCLEANSBORO, IL

Introduction

I would like to thank the House Committee on Agriculture for the opportunity to submit testimony on the next U.S. farm bill and its impact on my operation. I am honored to be here and be asked to present my views.

My name is John Williams. I farm with my father and son near McLeansboro, Illinois, in Hamilton and White Counties where we raise grain sorghum, corn, wheat and soybeans. Grain sorghum is a crop I use as a foundation for defense. It is less expensive to plant and much more adaptable to varying weather conditions. Grain sorghum has proven itself as an integral component in my rotation, providing a resilient, dependable crop each year on my third-generation family farm.

My partners and I appreciate the work put forth by this Committee in developing the next farm bill and look forward to working with the Committee to craft this set of vital farm policy. Because it is an integral part of my operation, my testimony will focus on multiple areas of farm policy as they relate to sorghum's safety net.

Protect Federal Crop Insurance

On my operation, I plan defensively and understand the upside and downside of risk. I have seen what can happen to friends and neighbors when they do not plan for risk, underscoring the need for meaningful risk management tools that producers can utilize. Therefore, my first priority is to "do no harm" to Federal Crop Insurance, and I feel the program should be built upon in the following ways:

- The APH methodology should be reformed and county T-yield system improved so as to reduce the impact of local weather phenomena and allow the producer's insurable yield (pre-deductible) to reflect what the producer and his lender would actually reasonably expect to produce in that year. I believe a personal T-yield system, which would allow a producer's APH to more accurately reflect his yield potential, would be a productive way to improve APH.
- I would also support improvement to the product development processes so that there would be a clear pathway to bring new policies, like one for sweet sorghum or high biomass energy sorghum, to market.
- In no case should the crop insurance tools, which are purchased by the producer, be weighed down with environmental regulation or other conditions that fall out of the scope of insurance.
- I would encourage RMA to include sorghum in the trend adjusted yield pilot program. It is inequitable to allow competing crops to have trend adjusted yields while sorghum producers' APHs are left unadjusted.

2012 Farm Bill

Crop insurance is a safety net in a time of disaster but it also is an integral part of my overall marketing strategy. Because of revenue protection insurance, I can market aggressively and still be protected against market shifts. I remember having a glut of grain in the 1980s and I don't want to be caught in a position like that again where it affects my bottom line.

In the 1980s, with high interest rates and low grain prices, my crop was worth less than it cost to produce it. While interest rates are not the problem today, the cost of basic inputs has skyrocketed over the last 2 years. That is why it is critical to have some protection in the next farm bill against a steep drop in commodity prices; I know input prices are sticky and slow to follow declining commodity prices.

Whether that protection is a reference price system or a revenue based system, it is important that it be in the farm bill safety net and producers have the option to choose what fits their operation and risk appetite the best. In a revenue based program, it is critical to have a reference price and plug yields. The reference price will protect against a large commodity price drop and plug yields will help in times of consecutive years of yield loss.

With that said, sorghum is an agronomically important crop to my farm and likewise to those in the Sorghum Belt. However, it's not always the primary crop for many producers, and is extraordinarily sensitive to any incentives that are created in the farm program. No matter which form of policy is pursued, special care must

be taken to encourage crop diversity and rotation on the farm and avoid a monoculture system which rejects agronomics in favor of farm policy incentives. Based on both experience and a producer's understanding of the program, I suggest the following:

- A farm bill should not dictate or distort planting decisions. Direct payments are excellent in this regard. SURE or similar whole farm aggregations tend to discourage diversification, which could be problematic for sorghum. Any commodity specific program that is tied to planted acres must be designed with extreme care to avoid creating payment scenarios that incentivize farmers to plant crops with higher inherent value to maximize payments rather than making the wisest possible agronomic decisions.
- A program should be simple and bankable. The recently expired SURE program had too many factors and was not tailored to the multiple business risks producers face—it was not simple. The current ACRE, while offering improved price-based protection, is based on the state's income, not the farm's—it is not bankable, especially in some of the large states where sorghum thrives. The current loan and counter cyclical programs are simple and bankable—unfortunately the 2008 price levels are no longer relevant given current production costs. It is important to me to have a simple, bankable program to take to my lender, should disaster strike my crop.
- A farm bill should be targeted and defensible. It makes sense to provide assistance when factors beyond the producers' control create losses.
- A farm bill should be built to withstand a multi-year low price scenario. Whether in a revenue loss plan, or a price-based countercyclical plan, it will be important to have a set minimum price that serves as a floor or reference price to protect producer income in a relevant way in the event of a series of low price years. Ideally, this minimum could move upward over time should production costs also increase.
- A farm bill should allow for transitional and fair reductions to the baseline for all crops. Generally, the least disruptive and most fair way to achieve savings across commodities would be to apply a percentage reduction to each commodity baseline and structure any new program within the reduced baseline amounts.

The sorghum industry has seen firsthand the impact farm policy can have on planting decisions made by producers.

Specifically evaluating certain revenue proposals, it seems that without yield plugs, in a situation with 2 consecutive years of loss, the protection quickly drops to a point where the program would have little value and would provide almost no protection for my farm. This component is necessary to ensure equity among crops because sorghum is grown in region with such high yield variability.

Additionally, a revenue policy in conjunction with the potential use of adjusted yields for certain commodities could eliminate the important element of risk involved in growing a crop. This would create a situation that would greatly distort planting intentions because a farmer may be inclined to plant for the largest revenue guarantee as opposed to the most prudent agronomic choice.

Finally, direct payments, while not necessarily tied to a specific crop being planted, have proven to be a WTO compliant, efficient payment for producers. It is one of the few parts of the current safety net bankers have certainty with and will provide financing for our producers. However, if the Committee decides to move away from this program, it makes it that much more important that successor policies be bankable.

Eliminate Dated Pay Limits

Given the likely possibility that a new farm program would have less certainty for the producer (a likely decrease or elimination of direct payments) and will therefore be designed to provide assistance only in loss situations, the program should not be limited based on arbitrary dollar limits, *i.e.*, assistance should be tailored to the size of loss. A producer should not be precluded from participating in a farm program because of past income experience. Any internal program limits on assistance should be percentage-based (*i.e.*, 25 percent of an expected crop value) and not discriminate based on the size of farm.

Build Incentives for Sorghum Production into Conservation and Energy Titles

Sorghum is a highly water efficient crop that works well in various rotation systems, spanning from southern Texas to South Dakota. It thrives in drought prone areas because, whereas other crops will die during a period of prolonged water

stress, sorghum will become dormant and thrive again upon taking in moisture. And while I rarely experience prolonged drought myself, this ability to make a crop under highly water deficient conditions allows sorghum to fit easily into farms where water is becoming scarcer each year.

As such, it would be beneficial to strengthen the principles of water conservation language in the Ag Water Enhancement Program (AWEP) of the 2008 Farm Bill to more specifically encourage planting sorghum and other water saving crops. Currently, the program allows incentives for switching to lower water intensity crops, but a vast majority of payments are going to other projects. There is also place for water conservation language in existing Conservation Security Program (CSP) and Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) language, and water conservation options should be strengthened wherever practical. Using farm bill conservation programs as a transitional support, farmers will be able to economically justify switching higher value crops to lower water intensity crops over time.

Additionally, grain, sweet and high biomass forage sorghums are all used to produce ethanol under economically viable biofuels technologies. I support the continuation of a farm bill energy title and specifically encourage continuing the Bio-energy Program for Advanced Biofuels from Section 9005 of the 2008 Farm Bill. Section 9005 allows incentive payments to eligible biofuels producers that use non-conventional feedstocks, such as sorghum. It has had positive economic impact on the Sorghum Belt and served as a water savings incentive where aquifers are already depleted.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Mr. Asay, you may proceed whenever you are ready.

**STATEMENT OF GARY ASAY, PORK, CORN, AND SOYBEAN
PRODUCER, OSCO, IL**

Mr. ASAY. Good morning, Chairman Lucas and Members of the Agriculture Committee. I am Gary Asay, a farmer from Osco, Illinois. Along with my wife, I farm 300 acres of corn and soybeans and raise about 9,000 hogs a year. I am licensed to sell crop insurance and Livestock Gross Margin insurance.

Like all pork producers, in the next farm bill, I would like to see provisions that help me maintain and strengthen my competitiveness. I do not want unwarranted and costly provisions that will make it harder for me to compete.

The U.S. pork industry would like Congress to address several issues in the next farm bill, including feed availability, comprehensive disease surveillance, new foreign market access, risk management, and government intervention into the markets. I want to focus my testimony on the latter two.

The U.S. pork industry has seen rapid growth in exports over the past decade. It is now exporting more than 25 percent of production. Because of that growth and an increased likelihood of a foreign animal disease outbreak in the U.S., the potential for a catastrophic drop in hog prices is greater than ever. Such a drop would adversely affect the U.S. economy which garners \$35 billion in GDP annually and 550,000 jobs for the U.S. pork industry. Producers need better risk management tools to protect their operations. USDA has such a tool, a program similar to the one for crop farmers called Livestock Gross Margin insurance. But it reaches far too few pork producers and covers too few hogs.

Congress and the USDA need to make funding and program changes so the program provides inexpensive catastrophic insurance coverage. Congress should remove the program's \$20 million cap, \$16 million of which is now used for the dairy industry and \$3 million is used for hogs. Also, USDA should lift the 30,000 head limit on the amount of hogs that can be insured. These limits are

out of step with today's pork industry. Last year, only 206,000 hogs were covered. With the U.S. pork industry marketing more than 100 million hogs in a year, it is clear that the current LGM program affords very limited protection to U.S. pork producers. Congress should strongly urge USDA to work with pork producers to develop a catastrophic insurance product that is more in keeping with today's pork industry needs.

Another issue I would like to raise is government's intervention in the buying, selling, and raising animals and how that would adversely affect pork producers' competitiveness. Mandates, whether pushed by lawmakers or activists, must not stand in the way of market-based demands. I know some lawmakers continue to discuss banning packer ownership of livestock, eliminating forward contracts and limiting the number of hogs covered by a contract. I do not believe pork producers would be well-served by having Congress dictate or eliminate certain types of contracting mechanisms. Doing so would force the livestock industry to revert to an inefficient system used more than a half century ago.

Today's U.S. pork industry has a wide variety of marketing and pricing methods, including contracts to meet the challenging needs of a diverse marketplace. Economics should determine the structure of the pork production and processing. No economic research has ever shown that structure or marketing practices of the industry has harmed producers or consumers. Until such research exists, Congress should not impose limitations on packer ownership of production, producer ownership of packing or marketing contracts.

Likewise, Federal mandates on production practices, including ones that dictate animal housing, would add to producers' costs and weaken the competitiveness. That is why pork producers oppose Egg Products Inspection Act Amendments, House Resolution 3798, which would dictate the size of cages for laying hens. The bill would amend the Federal food safety law. If imposed on imports, food safety laws must meet the World Trade Organization's equivalence principle, which requires countries to recognize each other's science-based measures as acceptable, even if they are different, as long as an equivalent level of protection is provided.

But the supporters of H.R. 3798 admit that the standards in the bill are arbitrary, they are not based on science that protects and improves food safety and public health. If imposed on imported eggs, they would not meet the World Trade Organization's equivalence principle.

For Congress to intervene in production practices for any livestock species with arbitrary standards devoid of scientific justification is extremely dangerous precedent for domestic and international commerce. The bottom line on the farm bill, Congress should craft legislation to help farmers like me remain competitive and should avoid provisions that make us less competitive.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Asay follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF GARY ASAY, PORK, CORN, AND SOYBEAN PRODUCER, OSCO,
IL

Introduction

Gary Asay is a farmer from Osco, Ill. Along with his wife, he runs Asay Farms, which consists of 300 acres split between corn and soybeans. He also raises about

9,000 hogs a year for Cargill and is licensed to sell crop insurance and Livestock Gross Margin insurance.

He serves on the board of directors of the National Pork Producers Council, which is an association of 43 state pork producer organizations and is the voice in Washington for the nation's 67,000 pork producers.

Like all pork producers, in the next farm bill Asay would like to see provisions that help him maintain and strengthen his competitiveness *vis-à-vis* foreign competitors; he does not want in the bill unwarranted and costly provisions and regulations that will make it harder for him to compete in the global marketplace.

The Next Farm Bill

There are several issues pork producers believes Congress should address in the next farm bill that could help the U.S. pork industry and farmers like him.

1. Enhancing programs that keep feed grain prices competitive with the rest of the world would be very beneficial. Feed comprises 60–70 percent of my input cost of producing a market hog. (Each market pig consumes approximately 10.5 bushels of corn and 200 pounds of soybean meal—that's about 4 bushels of soybeans.) But the rapid development of the corn-based ethanol industry, together with other factors, is threatening the U.S. pork industry's competitiveness and the survivability of producers like me. The markets have rationalized demand for corn over time, but the potential for short-term dramatic price swings, as well as localized feed shortages, has jeopardized the industry's competitiveness and reliability as a domestic food supplier and as an exporter.

Following passage of the Energy Independence and Security Act (EISA) of 2007, which included a Renewable Fuels Standard (RFS2) that quickly accelerated the mandated production of corn ethanol, pork producers struggled to adjust to rapidly escalating prices and increased volatility in grain markets. This resulted in a reduction in hog production. Congress allowed the long-standing tax subsidies for corn ethanol to expire at the end of last year. But the ethanol industry continues to seek further government support for expanding ethanol markets, calling for the blend rate to be increased from 10 to 15 percent ethanol in motor vehicle fuels, subsidies to finance construction of ethanol pipelines and other infrastructure and adjustments to the RFS2 that would allow corn ethanol to qualify as an advanced biofuel and expand its production mandate.

The debate over Federal renewable fuels policy has been playing out over continually increasing pressure on domestic and worldwide grain reserves. The 2011 crop, affected by weather conditions in various parts of the Corn Belt, including the loss of significant acreage because of flooding, delayed planting because of wet conditions, drought and excessively hot summer temperatures, came in below initial expectations, with corn reserves at times during the year reaching record lows. That caused tremendous volatility in grain markets, prompted speculative buying and increased the risk of localized corn shortages. Projections for the 2012 crop year show little improvement in total corn reserve carry over, enhancing the financial risk faced by pork producers, who must compete against subsidized users of corn for increasingly difficult to obtain supplies of corn.

Pork producers have asked Congress and the Obama Administration to consider a variety of responses, including reactivating the Inter-departmental Livestock Task Force to help identify policies to avert a feed-related crisis in the livestock industry, reforming the Conservation Reserve Program to put more land in production and to allow the penalty-free early release of the least environmentally sensitive acres in the event of a feed crisis and making available to producers all USDA and Federal emergency programs and loan guarantees to help them purchase feed should they encounter regional grain shortages. Additionally, the U.S. pork producers support H.R. 3097, the Renewable Fuel Standard Flexibility Act, which creates a safety valve that makes short-term adjustments to the RFS in the event of a grain crisis to ensure adequate supplies of feed is available for producers.

Research and development also are needed to find other energy alternatives, such as using animal manure and fat and biomass, including switchgrass and corn stover. Pork producers want to emphasize the right balance is needed to meet the needs of fuel *and* feed security.

2. Developing a world-class disease surveillance system is vital to the continued viability of the U.S. pork industry. The outbreak of H1N1 in 2009 demonstrated the interrelationship of human and animal health when combating new and emerging diseases. From that experience, the U.S. pork industry learned that

a more Comprehensive and Integrated Surveillance System (CISS) is needed to ensure the capture of data about a broader range of diseases. The industry began working collaboratively with USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to develop a CISS. CDC supports the CISS, and APHIS's Veterinary Services (VS) program has embraced this concept and included comprehensive surveillance as a major objective in its strategic plan, VS-2015. Completion of CISS is critical to maintaining the pork industry's disease-free status, which is critical to maintaining and expanding our exports.

Disease surveillance is the foundation of disease prevention and preparedness. The threat of new and emerging diseases continues to grow, with scientists continually warning the public and animal health authorities about prevention and preparedness. One of the more grim aspects of these warnings is that many of these diseases are zoonotic and are originating in wildlife and domestic animals. The CISS is designed to provide an "early warning system" and to allow for development of response plans in advance of an epidemic. The U.S. pork industry currently is collaborating with APHIS on a pilot project to test implementation of a CISS and to determine how it can be connected to an animal traceability system. Currently, the most significant shortcoming is funds to build the infrastructure to accommodate a more robust system of surveillance. In 2009, the emergency supplemental appropriation, which made funds available to CDC for managing the H1N1 crisis, also provided \$25 million to APHIS/VS for swine influenza surveillance. Of that amount, approximately \$17 million remains unused, money that could be used to support a surveillance system covering new and emerging diseases would also support the infrastructure for CISS. Although the pork industry has been working cooperatively with APHIS and the agency has committed to developing a CISS, the President's USDA budget for fiscal 2013 inexplicably proposed a reduction of \$2.6 million for swine disease surveillance. The justification for the decrease is inconsistent with USDA's commitment and the requirements for implementing a CISS. The ability to expand surveillance to include other diseases will increase exports. Reducing surveillance provides other countries the justification to restrict U.S. exports because of inadequate surveillance data.

U.S. pork producers also support USDA's animal traceability system. An effective traceability system is critical to the national animal health infrastructure and is required for certification by the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE). The ability to quickly trace diseased and exposed animals during a foreign animal disease outbreak would save millions of animals, lessen the financial burden on the industry and save the American taxpayer millions of dollars. With support from all sectors of the pork industry, approximately 95 percent of pork producer's premises already are registered under the USDA livestock identification program. Premises identification is the key to meeting a goal of tracing an animal back to its farm of origin within 48 hours, which would allow animal health officials to more quickly identify, control and eradicate a disease, to prevent the spread of a disease or to make certifications to our trading partners about diseases in the United States.

3. Expanding markets to U.S. pork products increases producers bottom line and contributes significantly to the U.S. economy, prompting job growth and increasing the U.S. gross domestic product. Pork represents 44 percent of global meat protein intake, far more than beef and poultry, and world pork trade has grown significantly in the past several years. The extent of this increase in global pork trade in the future will hinge heavily on continued efforts to increase agricultural trade liberalization.

The U.S. pork industry exported in 2011 more than \$6 billion of product, which supported more than 50,000 jobs. And the trade agreements with Colombia, Panama and South Korea approved last fall, when fully implemented, will boost U.S. pork exports to those countries by a combined \$772 million, add \$11 to the price producers receive for each hog marketed and generate more than 10,000 U.S. pork industry jobs. It is estimated that U.S. pork prices were \$55 per hog higher in 2011 than they would have been in the absence of exports.

It is important to emphasize the need to strengthen the ability of U.S. agriculture to compete in the global marketplace. But the downside of growing exports is, of course, the larger economic impact on producers and the U.S. economy should there be any disruption in trade. Pork producers understand this dynamic and recognize that it would be devastating for the U.S. pork sector.

4. Protecting producers against disruptions in trade is paramount. Producers like Asay need better risk-management tools to protect their operations should export markets ever be interrupted by a serious animal disease outbreak in this country.

Such tools are needed now, more than ever. Outbreaks of devastating foreign animal diseases such as foot and mouth, classical swine fever and African swine fever are increasing around the world. The increased presences of disease, along with increasing international travel and trade that move diseases around the world, have created an unprecedented risk to the U.S. pork industry.

According to a recent study, revenue for the combined beef and pork industries would fall by billions of dollars annually as a result of a foreign animal disease outbreak. The recent free trade agreements with Colombia, Panama and South Korea as well as economic growth in China will lead to continued pork export expansion. But if these export markets are lost and livestock producers are forced to bear the resulting financial harm, there will be thousands of bankruptcies in rural America. Further, USDA is expected to change its traditional approach to dealing with foreign animal diseases from “stamping out” to one that includes vaccinating and, potentially, living with diseases for an undetermined time.

There is a simple solution to the elevated risk in livestock production. USDA has been running a pilot insurance program for hog producers called Livestock Gross Margin (LGM). The program is designed to protect hog producers from systemic risk much as crop insurance programs do for crop producers. The program now is ready for prime time and should be allowed to take on this role. To structure the program to provide inexpensive, catastrophic coverage, Congress would need to remove the \$3 million cap on swine insurance.

The \$3 million limit on spending has caused USDA to severely restrict the number of head that any one producer can insure. In fact, last year just 205,883 hogs were covered; in 2010, only 263,454 hogs were covered. With the U.S. pork industry marketing more than 110 million hogs a year, it is clear that the current LGM program has little benefit to pork producers.

The limit on coverage—Congress capped the program for all species at \$20 million (\$16 million is used by the dairy industry), and USDA set a coverage limit of 30,000 head—is a new development for USDA’s Risk Management Agency (RMA) because there is no upper limit on the number of crop acres that can be insured under other RMA policies. There is nothing in the Federal Crop Insurance Act that allows RMA to engage in social engineering of this type. [In fact, the Agriculture Risk Protection Act of 2000 states the following:

- **Eligible producers:**

Any producer of a type of livestock covered by a pilot program under this subsection that owns or operates a farm or ranch in a county selected as a location for that pilot program shall be eligible to participate in that pilot program.

The limit on the insurable livestock farm size is unfortunate for two reasons. First, the livestock industry is evolving toward larger production units, and these larger units are essentially prohibited from using the product as a catastrophic policy to cover their output in excess of the numerical limits. Second, the existence of a limit is divisive, potentially pitting smaller units against larger ones.

Additionally, LGM for swine now is available only for a 6 month period. This is not enough coverage to protect against drought or to downsize an operation. This is easily fixed, and a policy that insures for one year is feasible. This policy would roll over every month so producers always have one year of insurance coverage.

The owners of LGM have indicated that they are willing to make the changes described above if the \$3 million limit is eliminated and the policy is allowed to move beyond pilot status.

Finally, companies and agents selling LGM are reimbursed based on the premium paid by the producer rather than on the number of policies. Total administration and operation (A&O) reimbursement for companies and agents is set at 22.2 percent of the producer premium. This means that a catastrophic policy that sells at \$1 per hog for 500 hogs would have a total A&O of \$111. This A&O needs to be split to cover the company’s costs and the agent’s costs. A typical reimbursement for selling a crop insurance policy is from \$500 to \$700. This

percentage-based A&O policy for livestock makes it economically infeasible for the agent to sell catastrophic policies or to sell to smaller producers. One easy remedy is to allow the agent to choose between reimbursement based on a percent of the premium or a fixed per-contract amount.

Today, because of the growth in exports of U.S. pork products and the increased chances of a foreign animal disease outbreak, the potential for a catastrophic drop in hog prices is greater than ever. And the stakes for the U.S. economy, which garners \$35 billion annually in gross domestic product and 550,000 jobs from the U.S. pork industry, also are great.

The U.S. pork industry has done much to protect itself, including increased bio-security on farms, implementation of a national swine identification program and calls for a comprehensive disease surveillance system, but it needs more. Pork producers encourage Congress to urge USDA to develop a catastrophic insurance product that is more in keeping with today's swine industry needs.

5. Protecting the environment is a top priority of the U.S. pork industry. Pork producers are committed to running productive pork operations while protecting the environment and exceeding environmental regulations. Pork producers have fought hard for science-based, affordable and effective regulatory policies that meet the goals of today's environmental statutes. For producers to meet these costly demands while maintaining production, they believe that the Federal Government must provide through conservation programs of the farm bill, such as the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), cost-share support to help them defray some of the costs of compliance.

The EQIP program has not provided pork producers with enough support to meet all the challenges we face related to conservation and the environment. Producers like Asay, who has used the program, would like to see the scope of projects covered by the program widened.

Pork producers take a broad view of what it means to be environmentally responsible farmers and business people, and they have embraced the fact that their pork processing operations must protect and conserve the environment and the resources they use and affect. They take this responsibility with the utmost seriousness and commitment, and it is in that spirit that producers would make major contributions to improving their practices through a conservation title of the farm bill.

Investing in research also is critical to the U.S. pork industry. Producers rely on it for improving swine genetics, testing and deploying new and improved animal vaccines, improving the usefulness of energy production by-products such as distillers dried grains and for further increasing animal productivity. Research also can assist in monitoring diseases and preventing a disease outbreak.

6. Dictating how the U.S. pork industry buys, sells and raises its animals would severely cripple the competitiveness of pork producers. Mandates—whether pushed by lawmakers or activists—must not stand in the way of market-based demands. Producers understand that the issue of banning packer ownership of livestock or eliminating forward contracting continues to be discussed. However, they do not believe that the U.S. pork industry will be well served by having Congress eliminate certain types of contracting mechanisms. This only forces the livestock markets to revert to an inefficient system used more than half a century ago in which livestock were traded in small lots and at prices determined in an open-market bid system. This system was inefficient and makes no economic sense in today's economy. Today, the U.S. pork industry has developed a wide variety of marketing and pricing methods, including contracts, to meet the changing needs of a diverse marketplace.

Economics should determine the structure of pork production and processing, including the ownership of both. No economic research ever has shown that either the structure or marketing practices of the industry have harmed producers or consumers. Until such research exists, Congress should not impose limitations on packer ownership of production, producer ownership of packing or marketing contracts.

Likewise, Federal mandates on production practices, including ones that would dictate animal housing systems, would add to producers' costs and weaken the U.S. pork industry's competitiveness *vis-à-vis* foreign competitors. It is for those reasons that producers oppose the "Egg Products Inspection Act Amendments" (H.R. 3798), which would dictate the size of cages for laying hens.

The bill would amend a Federal food-safety law. If provisions of that law are imposed on imported products, they must meet the World Trade Organization's

equivalency principle, which requires governments to recognize other countries' science-based measures as acceptable even if they are different from their own, so long as an equivalent level of protection is provided.

But proponents of H.R. 3798 have admitted that the standards in this bill are arbitrary and were part of a negotiated settlement between an industry group and an animal activist group; they are not based on science that protects and improves food safety and public health. If imposed on imported products (eggs, in this case), they would not meet the WTO's equivalence principle.

The U.S. pork industry has no doubt that activist groups and special interest groups will be watching this farm bill debate and will attempt to push their particular agendas, which would add regulations to our business practices. Lawmakers must be cautious about allowing these issues to be added to the 2012 Farm Bill—a piece of legislation that has been aimed for the past 65 years at maintaining the competitiveness of the U.S. agriculture and livestock sectors.

The U.S. pork industry has developed and implemented strict standards for animal care and judicious use guidelines for use of animal drugs. These standards and guidelines are now part of the industry's pork quality assurance and transport quality assurance programs. These require producers and handlers to be trained and certified to care and transport our animals with the utmost care and concern. Pork producers do not believe that Congress should legislate on these issues as part of the 2012 Farm Bill.

Congress should craft a farm bill that helps farmers like Gary Asay remain competitive in the domestic and world markets.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Mr. Asay.

Mr. Davis, proceed whenever you are ready.

**STATEMENT OF TERRY DAVIS, CORN AND SOYBEAN
PRODUCER, ROSEVILLE, IL**

Mr. DAVIS. Hello. Good morning, my name is Terry Davis, a corn and soybean farmer from Warren County, in Roseville, Illinois. Good morning, Mr. Chairman and Members of the House Agriculture Committee gracious enough to come before us today and those in attendance here today to listen to this important discussion. Today, we all share one commonality, this is our America. I wish to welcome everyone here today to my America, as I live only about 30 miles from this site. To describe this, I will use a line from the song by Irving Berlin, "God Bless America, land that I love, stand beside her and guide her." I come here this morning to tell you how I stand beside my part of America, not only to provide for my family but to provide this country with a plentiful, healthy, sustainable food supply; and hopefully raise enough extra that I can share my bounty with others around the world. And I ask you here today to be the guide, guide her to share my philosophy with the rest of the world.

I will comment on a story that I will share. Go back to 9/11/2001. I was traveling to an ethanol plant meeting, the formation of a group we were having and I received a phone call that we could not meet that day because something had happened in New York City and Washington, D.C. I did not yet know at that time what that was.

Later that afternoon, I had the opportunity to receive a phone call from my wife that was waiting in an hour and a half long line at a gas station to get gasoline for her car because of what was going on that day. I was headed to a meeting that afternoon, happened to drive by a gas station, saw the line, told my wife if that was the last tank of gas she was ever going to get, she was better off to come home, because the grocery truck would not make it to

the store tomorrow morning. But to my shock, as I drove to that meeting that afternoon, there was no one at the grocery stores, everybody was at the gas stations buying gasoline.

And the reason I think this important for this discussion today is that energy was important to us, yes; but why have we forgotten about food? If it comes down to a tank of gasoline or a loaf of bread, I know which line I am going to be in.

I would like to talk about the conservation title today. This title is often understated in its importance to the overall farm bill and I feel it is one of the most critical to its overall mission. I served as the Association of Conservation District's President here in Illinois and I had a column that I used every month to talk about the things that I felt were important for the Soil and Water Conservation District. I closed that column every month with this closing. "As always, remember that this is God's handiwork we are entrusted to watch over. Let us make him proud."

We all farm the land, we survive off of the bounty of our land, but we are just stewards of that land and we are allowed the privilege of being the caretakers of the land that we work during our lifetime. American agriculture is being tasked with a mission never before seen in modern history, that is the need to feed and protect more people with limited and in some cases dwindling natural resources. Every day in this country more land is converted for non-agricultural uses while all the while trying to feed a growing population. I am not advocating a moratorium on non-ag uses of the productive working land of the United States, but refocusing on what is of greater importance; cropland, animal production, forestry needs rather than development for social uses.

A strong underlying safety net is going to be necessary for creating a sustainable food supply. We need a strong commodities title along with a crop insurance program utilizing current programs and funding with a few tweaks. I feel that this underlying support should come from Federal farm programs to ensure that any raw input commodity producer receives enough support to ensure that they will again next year be able to raise production because of the alteration of this year's production, or due to weather or financial condition. This level should cover variable costs and protect against significantly lower commodity prices and a little bit more.

The farm bill provisions are intertwined and work together to be much more successful than any title will individually. A comprehensive, robust title I for commodities ensures continued sustainable domestic food supply. A vibrant renewable energy title can not only provide energy sources here at home but also create environments for natural resource conservation while allowing producers to generate income and provide an outlet for excess production. This excess production we will always need. As before, we have used loan rates and government sponsored storage to keep extra production. Today, we have the ability to allow farmers to hang onto those reserves and convert them into renewable energy sources if not needed as a fuel source. But if that crop is never raised, it will never be available if needed. A secure, adequately funded conservation title will create those opportunities.

I thank you for this opportunity to be before you this morning and look forward to your questions. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Davis follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF TERRY DAVIS, CORN AND SOYBEAN PRODUCER, ROSEVILLE,
IL

Good morning Chairman Lucas, distinguished Members of the House Agriculture Committee, House staff, the other invited panel members and all others here in attendance today we all share one commonality this is OUR AMERICA. I wish to welcome everyone to my America, as I only live about 30 miles from this site, and to describe this I will use a line from the song by Irving Berlin; "God Bless America, Land that I love. Stand beside her, and Guide her". I have come here before you this morning to tell you of how I stand beside my part of America, not only to provide for my family but to provide this country with a plentiful, healthy, sustainable food supply and hopefully raise enough extra that I can share my bounty with others around the world.

I come before you this morning to share from my perspective, a perspective that recognizes the importance of a strong equitable 2012 Farm Bill. This perspective does not want to rewrite farm bill policy totally, but rather celebrate its successes and build upon and those successes and hopefully craft a new 2012 Farm Bill that addresses the needs of the next 5 years and reviews and retires no longer pertinent addressed items. This bill has many titles expressed under its banner, but I feel that they are all intertwined and dependent upon each other for successful implementation of this farm bill. I do not feel that any title within the farm bill is any more important than another title; it is only with fair deliberation, implementation, and adequate appropriation that any farm bill effort will accomplish its goal. That goal is of GUARANTEEING the same goals that I have set for myself, to provide this country with a plentiful, healthy, sustainable food supply and then produce enough extra that I can share my bounty with others around the world. I recognize that this task becomes a little more complicated at the national level. I also realize that numerous, different segments of the populous want to have inclusions in this farm bill; but I feel strongly that the goal here in the farm bill is to do what government can to make sure that every American has adequate access to something to eat and then to have access to the food, energy and fiber materials that we need to exist and prosper.

The area I would like to focus your attention to right now is the conservation title. This title often understated in its importance to the overall farm bill but I feel it is one of the most critical to its overall mission. I have had the opportunity to serve the association that speaks for the Soil and Water Conservation Districts here in Illinois as its President and as part of my duties was to write a monthly column for the organization's newsletter. I closed that column every month with this closing, "As always, Remember that this is God's handiwork we are entrusted to watch over. Let's make him proud".

I am a Christian, but maybe for sake of this day more important is the fact that we are all just stewards that are allowed the privilege of being the caretakers of the land we work on during our lifetimes. American agriculture is being tasked with a mission never seen before during modern history, that of a need to feed and protect more people with limited and in some cases dwindling natural resources. Every day in this country more land is converted for non agricultural uses all the while trying to feed a growing population. I am not advocating a moratorium on non ag uses of the productive working land of the USA but refocusing on what is of greater importance; cropland, animal production, forestry needs rather than development for social uses.

We only need to look back into our country's history to see how important conservation has become. It began a a desire to protect things that were unique or in someone's opinion important to protect. Our National Park System and other Federal public lands as well as state and local public land holdings recognize that resources need preserving for future generations. Now as it becomes apparent that the working lands of this country are finite and that we need to protect them. The challenge here is that we cannot just lock them away but have to use them sustainably. The conservation accomplishments that have been achieved by this country are nothing short of spectacular, but vigilance and continued efforts are paramount to the survival of the human species as we wish it to be. Once our natural resources are lost our prosperity also will be lost. Conservation for me on my farm means this: Preservation of the natural resources not only for my benefit but to preserve the ability to utilize those by future generations and by using the conservation title of the farm bill in conjunction and along with other titles within the farm bill to secure and preserve a stable, sustainable food, fiber, and renewable energy supply.

To understand the working lands let us look back to the 1930's This country was trying to rebuild itself as for the first time in our country's history we had a large segment of the population that finally did not have to work the land for themselves but could have someone else furnish those needs for them while they enjoyed prosperity through the financial markets. Then that bubble burst in 1929 and sent many scrambling back to feed themselves. A result of that was accelerated damaging of new marginal lands in production. The lack of understanding that marginal lands means just that marginal, the Dust Bowl resulted and many more people found themselves struggling to just survive. Throw in Mother Nature creating a drought. Hugh Bennett came along and championed for working land as some say Theodore Roosevelt did for public land preservation. The result being the formation of the Soil Conservation Service. As I look at drought indicators today I realize that the results of the formation of SCS are what separates the Dust Bowl Days from what we experience today. Thus this conservation title is very important in the protection of the working lands of the USA. We do not need to extensively rewrite this title in the next farm bill but continue to focus on what are the critical needs. In my estimation NRCS and the EQIP program needs further funding and expansion. This is a very efficient and effective way to get conservation on the ground. I believe many other programs needs can be accomplished through EQIP and allowing prioritization to fit financial budgets. There is an attitude currently that since EQIP is receiving funding those funds can be redirected to under-funded special interest programs and this has to be curtailed. The NRCS EQIP system already is set up to allow states to cater the funding to localized needs thus improving effectiveness of monies spent.

There does need to be a conservation compliance component to complement production safety nets. Production agriculture is changing and there needs to be compliance to guarantee sustainability and to protect the accomplishments that the millions of Federal assistance dollars that have already been spent on have achieved. I have noticed that as farms get bigger, operations become more specialized, with farmers many times not even seeing the land only the tractor operators. These operators only have one mission, that is to do what they are instructed. The farmer producer may not even be aware of a problem occurring until confronted by some outside entity or agency. Conservation compliance is the strongest tool in the farm bill to ensure good stewardship and wise use of Federal funds.

A strong underlying safety net is priority one to creating a sustainable food supply. The tools of choice are a strong commodities title along with a crop insurance program utilizing current programs and funding with a few tweaks. All crops need to have a insurance program developed around them, including livestock. This underlying support should come from Federal farm program funding to ensure that any raw input commodity producer receives enough support to ensure that they will try again the next year if their production falters because of weather or financial conditions. This level should cover variable costs and protect against significantly lower commodity prices and little more to limit government exposure and allow efficient producers to determine who farms the land not who has the best crop insurance protection. Livestock producers could be included by a similar insurance plan limiting coverage to cost of feed inputs. Producers should be allowed to buy up insurance protection to higher levels but that risk should not be financed or underwritten by the Federal budget but rather an unsubsidized function by private insurance companies and risk assessed and rated accordingly by the insurance industry.

Farm bill provisions are intertwined and working together will be much more successful than any title individually. A comprehensive, robust title I for commodities ensures a continued sustainable domestic food supply. A vibrant renewable energy title can not only provide energy sources here at home but create environments for natural resource conservation while allowing producers to generate income and provide an outlet for excess production. This extra production will always be in reserve in case there is a need to use it as a food source. But if that crop is never raised it will never be available if needed. A secure, adequately funded conservation title will create opportunities and preserve and protect natural resources for continued future utilization.

Once we have created this plentiful food supply we need to be able to allow all Americans some kind of access to it. Current food aid provisions are sometimes abused and probably need attention to weed out fraud and abuse. If there were only certain types of purchases that could be made would help ensure proper use of funds. Stories like those of persons buying soda with Federal food aid assistance and then recycling unopened soda cans in automated can recyclers for the cash generated by the cans is an example of misuse of a valuable system to society.

Thank you for allowing a taxpayer to comment on this subject. To achieve these goals we only need to keep refocusing on what is first priority and what financial

resources we are willing to commit to achieve those goals. Current farm bill programs have accomplished so much for the safety and prosperity of the United States. Hopefully the 2012 Farm Bill will further allow America to be the proud beacon of hope for the rest of the world.

I close my testimony as I did for my informational column:

“As always, Remember that this is God’s handiwork we are entrusted to watch over.

Let’s make him proud.”



The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Mr. Davis.
Mr. Howell, you may proceed.

**STATEMENT OF DAVID W. HOWELL, CORN, SOYBEAN,
PUMPKIN, AND TOMATO PRODUCER, MIDDLETOWN, IN**

Mr. HOWELL. Good morning. My name is David Howell. I am honored to be here this morning to testify.

I am a farmer from Middletown, Indiana. My wife and I started our family farm in 1971. It is our vision that our children will be able to carry on. Our family farm is approximately 7,000 acres, more than 90 percent of which is leased. We grow corn, soybeans, about 500 acres of jack o’lantern pumpkins and about 500 acres of processing tomatoes. Our tomato production is under contract to a company called Red Gold, Inc., an Indiana tomato processing company.

We are seeking a modification of Federal law that restricts Midwestern farmers from growing fruits and vegetables on program acres.

The issue: since 1996, the farm policy has generally prohibited production of fruits and vegetables on base acreage. However, this was not significant until the 2002 Farm Bill, which made soybeans a program crop. This change meant that virtually all of the quality farmland in states like Indiana and Illinois now have a program base.

The problem is two-fold.

First, program restrictions. For example, our farm has been personally affected by the prohibition on growing fruits and vegetables. Our family is in transition to the next generation from my wife and me. We began our processing tomato operation in the early 1990s and established our personal production history over the years. The regulations as they stand now serve to limit the abilities of my children to diversify their farming enterprise with specialty crops. In essence, the prohibition on planting fruits and vegetables are protecting my wife and me from our own children. This seems contrary to any goal of encouraging young farmers. Additionally, we are needing to change our business structure to ensure an orderly generational transfer. When we do, however, our producer history will be lost.

Second, fear of base acreage loss. We have struggled to rent ground for growing processing tomatoes and pumpkins over the years. In the Midwest, most family farms rely on rented acres to grow their crops. I have found that the landlords fear, and rationally so, that future base recalculations will result in loss of base acres on their farms if they rent for processing tomato production.

H.R. 2675, the Farming Flexibility Act of 2011, would fix this twofold problem by allowing an acre-for-acre opt out from the program acreage for production of fruits and vegetables for processing. Also, it would declare a policy that vegetable production for processing on program base acres will not cause future loss of base acreage.

I realize that some in the fresh produce industry do not agree with me. They make two basic point. And let me address those.

They suggest that the 2002 Farm Bill restrictions do not present a real problem. And that is wrong.

First, it is a problem because of the restrictions. As we attempt to pass along our operation to the next generation, our producer history will be lost. And it harms the traditional industry that provides safe and economical food to a population in need of better nutrition.

Second, as a threat to base acreage, I and my landlords have lost base acres clearly.

Third, it is a threat to my market. As times goes on, about five percent of Midwest vegetable producers stop growing vegetables each year. That means that each year, it will be harder for our processor market to stay in business because they cannot contract for enough production. This year is the first time that some of them were not able to contract for their production capacity. Eventually, we will lose those processors, and the canned vegetable market will be taken over by imports.

Italians can put tomatoes on the East Coast cheaper than California canners. South America is already exporting a range of vegetables into these states, such as corn, asparagus, and tomatoes could not be far behind.

Clearly, this is a real problem.

Opponents of H.R. 2675 also claim that it would somehow hurt fresh produce producers. And this is also wrong. It would not hurt the producers.

First, it is against the law for us to use or produce to sell to the fresh produce market and production would have to be for processing only. Penalties for the program are very high.

Second, vegetables for processing are not the vegetable varieties produced for fresh market anyway.

Third, H.R. 2675 would just take us back to the 1996 Farm Bill situation prior to the inclusion of oilseed acreage. Under the 1996 Farm Bill and even before that, the Midwestern processing industry was getting smaller, not expanding.

There is no way that this would hurt the fresh produce producers.

A final couple of points. I realize and support that direct payments may be eliminated in the next farm bill. If that is done, we submit that the restrictions on producing fruits and vegetables should be eliminated altogether. And obviously, the fruit and vegetables we grow for processing go to nearby processing facilities, which means jobs in rural America. This is important throughout the Midwest.

Finally, the Federal Crop Insurance Program for specialty crops have not received the same refinement and upgrades as have tradi-

tional commodity crops and should be scrutinized to offer reasonable protection for the growers of our nation's food supply.

Thank you for coming to the Midwest to hear us.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Howell follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DAVID W. HOWELL, CORN, SOYBEAN, PUMPKIN, AND
TOMATO PRODUCER, MIDDLETOWN, IN

Introduction

Good morning. My name is David Howell. I am honored to present testimony today.

I am a farmer from Middletown, Indiana. My wife and I started our family farm upon returning home from college, and it is our vision that our children and their families will successfully transition what we sacrificed and worked hard to establish. Our family farms approximately 7,000 acres, of which more than 90% is leased. We grow corn, soybeans, pumpkins and about 500 acres of processing tomatoes. Our tomato production is under contract with Red Gold, Inc., an Indiana tomato processing company.

We are seeking a modification of Federal law that restricts Midwestern farmers from growing fruits and vegetables on program acres. I am here as one family farmer, but we do concur totally with the position of the American Fruit and Vegetable Processors and Growers Coalition (AFVPGC).

The Issue

Since 1996, farm policy generally has prohibited the production of fruits and vegetables on base acreage. However, this was not a significant problem until the 2002 Farm Bill made soybeans a program crop. This change meant that virtually all of the quality farmland in states like Indiana now have program base.

The problem is twofold.

First, program restrictions. For example, our farm has been personally affected by the prohibition on growing fruits and vegetables. Our family is in transition to the next generation from my wife and me. We began our processing tomato operation in the early 1990's and established our personal production history over the years. The regulations as they stand now serve to limit the abilities of my children to diversify their farming enterprise with specialty crops, not enhance them as any good agricultural policy would attempt to do. In essence, the prohibition on planting Fruits and Vegetables are protecting my wife and me from our own children entering the very enterprise that will help ensure their success because there is no mechanism for them to either earn their own producer history or have my producer history transferred to them, even though we have been continuously engaged in growing processing tomatoes for nearly 20 years. This seems contrary to any goal of encouraging young farmers to seek alternative crops and provide a more sustainable future, both economically and environmentally. Additionally, we are needing to change our business structure to ensure an orderly generational transition. When we do, however, our producer history will be lost.

Second, fear of base acreage loss. We have struggled to get rented ground for growing our processing tomatoes and pumpkins. In the Midwest, most family farms rely on rented acres to grow their crops. I have found that landlords who I have approached fear, and rationally so, that future base recalculations will result in loss of base acres on their farms if they rent it to me for processing tomato production. This means that my ability to rotate crops as a good IPM practice and to fulfill my traditional contract obligation to Red Gold is severely restricted.

H.R. 2675, the Farming Flexibility Act of 2011, would fix this twofold problem by allowing an acre-for-acre opt out from the program acreage for production of fruits or vegetables under contract for processing. Also, it would declare a policy that vegetable production for processing on program base acres will not cause future loss of base acreage.

I realize that some in the fresh produce industry do not agree with me. They make two basic points. Let me address those.

They suggest that the 2002 Farm Bill restrictions do not present a real problem. That is wrong.

- First, it is a problem because of the restrictions. As we attempt to pass along our operation to the next generation, our producer history will be lost, because it is not transferable. What my wife and I worked hard to establish under the rules will simply vanish and the ability to lease production acres for fruits and vegetables for processing will artificially be hindered, not by a free market de-

termination, but by a protectionist decree that offers no actual protection but harms a traditional industry that provides safe and economical foods to a population in need of better nutrition.

- Second, this is a threat to base acreage. I have lost base acreage, some of my landlords have lost base acreage, and that has happened to my neighbors who grow vegetables. This base acreage experience is why my landlords generally will not let me grow vegetables on leased land and in some cases specifically prohibit the production of fruits and vegetables because of this issue. My colleagues who grow vegetables are facing the same thing. Most family farms have significant production on leased land.
- Third, this is a threat to my market. As time goes on, **about five percent of Midwest vegetables producers stop growing vegetables each year. That means that each year, it will be harder for our processor market to stay in business because they cannot contract for enough production. This year is the first time that some of them were not able to contract for their production capacity. Each year this will get worse. Eventually, we will lose processors, and the canned vegetables market will be taken over by imports.**
 - Italians can put tomatoes on the East Coast cheaper than California canners. South America is already importing a range of other canned vegetables, such as corn and asparagus.

Clearly, this is a real problem.

Opponents of H.R. 2675 also claim that it would somehow hurt fresh producers. This is also wrong.

- H.R. 2675 is narrowly tailored. It would not hurt fresh producers.
 - First, it would be against the law for us to grow vegetables for fresh markets. H.R. 2675 would only allow opt out for FAV production FOR PROCESSING. The production would have to be for processing.
 - Penalties for program violations are very heavy—I would be crazy to intentionally violate program rules. (Penalties are equal to twice the per acre value of the tomato crop produced in violation.)
 - Second, vegetables for processing are not the vegetable varieties produced for fresh anyway. My family has been growing processing tomatoes for 20 years and, even though it has been legal to sell them to fresh markets, we never have.
 - They are the wrong variety—not right for the fresh market.
 - So, there is no market for them.
 - Where there is no market, there is no market distribution system.
 - Third, H.R. 2675 would just take us back to the 1996 Farm Bill situation prior to the inclusion of oilseed acreage. Under the 1996 Farm Bill and even before that, the Midwest processing industry was getting smaller, not expanding.
 - There is no way that this would hurt fresh producers.

A couple final points. I realize that Direct Payments may be eliminated in the next farm bill. If that is done, we submit that the restriction on producing Fruit and Vegetables should be eliminated altogether. Of course, the fruit and vegetables we grow for processing go to nearby processing facilities, which means jobs in rural areas. This is important throughout the Midwest. Here in Illinois, there is a LIBBYS facility that produces canned pumpkin, pumpkin pie filling and pumpkin bread from the pumpkins produced by 70 farmers on 8,000 acres. These pumpkin products have seen periodic shortages in recent years due to several factors, one of which is the company's difficulty in contracting enough acres. So, Farm Flexibility is critically important. The Federal Crop insurance programs for specialty crops have not received the same refinement and upgrades as have the traditional commodity crops and should be scrutinized to offer reasonable protection for the growers of our nation's food supply.

Thank you for your consideration of our views.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Mr. Howell.
Ms. Weber, please begin whenever you are ready.

**STATEMENT OF JANE A. WEBER, SPECIALTY CROP
PRODUCER, BETTENDORF, IA**

Ms. WEBER. Chairman Lucas, Representative Boswell, and distinguished Members of the Committee, I appreciate the opportunity to speak today about the impact of the farm bill from the perspective of a small farmer. My name is Jane Weber of Weber Farm, row crop farmer, specialty crop producer, and farmers' market vendor from Scott County in east central Iowa. I serve as a Soil and Water Conservation District Commissioner in my county to conserve the soil and improve water quality. There are several parts of the 2012 Farm Bill that are important to our farm, specialty crop producers, and conservation.

First, the conservation title: the farmland in our area as well as my own farm historically benefitted from locally-led, incentive-based conservation practices of CRP, EQIP and various other conservation programs. Producers rely on the NRCS for technical help to develop conservation plans, design conservation practices, make wetland determinations, and provide guidance on highly erodible lands. Weber Farm has installed contour buffer strips, filter strips, grass waterways, tiling, and farmstead windbreak. Conservation technical assistance, funded by the NRCS, is critical to conservation practices getting installed through Soil and Water Conservation Districts in Iowa and to farm bill programs being implemented. Workloads in the USDA Service Centers remain high for conservation programs, while funding for CTA remains critically low. Without technicians, NRCS and SWCDs cannot deliver conservation programs.

Four years ago the Cedar and Iowa Rivers flooded along with the Mississippi River, devastating the towns of Cedar Rapids, Iowa City, Columbus Junction and Oakville in eastern Iowa, along with the cropland in the water's path. Where conservation structures were not in place, soil was carried downstream along with the floodwaters. However, where two, three or more conservation practices occurred on farmland, the water damage was not as significant. Less soil and water left the area. In other words, the conservation practices worked.

Last year, it was the Missouri River that flooded in western Iowa. More conservation practices installed before a disaster may protect our valuable resources from disaster. In the spirit of making the most economical choice, Congress should adequately fund conservation today to avoid the increased costs of repair tomorrow and in the future.

Second, the nutrition title: as a farmers' market vendor, I participate in the Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program that provides fresh locally grown produce to low income seniors at the farmers' markets. This program has increased the profitability of producers and is appreciated by the consumers. Each year, I have inquiries from senior citizens on how to obtain vouchers and I have observed how the seniors frugally utilize them to stretch throughout the season. As Iowa's population is aging, I am seeing more demand for participation in the Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program, as well as an increasing need per person. In these economic times, seniors with fixed incomes are having difficulty eating nutritiously. Just as good nutrition helps all of us maintain good

health, it would be cost-effective to help these seniors eat more fresh fruits and vegetables for better nutrition to keep them healthy.

Third, the horticulture title: specialty crops are an important part of agriculture that allow farmers to diversify. Specialty Crop Block Grants try to help increase this competitiveness of specialty crops. In our state, they have supported educational efforts on food safety, research by our universities and marketing efforts that encourage consumers to choose locally grown products. I have written and received grants for two organizations. I have also served on a grant review board in our state. The grant process needs to be simplified so that more farmers' markets may access funds for marketing efforts to encourage consumers to buy fresh produce. These markets are the front lines in the direct marketing of specialty crops.

A strong conservation title is important for our production agriculture. NRCS and SWCDs are the key delivery system at the local level. The availability of program funding and the CTA allow the implementation of conservation practices as long-term investments in the protection of our natural resources.

Farm policy also must consider the growing consumer interest in fresh, healthy local food and provide access for low income populations. Specialty crop producers need a mix of programs aimed at enhancing profitability and an innovative marketing strategy to promote specialty crops and to educate consumers. The importance of passing the farm bill before break allows agencies to be prepared and producers to plant and make informed business decisions.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Weber follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JANE A. WEBER, SPECIALTY CROP PRODUCER,
BETTENDORF, IA

Chairman Lucas, Ranking Member Peterson, and distinguished Members of the Committee, I appreciate the opportunity to speak today about the impact of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 from the perspective of a small farmer. My name is Jane Weber of Weber Farm—row crop farmer, specialty crop producer, and farmers' market vendor—from Scott County, in east central Iowa. I serve as a Soil and Water Conservation District Commissioner in my county to conserve the soil and improve water quality. There are several parts of the 2012 Farm Bill that are important to our farm, specialty crop producers, and conservation.

Conservation Title

The farm land in our area as well as my own farm has benefited from the locally-led, incentive-based conservation practices of the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), and various other conservation programs. Producers rely on the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) for technical help to develop conservation plans, design conservation practices, make wetland determinations, and provide guidance on highly erodible land (HEL). Weber Farm has installed contour buffer strips, filter strips, grass waterways, tiling, and a farmstead windbreak. Conservation Technical Assistance (CTA) funded by NRCS is critical to conservation practices getting installed through Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs) in Iowa and to farm bill programs being implemented. Workloads in USDA Service Centers remain high for conservation programs while funding for CTA remains critically low. Without technicians, NRCS and SWCDs can not deliver conservation programs.

To protect our lakes and clean up our creeks and rivers from sediment and nutrient delivery, conservation programs are integral to improving water quality. As an IOWATER volunteer that participates in spring and fall snapshot water samplings in our county for 9 years, I have seen the results identify conservation needs in the community that our SWCD was able to help alleviate with conservation practices

cost shared with landowners. As an Iowa Watershed Improvement Review Board (WIRB) member, I have seen the partnerships of NRCS, DSC, EPA 319, and WIRB work together to improve water quality in projects throughout our state.

Four years ago the Cedar and Iowa Rivers flooded along with the Mississippi River devastating the towns of Cedar Rapids, Iowa City, Columbus Jct., and Oakville in eastern Iowa along with cropland in the waters' path. Where conservation structures were not in place, soil was being carried downstream along with the flood waters. However, where two, three, or more conservation practices occurred on farmland the water damage was not as significant. Less soil and water left the area. In other words, the conservation practices worked.

Last year it was the Missouri River that flooded in western Iowa. While the 2012 Farm Bill needs to address Emergency Conservation Program (ECP) as it funds the technical assistance and rehabilitation of farmland after a natural disaster, more conservation practices installed before a disaster may protect our valuable resources from disaster. In the spirit of making the most economical choice, Congress should adequately fund conservation today to avoid the increased costs of repair in the future.

Nutrition Title

As a farmers' market vendor I participate in the Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program that provides fresh, locally grown produce to low income seniors at the farmers' markets. This program has increased the profitability of producers and is appreciated by the consumers. Each year I have inquiries from senior citizens on how to obtain vouchers and I have observed how the seniors frugally utilize them to stretch throughout the season. As Iowa's population is aging, I am seeing more demand for participation in the Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program as well as an increasing need per person. In these economic times, seniors with fixed incomes are having difficulties in eating nutritiously. Just as good nutrition helps all of us maintain good health, it would be cost effective to help these seniors eat more fresh fruits and vegetables for better nutrition to keep them healthy.

I also participate in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) utilizing an electronic bank transfer (EBT) wireless machine at the farmers' markets. Many of the farmers' market vendors who tried this program at the onset have discontinued due to the cost of transactions for SNAP. A client could buy a \$.35 zucchini making the transaction fees higher than the purchase. A vendor actually would lose money after paying the monthly fees and transaction fees that are not allowed to be reimbursed. If all the costs and transaction fees involving the SNAP could be reimbursed, more vendors would participate in the program. However, it may not be cost effective as I have had a month where the monthly fees were higher than the total sales for SNAP as well. It would take more consumer education to make this program more beneficial to all concerned.

Horticulture Title

Specialty crops are an important part of agriculture that allow farmers to diversify. Specialty Crop Block Grants try to help increase the competitiveness of specialty crops. In our state they have supported educational efforts on food safety, research, and marketing efforts that encourage consumers to choose locally grown products. I have written and received grants for two organizations, the Mississippi Valley Growers' Association, Inc. and the Iowa Farmers' Market Association. I have also served on the grant review board in our state. The grant process needs to be simplified so that more farmers' markets may access funds for marketing efforts at their local level to encourage consumers to buy fresh produce. These markets are the front lines in the direct marketing of specialty crops. The current grant process has become more difficult for a farmers' market to obtain. A professional grant writer and/or administrator is needed so universities and other organizations with access to grant writers are more likely to apply and consequently, receive the grants.

Conclusion

Many farm bill programs have an impressive success rate. A strong conservation title is important for production agriculture. NRCS and SWCDs are the key delivery system at the local level. The availability of program funding and CTA allow the implementation of conservation practices as long-term investments in the protection of our natural resources.

Farm policy must consider the growing consumer interest in fresh, healthy, local food and provide access for the low income population. Specialty crop producers need a mix of programs aimed at enhancing profitability and an innovative marketing strategy to promote specialty crops and to educate consumers. The importance of passing the farm bill before break allows agencies to be prepared and producers to plan and make informed business decisions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

I now recognize myself for 5 minutes.

Mr. Asay, let us visit for a moment. You not only are a producer of feed grains, but you are a consumer of feed grains. And one of the issues that has come up time and time again in my home area in the northwestern half of Oklahoma is the question about having enough grain for beef cattle and pork and poultry operations. Tell me what your observations in the last few years have been. Are we meeting the demand, along with our needs for energy production, are we meeting the demand of our livestock industries in this country?

Mr. ASAY. Mr. Chairman, the last 2 years, we have had some tight carryovers. There have been some concerns for pork producers at times about feed availability. We have made it through the last couple of years without any major problems. Pork producers have done a lot of change in diets, use a lot of DDGS to substitute for corn and soybean meal in the diets to help get through in these periods and help make the adjustments needed. But there is still concern that sometimes if we have an extremely short crop that the availability of feedstuffs may be limited if we do not have some kind of adjustment in the fuel standard.

The CHAIRMAN. Putting your other hat on, Mr. Asay, as a grain producer as well as a feeder, the number of acres in the CRP program, I think reflecting grain prices in the re-enrollments, are coming down slowly. Does that concern you as a grain producer if your fellow farmers around the country are taking the signal it is time to produce more and putting some higher quality land back into production?

Mr. ASAY. It ultimately could put some pressure on the grain prices, but the market is the one making the decision for producers to bring that out, so I believe it is reacting to market factors.

The CHAIRMAN. Since CRP is, after all, a voluntary participation program you bid into and stay with a 10 year contract.

Let us touch on one other subject, Mr. Asay, and then I will turn to some of your colleagues on the panel.

You mentioned H.R. 3798. Some folks describe that as a bill attempting to take a negotiated agreement between a trade group in one region and an animal rights group, and impose it on the rest of the country. Is that a fair assessment?

Mr. ASAY. I would agree on that assessment. It's fairly scary to producer animals to have two groups try to set some standards on a regulatory issue. I would rather see market factors influence how animals were raised in this country.

The CHAIRMAN. Fair enough.

Mr. Williams, in your statement, you discuss the importance of having a reference price and a plug yield built into any revenue-based program. Could you expand a little bit more on that, why that matters?

Mr. WILLIAMS. The reason it matters is because if you have consecutive bad years, 3 or 4 bad years of either drought or excessive wet weather, as your yields, your personal yields go down, every year your guarantees keep going down. So the plug yield would be something like a county T-yield or something of that nature, and the price would be somewhere along the revenue price of the crop

insurance yield that would be there to coordinate with the plug yields to keep your dollar—your revenue guarantees level.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you for that very clear and understandable explanation for the record. This is a topic being much discussed in the hallways of Congress these days.

Ms. Weber, you mentioned conservation and your involvement. I must tell you as a Member of Congress who represents the part of the great country that probably was more centered in Mr. Steinbeck's book in the 1930s than any other—and we will not discuss what we think of that in northwest Oklahoma, but that is a whole different subject—we too are very fond of voluntary conservation programs. We too are very fond of the upstream flood control programs and are very focused on rehabilitating those structures. The chief challenge we have, as was alluded to several times today, is with the number of dollars available to us coming down, the tough decisions that we have to make to meet our part of the overall deficit reduction efforts that the United States House is prioritizing.

Could you expand for just a moment on why, as you so clearly pointed out in your testimony, why conservation is a long-term investment that benefits not just tomorrow but decades from now?

Ms. WEBER. The key word right now is—

The CHAIRMAN. And that is called baiting a witness actually, for the record.

[Laughter.]

Ms. WEBER. The key word is *sustainability*; whether it is in specialty crops or other types of production agriculture, sustainability. The only way you are going to have sustainability is if you have that good topsoil to produce the product. And if it is going downstream in weather-related events and causing hypoxia in the Gulf and whatever, we are not going to have sustainability. We have to keep the ground where it is, you have to keep the rain where it falls in order to have sustainability and good production agriculture.

The CHAIRMAN. Well put. If I did not know better, I would think you were a constituent of the 3rd District of Oklahoma.

I now turn to the outstanding—my time has expired—to the gentleman from Iowa for his 5 minutes. Mr. Boswell.

Mr. BOSWELL. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman. It has been an interesting presentation. Thank you all very, very much. I told the Chairman I would give up some of my time to continue that last question about conservation compliance and so on. So you may want to comment about that.

But I think that is an interesting point there, Ms. Weber, and I appreciate you coming here representing, seems to me like reading your statement, all aspects of agriculture really, not just one—specialty crops and production farms and so on at your family operation.

Kind of brings out the point we may have said earlier, I have said so often, we are not making more land, we are just making a lot more people and how are we going to take care of that as we go down the road. And I think you are kind of thinking about that apparently from what you have said.

I go back to you, Mr. Howell, you talk about your family operation and so on and wanting to take some of your program land out to put it in specialty crop. We have not had a lot of discussion about that, but I have a feeling that quite a few Members of our Committee would probably object to that, but I do not know that, we have not talked about it I do not think, have we, Mr. Chairman, at all? So this is an interesting point.

It seems to me like if I go back to my days when we were starting farmers' markets and so on, that this was one way to get people to grow specialty crops. They were not going to have somebody like me at that time, it was about all I could do, capable of doing, to row crop. But a lot of people said well, I think I will set this 20 acres aside and use my equipment and I will just produce a whole lot of onions or a whole lot of this or a whole lot of that. Kind of got that situation stated. So we may have a whole new discussion going on here, I do not know.

You have been raising tomatoes a long time and you make your point: how do we not go back, we are bumping heads again, Mr. Chairman, where we have people wanting to do different types—what I have said, there is room for everybody because of the population growth and need for food. How do we do that?

Mr. HOWELL. Well, it was not an issue until the 2002 Farm Bill, when they made soybeans one of the program crops. Before that, we used the soybean ground and we were free to use that for production of vegetables. When they changed that and added that in as a program crop, that is when it went out of hand. So it is not really—it is a relatively current short-term problem, but it needs to be rectified.

Mr. BOSWELL. Let us just dialogue for a minute, maybe it is a short-term problem and it will solve itself, I do not know. It is interesting, I guess we may hear more about it if this is indicative of what we will hear in other places. But you know, the farmers' markets have become a very successful thing, and to start out it was just seasonal and now a lot of places it is year round. And I am not sure how they get the produce there in all cases, but nevertheless, it is very, very popular. People want it, obviously. And then we see what the market is for corn, beans, wheat and so on. There does not seem to be any problem there, particularly as we have some of it going into fuels, alternatives, and that nature. I am just not sure how we get there without destroying something that I think across the country they are pretty proud of, and that is people that are going out and doing the fruits and vegetables and bringing it to town and selling it fresh on the farmers' market.

Mr. HOWELL. I have to apologize, I am not sure I understand exactly where you are going. If you are thinking I am against my colleague to the left—

Mr. BOSWELL. I am not sure either.

Mr. HOWELL.—I would like to have that part eliminated for both the fresh and the processing and I think that would be fine. And my suggestion is if you take direct payments away, why there is really no incentive, in my view, to keep that restriction on. Again, it just happened in the 2002 Farm Bill when they did that.

Mr. BOSWELL. Ms. Weber, would you care to make any comment in this discussion?

Ms. WEBER. Basically, for specialty crop producers—let me take for an example a muscatine grower in Iowa that produces watermelons. They need a 10 year change on the crop. I mean with most of things we grow, there is maybe a 3 year rotation. So you have to have other acreage to rotate it with. So they are renting other people's property and like he is saying, without the soybean ground to rotate to, if that was not clear, he did not have that ground to rotate to any more because that was part of the program. Is it that it?

Mr. HOWELL. Well, that is part of it. We have to be responsible growers, we have to rotate our crops and so we have to have 3 years out before we can grow a tomato crop. And so we need—I am not sure where the discussion is going again, but we need to have that extra ground to—soybeans and corn in a way, even though we raise a lot of them, are a vehicle to allow us to raise the corn and soybeans and then when you penalize the landowners for letting us grow those vegetable crops, nobody is going to win.

Mr. BOSWELL. I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman yields back. And I would note, if you listen to my friends on both the left and the right, the direct payment issue may take care of itself soon.

With that, I recognize the gentleman from Texas for 5 minutes.

Mr. CONAWAY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Davis, I appreciate your opening comments reflective of what a food shortage would look like, because most Americans take it for absolute granted that—well first off, most Americans think food just shows up at the grocery store by magic. They do not appreciate the hard work and sweat equity and the risks that you and your colleagues on the panel and I suspect most folks in this room, take every day and every year. There is this reliance that you put on a rational, fully resourced safety net working constantly in terms of trying to figure out what the best one is and it is in a constant state of flux.

Previous hearings, we have had people talk about farm labor, we talked a little bit about child labor, but farm labor in general. None of you mentioned that in your testimony. Are you adequately, have a workforce that is adequate to meet your needs, and that is not an issue in your area? Any of you?

Mr. DAVIS. Myself, with my family operation, both my children are becoming involved with the operation. My son has grown up on the farm and is now home today taking care of things while I am here with you.

I think we need, for continuation of development of ability to create something, we need that early training program. We send our children to school when they are 5 and 6 and 4 even but now we are saying that a child cannot learn how to work until they are 16 or 18.

Mr. CONAWAY. I guess I was asking comments for adults, maybe the specialty crop guys, Mr. Howell and Ms. Weber, do you have an adequate workforce to harvest your crops at the right points in time?

Mr. HOWELL. No, sir. I think that is a problem with all of agriculture, if you really look under the covers. If you think about the seed industry where detasseling is done, if you think about the

meat processing area where there is need for workers, livestock producers in the confinement facilities. There is a bad shortage, significant shortage and growing shortage of people able and willing to do the work. And I know it is not you gentlemen's responsibility in this Committee, but the whole issue of the undocumented workers and the immigration policies is really presenting a problem particularly for the horticulture, but across the board. And it is a train wreck getting ready to happen. Everybody wants to play by the rules and we do play by the rules, but there is a problem that we just need to face up to and provide us with an adequate supply of documented labor one way or another through a program that will let us harvest the crops. In the southern states, Georgia and those areas, and the Arizona issues, there are problems on both sides. But agriculture is running out of hand labor.

Mr. CONAWAY. Can anybody give us an example of where—the regulatory burden that you have to cope with. We can all talk about regulations, but specific regulations that you are having to deal with that are either new and/or antiquated that cost you money and can you give us some specificity with respect to those regulations that you think are no longer necessary or were not necessary to begin with?

Mr. DAVIS. Regulations, one that comes to mind, I understand that the Secretary has taken this under advisement to make a change right now, but something as simple as a cover crop on cropland. That if I do not plant a program crop to that cropland as its first crop, it becomes ineligible for program payments. So if I was to seed a rye grass crop on a cornfield and when I went into my FSA office to sign up for a farm program, that I would state that I have it seeded to rye now as a cover crop, that becomes my crop acreage for that year. Also, vegetables are ineligible, there are cover crops in turnips and radishes right now that are very beneficial to the ground, great reduction in the necessity of tillage, but because those crops are planted, it technically makes those crops ineligible for farm program payments, just based on the rules. So that is one regulation.

Another regulation that does come into play that I and my family, we work closely with my in-laws, I am allowed to have my children operate machinery on my farm, but I cannot have my nephew come onto my farm and operate the same machine, even though he has the same experience, because we do not have the same relationship.

Another area that has come into mind of regulations, workmen's comp back on the farm has become a serious consideration for me if I bring in outside labor. That is more of a state issue with the Illinois workmen's comp law, but that is another regulation that is coming.

And also, additionally—we could go on and on—but spraying of farm pesticides looks to be an issue that is coming to a head here very shortly that will restrict me.

Mr. CONAWAY. Thanks.

It would be interesting, Mr. Chairman, if we could find who in the Department of Labor actually wrote the farm labor laws, rules and regulations, to see if they have ever even been on a farm or could spell farm.

{Laughter.}

Mr. CONAWAY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman's time has expired.

The chair now recognizes the gentleman from Illinois, Mr. Hultgren for 5 minutes, please.

Mr. HULTGREN. Thanks again, Mr. Chairman.

I mentioned a little bit earlier just the gratitude that I have had of working with our Senators, I mentioned a couple people from Senator Kirk's office. Also, it has been a privilege to work with Senator Durbin's office. I also wanted to recognize I think Brad Middleton and also Bart Ellefritz are here from Senator Durbin's office. So thank you so much. Also glad that our acting Director of Agriculture, a good friend of mine, former colleague in the Illinois House, Bob Flider is also here as well, so thank you so much for being here today, and all your work.

Again, I want to thank the panel for your information, it has been very helpful.

A few questions. Mr. Williams, I wondered if you could—you have expressed in your testimony frustration over both the SURE and the ACRE programs. I wondered if you would be able to elaborate a little bit on these issues and speak to how you might recommend that we could simplify these and make them more beneficial, more useful.

Mr. WILLIAMS. With the ACRE program, as I understand it, back—and I also alluded to the fact that I remember back in the 1980s when the prices were very low, the ACRE program would have worked very well. But we have been blessed to have more exports so our prices have risen higher, the ACRE program just was not feasible, it did not pay the producer.

My experience with the SURE program, we have been paid throughout that. Whenever you get a yield loss and you draw crop insurance revenue from we will say 2008 crop year, then you will come back in 2009 and receive payment through SURE the following year. In my personal case, we farm in two counties, we did have a SURE loss in Hamilton County, but the crop was so great in White County that it kicked out the Hamilton County loss that was ineligible. To me—a lot of our landlords carry crop insurance as well and so because we were blessed to have a great crop in one county, but we were unfortunate in another county, the county that had the loss, we should have received the payment on that. And to me, that does not seem right. I realize the average was there and for us farming in both counties, we were all right. But the landlords were penalized because of our success in the other county. So to me, that was not very fair or equitable.

Mr. HULTGREN. Thank you.

Mr. ASAY, you spoke about the importance of developing a disease surveillance system and the work that the pork industry has done in conjunction with USDA's APHIS and also Centers for Disease Control. I wonder if you might be able to talk a little bit about the Comprehensive and Integrated Surveillance System and give us an update on your progress on that.

Mr. ASAY. We are working to try to update the system. There is a lot of work that has been done in the event a foreign animal disease does come to this country, as to what agencies have jurisdic-

tion over various aspects. At one point, it was thought that we would destroy the animals and then bury those animals to try to control disease, but we have seen in other countries that has not worked—England and South Korea, for example. If we were to bury animals, we would have to get okay from the EPA at those sites, that those sites could handle that. So now it looks like we have to vaccinate and control with vaccine the disease. First off, you would have to have enough vaccine for that disease on hand to control that. And also you would have to live with the disease for a number of years in order to get it under control again.

But we are working, trying to get all the agencies to work together and I believe right now, the first agency that would have control would be the Department of Homeland Security to make sure it was not a terrorist act. And after they ensure that, then it goes on to the next one. So there are a lot of steps involved, a lot of agencies involved, a very complicated matter.

Mr. HULTGREN. I wonder if you could give us an update on the pilot program USDA has been running with hog producers called the Livestock Gross Margin, LGM.

Mr. ASAY. Okay. Actually there was a pilot program created in Iowa a few years ago, in 2008 it expanded to some other states and last year it just expanded to the 48 continental states. It was set up—it is a program that uses futures prices to set the expected margins and uses the price of the hogs minus the cost of the feed with various formulas, and ensures that margin there. That is the concept, and it works for producers at times. It has helped in the management but there is a lot of cost involved in this and we would like to see some changes where it can insure larger operations and, as I mentioned, there were 200,000 hogs insured in the past year. I personally worked with producers to sell about 10 to 15 percent of that insurance. It has been a struggle working with agencies sometimes to try to clarify things also on this product.

Mr. HULTGREN. My time has expired. I did just want to mention real quickly, Mr. Howell, I appreciate your information and discussion on the Farming Flexibility Act of 2011, 2012, H.R. 2675. I know I am a cosponsor along with Congressman Schilling and Congressman Johnson here from Illinois, and I know that would be something very beneficial to Midwestern farmers and Midwestern families.

So my time is up, but thank you so much for the discussion. We certainly will be talking about that some more.

Mr. ASAY. Well, thank you for your help.

Mr. HULTGREN. I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman's time has expired.

The chair now recognizes for the final 5 minutes of questions, the gentleman from Illinois, Mr. Schilling.

Mr. SCHILLING. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

What I would also like to point out is that what is nice about the Agriculture Committee is that this is truly a red, white, and blue Committee, it is not Democratic or Republican. And also, a good friend of ours, Lieutenant Governor Simon has a couple of her folks here, Christina Rogers and Laura Kissell, we appreciate them being here today also.

I want to go back to Gary, your comment here on a question that Mr. Hultgren was asking. Do you have some suggestions on how Congress can strengthen the Livestock Gross Margin insurance?

Mr. ASAY. Okay, there are various aspects there. I just recently learned that the loss ratio on the LGM has been in the neighborhood of .33 to .37. There were some changes this year in the crop insurance program to try to get corn and soybeans closer to the 1.00 loss ratio. If we can somehow get that loss ratio improved, that would improve the aspects of the producer making that work for them to actually better protect them for the premium invested in that.

Also, one other aspect: This insurance is only available on the last Friday, business Friday, every month from approximately 4:30 p.m. until 8:00 p.m., the following Saturday. Not many crop insurance agents or producers want to mess with trying to figure out the margin and the premium on the weekend. That has been a limiting factor also.

Mr. SCHILLING. Very good.

And then can you further tell the story of conservation and its part of your operation? Can you basically elaborate further on how programs such as EQIP can be strengthened for us?

Mr. ASAY. Yes. I have benefitted from EQIP funds in the past, it has helped me invest in manure-hauling equipment. The manure spreader that I use has a controller on it and a monitor where I can control how much manure, how many gallons go on per acre. I also test the soil and the manure for an analysis and use the crop usage to determine how much manure I apply. It has also helped me with windbreaks on the farm to try to protect the wind from blowing through. Also for manure containment facilities. I think it is a very good program out there and we possibly need to look in some areas to expand a little bit to better help livestock producers.

Mr. SCHILLING. Very good.

And then, Mr. Davis, recently, there was a nice article in the *Galesburg Register-Mail* where a local farmer, David Serven, who actually is here today, said "Crop insurance to me is the safety net we need to keep there." I am hearing this from the majority of farmers that I talk to.

My time is almost up, but what are your thoughts on strengthening crop insurance here in Illinois, sir?

Mr. DAVIS. The thoughts of Mr. Asay there on the realignment of the loss ratio I think would be very beneficial to crop insurance usage here in Illinois. My county and my own instance, my loss ratio is .25. If 1.0 is loss equals payback for the premium I am paying, I am paying substantially more for my insurance than I ever hope to be able to get back because I do have a low loss. So if that could be addressed.

Another area is if, as I heard mentioned here just a moment ago, that direct payments might be curtailed in some way, shape, or form, there does need to be a safety net somewhere and if this crop insurance program is an area where we could regain that footing to put in that floor for support, the most important thing is that crop gets raised next year, not the crop you are raising this year that is lost, but raising that crop next year.

Mr. SCHILLING. Very good.

With that, I yield back my time, Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman yields back his time. The time has expired for this panel.

Before we adjourn, I would like to invite Mr. Boswell, followed by Mr. Schilling, to make any closing comments or remarks that they might have. Mr. Boswell.

Mr. BOSWELL. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman. I kind of measure how did I think things go on if I had what I know right now, would I have come to this meeting. Yes, I would.

It has been good to be here in Galesburg and Carl Sandburg College. I want to thank all of you for participating today and it has been meaningful. I think our staff has got a lot of notes we are going to have to digest but it has been worth coming here and, Mr. Chairman, I want to thank you for this and Mr. Schilling for being our host, I appreciate it. Thank you very much.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman yields back and I now recognize our host, Congressman Schilling, for any closing remarks he might have.

Mr. SCHILLING. Yes, I truly want to thank you, Mr. Chairman, for just recognizing the great Midwest for who we are, and just giving us the opportunity to have what I call the final 3 feet, the farmer to actually have their say. I think one of the most important things that we look at is from the Midwest and across the country when it comes to ag is that we want the farmers to have the input. We do not want folks that have really nothing to do with farming making the decisions on how the farm bill is going to come out.

And I think the biggest take-away that I got today out of this is that, number one, we need a 5 year bill so that we can give certainty to our farmers and allow them to just know what cards are on the table and then, number two, I think of course is the strong crop insurance.

But I just want to thank everyone who participated, the folks that set up, also the Agriculture Committee, the folks from Washington that took time out to be with us today. But just want to say thank you very much, everyone.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman yields back his time and I would recognize myself to note that I appreciate not only Congressman Schilling, but both of your Illinois Members, for the good work that they do on the Committee. And of course, our friends at Carl Sandburg College for hosting and helping work with us to make this possible, and the community for turning out today to listen to what some folks outside of rural America consider to be the least exciting topic, but yet it is the most important subject matter for all of our futures and all of our children's futures.

And with that again, let me state one more time for the record, that anyone may submit comments to be considered as a part of the Committee's farm bill field hearing record, this will be a part of the permanent record. Comments submitted to the address *agriculture.house.gov/farmbill* by May 20, 2012 will be incorporated in a permanent part of the record. It is important that we have not just our expert witnesses today, but everyone out there who is interested put their stake into this process.

With that, I would also note that we, working as a Committee together, have a very challenging process ahead of us. We intend to get you a farm bill that we can all support, that you can live with, that maybe you will not just survive but have a chance to thrive with. But it is going to be a challenging process. It is going to be a very challenging process.

And with that, under the rules of the Committee, the record of today's hearing will remain open for 30 calendar days to receive additional material and supplemental written responses from the witnesses to any question posed by a Member.

This hearing of the Committee on Agriculture is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:25 a.m. (CDT), the Committee was adjourned.]

THE FUTURE OF U.S. FARM POLICY: FORMULATION OF THE 2012 FARM BILL

FRIDAY, MARCH 30, 2012

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE,
State University, AR.

The Committee met, pursuant to call, at 9:00 a.m. (CDT), in the Riceland Hall, Arkansas State University, 201 Olympic Drive, State University, Arkansas, Hon. Frank D. Lucas [Chairman of the Committee] presiding.

Members present: Representatives Lucas, Neugebauer, Stutzman, and Crawford.

Staff present: Bart Fischer, Josh Mathis, Matt Schertz, Debbie Smith, Heather Vaughan, John Konya, Nathaniel Fretz, Anne Simmons, and Jamie Mitchell

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. FRANK D. LUCAS, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM OKLAHOMA

The CHAIRMAN. This hearing of the Committee on Agriculture entitled, *The Future of U.S. Farm Policy: Formulation of the 2012 Farm Bill*, will come to order.

Good morning, and thank you all for joining us today for this farm bill field hearing—which is a very important distinction, I might add. And I would like to thank Congressman Crawford for hosting us today.

These field hearings are a continuation of what my good friend and Ranking Member Collin Peterson started in the spring of 2010. Today, we will build upon the information we gathered in those hearings, as well as the 11 farm policy audits we conducted this past summer. We used those audits as an opportunity to thoroughly evaluate farm programs to identify areas where we can improve efficiency. The field hearings serve a slightly different purpose. Today, we are here to listen.

I talk to producers all the time back home in Oklahoma. I see them in the feed store, I meet with them at my town hall meetings and, of course, I get regular updates from my personal boss, Linda Lucas, back on the farm. But the conditions and crops in Oklahoma are different than what you will find here in Arkansas.

In New York, we heard how specialty crop producers and dairy producers utilize farm programs. In Illinois, we heard about the importance of crop insurance for corn and soybean producers. Today, we will hear from a wide variety of producers from across the Southeast. I expect we will hear a different perspective than we got in the Northeast and the Midwest. That is why it is so impor-

tant that we offer a choice of policy options. The broad range of agricultural production makes our country strong, but it also creates challenges when we are trying to write a single farm bill to support so many different regions and commodities.

While each sector has unique concerns when it comes to farm policy, I would like to share some of my general goals for the next farm bill. First and foremost, I want to give producers the tools to help you do what you do best and that is produce the safest, most abundant, most affordable food supply in the world. To do this, we must develop a farm bill that works for all regions and all commodities.

I recognize that the challenges that you face here in the Southeast are different than the conditions facing producers in Illinois or New York. I also recognize that even within commodities, different programs work better for different regions. That is why it is vitally important that the commodity title give producers options so they can choose the program that best works for them.

I am also committed to a strong crop insurance program. Now I know that crop insurance, while a valuable tool for many producers, does not work as well for producers down here. That is why offering an array of programs is important and why we must work with the Risk Management Agency to improve crop insurance products for rice, peanuts and other crops that do not have higher buyout levels.

Last, we will work to ensure that producers can continue using conservation programs to protect natural resources. I am interested to hear how producers in this area of the country use the conservation programs. I am particularly curious as to your thoughts about how to simplify the process so they are easier for farmers and ranchers to use.

Beyond those priorities, I know there are a number of universal concerns facing agriculture across the country. For instance, my producers in Oklahoma are worried about regulations coming down from the Environmental Protection Agency and how they must comply with those regulations. I am also aware that the death tax is creating difficulties for farming operations. I want to hear how these Federal policies are affecting producers here.

Today, we will hear from a selection of producers. Unfortunately, we do not have time to hear from everyone who would like to share their perspective. But we have a place on our website where you can submit those comments in writing to be added to the record. You can visit agriculture.house.gov/farmbill, to find that form. And you can also find an address on the postcards available on the tables that are here.

As I said before, we do not have an easy road ahead of us, but I am confident that by working together, we can craft a farm bill that continues to support the success story that is American agriculture.

And with that, I would like to recognize our host for any opening comments he might make. The gentleman from Arkansas, Mr. Crawford.

**OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. ERIC A. "RICK" CRAWFORD, A
REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM ARKANSAS**

Mr. CRAWFORD. I thank the Chairman.

I want to start by acknowledging our FFA chapters that are here, and if I could get them to stand. The chapters that we have checked in are Batesville, Weiner, Harrisburg and Manila. Thank y'all. This is the future of agriculture.

[Applause.]

Mr. CRAWFORD. Thank you for being here, good morning, and thank all of you for joining us. We are pleased to have this third of four farm bill hearings here in Arkansas. Great honor to be here and we are very thankful to our Committee Chairman and to the Members who have taken time to come and participate—Congressman Neugebauer from Texas and Congressman Stutzman from Indiana, all of whom are my colleagues on the Agriculture Committee.

As we know, agriculture is the number one industry in our district here in the First District of Arkansas—from the Delta, cotton, rice, soybeans, wheat, peanuts and aquaculture, and up into the Ozarks, poultry, cattle, dairy, timber products. Annually, agriculture in Arkansas is a \$16 billion economic juggernaut, employing over 260,000 Arkansans. And like every industry, Arkansas agriculture comes with a fair share of risk and uncertainty.

In these tough economic times, farmers and ranchers know the impact of high fuel prices as an input cost. When fuel costs rise, farmers feel the pinch more than most. Farmers also deal with uncertainty caused by unpredictable weather, volatile markets and a continued need for investments in technology. On top of all those challenges, farmers are constantly wrestling with a myriad of regulations coming from Washington and no agency embodies that better than the Environmental Protection Agency. Farmers in our district live off the land, they raise their families and earn an honest living by taking care of our natural resources. If anyone understands the importance of preserving our environment for future generations, it is certainly those who derive their livelihood from the land on which they live, and from the water that they use.

With all the challenges our agriculture community already faces, they should not have to worry about burdensome new regulations that only serve to cripple American agriculture. Sound farm policy must incorporate all the tools that America's farmers and ranchers need to continue to produce the world's safest, most abundant and affordable food supply, and the 2012 Farm Bill must take that into account. It also must take into account the diverse models of production throughout the United States. Unlike what some of my colleagues in Congress may think, there is no one-size-fits-all policy that will work. Agriculture here in Arkansas, and across the South, is vastly different than say Iowa or Illinois. And therefore, we need carefully crafted policy that accounts for the differences in cost, risk and production models. I know I am preaching to choir here and we are not here to do the talking, we are here to do the listening. So with that, I want to just really quickly acknowledge some of the witnesses that are from Arkansas and I am proud to represent them in Congress.

I will start by welcoming Dow Brantley from England, Arkansas; Mississippi County producer Randy Veach; representing the cattle industry, cattle producer Dan Stewart from Mountain View, Arkansas; Mike Freeze is an aquaculture producer from Keo, Arkansas; and last but not least, a friend of mine, cotton farmer, also an ASU grad, David Hundley.

We are pleased to welcome each of you. Thank all of you for being here, and we look forward to this hearing. With that, I yield back to the Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman yields back.

The chair would request that other Members submit their opening statements for the record so that the witnesses may begin their testimony and to ensure that there is ample time for questions.

With that, I would like to welcome our first panel of witnesses to the table. Mr. L. Dow Brantley, rice, cotton, corn, and soybean producer, Brantley Farming Company, England, Arkansas; Mr. Randy Veach, cotton, rice, corn, wheat, and soybean producer, Manila, Arkansas; Mr. Paul T. Combs, rice, soybean, cotton, corn, and wheat producer, Sunrise Land Company, Kennett, Missouri; Mr. Bowen Flowers, cotton, corn, soybean, wheat, and rice producer, Clarksdale, Mississippi; and Mr. Burch, cotton and peanut producer, Burch Farms, Newton, Georgia. Clearly, gentlemen, you are a diverse bunch of producers.

With that, Mr. Brantley, please begin whenever you are ready.

STATEMENT OF L. DOW BRANTLEY, RICE, COTTON, CORN, AND SOYBEAN PRODUCER, BRANTLEY FARMING COMPANY, ENGLAND, AR

Mr. BRANTLEY. Chairman Lucas and Members of the Committee, I would like to welcome you again to the State of Arkansas; and Congressman Crawford, thank you for convincing the Chairman that Jonesboro was the place to hold this hearing. Thank you again for holding this hearing on the reauthorization of the farm bill. I am honored to have the opportunity to offer testimony before the Committee—

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Brantley, if you do not mind, swing that microphone towards you.

Mr. BRANTLEY. Is that better?

I am honored to have the opportunity to offer testimony before the Committee concerning my views on current farm policy and the changes needed.

My name is Dow Brantley. My farm is located in central Arkansas near the community of England. We grow rice, cotton, corn, soybeans and I farm in partnership with my father, mother, two brothers and our families. Due to the hard work of my grandparents and parents, our family farm has grown from just a few hundred acres in 1946 to around 8,500 acres in row crop production today. I am pleased to serve as Chairman of the Arkansas Rice Federation and the Arkansas Rice Producers' Group as well as a board member for many other agribusiness associations in the state, but I offer my testimony today from my perspective as a farmer, and not on behalf of any one organization.

As I stated earlier, my farm is diversified, but rice is one of our primary focuses. It is worth noting that Arkansas grows rice on ap-

proximately 1.3 to 1.5 million acres each year, which is nearly ½ of the entire U.S. rice crop. Rice product, transportation and processing play important roles in the state by providing thousands of jobs in what is referred to as the Mississippi River Delta. Rice is the state's second highest value commodity and the top agricultural export.

The bigger challenges facing the U.S. rice industry are challenges over which farmers have no control. They are decisions taken by governments—our own Federal Government and the governments of nations around the world. Some examples include:

Brazil's export program that provides \$60 per ton export subsidy for rice to Central America, Haiti, Nigeria and to the U.S.

Thailand's intervention price program is the equivalent of \$10.00 per bushel, while the U.S. market price, here in the U.S., is around the \$6.00 per bushel range.

India, one of the world's top rice exporters, subsidizes the cost of fertilizer and other inputs for its farmers.

Iraq's unreasonable import specifications have contributed to a 77 percent drop in sales of U.S. rice to that country.

Access for U.S. rice was excluded from the so-called South Korea Free Trade Agreement because they consider it a sensitive crop.

China has yet to accept imports of U.S. rice as a result of China's lack of phytosanitary requirements.

And the U.S. Government continues an embargo that was put into place more than 50 years ago against trade with Cuba, once the number one export market for U.S. rice.

These trade policies and the increased cost of inputs, especially fuel and fertilizer, over which the U.S. farmer has no control, cannot be covered by a one-size-fits-all program.

The U.S. rice industry is seeking risk management tools that will allow rice farmers to secure their production loans and to repay loans should forces over which they have no control lead to an increase in input costs or decline in rice prices which makes U.S. rice less competitive.

Not providing such a policy option threatens not only U.S. farmers who grow rice, but thousands of Americans who transport, process and market U.S. rice across the nation and around the world.

Crop insurance as a whole has not worked on my farm or many others like ours in Arkansas. Our farm is 100 percent irrigated, and on average our yields are very consistent. Our financial problems occur with higher production costs due to irrigation or as a result of a weather event in the fall that disrupts our harvest and affects the quality of our crops. These circumstances cannot be hedged.

I believe Congress should reauthorize the farm bill this year for at least 5 years.

I understand that the budget situation facing this Committee is a key consideration in the development of the farm bill. These budget pressures, coupled with the outcome of the U.S.-Brazil WTO case means some farm policies must be modified to satisfy both budget constraints and specific trade objectives.

Some key components of the farm bill should be maintaining planting flexibility that began with the 1996 Farm Bill and the

countercyclical policies that have been in place for more than a decade now.

Given the aforementioned budget pressures and other considerations facing Congress, I believe that the following priorities represent the needs of producers for crops here in the Mid-South:

First, the trigger levels for assistance should be updated to provide tailored and reliable help should commodity prices decline below today's production cost and should include a floor or reference price to protect multi-year low price scenarios.

Second, as payments would only be made in loss situations, payment limits and means tests for producers should be eliminated, or at a minimum not tightened any further.

And third, the Federal Crop Insurance Program should be improved to be a more effective risk management for all crops in all production regions, beginning with the policy development process.

We support the funding of our land-grant universities through the research title, particularly the formula funding like the Hatch and Smith-Lever Acts that enable our universities to deliver initiatives that are so important to our states.

In summary, I appreciate the work of this Committee in crafting the 2008 Farm Bill, and more recently the recommendations developed last fall with your counterparts in the Senate. I know developing this next farm bill will present its own set of challenges, especially from inadequate budget authority and international trade obligations.

Based on my experience in working with the rice and cotton industries and the Arkansas Farm Bureau, I know they will work closely with this Committee to ensure that we have an effective farm policy. It is critical that we maintain provisions that allow us to be competitive in world markets and provide support in these times of low prices.

Thank you for the opportunity for me to present my views today.
[The prepared statement of Mr. Brantley follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF L. DOW BRANTLEY, RICE, COTTON, CORN, AND SOYBEAN
PRODUCER, BRANTLEY FARMING COMPANY, ENGLAND, AR

Introduction

Chairman Lucas, Ranking Member Peterson, and Members of the Committee, thank you for holding this important hearing on the re-authorization of the farm bill. I am honored to have the opportunity to offer testimony before the Committee concerning my views on current farm policy and the changes needed.

My name is Dow Brantley. My farm is located in central Arkansas near the community of England. We grow rice, cotton, corn, and soybeans. I farm in partnership with my father, mother, two brothers and our families. Due to the hard work of my grandparents and parents, our family farm has grown from just a few hundred acres in 1946 to around 8,500 acres in row crop production today. I am pleased to serve as the Chairman of the Arkansas Rice Federation and the Arkansas Rice Producers' Group, as well as a board member for many other agribusiness associations in the state, but I offer my testimony today from my perspective as a farmer, and not on behalf of any one organization.

Industry Overview

As I stated earlier, my farm is diversified, but rice is one of our primary focuses. It is worth noting that Arkansas grows rice on approximately 1.3 to 1.5 million acres each year, which is nearly half of the entire U.S. rice crop. Rice production, transportation and processing play important roles in the state by providing thousands of jobs in what is referred to as the Mississippi River Delta. Rice is the state's second highest value commodity and the top agricultural export. Nationally, the

U.S. rice industry contributes \$34 billion in annual economic activity. It provides jobs and income for not only rice producers and processors, but also for all involved in the value chain, contributing 128,000 jobs.

About 85 percent of all the rice that is consumed in the U.S. is produced domestically.

Despite significant trade barriers to exports, the U.S. remains the largest non-Asian exporter of rice and the third largest exporter worldwide.

Rice fields are flooded during the growing season to provide water that the plants need and to help control weeds. While drought during the growing season adds to the cost of maintaining the flood and certainly adds to the labor required to check irrigation pumps and keep levees intact, we do not lose a rice crop due to drought.

Global Challenges of U.S. Rice Industry

The bigger challenges facing the U.S. rice industry are challenges over which rice farmers have no control. They are decisions taken by governments—our own Federal Government and the governments of nations around the world. Here are some examples:

1. Brazil's PEP (Petrobras Environmental Program) program provides a \$60 per ton export subsidy for rice shipped to Central America, Haiti, Nigeria and to the U.S. All are traditional U.S. rice markets.
2. Thailand's Intervention Price is buying rice from Thai farmers at the equivalent of \$10 per bushel. The U.S. market price is in the \$6.00 per bushel range. And U.S. rice faces Thai rice in world markets every day.
3. India, one of the world's top rice exporters, subsidizes the cost of fertilizer and other inputs for its farmers.
4. Iraq's recent tender specifies rice varieties grown in Thailand and Vietnam, but not in the U.S. Thailand's unreasonable demands have led to a 77 percent drop in sales of U.S. rice to the country.
5. South Korean negotiators, at the eleventh hour, demanded that rice be excluded from the so-called Korea Free Trade Agreement because they considered rice a "sensitive crop." U.S. negotiators agreed to the exclusion.
6. China has yet to accept imports of U.S. rice as a result of China's lack of phytosanitary requirements.
7. Japan's desire to join the Trans Pacific Partnership has caused the rice industry to question the impact of the TPP on rice trade within that group of nations.
8. There have been no recent country updates as required by the WTO, which brings into question the level of engagement by the Administration in enforcing the trade issue.
9. While the U.S. has extended trade and travel status with Vietnam and China, countries which were our enemies in the 1960s and 1970s, we have not restored normal travel and trade relations with Cuba where the U.S. Government continues an embargo that was put into place more than 50 years ago.

The biggest risk to the U.S. rice industry is not crop failure, but our own government's trade policies and the trade policies of foreign governments, which are either condoned or ignored by our government. These trade policies and the increased costs of inputs, especially fuel and fertilizer, over which the U.S. rice farmer has no control, cannot be covered by a one size fits all farm policy.

The U.S. rice industry is seeking risk management tools that will allow rice farmers to secure their production loans and to repay the loans should forces over which they have no control lead to an increase in input costs or a decline in rice prices which make U.S. rice less competitive.

Not providing such a policy option threatens not only U.S. farmers who grow rice, but the thousands of Americans who transport, process and market U.S. rice across our nation and around the world.

2008 Farm Bill Review

The 2008 Farm Bill continued the traditional mix of policies consisting of the non-recourse marketing loan, loan deficiency payment, and the direct and countercyclical payment. While the countercyclical payment and marketing loan have been helpful in the past, they have recently been overwhelmed by the cost of production. If crop prices drop sharply most producers, including myself, will be in dire financial straits by the time these policies make payments. However, the marketing loan also plays a key role in the orderly marketing of crops for both producers and our marketing cooperatives, especially for rice and cotton. This policy should be continued without

being encumbered by limitations on how much of a commodity a producer can place under loan. The direct payment, whatever its imperfections, has assisted rice producers in meeting the ongoing and serious price risk of farming in today's environment. It is a bit ironic that the Federal Government has been sending signals to the agriculture community that we should shift our policies towards those that are green box and WTO friendly, such as direct payments. The rice industry heeded those instructions in previous farm bills, and we, more than any other commodity, will be severely impacted by the loss of the direct payment unless Congress works with us to find a workable policy solution.

The new policies created in the 2008 Farm Bill included the addition of Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) as an alternative to countercyclical payments for producers who agree to a reduction in direct payments and marketing loan benefits. The bill also added Supplemental Revenue Assurance (SURE) as a standing disaster assistance supplement to Federal crop insurance.

The support mechanisms within ACRE do not provide an adequate farm policy for rice farmers or others in the Mid-South when compared to the DCP program. As evidence by the lack of sign ups, ACRE has not proven to be a viable alternative for Southern agriculture. In my home county, we have 1,650 producers, and not one has elected to choose ACRE. I understand that only one producer in the entire state of Arkansas has enrolled 20 acres in ACRE. Specifically, in the first year of ACRE signup, only eight rice farms, representing less than 900 acres, were enrolled nationwide. A one-size-fits-all policy will not work, but a regional or crop-based policy could provide the assurance that rice farmers will be able to endure the challenges they face.

SURE has provided little, if any, assistance to row crop producers, including those producers in the Mid-South who suffered significant monetary losses due to heavy rains and flooding occurring prior to and during harvest and spring flooding.

I recognize the challenge facing Congress to make improvements in this program. Without increased baseline spending authority, there will be no funds to continue the policy in the next farm bill much less make the necessary improvements for it to be an effective disaster relief mechanism. However, I do not support reallocating existing spending authority from current farm policy to apply to SURE.

Crop Insurance

Crop insurance, as a whole, hasn't worked on our farm or many others like ours in Arkansas. Our farm is 100 percent irrigated, and on average, our yields are very consistent. Our financial problems occur with higher production costs due to irrigation or as the result of a weather event in the fall that disrupts our harvest and affects the quality of our crops. These circumstances can't be hedged.

Conservation

My family has participated in several conservation initiatives over the years. Initiatives such as the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP), and Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) have helped us conserve our natural resources and become better stewards of the land. Conservation initiatives such as the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) can lead to improved environmental and conservation practices, however I believe that this program is not succeeding in the way it could. Of all the conservation initiatives offered by USDA, the CSP might have the most potential in terms of producing the desired environmental results that are beneficial to both the environment and the farmer. This initiative is a win-win for everyone, but it has been vastly under-funded. The CSP has been hampered by overly restrictive payment limitations contrived by USDA regulators, and I do not believe the statute supports the restrictions. Because the CSP regulations limit payments to an "agricultural operation" and because the payment limits are so low, most farmers do not have the opportunity to enroll all of their land, even if their land would otherwise be eligible. In order to enroll more land in CSP, a producer is required to have more than one agricultural operation. This is a very costly and inefficient way for a producer to operate (*e.g.*, multiple loans, multiple operating accounts, multiple sets of operating records, *etc.*). Again, this probably has something to do with the level of funding, but it would seem to me that an initiative that produces benefits for both the environment and the producer would warrant more funding. With that being said, conservation initiatives should not serve as the primary delivery mechanism for farm policy and should not come at the expense of our farm policies.

Payment Limitations/Means Testing

The 2008 Farm Bill also made very substantial changes to the payment eligibility provisions, establishing an adjusted gross income (AGI) means test and, a very significant tightening of "actively engaged" requirements for eligibility. In my opinion,

the USDA over-stepped the intent of Congress in key payment eligibility provisions and issued regulations that are overly complicated and restrictive.

These changes have not only been expensive, but they have required our farm to make changes in our day-to-day operations that do not make good business sense. FSA's financing rules, active personal management rules and the decision by USDA to allow FSA and NRCS to operate under different actively engaged rules, are a few examples of the problems that we are facing. Sound farm policy provisions are of little value if commercial-size family farming operations are ineligible for benefits. While I oppose any artificial payment limitations, I advocate administering the current provisions within the intent of Congress and strongly oppose any further restrictions.

2012 Farm Bill

I believe Congress should reauthorize the farm bill this year.

I understand that the budget situation facing this Committee is a key consideration in the development of the farm bill. These budget pressures, coupled with the outcome of the U.S.-Brazil WTO case means some farm policies must be modified to satisfy both budget constraints and specific trade objectives.

Some key components of the farm bill should be maintaining planting flexibility that began with the 1996 Farm Bill and the countercyclical policies that have been in place for more than a decade now.

Given the aforementioned budget pressures and other considerations facing Congress, I believe that the following priorities represent the needs of producers for crops here in the Mid-South:

- First, the trigger levels for assistance should be updated to provide tailored and reliable help should commodity prices decline below today's production costs, and should include a floor or reference price to protect in multi-year low price scenarios.
- Second, as payments would only be made in loss situations, payment limits and means tests for producers should be eliminated, or at a minimum not tightened any further.
- Third, Federal crop insurance should be improved to provide more effective risk management for all crops in all production regions, beginning with the policy development process.

Price Protection is Key

The development of farm policy should be focused on providing producers with price protection, not just for price moves during the growing year, but for multiple years of price declines as we saw occur in the late 1990's. Those that hold out crop insurance as the centerpiece of farm policy certainly don't understand the nature of farming in my area. Crop insurance can't, and it was not designed to, provide price protection across multiple years. Adequate price protection is the most critical component of the next farm bill and must be included in any policy option.

The first priority should be to concentrate on increasing the prices or revenue levels at which farm policy would trigger so that it is actually meaningful to producers, and would reliably trigger should prices decline sharply.

The reference price for rice should be increased to \$13.98/cwt (\$6.30/bu). This level would more closely reflect the significant increases in production costs for rice on my farm. And this reference price should be a component of both the price-based option and the revenue-based option to ensure downside price protection.

The existing price trigger levels have simply not kept pace with the significant increases in production costs. It is for this reason that I believe strengthening U.S. farm policy would be helpful in ensuring that producers have the ability to adequately manage their risks and access needed credit.

Options for Different Production Regions

I believe that farm policy must be designed to give producers options of what policy will work best for a farmer based on our mix of crops and our growing region. I consider my farm to be rather diversified, growing four of the major program crops. We are fortunate to farm in an area where we have the ability to rotate among several crops. Not all production regions have that ability and may be limited to just one or two crops that can be profitably produced. Because of this great diversity across American agriculture we need policy options that I can use to tailor the best risk management tools possible on my farm.

Using rice as an example, here in the Mid-South I can rotate up to three other crops with my rice, whereas rice producers on the Gulf Coast have in most cases only one other crop rotation option, and yet in California rice producers have in most cases only one cropping choice, rice. Due to a host of differences in market

prices, production costs, yields, marketing patterns, and uses, there is the potential for a properly designed revenue-based policy to work for rice growers in California, while I know that for my rice enterprise here in Arkansas I need a price-based policy. But I would like the opportunity to evaluate both price-based and revenue-based options for my other crops to see which will best fit my situation. Each crop has very different pricing and marketing options.

Plain and Bankable Policies

The current SURE has too many factors and is not tailored to the multiple business risks producers face—it is not plain. The current ACRE, while offering improved revenue-based protection, is complicated by requiring two loss triggers; providing payments nearly 2 years after a loss; and provides no minimum price protection—it is not bankable. The marketing loan and target prices are plain and bankable—unfortunately the trigger prices are no longer relevant to current costs and prices.

Planting Flexibility

Any commodity specific farm policy that is tied to planted acres must be designed with care so as to not create payment scenarios that incentivize farmers to plant for a farm policy. Whatever is done should accommodate history and economics and allow for proportional reductions to the baseline among commodities. Some commodities are currently more reliant on countercyclical farm policies (ACRE/CCP) while others are receiving only Direct Payments in the baseline. Generally, the least disruptive and fairest way to achieve savings across commodities would be to apply a percentage reduction to each commodity baseline and restructure any new policy within the reduced baseline amounts.

There have been concerns raised about higher reference prices distorting planting decisions and resulting in significant acreage shifts, including for rice. Based on my understanding of the reference price levels included in the Agriculture Committees' package last fall, a reference price for rice of \$13.98/cwt that is paid on historic CCP payment yields and on 85% of planted acres results in a effective price level well below my average cost of production, so I find it hard to imagine why I would plant simply due to this policy given these levels. As I have noted earlier, we have a very diverse cropping mix, and my planting decisions are based on a number of economic, agronomic, and marketing factors, but farm policy that sets support levels below costs of production is not a factor in planting decisions.

Research

We support the funding for our land-grant universities through the research title, particularly the formula funding like the Hatch and Smith-Lever that enable our universities to deliver initiatives so important to our states. These initiatives are not only matched 7:1 with state dollars but finance important efforts on key issues at the state level like herbicide resistance, water quality, profitable and sustainable production practices and 4–H.

Conclusion

In summary, I appreciate the work of this Committee in crafting the 2008 Farm Bill and, more recently, the recommendations developed last fall with your counterparts in the Senate. I know developing this next farm bill will present its own set of challenges especially from inadequate budget authority and international trade obligations.

Based on my experience in working with the rice and cotton industries and the Arkansas Farm Bureau, I know they will work closely with this Committee to ensure that we have an effective farm policy. It is critical that we maintain provisions that allow us to be competitive in world markets and provide support in times of low prices. Our industries will evaluate different delivery systems as necessary to accomplish these goals.

Thank you for the opportunity to present my views today and I will be happy to respond to any questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Mr. Veach, you may proceed whenever you are ready.

STATEMENT OF RANDY VEACH, COTTON, RICE, CORN, WHEAT, AND SOYBEAN PRODUCER, MANILA, AR

Mr. VEACH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee, and Congressman Crawford for bringing this field hearing

here to Arkansas. We really appreciate the opportunity to testify before you.

I am a farmer from Mississippi County, Arkansas. I am a cotton, rice, soybean, wheat, and corn farmer, predominantly cotton. I farm with my wife, my son Brandon, and his wife. Brandon is a fourth generation farmer and we farm some land that my grandfather cleared and started farming. This is my 42nd crop, so I have been farming for a pretty good while.

I want to commend this Committee and for your leadership, Mr. Chairman, in putting forth a bill before the Joint Committee on Deficit Reduction. I think it needs to be noted that this was the only Committee that did put forth a bill, and we commend you on that.

I also serve as President of Arkansas Farm Bureau and I neglected to say that earlier.

We must, as a country, get our house back in order. And agriculture is ready to do our part. But we cannot balance our Federal budget on the backs of agriculture. We cannot cut our domestic support to the point where we lose our safety net. I believe that the farm bill should be crafted to benefit all sectors of agriculture. Farmers and ranchers risk it all every year to feed, clothe, and shelter our nation and the world.

It is also very important to have a good farm bill that will protect our rural communities. Our rural communities depend upon agriculture and agriculture depends upon our rural communities.

Commodity programs should take into consideration commodity and regional differences which, Mr. Chairman, you mentioned awhile ago. A one-size-fits-all approach will not work for all regions and all commodities.

Agriculture is our state's largest industry, as Congressman Crawford talked about. We bring an impact of more than \$9.4 billion, a direct impact, and then an indirect impact of \$16 billion. And 20 percent of all the jobs in the State of Arkansas are directly related to agriculture. Arkansas is number one in rice, number two in catfish and broilers, and number three in cotton.

Agriculture must have a workable risk management program. These programs consist of a combination of commodity programs and crop insurance. Historically, commodity programs provided price risk protection and crop insurance covered yield risk. In much of the South, our yield risk is mitigated by irrigation, about 80 percent of all row crops are irrigated in Arkansas. But this also greatly increases our input cost. That is the reason that crop insurance participation is lower in the Mid-South than other parts of the country. Arkansas agriculture needs a traditional program that provides price protection as well.

The current marketing loan program, with increased loan rates that reflect current prices, and a countercyclical program with higher target prices calculated on planted acres and current historic yields, would provide price protection.

Maintaining the marketing loan program is extremely beneficial to all crops. We use the marketing loan program extensively to help reach a higher price for our commodities, and cotton and rice use it very much. Prices are cyclical. I remember back in the 1970s I sold soybeans for \$12.00 a bushel. In 2001, we sold soybeans for

\$4.00 a bushel. So prices are cyclical and we need that price protection.

2011 was a year of difficult and diverse weather. Flooding, followed by drought and again flooding. And Chairman Lucas, I think the drought was even more extensive in your state, and the opportunity to irrigate is not as good as it is in our state.

Arkansas growers, through drought, did not have the losses that other states had, but we had a lot of losses due to flooding. That is another example that a one-size-fits-all program does not work effectively for our regions.

One point I wanted to make on flooding was that there is a gap that we have in flood insurance. Crops that are stored on-farm in storage in those facilities does not have the opportunity to have insurance protection. The Federal Government does not offer any protection for flooded grain in stored bins and private industry does not either. So this is something that needs to be addressed in the farm bill. I think that there was also not an opportunity for a lot of those producers to get the grain out of those bins and get them to the market so they could pay off their marketing loans. I think within Subtitle B, Marketing Assistance Loans and Loan Deficiency Payments, the Secretary should have the ability to extend the marketing assistance loans due to federally declared disasters.

You know, I know there is a public perception regarding direct payments. But I feel that I must caution you on an overnight elimination of this program, and what it would do to agricultural states' economy. For example, eliminating direct payments would have a \$243 million impact on Arkansas immediately, which is 1,952 jobs. This change will affect operating loans and rental agreements as well. Federal crop insurance alone will not replace the loss protection direct payments provide. Higher marketing loans—higher target prices will replace some of that money and some of that protection that will be lost by these direct payments.

We also support Congressman Peterson's bill when it comes to dairy that offers a voluntary gross margin insurance program. I think that we have also put one similar to this in the State of Arkansas in place, and it has worked very successfully. But I think this is also a reason that we need to get a farm bill this year.

Research: we oppose any cuts in research funding. Our increase in production is directly related to successful research and our land-grant universities do a tremendous job.

Conservation: we want to maintain the conservation practices and programs, current funding on that. EQIP, it is especially important that we maintain the current funding level in EQIP. EQIP is one of those programs that helps not only row crops but livestock production as well.

I will sum up by saying in conclusion, it is a benefit to our country to have a diverse agriculture industry. The farm bill should be crafted to support all sectors of agriculture.

I appreciate the hard work of this Committee to ensure that farmers and ranchers have a safety net that works for their region and their commodity during times of decreased prices and difficult weather, and allows our farmers to continue to provide the safest, most abundant, and least expensive food supply in the world.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Veach follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF RANDY VEACH, COTTON, RICE, CORN, WHEAT, AND
SOYBEAN PRODUCER, MANILA, AR

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee, my name is Randy Veach, a row-crop producer from rural Mississippi County, which is the largest row crop county in the nation. I raise cotton, rice, corn, wheat and soybeans. I farm with my son Brandon, who is the fourth generation to farm the ground cleared by my grandfather and father. This will be my 42nd crop.

I am serving my fourth term as President of Arkansas Farm Bureau, the state's largest agriculture advocacy organization with more than 220,000 member families.

I commend this Committee, with your leadership Mr. Chairman, for putting forth a bill to the Joint Committee on Deficit Reduction. Agriculture was the only Committee that put forward a proposal, and you should be congratulated for that.

We must as a nation get our house in order, and agriculture is ready to do its part in that effort. We feel across-the-board cuts are the fairest way to reduce our country's spending. We cannot balance the Federal budget on the backs of agriculture, and the cuts should not be so severe that eliminate the safety net that helps ensure adequate supplies of food and fiber. I feel, in fact, that agriculture is critical to our national security.

I believe the next farm bill should be crafted to benefit all sectors of the agriculture community and all regions of the country. I also believe it should be passed this year. Farmers and ranchers risk it all to feed, clothe and shelter our nation and the world. A one-size-fits-all approach will not work for all regions and all commodities. Farm programs should take into consideration commodity and regional differences.

Agriculture has a national impact of agriculture is \$170 billion. It is our state's largest industry with a direct impact of more than a \$9.4 billion and an indirect impact of more than \$16 billion. We exports more than \$2 billion in agricultural products each year. Arkansas ranks number one in rice, number two in catfish, broilers, and number three in cotton.

Agriculture must have workable risk management programs. These programs consist of a combination of Commodity Programs and Crop Insurance. Historically, commodity programs provided price risk protection and crop insurance covered yield risk. In Arkansas our yield risk is mitigated by irrigation (we are 80 percent irrigated for row crops). However, this greatly increases our input costs. That is the reason crop insurance participation is lower in the Mid-South than other parts of the country.

Arkansas agriculture needs a traditional program that provides price protection.

The current marketing loan program, with increased loan rates that reflect current prices and a countercyclical program with higher target prices calculated on planted acres and current historic yields, would provide price protection.

Maintaining the marketing loan program benefits all the crops, as recent high prices of cotton, cotton placed under the CCC loan have been steadily declining since the 2007 crop. The Mid-South accounts for approximately 50 percent of cotton placed under loan. This is a perfect time to increase loan rates, as commodity prices are up, as well as our inputs (fuel, fertilizer, crop protectants, *etc.*) Prices are cyclical, and these high prices are not sustainable.

November Average Cash Price Reported by USDA

Crop	1981	1991	2001	2011
Cotton (lb)	63.00	62.40	30.77	90.40
Rice (cwt)	9.83	7.58	4.23	14.40
Soybeans (bu)	6.00	5.42	4.18	11.50

As you will see, 2001 was a very difficult year for agriculture. The "three-legged stool" approach saved agriculture during the low prices. The marketing loan and countercyclical program protected our farmers against those times of low prices.

Cotton

Total value of cotton production in Arkansas totals \$694.5 million. Cotton is more than lint. Cottonseed production was 5.3 million tons and equates to \$118 million. It is used primarily by the livestock industry with 50 percent used by dairy farmers.

U.S. farmers planted 14.4 million acres of cotton in 2011. This was an increase of 34 percent from the previous year. Mid-South plantings were just less than 2.5 million acres, a 29 percent increase.

2011 was a year of difficult and diverse weather; flooding, followed by drought, and back to flooding.

Abandonment rates were up 34 percent. The highest since USDA began reporting both planted and harvested area in 1909. The Southwest growers were unable to harvest 60 percent of their cotton area. As you know, Mr. Chairman, Oklahoma registered the largest abandonment, 83 percent of planted area being a total loss. I contend Arkansas growers, through irrigation, didn't have the losses that our western neighbors experienced.

This is another example of why a one-size-fits-all program will not work effectively for all regions.

While flooding delayed planting in the Mid-South, our losses were in yield, not abandonment. Arkansas cotton production experienced a 107 lb. decrease compared to 2010. The average price in 2010 for cotton was \$.89 lb. If you calculate the price of cotton with 107 lb. decrease it equates to an average \$95.23 reduction per acre.

Due to the spring floods, for the first time, we witnessed an issue that needs to be addressed. Flood insurance is not offered to cover grain stored "on-farm." With more grain stored on farm, we need the Federal flood insurance to cover on-farm grain stored in bins.

Another issue that was witnessed for the first time was grain in the loan was unable to be delivered due to the flood. The Secretary could not extend the provisions of the loan due to Section 1203(b). I suggest amending Subtitle B, "Marketing Assistance Loans and Loan Deficiency Payments" Section 1203(b) Extension Prohibited, by either eliminating Section 1203(b) Extension Prohibited or establishing a criteria for the Secretary to have the ability to extend the marketing assistance loans due to Federal Declared disasters.

I understand public perception regarding direct payments, but I feel that I must caution you on the overnight elimination of this program and what it would do to the economy of several agricultural states. For example, the elimination of DP would have a \$243 million impact on Arkansas' economy, and equates to an average of \$40 per acre in eastern Arkansas. In Iowa, the reduction is \$473 million, Illinois \$418 million and Texas \$390 million. This will be an immediate reduction of the state's agricultural economy. This change will affect operating loans, rental agreements and also reduce land values. An immediate elimination of direct payments will cause Mid-South farmers higher risk due to larger operation loans with less collateral. That will increase pressures on agriculture lenders. I would caution the Committee about a complete and overnight overhaul of farm programs. That could affect markets, crop rotation, our state's agriculture economy, and have unintended consequences in the marketplace.

Federal crop insurance will not replace the lost protection now provided by direct payments. Higher marketing loan rates and higher target rates will help provide the price protection needed by farmers.

Dairy

For the record, I want to express our support for Congressman Peterson's bill to eliminate the dairy price support program and the Milk Income Loss Contract program and to use the funding associated with those programs to offer a voluntary gross margin insurance program for dairy farmers.

Arkansas Farm Bureau lead an effort 3 years ago to create a successful state program that assisted our dairy industry.

The main reason for this was to assist our dairy farmers during the toughest of times, as the national program did not work and needed an overhaul. Congressman Peterson's bill is the overhaul the dairy industry needs to survive.

Research

We oppose any cuts to research funding. We recognize the key role that agricultural research plays in making and keeping the farm sector competitive, profitable and responsive to the country's changing food, feed and fiber needs.

Our increase in production is directly related to successful research. Research is an invaluable investment for agriculture and the nation. Land-grant universities provide unbiased research that farmers and ranchers rely on to make informed decisions.

We support the funding for our land-grant universities through the research title, particularly the formula funding like the Hatch and Smith-Lever that enables our universities to deliver programs so important to our states.

These Federal investments are not only matched 7:1 with state dollars, but finance programs on key issues at the state level, like herbicide resistance, water quality, 4-H, as well as profitable—and sustainable—production practices.

A pressing research issue is pigweed control in cotton and the issue of glyphosate resistance.

Conservation

Funding for conservation practices and programs to help farmers and land owners comply with Federal environmental regulations should be maintained. I contend EQIP is the most beneficial conservation program, as it helps all sectors of agriculture and should remain at current funding levels.

We support the current conservation programs, given the fiscal considerations and increasing worldwide demand for food; we strongly support the “working lands” programs over the land retirement programs. The five conservation programs without baseline beyond FY 2012 should not be extended by cutting funding elsewhere.

Payment Limitations/AGI

We oppose any changes to the current payment limitations or means test. To be viable, we must recognize realistic economies of scale to justify the large capital investment associated with farming.

Credit

We support the enhancement of the Emergency Loan Program to assist farmers and ranchers during declared disasters. We feel that the eligibility requirements should be modified for the program to meet the needs of our farmers. We propose eliminating the 30 percent loss and the two lender credit denial requirements.

Specialty Crop

We support our specialty crop farmers and encourage assistance on research, food safety, marketing and promotions.

Livestock

We favor maintaining a livestock title.

In conclusion, our country needs a diverse agriculture industry. Rural America counts on agriculture; in fact it is the primary economic engine for our rural communities. At the same time, agriculture counts on those rural communities. Anything that weakens our rural communities has a negative impact on agriculture. So, in that way, we have a co-dependent relationship.

The farm bill should be crafted to support all sectors of agriculture. I appreciate the hard work of this Committee to help ensure farmers and ranchers have a reliable safety net that works during times of decreased prices and difficult weather, and one that fits their region and their commodity. With that in place, U.S. farmers will continue to provide the safest, most abundant, and most affordable food supply in the world.

Thank you. And God bless America.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Mr. Veach.

Mr. Combs, you may proceed when you are ready.

STATEMENT OF PAUL T. COMBS, RICE, SOYBEAN, COTTON, CORN, AND WHEAT PRODUCER; PRESIDENT, SUNRISE LAND COMPANY, KENNETT, MO

Mr. COMBS. Thank you. Chairman Lucas, Congressman Crawford, Congressman Neugebauer, and Congressman Stutzman; thank you for holding this hearing today and for allowing me the opportunity to testify.

My name is Paul T. Combs and our farms produce corn, cotton, wheat, soybeans, and rice in the Missouri Bootheel. My family is also in the farm equipment business with dealerships in southeast Missouri and northeast Arkansas.

I want to start out by thanking Chairman Lucas and Ranking Member Peterson for the work they did in putting together a farm bill last fall that would have served farmers and the taxpayers well. I appreciated your efforts because you put together a farm bill that worked for all farmers rather than picking winners and losers.

I also appreciated your work because it was clear that you were not driven by personal ideology of what farm bills should look like in concept, but instead, what actually works with producers on the ground. And finally, I thought it was extremely important that you did not forget the lesson of 1998 where there was inadequate protection in the event of low prices. That mistake was costly to farmers and the taxpayers alike, and I hope it is not repeated.

It happens that what I so appreciate about the work you did last fall is my main message about what the 2012 Farm Bill should look like. The 2012 Farm Bill should not pick winners and losers by forcing all farmers into a policy that works for some, but not for others. Forcing everyone into a revenue program would have that effect.

The 2012 Farm Bill should offer producers a menu of options that meaningfully address the risks they face on their farm. Price-based and revenue-based options and a STAX option for cotton producers makes good sense.

The next farm bill should also meet what should be the lowest common denominator in any farm bill, and that is to be there when the bottom falls out on prices. Some people in Washington, and even some of my fellow producers, forget the basic economic lesson that what goes up usually comes down. Every one of us will regret being a part of a farm bill that would ignore this basic economic lesson. Revenue protection without some minimum price protection such as you included in the 2011 package would repeat the grave mistakes of the past if we see prolonged periods of low prices. This sort of policy would fail farmers.

The 2012 Farm Bill should offer producers a little certainty at a time when there is little certainty. That means enacting a 2012 Farm Bill in 2012 rather than kicking the can down the road a year and leaving us to wonder what policy will be beyond next year. It also means letting the ink dry on substantial payment limitations and means testing reforms included in the 2008 bill. If Washington is serious about global competitiveness, it would do best to lose this sort of social engineering that holds us back from competing against heavily subsidized and protected foreign competition.

Last, Ranking Member Peterson has, time and time again, suggested that crop insurance may one day be all we producers have left. I hope that is not the case because crop insurance does not work as well for farmers in this area, as it does for Iowa corn and bean farmers where the typical coverage is 80 or 85 percent of revenue.

In the case of rice, roughly $\frac{1}{2}$ of our production is in CAT and the other $\frac{1}{2}$ is at the 60 percent yield coverage. We as an industry have been trying to change this for 4 years but have so far been unsuccessful. Our industry will keep working on it, but if the two policies that we have pending are improved, we are still a long way off from being where producers in the Midwest are relative to crop insurance.

So the bottom line is we are entering the farm bill debate at a huge disadvantage as one of the main things that works for us is the direct payment and that is the one thing that is going to be eliminated under this bill.

Fortunately, Mr. Chairman and Mr. Peterson, you know this well and you have worked with our industry to ensure that rice farmers are not left out in the cold in this farm bill process. And for that, we all thank you very much. We are grateful to both of you.

Thanks once again for taking the time to be here today and for the opportunity to hear perspectives of producers like myself.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Combs follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF PAUL T. COMBS, RICE, SOYBEAN, COTTON, CORN, AND WHEAT PRODUCER; PRESIDENT, SUNRISE LAND COMPANY, KENNETT, MO

Introduction

Chairman Lucas, Ranking Member Peterson, and Members of the Committee, thank you for holding this hearing concerning farm policy and the 2012 Farm Bill. I appreciate the opportunity to offer testimony on farm policy from the perspective of a producer who comes from an area that produces many different crops and where we have a number of cropping options.

My name is Paul T. Combs. I raise rice, soybeans, cotton, corn, and wheat in Dunklin and Pemiscot counties in the Missouri Bootheel. In addition to our farming operation, my family and I also own and operate farm equipment dealerships in both Missouri and Arkansas.

I recently completed two terms on the board of the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis. I also serve on several boards and committees for farm organizations, including the USA Rice Federation.

Effects of Strong Farm Policy

As a producer who is involved in both production agriculture and as an agribusiness supplier, I come to the table with a somewhat unique perspective.

As a producer, I need long-term certainty in Federal farm policy that will allow me to make business planning decisions on my farm. For this reason, I believe it is imperative that Congress pass a 5 year farm bill this year, not a short-term extension that leaves me in limbo as to what policy will be in place. We are trying to grow our farm by purchasing land when opportunities arise. We are trying to improve our marketing options by expanding on-farm storage capacity so we can better market our crops. These types of decisions require not only long-term policy, but policy that will allow us to tailor our risk management options to the needs of our farm.

As an agribusiness owner, I see firsthand the impact that uncertainty and inadequate farm policy can have on producers when it comes to their decisions about investing in new equipment for their farms. Right now prices are decent for most of the crops in our area, but we all know how cyclical commodity prices are, and every grower needs a policy that will provide some downside price protection if (and likely when) we see a steep decline in commodity prices. Without this type of certainty, farmers, like any businessperson, will take steps to minimize their exposure to risk, resulting in a pullback in investments for their farm. This pullback starts first with their suppliers of inputs (equipment, grain storage facilities, fertilizer) and then begins to impact the majority of businesses in rural America. We've seen this cycle play out over and over and I hope we will not repeat the mistakes of the past by putting in place a farm policy that assumes good prices are here to stay, and then we find out it is ill-equipped to deal with the decline in prices that is sure to come.

Effective farm policy gives producers the confidence we need to continue to invest in our farms and the confidence that lenders need to extend the financing to producers to make these investments. During my time on the Federal Reserve board, I saw the importance of not hindering this access to credit.

2008 Farm Bill Review

The traditional mix of farm policies that were continued in the 2008 Farm Bill including the nonrecourse marketing loan, loan deficiency payment, and counter-cyclical payments have not triggered for most crops due to the current market price levels. Yet the cost of inputs have increased in step with the rise in commodity prices so the current levels of price protection afford very limited protection to producers. However, I would note the importance of maintaining the existing marketing loan which plays an important role in marketing of our cotton and rice in particular.

As such, whatever its imperfections, the Direct Payment alone has assisted producers in meeting the ongoing and serious price and production risks of farming today.

Because the Direct Payment has been singled out for elimination in the next farm bill, I believe that we must strengthen the remaining policies in the 2012 Farm Bill to ensure that producers have the ability to adequately manage their risks and access needed credit.

Crop Insurance

The current suite of risk management products offered through Federal Crop Insurance has provided limited value to producers in the Mid-South.

What farmers need from Federal crop insurance are products that will help protect against increased production and input costs, particularly for energy and energy-related inputs. Because crop insurance does not cover the margin risk that some producers face, we must work to develop a new generation of crop insurance products that will provide more meaningful risk management tools that will aid in protecting against sharp, upward spikes in input costs. I am aware that the rice industry is currently pursuing development of such a product, but it is important to stress that even if a new product is approved this year, it takes several years to conduct a pilot to ensure the policy is functioning properly. And it will be a long road to explain the new product to producers and encourage evaluation of the policy, particularly in areas like mine where we have not historically seen high levels of participation in crop insurance. The bottom line is that even if crop insurance is made effective one day for rice and other crops currently under-served, insurance cannot replace the need for farm policy under the farm bill for any crop.

Conservation

Conservation policies play an important role in production agriculture by providing financial cost-share and technical assistance to producers in their continual efforts to conserve water, soil, air, and wildlife habitat. I support maintaining a strong conservation title in the farm bill, in particular one that emphasizes working lands conservation incentives, but not at the expense of the commodity policies.

Voluntary, incentive-based, and science-based conservation initiatives are needed, as is technical assistance. The Conservation Security Program (CSP), Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), and the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) are important working lands initiatives that assist producers with protection of the environment and conservation of natural resources and should be reauthorized.

Rice producers in my area were some of the early participants in the original CSP and we saw real benefits from this and the other conservation initiatives.

I support the efforts undertaken last fall by the Agriculture Committees to streamline and consolidate the conservation title as part of the Select Committee process, and I urge you to continue with this approach in developing the conservation title in the 2012 Farm Bill.

I would like to note that rice farming is one of the few commercial enterprises that actually promotes wildlife habitat and improves biological diversity.

Since the very nature of rice production requires that fields be flooded for many months of the year, evidence shows unequivocally that it plays a vital role in supporting common environmental goals, such as protecting freshwater supplies and providing critical habitat for hundreds of migratory bird species.

Without rice farming, wetland habitats in the United States would be vastly reduced. A loss of this magnitude would have a disastrous effect on waterfowl and a host of other wetland-dependent species.

The clear and positive benefits that commercial rice production has for migratory birds and other wildlife species contribute not only to a more interesting and diverse landscape, but also provide economic benefits that support local economies and create jobs.

By providing an environment favorable to wildlife advancement, rice production clearly generates positive benefits to the economy and society.

Farm Bill 2012

Farm policy should be designed to support a strong and dynamic U.S. agriculture sector.

As noted earlier, the 1996 Farm Bill's Direct Payments have provided critical help to farmers in the Mid-South—offering capital farmers could tailor to their unique needs.

However, given the pressure to move away from this policy to more counter-cyclical policies, I support the following priorities:

- The triggering mechanism for assistance should be updated to provide tailored and reliable help should commodity prices decline below today's production costs, and should include a floor or reference price to protect in multi-year low price scenarios.
- Second, as payments would only be made in loss situations, payment limits and means tests for producers should be eliminated.
- Third, Federal crop insurance should be improved to provide more effective risk management for rice in all production regions, beginning with the policy development process.

Price Protection Is Imperative

Given the price volatility for the crops I produce, and the fact that most crops in my area are irrigated, most of the risk that I face is on prices, not necessarily production. This is very true for my rice, which is fully irrigated, but most of my other crops are irrigated as well. To address this primary risk, I believe providing effective levels of price support for all crops should be the central focus of this farm bill, and honestly this is what farm policy has historically been focused on and that should continue.

I hear some contend that a revenue-based policy with no reference or floor price is the right approach to take in this farm bill and is all that is needed when coupled with crop insurance. It seems to me that this approach is flawed in several ways. First, this assumes that crop insurance works equally well for all crop and regions, which I can assure you is not the case today. Second, this assumes that we won't face another 1998 through 2002 scenario where we have good commodity prices that quickly fell to catastrophic levels due to global factors. Third, this assumes that if commodity prices fall then input costs will decline in sync and proportional to the decline in prices. I have to say that if history is any guide, then I believe all three of these assumptions will prove wrong. And by not planning now for this type of scenario, we are setting ourselves up for another situation where farm policy will not be equipped to respond to this price decline. The result will be a significant economic downturn in rural America, followed by calls for Congress to provide additional economic assistance in a time of large Federal budget deficits and debt.

In addition, what happens if the price of only one or two commodities decline sharply? I can't imagine that input costs are going to decline in this scenario, so producers of these crops are forced to deal with a severely depressed price environment where our options are to either stop producing all together, or shift into the other crops with higher prices. This could have severe implications to the infrastructure for the crops with depressed prices and reduced production. We have seen this occur in some areas with both rice and cotton infrastructure and I believe we can ill-afford a farm policy that would not provide us with effective downside price protection to forestall any further contraction of these industries.

For example, based on the farm bill process last fall, I believe the reference price for rice should be increased to \$13.98/cwt (\$6.30/bu). This level would more closely reflect the significant increases in production costs for rice. And this reference price should be a component of both the price-loss policy and the revenue-loss policy to ensure downside price protection.

Producer Choice

In addition, there should be true options for producers that recognize that a one-size-fits-all approach to farm policy does not work effectively for all crops or even the same crop in different production regions.

Here in the Mid-South where I farm, a price-based loss policy is viewed as being most effective in meeting the risk management needs, again largely due to our consistent production as a result of large investments in irrigation infrastructure and being blessed with adequate water resources. Specifically, this policy should include a price protection level that is more relevant to current cost of production; paid on planted acres or percentage of planted acres; paid on more current yields; and take into account the lack of effective crop insurance policies for many crops in my area.

Using rice as an example, this is a crop grown in a fairly limited geographic area, yet there are distinctions between growing regions that make a difference in what policy will work best for rice. In the California production region, although the existing revenue-based policy still does not provide effective risk management, efforts to analyze modifications which will increase its effectiveness continue. Since rice yields are highly correlated between the farm, county, crop reporting district, and state levels, we believe the revenue plan should be administered for rice at either the county or crop reporting district level to reflect this situation rather than lowering guarantee levels to use farm level yields. By setting loss triggers that reflect local marketing conditions, delivering support sooner, and strengthening revenue guaran-

tees that account for higher production costs as well as the absence of effective crop insurance, California rice producers are hopeful that an effective revenue option can be developed.

While I have focused on the need for a choice for rice producers in different regions, this also applies for producers of most other grains. I support having policy options available for corn, soybeans, and wheat, which I produce, and believe that both a price-based policy and a revenue-based policy should be offered as options for these crops.

I indicated earlier that I am also a cotton producer. I want to encourage the Committee to include the cotton industry's area wide, risk management proposal in the new farm bill. It has been designed to fit the new budget constraints, while providing a reasonable and sustainable safety net for cotton producers. While it is certainly not perfect and is not comparable to our current policy, it represents the substantial reform necessary to provide a basis to resolve the longstanding Brazil WTO case. It does fit the cotton industry's situation far better than the revenue plans designed by Midwestern interests for grains and oilseeds. And it preserves the marketing assistance loan, with modifications, that is so important to our entire industry. It is imperative that the Brazil case be resolved by the end of 2012 to eliminate any possibility that Brazil will impose the prohibitively high tariffs authorized by the WTO. Retaliation in the form of high tariffs will disrupt U.S. exports and adversely impact U.S. businesses across the board.

Bankability—SURE is not tailored to the multiple business risks producers face. ACRE, while offering revenue-based protection, is complicated by requiring two loss triggers; providing payments nearly 2 years after a loss; and provides no minimum price protection—it is not bankable. For example, on farms I enrolled in the ACRE program I just received this month the ACRE payments for the 2010 crop. This is not a policy I can take to a lender and show that it will provide a meaningful and timely safety net. The marketing loan and target prices are plain and bankable—unfortunately the trigger prices are no longer relevant to current costs and prices.

Defendable—It makes sense to provide assistance when factors beyond the producer's control create losses for producers. I believe that tailored farm policies are more defendable. For this reason, updating bases and yields or applying farm policies to planted acres/current production and their triggering based on prices or revenue, depending on the option a producer chooses. However, policy choices should not result in severe regional distortions in commodity policy budget baselines from which reauthorized commodity policies must be developed. Whatever is done should allow for proportional reductions to the baseline among commodities.

Building a safety net to withstand multi-year low prices—Whether in a revenue-based plan, or a price-based plan, reference prices should protect producer income in a relevant way in the event of a series of low price years. Ideally, this minimum could move upward over time should production costs also increase, this being of particular concern in the current regulatory environment.

No distortion of planting decisions—Any commodity specific farm policy that is tied to planted acres must be designed with care so as to not create scenarios that incentivize farmers to plant for a farm policy. As I have followed the current farm bill debate since last fall, I am amazed at some of the assertions about a price-based policy distorting planting decisions and resulting in large acreage shifts. The price levels that I understand were developed last year and how they were factored based on acreage and yield percentages would have meant they were well below our costs of production for all crops. This idea that maintaining a price-based policy is somehow distorting, and that a revenue-based policy that is based off historically high prices is non-distorting is misleading.

Payment Limitations and Means Testing

I strongly oppose any further reduction in the payment limit and adjusted gross income (AGI) levels provided under the current farm bill. Payment limits have the negative effect of penalizing viable commercial size, family farms the most when crop prices are the lowest and support is the most critical. To be a viable farm, we must use economies of scale to justify the large capital investment costs associated with farming today. It is essential that producers maintain eligibility for all production to the non-recourse loan. Arbitrarily limiting payments results in farm sizes too small to be economically viable, particularly for rice, cotton, and grain farms across the Sunbelt. The current payment limit and AGI provisions have created significant paperwork burdens and costs to producers to comply and remain in compliance. As oppressive as these limits are, at a minimum Congress should not make any further reductions or limits that further penalize commercially viable farms.

2011 Efforts for Submission to the Joint Committee on Deficit Reduction

I believe that the package prepared for recommendation for the Budget Control Act of 2011 is a good framework on which to build the 2012 Farm Bill. The choice of risk management tools that producers can tailor to the risks on their own farms, providing under each of those options more meaningful price protection that is actually relevant to today's production costs and prices. I appreciate the hard work of the House and Senate Agriculture Committees and their staff to address the budget constraints you are under, while working in a bicameral and bipartisan fashion to achieve workable solutions for the farm bill.

Conclusion

Again, thank you for your leadership and for the opportunity to offer my testimony this morning. I look forward to working with you and your staff as we move forward in this process. I would be happy to respond to any questions you might have.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Mr. Combs.
Mr. Flowers, proceed when you are ready.

**STATEMENT OF RICHARD BOWEN FLOWERS, JR., COTTON,
CORN, SOYBEAN, WHEAT, AND RICE PRODUCER,
CLARKSDALE, MS**

Mr. FLOWERS. First, I would like to offer my thanks to Chairman Frank Lucas and Members of the Committee for the chance to provide input on the importance of an effective and flexible farm policy. My thanks are also extended to Congressman Rick Crawford for hosting today's hearing. My name is Bowen Flowers and I operate a diversified family farm partnership in and around Clarksdale, Mississippi, which is about 150 miles south of Jonesboro. My crop mix includes cotton, corn, soybean, wheat, and rice.

Mr. Chairman, I understand the daunting task facing this Committee with the development of new farm legislation. Budget pressures will mean addressing a broad array of interests and priorities with less money. In my opinion, agriculture is willing to take a proportionate contribution to deficit reduction, but efforts to impose inequitable reductions on agriculture should be strongly opposed.

With respect to production agriculture, I encourage this Committee to take into consideration the diversity of production practices, cost structures and risk profiles. A one-size-fits-all farm program cannot address this diversity, and I hope that the eventual farm bill will offer a range of programs structured to address the needs of the different commodities and production regions.

I also urge the Committee to complete the farm bill this year, in advance of the expiration of the current legislation. We need some certainty regarding farm programs as we look at the long-term investments necessary to keep our farming operations economically viable.

Although my operation has a diversified mix of crops, I consider cotton my primary crop. As you are well aware, cotton faces the additional challenge of resolving an ongoing trade dispute with Brazil. In that dispute, a WTO panel found fault with cotton's marketing loan and target price. In preparing for the expedited farm bill debate, cotton producers had to make some difficult policy decisions. To that end, the National Cotton Council has proposed dramatic changes to upland cotton programs by eliminating the target price and introducing a formula that will allow the marketing loan to adjust lower in times of low prices. In place of the target price as well as the ACRE program and the direct payment, the cotton

industry is proposing a revenue-based insurance product that will address a level of risks for which current insurance products do not offer affordable options.

I strongly support the industry's proposal known as STAX, and hope the Committee looks favorably on this option when crafting the next farm bill. I commend the National Cotton Council for developing this area-wide revenue-loss crop insurance program. It should be noted since this is a crop insurance program, producers would be required to pay part of the cost of such coverage. Covering up to 95 percent of revenue is especially important in my region, based on high cost of inputs and thin margins. Several years of five percent or more revenue losses would be economically devastating to my operation.

While I am a diversified producer, it is important to note that cotton production is the most single significant economic driver in my area. It means jobs on the farm, in gins, warehouses and through the production and processing cotton cycle. The spin-off impact on rural communities in the Delta, for input suppliers, equipment dealers, and others is also significant. Even a moderately sized city such as Clarksdale is very dependent on agriculture. Therefore, a viable cotton farm policy is especially critical to our rural area.

Mr. Chairman, I would also like to voice my concerns about the efforts to further tighten payment limits or impose arbitrary means tests. Effective farm policy must maximize participation without regard to size or farm income.

In conclusion, I will touch briefly on two final points.

First, crop insurance is a critical tool for effective risk management. I personally purchase crop insurance coverage on my crops. With the STAX product, the cotton industry is proposing to broaden the menu of insurance choices. I encourage all existing products be maintained as well.

Second, conservation programs were strengthened in the 2008 Farm Bill, and I hope these programs will continue to provide workable options for Mid-South farming operations.

Thank you again for the opportunity to offer these comments and I will be happy to answer questions at the appropriate time.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Flowers follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF RICHARD BOWEN FLOWERS, JR., COTTON, CORN, SOYBEAN,
WHEAT, AND RICE PRODUCER, CLARKSDALE, MS

First, I would like to offer my thanks to Chairman Frank Lucas, Ranking Member Collin Peterson, and Members of the Committee for the chance to provide input on the importance of an effective and flexible farm policy. My thanks are also extended to Congressman Rick Crawford for hosting today's hearing. My name is Bowen Flowers and I operate a diversified family farm partnership in and around Clarksdale, Mississippi, which is about 150 miles south of Jonesboro. My crop mix includes cotton, corn, soybeans, wheat and rice.

Mr. Chairman, I understand the daunting task facing this Committee with the development of new farm legislation. Budget pressures will mean addressing a broad array of interests and priorities with less money. In my opinion, agriculture is willing to make a proportionate contribution to deficit reduction, but efforts to impose inequitable reductions on agriculture should be strongly opposed.

With respect to production agriculture, I encourage this Committee to take into consideration the diversity of production practices, costs structures and risk profiles. A one-size-fits-all farm program cannot address this diversity and I hope that the

eventual farm bill will offer a range of programs structured to address the needs of the different commodities and production regions.

I also urge the Committee to complete the farm bill this year—in advance of the expiration of the current legislation. We need some certainty regarding farm programs as we look at the long-term investments necessary to keep our farming operations economically viable.

Although my operation has a diversified mix of crops, I consider cotton my primary crop. As you are well aware, cotton faces the additional challenge of resolving an ongoing trade dispute with Brazil. In that dispute, a WTO panel found fault with cotton's marketing loan and target price. In preparing for the expedited farm bill debate, cotton producers had to make some difficult policy decisions. To that end, the National Cotton Council has proposed dramatic changes to upland cotton programs by eliminating the target price and introducing a formula that will allow the marketing loan to adjust lower in times of low prices. In place of the target price, as well as the ACRE program and the direct payment, the cotton industry is proposing a revenue-based insurance product that will address a level of risks for which current insurance products do not offer affordable options.

I strongly support the industry's proposal, known as STAX, and hope the Committee looks favorably on this option when crafting the next farm bill. I commend the National Cotton Council for developing this area-wide revenue-loss crop insurance program. It should be noted that since this is a crop insurance program, producers would be required to pay part of the cost of such coverage. Covering up to 95% of revenue is especially important in my region based on high cost of inputs and thin margins. Several years of 5–10% revenue losses would be economically devastating to my operation.

While I am a diversified producer, it is important to note that cotton production is the most significant economic driver in my area. It means jobs on the farm, in gins, warehouses and on through the production and processing cotton cycle. The spin-off impact on rural communities in the Delta and other regions for input suppliers, equipment dealers and others is also significant. Even a moderately-sized city such as Clarksdale is very dependent upon agriculture. Therefore a viable cotton farm policy is especially critical to our rural economy.

As a cotton farmer, I understand that my ability to produce a crop will be dependent on strong demand for my product. The U.S. cotton industry sells both to domestic textile mills as well as international mills, and both markets are extremely important. Fortunately, the 2008 Farm Bill included programs that benefit both markets.

In the case of U.S. textile mills, the 2008 farm law introduced the Economic Adjustment Assistance Program. The program is a success story that is revitalizing the U.S. textile manufacturing sector and adding jobs to the U.S. economy. The program provides a payment to U.S. textile manufacturers for all upland cotton consumed. The payment rate from August 1, 2008 through July 31, 2012, is 4¢ per pound of cotton used, and will be adjusted to 3¢ per pound beginning on August 1, 2012. I encourage the continuation of this important program in the new farm law.

In addition, the continuation of adequately funded export promotion programs, including the Market Access Program (MAP) and Foreign Market Development (FMD) Program, are important in an export-dependent agricultural economy. Individual farmers and exporters do not have the necessary resources to operate effective promotion programs which maintain and expand markets—but the public-private partnerships facilitated by the MAP and FMD programs, using a cost-share approach, have proven highly effective and have the added advantage of being WTO-compliant.

Mr. Chairman, I would also like to voice my concerns about efforts to further tighten payment limits or impose arbitrary means tests. Effective farm policy must maximize participation without regard to size or farm income. Artificially limiting benefits is a disincentive to economic efficiency and undermines the ability to compete with heavily subsidized foreign agricultural products. I appreciate the pressures from some in Congress for even more restrictive limits, but I would like to remind the Committee that the 2008 Farm Bill contained significant changes with respect to payment limitations and payment eligibility. In fact, the 2008 farm law included the most comprehensive and far-reaching reform to payment limitations in 20 years. The limitations were made more restrictive, and the adjusted gross income test was substantially tightened. As part of the 2012 Farm Bill, I urge this Committee to not impose any further restrictions on payment eligibility including lower limits or income means tests.

In conclusion, I will touch briefly on two final points. First, crop insurance is a critical tool for effective risk management. I personally purchase crop insurance coverage on my crops. With the STAX product, the cotton industry is proposing to

broaden the menu of insurance choices. I encourage all existing products be maintained as well. Second, conservation programs were strengthened in the 2008 Farm Bill, and I hope those programs will continue to provide workable options for Mid-South farming operations.

Thank you again for the opportunity to offer these comments. I will be happy to answer questions at the appropriate time.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Mr. Flowers.
Mr. Burch, whenever you are ready to proceed.

**STATEMENT OF TIM BURCH, COTTON AND PEANUT
PRODUCER, BURCH FARMS, NEWTON, GA**

Mr. BURCH. Good morning, Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee. My name is Tim Burch. I am a native of Baker County, Georgia which is located in the southwest part of the state. My father, brother, and I run a diversified farming operation. We have approximately 500 acres of peanuts, 1,500 acres of cotton and 150 head of cattle. I have been farming for 37 years and live on the farm of my grandparents. I serve on the Georgia Peanut Commission and I am an alternate to the National Cotton Council. I also am active in Georgia Farm Bureau.

It is critical that Congress pass a 5 year farm bill. Farmers, agribusiness, and financial institutions need as much certainty as possible in an industry that has a very large number of variables impacting profits and losses.

When I began farming, the peanut industry was driven by a Federal supply management peanut policy. In 2002, peanut growers met with the House Agriculture Committee leadership and asked the Committee to move our program policy from the peanut quota program to a marketing loan type program. This marketing loan program is what we have today. It has been very successful for our industry. We support the current program as included in the 2008 Farm Bill but we recognize that there is significant effort to eliminate direct payments. All of our policy analyses assume that direct payments are eliminated. For the last several farm bills, peanut producers have relied on the University of Georgia's National Center for Peanut Competitiveness for farm policy economic analyses. The Center has 22 U.S. representative peanut farms established and maintained by the Center. As farm organizations, Members of the House and Senate, as well as public institutions offered farm policy concepts for the 2012 Farm Bill, the Center would analyze each proposal, including multiple scenarios through the 22 U.S. representative farms dispersed throughout the peanut belt.

What was evident with each of these alternative or revenue type programs is that they did not work on the 22 representative farms. I recognize that some organizations believe that a one-size-fits-all revenue program will work for the U.S. agricultural economy. I do not agree. Our cost structure and equipment needs alone are significantly different than that of the Midwest and our peanut producers require very specialized equipment. Why do these revenue proposals not work for peanuts?

First of all, there is no consideration for irrigated *versus* non-irrigated production practices. There are significant yield differences for peanuts—at 1,100–1,400 pounds, based on Risk Management Agency's data and the U.S. peanut representative farms. The Center's 2011 preliminary data indicates that the yield differences

could reach 3,000 pounds and higher per acre in Georgia. National Agricultural Statistics Service county yields do not separate out the differences between irrigated and non-irrigated peanuts.

Second, there is no revenue insurance program for peanuts.

Third, peanuts do not have any source of predicted harvest price.

Peanuts do not and will not have a futures market like other row crops.

The Rotterdam price series with appropriate conversion formula for peanuts is the best source. Our own U.S. Government used the Rotterdam price series during the GATT trade negotiations and the USDA Foreign Agricultural Service reports that price series.

Utilizing NASS-CRD and NASS county yields will not work for peanuts. None of the six Georgia representative farms analyzed triggered on either the CRD criteria or the county level using existing NASS yields. No CRD district that has one of the Center's representative peanut farms outside of the Southeast would trigger a payment. Peanuts have a greater variability of yield within a county and CRD than any other crop excluding cotton.

An Olympic average does not work to protect a farm from a period of depressed prices or weather related depressed yields.

Given the 2011 peanut season, none of the non-irrigated producers who had between no yield and 1,000 pounds would have been helped by any of the proposed revenue proposals.

If we eliminate direct payments, what will work for the peanut producers? After conferring with the Center over the last 9 months, we believe producers need a policy choice to manage risk, including revenue protection, price protection and crop insurance. I support producers having a choice between a countercyclical type program with a trigger price of \$534 per ton and a revenue program. The Center believes this target price will serve as protection during periods of low prices. USDA estimates that the market price for peanuts is over \$1,200 per ton. I can assure you, just as any peanut producer or major buyer of peanuts would, that \$534 target price will not increase peanut production or acreage. Please also note that we have to rotate peanuts and if our rotation gets out of sync then costs escalate and yields decline.

At the same time, peanut producers need a revenue program that is a real viable choice for producers. This should include a reference price of \$534 per ton and a world market price determined by the Rotterdam price analysis.

Mr. Chairman, you and other Members of the Committee were successful in reforming payment limitation rules in the 2008 Farm Bill. Working with agricultural groups and Members of Congress not on the Agriculture Committee, I believe the reforms in the 2008 Farm Bill were equitable, and I ask that the current adjusted gross income rules and payment limitation restrictions be continued in the 2012 Farm Bill.

In closing, I appreciate the opportunity to testify before the Committee today. You have a difficult task as you attempt to reconcile a crisis in our Federal budget while assuring that America has an adequate and safe food supply.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Burch follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF TIM BURCH, COTTON AND PEANUT PRODUCER, BURCH FARMS, NEWTON, GA

Good morning, Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee. My name is Tim Burch. I am a native of Baker County, Georgia which is located in the southwest part of the state. My father, brother and I run a diversified farming organization. We have approximately 500 acres of peanuts, 1,500 acres of cotton and 150 head of cattle. I have been a farmer for 37 years and live on the farms of grandparents. We are a family farm with a long, proud history. In addition, I am involved in a cotton gin and warehouse as well as a peanut buying point, warehouse and peanut shelling facility with 87 other growers in Georgia. Our agribusiness was founded on the principle that family farmers had to join together to market their products in order to have a future.

I serve on the Georgia Peanut Commission and am an alternate to the National Cotton Council. I also am active with the Georgia Farm Bureau.

I appreciate the opportunity to testify today on The Future of U.S. Farm Policy: Formulation of the 2012 Farm Bill. Our family's livelihood is based on agriculture and farm policy.

It is critical that Congress pass a 5 year farm bill. Farmers, agribusinesses and financial institutions need as much certainty as possible in an industry that has a very large number of variables impacting profits and losses. A 5 year farm bill allows all segments of agriculture the opportunity to achieve the economic impact that all of us desire.

When I began farming, the peanut industry was driven by a Federal supply-management peanut policy. In 2002, peanut growers met with the House Agriculture Committee leadership and asked the Committee to move our program policy from the peanut quota program to a marketing loan type program. This marketing loan program is what we have today. It has been very successful for our industry. We support the current program as included in the 2008 Farm Bill but we recognize that there is a significant effort to eliminate direct payments. All of our policy analyses assume that direct payments are eliminated. For the last several farm bills, peanut producers have relied on the University of Georgia's National Center for Peanut Competitiveness (Center) for farm policy economic analyses. The Center has 22 U.S. Representative Peanut Farms established and maintained by the Center. As farm organizations, Members of the House and Senate as well as public institutions offered farm policy concepts for the 2012 Farm Bill, the Center would analyze each proposal, including multiple scenarios through the 22 U.S. Representative Farms dispersed throughout the peanut belt.

What was evident with each of these alternative or revenue type programs is that they did not work on the 22 Representative Farms. I recognize that some organizations believe that a one size fits all revenue program will work for the U.S. agricultural economy. I do not agree. Our cost structure and equipment needs alone are significantly different than the Midwest with our peanut producers requiring very specialized equipment. Why don't these revenue proposals work for peanuts?

- There is No Consideration for irrigated *versus* non-irrigated production practices. There are significant yield differences for peanuts—at least 1,100–1,400 lbs.—based on Risk Management Agency (RMA) data and the U.S. Peanut Representative Farms. The Center's 2011 preliminary data indicate that the yield differences could reach 3,000 lbs. and higher per acre in Georgia. National Agricultural Statistical Service (NASS) county yields do not separate out the differences between irrigated and non-irrigated peanuts.
- There is NO revenue insurance program for peanuts—all proposals use revenue insurance as the core part of their program where a producer is covered at the 65–85% level. Peanuts had a GRIP yield insurance program but no peanut farmers used it so RMA has discontinued the program. This implies county yield based programs do not work for peanuts.
- Peanuts do not have any source for a predicted harvest price.
- Peanuts DO NOT and WILL NOT HAVE A FUTURES MARKET like other row crops. Multiple land-grant university studies and efforts by the U.S. Department of Agriculture have all concluded that a futures market is not an option for peanuts.
- The Rotterdam price series with appropriate conversion formula for peanuts is the best source. Our own U.S. Government used the Rotterdam price series during the GATT trade negotiations and the USDA Foreign Agricultural Service reports that price series.

- Utilizing NASS-CRD and NASS-County yields WILL NOT work for peanuts. None of the six Georgia Representative Farms analyzed trigger on either the CRD criteria or the county level using existing NASS yields. No CRD district that has one of the Center's Representative Peanut Farms outside the Southeast would trigger a payment. Peanuts have a greater variability of yields within a county and CRD than other row crops excluding cotton.
- An Olympic average does not protect a farm from a period of depressed prices or weather related depressed yields.
- Given the 2011 peanut season, none of the non-irrigated producers who had between no yields to 1,000 lbs would have been helped by any of the proposed revenue proposals.

If we eliminate direct payments, what will work for peanut producers? After conferring with the Center over the last 9 months, we believe producers need a policy choice to manage risk—Revenue Protection, Price Protection and Crop Insurance. I support producers having a choice between a countercyclical type program with a target price of \$534 per ton and a revenue program. The Center believes this target price will serve as protection during periods of low prices. USDA estimates that the market price for peanuts is over \$1,200 per ton. I can assure you, just as any peanut producer or major buyer of peanuts would, that a \$534 per ton target price WILL NOT increase peanut production or acreage. Please also note that we have to rotate peanuts and if our rotation gets out of sync then costs escalate and yields decline.

At the same time, peanut producers need a revenue program that is a real, substantive choice for producers. This should include a Reference Price of \$534 per ton and a world market price determined by a Rotterdam price analysis.

In addition, to Producer Choice, our growers must have access to a full range of workable and useful crop insurance products in order to compete for acreage. Working toward these goals, the nation's peanut farmers came together 2½ years ago to begin work with private industry and RMA to develop a viable insurance program for peanuts. This new program proposal is very much like the successful revenue insurance policies for cotton and corn as well as several other crops. This new peanut policy would take a farmers average production history and let the farmer insure a percentage of it according to what the farmer needs to have guaranteed. This part is not changed from the present program, but what is different is that the farmer will be assured to receive what the peanuts are actually worth if he has a shortfall in production and not some arbitrary amount set in stone months before planting time. The farmer will receive payment on what the peanuts are worth at a certain period of time during the year, so farmers know whether they can afford to plant. It is critical that we have the support of RMA and the House Agriculture Committee to get the peanut crop insurance program viably priced and implemented in 2013. I would hope that the changes Congress makes for crop insurance, in the 2012 Farm Bill, would be to improve the programs and not harm crop insurance products.

I indicated earlier that I am also a cotton producer. I want to encourage the Committee to include the cotton industry's area wide, risk management program in the new farm bill. It has been designed to fit the new budget constraints, while providing a reasonable and sustainable safety net for cotton producers. While it is certainly not perfect and is not comparable to our current program, it represents the substantial reform necessary to provide a basis to resolve the long-standing Brazil WTO case. It does fit the cotton industry's situation far better than the revenue plans designed by Midwestern interests for grains and oilseeds, and it preserves the marketing assistance loan, with modifications, that is so important to our entire industry. It is imperative that the Brazil case be resolved by the end of 2012 to eliminate any possibility that Brazil will impose the prohibitively high tariffs authorized by the WTO. Retaliation in the form of high tariffs will disrupt U.S. exports and adversely impact U.S. businesses across the board.

Mr. Chairman, you and other Members of the Committee were successful in reforming payment limitation rules in the 2008 Farm Bill. Working with agricultural groups and Members of Congress not on the Agriculture Committee, I believe the reforms in the 2008 Farm Bill were equitable. I ask that the current adjusted gross income rules and payment limitation restrictions be continued in the 2012 Farm bill.

In closing, I appreciate the opportunity to testify before the Committee today. You have difficult task before you as you attempt to reconcile a crisis in our Federal budget while assuring that Americans have an adequate, safe food supply.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Mr. Burch.

And for any of you in the audience who ever thought you wanted to be a witness, now comes the fun part—you get to answer questions from the Committee. With that, I recognize myself for 5 minutes.

Mr. Brantley, some have suggested that using a reference price established in law would result in producers planting for the government program. Those same folks suggest that a 5 year Olympic average price in a revenue program has no impact on current planting decisions.

Can you elaborate on the factors you consider when you make your cropping decisions and the role that reference prices would play in those decisions?

Mr. BRANTLEY. The role of the reference price as I see it, or the view that I see that I looked at last fall, determining whether we would grow more acres than is sustainable here in Arkansas, is just not feasible. The \$13.98 target price, that figure that was given to us last fall, in all reality, you have to look at it on a whole-farm basis, 85 percent times your countercyclical yield, which in Arkansas is about 70 percent of your normal yield, is well below the cost of production. So those that say the target price reference price in that area, the \$13.98, would increase production are just, in my opinion, dead wrong. Our true cost of production is in the \$14.00 range. If you average that across all the U.S., the Olympic average, if commodity prices were high for a long time and then prices fell, yes, that would work. But what if it is the other way around.

I can see the Olympic averages creating more acres than the target price.

The CHAIRMAN. So the goose should always be careful when talking about the gander, huh?

Mr. Veach, I understand that Arkansas Farm Bureau recently made a decision to dissent from the American Farm Bureau policy. Can you talk about some of the reasons that the Arkansas Farm Bureau determined it could not support the SSRP proposal? And to your knowledge, along with that, is the Arkansas Farm Bureau the only state that disagreed with this approach?

Mr. VEACH. Yes. The SSRP program is a deep loss crop insurance program that triggers on regions. And that just really does not work, especially for some of our commodities here in Arkansas. We wanted the opportunity to speak to this Committee and to our Congressional delegation on what we feel like is a more workable plan for Arkansas agriculture, taking into consideration those regional and commodity differences. And to do that, it was for us to dissent from the American Farm Bureau policy that is supporting the deep loss regional trigger approach. And so we feel like that we need a more diverse type of farm bill that will take into consideration these regional and commodity differences.

Now we did not take that lightly. We deliberated on that for a good long while, but we felt like it was extremely important, for us to represent the producers in our state, that we would dissent from that program.

The CHAIRMAN. Fair enough.

Mr. Combs, regarding the package the Committee developed last fall, I remember reading an article where it was suggested that a

price option would cause rice acres in this country to explode by 5 or 10 million acres. Do you agree with that assessment? And why?

Mr. COMBS. I think that article was put out by people talking from their position and that was a different commodity and, no, it is not going to result in an explosion. Like Mr. Brantley pointed out, the plan that you had put forward, the Committee put forward, only offered that price protection on 85 percent of your planted acres and then on historic yields. So, farming is a lot—and the machinery business—if it was easy, everybody would be doing it. And that is not the case with this program.

The CHAIRMAN. Fair enough.

Mr. Burch, based on the analysis that the peanut industry has done through the University of Georgia, could you discuss if a revenue type shallow loss program would work for peanuts?

Mr. BURCH. No, sir, it would not, on the fact that it does not distinguish between irrigated and non-irrigated. There is such a variability. On my own farm this past year, I had as good an irrigated yield as I have ever had at an additional cost. There was a 3,200 pound yield difference between my irrigated and dryland crop this year. So not taking that into consideration, it would not work.

The CHAIRMAN. Fair enough.

Mr. Flowers, my last question, my time is about to expire. Did I understand you basically to say that commodity title resources should follow production? That is a pretty amazing concept for some of the folks that we serve with back East to understand.

Mr. FLOWERS. We had a lot of hard decisions to make, since cotton was kind of pointed out in the Brazil case, the target prices were pointed out in the case and the marketing loans. That is the reason we kind of came up with the STAX program to take care of that situation.

The CHAIRMAN. I just could not help but note what I understood your comment to be, resources should follow the production. There are a lot of folks we serve with who want to use the farm bill to do everything imaginable in the way of directing resources. We will talk about that again in a moment.

My time has expired. I now turn to the gentleman from Texas, who actually has fewer trees than I have in the 3rd District of Oklahoma. Mr. Neugebauer for 5 minutes.

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for having this hearing. I appreciate Mr. Crawford encouraging the Committee to come to Arkansas, he is a great Member and I am enjoying serving with him. We appreciate you all sending him to help us do some great work for our country.

You know, one of the things since I have been in Congress, this is my fifth term, I have been working a lot on crop insurance. In fact, in the 2008 Farm Bill, we had a concept that we had approved and passed out of our Committee. Unfortunately, the Speaker of the House, Ms. Pelosi, decided to take that out of the farm bill. But I have reintroduced what is called the Crop Risk Options Plan Act of 2011 and some of you may or may not have seen that. And basically it talks about taking a GRP or a GRIP policy and putting it on top of a multi-peril to give producers some flexibility. Because one of things I know, as Mr. Brantley pointed out, farming today is big business. And in order to be competitive in the global econ-

omy, unfortunately, it is more and more difficult for smaller producers to do that. And so as you get into these large operations, very diverse, it takes more and more capital and more and more loans to do that. In order to make those businesses viable, we need a very strong and effective crop insurance, risk management for our producers.

One of the things that I think is an important part of that is having the flexibility. For example, talking about the regional trigger, the trigger for my crop bill is a county trigger, which we think is more reflective of the conditions, and not the region. Depending on how you draw geographical regions, the ability to have different conditions within those regions is very probable. Generally in a county, I think it is easier to be more reflective.

One of the things I wanted to talk about, because we keep hearing the price, some kind of a price protection, yield protection, within these risk management policies. One of the things we are going to be faced with is we are going to be given a certain amount of money, our Committee is, to craft a farm policy. So what I want to do is leave as much flexibility in there. So one of the things I wanted to ask you to comment on is when we look at being able to add some additional features to this, obviously that increases the scoring. So should we make, for example, some of these things options instead of a mandatory part of the policy. So if a producer wanted to buy price protection, for example, he could choose—he or she could choose to do that or not. And that would impact the cost of the policy, and the same way with some additional yield protection. Should that be something that we are thinking about or considering as we begin to look at the crop insurance? And what is your feeling about, for example, having a county trigger?

Mr. Brantley.

Mr. BRANTLEY. I believe an option is exactly what we are asking for, I think all of us would agree here at this panel. An option of a price over revenue is exactly what we need.

Help me here, Mr. Combs, if you do not mind.

Mr. COMBS. Well, we would like the price protection and then also our industry is trying to develop a formula that would also offer input cost protection. And it would be—and the more options you can have on it, in theory, the lower it should score. I mean if the producer wanted that level of coverage, they should be able to purchase it. But we have to have the help of RMA to get these policies approved. You know, we have been beating our head against the wall for 4 years and we had two concepts and we still have not gotten them approved.

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. That is one of my frustrations as well. The thing about what we set out to do with our bill was to take existing products so we did not have to go out in the field and test those. So it is basically just giving them the authority to take existing products basically and combine those.

So, when you start talking about those options, obviously it increases the cost of those, but when I look around this table we see a lot of folks that have different commodities. And so what we want to be able to do is allow you to determine, for those particular commodities, what is the best option for you. And not necessarily tie you into one policy to try to manage the total farm operation.

Mr. COMBS. I understand that, but existing crop insurance products have not been successful in the rice industry. That is the point that we would drive home.

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Those are the changes that I think we are going to need to look at. So thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. The chair now recognizes the gentleman from Arkansas, Mr. Crawford, for 5 minutes.

Mr. CRAWFORD. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Veach, I want to direct my first question to you. As a result of budget cutting and political environment and the Brazilian WTO case against cotton, the cotton industry came up with the STAX plan to serve as a primary risk management tool for cotton growers. Can you give some detail as to whether this type of coverage would work for Arkansas cotton producers?

Mr. VEACH. I think that the STAX program, for a lot of the cotton industry, cotton producing areas, would work very well. And it would work in Arkansas as well, but I think with the amount of irrigation that we have and how we mitigate that risk in irrigation, that we need a little more protection in price. I think that one of the best ways of doing that is if we have these options. It has to be a viable option, and I think that producers could decide if that program is the one that works best for them, or if more of a price-based type program would work better for them. I think those options have to be very viable options. It cannot be just an option. It has to be one that really provides a safety net. If we have options to provide a safety net, then we have the opportunity to pick which one of those works best for that particular commodity on that particular type farmer's ground.

I think that we are not looking at great diversity in programs. I do not think we can have a whole large assortment of programs to pick from, but I think that we can—if the Committee can come to some—where that we can have very viable options, a couple, two or three, that producers can use the choice to do that.

But I think the STAX program works very well for a lot of producers, but some maybe would rather have more price protection.

Mr. CRAWFORD. Each of the witnesses gave some comments about crop insurance and particularly as it applied to rice and some specific issues there. I want to switch gears just a little bit and talk about conservation.

And I will kind of direct this to each of you, but I will start with Mr. Brantley. This Committee is going to need to take a serious look at lowering the acreage cap with the CRP and also deciding the future purpose of the program. Given the increased demand for grain, high crop prices, and increasing land values, what do you see as the future role of CRP and what changes would you like to see in the program?

Mr. BRANTLEY. I do not participate in the CRP program, so to suggest changes, I do not know that I can answer that. But conservation programs are very important to me and my family on our farm, EQIP being the number one program. Water, we talk about irrigation here on this panel, water storage is critical for a rice crop here in Arkansas, so the EQIP program, I think for me, should be first and foremost when we talk about conservation programs. I do

realize CRP is a big part of conservation, plays a very important role. But I could not make any recommendations today.

Mr. CRAWFORD. Mr. Combs.

Mr. COMBS. I share Dow's thoughts. I mean our farms participate in EQIP and the Conservation Security Program and the Migratory Bird Habitat Program and WRP. So we are in four conservation programs and I think they are very important for both our farms for conservation and then for other stakeholders in the country, because they provide benefits for water fowl and wildlife and other things.

But CRP is not a big deal in the Delta and so I feel more confident to comment on these programs than I would be on the CRP.

Mr. CRAWFORD. Okay. And the reason I used CRP as an example, just strictly as an example, it has just been around for what, 25 years now, and so in general terms—

Mr. COMBS. It is a big deal to a lot of people, it is just not on—we are pretty tied to the NRCS office in our county, but we are just not as much on CRP.

Mr. CRAWFORD. Mr. Flowers, any input on that?

Mr. FLOWERS. CRP has been a good product in the Mississippi Delta. There has been a lot of land going into CRP and WRP. Like everybody else, we are 80 percent irrigated and a lot of the land that is not irrigated has been put in CRP for wildlife. Something I would like to see, we are starting to have some water issues and we want to conserve our water for future generations and one thing I would like to see is maybe developing a CRP program where we could impound water and use that for irrigation.

Mr. CRAWFORD. Okay.

Mr. FLOWERS. EQIP has been very important to our area also.

Mr. CRAWFORD. Excellent. Mr. Burch, last word on that.

Mr. BURCH. I just do not see CRP as being critically important in a time that we are needing to maximize our production to feed this world.

Mr. CRAWFORD. Excellent. Thank you. I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman yields back.

The chair now turns to the gentleman from Indiana for his 5 minutes.

Mr. STUTZMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I want to thank each of you for being here today.

Being a fourth generation farmer from Indiana, it is great to sit here and listen to you all and your stories and your experiences. And I believe that we in agriculture have a great opportunity to lead in our nation's capital. And I appreciate the Chairman's leadership on leading in the negotiations last year with the Committee, the super committee, that was designed to fix our country's problems, which I believe the Chairman did the right thing in putting a bill together and crafting a bill and being prepared. That is what farmers do, we are always prepared for the worst and we are always trying to be prepared for the best as well. But we focus on the worst probably more than anything.

I have just a couple of questions, and really for any of you, because you are—two of you are from Arkansas and the others from other parts of the South here. You know, being a farmer, I remember going into the bank with my father and I always hated sitting

on the farmer's side of the desk. I always wanted to be on the banker's side. Well, today, I would rather be on the farmer's side. The bankers, they have kind of taken it on the chin lately.

Has credit availability changed for you all and how have your experiences been with access to credit and the experiences that you have. And what you may see with your neighbors around your communities and the challenges, what experiences are people facing right now in your communities.

Maybe we can start with Mr. Burch and just go right down the line.

Mr. BURCH. Well, in my area it is pretty much like I am sure it is all over the United States, the people that do not need to borrow have ready access to money. And the people that need it are having trouble getting it. So it just depends on your collateral situation. It is very tight for people that have marginal operations.

Mr. STUTZMAN. Mr. Flowers.

Mr. FLOWERS. I am a director on a bank and it is really important for us, we would like to see some kind of crop insurance that the farmers in our area can afford and take advantage of. I know the banks want to make sure that they have pretty good collateral and stuff. Our problem is we do not have the deep losses, but the losses between the deep losses and what it actually costs to produce is where we have our problems. So that is kind of what we look at. So that would be very helpful if we had some kind of coverage that would take care of that.

Mr. COMBS. Typically in agriculture, credit is available when times are good. And that is what we are seeing now. And so, credit will tighten up when the prices decline and that is why the farm bill is so important, because when credit does tighten up, we need protections that can be offered in farm policy in order to ensure that that credit still flows. I am not saying that there is no lack of credit right now, because there could be in individual cases, but everybody is wanting to lend money to farmers today, compared to the late 1990s.

Mr. VEACH. I think that if direct payments are done away with, it is going to affect the lending quite a bit, especially loans to rice producers and cotton producers in the fact that you are going to lose what is a guarantee up front, but you are going to have a certain amount of dollars coming in on that operation. And those producers will have to be able to show through their cash flow and the collateral that they can pay that loan back without that direct payment. And that computes out to \$100 an acre or so for rice and \$30 and \$40 an acre on cotton. And if you compute that out in rice in the State of Arkansas on actual planted acres, you are looking at probably at least close to \$50 an acre now that you are going to have to show to your lender that you can get by without that. And that is going to be a big factor in getting loans.

Mr. BRANTLEY. I would echo Mr. Veach's comments. The loss of direct payments will make it very difficult. One thing to note is how important our community banks are *versus* our larger banks. The community banks understand us, they know us well, they know farming, they know the risks. It is vitally important that we keep those community banks in our neighborhoods and keep them

around *versus* large corporate banks who just strictly look at the number and not necessarily a name or understand the risk.

Mr. STUTZMAN. Mr. Brantley, real quick, we have the warning light here, but could you give us a quick example. Rice seems to be the one that you are most concerned about, across the table here, about protection. Is that right? Cotton, Mr. Flowers mentioned cotton as well. I mean, do you think there is room for us focusing on those two particular crops? Do the other crops need the direct payment program behind them?

Mr. BRANTLEY. Rice is the most important on our farm. Yes, I think direct payment would fit my farm best for all crops, but rice being the most important because it is the most politically traded commodity in the world, compared to the other commodities.

Mr. STUTZMAN. Right. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. The chair will yield to the gentleman from Indiana 30 seconds, and would the gentleman yield to the Chairman?

Mr. STUTZMAN. Yes, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Flowers, you said you are on the board of directors of a bank. My bankers tell me in Oklahoma, and I assume it is the same across the country, that they are in a more rigorous period of examination by the bank examiners. Long gone are the days when it was just a simple process. It is now a really horrendous process and that in every farmer's loan file, not only do you have copies of participation in the farm bill, but you also have to have all your crop insurance records and all those things to prove that you are covering all your bases. Is that your observation?

Mr. FLOWERS. That is definitely, we are going through more and more rigorous examinations in the bank. First thing we look at is what the direct payments are, what crops have you already sold and what kind of insurance you have.

The CHAIRMAN. So it does not necessarily matter how great your record is and how much confidence your banker has in you. If he or she does not have all of those records in your file to show the examiner, then the examiner comes down on the loan officer, which causes complications. So for a variety of reasons, these tools are absolutely necessities. Correct, sir?

Mr. FLOWERS. That is correct. The days of just knowing who you are dealing with are over. You have to have everything documented and every "i" dotted and crossed every "t". You are correct.

The CHAIRMAN. Absolutely. Any additional questions for this panel?

[No response.]

The CHAIRMAN. Seeing no additional questions from the Committee for the panel, I would like to thank you for your insights and your expertise. And you are dismissed, gentlemen.

As they are stepping away from the table and our next group of witnesses in panel two are preparing to come forward, I would like to introduce them. Mr. David C. Hundley, rice, corn, soybean producer, Jonesboro, Arkansas; Mr. Mike Freeze, aquaculture producer, Keo Fish Farm, Keo, Arkansas; Mr. Dan Stewart, cow/calf producer, Mountain View, Arkansas; Mr. John E. Owen, rice, soybean, corn, and cotton producer, John and Annie Owen Farms, Rayville, Louisiana; and Mr. Walter Corcoran, Jr., cotton, corn,

peanut, soybean, grain sorghum, and cow/calf producer, Eufaula, Alabama.

As they are setting up, once again, I thank the previous panel for those very thoughtful statements and very insightful answers to our questions. That is what this is all about.

Swing that microphone around towards you there, Mr. Hundley, and whenever you are ready, you may begin.

**STATEMENT OF DAVID C. HUNDLEY, RICE, CORN, AND
SOYBEAN PRODUCER, JONESBORO, AR**

Mr. HUNDLEY. Chairman Lucas, Congressman Crawford, and other Members of the Committee and guests, my name is David Hundley. I am a producer from Bay, Arkansas and I am also the general manager for JHM, Inc., a third generation diversified agricultural business that includes a cotton gin and a grain elevator located in the First District. Thank you for holding this hearing at my alma mater, Arkansas State University and in the First Congressional District of the great State of Arkansas, and for this opportunity to testify before you regarding farm policy issues.

According to a recent study released by the University of Arkansas, agriculture is the single largest industry in the State of Arkansas, and the First Congressional District is by far the most diverse in the state with several different diverse crops being produced here, all contributing over \$17 billion of value added to the Arkansas economy. That is 17¢ of every dollar that is generated in Arkansas of value added. The contribution of the agriculture sector as a percentage of GDP in Arkansas is greater than in any other contiguous state, as well as the average for the Southeast region of the United States. The Arkansas agriculture sector, as a percentage of GDP is 10.73 percent and Arkansas is in the top ten states in the production of ten agricultural commodities.

An economically viable agriculture is essential for the United States of America to remain the greatest country in the world. The farm bill should be written for the good of the country and not for the purpose of garnering votes for re-election. In my opinion, we need smart policy that meets the following criteria:

The 2012 Farm Bill should recognize the contribution of the American farmer and work to preserve the farmer and farm family by providing tools to manage risk, access credit, and ensure the ability to create and maintain our farming population.

Farm programs should not favor the production of one commodity over another. Farm programs should work for all commodities and protect farmers against the unique risks associated with each commodity and various methods of production, such as irrigated production.

Farm programs should be fair and available to all producers regardless of size, commodity grown, income, or business structure. Means testing is not a fair or effective policy. Setting such tests would be detrimental to the family farms of Arkansas.

The farm bill should help farmers deal with the myriad regulations that they currently face from multiple government agencies. Many existing regulations put American producers at a disadvantage to their foreign counterparts. On environmental issues, farmers are land stewards that should be recognized for their efforts to

preserve the land for production and conservation. Incentives to preserve the land work.

Congress should recognize that farmers receive very little funding when compared to the nutrition components of the farm bill. Any increase in funding for nutrition programs should not be offset by cutting programs dedicated to American farmers. We cannot bite the hand that feeds us.

Risk management tools should be uniquely tailored for each crop. A one-size-fits-all program will not work, especially in this region of the country. We need risk management tools for protection against all risk including yield loss, price declines, and input cost spikes. Without such a safety net, lenders will not be willing to risk capital and credit will not be available for farmers to operate.

Today, I am respectfully asking that we lay aside partisan politics and engage the great base of knowledge and skills possessed by the American farmer to craft a sound farm policy that is based on real economic principles. While most farmers are supportive of the current farm bill commodity programs, it is clear that Congress wants to transition to a new safety net risk management approach and away from direct payments, regardless of the underlying commodity price. We need a new safety net risk management approach. I believe the safety net programs, including the direct payment program should be tied to actual production costs of in-year production. Safety nets should offer less in the good years and more in the lean years. It needs to be a program that promotes efficiency to growing progressive farmers, while not ignoring small family farms who garner that same efficiency by engaging the entire family and utilizing off-farm income. We are all American farmers and neither should be admonished or admired through class warfare more or less than the next.

In summary, the producers and citizens of Arkansas require a strong agriculture industry to provide for their existence and to contribute to the strength of American agriculture. I believe that the entire country would be better served if the base of knowledge and skills of the American farmer were engaged in a serious discussion about the best ways to construct a new out-of-the-box approach to really sound farm policy. Their very existence today *versus* the opportunities that Mother Nature provides on an annual basis is testament to our ability to constantly adapt on a minute's notice. The greatest threat today remains the monopolization of all the industries that we as farmers rely on to purchase our daily inputs. These monopolies have the ability to reduce their per unit cost while at the same time the general public calls for American agriculture to remain small family farmers.

Mr. Chairman, it has been my honor to be part of this discussion and I want to thank you for holding this hearing in the First Congressional District of the great State of Arkansas.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Hundley follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DAVID C. HUNDLEY, RICE, CORN, AND SOYBEAN PRODUCER, JONESBORO, AR

Chairman Lucas, Congressman Crawford, other Members of the Committee and guests, my name is David Hundley. I am a producer from Bay, Arkansas and I am also the General Manager for JHM, Inc. a third generation diversified agricultural business that includes a cotton gin and grain elevator located in the First District.

Thank you for hosting this hearing in the First Congressional District of the Great State of Arkansas, and for the opportunity to testify before you regarding farm policy issues at my Alma Mater—Arkansas State University.

According to a recent study released by the University of Arkansas, Agriculture is the single largest industry in the State of Arkansas and the First Congressional District is by far the most diverse in the state with cotton, grain, poultry, catfish, baitfish, livestock, sweet potatoes and forest products all contributing over \$17 billion of value added to the Arkansas economy. That is 17¢ of every dollar generated in Arkansas of value added. Arkansas agriculture provides 275,435 jobs which is one in six of all jobs. The contribution of agriculture sector as a percentage of GDP in Arkansas is greater than in any contiguous state as well as the average for the Southeast region of the United States. The Arkansas Agriculture sector as a percentage of GDP is 10.37%. Arkansas is in the top ten states in the production of ten agricultural commodities.

Arkansas agriculture is responsible for generating jobs in all 20 industries in the North American Industry Classification System used for economic analysis. Employment in the top five NAICS industries total 197,599 jobs which accounts for 72% of all jobs in Arkansas being generated by agriculture. The value being generated in these top five industries total \$12,274 Million. I believe it is obvious that Agriculture is vital to the Great State of Arkansas as well as the United States of America and it is imperative that the integrity this industry is preserved with sound Farm Policy as there has never been a great nation without a strong and sound agriculture sector.

An economically viable agriculture is essential for the United States of America to remain as the greatest country in the world. In my opinion, we need smart policy that meets the following criteria.

1. The 2012 Farm Bill should recognize the contribution of the American farmer and work to preserve the farmer and farm family by providing tools to manage risk, access credit, and ensure the ability to create and maintain our farming population.
2. Farm programs should not favor the production of one commodity over another. Farm programs should work for all commodities and protect farmers against the unique risks associated with each commodity and various methods of production, such as irrigated production.
3. Farm programs should be fair and available to all producers regardless of size, commodity grown, income, or business structure. Means testing is not fair or effective policy. Setting such tests would be detrimental to the family farms in Arkansas.
4. The farm bill should help farmers deal with the myriad of regulations that they currently face from multiple government agencies. Many existing regulation put American producers at a disadvantage to their foreign counterparts. On environmental issues, farmers are land stewards and should be recognized for their efforts to preserve the land for production and conservation. Incentives to preserve land work.
5. Congress should recognize that farmers receive very little funding when compared to the Nutrition components of the farm bill. Any increase in funding for nutrition programs should not be offset by cutting programs dedicated to American farmers. We cannot bite the hand that feeds us.
6. Risk management tools should be uniquely tailored for each crop. A one size fits all program will not work, especially in this region of the country. We need risk management tools for protection against all risks including yield loss, price declines, revenue declines, and input cost spikes. Without such a safety net, lenders will not be willing to risk capital and credit will not be available for farmers to operate.

America today is made up of largely urban society and these urban born, urban raised citizens take their daily food & fiber for granted. Most of these same urbanites take the American Agricultural system for granted and spend countless dollars fighting to over regulate and destroy the same system that sustains their daily existence. While the average American spends less of their disposable income than many other developed countries on an excellent and ample supply of food they do not understand that a 60 pound bushel of wheat that is worth \$6 to an American Farmer makes approximately 100 loaves of bread which sell for an average of \$3 per loaf. The American Media's misconception that a \$1 bushel rise in the price of wheat causes bread to increase in price by 50% cannot be part of the policy process. Can this person be involved or effective in creating a sustainable viable agriculture policy? The average cost of the newest John Deere cotton harvester is over \$600,000.

A farmer that needs to add an additional harvester should not have to navigate a myriad of USDA regulations to justify its existence.

Today I am respectfully asking that we lay aside partisan politics and engage the great base of knowledge and skills possessed by the American Farmer to craft a sound Farm Policy that is based on real economic principles. While most farmers are supportive of the current farm bill commodity programs, it's clear that Congress wants to transition to a new safety net risk management approach and away from direct payments regardless of the underlying commodity price. I believe safety net programs, including the direct payment program should be tied to actual production costs and actual in year production. Safety nets should offer less in the good years and not limited to an arbitrary limit in the lean years. It needs to be a program that promotes efficiency to growing progressive producers while not ignoring small family farms who garner that same efficiency by engaging the entire family and utilizing off farm income. We are all American Farmers and neither should be admonished or admired through class warfare more or less than the next.

In summary, the producers and citizens of Arkansas require a strong agricultural industry to provide for their existence and to contribute to the strength of American Agriculture. I believe that the entire country would be better served if the base of knowledge and skills of the American Farmer were engaged in a serious discussion about the best ways to construct a new out of the box approach to really sound Farm Policy. Their very existence today *versus* the opportunities that Mother Nature provides on an annual basis is testament to our ability to constantly adapt on a minutes' notice. The greatest threat today remains the monopolization of all the industries that we as farmers rely on to purchase our daily inputs. These monopolies have the ability to reduce their per unit cost while at the same time the general public calls for American Agriculture to remain small family farmers.

Mr. Chairman, It has been my honor to be a part of this discussion and I want to thank you for holding this hearing in the First Congressional District of the Great State of Arkansas.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Mr. Freeze, begin when you are ready, after you swing that microphone around—yes.

**STATEMENT OF THOMAS MICHAEL "MIKE" FREEZE,
AQUACULTURE PRODUCER; CO-OWNER, KEO FISH FARM,
KEO, AR**

Mr. FREEZE. My name is Mike Freeze and I have been an Arkansas fish farmer since 1983. I am Co-Owner of Keo Fish Farms which has 1,300 acres of ponds in which we produce hybrid striped bass and sterile triploid grass carp for live sales nationally and internationally.

I would like to thank Chairman Lucas and my own Congressman Rick Crawford and the remaining Members of the House Committee on Agriculture for allowing me to address you about national issues that impact aquaculture in the United States.

For aquaculture facilities that ship live product nationally, our number one regulatory issue is the Lacey Act. Written in 1900 and amended numerous times, including in the 2008 Farm Bill, the Lacey Act prohibits the international and interstate trafficking of illegally obtained wildlife and fish or parts thereof. When the Lacey Act was written, aquaculture was practically non-existent, yet today our domesticated fish are regulated as if they were taken from the wild. Of particular concern is that that Lacey Act elevates the violation of even misdemeanor state regulations to Federal felonies simply because over \$350 of domesticated product has entered interstate commerce. Penalties for a Lacey Act violation begin at \$100,000 and 4 months incarceration in a Federal penitentiary. This scenario is analogous to a \$50 speeding ticket being elevated

to a \$100,000 speeding ticket simply because you are driving on an interstate highway.

I am enclosing with my written testimony a copy of a report by the National Agricultural Law Center entitled, *Aquaculture and the Lacey Act*, in which author Elizabeth Rumley states, "The Act should be amended to exempt domestically produced aquatic species."

Next, I would like to talk to you about aquaculture's reliance upon the services provided by USDA/APHIS Wildlife Services and Veterinary Services. Fish-eating birds are protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and Wildlife Services' verification as to the intensity and degree of bird depredation at a particular aquaculture facility is a requirement for U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service to issue a Bird Depredation Permit to that facility. It would be impossible for the private sector to address these depredation issues without Wildlife Services' direct involvement.

Veterinary Services animal health inspection and certification allow America's aquaculturists to market their live aquatic animals nationally and internationally. Once again, it is impossible for the private sector to address such health certification issues that are codified in the national and international law as requiring a Veterinary Services' health certificate.

I understand in this time of budgetary constraints that tough decisions have to be made. But our industry should only have to take their proportional share of any funding decreases. In the case of Wildlife Services, the entire aquaculture line item of \$1,063,000 in the Fiscal Year 2013 President's budget was deleted at the request of APHIS without any stakeholder input.

As you probably know, imported seafood contributes significantly to our national trade deficit and reducing USDA support to our industry will only cause this \$10 billion imbalance to increase.

Catfish farming and processing is a significant part of the American aquaculture industry. The last several years have been challenging for catfish producers and processors. Higher input costs are impacting the industry and reducing its ability to meet demand. According to USDA statistics, catfish processing and overall fish inventory are down 35 and 25 percent respectively from the previous year. While there are multiple insurance products and Federal programs to protect crops and livestock from market fluctuations, the catfish industry lacks a tool to reduce the risk of volatility caused by rising input costs or depressed market values.

I would urge the Committee to consider instructing the USDA Risk Management Agency to include catfish and other food fish within the Livestock Gross Margin and Livestock Risk Protection insurance programs. These insurance programs allow farmers and ranchers to purchase insurance policies to protect against price and input cost volatility.

The 2008 Farm Bill included instructions for the USDA to establish a voluntary fee-based inspection and grading program for catfish. The USDA catfish inspection rule remains a top priority for the catfish industry and the American public. The Committee's past and continued support on this issue is greatly appreciated.

USDA has undertaken a thorough process for the implementation of this new responsibility. The comment period closed on June

24, 2011, and of the 280 comments posted, 84 percent urged FSIS to include all imported and domesticated catfish in the new regulations currently under consideration. A broad definition of *catfish* is imperative to effective inspection of catfish and catfish like products. Should USDA make the unwise decision of including the more narrow definition of *catfish*, more than 95 percent of all catfish like imports will remain uninspected upon entry into the U.S. market. Gentlemen, this is not a trade issue, this is a food safety issue. And the American public deserves the implementation of this rule at the earliest possible date, using the broad definition, which includes the three families typically consumed as food.

Additionally, the aquaculture industry has serious concerns about FDA's proposed rule that would significantly change regulations regarding unapproved drugs found in food products. The FDA released this proposed regulation on January 25, that would provide a simplified approval process for persons requesting the import of food items containing residues of animal drugs that are unapproved in the U.S. I believe that U.S. consumers should have confidence that food products are safe. There is great concern that this proposed rule signals a move by the Administration towards allowing drugs to be used by foreign producers that are prohibited in the United States. And I would strongly urge the Committee to oppose this move by the Administration.

Finally, one issue that impacts all farmers is the closing of county FSA offices across the United States according to criteria established in the 2008 Farm Bill. While the closing of most of these offices is justified, occasionally a county office with a moderate to heavy workload meets the closing criteria while an adjacent office with a lighter workload does not. Recent incentives for FSA employees to retire just prior to the determination of which FSA county offices met the closing criteria has exacerbated this issue. Therefore, I would respectfully ask the Committee to consider enacting emergency legislation that would allow each state FSA committee to exchange the closing of one county office for another county office, as long as the total number of offices closed within that state remains the same.

Thank you, gentlemen.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Freeze follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THOMAS MICHAEL "MIKE" FREEZE, AQUACULTURE
PRODUCER; CO-OWNER, KEO FISH FARM, KEO, AR

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and 4 months incarceration in a Federal penitentiary. Thus, what may be a misdemeanor state violation in both of the two states involved, is immediately elevated to a Federal felony offense, simply because state boundaries were crossed. This scenario is analogous to a \$50 speeding ticket being elevated to a \$100,000 speeding ticket simply because you are driving on an interstate highway.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is one of the agencies that enforce the Lacey Act and their enforcement division has historically applied this act to the international and interstate movement of private aquacultural products. In part this is because the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service does not recognize the private ownership of aquacultural products. In March of 1990, a USFWS enforcement memorandum placed a low priority on using the Lacey Act against aquacultural producers except in instances where disease transmission or non-indigenous fish species were involved. Unfortunately, this memorandum has long since been forgotten. I am enclosing a copy of a report by the National Agricultural Law Center entitled "Aquaculture and the Lacey Act" in which author, Elizabeth Rumley states: "The Act should be amended to exempt domestically produced aquatic species".

Next I would like to inform you about aquaculture's reliance upon the services provided by USDA/APHIS Wildlife Services and Veterinary Services. Wildlife Service's assistance with wildlife depredation at aquaculture facilities is essential because such wildlife are often protected by Federal regulations. In the case of avian depredation, piscivorous birds are protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and Wildlife Services verification as to the intensity and degree of avian depredation at a particular aquaculture facility is a requirement for the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service to issue a Bird Depredation Permit to that facility. It will be impossible for the private sector to address these depredation issues without Wildlife Services' direct involvement.

Veterinary Services aquatic animal disease inspection and control programs are vital to protecting American aquaculture. Veterinary Services' international programs and their interactions with OIE member nations ensure that our aquacultural products are regulated in a scientific manner. Without Veterinary Services essential animal health inspections and certifications, America's aquaculturists will not be able to market their live aquatic animals nationally and internationally. The negative economic impacts from such a loss of business may actually cause many aquacultural businesses to fail. Once again, it will be impossible for the private sector to address such health certification issues that are codified into national and international law as requiring a Veterinary Services' health certificate.

Fish farmers have worked for many years with USDA and Congress to secure line item aquaculture funding for both of these agencies as only these two agencies can provide the essential services listed above. We understand that in this time of budgetary constraints that tough decisions have to be made, but our industry should only have to take their proportional share of any funding decreases. In the case of Wildlife Services, the entire aquaculture line item of \$1,063,000 in the FY 2013 President's Budget was deleted at the request of APHIS, without any stakeholder input.

As you probably know, imported seafood contributes significantly to our national trade deficit, and reducing USDA support to our industry will only cause this imbalance to increase. Currently, 84% of U.S. seafood is imported and the U.S. seafood trade deficit has doubled since 1989, reaching \$10 billion in 2010. Therefore, I am respectfully asking your assistance in restoring aquaculture's line item funding for these two agencies back to historic levels.

Catfish farming and processing is a significant part of the American aquaculture industry. The last several years have been challenging for catfish producers and processors. Similar to other sectors of the livestock industry, catfish producers are faced with extraordinarily high feed and energy prices. These higher input costs are impacting the industry and reducing its ability to meet demand. According to USDA statistics, catfish processing and overall fish inventory are down 35 and 25 percent respectively, from the previous year's reporting. While there are multiple insurance products and Federal programs to protect crops and livestock from market fluctuations, the catfish industry lacks a tool to reduce the risk of volatility caused by rising input costs or depressed market values.

I would urge the Committee to consider instructing the USDA Risk Management Agency (RMA) to include catfish and other food fish within both the Livestock Gross Margin (LGM) and Livestock Risk Protection (LRP) insurance programs. These insurance programs allow farmers and ranchers to purchase insurance policies to protect against price and input cost volatility. Catfish and other food fish farmers would benefit from access to these existing insurance products, allowing them to purchase a product to protect against unexpected increases in feed costs or drops in market pricing.

In addition, “The Food, Conservation and Energy Act of 2008” included instructions for the USDA to establish a voluntary fee based inspection and grading program for catfish. The USDA catfish inspection rule remains a top priority for the catfish industry and the American public. The Committee’s past and continued support on this issue is greatly appreciated. According to Import Refusal data and also FDA Import Alerts, certain drugs and chemicals have been found in catfish imported from China, Thailand and Vietnam and have resulted in the following import refusals for Fiscal Year 2010:

Country	Refusals for Fiscal Year 2010
China	22
Thailand	4
Vietnam	30

USDA has undertaken a thorough process for the implementation of this new responsibility, including extensive public comment. The comment period closed on June 24, 2011, and of the 280 comments posted on the USDA’s Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) official comment site, 84 percent, or 234 postings, urged the agency to include all imported and domestic catfish in new regulations currently under consideration by FSIS. The proposed rule offers two options for the definition of catfish and seeks public comment. One option is to define “catfish” as including all species in the order *Siluriformes*, with the three families typically consumed as food, including *Ictaluridae*, *Pangasius* and *Clariidae*. A broad definition of catfish is imperative to effective inspection of catfish and catfish-like products. Should USDA make the unwise decision of including the more narrow definition of catfish, more than 95% of all catfish-like imports will remain uninspected upon entry into the U.S. market. This is not a trade issue, this is a food safety issue and the American public deserves the implementation of this rule at the earliest possible date, using the broad definition, which includes the three taxonomic families of fish that are typically consumed as food.

Additionally, the aquaculture industry has serious concerns about FDA’s proposed rule that would significantly change regulations regarding unapproved drugs found in imported food. The FDA released a proposed regulation on January 25th that would provide a simplified approval process for persons requesting the import of food items containing residues of animal drugs that are unapproved in the U.S. The industry agrees with the FDA’s advisory committee, the Veterinary Medicine Advisory Committee, that any drugs used to treat animals that Americans will consume should be based on food safety protections currently employed by FDA to regulate drugs used by U.S. farmers. I believe that U.S. consumers should be confident that the foods they eat are safe. There is great concern that this proposed rule signals a move by the Administration towards allowing drugs to be used by foreign producers that are prohibited in the United States. I would strongly urge the Committee to oppose this move by the Administration.

Finally, one issue that impacts all farmers is the closing of county FSA offices across the United States according to criteria established in the 2008 Farm Bill. While the closing of most of these offices is justified, occasionally a county office with a moderate to heavy work load meets the closing criteria, while an adjacent office with a lighter work load does not. Recent incentives for FSA employees to retire just prior to the determination of which FSA county offices met the closing criteria has exacerbated this issue. Therefore, I would respectfully ask that the Committee consider enacting emergency legislation that would allow each State FSA Committee to exchange the closing of one county office for another county office as long as the total number of offices closed within that state remains the same.

ATTACHMENT

National Agricultural Law Center, University of Arkansas
An Agricultural Law Research Project

Aquaculture and the Lacey Act

by

Elizabeth R. Springsteen

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Aquaculture and the Lacey Act

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Aquaculture includes the cultivation of aquatic species for human consumption as well as for recreational or ornamental purposes. The practice has a long history, tracing back through ancient Chinese records indicating that carp was raised more than 4,000 years ago and hieroglyphics in the tombs of the Pharaohs describing tilapia farming in ancient Egypt. However, fish culture in the U.S. has a much more limited history, beginning in the mid 1800s when Federal and state hatcheries were built to raise sportfish species to stock public and private waters. Attempts to commercialize aquaculture for food purposes did not begin until the 1950s, with channel catfish farming in the Mississippi Delta region. From those small beginnings it has become an extensive industry, bringing in yearly nationwide revenue of \$1.5 billion, according to the 2007 Census of Agriculture.

The practice of aquaculture is regulated at various levels of government, with state and local authorities generally regulating activities and issuing permits dealing with zoning, building, land and water use, waste discharge, and aquaculture production practices and species. Not surprisingly, each state's division of regulatory responsibility and authority among their agencies or offices, as well as the resulting regulations themselves, are all very different. They have each been influenced by unique state socioeconomic histories and the ecological differences between states. As a result, state aquaculture regulation is a bewildering mosaic of species regulations, with little to no consistency between geographic locations.

At the Federal level, agencies responsible for different areas of regulation include the FDA, USDA, EPA, Fish and Wildlife Service ("FWS"), Army Corps of Engineers and National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration ("NOAA").

History and Provisions of the Lacey Act

One major statute with the potential to severely affect aquaculture is the Lacey Act, 18 U.S.C. §§ 41–48, a Federal statute passed in 1900 to protect wildlife. It was originally intended to combat hunting to supply commercial markets, the interstate shipment of unlawfully killed game, the killing of birds for the feather trade and the introduction of harmful invasive species. The Lacey Act applies to all "wild" animals, specifically including fish and amphibians, even when those animals have been "bred, hatched, or born in captivity." It is unlawful to "import, export, transport, sell, receive, acquire or purchase" any fish or wildlife "taken, possessed, transported, or sold" in violation of laws or regulations (state, Federal or foreign) that are fish or wildlife related. In 2008, plants were added to the scope of the Act.

One of the ways in which the Lacey Act can be triggered is by the violation of a Federal regulation. If this happens, the offender can be prosecuted under the Lacey Act even if no interstate shipment takes place. For example, the Endangered Species Act is a Federal statute that protects certain species. If an individual "transport[s], sell[s], receive[s], acquire[s], or purchase[s]" a creature that has been "taken, possessed, transported, or sold" in violation of that law, that person may be prosecuted under either the Endangered Species Act or the Lacey Act—even if they do not cross a state line.

However, the Lacey Act is also triggered when a state or Federal law regarding fish or wildlife is violated by a product that has been part of interstate commerce. Each state has its own protected, prohibited, restricted or approved exotic or game species lists, established by a state department of natural resources, fish and game, environmental protection or agriculture, and the creatures on the list can vary widely from one state to the next. For an example in this situation, consider Minnesota.

As of this writing, in Minnesota it is illegal to transport “prohibited invasive species” on a public road, and violation subjects the offender to a \$250 civil penalty or a misdemeanor (up to 90 days and/or \$1,000). As a result, a company based in Minnesota who transports one of these species to another part of the state may only be prosecuted under the state law. A company based in another state who transports one of these species on a Minnesota road, however, may be prosecuted under the Lacey Act. This is important, especially considering the disparity between the state and Lacey Act penalties.

Lacey Act Penalties

Penalties for violating the Lacey Act are severe. If an individual “knew” or “was generally aware of” the illegal nature of the wildlife and the value of the wildlife was over \$350, he may be prosecuted and convicted under the Act’s felony provisions. If that happens, the penalty is up to 5 years in prison and/or a \$250,000 fine (\$500,000 in the case of an “organization,” including a business).

Misdemeanor prosecution may occur in two situations. The first is if the defendant takes/possesses/transport/sells the prohibited wildlife “without exercising due care.” “Due care” means “that degree of care which a reasonably prudent person would exercise under the same or similar circumstances. As a result, it is applied differently to different categories of persons with varying degrees of knowledge and responsibility” (Senate Report 97–123). Generally, due care requires the judge to ask him or herself if the defendant, when trying to follow the law, applied as much thought, planning and prevention as would a normal, reasonable person in their situation. It’s important to remember that, as stated above, the amount of “due care” a person must show changes depending on their knowledge and responsibility level. As a result, an aquacultural producer transporting their products across state lines will probably be held to a higher standard of care than a child who is transporting his pet goldfish during a cross-country move.

The second way in which a misdemeanor may be prosecuted under the Lacey Act is if the defendant knew about the illegal nature but the value of the wildlife was less than \$350. It’s important to note, however that prosecutors may aggregate, or combine, violations for charging purposes. Combining the violations can increase the value of the wildlife, and potentially elevate the offense from misdemeanor to felony status. Misdemeanor penalties are up to a year in prison and/or \$100,000 fine (\$200,000 for organizations).

Further, false labeling of wildlife transported in interstate commerce is also criminalized, regardless of intent. If the products have a market value of less than \$350, false labeling is a 1 year/\$100,000 misdemeanor, but if the value is greater than \$350, the offender may be charged with another 5 year/\$250,000 felony.

Federal Enforcement of the Lacey Act

Federal enforcement of the Lacey Act is triggered in two situations. First, it is triggered when Federal law is violated, even if no interstate commerce takes place. For example, if an individual possesses a creature that is illegal to possess under Federal law, the Lacey Act may be enforced. Second, it is triggered when a state law regarding fish or wildlife is violated by a product that has been part of interstate commerce. Each state has its own protected, prohibited, restricted or approved exotic or game species lists, established by a state department of natural resources, fish and game, environmental protection or agriculture, and the creatures on the list can vary widely from one state to the next. For an example in this situation, consider Minnesota. In Minnesota it is illegal to transport “prohibited invasive species” on a public road, and violation subjects the offender to a \$250 civil penalty or a misdemeanor (up to 90 days and/or \$1,000). As a result, a company based in Minnesota who transports one of these species to another part of the state may be prosecuted under the state law. A company based in another state who transports one of these species on a Minnesota road may be prosecuted under the Lacey Act.

How does this affect aquaculture? Imagine that a single fish (or even fish egg)—legal to possess in Wisconsin—is inadvertently loaded with a 2,000 lb. truckload of other fish that had been sold to an aquaculture producer in Minnesota. This single fish is on the Minnesota prohibited list. Once the truck crosses the state line, it is stopped by the Minnesota DNR, searched, and the prohibited fish is found. Both the Wisconsin seller and the Minnesota buyer may be prosecuted under the Lacey Act, and what would have been a maximum penalty of 90 days and/or \$1,000 from the state of Minnesota has now turned into a potential year in Federal prison and up to a \$100,000 fine. Moreover, the seller may also be charged with false labeling (for failing to include the prohibited fish in the list of the shipment’s contents), adding up to another 5 years and/or \$250,000 to the sentence.

Minimizing Risk

The risks associated with the Lacey Act can, of course, be minimized by only shipping products in-state. However, this is not a reasonable or feasible option for many producers. For those producers involved in interstate shipment of aquacultural products, the only advice that may be helpful is to check, doublecheck and document every step taken to ensure that regulated species are not transported, because your freedom and livelihood might depend on convincing a judge or jury that you exercised due care in trying to prevent it. Aquaculturists can access the Injurious Species List, as authorized by the Lacey Act, by visiting <http://www.fws.gov/fisheries/ans/ANSInjurious.cfm>. The National Agricultural Library is working on a nationwide compilation of information describing species that are regulated by the states, and it is located at <http://www.invasivespeciesinfo.gov/laws/statelaws.shtml>. This compilation is still a work in progress, so aquacultural producers should still check with the Aquaculture Coordinator in the destination state or their state for regulated species information. Visit <http://www.nasac.net/> for Coordinator contact information.

For more information on the legal aspects involved in aquaculture operations, please visit the National Agricultural Law Center's "Aquaculture" reading room, located at <http://www.nationalaglawcenter.org/readingrooms/aquaculture/>.



Lacey Act Examples.

Consider three producers. Producer A's business is located in Arkansas, B's is in Alabama and C's is in Wisconsin, as shown on the map. They all engage in interstate shipping of their products while also receiving products from other companies that were shipped interstate. That interstate commerce is the trigger to the Lacey Act.

Example 1

Question: Producer A sells an unlabeled load of diploid black carp to Producer B. Diploid black carp may be possessed in Arkansas. However, it is on the Federal invasive species list, so it may not be transported across state lines.

Charges

Against A: Trafficking
Against B: Trafficking

Example 2

Question: Producer A sells a load of catfish to Producer B, but it is labeled "whitefish."

Charges

Against A: False Labeling
Against B: None

Example 3

Question: Producer A sells a load labeled "catfish" to Producer B, and a black carp is included in the shipment.

Charges

Against A: False Labeling & Trafficking
Against B: Trafficking

Example 4

Question: Producer A sells a load labeled "catfish" to Trucker in AR. A black carp is included in the shipment. Trucker drives the shipment to AL, and sells it to Producer B.

Charges

Against A: False Labeling
 Against B: Trafficking
 Against Trucker: Trafficking

Example 5

Question: Producer A sells a load labeled "fishfish" to Producer C. Possession of "fishfish" is legal in AR and WI, but illegal in IL, where Trucker is pulled over.

Charges: No Lacey Act violation, as long as the load was correctly labeled. Trafficking provisions do not apply to interstate shipment if the shipment is en route to a state in which the fish or wildlife or plant may be legally possessed.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Mr. Stewart, whenever you are ready.

**STATEMENT OF DAN STEWART, COW/CALF PRODUCER,
 MOUNTAIN VIEW, AR**

Mr. STEWART. I would like to thank the Committee for this opportunity to speak at the hearing today.

My name is Dan Stewart. I have been a member of the Arkansas Cattlemen Association for over 20 years, and have served on their board. I am the current President of the Stone County Cattlemen and served in that office several times. I am a long time member of the Farm Bureau, and served on the Board of Directors of the Arkansas Limousin Organization. I live up in the hills of Stone County, Arkansas on a farm my family has worked and owned for over 100 years and there has always been cattle raised on that farm for as long as I can remember.

One of my first memories is my grandpa sitting me up on the back of his big old Hereford bull. I tried that later as a teenager at a rodeo with a whole lot less success. I try my best to help my grandson to have the good memories of growing up on a farm and to know the responsibilities and work that comes with helping produce the food for our country and the world. I borrowed money and bought my first herd of cattle at the age of 16.

Compared to many others our operation is small, but when I looked at the demographics I guess I am pretty much what you could call the average cattle producer. The average age of a farmer is 57 years old and the majority by far of the cattle producers have 100 or less head of cattle in their herd. I feel small farms and ranches are the heart and soul of our communities and have a far greater value to our country than just the quantity of animals that they produce.

Most producers I know pretty much have a no-nonsense attitude when it comes to their cattle operations. If something works, they keep it. If it does not, they will try something else. If it ain't broke, don't fix it. So my suggestions to you are fairly simple.

First of all, we need easy access to the programs that the government offers. It can be a real burden to drive long distances to apply for programs or to sign papers. The road systems in our part of the state are not always straight and smooth. It is more than just the distance as the crow flies. Not everyone has a computer or affordable access to the Internet.

One of the programs that I take very personally is the disaster assistance programs. A little over 4 years ago, one of the longest track tornadoes on record started at Atkins, Arkansas and left a continuous path of destruction nearly to the Missouri state line,

well over 100 miles long. The track of this tornado went from one end of my farm to the other, destroying all my fences, barns, and damaging and nearly destroying our home. The very next morning, the CED from our Farm Service Agency was out checking on the broken farms in his area. That is why we need local offices staffed with people that know the farmers and the land in their communities. The counties that were affected by this storm were declared a disaster area and we received financial assistance to reimburse us for some of our expenses in rebuilding. Without that help, I am not sure what we would have done.

Another thing I feel is important to cattlemen is the conservation programs that help us preserve and protect our natural resources. This is even more important with the increasing concerns from the EPA and other environmental agencies.

As a cattle producer and a user of feed, I am against any subsidies for ethanol. I think these subsidies have artificially raised corn prices to the point that it has really affected the livestock industry. Ethanol should stand on its own.

I would like to see our marketing system kept as free as possible, but guard against anyone taking undue advantage of that system.

To sum this all up, basically what I am saying is when we are affected by natural disasters and forces beyond our control, be there with the tools and the help we need to get back to the point that we can continue to be productive. Give us the guidance and assistance we need to protect our soil and water, the most valuable resources that we have. Keep rules and regulations to a minimum, but when there are mandates and rules that prevent the use of our land or the ability to produce an income from it, we should be properly compensated.

Let us continue to do the job that we should be doing, and that is to produce the safest, most wholesome, and abundant food supply in the world.

Thanks again for this opportunity.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Stewart follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DAN STEWART, COW/CALF PRODUCER, MOUNTAIN VIEW, AR

First of all I would like to thank the Committee for this opportunity to speak at this hearing today.

My name is Dan Stewart and I've been a member of the Arkansas Cattlemen Association for over 20 years, and have served as a State Board Representative. I am the current President of the Stone County Cattlemen and served in that office several times, I'm a long time member of Farm Bureau, and served on the Board of Directors of the Arkansas Limousin Organization. I live up in the hills of Stone County Arkansas on a farm my family has worked and owned for over 100 years, and there has been cattle raised on this farm for as long as I can remember.

One of my first memories is of my grandpa sitting me upon the back of his big old Hereford bull. (I tried that later as a teenager at a rodeo with a lot less success.) I try my best to help my grandson to have good memories of growing up on a farm and to know the responsibility, and work that comes with helping produce the food for our country and the world. I borrowed money and bought my first herd of cattle at the age of 16.

Compared to many others our operation is small and I wondered why I was invited here to speak today, but when I looked at the demographics I guess I'm pretty much what you'd call the average cattle producer. The average age of a farmer is 57 years old and the majority by far of cattle producers have 100 or less head of cattle in their herd. I feel that small farms and ranches are the heart and soul of our communities and have a value to our country far greater than just the quantity of animals that they produce.

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I would like to see our marketing system kept as free as possible, but guarded against anyone taking undo advantage of that system.

To sum this all up basically what I'm saying is, when we are affected by natural disasters and forces beyond our control, be there with tools and the help we need to get back to the point we can continue to be productive. Give us the guidance and assistance we need to protect our soil and water, the most valuable resources we have. Keep rules and regulations to a minimum, but when there are mandates and rules that prevent the use of our land or the ability to produce an income from it we should be properly compensated.

Let us continue to do the job we should be doing, that is to produce the safest, most wholesome, and abundant food supply in the world.

Thank you again for this opportunity,

DAN STEWART.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Mr. Owen, again, when you are ready, sir.

STATEMENT OF JOHN E. OWEN, RICE, SOYBEAN, CORN, AND COTTON PRODUCER, JOHN AND ANNIE OWEN FARMS, RAYVILLE, LA

Mr. OWEN. Chairman Lucas, Members of the Committee, thank you for holding this hearing. I appreciate the opportunity to offer testimony on the 2012 Farm Bill. My name is John Owen and I raise rice, corn, soybeans, and cotton in northeast Louisiana where my wife Anne and I have been farming together for 30 years. I also serve as President of the Louisiana Rice Growers Association and on several boards of the USA Rice Federation.

America's farmers can be proud of what we do. We have helped carry our nation through not one, but two economic recessions in the past 12 years. We have reduced our country's trade deficit, we have ensured that Americans spend less of their disposable income on food than anyone else in the world. We contribute to national security by producing our own food and fiber here at home and by feeding and clothing much of the world. And I firmly believe that the U.S. farm policy that we will discuss here today, a policy that

costs a fraction of one percent of the entire Federal budget, is essential to continuing our success.

In short, U.S. agriculture is important to America and farm policy is important to U.S. agriculture.

Mr. Chairman, I have to admit I do not have a great deal of confidence in Washington these days. But I must say that you and your Ranking Member, Mr. Peterson, and your counterparts in the Senate demonstrated last year that not everything in that town is broken.

When my wife and I were talking about my testimony for this hearing and the kind of farm bill we would write this year under the kind of constraints that you were facing last year, we finally added it all up and concluded that it would look a whole lot like what you and Mr. Peterson developed last fall. All the key elements were there.

You started off by acknowledging that what works for the farmers that you heard from last week in Illinois may not work for Anne and me in Louisiana. We have different crops, a different region and different risks. So importantly, you did not try to shove us all into some neat policy box that looks great in Washington, but falls apart on the farm. I really thank you for that.

Another thing you did was to make sure that farmers were not sold a bill of goods. Out of all the options that a producer could choose from in the 2011 bill that you put together, there was protection built into each of them to make sure that if prices fell through the floor, there would not be a crisis in farm country because a producer was allowed to pick a false choice.

I have seen a lot of revenue proposals out there, and nearly all of them do not have any price protection in them. If prices collapse, the revenue the producer is guaranteed collapses right along with it. I do not think all the producers realize this across the country. But I am relieved that you foresaw the problem and did something to prevent it.

On top of these extremely important things, both producer choice and price protection, you also worked to improve crop insurance, including nudging the USDA along to quickly develop some risk management products that might hold out some hope for rice producers, who have not had great success with crop insurance in the past. And you also decided to let the ink dry on payment limits and AGI rules that were written just 2 years ago. Every one of these things is important to Anne and my farm.

But I want to say one other thing. I know you took a lot of unfair flack for defending the rice provisions of the 2011 bill. Your standing up for us does not go unnoticed in rice country. We greatly appreciate that you recognized that all we came to the table with was the direct payment, and that was going to be gone. So you worked with us to give us a decent alternative that we can still take to our banker and get a loan.

In my 30 years in production agriculture, I have watched farm policy evolve through five farm bills. The best legislation built on previous farm policy and made adjustments that were improvements and updates, but not radical shifts in policy. I urge you to keep this in mind as you move forward drafting our next farm bill.

The bottom line is, I believe—and maybe more importantly my banker believes—the 2011 package that you put together serves as an excellent framework for you to develop the 2012 Farm Bill.

Thank you for allowing me this time to testify.
[The prepared statement of Mr. Owen follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JOHN E. OWEN, RICE, SOYBEAN, CORN, AND COTTON
PRODUCER, JOHN AND ANNIE OWEN FARMS, RAYVILLE, LA

Introduction

Chairman Lucas, Ranking Member Peterson, and Members of the Committee, thank you for holding this hearing concerning farm policy and the 2012 Farm Bill. I appreciate the opportunity to offer testimony on farm policy from the perspective of a diversified producer.

My name is John Owen. I raise rice, soybeans, corn, and cotton in Richland Parish in northeastern Louisiana and I have been farming in partnership with my wife Anne for thirty years. In addition, I serve as President of the Louisiana Rice Growers Association and on several boards and committees of the USA Rice Federation, including the USA Rice Producers' Group.

Importance of Agriculture and Cost-Effective Farm Policy

The U.S. agriculture sector should be proud of our contributions to the U.S. economy. In a time of economic downturn, agriculture producers have managed to remain profitable, create new jobs, and provide consumers in the U.S. and all over the world with a safe and abundant supply of food and fiber.

While U.S. agriculture is critically important to America, farm policy is also critically important to U.S. agriculture.

I would urge lawmakers to reject cuts to U.S. farm policy that would exceed the level specified in the letter by the House and Senate Agriculture Committee Chairs and Ranking Members to the Joint Committee on Deficit Reduction last fall. I am concerned that an attempt to write a farm bill with budget reductions greater than the \$23 billion proposed last year will result in farm policy that is inadequate to meet the risk management needs of producers.

2008 Farm Bill Review

The 2008 Farm Bill continued the traditional mix of policies consisting of the non-recourse marketing loan, loan deficiency payments, and the direct and counter cyclical payments. This past farm bill made substantial changes to the payment eligibility provisions, establishing an aggressive adjusted gross income (AGI) means test and significant tightening of "actively engaged" requirements for eligibility. The 2008 Farm Bill also included the addition of Average Crop Revenue Election (ACRE) as an alternative to counter cyclical payments for producers who agree to a reduction in direct payments and marketing loan benefits. The bill also added Supplemental Revenue Assurance (SURE) as a standing disaster assistance supplement to Federal crop insurance.

To be honest, neither ACRE or SURE has proved much value for the crops I grow on my farm. With some changes, a revenue-based policy may be workable for some crops in some growing regions. But for crops that I produce, I haven't seen a revenue-based proposal yet that would be effective in the Mid-South. And particularly as it relates to rice production in my part of the country, forcing me to depend on a revenue policy for risk management will leave me with little to no price protection, which is the main risk I face in rice. SURE has provided little, if any, assistance to producers in the Mid-South who suffered significant monetary losses in 2009 due to heavy rains and flooding occurring prior to and during harvest, or the significant losses last year as a result of spring flooding in the Mid-South. SURE's inability to provide disaster assistance for such catastrophic events further highlights the continuing gap in available policies designed to help producers manage or alleviate their risk.

Whatever its imperfections, the Direct Payment alone has assisted producers in meeting the ongoing and serious price and production perils of farming today. Direct payments have provided critically important capital to farmers that they could tailor to their unique needs. This capital was used to help finance production costs, cover shallow losses, and purchase crop insurance or to make capital improvements to farming operations. While other options to direct payments are being considered, we believe it will be very difficult to improve upon their effectiveness.

I believe we must focus on strengthening farm policies in the 2012 Farm Bill to help ensure that all producers have the ability to adequately manage their risks and access needed credit.

Crop Insurance

Crops grown in the Mid-South have traditionally been under-served by crop insurance. As a result, we have on average lower coverage levels and higher premium costs for most of our crops. This situation has been improving in recent years, but we are still far from the day when I as a Mid-South producer can say that crop insurance is the most important part of farm policy for me. In fact, I think it is inappropriate to believe that crop insurance can ever be the sole policy producers rely on for risk management. Crop insurance is designed to cover production shortfalls or price declines in a single year. It is not designed to protect against price declines over multiple years. And I find myself asking the question, and let me be clear I hope we don't see this happen, but if crop prices decline again in a scenario like we saw in the late 1990's how effective is crop insurance going to be then? If corn prices are \$2.50/bushel and soybean prices are \$5.00/bushel it is clear that a crop insurance revenue policy is not going to be of much help to me as a producer with prices at these levels.

From a rice grower's perspective I have additional concerns about crop insurance. The risk management products offered under Federal Crop Insurance have been of very limited value due to a number of factors, including artificially depressed actual production history (APH) guarantees, which I understand is also a problem for many other producers; high premium costs for a relatively small insurance guarantee; a lack of convergence between the cash and futures prices for rice; and the fact that the risks associated with rice production are unique from the risks of producing many other major crops.

What rice farmers like I need from Federal crop insurance are products that will help protect against increased production and input costs, particularly for energy and energy-related inputs. For example, fuel, fertilizer, and other energy related inputs represent about 70 percent of total variable costs.

As such, rice producers enter the 2012 Farm Bill debate at a very serious disadvantage, having only a single farm policy that effectively works and that farm policy being singled out for elimination.

Commodity Futures Market

Another risk management tool that is becoming more important for me as a producer is the use of the commodity futures market to hedge my price risks for the crops I produce. As we see the coming changes in the farm bill, I think the ability to effectively use the futures market to price and market our crops will become imperative. Today I have the ability to hedge the corn and soybeans I produce, but with rice I am limited in the opportunity to hedge the crop due to issues with the rice futures contract. The contract has suffered from a lack of convergence between cash prices and the futures prices, and in some cases there has been a negative basis as wide as \$4/cwt. For the other crops I produce, I am able to hedge my prices successfully, but for the rice we grow, I am unable to do so.

2012 Farm Bill

First and foremost, I believe that the 2012 Farm Bill should be reauthorized this year.

I know that due to budget restrictions, it will be necessary to write the upcoming farm bill with fewer resources than have been available in the past. Furthermore, some farm policies must be modified to satisfy specific trade objectives as a result of the U.S.-Brazil WTO case. The continuation of a multi-legged stool that includes the marketing loan, countercyclical payments and the best mix of risk management tools for producers.

I believe that the planting flexibility provided under the 1996 Farm Bill and the countercyclical policies that have been in place for more than a decade now have served this nation and its farmers well. In addition, the non-recourse marketing loan still serves an important function by allowing producers the ability to utilize the loan for the marketing of their crops. This is particularly important in both the rice and cotton industries.

Given the aforementioned budget pressures and other considerations facing Congress, I believe that the following priorities represent the needs of producers in crops here in the Mid-South:

- First, the triggering mechanism for assistance should be updated to provide tailored and reliable help should commodity prices decline below today's produc-

tion costs, and should include a floor or reference price to protect in multi-year low price scenarios.

- Second, as payments would only be made in loss situations, payment limits and means tests for producers should be eliminated, or at a minimum not tightened any further.
- Third, Federal crop insurance should be improved to provide more effective risk management for all crops in all production regions, beginning with the policy development process.

Price Protection is Key

I believe the main purpose of farm policy is to provide protection in the event of price declines, which are beyond the control of producers. As noted earlier crop insurance can't provide this protection across multiple years, and only protects against price declines within a growing season. My understanding of the farm bill package developed last fall by this Committee and your counterparts in the Senate is that it included reference prices at levels more relevant to today's cost of production and this reference price would provide a floor for both a price-based option and a revenue-based option. I think this is the most critical component of the next farm bill and must be included in any policy option.

To use rice for an example, price volatility is the primary risk producers face that they do not have other good means of protecting against, with price fluctuations largely driven by global supply and demand. Rice is one of the most protected and sensitive global commodities in trade negotiations, thus limiting access to a number of key markets. Costs of production have risen to a point where the current \$6.50 (loan rate)/\$10.50 (target price) assistance triggers are largely irrelevant. So I believe the first priority should be to concentrate on increasing the prices or revenue levels at which farm policy would trigger so that it is actually meaningful to producers, and would reliably trigger should prices decline sharply.

The reference price for rice should be increased to \$13.98/cwt (\$6.30/bu). This level would more closely reflect the significant increases in production costs for rice on our farm. And this reference price should be a component of both the price-loss policy and the revenue-loss policy to ensure downside price protection.

Options for Different Production Regions

Another important concept that I believe should be reflected in the next farm bill is producer choices or options. It is easy to see that not only are there significant differences in the policy needs of various crops, but there are different risk management needs for the same crop in different growing regions.

Whether it is the rice or corn on my farm in northeast Louisiana, I have a different view of what policy will work best on my farm relative to corn in Iowa or rice in California. Again, using rice as an example, here in the Mid-South and the Gulf Coast production regions, a price-based policy is viewed as being most effective in meeting our risk management needs. Specifically, this policy should include a price protection level that is more relevant to current cost of production; paid on planted acres or percentage of planted acres; paid on more current yields; and take into account the lack of effective crop insurance policies for commodities like rice.

However, my friends producing rice in California have analyzed the potential for a revenue-based policy that could work better in their area to provide effective risk management. Efforts to analyze modifications which will increase the effectiveness of revenue plan continue. Since rice yields are highly correlated between the farm, county, crop reporting district, and state levels, a revenue plan should be administered for rice at either the county or crop reporting district level to reflect this situation rather than lowering guarantee levels to use farm level yields. By setting loss triggers that reflect local marketing conditions, delivering support sooner, and strengthening revenue guarantees that account for higher production costs as well as the absence of effective crop insurance, California rice producers are hopeful that an effective revenue option can be developed.

Different perils confront producers of different crops. Producers need a choice, just as producers were also allowed choices in the 2008 Farm Bill. A necessary part of providing a real choice is to ensure that each option, revenue-based or priced-based, provides effective protection in the event of price declines, particularly in multiyear low price scenarios.

Tailored and Defendable Policy

I believe it makes sense to provide assistance when factors beyond our control create losses. Generally more tailored farm policies are more defendable. For this reason, I like the thought of updating bases and yields or applying farm policies to

planted acres/current production and their triggering based on prices or revenue, depending on the option a producer chooses.

Planting Flexibility

Direct payments are excellent in this regard. SURE or similar whole farm aggregations tend to discourage diversification, which could be a problem for farms in my area and across the Mid-South where we tend to have very diversified farms. Whatever is done should accommodate history and economics and allow for proportional reductions to the baseline among commodities. Some commodities are currently more reliant on countercyclical farm policies (ACRE/CCP) while others are receiving only Direct Payments in the baseline. Generally, the least disruptive and fairest way to achieve savings across commodities would be to apply a percentage reduction to each commodity baseline and restructure any new policy within the reduced baseline amounts.

I know there have been concerns raised about higher reference prices distorting planting decisions and resulting in significant acreage shifts including for rice. I have not seen analysis that shows significant acreage shifts resulting from the reference price levels included in the 2011 Farm Bill package. In fact, for rice specifically, a reference price of \$13.98/cwt that is paid on historic CCP payment yields and on 85% of planted acres results in a reference price level well below my average cost of production, so I find it hard to imagine why someone would plant simply due to this policy given these levels.

Crop Insurance Should Be Maintained and Improved

Although crop insurance does not currently work as well for rice as it does for other crops, the third priority would be to improve availability and effectiveness of crop insurance for rice as an available option. I would also support improvement to the product development processes (we have struggled with two 508(h) submissions for over 4 years and are still not completed with the process), and to the APH system such that any farmer's insurable yield (pre-deductible) would be reflective of what that farmer actually expects to produce. In no case should the crop insurance tools, which are purchased by the producer, be encumbered with environmental/conservation regulation or other conditions that fall outside the scope of insurance.

2011 Budget Control Act Efforts

Although the details of the 2011 Farm Bill package that was prepared by the House and Senate Agriculture Committees in response to the Budget Control Act were not disclosed, based on discussions and reports I believe that package at least represents a good framework on which to build the 2012 Farm Bill. The 2011 package included a choice of risk management tools that producers can tailor to the risks on their own farms, providing under each of those options more meaningful price protection that is actually relevant to today's production costs and prices. It also included provisions to improve crop insurance and expedite product development for under-served crops such as rice.

I would note that the effective support for rice producers under the price-based option was set well below cost of production and that late changes to the revenue-based option minimized its potential as an effective risk management tool for any rice producers, and that pay limits and AGI rules would still serve as an arbitrary constraint upon U.S. competitiveness globally. Still, even with these areas for improvement, I want to express my appreciation to the Members and staff that put enormous time and effort into what I believe represents a good blue print for ongoing farm bill deliberations.

Thank you for this opportunity to offer my testimony today and I will be pleased to respond to any questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Mr. Owen.
Mr. Corcoran, whenever you are ready.

STATEMENT OF WALTER L. CORCORAN, JR., COTTON, CORN, PEANUT, SOYBEAN, GRAIN SORGHUM, AND COW/CALF PRODUCER, EUFAULA, AL

Mr. CORCORAN. I would like to thank Chairman Lucas and the Members of the Committee for the opportunity to provide my views on U.S. farm policy. I would also like to express my gratitude to Congressman Rick Crawford for hosting this very important hearing.

My name is Walt Corcoran from Eufaula, Alabama. Along with my brother, nephew and our wives, we operate a diversified family farming operation in both Georgia and Alabama. Our principal crops include cotton, corn, peanuts, soybeans, and grain sorghum. We also manage a 500 head cow/calf operation. The majority of my crop production is dryland with about $\frac{1}{3}$ irrigated using surface water.

A sound and stable farm policy is critically important to the economic viability of U.S. agriculture. I fully support the Committee's commitment to conclude a farm bill in 2012. It is critically important to provide certainty to those of us involved in production agriculture since we make long-term investment decisions based in part on Federal farm policy.

The 2008 Farm Bill has worked very well for my operation. The combination of marketing loan, direct payment, and countercyclical payments have provided a good safety net. I appreciate the budget pressure facing this Committee and all of Congress. Those pressures will lead to reduced funding for the next farm bill and I want to stress that agriculture is willing to contribute an equitable share to deficit reduction. But I encourage this Committee to fight efforts to impose a disproportionate burden on farm programs.

In addition to budget pressures, the cotton industry faces a unique challenge in resolving the longstanding dispute with Brazil. Because of these challenges, the National Cotton Council has proposed an innovative revenue-based crop insurance program known as STAX. This product replaces the direct and countercyclical payments for cotton; thus, directly addressing one of the programs found to be at fault in the WTO dispute. In the opinion of the U.S. cotton industry, this structure will best utilize reduced budget resources, respond to public criticism by directing benefits directly to growers, and builds on the existing crop insurance programs.

The findings of the WTO case also require that changes be made in the marketing loan for upland cotton as part of the development of the 2012 Farm Bill. I also encourage this Committee to follow the industry's recommendation to introduce a formula for determining the marketing loan level. That formula will allow the marketing loan to adjust lower in times of lower prices. The loan rate for a crop will be determined in the fall prior to planting the crop and will have a range from 52¢ to 47¢.

The House and Senate Agriculture Committees' proposal to the Joint Budget Committee recognized the fact that because of the diversity of crop needs, a one-size-fits-all approach is not practical. I encourage your Committee to continue this approach in your deliberations and tailor the various programs to fit the needs and constraints of the individual commodities.

Farmers understand that agriculture is an extremely risky endeavor, but we also understand that effective risk management is the key to long-term viability.

Like the vast majority of farming operations across the Cotton Belt, crop insurance and risk management tools are critically important to my economic livelihood. Given the diversity of weather and production practices, the menu of insurance choices should be diverse and customizable, thus allowing for maximum participation and the most effective coverage. I have crop insurance on most of

my crops. Last year, because of the severe drought, it provided a measure of risk protection that was critical to my farming operation. I strongly urge that crop insurance not be weakened during this farm bill.

In 2008, the introduction of enterprise unit pricing gave us one more option for insuring against risks that are beyond our control. I encourage the continuation of this option.

Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to make these brief comments.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Corcoran follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF WALTER L. CORCORAN, JR., COTTON, CORN, PEANUT,
SOYBEAN, GRAIN SORGHUM, AND COW/CALF PRODUCER, EUFAULA, AL

Good morning. I would like to thank Chairman Lucas, Ranking Member Peterson, and Members of the Committee for the opportunity to provide my views on U.S. farm policy. I would also like to express my gratitude to Congressman Rick Crawford for hosting this very important hearing. My name is Walt Corcoran, Jr. from Eufaula, Alabama. I along with my brother, nephew and our wives, operate a diversified family farm operation in both Georgia and Alabama. Our principal row crops include cotton, corn, peanuts, soybeans and grain sorghum. We also manage a 500 head cow/calf herd. The majority of my crop production is dryland with about $\frac{1}{3}$ of my acreage using surface water irrigation.

A sound and stable farm policy is critically important to the economic viability of U.S. agriculture—I appreciate the dedication and diligent work of this Committee during last fall's attempt at a joint deficit reduction package. While that effort did not advance a farm bill conclusion I fully support the Committee's commitment to conclude a farm bill in 2012. It is critically important to provide certainty to those of us involved in production agriculture since we make long-term investment decisions based on Federal farm policy.

The 2008 Farm Bill has worked very well for my operation. The combination of the marketing loan, Direct Payments and Counter-cyclical Payments has provided a good safety net, and in recent years, has required minimal Federal spending. I appreciate the budget pressures facing this Committee and all of Congress. Those pressures will lead to reduced funding for the next farm bill. I want to stress that agriculture is willing to contribute an equitable share to deficit reduction, but I encourage this Committee to fight efforts to impose a disproportionate burden on farm programs. We support your Committee's recommendation of \$23 billion in budget savings as an equitable contribution to deficit reduction.

In addition to budget pressures, this Committee is well aware that the cotton industry faces the unique challenge of resolving the long-standing trade dispute with Brazil. Because of these challenges, the National Cotton Council has proposed an innovative revenue-based crop insurance program known as STAX. This product replaces the direct and countercyclical payments for cotton, thus directly addressing one of the programs found to be at fault in the WTO dispute. In the opinion of the U.S. cotton industry, this structure will best utilize reduced budget resources, respond to public criticism by directing benefits to growers who suffer losses resulting from factors beyond their control, and build on the existing crop insurance program, thus ensuring no duplication of coverage and allowing for program simplification.

The findings in the WTO case also require that changes be made to the marketing loan for upland cotton as part of the development of the 2012 Farm Bill. I also encourage this Committee to follow the industry's recommendation to introduce a formula for determining the marketing loan level. That formula will allow the marketing loan to adjust lower in times of low prices. The loan rate for a crop will be determined in the fall prior to planting the crop and be set equal to the average of the AWP for the two most recently completed marketing years provided the 2 year moving average falls within a set maximum of \$0.52 and a minimum level of \$0.47.

Other existing features of the upland cotton marketing loan should be retained in the next farm bill. These include an effective determination of the Adjusted World Price for purposes of loan redemption in times of low prices, as well as the provision of storage credits should the loan redemption price fall below the loan rate.

The House and Senate Agriculture Committee proposal to the Joint Budget Committee recognized the fact that because of the diversity of crop needs, a one-size-fits-all approach is not practical. I encourage your Committee to continue this ap-

proach in your deliberations and tailor the various programs to fit the needs and constraints of the individual commodities.

Farmers understand that agriculture is an extremely risky endeavor, but they also understand that effective risk management is the key to long-term viability. While the goal of farm programs is not to completely remove the risk associated with farming, farm programs should strive to provide opportunities for effective risk management.

Like the vast majority of farming operations across the Cotton Belt, crop insurance and risk management tools are critically important to my economic livelihood. Given the diversity of weather and production practices, the menu of insurance choices should be diverse and customizable, thus allowing for maximum participation and the most effective coverage. I have crop insurance coverage on most of my crops. Last year, because of the severe drought conditions, it provided a measure of risk protection that was critical to the economic viability of my farming operation.

I strongly urge that crop insurance not be weakened during this farm bill. In today's environment of volatile prices and high input costs, effective risk management has never been more important.

In 2008, the introduction of enterprise unit pricing gave producers one more option for insuring against those risks that are beyond their control. I encourage the continuation of that option in the 2012 Farm Bill.

Mr. Chairman, my brief comments do not provide an exhaustive look at the many important programs included in the current farm legislation. That said, there are a couple or others I would point out. Assistance for our U.S. textile mills was introduced in the 2008 Farm Bill, and I encourage that program to be continued in the next farm law. In recent years, conservation programs have become increasingly important and I hope those programs will remain useful options. Thank you for the opportunity to offer these, and I look forward to the opportunity to answer questions at the appropriate time.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, sir. And I now recognize myself for 5 minutes.

Mr. Owen, in your written statement you said, "It is inappropriate to believe that crop insurance can ever be the sole policy producers rely upon for risk management." Sole policy. Expand just—and you did a good job in your testimony. Expand just a little bit more on that if you would for the record.

Mr. OWEN. Well, the main problem with using crop insurance as the sole basis risk management is that crop insurance cannot protect you against a multi-year low price scenario such as we experienced in the late 1990s. The indemnities for crop insurance or the triggers are set in the winter and they are generally based off Chicago Board of Trade futures, and when those prices are low, then you have a product that provides no protection from the beginning. So without an underlying reference price, either countercyclical or through a revenue assurance policy offered through the government that is economically viable, then crop insurance is not a long-term safety net for agriculture in the Mid-South, or as far as I can see, anywhere in the country.

The CHAIRMAN. Very insightful plan, sir.

Mr. Stewart, you mentioned the importance of disaster programs. So as a fellow cattleman, I ask this question and if you do not mind me asking, have you participated in any of the livestock disaster programs offered under the 2008 Farm Bill—the Livestock Forage Program or the Livestock Indemnity Program?

Mr. STEWART. What I have participated in is the NAP, the non-insured disaster program. The LA—there are a lot of letters and acronyms and it is almost like learning a new language.

The CHAIRMAN. Yes.

Mr. STEWART. But we did not qualify. It is pretty hard to qualify in that Livestock Forage Program, so we did not. But I have re-

ceived payments from the NAP Program, which is the non-insured. And as far as the Livestock Indemnity Program, I do keep records of losses in case I would qualify, but so far I have personally been lucky enough that I have not had to use the LIP program.

The CHAIRMAN. One other question, Mr. Stewart. You mentioned ethanol just a moment ago. From your perspective as a cattleman, some would argue, with 45, maybe 50 percent of the corn crop on average in the last couple of years going through the ethanol cookers, that it has no real effect on the supply of corn or the availability of feed. What do you think of that comment that some people make.

Mr. STEWART. Well, that seems to be hard to believe. I do not think the corn crop as a whole has gone up that much. First, they were talking about the distiller's grain, but it seems like that has not—we have not been able to utilize that as a feed source like we were once led to believe.

The CHAIRMAN. On the previous panel, my colleague from Arkansas noted about the Conservation Reserve Program and we are seeing in some of the re-enrollments the acres come down, which of course, CRP is a voluntary conservation program and I am a great believer in voluntary conservation programs, by the way, for the record. But as those CRP acres come down, that seems to imply that producers are assessing grain prices and determining we have to have more production. My cattlemen, pork producers, poultry people, and turkey people at home tell me in a pretty straight-forward way that the feed supplies have been really tight the last 2 years. Do you see that when you buy your 20 percent pellets?

Mr. STEWART. Yes, I do, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. So we have to have more grain. You would agree with that statement.

Mr. STEWART. Yes, in order to keep the price where we can afford it. You know, if you have the money, you can buy it, but it makes it tough. And I know right now, cattle prices are good, but as we all know, they do not last.

The CHAIRMAN. Exactly. Exactly. Looks like my time is about to expire.

I now turn to the gentleman from Texas for 5 minutes, Mr. Neugebauer.

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Hundley, you mentioned that you were opposed to means testing. A lot of folks are opposed to large farming operations getting farm payments. I think in your testimony, you said it would be detrimental to the family farms in Arkansas. Do you want to elaborate on that?

Mr. HUNDLEY. Yes. I think as you see from the previous panel and this panel, the one thing that lenders and people that extend credit like right now is the guarantee that a deficiency payment provides. Not so much the deficiency payment, but the guarantee. And I think means testing in itself is almost a failed attempt to regulate a failed policy. You know, the safety net that we need needs to be a safety net that is available to every farm on every acre on every crop, regardless of their size or their business structure. And I think from that standpoint is what I referred to as means testing would be detrimental to Arkansas farmers if it was

just you draw a line in the sand and say okay, you get it, you do not.

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. Mr. Owen, you mentioned that reform to crop insurance you thought would be an integral part of the next farm bill. One of the things that we are going to have to do is make choices because in this budget environment we feel like we are going to be obviously dealing with a smaller amount of funds to put together a good comprehensive farm policy in the future.

Of the current policy that we have; in other words, talking about looking at the baskets we have now, in your operation, what do you think is the most important farm program that exists today that we should work really hard to preserve. If you had to pick one. And I know that is difficult and I am not saying we are going to have to do that, but I am just trying—we are going to have to prioritize this and we are trying to get your thoughts.

Mr. OWEN. It is not as difficult as you would imagine. For my operation, countercyclical program is by far the most important and the most defensible to the city people. Having a meaningful reference price that we can take to a bank to get financed, having a loan program that we can use to aid our marketing is the most important. We need price protection and we need yield protection. Price protection has to come from the countercyclical type program. Yield protection should come from insurance. And the most important factor by far though to my operation is a countercyclical program with a reference price that is meaningful.

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. You know, one of the things that we have seen is the countercyclical payments have actually performed extremely well over the last few years, and that is the way the program was designed, was when the price was low obviously you had that safety net. But in many commodities, for the last few years obviously, countercyclical payments have not come into play. So that is a program—unfortunately that is one of the programs that we have had trouble with the WTO. So obviously that is something we will have to address.

Mr. Stewart, in this environment where we have just come out of in Texas some pretty severe droughts and some other parts of the country, what are some of the biggest challenges for the cow/calf producer today?

Mr. STEWART. Well, like you say, regardless of whether you attribute it to global warming or weather cycles or what, but it seems like we are in a system of extremes. In our area, we can have floods, massive floods all spring. Summer gets here and we do not get another drop until next winter. And that seems to be one of the biggest challenges as far as our forage production.

Other issues—like most farmers and ranchers, we like to look ahead and plan for the worst. And there are environmental issues that possibly will be out there. Some of them, like the dust issue, they say that was just a myth, but it concerns a lot of farmers. And I would like to see some assurance that stuff like that will not affect us in the future.

Mr. NEUGEBAUER. I yield back, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman yields back.

The chair now recognizes the gentleman from Arkansas, Mr. Crawford, for 5 minutes.

Mr. CRAWFORD. Real quick, we were talking with Mr. Stewart. I want to talk about something that has been brought to my attention by a number of folks. The testimony you gave regarding your experience as a child and just kind of describing the family dynamic on your farm.

The Department of Labor issued a proposed regulation in regards to children working on farms, and to my knowledge, no ag group obviously supported that initial proposal. But since the backlash, the Department has said they will repropose the regulation involving the parental exemption section only. Have you read anything about that? And what would be the impact on a family farm like yours if they were to tell you that you could not allow your children to participate in production agriculture?

Mr. STEWART. Well, I personally think it would be devastating to the family farm, because at an early age, my thought is you need to instill a love for farming. Farming in our area especially is more than just an economic thing. It is a way of life and something that you have to really want to do because at times it is tough. And if you do not love what you do, you are not going to stay in it. And if you instill that in your children and grandchildren at an early age, we can continue to have our family farms.

Mr. CRAWFORD. Excellent, thank you.

Mr. Freeze, the Arkansas fish growing industry has been in decline for the past few decades. Can you talk about some of the factors that have contributed to that decline? And in crafting the next farm bill, what would the suggestions be to address those issues?

Mr. FREEZE. Well, of course, the rising input cost, your increase in feed and increase in energy costs, *et cetera*. They affect the aquaculture industry or fish farms just like they do other farmers. But probably this unlevel playing field that was referred to with the seafood inspection is one of the big issues. I think this Committee tried to correct that in the 2008 Farm Bill, but it has been almost 4 years now and still the inspection of catfish coming into the United States has not been transferred from FDA to FSIS. FSIS started inspections and we are wondering how much longer this is going to take.

So other than that, some of the regulatory issues that I talked about. I mean, I know all farmers feel as if they are over-regulated but I think if you will add it up, for a fish farmer, we are regulated by something like 30 to 40 different state and Federal agencies. And it is just a real problem.

Mr. CRAWFORD. Thank you.

In the time I have left, Mr. Hundley, many of the Members of this Committee see farmers as the best stewards of the land and I think certainly those Members that are present would agree with that. But the EPA seems to think differently about that. Congress has given producers the tools through cost-share programs and voluntary incentive-based programs to improve water, soil and air quality. Can you talk about the importance of conservation programs in dealing with potential regulations that we may be seeing with respect to EPA?

Mr. HUNDLEY. I need to think about how to say this. When you mention EPA, one of the problems, you say that there are programs to help us mitigate some of those regulations. What I see right

now, it seems that we have an agency that is out there making rules and trying to enforce rules that have sidestepped even the Committee or even Congress sometimes. It seems like, for instance, the fuel containment deal. I mean just all of a sudden, here it comes. I don't want to look a gift horse in the mouth on some of these programs that we have to help offset these, but you know, we feel that the EPA is over-reaching sometimes and we feel like you all should have some input before it ever comes to us as an implementation of a law.

Mr. CRAWFORD. Okay. A little time left.

Mr. Corcoran, you want to comment on that with respect to EPA on your farm?

Mr. CORCORAN. Just as he was saying, they over-reach. I think they are implementing or putting rules on us before we know what is going on. As far as point source pollution in our state. We had a big problem with trying to regulate—I think it is everywhere—the waters under the Clean Water Act, trying to regulate the nozzle as a point-source source of pollution. They are far over-reaching regulations and we need to rein them in somehow.

Mr. CRAWFORD. Mr. Owen, final thought.

Mr. OWEN. Well, first of all, I would say that farmers are the original active environmentalists, instead of being environmental activists. And EPA does need to be reined in. We are excellent stewards of the land and I would put our record up against any country as far as the way we take care of our land, the way our pesticides are regulated, the way we use our pesticides. We have a fabulous track record and we do not need further regulation.

Mr. CRAWFORD. Thank you. I yield back, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman's time has expired.

The chair now recognizes the gentleman from Indiana, Mr. Stutzman, to conclude the questions for this panel. You are recognized for 5 minutes, sir.

Mr. STUTZMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

As we all know, there is plenty of volatility in agriculture. As we see yesterday corn prices were down, today corn and soybean prices are up 30¢ and 50¢, just due to crop reports. You know, we see a lot of volatility. Many folks out East do not understand those challenges. We are always trying to play—we have to play two sides of the game. You have input costs and then you have your commodity prices that affect us.

I appreciate Congressman Crawford so much. Being a corn and soybean farmer from northern Indiana, rice is really a new crop to me. I do not understand the complexities that you all face. And one of the comments that Mr. Owen, you had in your testimony, I would like to direct this question to Mr. Owen and Mr. Corcoran. In your testimony, Mr. Owen, you cite "What rice farmers like I need from Federal crop insurance are products that would help protect against increased production and input costs, particularly for energy and energy-related inputs. For example, field fertilizer and other energy-related inputs represent about 70 percent of total variable costs."

I know for myself as a corn and soybean farmer, I have about the exact same situation for us. It is volatility in the input side. Can you give me an idea—we are seeing a lot of volatility in the

corn and soybean markets. What are you seeing on the rice side? I just have not followed those prices. What is different about rice from corn and soybeans?

Mr. OWEN. Well, first of all, rice has been working towards, for the last 4 years with RMA trying to develop a policy that would provide us with rising input protections in fuel and fertilizer primarily. And the main thing that is different about rice is the cost of running irrigation pumps. When we have a drought scenario—and you have a 100 horsepower motor on average in the Mid-South, 100 horsepower motor turning 24 hours a day trying to keep water on 100 acres of rice. Well, most rice farmers are farming 750 to 1,500 acres of rice in their rotational mix. That is a significant consumption of diesel. And also when we have fertilizer price spikes such as in 2008, it just runs your production cost through the roof. So we are working with RMA to try to develop a product for rice, which may very well work for corn and soybeans after it is developed and up, but this is a pilot program that we are trying to get through and developed. But I would say the amount of diesel and electricity required to run irrigation systems in drought periods is our main cost of running up our fuel.

Mr. STUTZMAN. And Mr. Corcoran, if you could talk a little bit about the price of rice and how that market works.

Mr. CORCORAN. I am not a producer of rice.

Mr. STUTZMAN. Oh, I am sorry, you are cotton. I am sorry about that.

Mr. Owen and Mr. Hundley, if you could maybe comment on that.

Mr. HUNDLEY. Excuse me, the question again?

Mr. STUTZMAN. We see a lot of volatility in corn and soybeans and I am a northern Indiana farmer and as Mr. Stewart mentioned, ethanol has obviously played a huge impact in those prices. Could you talk about the rice market? Do you see the same volatility and what are the factors that affect the price of rice.

Mr. HUNDLEY. I think one of the things that I see with rice is we do not have—the futures market is not an effective place to hedge. Where you as a corn farmer, I mean, you can go in and daily trade corn or soybean futures as an effective hedge, and in rice, we do not have that.

I have some opinions of why that is, but I do not know if it is true. A lot of the end-users do not use hedging as an effective tool. So I think that is the biggest difference.

Mr. OWEN. Mr. Stutzman, we are taking some steps and working with CME and the rice industry to try to improve convergence in futures. Another difference is rice is—you know, the United States only grows about three percent of the world's rice crop. However, we are the third or fourth largest exporter of rice. And 96 percent, or 95 percent of the rice grown in the world is consumed where it is grown. So the five percent that is left for export can be extremely volatile in price. Currently we are dealing with countries that are subsidizing their exports, India, Thailand and Brazil at this point. So that changes the dynamic a little bit.

And rice is an expensive crop to grow. Hopefully we will get these things ironed out with the ability to hedge rice like we use

futures for corn and soybeans and wheat and cotton, but we are not there yet. But we are working on it.

Mr. STUTZMAN. Well, my wife for some reason keeps putting more rice on our plate at home, so you must be getting to her, so we are trying to do our part and help consume the rice crop.

Mr. OWEN. It is good for you.

Mr. STUTZMAN. It is good for you. With that, I will yield back, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman's time has expired, all time has expired.

Before we begin the process of concluding this hearing, I would like to take just a moment once again to thank Congressman Crawford for working very diligently to suggest the quality of hearing we could have and the different perspectives we could bring together. You were absolutely right, Rick, about that.

And I would also like to thank Arkansas State University for these wonderful facilities. Rarely do we have this quality of a facility to have a field hearing in; thank you very much, staff, faculty, administration for that.

And also, and I much attribute this to the fact that he was an old House Member before he went to that other body on the other side of the building in Washington, D.C., I would like to note on behalf of the Committee a very special appreciation to Arkansas's own Senator Boozman for coming and spending a half a day with us. As a Member of the Senate Agriculture Committee and a representative of this great ag state, he is just as concerned and focused as we are all here today on trying to figure out the things we need to determine so as to craft that next farm bill. So raise your hand, John, you cannot hide over there. Senators are Senators, you know.

[Applause.]

The CHAIRMAN. And with that, I would like to invite the gentleman from Arkansas, Mr. Crawford, to offer any closing remarks that he might have.

Mr. CRAWFORD. I thank the Chairman for his work in leading the Agriculture Committee in the House of Representatives. I want to say a particular word of thank you to the staff, the Committee staff, who do the hard work and the heavy lifting. They have done a wonderful job and I also want to thank the staff here at ASU for hosting us today.

From the testimony we have heard this morning, it is obvious that our farmers face many challenges. I am encouraged though that as the Agriculture Committee begins the task of writing a new farm bill, that we will be able to protect farmers here in Arkansas and the Mid-South and across the country.

So last, let me encourage everyone who did not get a chance to have their comments heard, that we do want to hear from you, you can submit your written comments for the record up until May 20, you can do that online at www.house.agriculture.gov/farmbill. That is a tough one to remember, get with us after the hearing and we will be glad to write that down for you. Again, you have until May 20 to submit your comments and we do want to hear from you. Your opinion is very important.

Thank you so much, everyone for being here. And with that, I yield back to the Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman yields back.

Any other closing comments from my colleagues?

[No response.]

The CHAIRMAN. Seeing none, thank you all again for being here today. I think we have heard some truly valuable input today and I would like to especially thank our witnesses for their time and their willingness to answer questions to the extent they have.

As I said when we started, there are some challenges that vary by region and we need to tailor farm policy to reflect those unique requirements. I think it is also true farmers and ranchers across the country share some of the same experiences. So whether you raise fish in Arkansas or cotton in Mississippi or peanuts in Georgia, corn in Alabama or rice in Missouri and Louisiana, you want the same things. You want smart policies that allow you to keep producing food and fiber for America. Your input is important as a piece of this puzzle in putting together a farm bill that works for all farmers in all regions, all parts of the country.

Once again, as my colleague Congressman Crawford said, if you want to submit comments, opinions and have it included in the official record, go to agriculture.house.gov/farmbill and fill out that form and send it back to us. Your perspective is vital to the process and I thank you all for participating today.

Under the rules of the Committee, the record of today's hearing will remain open for 30 calendar days to receive additional information and supplementary written responses from witnesses to any question posed by a Member.

This hearing of the United States House Committee on Agriculture is adjourned. Thank you.

[Whereupon, at 10:53 a.m. (CDT), the Committee was adjourned.]

THE FUTURE OF U.S. FARM POLICY: FORMULATION OF THE 2012 FARM BILL

FRIDAY, APRIL 20, 2012

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE,
Dodge City, KS.

The Committee met, pursuant to call, at 9:00 a.m. (CDT), at the Magouirk Conference Center, 4100 W. Comanche, Dodge City, Kansas, 67801, Hon. Frank D. Lucas [Chairman of the Committee] presiding.

Members present: Representatives Lucas, Conaway, and Huelskamp.

Staff present: Bart Fischer, Matt Schertz, Nicole Scott, Heather Vaughan, Suzanne Watson, John Konya, and Caleb Crosswhite.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. FRANK D. LUCAS, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM OKLAHOMA

The CHAIRMAN. This hearing of the Committee on Agriculture entitled, *The Future of U.S. Farm Policy: Formulation of the 2012 Farm Bill*, will come to order.

Good morning. Thank you all for joining us today for our final farm bill field hearing. Congressman Huelskamp, thank you for hosting us in your district. I like doing things in the neighborhood, coming from just across the line to the south, and I want to thank all of our witnesses for joining us today and extend a particular welcome to Scott Neufeld, who's come up from my great State of Oklahoma. I'll talk about him a little later.

This hearing is a continuation of a process that started in the spring of 2010. Today, we'll build upon the information we've gathered in those hearings, as well as the 11 farm policy audits we conducted this past summer.

We used those audits as an opportunity to fairly evaluate farm programs to identify areas where we could improve efficiency.

The field hearings serve a slightly different purpose, though. Today, we're here to listen. I talk to producers all the time back in Oklahoma. I see them at the feed store; I meet them in my town hall meetings; and of course, I get regular updates from my boss, Linda Lucas, back home on the ranch. Yes, those of you who know Linda understand exactly what I mean by that, but I can tell you that the past three field hearings have demonstrated the tremendous diversity of agriculture in this country.

We started in New York, where the farming operations tend to be smaller, and there are probably more trees in one acre than you have in most counties in the Big First District of Kansas, Tim. We

learned how farm policy affects specialty crop growers and dairy producers in the Northeast.

Next was Illinois, where we saw vast corn and soybean fields and heard how crop insurance is a critical risk management tool for farmers in the Corn Belt.

In Arkansas, we saw quite a few irrigated fields, and yes, as a western Okie, I was a little envious of that, and we heard why crop insurance isn't quite as effective of a risk management tool in the Southeast.

Today, we'll hear from a wide variety of producers who will no doubt have a different perspective than we got in those other regions. That's why it's so important that we offer a choice of policy options. The broad range of agricultural production in our country is what makes our country strong, and it also creates challenges, when we're trying to write a single farm bill that supports so many different regions and commodities.

While each sector has unique concerns when it comes to farm policy, I'd like to share some of my general goals for the next farm bill. First and foremost, I want to give producers the tools to help you do what you do best, and that is produce the safest, most abundant, most affordable food supply literally in the history of the world.

To do this, we must develop a farm bill that works for all regions and all commodities. It has to take into account the diversity of agriculture in America. Even within commodities, different programs work better for different regions, and that's why it's virtually important—vitality, I should say, important that the commodity title give producers options so they can choose the program that works best for them, whether it is by protecting revenue or price.

I'm also committed to providing a strong crop insurance program for our producers. The Committee has heard loud and clear the importance of crop insurance, and it will be the backbone of our safety net. We will look for areas to improve crop insurance as we move forward.

Last, we will work to ensure that producers can continue using conservation programs to protect our natural resources. I'm particularly curious as to your thoughts on how to simplify the process so they are easier for our farmers and ranchers to use.

Beyond those priorities, I know there are a number of universal concerns facing agriculture across the country. For instance, my producers in Oklahoma are worried about regulations coming down from the Environmental Protection Agency, the EPA, and how they must comply with those regulations. I'm also aware that the death tax is creating difficulties for farming operations. I want to hear how these Federal policies are affecting producers here.

Today, we'll be hearing from a selection of producers. Unfortunately, we don't have time to hear from everybody who would like to share their perspectives, but we have a place on our website where you can submit your comments in writing. You can visit agriculture.house.gov/farmbill to find that form. You can also find the address on postcards that are available around the room, I believe.

As I said before, we don't have an easy road ahead of us, but I'm confident that by working together, we can craft a farm bill that

continues to support the successful story that American agriculture is; and with that, I would turn to our host, my colleague from the House Agriculture Committee, Mr. Huelskamp, for any comments he might offer.

**OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. TIM HUELSKAMP, A
REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM KANSAS**

Mr. HUELSKAMP. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm pleased and honored to host this field hearing for the House Agriculture Committee, not far from my home town of Fowler and not far from our family farm. I appreciate you and Congressman Conaway and others that have taken the time and effort to hear what producers think about the farm bill, and what a fantastic place to be here and hear that, in the region once known as the Great American Desert.

The pioneers turned it into one of the most productive agriculture areas in the world with hundreds of thousands of acres of wheat and corn and milo and soybeans, even cotton, and millions of head of cattle and pigs, and not to mention ethanol and dairy production.

We do this in a time of mixed news: A lingering and devastating drought throughout much of the Plains, high commodity prices and record exports, matched with high cost for inputs and machinery and even a land price boom, an aging producer population and labor shortages, a slew of expensive government regulations from the EPA, USDA, Departments of Labor and Transportation.

Additionally, we're all aware of the financial situation in Washington. Overspending has led to a massive debt problem. As America's farmers and ranchers, we will do our fair share, I believe, to solve this problem, but so should the more than 80 percent of the farm bill spending for food stamps and other welfare programs, and we also expect Washington to do with less: Less regulation, less mandates, and less control over our way of life.

Writing farm policy is especially difficult because there are so many variables affecting agriculture: Market volatility, monetary policy, international competition, the weather, and of course, new regulations out of Washington. With these in mind, the next farm bill must be designed with maximum flexibility and effective risk management for our farmers and ranchers as we feed a growing and hungry world.

In order to meet these goals, it's absolutely critical that we actually listen and learn from the concerns and common sense of America's farmers and ranchers, so let me again thank you all for coming to share your thoughts with the Committee and I look forward to hearing from you today.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Congressman Huelskamp.

The chair requests that other Members submit their opening statements for the record, so that witnesses may begin their testimony and ensure that there's ample time for questions.

With that, I'd like to welcome our first panel of witnesses to the table: Mr. Gary Harshberger, a corn, wheat, milo, soybean and cow/calf producer, Dodge City, Kansas; Mr. Keith Miller, a wheat, sorghum, corn, soybean and cow/calf producer, Great Bend, Kansas; Mr. Dee Vaughan, a corn, cotton, sorghum, soybean, and wheat producer, Dumas, Texas; Mr. Scott Neufeld, cotton—sorry—wheat,

sorghum, canola, alfalfa, cow/calf producer from Fairview, Oklahoma; and indulge me for a moment, as the Chairman of the Committee, to note that while he didn't put it in his bio, he and his wife Brenda and their two kids were recently named the Oklahoma Farm Bureau Family of the Year. I think that's very impressive and thank you, Scott, for bringing the real boss of your operation, Brenda, with you today also.

With that, Mr. Terry Swanson. Mr. Swanson is a corn, wheat, sorghum, sunflower, and cow/calf producer from Walsh, Colorado, and with that, let's turn to, appropriately, our friend from Dodge City. You may begin.

**STATEMENT OF GARY HARSHBERGER, CORN, WHEAT, MILO,
SOYBEAN, AND COW/CALF PRODUCER, DODGE CITY, KS**

Mr. HARSHBERGER. Good morning. Is this on? Good morning, Chairman Lucas, Representative Huelskamp, and Representative Conaway. Welcome to western Kansas. Kansas's First Congressional District is the number one agriculture producing Congressional district in the nation. It's my honor to sit before you today and offer my perspective on farm policy as the Committee shapes the next farm bill. Thank you for holding this hearing in Kansas and thank all of you for being here.

My name is Gary Harshberger. I'm a fourth generation Ford County farmer. After graduating college in 1987, I returned to the family farm. However, I can proudly say that I started farming roughly about the age of 10. Today we raise corn, milo, wheat, soybeans, and some cattle. I currently serve as Chairman of the Kansas Water Authority. I serve on the Bonanza Bioenergy board as well as the Arkalon Energy board of directors.

I know that ag programs have done more than their fair share to reduce Federal spending and yet this bill will be written with much less money. Thank you for your efforts in trying to develop a farm package that works and can sustain farmers through the next 5 years. My testimony today will focus on five critical areas as they relate to my operation.

First of all, while this Committee does not have jurisdiction over this particular area, I must share my concern with over-regulation. On one hand, the government wants to cut farm production—protection—cut farm protection, and on the other, it wants to saddle us with costly regulations proposed by out-of-touch politicians and bureaucrats. The child labor laws stemming from the Department of Labor, as well as diesel engine regulations coming from the EPA, are just two examples of regulatory burdens that cost my farm and consumers money.

Over-regulation is cumbersome and costly and presents more of a threat to our nation's agriculture than possibly would the farm bill.

On to the farm policy. I know this Committee has heard from producers across the U.S. that crop insurance is the most important program to protect in the next farm bill. I would like to echo that fact. The impact of the recent drought is a testament to the uncertainty farmers face each year, and the need to rely on crop insurance can never be more clear.

There are many ways to strengthen the program, such as a personal T-yield system to current APH methodology, allowing a producer's APH's to more accurately reflect his yield potential. I would like—I would also like to see a better system in place for insuring limited irrigation practices.

As water supplies diminish and water conservation practices are adopted, crop insurance should reflect this trend. RMA needs to be encouraged to implement the proposed limited irrigation crop insurance programs for 2013.

Finally, please keep crop insurance tools purchased by producers protected from environmental compliance requirements or other—any other payment limitations that limit conditions that do not belong tied to insurance.

There have been many policy avenues that have been offered by the commodity title. Shallow loss and deep loss have both been discussed. I believe a new program should protect yield and price in some form, as well as allow for flexibility. If revenue—if a revenue-type program is used, I believe a minimum price yield and plug—minimum price and plug yield should be included in a revenue-based program. My input prices have dramatically increased since the time I began farming. Recently, we have enjoyed higher commodity prices and positive profit margins. However, historically, this shows that this will not last, as input costs will increase until they meet or exceed the costs of production.

Last year, for instance, I just saw a \$48,000 increase in the price of a combine. I feel a price—I feel a minimum price will protect against a large drop in commodity prices and plug yields will help in times of consecutive years of yield loss, such as in a drought.

A farm bill should provide assistance when I suffer losses beyond my control. I need a simple program in case of—in case my operation suffers a disaster. ACRE and SURE did not provide the efficiency and simplicity farmers needed, and while current loan countercyclical programs are simple, production costs have continued to rise, making 2008 levels no longer relevant to the realities of costs today.

Water conservation is something I'm very passionate about. Last year's drought has dramatically affected the water supply in my region, as many others tied to the Ogallala Aquifer.

We need to build stronger incentives for producers to plant less water-intensive agriculture commodities; strengthen existing programs like AWEP, where dollars are already being used towards water conservation; and allow use of conservation practices that use new technologies currently eligible within the NRCS's conservation stewardship program, all of which can benefit ground-water conservation.

Last, I support the continuation of the farm bill energy title. It's imperative our country sustains the national—our national—our national security. Programs in the energy title, like the Bioenergy Program for Advanced Biofuels, have been positive for the U.S. I am proud that I produce local grains that go to local ethanol plants and contribute to renewable fuel sources that reduce our dependence on foreign oil and putting billions of dollars back into our local economies instead of sending them overseas.

Many people talk today about cutting the energy title from the farm bill, and some even question the Renewable Fuel Standard in general. We have to remember that energy policy has been instrumental in maintaining our markets for our grain, as input prices and regulations have continued to increase tremendously. Cutting the legs out from underneath ethanol or biofuels at this time would be catastrophic.

In closing, I'd like to reiterate that crop insurance is critical. I believe that the commodity title should be as simple as possible, as to allow producers flexibility for what works best in their region and on their farm. Finally, water and biofuels are critical to our local economies, and programs in the conservation and energy titles that benefit us in producing domestic biofuels and sustaining our water should be supported.

Thank you, and I welcome any questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Harshberger follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF GARY HARSHBERGER, CORN, WHEAT, MILO, SOYBEAN, AND COW/CALF PRODUCER, DODGE CITY, KS

Introduction

It is my honor to sit here today before the House Committee on Agriculture and offer my perspective on farm policy as the Committee shapes the next farm bill. Thank you for holding this hearing in Kansas, and thank you Chairman Lucas and Congressman Huelskamp for being here.

My name is Gary Harshberger. After college, I returned home to my family operation in Ford County and started farming in 1988 where we grow corn, milo, wheat and soybeans, and we also raise cattle. I serve as Chairman of the Kansas Water Authority and serve on the Bonanza Bioenergy and Arkalon Energy board of directors. Water and renewable energy can offer a sustainable future and are two areas I am particularly passionate about.

I know that ag programs have done more than their fair share to reduce Federal spending and yet this bill will be written with much less money. Thank you for your efforts in trying to develop a farm bill package that works and can sustain farmers through the next 5 years. My testimony will focus on five critical areas as they relate to my operation.

Cumbersome Regulations

Over-regulation has become a significant threat to the family farm. Although I understand this Committee does not have jurisdiction over this particular area, it is necessary that I share my discontent with what is happening at the farm level today. A couple of examples to highlight my concern are the Department of Labor's proposed child labor laws as they relate to agriculture and the diesel engine regulations coming through the Environmental Protection Agency. If the U.S. hopes to stay competitive with the rest of the world, it cannot continue to add more regulatory burdens on family farms like mine. These cost my farm and consumers money and disrupt the family farm work ethic on which this country was founded.

Federal Crop Insurance

Even though producers across the U.S. have echoed Federal Crop Insurance as the most important program to protect in the next farm bill, I must place emphasis on it myself because it is crucially vital to my farming operation. The impact from the recent drought is a testament to the unknown certainty producers face each growing year, and many are able to continue farming this year because of their investment in crop insurance.

- Improvements are needed in APH methodology and the county T-yield system. A producer's insurable yield should reflect what he and his lender actually expect to produce in a given year. APH could be improved by using a personal T-yield system, which would allow a producer's APH to more accurately reflect his yield potential rather than the county's yield potential.
- I would like to see a better system in crop insurance for limited irrigation. Right now insurance is all or nothing. There needs to be a viable policy in Federal crop insurance to have limited type irrigation practices. There has been talk

about this at the state level, but nothing has been developed yet. This type of policy would allow producers to raise feed while using less water.

- Please keep crop insurance tools purchased by the producer protected from environmental compliance requirements or other payment limit conditions that do not belong tied to insurance.

Commodity Title

Many avenues have been offered for a commodity title in the next farm bill, and while proposals have focused on either a shallow loss type program or a deep loss type program, I hope that our new program protects yields and price in some form. I have not looked at how all these different options would impact my farming operation, but I did like the concept of being able to choose between policies, an opportunity that I understand was in the fall draft of the farm bill.

If a revenue type program is used, I believe a minimum price and plug yields should be included in a revenue-based program. My input prices have dramatically increased since the time I began farming, and while we have enjoyed higher commodity prices, history shows they will not last. In order to protect my investment, I feel a minimum price will protect against a large commodity price drop and plug yields will help in times of consecutive years of yield loss, which I may soon face if the current drought continues.

Without yield plugs, a scenario may be created where the program has little value to dryland in this area and can no longer offer protection to my farm if two consecutive years of yield loss are realized. Therefore, I feel this component is necessary in a revenue-based program.

A farm bill should provide assistance when producers suffer losses beyond their control. I need a simple program to take to my banker in case my operation suffers a disaster. ACRE is based on the state's income, and I could suffer a total loss due to an isolated weather event and never trigger a payment. The SURE program was very complicated and slow to pay when we did have a loss. The current loan and countercyclical programs are simple, but production costs have continued to rise making the 2008 price levels no longer relevant to the realities of costs today.

A set minimum price is needed to protect producer income in the event of a multi-year low price situation. Ideally, this minimum could move upward over time should production costs also increase.

Conservation Title

Last year's drought has dramatically affected the water supply in my region and many others tied to the Ogallala Aquifer south of here. As an irrigated farmer, water is something I am very passionate about. Every drop of water is valuable and should be utilized toward its best economic return, but when meters are over pumped and very little recharge to the aquifer through rainfall takes place, lasting damage to our water supply results.

Programs in the 2008 Farm Bill like the Agriculture Water Enhancement Program (AWEP) under the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) targeted dollars toward water conservation and have laid the groundwork for more focused programs, but I feel these programs stand to be strengthened by providing stronger incentives to producers to plant less water-intensive agricultural commodities. The Conservation Security Program (CSP) is another existing program where water-savings language can be applied.

Energy Title

I support the continuation of a farm bill energy title. It is imperative our country sustains our national security, and produces as much of our fuel in the U.S. as possible. I am a believer in the "all of the above approach." The energy title has helped to continue to expand biofuels production outside the Corn Belt and outside of traditional feedstocks. Programs in the energy title like the Bioenergy Program for Advanced Biofuels have been positive for the U.S. I am proud that I produce local grain that goes into local ethanol plants and contributes to a renewable fuel source that will lessen dependence on foreign oil.

Many people talk today about cutting the energy title of the farm bill, and some even question the renewable fuels standard in general. We have to remember that energy policy has been very valuable in helping to maintain markets for our grain as input prices and regulations have continued to increase tremendously.

Conclusion

In closing I would like to reiterate that crop insurance is critical. I believe that the commodity title should be as simple as possible and bankable. If there ends up being several different complex proposals, then I would hope that I have the flexibility to choose based upon my own operation. Finally, water and biofuels are crit-

ical to our local economies, and programs in the conservation and energy titles that benefit us while producing domestic biofuels and sustaining our water should be supported. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Mr. Miller, you may begin when you're ready.

**STATEMENT OF KEITH MILLER, WHEAT, SORGHUM, CORN,
SOYBEAN, AND COW/CALF PRODUCER, GREAT BEND, KS**

Mr. MILLER. Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and the Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to join us today and share some thoughts about the necessity of an economic safety net for farmers and how possible improvements to the current program would allow us to achieve these goals.

I currently farm in the middle of Kansas, Great Bend, Kansas, and serve on the board of directors of Kansas Farm Bureau and am the past Chairman of the United States Meat Export Federation, but I'm here today under my own steam and grateful for the opportunity to share my thoughts with you.

Mr. Chairman, please allow me to thank you publicly for having Representative Huelskamp host this hearing here in the great city of Dodge City, and we're glad that he did that for us, so we appreciate that, Tim.

Crop insurance is an important part of my operation and it is imperative to it. Protection enhancement of crop insurance programs ranks as the number one priority from a long list of farm organizations throughout the United States, and I cannot agree more. Agriculture is a highly erratic industry and is influenced by many variables, and some are beyond a producer's control. We can control seed, fertilizer, and those types of inputs, but we cannot control the weather and the markets. Simply put, during the development of the 2012 Farm Bill, crop insurance must be a priority.

Enterprise units would allow farmers to access quality coverage at a lower rate. These units are being used in certain areas to—and we're having trouble with the irrigated and the dryland differential because it currently, if you insure under one, you have to be for both. We need more flexibility in that program.

Limited irrigation should be a focus of the new program and we should look for ways that we can do that in the new farm bill. Limited irrigation will only help conserve the water supply which is so very limited here in the United States.

Declining yields is another problem that we're having with our crop insurance, and it's because of the excessive amount of drought years and crop failures. Under the current situation, the production history will go down and it will increase costs to our consumers through their premiums. We need to find a better way of keeping the crop in that system.

Improving data collection: Like many others, the data is very, very important in the technology on my farm. It only seems right that we should improve the data collection that FSA and RMA are using, especially tying crop insurance together with our other reporting services, so we would encourage you to work on that.

Reform: as you know, the cuts in crop insurance for the last few years have been between \$12 and \$20 billion. Additional cuts would likely increase the premiums to our producers and make it

unable for a lot of producers to be able to purchase that. We simply cannot afford additional cuts in today's high risk marketplace.

Let me switch gears, Conservation: I live right next to the Cheyenne Bottoms and conservation is a very, very important part of my operation. I currently use EQIP in several different ways to try and limit the amount of erosion in our area and preserve that wetland.

Regulation, as you know, has been a major part of our problem coming from the—from D.C. The CAFO regulations, EPA regulations, Clean Water Act, all them have been giving us a lot more new regulations coming down and we're having trouble meeting all those regulations, and we sure would encourage you to try and limit them.

Exports: I couldn't tell you enough about exports and global economy and how the amount of opportunities we have there. The Market Access Program is crucial for that to stay in business. The multi-year impact of increased market development spending is equal to \$35 in agriculture export gains for every dollar expended. That's a 35:1 return on investment. That is crucial for the future of the United States to keep that program intact.

So in closing, I would encourage you to read my entire written testimony, because there are a lot more facts and figures that are in that, and I sure thank you for the opportunity for me to be able to share my thoughts with you as a Committee.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Miller follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF KEITH MILLER, WHEAT, SORGHUM, CORN, SOYBEAN, AND COW/CALF PRODUCER, GREAT BEND, KS

Mister Chairman, Ranking Member Peterson, and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to join you today to share some thoughts about the necessity of an economic safety net for farmers and how some possible improvements to the current program will allow us to achieve this goal.

I'm a third generation farmer who grew up on the same farm where I currently live in rural Barton County, Kansas. When I started farming with my wife in 1976, my father was farming 400 acres and raised a few hogs. Since then, the farm has grown to over 7,500 acres and is a diversified grains, alfalfa and cattle operation.

All of my daughters and sons-in-law work on the farm at various times, and my daughter, Dara, and her husband, Jason, work there full time throughout the year. Whenever I'm away from the farm, I can count on my family to ensure that things run smoothly with respect to the day-to-day business on our farm.

I've been fortunate to have the opportunity to serve in a host of leadership capacities, in my community, my county, my state, and even internationally.

Our family is deeply involved in our church, where I serve on the church council and I've had the good fortune to serve on my local school board for a number of years, including a stint as President, when we shepherded a major bond issue to pay for school improvements.

I currently serve on the board of directors of Kansas Farm Bureau, and am a past Chairman of the United States Meat Export Federation.

But I'm here today under my own steam, grateful for the opportunity to share my thoughts about the next farm bill and eager to engage the Committee in this important dialogue.

Mister Chairman, please allow me to begin by publicly thanking my own Congressman, U.S. Representative Tim Huelskamp for his leadership in the Big First U.S. House District of Kansas, and for arranging this field hearing today in Dodge City.

Safety Net/Crop Insurance

Our family is deeply committed to agriculture and to rural America. My wife, Connie, and I raised our daughters and run our farm with an eye to the future generations of our family who will help feed, fuel and clothe the world from our lands.

Stability through the use of effective risk management tools is imperative for our operation. Protection and enhancement of crop insurance programs ranks as the number one priority for a long list of farm organizations in the 2012 Farm Bill process. I could not agree more.

Agriculture is a highly erratic industry influenced by a multitude of variables beyond the producer's control. Farmers can use top quality seed, fertilizer, chemicals and best management practices, and still not be able to control the weather or the markets. Profit margins in the industry are such that it is critical that farmers have access to a strong, viable and flexible risk management program.

Simply put, during the development of the 2012 Farm Bill, crop insurance must be a priority.

In fact, there are several possible improvements that I would urge the Committee to consider that would allow the program to better meet the needs of producers in Kansas and across the nation.

Enterprise Units

Enterprise units allow farmers to access quality coverage at a lower premium rate. The program should be made permanent, but unfortunately, given the diversity between irrigated and dryland acres, the concept doesn't work as well as it could. To address this situation I would recommend introducing additional flexibility within the program to allow producers to designate enterprise units by practice; specifically, differentiating between irrigated acres and dryland acres.

In drought years, this differentiation would have allowed us to receive indemnity payments on the dryland acres while continuing to attempt to bring a crop to fruition on our irrigated acres.

Limited Irrigation Products

Given our focus on the future we routinely look for ways to maximize production while conserving water. One option I would encourage the Committee to support is the concept of a limited irrigation insurance product. Currently, producers have only two choices: They must declare acres either irrigated or non-irrigated. An irrigated designation implies application of adequate water to produce the crop but also requires planting at higher population rates.

Properly developed, a limited irrigation product would encourage conservation by allowing producers with limited or declining water supplies to plant lower populations and set a lower yield goal while maintaining insurance coverage at better than dryland levels.

Declining Yields

Many parts of the nation have now endured successive years of disaster events. Under our current structure these consecutive bad years result in declining Actual Production History and subsequently increasing producer premiums.

Alternatives should be explored to rectify this situation and could include the use of a personal "T" yield in addition to the adoption of a higher yield plug to allow a producer's insurable yield to reflect what he hopes to produce in a given year.

Improving Data Collection

Like many operations, we have aggressively implemented technology on our farm. It seems only natural to continue to encourage the implementation of technology at FSA and RMA as well as on the farm allowing greatly improved accuracy in reporting and eventually adding the potential for real time data collection.

We believe the 2012 Farm Bill should continue to encourage agencies to embrace technology to better serve producers and allow for more efficient delivery of all farm programs and indemnity payments.

Reform Wisely

As you're well aware, recent cuts to crop insurance and the renegotiation of the SRA have resulted in \$12 to \$20 billion in savings. Additional cuts will likely result in increased premiums to producers or reductions in the products available or the level of service companies are able to provide. We simply cannot afford additional cuts in today's high risk marketplace.

American agriculture relies on a strong safety net, delivered efficiently and effectively through the current public-private partnership. Producers across the nation are concerned and opposed to this notion that crop insurance delivery could be managed and delivered through an existing Federal agency.

In addition, in no case should the crop insurance tools, which are purchased by the producer, be encumbered with environmental regulation, conservation requirements, or other conditions that fall out of the scope of insurance. They should also not be subject to payment limits or means testing, doing so would defeat the pur-

pose of the programs and reduce their effectiveness in ensuring that producers, no matter how small or large have equal access to risk management tools and an equal opportunity to continue to operate their farms.

Conservation

Let me switch gears and visit briefly about the importance of conservation. My farm is literally just a stone's throw from Cheyenne Bottoms. It's the largest marsh in the interior of the United States and was designated a Wetland of International Importance in 1988.

The area is considered the most important shorebird migration point in the western hemisphere. Approximately 45% of the North American shorebird population stops at the Bottoms during spring migration. Because of our farm's proximity to this special place, those of us in Barton County understand and value the importance of conservation.

Farm bill conservation programs help producers enhance soil and water quality, improve wildlife habitat, can assist with compliance with Federal and state environmental rules, protect agricultural and grass lands and provide various other benefits.

Working lands programs, in my opinion, provide the most bang for the buck. Chief among those is the Environmental Quality Incentives Program which seems to be the best and most effective way to implement multiple conservation practices. Whatever you can do to preserve EQIP funding and programs should be a top priority.

On my farm, I take advantage of the benefits offered in EQIP three different ways: Terracing of my fields, waterways and water conservation. In addition, I have many acres enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program.

Regulation

Federal regulations are increasingly costly for the U.S. economy, including for farmers and ranchers. And here, if you'll allow me, I'd like to tip my hat to Congressman Huelskamp for his work keeping this issue in the consciousness of the Congress.

In the last year alone, Federal regulators have finalized regulations that ask farmers to draw up oil spill prevention plans for their operations, apply for Clean Water Act permits for certain pesticide applications and report certain air emissions. Unless the courts rule otherwise, farms and ranches will likely be regulated for greenhouse gas emissions, and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is proposing that Concentrated Animal Feeding Operation (CAFO) owners report sensitive information on their operations to Federal regulators. Given the wide application, cost and burden of Federal regulations, it is critical that the process by which they are proposed and finalized be open, transparent and fair to all, particularly the regulated community.

Research

As you know, the world population is exploding. In any best case estimate, agricultural production must produce 70 to 100% more by 2050. Current efforts are likely to yield only a 40% increase in our production by that time. We have significant work to do.

Federal programs must encourage both public and private investment in efforts that will produce new information to improve soil, environmental and socioeconomic conditions and allow producers to continue to produce high quality, affordable food on a shrinking land base.

We must also strive to improve the acceptance and implementation of technology in agriculture. Our competitive advantage in world markets will be maintained only through the continued support and encouragement of technological advancements. To that end, our partners in the biotech industry should be encouraged to cooperatively develop protocols for products as they come off patent to allow producers to access and implement cost effective practices on their operations.

Exports

I think we can all agree that in today's global economy, our government needs to be a full-fledged partner in helping expand and enhance agricultural export opportunities. The Market Access Program of the existing farm bill works and should be retained.

Agriculture's trade surplus was nearly \$30 billion 2 years ago. It's forecast to be \$24.5 billion this year. Agriculture is still one of the few sectors of the American economy to enjoy a trade surplus, and without it, the overall U.S. trade deficit would be even worse.

The multi-year impact of the increased market development spending is equal to \$35 in agricultural export gains for every additional \$1 expended. That's a 35:1 return on investment.

The Market Access Program protects American jobs and increases farm income. Every billion dollars in U.S. farm exports supports about 8,400 American jobs. Given that U.S. farm exports are forecast to be \$131 billion this year, more than a million Americans can trace their jobs to these exports, thanks in no small measure to MAP and related programs that have boosted U.S. agricultural exports.

And finally, the Market Access Program is a great example of a successful public-private partnership. It is administered on a reimbursable cost-share basis, specifically targeting small businesses and farmer co-operatives. While government's an important partner in his effort, industry contributions are now pegged at more than 60% of total annual spending on market development and promotion, up from roughly 30% only 2 decades ago.

Conclusion

I manage my farm with a focus on longevity and sustainability. We appreciate the partnership we have with the Federal Government and programs to ensure stability in our efforts to produce food, fiber and fuel. The 2012 Farm Bill provides new opportunities to further define that partnership and to continue to protect and ensure that Americans and consumers around the world have access to safe and affordable food.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our thoughts and our operation with you today. Should you ever find yourself in Barton County, Kansas, please, by all means, stop by for a cup of coffee.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Mr. Vaughan, you may begin when you're ready.

STATEMENT OF DEE VAUGHAN, CORN, COTTON, SORGHUM, SOYBEAN, AND WHEAT PRODUCER, DUMAS, TX

Mr. VAUGHAN. Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee, thank you for holding this hearing here today. My name is Dee Vaughan and I am a corn, cotton, sorghum, soybean and wheat producer from Dumas, Texas. I currently serve as President of the Southwest Council of Agribusiness, an organization comprised of 17 farm groups, 30 lending institutions, and about 70 main street businesses in Texas, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Colorado, and also here in Kansas.

I want to begin by thanking this Committee for working hard to develop a consensus farm bill this last fall that not only would have met the needs of all producers and all regions and all crops, but have done so in a way that would have saved over \$23 billion for the taxpayers. I believe this year's farm bill process should build upon the excellent work that was done last fall.

There is one particular aspect of your work that I want to especially thank you for, and that is your focus on price protection. If Washington is truly serious about saving taxpayer dollars and less government intervention, price-based protection in the farm bill is the way to go about it.

Think about a farm bill that provides meaningful price protection relative to today's production costs and price situation that could still end up not costing the taxpayer a dime for this protection over the next 5 years.

Conversely, if history is any guide, you can be sure that a farm bill built on price protection, if needed, will prove to be the cheapest of the alternatives that have been presented before you. In short, a price-based farm bill policy that only kicks in when it is absolutely necessary is the conservative, fiscally responsible, and market-oriented approach that we should be striving to achieve.

It seems that much of the farm bill discussion has centered on revenue-based options, but there are concerns about this route. First, I think there has been enough bad PR about direct payments over the last few years that producers want to avoid receiving any kind of a payment unless it is absolutely necessary. I also think there is concern about the fact that no policy should be so rich that it drives up input costs and land costs, not to mention the criticism.

Second, I think there is a big concern that revenue approaches cut off help to producers just when they need it the very most, when revenue really drops, mainly due to prolonged periods of low prices. That's exactly when producers need farm policy most, and that's exactly when revenue approaches offer the least protection.

Third, while I agree that revenue does not exactly duplicate what crop insurance does, there is at least some crossover, especially in the minds of the public and especially in the minds of the critics of the farm bill and crop insurance. It is important to remember in this exercise that we must pass a good farm bill, but we must also be able to defend it later.

In my view, what was so important about what you did last fall is that you ensured that even if a producer chose a revenue option, there would be price protection for that producer if the bottom fell out, price-wise. You also worked to protect crop insurance from harm, which is a top priority as applied by farmers from across the country, and I totally agree. Whatever you do, please do not harm crop insurance. Proposals to link conservation compliance and to impose a payment limit cap on crop insurance are thinly veiled attempts to kill insurance for farmers. No question about it.

From my perspective, at least, the Supplemental Coverage Option included in your plan of last fall could serve very well as the revenue component of the farm bill and do so without the negatives that I've mentioned about the revenue options.

In closing, I firmly believe that if you ask rank and file farmers, no matter the crop, no matter the region of the country, the vast majority of them would tell you that if they were writing the farm bill, they would ensure that there is real price protection and that crop insurance would not be harmed in the process, but improved.

Maybe it's the West Texan in me, but I tend to think that the right answer is usually the plain one. Washington should keep it simple. We rely on crop insurance for what it does best: Protect against production risk. We need an equally effective policy that provides protection against low prices over a sustained period of time such as we experienced in the late 1990's and early 2000's. While shallow losses can be devastating if they're repetitive, the risk producers fear most is a drop in commodity prices to below cost of production that lasts for several years.

Thank you for the opportunity to present my views on the 2012 Farm Bill and I look forward to answering any questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Vaughan follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DEE VAUGHAN, CORN, COTTON, SORGHUM, SOYBEAN, AND WHEAT PRODUCER, DUMAS, TX

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Peterson, Members of the Committee, thank you for holding this hearing, and the important work you are doing to craft a good farm bill.

My name is Dee Vaughan and I farm just about 200 miles southwest of here near the town of Dumas, Texas. I grow all the major row crops that work well in the Texas Panhandle—chiefly corn, cotton, sorghum, wheat and soybeans. I have been fortunate in the past number of years to get to serve in a number of leadership positions in farm and commodity organizations—including serving as President of the National Corn Growers Association from 2003 to 2004.

I currently serve as President of the Southwest Council of Agribusiness, an organization comprised of 17 farm groups, including producers of cotton, corn, wheat, grain sorghum, rice, peanuts and cattle; 30 lending institutions; and about 70 main street businesses in Texas, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Colorado, and here in Kansas.

I want to begin by thanking this Committee—earnestly thanking you—for working so hard to develop a consensus farm bill last fall that not only would have met the needs of all producers, regions, and crops in this country but would have done so in a way that would have saved taxpayers \$23 billion. I believe we as farmers can all be proud of the fact that our rural representatives and agricultural leaders in Washington were able to come together in this way—a real contrast to how it appears other areas are working (or not working) in our nation's government. In short, I believe this year's farm bill process should build upon the excellent work that you did last year.

There is one particular aspect of your work that I want to especially thank you for and encourage you in, and that is your focus on price protection. Plain and simple, a collapse in commodity prices is what keeps me up at night, and that is the risk I think this farm bill should address. Happily, this approach is also the most cost efficient. If Washington is truly serious about saving taxpayer dollars and about less government intervention, price-based protection in a farm bill, as a compliment to crop insurance, is the way to do it.

Think about the prospect of a farm bill that provides meaningful price protection relative to today's production costs and price situation that could still end up not costing taxpayers a dime over the next 5 years. If the only thing title I of the next farm bill provided producers was this kind of price protection, this no cost scenario is a real possibility. Conversely, if a price-based farm policy did cost money, if history is any guide, you can be sure that it will prove to be the cheapest of all the alternatives.

Easy to understand, bankable price protection is not a unique concept to me or anyone else and it certainly is not an unproven one. But it does feel a bit novel amidst all the other complicated proposals that are floating around out there which I'd be surprised if more than a handful of people could actually explain to you if asked. But worse than being complicated, these ideas—which all center on a revenue guarantee based in part on a 5 year Olympic Average (OA) price—offer farmers no real price protection and we know from experience that that alone is a big problem.

The SWCA, which is made up of the major producer organizations from five states as well as dozens of lenders, suppliers and processors, has made price protection a key priority. This organization is unique in that it brings a lot of diversity and experience to the table via the leaders from these regional organizations, many of whom have served as officers in national commodity organizations. This past Fall, our group propounded a priorities document which is attached to this testimony in its entirety. With respect to the price protection, it stated the following:

“The priority in redesigning a countercyclical policy should be to protect against deep and persistent price declines. Whether achieved through a countercyclical revenue policy or a price-based policy, the policy must provide effective protection across commodities, and be reliable and bankable to the producer. The marketing loan for commodities should also be maintained and rates raised where practicable in order to reflect today's costs of production.”

Of the systemic risks (those beyond the control of the farmer) which farmers face, prolonged periods of low prices would be most devastating to the economy and is most worrisome to SWCA members—producers, lenders and agribusinesses alike. Production losses are being addressed well by crop insurance. Single year revenue losses are being addressed well by crop insurance. But if a series of events like a strengthened dollar, above average yield worldwide, and a slowdown of Asian economies struck, causing corn and sorghum prices to decline to \$3.00, beans to \$7.00, wheat to \$4.00, rice to \$11.00 and cotton to \$.65, our current farm policy would be ineffective and rural economies would suffer.

The SWCA does not, and I do not believe a 5 year Olympic Average of price or revenue as a target provides adequate protection in this situation either.

A 5 year rolling average price-trigger can offer assurance in the first and second year of a price decline, but by the third year the protection is severely eroded. And,

of course, our experience from 1997 to 2006 would confirm that prices can remain below cost of production for multiple years.

The current debate reminds me of the 1995/1996 timeframe when economists assured us all that we had hit a new plateau of prices and that growing world demand for food and fiber would keep prices high.

In 1995, the season average price for corn hit \$3.24—an all time high. But over the next 4 years, prices fell to \$2.71 in 1996; to \$2.43 in 1997; to \$1.94 in 1998; and to \$1.82 in 1999—that is a 44% collapse in prices over 4 years that was absolutely devastating, and that I expect most of us up here today would not have survived had it not been for the *ad hoc* Market Loss Payments that was provided beginning in 1998.

How would have a 5 year Olympic Average price safety net have fared during these times? Well it would have peaked in 1998 at \$2.55, but then trailed off over the next 4 years to \$2.07 in 2001, and then \$1.92 in 2002 and 2003. That is not what I, or my banker, would have considered adequate price protection.

In 2010, the season average price for corn hit \$5.40—a new all time high. But what if we shed 44% over the next 4 years just as we did in the late 1990's? How will farmers fare with corn prices at \$3.02. I can tell you for this farmer and the community of Dumas, Texas, the answer would be not well.

The current 5 year Olympic Average for corn relevant to 2012 is \$4.55, which sounds like an attractive safety net. But if that safety net is allowed to trail down over a couple years back to the mid \$3.00 range or lower, then it is no longer helpful, and I expect farmers would be seeking *ad hoc* assistance again.

Now I can tell you I am thrilled prices are still strong in the 2011 marketing year and 2012 planting season, and I am hopeful they remain this way—but I am not confident they will. So bottom line, I think building in more relevant protection while prices are high is good insurance should prices go south again, as history has shown they most likely will.

If one defines conservatism, fiscal responsibility, and market orientation by the traditional measures of how much something costs and how often it intervenes, price-based farm policy that only kicks in when it is absolutely necessary is the conservative, fiscally responsible, and market-oriented approach.

Regarding revenue program alternatives, specifically those targeted at “shallow losses,” I would note just a few concerns. First, I think there has been enough bad PR from Direct Payments that producers want to avoid receiving any payment unless it is absolutely necessary. I also think there is concern that no policy should be too rich so that it drives up input costs and land rents, in addition to the criticism. Second, I think there is a big concern that revenue approaches cut off help to producers just when they need it most: when revenue really drops, mainly due to a prolonged period of low prices. That's exactly when farmers need farm policy most and that's exactly when revenue approaches fold-up tent. Third, while I agree that revenue does not exactly duplicate what crop insurance does, there is at least some crossover and, in the minds of the public and especially the critics, any effort to say there is no duplication between the two will be regarded, however falsely, as merely parsing words. It is important to remember in this exercise that we must not just pass a farm bill but we must also one day defend it as well.

In my view, what was so important about what you did last fall is that you ensured that even if a producer chose a revenue approach, there would be price protection for that producer if the bottom ever fell out. You also worked to protect crop insurance from harm, something that so many farmers across the country say is there absolute top priority.

I want to add my voice to the chorus and say, whatever you do, please do nothing to harm crop insurance. Proposals to link conservation compliance and to impose a pay limit on crop insurance are thinly veiled attempts to kill insurance for farmers. Period.

From my perspective, at least, the Supplemental Coverage Option included in your plan of last fall could serve very well as the revenue component of the farm bill and could do so without any of the negatives of the other revenue approaches that I just laid out.

In closing, let me just say this: I firmly believe that if you asked rank and file farmers in the country, no matter what the crop or region of the country, nine out of ten of them would tell you that if they were writing the farm bill, they would ensure that there is real price protection because that is the one thing crop insurance is not designed to take care of, and that crop insurance should be not just not harmed, but improved upon.

It may be the West Texan in me but I tend to think that the right answer is usually the plain one. Washington should keep it simple. We rely on crop insurance for what it does best, protect against production and in-season price risk. We need an

equally effective policy that provides protection against low prices over a sustained period of time such as was experienced in the late 1990's through the mid-2000's. While shallow losses can be devastating if they are repetitive, the risk that producers fear most is a drop in commodity prices to below cost of production lasting for several years.

Thank you for the opportunity to present my views on the 2012 Farm Bill. I will be pleased to answer any follow-up questions you may have.

ATTACHMENT

October 12, 2011

Dear Member of Congress:

The Southwest Council of Agribusiness (SWCA) is a coalition of more than 100 businesses standing with producer organizations from **Texas, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Kansas and Colorado** to promote agriculture and policies that support this most important and fundamental of industries.

Understanding that our nation's current fiscal situation, and the super committee process designed to address it, may force an early reconsideration of the policies of the 2008 Farm Bill, the SWCA offers the following for your consideration.

Budget Issues

The members of the SWCA believe that farm policy designed to support a strong and dynamic U.S. agriculture sector is vital to our nation's economy and security interests. We also believe the current mix of policies has proven a great success by reducing government expenditures while providing a foundation for our nation's farmers to diversify and create and grow markets, commerce, and jobs to emerge as one of the few bright spots in the current dismal economy.

Accordingly, as Congress considers any revisions to these important policies, we would ask that you carefully consider three important overarching facts along with our specific recommendations:

First, stable agricultural policy makes for a strong agricultural economy. In 2000, a time of great instability and uncertainty, the U.S. value of farm sector production had stagnated at \$218.4 billion with little optimism for a recovery. However, since the 2000 crop insurance bill, the 2002 Farm Bill, and subsequent improvements, farm sector production value and other measures have shown steady growth, reaching a net record \$411.5 billion in 2011. Total net value added to the economy from agriculture is also forecast to reach a new high of \$157 billion in 2011. As Washington seeks to provide greater economic certainty through reform of the tax code, regulatory relief, and other measures in order to fix all that is broken in the economy, injecting uncertainty in the one sector of the economy that is not broken seems especially imprudent.

Second, stable agricultural policy costs taxpayers less. From 1999 to 2001, the government spent an average of \$22.4 billion to shore up the floundering agricultural sector, which had been injured by, among other things, lost trade, a strong dollar and strong worldwide crop production. Over the last decade, this has changed. For example, from 2009 to 2011, annual spending will average \$11.6 billion—roughly ½ of the amount being spent 10 years earlier. When markets turn again, it will be more cost effective to have stable and predictable policy in place to address the losses rather than work on an *ad hoc* basis to provide costly disaster assistance.

Third, our growing world needs a strong and dynamic U.S. agricultural sector. The global population is expected to rise from seven billion to nine billion people by 2050, and so we must become more productive on the world's limited arable land. U.S. agriculture today leads the way in this regard, getting more out of every acre of soil than any other nation, and doing so in a sustainable way. We must not abandon this model.

Because of these critical facts, we strongly oppose cutting the agricultural budget beyond the level that would otherwise be cut under sequestration, which essentially mirrors the level of cuts recommended by the bipartisan Simpson-Bowles Commission. Agriculture has consistently come in under budget over the past decade, and has made significant contributions to deficit reduction both in its mandatory policies (*e.g.*, the 2008 Farm Bill and the 2010 crop insurance negotiation) and in discretionary funding accounts. **We also strongly believe that the policies to achieve these savings should be developed by the House and Senate Agriculture Committees.**

While the SWCA considers all areas of the farm bill important, and specifically supports areas such as research funding and the FSA guaranteed loan programs, we are focusing our comments on the principal funding areas most likely to be affected should the super committee process address farm policy.

Federal Crop Insurance and Title I Farm Policy

Since our nation's very beginning, we have had Federal policies in place to promote strong U.S. agricultural production. These policies have helped the U.S. agricultural sector become the most productive, dynamic, conservation-minded and diverse agricultural sector in the history of the world. Below are some specific policy recommendations we provide to ensure we do not break with this important tradition that is also a cornerstone of our economy and security.

1. **Any countercyclical element of farm policy** that would replace the current countercyclical program, direct payments, SURE, and ACRE, in whole or in part, **must effectively work for all staple commodities and producers.** The policy should provide reliable protection by commodity, but should be carefully designed to not distort planting decisions.
2. **Any cuts made to title I of the farm bill should be applied to the respective commodities on a proportional basis.**
3. **The priority in redesigning a countercyclical policy should be to protect against deep and persistent price declines.** Whether achieved through a countercyclical revenue policy or a price-based policy, the policy must provide effective protection across commodities, and be reliable and bankable to the producer. **The marketing loan for commodities should also be maintained** and rates raised where practicable in order to reflect today's costs of production.
4. **The separate countercyclical mechanism should compliment, not compete with or duplicate, the protection that can be purchased through Federal crop insurance.** Moreover, crop insurance should be improved, especially as it relates to insurable yields (*i.e.*, the Actual Production History system) and specific crops such as rice and peanuts that are currently under-served. Rep. Randy Neugebauer's "Total Coverage Option" area-based supplemental insurance authority is a well-crafted and cost effective option for shallow loss coverage.
5. Given declining budgetary resources, **assistance should generally be tailored to planted acres.** However, we are concerned about base acres, particularly in the western Great Plains, that are currently in grass and receiving decoupled benefits. Because of their conserving use, we would urge the consideration of alternative positive incentives to keep this land in grass where the economic benefits of breaking it out would be outweighed by the potentially adverse environmental impact.
6. Finally, **outdated payment limits and arbitrary means tests should be eliminated,** and USDA's definition of a "farm" should be updated. Notions of 2.1 million farmers in the U.S. (based on USDA's definition which includes anyone who sells more than \$1,000 worth of agricultural production) lead to the distortion of facts. Based on 2007 Census data, only 10% of farms in the U.S. had gross sales over \$250,000, and only 125,000 had gross sales over \$500,000. These full-time family farms are all-in every year and constitute the "thin green line" that keeps America and much of the world clothed and fed.

Title II Conservation Issues

In the Southwest region of the U.S., conservation policies have provided important tools for farmers, ranchers, livestock producers, and landowners to make sound investments that promote wise use of soil and water resources. We are especially mindful this year of this fact considering the severe drought that has gripped the region. With this background, we offer the following principles:

1. **The Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) should be preserved.** While we are open to reduction in the overall acreage cap, we maintain that this policy has served as an effective means of concentrating our farming efforts on the most productive land. **The Grasslands Reserve Program (GRP) should be expanded,** especially if decoupled title I policies are substituted for policies tied to planted acres.
2. **The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) is the most important conservation policy,** providing critical cost-share and incentives for farmers and livestock-producers alike. **The EQIP model should be expanded, and funding for the Agricultural Water Enhancement Program**

(AWEP) **within it should be maintained** and better directed to encourage the best water conserving practices in agriculture operations possible.

3. Given the critical water needs of a growing world population, **a greater emphasis should be placed upon water conservation in all policies within the conservation title.** The Southwest U.S. has much it can teach the world about a wise use of scarce water resources in agricultural production, but we feel confident more can and should be done.

Regulatory and Competitiveness Issues

Agriculture is a business subject to sharp and unpredictable swings in price, costs, and income, with producers operating on thin margins, which generally, helps to explain the need for the farm and conservation policies discussed above. This also explains why U.S. farmers and ranchers are sensitive to regulations imposed by the government. The imposition or threat of misguided environmental regulations, including a rash of recent endangered species listings, and the proliferation of manipulative regulations in the livestock sector have all had a dampening effect on the rural economy, with no apparent benefit. Accordingly, the SWCA is very supportive of efforts by Senator Mike Johanns and Senator Pat Roberts to sequester the regulatory activity and provide stability to the business environment. We offer one specific proposal that is fully within the purview of the House and Senate Agriculture Committees:

The USDA Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration (GIPSA) proposed rule should not be implemented because it will encourage frivolous lawsuits and end alternative marketing arrangements as we know them. Ultimately the proposed rule will set the beef industry back 30 years by stifling the innovative efforts of U.S. cattle producers to add value and enhance the quality and safety of their products. The bottom line is that this is yet another example of the government trying to interfere in the private market by telling producers when and how they can market their cattle.

We hope that this information is useful as you continue to work to develop sound farm policy in the context of ongoing deficit reduction efforts. If you would like to know more about the SWCA and our membership, please visit <http://www.southwest-council.com>.

Sincerely,

Southwest Council of Agribusiness.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Scott, you may begin when you're ready.

STATEMENT OF SCOTT NEUFELD, WHEAT, SORGHUM, CANOLA, ALFALFA, AND COW/CALF PRODUCER, FAIRVIEW, OK

Mr. NEUFELD. Mr. Chairman, Mr. Huelskamp, Mr. Conaway, Members of the Committee—

The CHAIRMAN. Scott, turn that microphone just a little bit more towards us. Thank you.

Mr. NEUFELD. Thank you for holding this hearing on the farm bill. My name is Scott Neufeld and I'm a third generation farmer operating in a partnership with my father. We have a diversified operation, producing wheat, alfalfa hay for dairy use, canola, and grain sorghum. We also have a cow/calf herd and we raise stocker cattle on wheat pasture when the conditions allow. My wife and I have been very active in the Oklahoma Farm Bureau and I currently chair the Farm Bill Advisory Committee.

If I were to sum up my views on the farm bill, my advice would be straightforward and twofold. First, please keep Federal crop insurance strong and use the opportunity to make improvements; and second, make the focus of the farm bill be about addressing price protection during a multiyear downturn, a risk that crop insurance was never designed to address. If Washington does these two things, this farm bill will be a great success.

It's a testimony to the success of crop insurance protection and the current farm bill that producers are planting again this spring and moving forward with no outcry for *ad hoc* disaster assistance. The risk management tools that were in place during our recent drought were adequate and cheaper than funding additional disaster programs.

Areas where crop insurance can be improved track closely with the recommendations that Chairman Lucas and his colleagues made last fall. These recommendations include improving actual production histories to deal with multiple year losses so those APH's, and ultimately insurance coverage, reflect true production potential. I also appreciate the extensive enterprise units and the ability to divide enterprise units from irrigated *versus* non-irrigated practices.

Separate from the farm bill, I appreciate this Committee's leadership in closely monitoring what USDA is doing regarding crop insurance. In an effort to try to lower rates for some producers, I'm concerned that it may price the rest of the country out of coverage.

I also strongly oppose applying payment limits and means testing to crop insurance. The agricultural economy has driven many family-owned operations to become larger to spread risk and investment in capital. Why do we penalize the larger producer by restricting the amount of protection that he would be allowed? We need to change our mindset to a per acre basis, not a per operator basis. I also oppose entangling crop insurance with existing conservation compliance requirements, and I urge Members of Congress to oppose this effort.

As to the need for real price protection on the farm bill side of the equation, nearly everyone in this room can probably remember back to 2008 when we saw wheat prices climb to upwards of \$12 to \$13 per bushel and we all thought we had reached a new plateau; but then a year later, in the 2009 marketing year, we can all remember seeing those prices drop dramatically to levels we thought we would never see again.

I can remember going to the elevator the day that I saw wheat prices with a "\$3" in front of them and thinking to myself, how am I going to make this work? Many producers were forced to sell at that level as well. While short-lived, it reminded me that the input costs that we deal with every day don't cycle as fast as the prices being bid at the elevator.

On this issue, here is my deep concern. All the revenue program ideas floating around out there will not provide the kind of protection farmers need if the depressed prices we just talked about remain in place for several years. If stuck at those levels, Washington would be inundated by calls for costly and unbudgeted emergency relief legislation. Neither taxpayers nor farmers can afford to go down that road again, so I call on Congress to focus the farm bill on providing real price protection for farmers in these periods of prolonged low prices. Fortunately, thanks to the Chairman and the work of his Committee, the 2011 package to the select committee would have met this basic test.

I would also like to stress the importance of NAP and the Livestock Forage Program to livestock producers like myself. Producers in my area also value the CSP and the EQIP programs. These ini-

tatives, along with the MAP and foreign market development, along with aggressive agricultural research, are all modest in investment dollars but still unsung heroes in U.S. farm policy.

So let me start—let me finish where I started. As producers, we have two factors that affect our ability to be successful: yield and price. Please do not harm but build on crop insurance to provide yield protection, and please don't stray from the main mission of a farm bill; that is, providing a safety net by offering sound multi-year price protection. Passage of a 2012 Farm Bill would provide much-needed certainty to the future of agriculture and the businesses that support it. Thank you for allowing me to testify today.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Neufeld follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SCOTT NEUFELD, WHEAT, SORGHUM, CANOLA, ALFALFA,
AND COW/CALF PRODUCER, FAIRVIEW, OK

Introduction

Chairman Lucas, Ranking Member Peterson, Members of the Committee, thank you for holding this hearing in the heart of wheat country, where producers understand and have experienced the need for sound farm policy, especially over the last 18 months. I appreciate the opportunity to offer testimony as a producer who is impacted directly by the legislation that will be drafted.

My name is Scott Neufeld. I am a third generation farmer operating in a partnership with my father. We have a diversified 3,000 acre operation of wheat, alfalfa hay for dairy use, canola, grain sorghum, and a cow/calf herd. We also graze stocker cattle on wheat pasture as conditions allow. My wife and I have been actively involved with the Oklahoma Farm Bureau (OFB) serving on county and state boards and committees. Most recently, I was appointed to serve on the OFB Farm Bill Committee, which was given the task of studying and providing input into the drafting of the 2012 legislation. My wife also serves on the Oklahoma Farm Service Agency (FSA) State Committee.

Current Climate

I first want to commend you and the Committee for leading the way in the effort to produce bipartisan and bicameral legislation for the Select Committee last fall. The effort to work together was commendable and showed we can and will work out our differences in the current climate. A great framework was built for the discussions that have been ongoing these past several months. I understand the soaring and out of control debt this country faces weighs heavy on each of you as it does your constituents. I also recognize that in the face of increased global demand for food commodities combined with a weaker dollar, commodity prices are higher. But, as Chairman Lucas has stressed numerous times, we should not be fooled into putting a weakened farm policy in place. These current conditions occurring at a time where we need to draft a sound farm policy present challenges and dangers.

The American public enjoys the safest, most abundant, and most affordable food supply of any country in the world. Traveling abroad will dispel any doubt one may have. Yet, the general public is becoming more and more removed from where and how their food is grown and processed. Consumer understanding of the risks and investments agriculture makes on their behalf is under-appreciated. Somehow we must continue to work to bridge that gap and fortify consumer rapport with the American farmer. Public perception may only be perception, but perception is reality and we must deal with this issue and not ignore it. For example, in my opinion, the attack on Direct Payments is a result of a misinformed public. We haven't done enough to educate the public about how those payments are really used. From funding conservation efforts to helping buy up crop insurance coverage to making investments in our rural communities or replacing a piece of well-used equipment, these are real expenses that help us efficiently produce a safe food supply.

I would like to remind everyone of the recent past where in 2008 we saw wheat prices climb to upwards of twelve to thirteen dollars a bushel. We thought we were on a new plateau or so we hoped. A year later in the 2009 marketing year, we saw those prices drop dramatically to levels we thought we would never see again. I remember going to the elevator the day we saw wheat prices with a \$3 in front of it again and thinking, "How am I going to make this work?" Many producers were forced to sell at those levels to meet financial obligations. Fortunately, that cycle

didn't last long but it allowed us to experience first-hand how the input costs that we deal with everyday didn't cycle as fast as the prices being bid at the elevator.

Agriculture has been a bright spot and shining star in the current nation-wide recession. We have continued to create new jobs and establish a trade balance favorable to the U.S. economy. Let's not forget how important agriculture has been to the well-being of rural America as well as the supply of food and fiber to every U.S. citizen.

It is critical to work toward passing legislation during this session to provide some certainty to producers across the United States. An extension without a 5 year reauthorization is not adequate to allay the uncertainty that exists out there. A great framework has been put forth in the proposal to the Select Committee and the conversations are in place **now** to produce a workable and acceptable solution to the challenges agriculture face.

A Look Back

I was taught at an early age that a good way to make a plan forward is to look back on the past and see what **has** worked and why, and see what **has not** worked and why. The 1996 Farm Bill offered flexibility that had not been experienced previously. In the global and volatile markets of today, flexibility must remain a guiding principle as we craft new legislation. The 2002 and 2008 Farm bills continued on those principles including protection against low prices which lessened the need for *ad hoc* disaster assistance and have provided good management tools for producers to navigate risk. Did previous farm bills accomplish their goals? In most cases they have served producers well. Could they be improved? Always.

Some of the Challenges

As agriculture is transitioning, smaller bi-vocational producers are discontinuing their farming interests and older generations facing retirement are not selling their land but letting others operate it. It is becoming more difficult for operators to explain to land owners their options and keep current with sign-ups and know what they are signing. In my area, crop share arrangements are a popular renting agreement. While we as producers studied the options and knew which choices would be to our benefit, the complexity of explaining the details to a disengaged landowner has been an issue, therefore, causing confusion and in some cases even noncompliance.

ACRE and SURE are two examples of programs that are too complex. Program technicians in the local FSA office working scenarios on the same producer would come up with two different results. Furthermore, the triggers needed to make the program work encompassed too large of a geographical region. The marketing prices needed to calculate payments were far too removed from actual loss. Receiving a payment 14-16 months after actual production loss is not beneficial.

During the last 5 years, we have also seen our input prices steadily move higher. Most recently we have seen fuel prices soar. Seed, insurance, taxes, labor, and fertilizer all continue to increase. The CCP program has provided a floor but with the rising prices and costs, these levels are no longer relevant and need to be adjusted to offer true price protection.

Some of the Positives

When we look at the concepts of the 2008 Farm bill, we see it was a multi-faceted safety net including these components: Crop insurance, CCPs, MAL/LDPs, Direct Payments, ACRE, SURE, and conservation in the form of EQIP, CSP, CRP, and LFP, *etc.* Farm policy has become complex and for a reason. A "one-size-fits-all" approach cannot address the differences across commodities and regions of the country and even the same commodities across multiple regions. A cotton, peanut, or wheat producer from the Southern plains has many different risks, markets, and inputs as does a corn or soybean producer from the upper Midwest. The same differences are evident from the producers in Arizona and California to those in Pennsylvania and New York. Let's discuss several of these farm policy components.

Crop Insurance

Crop insurance has been the one tool that has provided us with a bankable guarantee to be able to go to our lenders and show them a minimum of what we could expect out of a crop. It has been flexible and provided coverage for most of the major crops in my area. I want to express my appreciation for the pace at which we were able to provide a full policy for Winter Canola in Oklahoma and the Southern Regions.

We have been pleased with the options and protection this tool has given us. Many producers in Oklahoma, Texas, and Western Kansas would be in a much different situation right now had it not been for a sound Crop Insurance policy that

protected us from the historic drought we went through last fall, spring, and summer. While much of the drought-pressured areas have received adequate rainfall, many areas still remain well below normal and water sources for our livestock are not replenished. Irrigation reservoirs in southwest Oklahoma are still at less than $\frac{1}{3}$ capacity to begin the growing season. Pastures will need rest to recover stands and nutrients needed to return to previous levels of production. When we see the record amount of indemnities paid out this last growing season and crop insurance coming under new attacks, none of us should forget the seriousness of the drought we have just come through. We should also remember the billions in cuts we have already taken. It is a testimony to the success of crop insurance protection that producers are planting again this spring and moving forward with no outcry for *ad hoc* disaster assistance. The risk management tools that were in place were adequate and cheaper overall than funding additional disaster programs.

I also strongly oppose applying payment limitations and means testing to Crop Insurance. The agricultural economy has driven many producers to become larger to spread risk and investment in equipment. A farmer producing crops on 1,000 acres of cropland has to have adequate capital invested to efficiently farm these acres. A partnership or family corporation that has gone together and is producing crops on 10,000 acres has the same risk per acre as the smaller producer. Why would we penalize the larger producer by restricting the amount of protection they would be allowed? We need to change our mindset to a per acre basis, not a per operator basis.

As producers already enrolled in the farm bill, conservation compliance is already a requirement to participate so I cannot see the need to entangle Crop Insurance with existing requirements and I urge Members of Congress to oppose this effort.

It doesn't make sense to put limits on larger acreages when farmers face payment limits under the farm bill. Crop insurance is their only real protection. Taking protection away from larger farms, which are still family-owned, will have a dramatic and negative economic and social impact in rural communities.

There is unwarranted criticism that current Crop Insurance offerings are driving up land and rent values and discouraging entry level producers. I believe the converse is actually true. If a young producer can't find levels that guarantee at least his variable costs to be covered, a lender is less likely to finance him. A beginning producer with limited capital and a higher level of debt to get started doesn't have the ability to absorb the level of risk an established producer does.

I am also aware of the process that the corn and soybean commodity groups have been through in the re-rating of their actuarial tables. The methodology is being reviewed to make sure it was sound and I am concerned about what the re-rating could do to other crops in the Southern Regions.

One area that Crop Insurance is not meant to cover is against chronic low prices. We always hope that between the base price and the harvest established price under crop insurance that there are break-even scenarios at one of those levels. But, what happens when we hit a multi-year downturn and don't have protection in place? Wheat prices at \$3-\$4 don't offer much hope at our current input levels. One could argue that if prices remain at these levels, we should just plant alternative crops and under decoupled farm bill policies we do have that option. That being said, the markets for those substitute crops tend to move in the same direction. Price-based protection is critically important to helping us stay in business during times of chronically low prices.

Direct Payments

The Direct Payment portion of the current farm bill has become a target for huge criticism. They have been hard to defend in times of good profitability for agriculture. While maybe hard to defend against unfair attacks, they have been easy to understand and administer for FSA, one of the parts of the suite of farm bill policies that is green box WTO compliant, and a payment you could take to the bank. An unseen benefit of the Direct Payments not often talked about is the impact they have on our rural economies. These payments are usually used locally to pay expenses to the businesses that provide parts and services we need which in turn support our local economies.

NAP and LFP

Another part of farm policy often overlooked is the Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP). In Oklahoma, forage crops are important and many of these are grown on cropland acres but are not insurable through Crop Insurance. Grazing is also a large part of many of the wheat acres planted in our state. NAP has given us some protection in years where forage has been well below normal. NAP is not a "solve all the problems" policy, but it did provide about 20% of my

own farm's lost revenue to assist in the loss of production our alfalfa hay crops experienced this past year. The indemnity made up only a small portion of the production loss we faced, but it did help make payments and get our operation through to hopefully a better year ahead.

LFP or Livestock Forage Program also paid out indemnities this past year in the drought stricken areas of our state. LFP did not keep us from culling our herd size but this assistance did allow us to buy several loads of feed we were short because of the inability to grow forage of any kind this past year, and still maintain our genetics in breeding stock. While this program does not have a baseline, it is my suggestion that these programs be fully funded going forward.

CRP

CRP has been useful to move highly erodible lands out of production. Because of the growth in the ethanol industry, feed grains have been in short supply. We should consider bringing out some of the acres that were enrolled in an environmentally responsible way to aid in the production of additional feed grains. We will need to continue to be careful stewards of the land and water resources we have enrolled in CRP being careful not to disturb highly erodible lands. Seeing pictures of the dust bowl reminds me that the conservation efforts put forth in this area, and particularly in the drought regions of this country, have prevented another dust bowl from starting again. Without the combination of the CRP and no-till or minimum till cultivating practices, the drought of 2011 would have been much worse. This is testimony to the efforts of producers all over the United States and their ability to be good stewards and adopt best management practices for each tract of land they operate.

Conservation

Conservation initiatives need to remain a significant part of the farm bill; however, I would urge the focus be on working lands rather than land retirement initiatives. The current cost share initiatives are working and most producers know how they work. I would encourage a streamlining of initiatives similar to the proposal to the Select Committee last fall, not as to impact the dollars spent but to again make the initiatives less complicated and more user friendly. Producers in my area like EQIP and CSP. With EQIP being a cost sharing initiative to promote quality efforts on farms that need some additional work and CSP offering incentives to engage in producer selected options to improve the environmental quality of their farms, I can't help but think they should be funded at current levels and other initiatives streamlined to fit within the scope of these two initiatives. Modeling new initiatives that producers already understand should be the goal. Conservation is a priority of any responsible producer today.

Research

Our land-grant universities in partnership with ARS have been critical in providing valuable non-biased research and extension education to many of the seed, chemical and management techniques being promoted to improve our efficiency. The role that ARS plays is often not seen by producers and the public but greatly increase the effectiveness of the research and extension efforts of the land-grant universities. The Wheat Quality Labs play huge roles in our marketing efforts. I urge continued emphasis on funding in the next farm bill to promote the level of research that will ultimately help us to feed nine billion people using less land and fewer resources.

Marketing

I want to express appreciation for the work in continuing to open markets around the world. The Free Trade Agreements with Columbia, S. Korea, and Panama will open more doors to the foreign agricultural trade. I urge full funding of MAP and FMD marketing tools that continue to work toward opening markets and maintaining existing ones around the world. Many of these tools match producer dollars to assist with marketing their commodities.

Importance of Not Affecting Planting Decisions

Red flags have been waved around concerning the part of the proposal to the Select Committee that considered raising target prices to more relevant levels. While flexibility is paramount and we do not want a government program influencing planting decisions, the levels I saw were still well below break-even prices and I cannot imagine how they would drive planting decisions. In fact, given shallow loss revenue programs would, by definition, trigger faster and more often, it would seem that such programs that guarantee revenues based on higher prices and yields would be more susceptible to this kind of criticism.

Conclusion

Producers understand the crisis in our country and we are willing to do our fair share in reducing the deficit. We need sound crop insurance to cover the yield component of risk, price protection under the farm bill to insure against steep and chronic price declines, and a conservation title focused on improving practices on working lands. It is a huge testimony to the success of crop insurance protection combined with the other facets of farm policy that producers are planting again this spring and moving forward while there was no outcry for an *ad hoc* disaster program like there was in the late 1990s. We in agriculture have the tools and management ability to absorb minor changes in prices and yields. Concepts and program suggestions aimed at insuring losses as little as 5–10% are not warranted. American Farm Bureau has opposed these types of programs and stated that shallow loss coverage is fiscally irresponsible. Our focus must remain on a safety net that is based on crop insurance and protects from steep price declines over time and due to unforeseen circumstances, not on guaranteeing a profit.

I commend the efforts of you and your staff in the work that has been accomplished this far. I thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony as a part of the process and look forward to working with you as we move this process toward the passage of a 2012 Farm Bill.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Mr. Swanson, turn that microphone just a little bit more towards you and begin when you're ready.

STATEMENT OF TERRY SWANSON, CORN, WHEAT, SORGHUM, SUNFLOWER, AND COW/CALF PRODUCER, WALSH, CO

Mr. SWANSON. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Conaway, Mr. Huelskamp. I appreciate the opportunity to testify today. My name is Terry Swanson and I farm and ranch in southeast Colorado with my wife, Marcella, and my son Miles and his family. Our farm is located 20 miles from Kansas and 20 miles from Oklahoma. Our principal crops are grain and forage sorghum, wheat, corn and sunflowers, all grown under dryland conditions. Our cattle operation includes a cow/calf enterprise and growing stocker/feeder cattle. I'm here to speak on behalf of my operation and others like it in my area.

Why am I here? This is a question I think that has to be answered first. My son is a fourth generation farmer in Baca County and is raising the fifth generation to make his home there. We want to contribute to the nation's food supply and in turn, to its economy, by providing an ample, reasonably-priced, secure, safe food supply. In turn, we expect to be able to live and have our livelihood in a relatively safe, secure agricultural environment that will sustain us and those that come after us.

It's important for me to acknowledge the work that the Committee did last fall, presenting the Super Committee with a package that not only addressed the needs of the ag community, but it also saved our nation \$23 billion. The product that the Committee did put together did all of the—virtually all of the things that I'm going to talk about here today. You should be proud, and we are grateful.

We have had an unfortunate cropping sequence for the last 8 to 10 years in southeast Colorado. The rotation is one year of good crops and the other one is one year of indemnity payments, and those things are the only thing we've had to take to the bank. Therefore, I strongly feel that the next farm bill must have, like the rest of the people on the panel mentioned, have crop insurance as its backbone. Please do no harm to crop insurance, but rather,

improve it with better APH methodology and a T-yield system. Workable insurance products for forage sorghum and trend yields will also help for all crops.

The commodity title: like crop insurance, the commodity title must provide provisions for systemic risks, such as drought, to be viable for this area of southwest Kansas, Oklahoma Panhandle, Texas Panhandle, and all of eastern Colorado.

There are two kinds of risks: one of them is production risk and the other one is price risk. For the next farm bill to accomplish the goals that we have set before us, we must address both. As you can see, I have enough gray hair to show you that I've experienced both of these risks many, many times, and you can't afford to ignore either one of them.

The end product expressed in the commodity title must not favor one crop over another at signup. I must be able to choose my cropping decisions agronomically at the farm, rather than at the FSA office, choosing whichever program will pay the best.

The program offered should not only pay out with the loss. I should be able to provide the producer—it should be able to provide the producer a bridge between successful crops and markets and those that are difficult due to circumstances beyond the farmer's control. These circumstances can be environmental factors or they can be market influences that are unforeseen and, therefore, unable to be offset with other risk management tools.

I wanted to bring with me a bag of soil. I was going to call it a bag of dirt, but my son is a soils major and he said you have to call it soil, but I was advised otherwise, but everything that we do starts with the dirt. If we don't take care of the dirt, it won't take care of us. Therefore, I'm passionate about conservation.

I live in the epicenter of the Dust Bowl. I know the effects of poor conservation practices. I've implemented CSP and EQIP contracts and their associated practices on my farm and my ranch, and I've seen immediate positive results from the technical support and the financial remuneration that these programs can provide. They provide a segue from current practices to those of enhanced conservation, not only for this generation of producers, but for all who are on the land in the future, and I might add, that's an investment in the sustainability of this nation's food supply.

We live in a very water sensitive area. The crop that I raise a lot of, sorghum, is the most water-efficient crop that we have available. I would hope that we could have that efficiency be expressed and encouraged in the conservation title.

Again, provide the producer with the right choices and he will effectively and safely produce an ample food for this country's nutrition and security as well. Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Swanson follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF TERRY SWANSON, CORN, WHEAT, SORGHUM, SUNFLOWER,
AND COW/CALF PRODUCER, WALSH, CO

Introduction

I thank Chairman Lucas, Congressman Huelskamp and the entire House Committee on Agriculture for holding this hearing in Kansas, the heart of America and farm country. I also thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on the impact future farm policy under the next farm bill will have on my operation.

My name is Terry Swanson, and my wife Marcella and I grow grain sorghum, wheat, corn, forage sorghum, sunflower, and raise cattle on our farm and ranch in southeast Colorado near Walsh—an area that I and those before me refer to as the epicenter of the Dust Bowl. It is a challenging area to live and work, but we have been doing so for 42 years now, and there are several pieces in the farm legislation puzzle that enable us to manage our risks and continue to live and operate efficiently today. I live 20 miles from Kansas and 20 miles from Oklahoma and am honored to share my Colorado perspective.

I appreciate the work put forth by this Committee in developing the next farm bill and the bipartisan approach agriculture has taken up to this point to try and develop a comprehensive farm bill package. I realize the need now more than ever for this industry to work together and look forward to working with the Committee to craft this set of vital farm policy. Because it is an integral part of my operation, my testimony will focus on multiple areas of farm policy as they relate to my safety net.

Protect Federal Crop Insurance

My area experienced one of the driest periods of all time during last year's drought. Keeping up with feed requirements for my cattle and growing any crop at all were a struggle in 2011, but because I invest in crop insurance to protect my business investment, I am able to farm and ranch again in 2012. Crop insurance is by far the most important component of my safety net, and I ask that the Committee does not harm this essential program. I have some specific suggestions that I believe would enhance the Federal crop insurance program.

- I would suggest reforms to APH methodology and a better county T-yield system to reduce the impact of local weather events and allow the producer's insurable yield (pre-deductible) to reflect what the producer and his lender would actually reasonably expect to produce in that year. I believe a personal T-yield system, which would allow a producer's APH to more accurately reflect his yield potential, would be a productive way to improve APH.
- Forage sorghum is an important part of my operation, because its high yield and low water use make it an ideal winter feed crop for my livestock operation. A usable forage insurance product would offer needed protection for diversified producers like me.
- In no case should the crop insurance tools, which are purchased by the producer, be weighed down with environmental compliance requirements or other conditions that fall out of the scope of insurance.
- I would encourage RMA to include all crops in any trend yield program. It is unfair to allow certain counties and certain crops to have this option.

2012 Farm Bill

I understand the Committee has considered various policy options for title I. For both the health of my operation and my sensibility of Federal farm programs, I prefer to have a deep loss, price protection plan. Whether that protection is a reference price system or a revenue based system, it is important that it be in the farm bill safety net and producers have the option to choose what fits their operation and risk appetite the best. In a revenue based program, it is critical to have a reference price and plug yields. The reference price will protect against a large commodity price drop and plug yields will help in times of consecutive years of drought.

It seems that without yield plugs, in a situation with 2 consecutive years of loss, the protection quickly drops to a point where the program would have little value and would provide almost no protection for my farm. This component is necessary to ensure equity among regions because I grow in a region with such high yield variability.

Additionally, a revenue policy in conjunction with the potential use of adjusted yields for certain commodities could eliminate the important element of risk involved in growing a crop. This would create a situation that would greatly distort planting intentions because a farmer may be inclined to plant for the largest revenue guarantee as opposed to the most prudent agronomic choice.

No matter which form of policy the Committee pursues, special care must be taken to encourage crop diversity and rotation on the farm and avoid a monoculture system which rejects agronomics in favor of farm policy incentives. The environmental disaster of the Dust Bowl was influenced in part by continuous monoculture cropping, and Federal farm programs should not incentivize producers to repeat the mistakes of the past. Based on both experience and a producer's understanding of the program, I suggest the following:

- A farm bill should not dictate or distort planting decisions. Direct payments are excellent in that they are the most flexible safety net available. SURE or similar whole farm policies tend to discourage diversification, which could be problematic for me and especially my geographic area. Any commodity-specific program that is tied to planted acres must be very carefully designed to avoid creating payment scenarios that incentivize farmers to plant crops with higher inherent value to maximize payments rather than making the wisest possible agronomic decisions.
- A program should be simple and bankable. The recently expired SURE program had too many factors and was not tailored to the many business risks producers face—it was not simple. The current ACRE, while offering improved price-based protection, is based on the state's income, not mine, so I could suffer a total loss and not trigger a payment if the rest of my state had no such misfortune—it is not bankable, especially in a largely diverse state like Colorado. The current loan and counter cyclical programs are simple and bankable. Unfortunately, the 2008 price levels are no longer relevant given current production costs. It is important to me to have a simple, bankable program to take to my lender should disaster strike my crop.
- A farm bill should be targeted and defensible. It makes sense to provide assistance when factors beyond the producers' control create losses.
- A farm bill should be built to withstand a multi-year low price scenario. Whether in a price-based countercyclical plan or a revenue loss plan, it will be important to have a set minimum price that serves as a floor or reference price to protect producer income in a relevant way in the event of a series of low price years. Ideally, this minimum could move upward over time should production costs also increase.

Finally, direct payments, while not necessarily tied to a specific crop being planted, have proven to be a WTO compliant, efficient payment for producers. It is one of the few parts of the current safety net that give bankers certainty and will provide financing for our producers. However, if the Committee decides to move away from this program, it makes it that much more important that successor policies be bankable.

Eliminate Dated Pay Limits

Given the likely possibility that a new farm program would have less certainty for the producer (a likely decrease or elimination of direct payments) and will therefore be designed to provide assistance only in loss situations, the program should not be limited based on arbitrary dollar limits, *i.e.*, assistance should be tailored to the size of loss. A producer should not be precluded from participating in a farm program because of past income experience. In my area, farms are large, both because it takes a lot of acres to produce a marketable crop or to support each head of cattle and because the rugged nature of farming and ranching here has driven many producers to so called greener pastures since the Dirty 30s. As such, any internal program limits on assistance should be percentage-based (*i.e.*, 25 percent of an expected crop value) and not discriminate based on the size of farm.

Build Incentives into Conservation and Energy Titles

I am personally passionate about conservation, and a variety of farm bill conservation programs have allowed me to enhance environmental improvement activities on my farm and ranch. I use EQIP, CSP and CRP in various ways. All three have shown demonstrable results over the life of the last farm bill. The value of these programs cannot be overstated in a sensitive area like mine, and I urge the Committee to maintain and strengthen conservation activities wherever possible.

For my part, I believe it would be beneficial to strengthen the principles of water conservation language in the Ag Water Enhancement Program (AWEP) of the 2008 Farm Bill to more specifically encourage planting water saving crops and enhancing water quantity. Currently, the program allows incentives for switching to lower water intensity crops, but a vast majority of payments are going to other projects. There is also a place for water conservation language in existing Conservation Security Program (CSP) and Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) language, and water conservation options should be strengthened wherever practical. Using farm bill conservation programs as a transitional support, farmers will be able to economically justify switching higher value crops to lower water intensity crops over time. In my area and across the Southwest, producers' near-term conservation initiatives will help preserve and repair the Ogallala Aquifer that this area relies upon.

Additionally, I support the continuation of a farm bill energy title and specifically encourage continuing the Bioenergy Program for Advanced Biofuels from Section 9005 of the 2008 Farm Bill. It has enhanced markets in my area and I'm proud that farmers are contributing to our national security by lessening oil from the Middle East.

Livestock in My Operation

Throughout the High Plains, most of the people I know have livestock. The recent drought generated a tremendous feed demand, and the dollars needed to offset the drought increased with it. Even so, herd dispersment was rampant. Livestock producers have benefitted greatly from the 2008 Farm Bill, especially during the drought. Livestock plays a pivotal role in my operation, and we cannot forget about the livestock producer in the next farm bill.

In conclusion, I know the Committee faces a difficult task in balancing geographic and commodity differences. It is hard to make a one-size-fits-all package, so I would just like to reiterate the most important things to me are long term, deep loss price protection, a solid insurance program and the ability for each producer to choose among policies.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Mr. Swanson.

I now recognize myself for 5 minutes for questions and would note to my colleagues, with the kind of bright and insightful panels we have on both this and the next panel, we'll have some definite flexibility in the amount of time we're using.

Mr. Vaughan, you're probably aware that a letter from a few of our national commodity groups was sent to the United States Senate yesterday. Are you a member of any of those groups?

Mr. VAUGHAN. Yes, sir, I am.

The CHAIRMAN. Not to put you on the spot, but just simply asking. The letter suggests that corn growers oppose any form of price protection. As a corn grower, do you agree with that perspective?

Mr. VAUGHAN. No. I'm a former President of that organization and I'm a member of the Soybean Association and a Farm Bureau member and a member of the Wheat Growers, and I do not agree with that statement that was made in there, that they do not support a price-based protective system, and that's what we need. That's what we need out here in this country, if we have multi-year losses like we had in 1997 through 2005.

The CHAIRMAN. They seem to say, or imply, and it says the phrase that it would distort planting decisions and that a shallow loss revenue plan based on the last 5 years of revenue will not. Any concerns with that statement?

Mr. VAUGHAN. Yes, I do. Isn't it true that basically the farm bill distorts planting in and of itself? I mean, what is the purpose of the farm bill? It's to keep farmers producing so that we don't have a situation where we create a huge surplus and then prices go to the bottom and we just—farmers can't get money to plant and so they just have to stop for a year. How would that system work?

I mean, it takes a year. We're not like an auto plant where we can shut down for 3 or 4 weeks and let supply and demand come back into balance. It takes a year to grow a crop, and so we have to keep producing. We need price protection that enables us to—for lenders to keep lending, rural America to keep working, and farmers to keep farming.

So with that said, I would say all policies distort plantings to a certain extent; even crop insurance, the way it's structured. I mean, we have to set a stake in the ground and say, okay, this is the crop price, the guaranteed crop price for the year for crop in-

insurance, but what if it changes three or four more times during the year? Obviously, those planting—what that planting guarantee is for crop insurance has an influence on prices, or on crop plantings; so even if crop insurance has distorted the plantings to some extent, the idea that revenue doesn't, I can't buy into that, because a farmer—if prices are low for all commodities, which they generally are all at the same time, and a farmer goes in and he looks at it and he says, okay, I grew corn and soybeans. I'm going to look at my revenue guarantee under my revenue plan, I'm going to look at my crop insurance guarantee, and I'm going to plant corn if it's the best one for under that system, or I'll plant soybeans if it's the best, and so even that revenue plan, that's where I disagree. When they say that the revenue plan is not going to distort plantings to any extent at all, that's—I think that's totally false.

The CHAIRMAN. Fair statement. Scott, why don't crop insurance and these revenue programs provide the price protection you need, from your perspective?

Mr. NEUFELD. Well, from my perspective, obviously, we set a base price in crop insurance usually in the fall months for us wheat producers, and then there's a harvest price set during the month of harvest, usually in the month of June, and you get the greater of those two. If per chance we get into those years of multi-year low prices and we have $\$3\frac{1}{2}$, $\$4\frac{1}{2}$ prices that are set for those target prices and base prices during those times, and you multiply that by your yield, your revenue guarantee is well below your break-even, and I just—the crop insurance, the way the crop insurance prices are set, if we get into years at multi-low prices, the revenue guarantees don't guarantee us a break-even anymore, where this year, it's just the opposite, actually.

With this year, we had some great prices set during the fall and we have good, good revenue guarantees, but if we get—and our guarantees are well above our break-evens now, or they're going to provide us a profit, anyway.

The CHAIRMAN. You rightly point out that there are a great number of people out there who are misinformed, in your testimony, about the importance of direct payments. Can you give us an appreciation for the relevance of the direct payments in your operation, the direct payments that have been the foundation of the safety net of the last three farm bills?

Mr. NEUFELD. Direct payments in my operation have amounted to anywhere between an \$8 to an \$11 per acre type of a payment. What can that do for us? What has it done for me on my farm? It's allowed me to replace equipment that needed to be replaced. It allowed me to buy some crop insurance, possibly buy up-coverage on crop insurance, and I think one thing that we don't see in direct payments are all the dollars that are pumped into these rural economies through direct payments are spent locally, so we don't often talk about the support that it has been to our rural economies, but those dollars, in essence, are rural economic development as well.

The CHAIRMAN. And as my colleagues would indulge me, I'll continue, if you'd also expand. Now, there are some folks that if they have their way, they would limit, put a pay limit of \$40,000 on the portion of your premium that the government shares. How would

that impact your ability to insure your crop, obtain loans from the banker, and how would it affect young farmers who are just starting out?

Mr. NEUFELD. That's a good question. You know, the payment limits on crop insurance premiums probably would not directly affect my operation because I'm not large enough to get into those levels where that would. But, I know many family-owned corporations that it would affect their ability to buy the level of crop insurance that they would desire.

A young producer just starting out, would it level the playing field for them? I'm not sure. It probably wouldn't, but it does—crop insurance does give us a bankable guarantee that when we go to the bank, we can say this is the amount of revenues that I'm going to get, regardless of the price or the yield it happens to make.

The CHAIRMAN. And my farmers remind me, your neighbors, our fellow neighbors in Oklahoma, that all those records have to be in that loan portfolio file; that it's not just the banker that wants it. It's the examiners who demand the bankers have that in the file, so it's critically important.

Mr. Swanson, you talk about the importance of farm policy not influencing a producer's planting decisions.

Given what you know about the effort last fall, in your judgment, would that policy have influenced your planting decisions if the farm bill had become a—the effort in the Super Committee become the farm bill?

Mr. SWANSON. Well, I have to yield to what Mr. Vaughan said. I think all things influence planting decisions, and it probably absolutely would. However, if we have—for instance, if we had price—price protection and it was equitable across the board, that should not influence your decision, just because of that price protection; and so those things that were put forth, I think were influenced—it influenced it, but it influenced it probably a minimal amount.

The CHAIRMAN. I guess to go straight to the point, the reference prices discussed in the 2000 Farm Bill effort, would that have addressed your concern about the need for price protection in periods of low prices?

Mr. SWANSON. Yes, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Mr. Miller, kind of a philosophical question. You mention that you've grown your operation, in your testimony, from 400 acres that your father farmed to 7,500 now. When you listen to the national dialogue, are you led to believe that large farms are bad and the idea of the ideal farm is small, the family-owned farm?

Can you explain why you chose—that's what—if you listen to the national dialogue, that's what you believe, based on what you hear. Can you explain your choice to expand and could you sustain your family today on that 400 acres your father farmed in 1976? I know it's almost a simple, a silly question to ask, but it's relevant for the record.

Mr. MILLER. No, there's no way that we could survive on the 400 acres my father had when we started. The reason I grow my farm is we pool assets; we pool machinery; we pool capital; we pool buying power for buying large volumes of seed, fertilizer, and every-

thing else; and it's made the operation of our farm a lot cheaper per acre.

My farm actually includes two other operators with me, my nephew and my daughter and husband, and they absolutely could not start without me helping them, and by pooling everything together, we have the opportunity to do so.

The CHAIRMAN. Absolutely. My time has expired and I appreciate the indulgence of my colleagues. I now turn to the gentleman from Texas, the Chairman of the General Farm Commodities and Risk Management Subcommittee, and a fellow who may have even fewer trees than you have or I have at home. Mr. Conaway.

Mr. CONAWAY. Well, I do represent a Committee called "Notrees". The first guy on the Committee, the Chairman, put me on the Forestry Subcommittee. We went to the city limits of Notrees, Texas. I had my picture taken by the city limit sign and gave it to the Chairman and said, I'm probably not the right guy to deal with forestry concerns.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am reminded, though, that sharing questions with the Chairman is like sharing a hamburger with a lion. I learned everything I know from Pat Roberts. I'm his son.

The CHAIRMAN. I was back then, too.

Mr. CONAWAY. I would like to just—I think Mr. Miller and Mr. Harshberger may have mentioned it as well—turn to crop insurance, the differentials or the differences between irrigated practices and dryland farming and how that would work if you were somehow to bifurcate insurance units into separate. Can you kind of walk me through how you envisioned that would work?

Mr. MILLER. Well, what I'm concerned about is the—right now, it's either dryland or it's irrigated, and if we would put it by the enterprise units, we could have either separate enterprises that have both the irrigated and dryland and that would be—

Mr. CONAWAY. Separate?

Mr. MILLER. Well, yes. We need to do something to be able to differentiate, because our irrigation yields for corn in our area are in the 140 to 170 range, and dryland is in the 50 to 60, and you can't commingle them and it's a real mess for us, so somehow we need to address that issue.

The limited irrigation is also a real major issue with that because, like last year, everybody told us we ought to shut our wells down because everything was a total disaster, but the crop insurance, where we had them insured for definitely for irrigation, they said we had to keep running them, and that was just water getting wasted, because the crop was already done.

Mr. CONAWAY. The GAO report on—it's still serving by the folks who asked for the report. Can you guys, each of you, walk us through how the impact of the \$40,000 limit and—or tie in conservation practices that you wouldn't otherwise have been doing to get that, how do you see that being implemented and impacting your operation? Anybody? Just start with Dee, anybody with comments.

Mr. VAUGHAN. When that came out about a week ago, we did a little analysis and what we discovered is that if a guy in Texas, the Panhandle there, is buying 65 percent coverage, he's basically getting about \$40 per acre in subsidy; so in fact, what it would do is

limit it to about a thousand-acre farm. You could go to your banker, and there are not many thousand-acre farms in our area. In our area, they just don't work. You have to be larger to get efficiency of scale.

So what you have is a situation where you'd either have to go to your banker and say, well, I'm sorry, but I can insure a thousand acres and everything after that was on its own, or take a lower coverage. Maybe you could go to 5,100, but then you have to go back to your banker as well and say, I'm insuring my crop for less than what I did last year, so it's going to have a tremendous impact. I mean, if that policy was enacted, it would be a terrible policy.

As far as conservation compliance, I exceed what is in my conservation plan anyway. I'm strictly a strip till and no-till farmer. That's not in my conservation plan. It goes above and beyond what I have to do, and as mentioned, our land is what we do. It's our biggest asset. Why would we jeopardize it by misusing it or abusing it?

Mr. CONAWAY. Sure. Scott?

Mr. NEUFELD. As I read that GAO report, it was going through my mind, something that I could equate this to that we could get our heads around, and as I thought about it, natural disasters hitting different communities in this country. In essence, putting those limits on would be like saying that we're going to give a FEMA disaster declaration and assistance to Chicago the same as we are going to give to Minneola, Kansas. Things are to scale in this country and our ag production entities are that same way, and it's just like I said, if we are going to limit farm size to 1,000 acres, that's going to dictate what kind of risk you're going to be able to take.

Mr. SWANSON. I think we're getting into that philosophical area real, real quick and deep in the weeds, but when we help other things and other industries in this country, let's say we're going to build a wind farm, we don't tell the wind farm people that we're going to help you build the first eight windmills and then you're going to have to build the other 27 on your own. We help them build all of them.

We don't help the airlines with a few, if we decided that the airline industry needs to be a mom and pop type operation and we're not going to let you have but a few airplanes. We think you can serve with that, and so why do we not treat agriculture as a business like we do other things, and the—we're required to do that when we get financing. We're required to do that.

Our country encourages growth, encourages progress, and it seems to me like—and pardon me if I'm getting a little bit sensitive here. Seems to me like the ag community is the only one that's looked on disparagingly when we grow, and we have some problems with that.

Mr. CONAWAY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. The chair now recognizes the gentleman from Kansas for 5 minutes, Mr. Huelskamp.

Mr. HUELSKAMP. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and the first question would be for Mr. Harshberger. I had invited someone from the EPA to come here and listen, and it's my understanding out of the

thousands of folks that work there, no one had time to come and listen, but if they were here, what would you tell them about your desire to protect the environment on your family farm?

Mr. HARSHBERGER. It was mentioned by Mr. Swanson. It's about the dirt, and I've always stated that farmers are active environmentalists. Our livelihood depends upon the health of that dirt, so we are the world's conservationist. Now, there are some things that we can help with like, for instance, with the water in eastern Kansas, we have an issue of sedimentation in our reservoirs, and so with the funds like EQIP and AWEP, we're able to enhance the streambeds to avoid that sedimentation, so there are things that we're already doing. We're already in tune with what we need for our farms, for our dirt. There are some things that we can have assistance on to take us to the next step forward, but I think we are the first active environmentalists.

Mr. HUELSKAMP. Thank you. Mr. Miller, a question. You mentioned exports and I have a broad background in that. Can you describe for the Committee and the folks here what our foreign competitors do that make it difficult for us to compete internationally?

Mr. MILLER. Yes. Our foreign competitors, for one thing, all have animal ID and it's mandatory, and that particular issue is causing us a lot of grief overseas. If you notice, China just recently decided to take exports from Canada and we're still not in there, and the only reason they did so is because they had mandatory ID in Canada. That's becoming a major issue for our country doing business overseas. A lot of your businesses in Japan, Korea, and places like that actually have TV monitors set up and you can scan a bar code on a product and actually see where the product came from. The consumer is driving it over there and it's an issue that we don't—that we haven't been able to address here in the U.S. The pork side does have mandatory ID, but the beef side doesn't, so that's an issue we're going to have to tackle somehow through either incentive, through voluntary or some other method, but exports are booming overseas and the demand's there.

The reports say that we have to double production by the year 2050 in order to be able to feed all the people that are going to be in the world, and we're in the prime area to produce a lot of product and ship it overseas and make a profit, but we have to make sure that we have the right safety nets here now so that we all can stay in business and be able to produce that food instead of ship it in from overseas.

Mr. HUELSKAMP. Thank you. Mr. Swanson, what are your thoughts on conservation programs, the number of programs that we have? There have been proposals to consolidate those, consolidate applications. You're in an area, the epicenter of the Dust Bowl. I wonder if you could talk a little bit about that.

Mr. SWANSON. Well, I'm all for improving bureaucratic efficiency, and if that's—can you say those two words in the same sentence? I'm not sure. But at the same time, we do know that in order to administer something, we have to have a bureaucracy to do it, and so if those consolidations make the product that the farmer needs, the producer needs, the rancher needs a better product, and makes it easier to access and to implement, I'm all for it. If it saves us money in the process, I'm all for it, but I think that we really do

need to strengthen our relationship with the local soil conservation district boards. They know what's going on; they know what will work in their area; they know what those things are; and those bureaucracies need to listen to them, and so I guess that's not a very good answer to a very good question.

Mr. HUELSKAMP. Mr. Vaughan, I have time for one more question. Just curious. Talk about your cost of production. Would you say generally what it is today or what it was compared to, say, 5 years ago for, say, corn?

Mr. VAUGHAN. It's been up and down like a roller coaster over the last few years. In 2008, it peaked. It was approximately about \$4½ a bushel growing a bushel of corn that year, because of high natural gas costs. We irrigate, we use natural gas, and it was a back-breaker that year, with fertilizer costs.

Mr. HUELSKAMP. What was your average sale price that year?

Mr. VAUGHAN. Approximately around—we had forward contracted a lot of product earlier and sold it for in the \$4½–\$5 range, so it was basically a break-even year, even though USDA reported record farm income that year. I talked to a lot of producers that were in the same boat. It's back down now because of energy cost.

Natural gas, of course, is much cheaper than it was in 2008, so it's—we're back down considerably.

Mr. HUELSKAMP. Okay. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, and I'd like to once again acknowledge the outstanding insights that the first panel provided to us today and dismiss you gentlemen. Thank you for your participation and we'll now call the second panel of witnesses to the table.

As they're coming up and the name tags are being placed, we'll have on our second panel Mr. Frank Harper, a corn, soybean, wheat, sorghum and cow/calf producer from Sedgewick, Kansas. We'll have Mr. Kendall Hodgson, wheat, soybean, corn, sorghum, alfalfa and cow/calf producer from Little River, Kansas; Mr. Tom Giessel, a wheat, corn, sorghum, soybean, alfalfa, and cow/calf producer from Larned, Kansas; Mr. Woody Anderson, a cotton and wheat producer from Colorado City, Texas; and Mr. Zach Hunnicutt, a corn, soybean, and popcorn producer from Aurora, Nebraska.

One thing about it, when you have a hearing in our part of the world, you have a diversity of production. That's wonderful, and whenever you're ready, Mr. Harper, you may begin.

**STATEMENT OF FRANK HARPER, CORN, SOYBEAN, WHEAT,
SORGHUM, AND COW/CALF PRODUCER, SEDGEWICK, KS**

Mr. HARPER. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman, Mr. Huelskamp, and Mr. Conaway. My name is Frank Harper and I thank you for the opportunity to be here today. My wife and I, Mary, we have a cow/calf backgrounding and farming operation near Sedgewick, Kansas. Our cattle operation consists of both registered commercial cows, and we typically background our calves and then retain ownership through the feeding phase. Our farming operation consists of wheat, grain sorghum, corn, soybean, and includes both dryland and irrigated production. I currently serve as President of the Kansas Livestock Association and serve on the Board of Directors of

the National Cattleman's Beef Association, of which KLA is an affiliate.

The beef industry is a key segment of the Kansas economy, and the Kansas beef industry is a major piece of the U.S. beef industry. Kansas ranks third nationally with 6.1 million cattle on ranches and in the feedyards. Those cattle generated \$6.53 billion in cash receipts in 2010.

Development of the next farm bill is an important process for livestock producers. The vast majority of my fellow livestock producers believe the livestock industry is best served by the process of free enterprise and free trade. Even with its imperfections, free trade is more equitable than regulated and subsidized markets, which often distort production and market signals. We oppose attempts to narrow the business options or limit the individual freedom of livestock producers to innovate in the management and marketing of their production.

I oppose the inclusion of the livestock title in the next farm bill. The livestock title in the last farm bill attracted proposals like the GIPSA rule, mandatory country-of-origin labeling, and other items that are counter to the free enterprise system that I support.

Items with industry-wide support can be included in the miscellaneous title, just as they have been in every farm bill prior to the 2008 bill.

I strongly oppose, as do the vast majority of Kansas cattle producers, the proposed regulation issued by the Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration on June 22, 2010. In short, U.S. producers are concerned that the GIPSA rule would greatly expand the role of government in marketing livestock and eliminate producers' ability to market livestock to capture the benefits of their efforts to improve the quality of their livestock.

Over the years, I've invested in genetics that have helped me improve the quality and consistency of the calves I produce. To capitalize on this investment, I retain ownership of my calves and feed them in a commercial feedyard. This allows me to market my calves through programs like U.S. Premium Beef, Certified Angus Beef, and other programs that allow me to earn premiums for the high quality cattle.

The GIPSA rule would require purchases of my cattle to justify paying more than the, "standard price" for my livestock. If my competitors don't agree with the justification the packer offers by paying me for my—more than the standard price for my livestock, the packer could be sued. Common business sense tells me it wouldn't be long before the packer no longer would be interested in our agreement. This means I'll be back to selling cattle at a price based on averages, instead of actual value. My investment in superior genetics could be lost or severely compromised.

The rule goes far beyond the intent of Congress. Members of this Committee will recall several of the proposals contained in this rule were either defeated or withdrawn during consideration of the last farm bill. We strongly urge you to take action to prevent the implementation of this rule.

Country-of-origin labeling continues to be an area of concern for us. Last year, the World Trade Organization ruled in favor of Canada and Mexico in their complaint against the U.S. mandatory

COOL program, and it is in the interest of the U.S. beef industry to resolve this dispute before retaliatory action is taken. Organizations like KLA and NCBA strongly encourage the inclusion of language in the next farm bill to address the WTO finding.

For additional questions, I would refer you to my written comments. Again, thank you for the opportunity to be here and I'll entertain any questions at the appropriate time. Thanks.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Harper follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF FRANK HARPER, CORN, SOYBEAN, WHEAT, SORGHUM, AND COW/CALF PRODUCER, SEDGEWICK, KS

Mister Chairman and Members of the Committee, my name is Frank Harper. My wife Mary and I have a cow/calf, backgrounding and farming operation near Sedgewick, Kansas. Our cattle operation consists of both registered and commercial cows. We typically background our calves then retain ownership through the feeding phase. Our farming operation consists of wheat, grain sorghum, soybeans and corn and includes dryland and irrigated production. I am President of the Kansas Livestock Association (KLA) and serve on the Board of Directors of the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA), of which KLA is an affiliate. I am very pleased to be with you today.

The beef industry is a key segment of the Kansas economy and the Kansas beef industry is a major piece of the U.S. beef industry. Kansas ranks third nationally with 6.1 million cattle on ranches and in feedyards. Those cattle generated \$6.53 billion in cash receipts in 2010. Kansas is a national leader in cattle feeding and beef processing. The Kansas beef cow herd is the seventh largest in the country at 1.43 million head. Also, the presence of Kansas State University, the Animal Health Corridor and the proposed National Bio and Agro-Defense Facility makes Kansas a world leader in animal health research.

Development of the next farm bill is an important process for livestock producers. Whether directly or indirectly, the provisions included in the farm bill can have a dramatic impact on livestock producers' businesses. I oppose agriculture policies that pit one industry group against another, distort market signals and inadvertently cause economic harm to the livestock sector.

The vast majority of my fellow livestock producers believe the livestock industry is best served by the process of free enterprise and free trade. Even with its imperfections, free trade is relatively more equitable than regulated and subsidized markets which retard innovation and distort production and market signals. We oppose attempts to narrow the business options or limit the individual freedom of livestock producers to innovate in the management and marketing of their production.

I oppose inclusion of a "Livestock Title" in the next farm bill. The livestock title in the last farm bill attracted proposals like the GIPSA rule, mandatory country-of-origin labeling and other items counter to the free enterprise system I support.

Items with industry-wide support can be included in the "Miscellaneous Title", just as they have been in every farm bill prior to the 2008 bill. I ask for the support of Members of this Committee in opposing a livestock title in the next farm bill.

GIPSA Proposed Rule on Livestock Marketing

I strongly oppose, as do the vast majority of Kansas cattle producers, the proposed regulation issued by the Grain Inspection, Packers and Stockyards Administration (GIPSA) on June 22, 2010. I would refer you to comments filed by KLA and NCBA which may be found at <http://www.kla.org/proposedgipsarule.aspx>. Although USDA has not advanced the most egregious portions of the regulation for final rule-making, the threat remains, especially after the current appropriations restriction expires in September.

Beef producers throughout Kansas and the United States are concerned the proposed regulation would greatly expand the role of government in marketing livestock and eliminate producers' rights and ability to market livestock to capture the benefits of their efforts to improve the quality of their livestock.

As outlined in both sets of comments, the regulation outlines new definitions to be used to interpret the Packers and Stockyards Act that would expand the jurisdiction of USDA over all marketing arrangements. USDA would require the reporting of marketing arrangements and then would post them on the USDA website. Producers participating in marketing arrangements would have limited ability to protect their private information from public disclosure.

The proposed regulation has broad application and may include existing contractual arrangements if the agreement between the buyer and the seller were modified by the parties. The proposal also would require buyers to justify any discount or premium paid. USDA then would review these transactions and make determinations of violations based upon its judgment, not marketplace economics.

The proposal includes new definitions of “competitive injury” and “likelihood of competitive injury” and new listings of circumstances that may be considered “unfair, unjustly discriminatory and deceptive practices or devices.” Both sets are so broad that mere accusations, without economic proof, would suffice for USDA or an individual to bring a lawsuit against a buyer.

The proposal’s new listings of criteria that USDA would use to determine whether an undue or unreasonable preference or advantage was made by a buyer include requiring the buyer to make similar offers to all livestock producers; requiring the buyer to make price premium offers in a manner that does not discriminate against any other seller; and requiring the buyer to make offers known to all sellers if such offer is made to one or more seller.

We believe these provisions would negatively impact producers and consumers in the following ways.

Lost Opportunities and Lost Profits: Cattle producers are concerned this regulatory proposal, coupled with the risk of litigation from USDA and citizen suits, likely would cause buyers to withdraw marketing arrangements rather than run the risk of litigation, civil penalties and potential revocation of licenses.

If marketing arrangements were restricted, producers and consumers would be the losers. The proposed regulation would restrict cattle producers’ freedom to market their cattle as they see fit. It would limit their opportunity to capture more of the value of their cattle and eliminate important risk management tools. Regulating marketing agreements would impact nearly 65% of the fed cattle market.

The proposed regulations ultimately may remove products consumers prefer. Producers have responded to consumer demand by finding innovative ways to develop and market premium quality and branded products. These alternative marketing arrangements have allowed producers to get paid for the added value. These arrangements ensure a consistent supply of livestock and poultry that meet the requirements of such programs. Without this consistent supply, these programs cannot be sustained.

The 2007 USDA GIPSA Livestock and Meat Marketing Study found reducing or eliminating the use of alternative marketing arrangements (AMAs) would negatively affect both producers and consumers. No segment of the beef industry, from the ranch to the consumer, would benefit from the reduction or elimination of these marketing arrangements. The GIPSA study results showed if AMAs were reduced 25%, the 10 year cumulative effect would be a loss of \$5.141 billion for feeder cattle producers; a loss of \$3.886 billion for fed cattle producers; and a loss of \$2.539 billion for consumers. If marketing arrangements were eliminated, the 10 year cumulative losses for producers and consumers would be as follows: feeder cattle producers—\$29.004 billion; fed cattle producers—\$21.813 billion; and consumers—\$13.657 billion. Combined losses across all segments would exceed \$60 billion.

Loss of Privacy/Risk of Litigation: The proposed regulation requires packers to file copies of marketing arrangements with USDA. Packers may assert some information is confidential and request that it not be released. However, producers who are parties to the marketing arrangements would not have the same opportunity to claim privacy. This means confidential producer information could be posted on USDA’s web site for producer competitors to view. The regulation would lessen the burden for bringing an action against a packer. Packer livestock purchase records likely would be a part of any litigation. Producers participating in questioned transactions likely would be drawn into the litigation.

Negative Restructuring of the Industry: I believe the potential elimination of marketing arrangements likely would encourage vertical integration. In order to satisfy consumer demand currently being met through the use of marketing arrangements, packers may choose to own livestock in larger numbers (today, packers directly own less than 5% of the market) rather than risk litigation.

While the regulation is couched in many legal terms and arguments, it would have a real impact on producers like me. Over the years, I have invested in genetics that have helped me improve the quality and consistency of the calves I produce. To capitalize on this investment, I retain ownership on my calves and feed them in a commercial feedyard. This allows me to market my calves through U.S. Premium Beef and other programs that allow me to earn premiums for my high quality cattle.

The proposed regulation would require purchasers of my cattle to justify paying more than a “standard price” for my livestock. What is a standard price and who

sets it? The regulation seems to infer that to be the role of government. I strongly oppose the government setting “standard prices” for my livestock. If my competitors (other producers) don’t agree with the justification the packer offers for not paying me a “standard price”, the packer may be sued. Common business sense tells me that it wouldn’t be long before the packer no longer would be interested in our agreement. This means I’ll be back to selling cattle for the same average price as everyone else. My investment in superior genetics would be lost.

I believe the proposed rule will set the beef industry back to a time when all cattle received the same average price and beef demand was in a downward spiral. The rule also goes far beyond the intent of Congress. Members of this Committee will recall several of the proposals contained in this rule were either defeated or withdrawn during consideration of the last farm bill. We strongly urge you to take action to prevent the implementation of this rule.

I believe the best course of action to protect U.S. beef producers is to delete the language which led to the proposed GIPSA rule. To that end, I support language striking Sec. 11006, Part 1 of the Food, Conservation and Energy Act of 2008.

Livestock Ownership Restrictions

Another marketing related issue of concern is efforts to restrict packer ownership of livestock. I strongly oppose H.R. 4284 and its Senate companion, S. 2141. While the bills target packers, they could more accurately be described as restricting producers’ choice of when to market their livestock. Study after study has shown packer ownership levels have no impact on market prices. In fact, the 2007 GIPSA study found limiting marketing opportunities in the beef industry would have significant negative effects for both producers and consumers.

I ask Members of this Committee to reject any attempt to include language such as that contained in H.R. 4284 in the next farm bill.

Country-of-Origin Labeling

The vast majority of beef producers have supported *voluntary* country-of-origin labeling (COOL) programs. These producers believe the market will provide the information and attributes consumers desire and are willing to pay to receive. The number of branded beef programs being utilized by beef producers is a testament to the signals provided by the market.

Despite broad beef industry opposition, the current mandatory COOL program was included in the last farm bill. Producer groups like KLA and NCBA actively engaged in the development of the regulation in an attempt to limit the record-keeping burden for the industry. While we believe the requirements of mandatory COOL have been relatively benign for most producers, the same cannot be said for all beef industry participants.

Last year, the World Trade Organization (WTO) ruled in favor of Canada and Mexico in their complaint against the U.S. mandatory COOL program. Although the U.S. Trade Representative has appealed the ruling, we believe the original decision is likely to stand.

It is in the interests of the U.S. as a whole, and the U.S. beef industry in particular, to resolve this dispute before retaliatory action is taken. Canada and Mexico are among the largest trading partners for the U.S. In terms of exports, Canada and Mexico represent the number one and two destinations for U.S. beef products. In 2011, Canada and Mexico purchased more than \$2 billion worth of U.S. beef and beef products, nearly 40 percent of our total beef export value.

I strongly support the inclusion of language in the next farm bill to address the WTO finding. My preference would be language making the meat portion of the COOL program voluntary. An alternative approach would be to adopt the concept of substantial transformation wherein meat from any animal processed in the U.S. would be labeled as “Product of the U.S.”

Conservation Title

Several conservation programs authorized in previous farm bills have played an important role in assisting farmers and ranchers enhance our nation’s natural resources for food production, wildlife habitat, and water quality. In Kansas, the Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) is improving habitat for grassland-nesting birds under consideration for listing as threatened or endangered species, enhancing the health of grazing lands, improving water quality near lakes used for public drinking water, improving soil quality, conserving groundwater and reducing soil erosion. In Fiscal Year 2010, our state NRCS personnel completed over 900 contracts impacting over 213,000 acres of our state’s agricultural landscape. One important feature of EQIP has been its focus on livestock operations. I recommend a continued focus of 60% of EQIP funds toward livestock projects.

My personal experience with EQIP has been very positive. EQIP helped enable me to make the transition to no-till farming. The cost-share funds made it feasible for me to make the investment necessary to complete that transition. I know many similar stories where EQIP has facilitated operational changes that have positively impacted environmental quality.

Farm and Ranchland Protection Program and Grassland Reserve Program (GRP) conservation easements are in strong demand by our state's agricultural landowners who desire to sell their development rights to protect their lands for future generations of farmers and ranchers. In many instances, selling a conservation easement has been a helpful tool for estate and succession planning as today's landowners prepare for the next generation of farmers and ranchers.

Kansas leads the nation in the number of GRP agreements. To date this program has permanently protected over 36,000 acres of high-quality native grasslands, through 66 GRP conservation easements in Kansas. We realize GRP does not have baseline funding for the next farm bill, but we encourage Congress to reauthorize this program and give it favorable consideration for its share of funding.

I encourage Members of this Committee to remind your colleagues that Federal funds spent on conservation are a good investment in our country's natural resources and the ultimate beneficiary is the general public. In addition, conservation program spending is not an entitlement as participants are required to use these funds on the land and, in many instances, are required to invest their own time and personal funds as a match or cost-share contribution.

Conservation Easement Tax Incentive

The Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 included a provision to extend the income tax incentive for qualified conservation gifts, including donated conservation easements. This extension expired December 31, 2011.

I support making this incentive more permanent, as proposed in H.R. 1964, the Conservation Easement Incentive Act of 2011. This bipartisan bill is sponsored by 302 Members of the House, including several Members of this Committee. I encourage this Committee to consider including similar language in the next farm bill.

Research

My fellow cattle producers and I fully recognize the current economic situation facing the Federal Government and the need to reduce the Federal deficit. That said, I believe there are a number of programs worthy of continued funding in the farm bill. One area that plays a significant role in the livestock industry is the research title. Funding for livestock production research continually has declined since the 1970's. The beef industry does support increased funding for research on production practices, animal diseases, nutrition, food safety, and environmental impacts of the industry. Of these, the most critical programs administered by USDA are in the area of animal health.

I would encourage the Committee to closely look at this title and identify ways we might be able to do more with less to ensure the health of our U.S. beef herd. Finding ways to increase investment opportunities, whether through public or private partnerships, will be vital to the security and viability of our agricultural industry and food supply. As we look to further expand international trade opportunities, animal health issues will become even more important with our international trading partners. It is imperative that we continue to invest in research on animal health issues to help U.S. producers remain competitive in the global marketplace.

Related to animal health research is the proposed National Bio and Agro-Defense Facility (NBAF) currently planned for construction in Manhattan, Kansas. NBAF will house research on important foreign animal diseases now being conducted at the aging facility on Plum Island. This research is essential to protecting U.S. livestock from potentially devastating diseases such as foot-and-mouth disease. Research scientists are close to developing several important vaccines that would mitigate the impact and help contain a foreign animal disease outbreak. It is important that research continues.

Due to the nature of the pathogens used in this research, the strictest and most modern bio-security and containment measures are necessary in this type of facility. Although the Plum Island facility has served its purpose well, it has reached its useful life. Given the importance of the research, it is imperative that development of a new facility move forward. We believe the Manhattan site is an appropriate location for the new facility given the proximity of the animal health corridor and the existing bio-security level 3 facility. We ask for the support of this Committee in moving forward with an appropriately designed and funded facility.

Government Mandates for Production Practices

Cattle producers recognize and respect their obligation to provide for the well-being and care of their cattle. It is my responsibility to raise my cattle in a humane and compassionate manner and I take that responsibility seriously. I am concerned with legislation that has been introduced in the House (H.R. 3798) that would require the Federal Government to dictate production practices for food producing animals. Knowing the intent of this bill is focused on the laying hen industry, I still have serious concerns about the precedent of the Federal Government getting in the business of telling producers how to raise their animals, taking the decision away from farmers and ranchers and the animal health professionals and animal scientists with whom they consult. I am concerned the legislation will stifle the scientific research and industry innovation that ultimately benefits animals. Prescriptive production mandates are a clear disincentive to continually improve our industries based on the latest science.

The World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) currently is developing international, species-specific standards for animal care. This process is guided by scientists and veterinary experts who have made the decision to move away from prescriptive housing requirements and instead have adopted outcome-based requirements. Current U.S. industry guidelines are science and outcome-based. We closely monitor each OIE guideline to ensure our industry standards remain consistent with any science-based OIE standards. I urge you and your colleagues to carefully evaluate the role of the Federal Government in determining animal production practices. I believe those decisions are best kept in the hands of the animal scientists, veterinarians, farmers and ranchers who care for these animals every day.

Animal Disease Traceability

The beef industry long has been supportive of animal identification for animal health purposes. We strongly believe the goal of any program should be to enable the cattle industry, state and Federal animal health officials to respond rapidly and effectively to animal health emergencies. We do appreciate APHIS recognizing the shortcomings of the previously proposed NAIS and that it had become a barrier to achieving meaningful animal disease traceability in the U.S.

The beef industry has advocated for a species specific and phased-in approach. The proposed Animal Disease Traceability (ADT) program does this with Phase 1 only applying to cattle more than 18 months of age. We look forward to an objective, robust assessment of Phase 1 before moving forward with inclusion of any cattle under 18 months in Phase 2. We are concerned as the proposed rule does not provide for a separate rulemaking process for Phase 2. We encourage APHIS to re-evaluate how they plan to proceed for this age group and allow for a separate rule-making. This group of cattle is much larger, more complex, and has increased logistical, technical and financial challenges for cattle producers and animal health officials.

We also are concerned USDA's cost-benefit analysis may be flawed and not adequately represent the total cost to the cattle industry for Phase 1 and especially for Phase 2 of the program. The beef industry consulted with agricultural economists who indicate there is not enough information provided for a separate cost/benefit analysis. Therefore we requested more information in order to adequately evaluate APHIS' economic analysis of the ADT rule.

Proposed On-Farm Child Labor Regulations

I am very concerned about the impact of recent proposed changes to on-farm child labor regulations. I applaud the Department of Labor's desire to enhance the safety of young people working on farms and ranches. A safe working environment is a primary concern of all farmers and ranchers. However, I am concerned the proposed regulations will stifle the ability of young people to work in agriculture.

The list of prohibitions in the proposed rule is long and many are very vague or overly broad. Overly burdensome regulations often do more damage than good. I believe parents are better positioned to make decisions about the types of tasks assigned to young people on farms and ranches.

We need more, not fewer, opportunities for young people to learn about agriculture and the potential for a career in agriculture. Not to mention the responsibility and work ethic developed when working with livestock or caring for crops. I appreciate the support shown by Chairman Lucas and several Members of this Committee in sponsoring H.R. 4157, the Preserving America's Family Farms Act. I encourage every Member of this Committee to become a cosponsor of this bill.

Commodity Title

Finally, I would like to comment on the commodity title. Historically, the cattle industry has hesitated from weighing in on prospective title I programs. Recent proposals, however, including those made during negotiations on the Super Committee proposal, cause some concern.

Current commodity programs are relatively uniform, with each commodity crop participating in the direct payment, counter cyclical, marketing loan and crop insurance programs. Discussions that involve creating segmented commodity programs for individual crops pose a real threat to the livestock industry. Creating individual commodity programs increase the risk that farmers will fail to heed market signals and continue to grow crops in low demand and fail to increase production of crops in higher need.

In the next farm bill, it is crucial that commodity programs not pick winners and losers. While the structure of commodity programs may change, cattle producers urge Members of this Committee to maintain uniformity of programs across all commodities.

Conclusion

As you can see, the vast majority of cattle producers believe markets free from government interference best serve the beef industry. We prefer a farm bill that does not restrict our marketing options or distort market signals. We look forward to working with you as the next farm bill is developed.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Mr. Hodgson, you may begin when you're ready.

**STATEMENT OF KENDALL HODGSON, WHEAT, SOYBEAN,
CORN, SORGHUM, ALFALFA, AND COW/CALF PRODUCER,
LITTLE RIVER, KS**

Mr. HODGSON. Chairman Lucas, Representative Huelskamp, and Representative Conaway, thank you for coming here today. I appreciate your willingness to listen to what I and others would desire for a new farm bill.

My name is Kendall Hodgson and I live in central Kansas, near the town of Little River. I'm a fourth generation farmer and rancher. My great-grandfather homesteaded on the banks of the Little Arkansas River across from an Indian camp in 1871. I farmed for 33 years, first in partnership with my father and now with my wife. We have two boys in high school and a daughter in grade school, and I think every day of what I need to do to make it possible for any of them to continue to farm if they would so choose.

I operate a diversified farm, producing wheat, soybeans, grain sorghum, corn and alfalfa. I also operate a cow herd to give me something to do in the winter.

We are here today to visit about what would be an appropriate safety net for farmers in this area. It is my belief that farms are less able to withstand a total crop loss without some form of income today than they were in the past. In today's business environment, we cannot afford to stumble.

Our first priority should be a viable crop insurance program that covers not only a single year loss, such as last year's disastrous drought, but also multiple years of low production that caused declining APH's. Crop insurance may be our best tool, but it's not a perfect product. County T-yields are helpful, but sometimes they don't reflect what a producer and his lender would expect to produce in any given year.

Direct payments have been very beneficial to the Great Plains, but seem to have fallen out of favor with many groups, and they're an easy target for budget cutters. A possible alternative to direct

payments could be some type of revenue product that is triggered when price times yield are below some threshold. It might make some sense to use an area, such as a crop reporting district, to set these triggers. Farm level revenue is what we are actually most concerned about, but in reality, we have that with multi-peril crop insurance. Some form of area-wide program would be more budget friendly and give another layer of protection to production agriculture. The ACRE program seemed to have the right idea, but with a statewide trigger, really makes it unusable for the Great Plains area.

In any of these programs, I would ask that the Committee be mindful of WTO compliance. We think of ourselves as a nation of laws, and we really have more to lose by noncompliance than we have to gain. The payments to Brazil is the one that comes to my mind. It really is a black eye for our farm programs that only invite criticism from our detractors.

Conservation is something very near and dear to my operation. I realize I'm only on this Earth for a short time and I feel great responsibility to conserve those natural resources that I am privileged to manage, and I think this is a very appropriate rule for government to maintain the wealth of the nation in cooperation with those private operators.

I know that the CRP part of the conservation has and will have a role in protecting fragile lands, but I can also see in some instances that better farming techniques can make better use of that land. I'm skipping through my testimony here.

Conservation on working lands, in my opinion, is where the rubber should meet the road; again, in cooperation with the steward of the land, I think would have the most impact. Any system of production that leaks nutrients or soil out of it is not sustainable, and that, to my mind, is what conservation should be about.

Basic research is not part of this title I that we're talking about today, but it is of utmost importance to agriculture. Agriculture is a great success story. Let's not forget to keep funding the kind of research that keeps private and corporate entities—that private or corporate entities cannot justify to enable producers to be even more efficient in the future.

Another topic not in title I is trade promotion. These public and private shared funds have proven to be dollars well spent. Agricultural exports continue to be one of the shining stars in our balance of trade with other countries.

In summation, I would ask the Committee to please maintain the flexibility of a program that would be proposed to allow individuals who have different needs to have some benefit. I remember what it was like before Freedom To Farm, and I don't want to go back. I thank the Committee for the time, and would be happy to answer any questions they may have.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Hodgson follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF KENDALL HODGSON, WHEAT, SOYBEAN, CORN, SORGHUM,
ALFALFA, AND COW/CALF PRODUCER, LITTLE RIVER, KS

Chairman Lucas, Ranking Member Peterson, and Members of the Committee I appreciate your willingness to come to Kansas today to hear what I and others would desire for a new farm bill.

My name is Kendall Hodgson and I live in central Kansas near the town of Little River. I am a fourth generation farmer and rancher. My Great Grandfather homesteaded on the banks of the Little Arkansas River across from an Indian camp in 1871. I have farmed for 33 years, first as a partner with my Father and then as a sole proprietor with my wife when he was no longer able to get around. We have two boys in High School and a daughter in grade school and I think every day what I need to do to make it possible for any of them to continue to farm if they so chose.

I operate a diversified farm, producing wheat, soybeans, grain sorghum, corn and alfalfa. I also operate a cow herd that gives me something to do in the winter.

We are here today to visit about what would make an adequate safety net for farmers in this area. It is my belief that farms are less able to withstand a total crop loss without some income today than they were in the past. In today's business environment we cannot afford to stumble.

Our first priority should be to maintain a viable Crop Insurance program that covers not only single year losses such as last year's disastrous drought but also multiple years of low production which will cause declining APH's (average production history's). Crop Insurance in one of the best tools we have to keep us whole in the bad years as well as helping us market our crops prior to harvest with more confidence when it makes sense to do so. Crop insurance may be our best tool but it is not a perfect product. Any crop insurance product needs to have plugs to fill the multiple years of low yields that can and will occur in this part of the country. One suggestion I have heard is to have better methodology to the formation of APH's. County T-yields are helpful but sometimes don't reflect what a producer and his lender would expect to produce in any given year. The closer to the individual farm those expectations can be formulated the better.

Direct Payments have been very beneficial to the Great Plains area but seem to have fallen out of favor with many groups and are an easy target for budget cutters. A possible alternative to Direct Payments could be some type of revenue product that is triggered when price times yield are below some threshold. It might make sense to use some area such as a crop reporting district to set these triggers. Farm level revenue is what we are most concerned about but in reality if we have that with multi peril crop insurance. Some form of area wide revenue program would be more budget friendly and would give another layer of protection to production agriculture. The ACRE program seems to have the right idea but by having a statewide trigger makes it unusable for the Great Plains area. I like to point out that there is more variability in environment from the western border of Kansas to the eastern border of Kansas than there is from the eastern border of Kansas to the East Coast.

In any of these programs I would ask the Committee to be mindful of WTO compliance. We like to think of ourselves as a nation that follows the law. We stand to lose more by noncompliance than to gain. I understand the realities of the Brazilian threat of a WTO suit concerning our cotton program and our subsequent payments to Brazil to keep that suit from happening but this is something of a black eye for our farm programs that only invite criticism from our detractors.

Conservation is something that is near and dear to my operation. I realize that I am on this Earth only a short time and I feel a great responsibility to conserve the natural resources I that am privileged to manage. This is a very appropriate role for government to maintain the wealth of the nation in cooperation with the private operators on the land.

I know that CRP has and will have a role in protecting fragile lands but I also can see that with better farming techniques we can make better use of some of that land. 21 years ago I spent a month in India and to see how they scrambled for every bit of land to grow something on was quite a contrast to our government paying us to not produce. I fully realize that we are not India nor would I want us to be but I can see the need in the future to put lands where appropriate back into production.

Conservation on working lands in cooperation with the steward of the land would have the most impact of any conservation program. Preserving our natural resources by not only keeping the soil on the land where it ought to be, but by preventing excess nutrients and crop production chemicals from going down the river is our ultimate goal. A system of production that leaks either soil or nutrients out of it is not sustainable.

Basic research may not be part of the title I portion of the farm bill that we are discussing here today but I would be remiss if I did not remind the Committee that modern agriculture is a great success story. We produce far more with fewer resources than at any time in history. We didn't get here by accident. Let us not forget to keep funding the kind of research that private or corporate entities can't justify that will enable producers to be even more efficient in the future.

Another topic that may not be in title I is trade promotion. These public-private shared funds have been proven to be dollars well spent. Agricultural exports continue to be one of the shining stars in our balance of trade with other countries. Exports also help relieve the burdens of abundant productions that we have endured in the past.

In summation I would ask the Committee to please maintain the flexibility of any program that would be proposed to allow individuals who have different needs to see some benefit.

I thank the Committee for their time and would be happy to answer any questions they may have.

KENDALL HODGSON.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Mr. Giessel, you may begin when you're ready.

STATEMENT OF THOMAS "TOM" GERARD GIESSEL, WHEAT, CORN, SORGHUM, SOYBEAN, ALFALFA, AND COW/CALF PRODUCER, LARNED, KS

Mr. GIESSEL. Chairman Lucas, Representative Huelskamp, and Representative Conaway, thank you for the opportunity to share what I think are the most important issues to consider in the next farm bill.

My name is Tom Giessel. I'm a fourth generation family farmer from Pawnee County, Kansas. My brother Jay and I raise winter wheat, grain sorghum, corn and alfalfa, and a small percentage of the land is irrigated. We formerly had a cow/calf herd as well. I'm a member of five cooperatives and Kansas Farmers Union, and participate in several other farm and rural organizations. I've taken an active interest in farm policy since 1975.

One of the foregone conclusions of the farm policy debate is that direct payments will not be part of the next farm bill. While I understand the concerns that many farms have with the end of this support, the experience I've had on my farm shows that the fixed payments don't amount to that much. Last year I received about \$10 per acre through direct payments. Just in fertilizer alone, I spent over \$220 an acre preparing irrigated corn for planting this year. These costs might make direct payments seem insignificant, but I would much rather see the \$10 an acre be used to support programs that will kick in when I really need it. The loss of direct payments is overblown and I encourage the Committee to find a way to provide assistance when it's actually needed.

There has been much discussion about crop insurance as the base of the next farm bill. That makes sense. Just about all crop insurance products work very well when prices are high. However, when prices return to normal times, crop insurance may not be as appealing. From my perspective as a crop farmer, I have seen relatively few high price spikes and rarely was in a position to take advantage of them. In my 37 years of farming, I have rarely sold \$5 wheat and \$4 corn. When prices are low, which are more common than when prices high, a revenue product that doesn't provide much help will not be attractive. Because of this, crop insurance should not be the only component of the next farm bill. Farmers need a safety net that works in time of need; not just all the time.

I appreciate that there are limited budgets and limited appetite for farm payments. While many of the proposals of the farm bill commodity title try to solve the problem presented by shallow or

deep losses that might not otherwise be covered by crop insurance, none of them address the prolonged market failures, either very low or, actually, very high prices. The Committee should be proactive in finding a solution that addresses these realities.

I support the Market-Driven Inventory System, or I'll use the acronym, MDIS, which is voluntary farmer-owned and will allow commodity markets to work better. MDIS takes the tops off the peaks and fills the valleys. It dampens the volatility, so it's not damaging all sectors of ag—that is so damaging to some sectors of agriculture.

A study by the University of Tennessee found that between 1998 and 2010, government spending on direct and countercyclical payments and disaster programs was \$152 billion. With MDIS, it would have been only \$56 billion, a savings of nearly almost \$100 billion. With MDIS, net farm income averaged only slightly lower, which is impressive, considering the savings and the effective safety net provided by the program. MDIS will reduce price volatility, which helps farmers, livestock producers, biofuels industry, consumers, and the hungry around the world. MDIS will also make sure that farmers receive the bulk of their revenue, even in some tough times, from the market and not the mailbox. I urge you to consider the Market-Driven Inventory System as a farm program that will function as a true safety net.

As a rural resident, I understand the importance of delivery of these farm programs. It is essential that farmers and ranchers have access to FSA and other USDA agency offices. I also encourage the Committee to push for greater autonomy and authority for FSA County Committees to meet the needs of farmers in their local areas.

Additionally, I know that regulations have been discussed at length by this Committee. I agree that farmers should be able to operate their enterprise without much trouble from anyone. Nonetheless, I cannot think of a single one of my neighbors who have gone out of business because of too much regulation. I can, however, point to many that have had to sell their farm or their cow herd because of under enforcement of antitrust laws, manipulation of commodity markets, and other lax protection from those of greater power than the farmer.

My final thought would be on conservation, and for me, conservation must be more than just a title on a farm bill. You know, starting with about the 1996 Farm Bill, farmers have been encouraged to try to grow two blades of grass where only one has grown before. All our production is costly in so many ways. Specifically, it drains resources; resources that we are borrowing from future generations. Conservation is an ethic; an ethic which farm policy should be built around.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my ideas and I'll answer questions at the appropriate time.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Giessel follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THOMAS "TOM" GERARD GIESEL, WHEAT, CORN, SORGHUM, SOYBEAN, ALFALFA, AND COW/CALF PRODUCER, LARNED, KS

Thank you for the opportunity to share with you the important issues, as I see them, for Congress to consider in the next farm bill. My name is Tom Giessel and

I'm a fourth-generation family farmer from Pawnee County, Kansas. My brother Jay and I raise winter wheat, grain sorghum, corn, and alfalfa, with a small percentage of the land irrigated. We formerly had a cow/calf herd as well. I'm a member of five cooperatives as well as Kansas Farmers Union, and participate in several other farm and rural organizations. I have taken an active interest in farm policy, especially since 1975, and have followed the ebb and flow of concepts to ensure that family farmers, ranchers and rural America have an opportunity to thrive.

I know that today's budget environment is challenging, but I also understand that tomorrow's budget situation is not likely to be any more favorable. The agriculture community has been clear in saying it is willing to bear its fair share of cuts in order to contribute toward deficit reduction, but they must be proportional to cuts in other sectors. I respectfully urge Members of the Committee to consider the critical and tenuous nature of our nation's food security when considering the next farm bill. Production agriculture is a primary economic driver, and as such, when production agriculture prospers, a multiplier effect results and jobs and tax revenues at the local, state, and national levels are added without raising tax rates. Spending reductions that adversely impact the productivity and profitability of production agriculture are counterproductive to our overall national economic interests. Family farmer- and rancher-owned and operated food, fuel, and fiber production is the most economically, socially and environmentally beneficial way to meet the needs of our nation.

Our national farm and food policy affects all Americans, urban and rural, food producers and food consumers. We have the opportunity to shape this important policy only once every few years. Our nation's family farmers, who are those most vulnerable to risk, need an effective and fiscally responsible safety net to mitigate the effects of weather and market volatility in order to achieve our food and energy security goals and to preserve jobs in rural America. As the Members of the Committee know, agriculture is an industry that is very different from any other, with market behavior that defies typical supply and demand economics, high input costs, and the constant risk of weather disasters threatening our nation's producers. Farmers should not receive support in the good times, but farm policy should instead provide economic security to farmers, who have little market power, in bad times. Our nation's farmers need a more effective and fiscally responsible safety net to mitigate the effects of weather and market volatility and to achieve our food and energy security goals.

Additional Farm Bill Priorities

Congress should continue investments in rural America through farm bill conservation and energy programs. Demand for these initiatives remains high and yet these programs are chronically under-funded in the annual appropriations process, which results in program backlogs. Congress should provide a flexible conservation toolbox in the 2012 Farm Bill that includes streamlined program delivery for working lands, land retirement and easement programs, coupled with significant Federal funding and flexible local planning authorities.

Additionally, the 2008 Farm Bill included language that established and continued important research, animal health, marketing, and disaster programs related to livestock production, which brought additional interests into the farm bill process. The livestock title mandated country-of-origin labeling (COOL) for meat, fish, perishable agricultural commodities, and assorted other food products, which has been a long awaited and very beneficial law for farmers and consumers alike. A livestock title should be a part of the 2012 Farm Bill and must maintain the progress established by the previous farm bill.

National nutrition policy must address both the quantity and quality of food available to needy Americans, and nutrition programs should place an emphasis on fresh and local food to ensure that Americans of all income levels have access to healthy, nutritious foods. The local food procurement directive of the 2008 Farm Bill must be continued and further emphasized in the 2012 Farm Bill, and further incentives should be provided for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and other Federal nutrition program recipients to use their benefits at farmers markets, achieving dual objectives of providing healthy food to those who need it most and supporting family farmers and ranchers.

Market-Driven Inventory System: An Overview

In 2011, a study by University of Tennessee's Agricultural Policy Analysis Center (APAC), under the leadership of Dr. Daryll E. Ray, director, and Dr. Harwood Schaffer, research assistant professor, developed a farm program concept that would moderate extreme volatility in commodity markets while allowing farmers to receive

their income from the marketplace rather than from government payments, saving the Federal Government a significant amount of money in the process.

The Market-Driven Inventory System (MDIS) developed by Dr. Ray is an agricultural commodity program that mitigates price volatility, providing advantages to livestock producers, the biofuels industry, and to hungry people in this country and around the world. In addition, it would reduce government expenses, increase the value of crop exports, and maintain net farm income over time. The central feature of MDIS is a voluntary, farmer-owned and market-driven inventory system that operates under market forces during normal conditions but moderates prices at the extremes. Inventory stocks activity would only be activated when crop prices become so low or so high that normally profitable agricultural firms are not provided with reasonable investment and production signals. By working with the market, MDIS would ensure that farmers receive their income from the market instead of from government payments.

In the wake of the extreme commodity price volatility seen from 2006 to 2010, many of our international counterparts have revitalized, constructed or made plans for a grain inventory management system on a national level. The international community has also of late called for the establishment of a global “virtual” internationally coordinated reserve system for humanitarian purposes,” first mentioned in the G8 Leaders’ Statement on Global Food Security at the Hokkaido Toyako Summit on July 8, 2008, and more recently at the November 2011 G20 summit in Cannes, France.

This two-phase study found that MDIS can provide the functions sought by American family farmers and ranchers and our international brothers and sisters. The first portion of the study (Phase I) is a rerun of history from 1998 to 2010 with one change: the commodity programs during that period are replaced with MDIS. The second (Phase II) uses the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) 10 year baseline released in February 2012 as the starting point for the analysis. Because 10 year-ahead baseline projections lack real world variability, a pattern of shocks that roughly mimic the variability experienced by crop agriculture from 1998 to 2010 were imposed on the projections.

The POLYSYS simulation model, developed by APAC, is the analytical model used in this analysis. POLYSYS simulates changes in policy instrument levels and/or economic situations as variation away from a baseline situation. Crop allocation decisions are made with linear programming models using county-level data as a proxy for farm-level decisions. The crop prices and demands as well as all livestock variables are estimated at the national level. National estimates of revenues, costs and net returns are also estimated.

MDIS Phase I: A Historical Analysis

Phase I explores the extremely volatile commodity price period between 1998 and 2010 using historical data as the baseline. In this portion of the analysis, the actual historical supply, demand and price numbers are compared with what those numbers are estimated to have been had MDIS been in effect.

During the 1998 to 2010 time period, actual government payments for the eight program crops (corn, wheat, soybeans, grain sorghum, barley, oats, cotton and rice) totaled \$152.2 billion, excluding crop insurance premium subsidy payments. If MDIS had been in place during this time, farmers would have received \$56.4 billion from the government (in storage payments), while earning roughly the same net farm income over the period as historically received (*figures 1 and 2*). With MDIS in effect, annual net farm income would have been, on average, higher in the early part of the period (1998 to 2005) and lower in the latter part of the period (2006 to 2010) but for the full 13 years under MDIS, net farm income averaged only slightly lower (\$51.1 billion *versus* \$52.1 billion). MDIS would have proven to provide an effective safety net for farmers, remove the volatility from the commodity market and reduce government payments by approximately ⅓.

Figure 1: Government Payments for 8 Crops: 1998–2010

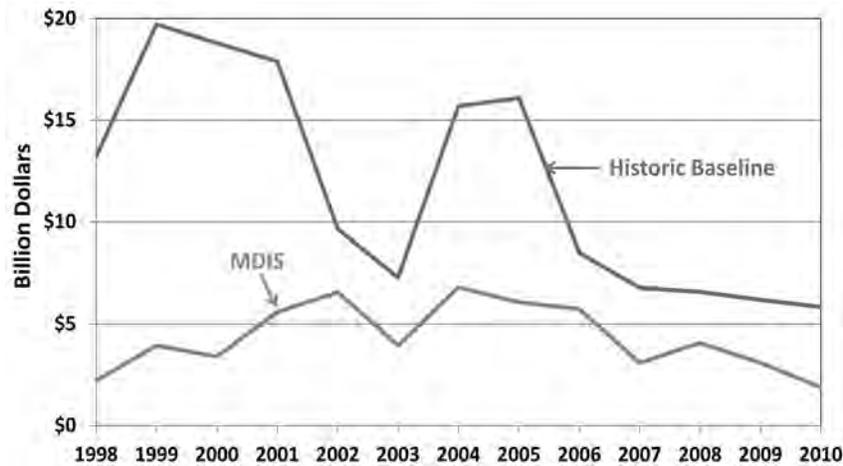


Fig. 1 compares the Federal cost of the farm bill programs that were implemented from 1998 to 2010 to the cost of MDIS if it had been in place during this time frame. The analysis found that, had MDIS been implemented instead of the farm bill programs that were in place, the Federal Government would have saved more than \$95 billion over the 13 year period.

Figure 2: Realized Net Farm Income, 1998–2010

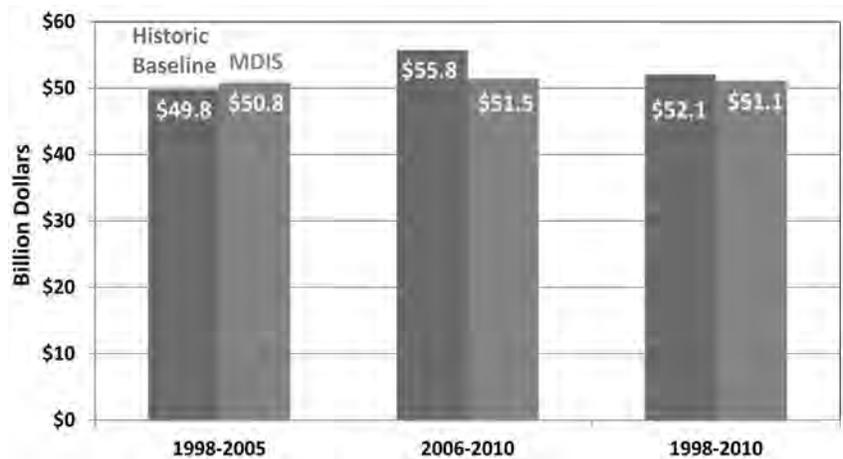


Fig. 2 compares net farm income from the farm programs that were implemented from 1998 to 2010 to what net farm income would have been had MDIS been in place during this time frame. The analysis found that net farm income would have remained virtually unchanged over the 13 year period.

For the entire 13 year period, the value of production under the baseline policies was \$413 billion while with MDIS it would have been \$446 billion—a difference of \$2.6 billion per year. Crop prices were significantly higher under MDIS in the early part of the period, and for the full 1998 to 2010 period prices were higher by \$0.25, \$0.50 and \$1.00 per bushel for corn, wheat and soybeans, respectively, compared to actual prices.

Had MDIS or a similar inventory-based commodity program been in effect from 1998 to 2010, the value of crop exports would have exceeded the actual value of ex-

ports during that period (*figure 3*). A higher crop price does cause a reduction in the quantity exported, but that decline is less than the increase in price. As a result, the value of exports increases with rising prices and decreases with price declines. As an aside, this property does not bode well for the future direction of the change in value of agricultural exports over the next few years if prices decline.

Figure 3: Annual Value of Exports for 8 Crops (1998–2010)

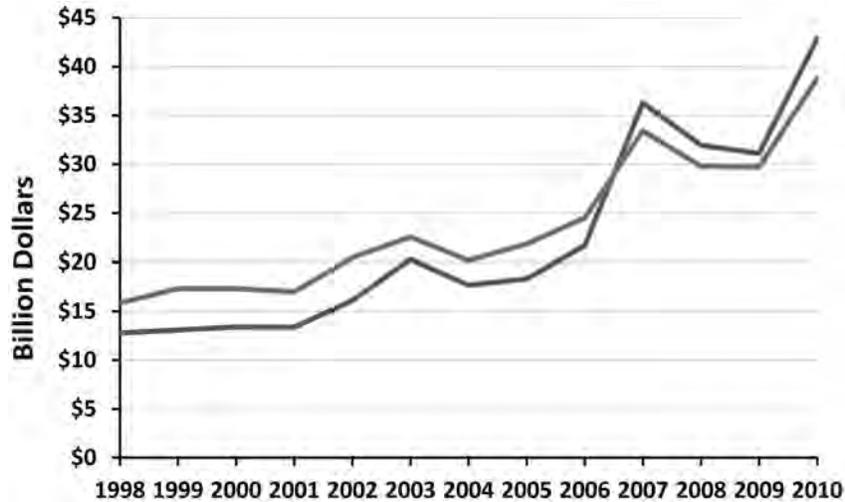


Fig. 3 compares the historic export value of the eight program crops from 1998 to 2010 to their value if MDIS had been in place during this time frame. The analysis found that, had MDIS been implemented instead of the farm bill programs that were in place, the export value of the eight program crops would have been greater over the 13 year period.

MDIS Phase II: Future Projections

Phase II is based on USDA baseline projection data for 2012 to 2021 as the beginning point of the analysis, but production shocks were used to mimic the variability that crop and livestock agriculture experienced between 1998 and 2010. Crop yields ten percent above the baseline for the eight major crops for the 2012 through 2014 crop years were imposed, and in the 2017 and 2018 crop years a ten percent decrease below baseline yields was used, along with a five percent decline in 2019. The purpose of these yield shocks was to reproduce price conditions similar to those that were seen in 1998 through 2010—a timeframe that saw both low prices accompanied by massive government payments and record high prices. The resulting comparisons below are between this shocked baseline assuming continuation of current commodity programs and the MDIS alternative. The MDIS simulation includes the same production shocks.

Government payments with a continuation of the current programs and shocked production total \$65 billion over the 10 years from 2012 to 2021. With MDIS in place, government payments are estimated to total \$26 billion, or 60 percent less (*figure 4*).

Figure 4: Government Payments for 8 Crops: 2010–2021

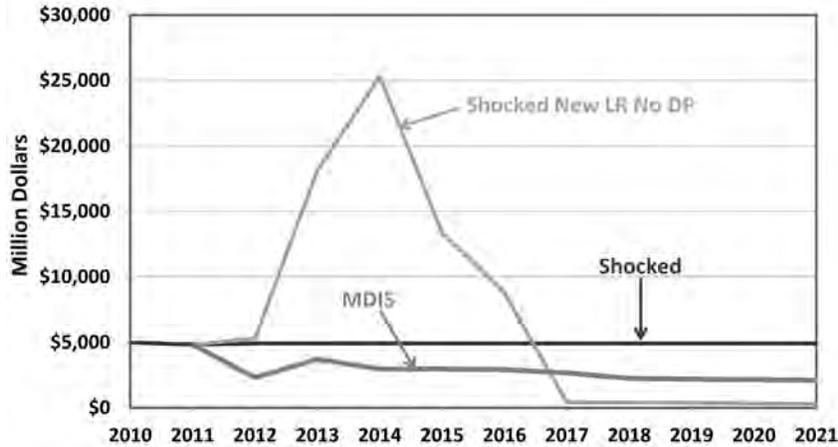


Fig. 4 compares the projected Federal cost if current farm programs are extended to the projected net farm income under MDIS from 2010 to 2021 under three scenarios. First, if current programs are extended and annual values match USDA’s baseline projections; second, if current programs are extended and supply/demand shocks are felt (as described earlier in the document), and; third, if supply/demand shocks occur but MDIS programs are in place. The analysis projects that government payments would be \$39 billion lower if MDIS is implemented rather than extending current programs.

Net farm incomes averaged over the 10 years are nearly identical—\$79.2 billion per year under the current programs and slightly higher with MDIS, \$79.6 billion (figure 5).

Figure 5: Realized Net Farm Income, 2010–2021

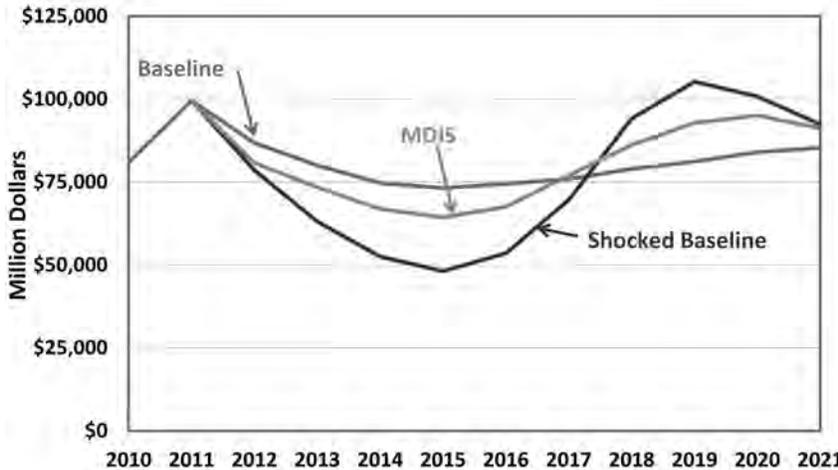


Fig. 5 compares the projected net farm income if current farm programs are extended to the projected net farm income under MDIS from 2010 to 2021 under three scenarios. First, if current programs are extended and annual values match USDA’s baseline projections; second, if current programs are extended and supply/demand shocks are felt (as described earlier in the document), and; third, if supply/demand shocks occur but MDIS programs are

in place. The analysis projects that net farm income would be slightly higher under MDIS than under current programs in either scenario.

Because crop prices average higher with MDIS than under the current program, the value of exports over the 10 year period is higher with MDIS by \$15 billion, or \$1.5 billion per year, on average (more in the first part of the period and less in the latter part of the period) (figure 6).

Figure 6: Value of Exports—8 Crops, 2010–2021

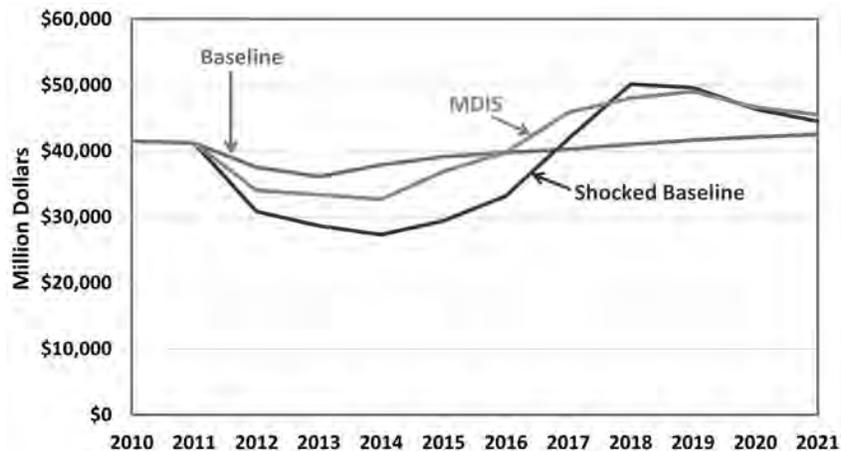


Fig. 6 compares the projected export value of the eight program crops from 2010 to 2021 to their projected value if MDIS is in place during this time frame. The analysis projects that, if MDIS is implemented instead of extending the current farm bill programs, the export value of the eight program crops would be \$15 billion more over the study period.

MDIS: Mechanics

For Phase I, the beginning corn loan rate is halfway between the variable cost of producing a bushel of corn and the corresponding total production cost. In 1998 that number is computed to be \$2.27 per bushel of corn. The 1998 loan rates for other crops are then computed to be in the same proportion to corn loan rates as those legislated by the Federal Agriculture Improvement and Reform (FAIR) Act of 1996 (the 1996 Farm Bill) in order to minimize distortion, except for grain sorghum, for which the loan rate is raised to be equal to that of corn, and soybeans, for which the loan rate is raised to \$6.32. The loan rates of all crops are adjusted for 1999 through 2010 using USDA's prices-paid-by-farmers chemical input index.

The analysis for Phase II of the study follows the approach and most of the basic specifications used for Phase I. The loan rates for this analysis (all in dollars per bushel) are: \$3.50 for corn, grain sorghum and barley, \$2.49 for oats, \$5.28 for wheat and \$8.97 for soybeans. The loan rates have the same proportion to corn as the loan rates in the Food, Conservation and Energy Act of 2008 (2008 Farm Bill). Loan rates are held constant for the full 2012 to 2020 period.

The maximum quantities of grain allowed in the MDIS inventory in both Phase I and Phase II are specified to be 3 billion bushels of corn, 800 million bushels of wheat and 400 million bushels of soybeans. Inventory maximum levels for other program crops would be set as appropriate. Farmers with MDIS recourse loans are paid \$0.40 per bushel per year to store the grain and are required to keep the grain in condition.

With MDIS in operation, markets work uninterrupted until prices are estimated to fall below a recourse loan rate or, if MDIS inventory is available, prices exceed 160 percent of the loan rate.

When prices fall below the loan rate, the model estimates the amount of grain that farmers would need to put under recourse loan with the Farm Service Agency (FSA) to raise the market price to or above the loan rate, which is the "price" that FSA uses to value the grain used as collateral for the loan. If a market price is estimated to exceed 160 percent of the loan rate, the model checks to see if there is an inventory stock in the MDIS farmer-owned inventory. If MDIS inventory is avail-

able, the model computes the quantity needed to lower price to about 160 percent of the loan rate and allows that amount of stock onto the market. Setting the release price at 160 percent of the loan rate is the key to establishing a functional system. The market does not work as effectively within the model at higher or lower loan rate-release price ratios.

The grain under MDIS must stay in inventory, that is, it cannot be redeemed by paying off the loan and marketed until the price goes above the release price of 160 percent of the loan rate and notification is specifically received. With MDIS in effect, all government payment programs (countercyclical payments, loan deficiency payments, fixed or direct payments, *etc.*), except MDIS inventory storage payments and crop insurance subsidies, are eliminated for corn, grain sorghum, oats, barley, wheat, and soybeans. An optional set-aside would be available for use at the Secretary's discretion if MDIS inventory maximums are reached and prices fell below loan rates. Rice and cotton are not included in MDIS and are assured to remain eligible for current program payments.

History of Commodity Programs—How Did We Get Here?

With the adoption of the FAIR Act of 1996, which extended the marketing loan program to all crops, the holding of grains either by the Commodity Credit Corporation or farmers in a farmer-owned reserve was made ineffective. Part of the logic behind the end of these grain storage programs was the belief that if there were a need for stocks, participants in the commercial sector would buy up those stocks at a low price and later sell them at a higher price with no cost to the government. Recent history has demonstrated that those commercial inventories simply did not come into existence and the market has seen numerous countries impose harmful export limitations of their domestically produced foodstuffs in the face of citizen concern over food shortages. In the U.S., we have even heard concerns from the livestock sector over the availability of sufficient feed supplies.

The 1996 Farm Bill instead established the present system of direct and countercyclical payments. Almost immediately after the 1996 bill, the market changed and commodities prices began to decline. From 1996 until 2004, the value of agricultural exports fell from an all time high of \$27.3 billion to \$10.5 billion.¹ From 1996 until 2005, corn prices fell to an average of \$2.06 per bushel, wheat an average of \$3.03 per bushel and soybeans an average of \$5.33 per bushel.² The elimination of reserves and new incentives to plant program acres combined to result in widespread overproduction, devalued crop prices and thus an increase in the amount paid in government subsidies. The resulting system had no way to moderate wild swings in supply and market volatility that has proven detrimental not only to family farmers but also to consumers in developing countries, industries dependent upon agricultural commodities for inputs and rural economies.

In times of high commodity prices, such as current market conditions, target prices are set so low that even in the case of a market downturn, the countercyclical program does not reflect the rising cost of production or provide an adequate safety net. Direct payments are increasingly indefensible to the public and unnecessary for farmers, as they get distributed based on historic production, regardless of current market price.

As a result, from 1998 to 2010, government payments for crops totaled \$152.2 billion.³ If MDIS had been in place for corn, wheat and soybeans between 1998 and 2010, government payments to farmers would have been reduced by nearly ⅓ to \$56.4 billion, the value of exports would have increased, average commodity prices for farmers would have been higher, damaging price volatility would have been substantially reduced and overall farm income would have been left effectively unchanged.⁴

MDIS and the Federal Deficit

As Congress continues to seek ways to reduce the Federal deficit, any serious discussion regarding controlling government expenditures should include MDIS. APAC's analysis over the 10 years from 2012 to 2021 found that government payments with a continuation of the current program and shocked production remain unsustainably high, totaling \$65 billion. However, with MDIS in place, estimated

¹Jerardo, Alberto. February 2004. "The U.S. Trade Balance . . . More Than Just a Number." U.S. Department of Agriculture-Economic Research Service.

²Ray, Daryll, *et. al.* March 2012. "An Analysis of a Market Driven Inventory System (MDIS)" University of Tennessee Agricultural Policy Analysis Center.

³*Ibid.*

⁴*Ibid.*

government payments over the same period total \$26 billion, a 60 percent reduction (figure 4).⁵

MDIS could save tens of billions of dollars paid under existing government payment programs and the additional tens of billions in “emergency” payments and government subsidies to revenue insurance programs otherwise needed to offset the almost inevitable periodic severe collapses in grain prices. Under MDIS, grain farmers receive their income from the market and grain demanders are not subsidized or overcharged.

Permanent Disaster Programs

The unpredictability and inefficiencies associated with *ad hoc* disaster programs led to the inclusion of the Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program (SURE) and other related programs, such as the Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honey Bees and Farm-Raised Fish Program (ELAP), the Livestock Indemnity Program, and more, in the 2008 Farm Bill. These permanent disaster programs were intended to allow farmers and ranchers to recover quickly from devastating weather without waiting for piecemeal disaster assistance. Unfortunately, that set of programs was inadequately funded and oversight challenges postponed many of the rules and regulations needed to implement the programs. Even in 2010, there were farmers still awaiting their claims for 2007 losses. SURE and similar initiatives were a hard-won victory for family farmers and ranchers and those programs’ guiding principles—to protect farmers against catastrophic yield losses—ought to be included and appropriately implemented in the next farm bill.

In the next farm bill, permanent disaster programs must be funded at a level that makes them effective and eliminates the need for *ad hoc* payments. Partial advance payments should be made available so that assistance can be quickly provided in times of desperate need. Decision makers must ensure that we can continue the work that was done with SURE and other programs in 2008. Returning to a system of *ad hoc* disaster programs is likely to be much more costly for both the Federal Government and for farmers. Not only are *ad hoc* programs expensive, but they are also difficult to administer, extremely political, and not solely influenced by real conditions and/or need. Between 1996 and 2002, when the commodity title was removed from the farm bill, approximately \$30 billion was spent on *ad hoc* disaster programs.⁶ The cost to extend SURE and similar disaster assistance programs for 5 years in a 2012 Farm Bill is projected to be \$8.9 billion,⁷ and baseline funding for the permanent disaster programs expired in 2011. It should also be noted that any disaster program would likely be less costly if the MDIS concept were also included in the next farm bill.⁸

Even though permanent disaster programs were enacted in the 2008 Farm Bill, *ad hoc* disaster relief efforts were authorized in 2010. This is likely due to the fact that SURE and the other programs were not as effective or fast-moving enough to satisfy the needs of farmers who were affected by disaster. If disaster programs were strengthened, these legislative solutions would likely be unnecessary. It should also be kept in mind that disaster programs are among the few farm bill programs that provide roughly equal benefits to both farmers and ranchers. Including a set of previously unaffected sectors of agriculture in Federal farm policy would generate more support for the overall farm bill.

It is important that farmers do their part by responsibly sharing in the inherent business risks of their farm. The distribution of disaster aid must remain linked to crop insurance participation, and SURE participants should be required to purchase more than just catastrophic (CAT) coverage so that they are able to reasonably recover some of their losses through crop insurance.

Any improvements in disaster programs should not come at the expense of program delivery. County FSA staff who service these programs are pushed to the limits of their resources as it is, and their offices need adequate funding and modern technology in order to continue to serve our country’s farmers. A consistent, predictable and stable backup plan for farmers struck by weather-related problems is the most important benefit of having a permanent disaster aid program. Any efforts to improve upon it should not interrupt the positive results SURE and other disaster programs provided.

⁵ Ray, Daryll, *et. al.* March 2012. “An Analysis of a Market Driven Inventory System (MDIS)” University of Tennessee Agricultural Policy Analysis Center.

⁶ USDA Economic Research Service, retrieved from <http://www.ers.usda.gov/Data/FarmIncome/FinfidmuXls.htm>.

⁷ Congressional Budget Office.

⁸ Ray, Daryll, *et. al.* March 2012. “An Analysis of a Market Driven Inventory System (MDIS)” University of Tennessee Agricultural Policy Analysis Center.

Risk Management

Crop insurance is an important safety net mechanism that provides assistance to farmers only when assistance is needed. It is fully compatible with MDIS and, as such, crop insurance must remain a cornerstone of farm policy. Risk management tools must be made economical for all farmers, regardless of crop or geographic region, and more insurance products should be made available that protect against changes in the cost of production. Farmers also need protection against losses due to weather-related disasters, high input costs or devastatingly low prices. There should also be efforts aimed at streamlining and eliminating duplication among existing farm bill programs. Risk management provisions in the next farm bill should extend the availability and affordability of Federal Crop Insurance Programs to farmers in portions of the country that have not historically carried significant levels of crop insurance, thereby reducing the need for disaster aid.

I support the reestablishment of compliance requirements for Federal crop insurance eligibility so that all existing or new crop and revenue insurance or other risk management programs are subject to all conservation compliance provisions.

Crop insurance coverage should be improved for organic producers, including ending the existing surcharge on organic policies and the full implementation of coverage levels based on organic prices. Additionally, crop insurance products and other risk management tools should be developed for specialty crop producers. Funding levels for crop insurance must remain adequate as it is the most critical and effective safety net for farmers and crop insurance has already been subjected to recent significant cuts.

Recent budget cuts to crop insurance, which subtracted from the farm bill baseline, were made since the last farm bill. We urge lawmakers to carefully consider the effects of reduced funding for crop insurance programs. Cuts should not come at the expense of greatly increased risk management costs for farmers. Continued vigilance should be maintained to prevent the abuse of crop insurance programs, but crop insurance must remain a part of the next farm bill. Costs associated with the Federal Crop Insurance Program have risen as crop insurance has taken on additional importance in the suite of safety net tools in the farm bill. Although costs have increased over the long run, total costs of the crop insurance program were cut nearly in half between 2008 and 2010. Most of the savings came from reductions in net indemnities, although reductions to administration and overhead subsidies for approved insurance providers have made for decreased spending as well.

There are also a few adjustments to the mechanisms of the crop insurance programs that should be considered. All risk management programs should be based upon Actual Production History (APH), and for situations that the APH is not available, the qualified yield for a farm should not be set at a lower level than that of county FSA calculations. In order to protect farmers in the event of successive crop disasters, we also urge the establishment of APH yield floors. These common sense approaches to crop insurance will help to ensure that losses are accurately reflected in indemnities.

Crop insurance is not the be-all and end-all for a farm safety net. Without reducing the volatility that plagues agriculture commodity markets with MDIS, revenue-based crop insurance products will be extremely expensive in high price periods and will provide little, if any, assistance to farmers when prices collapse. Farmers would much rather see a farm policy that also includes MDIS and disaster assistance programs to moderate the volatility of the agricultural marketplace and yields so that farmers can continue to farm.

MDIS Benefits Stakeholders

MDIS holds numerous benefits for a variety of stakeholders, including farmers, the environment, livestock producers, the ethanol industry, taxpayers and the food insecure worldwide.

MDIS Benefits Farmers

MDIS helps smooth out some of the wild price swings that can put some farmers out of business. By providing a greater level of income certainty, MDIS helps farmers plan for the future without decreasing farm income. Land prices and input costs rise dramatically when commodity prices rise, but when prices drop, these costs do not drop correspondingly. With a reasonable loan rate, farmers could make long-term investments in their farming operation that improve their long-term profitability.

Farmers who put their corn, wheat and/or soybeans into the inventory system would benefit from the receipt of storage payments. They would also benefit from the future sale of their stored commodity at the higher release price. With MDIS in effect, annual net farm income was higher, on average, in the early part of the

period from 1998 to 2005 and lower in the latter part of the period from 2006 to 2010, but for the full 13 years, the MDIS net farm income averaged only slightly lower (\$51.1 billion *versus* \$52.1 billion). The low-price years would reduce the tendency to capitalize higher returns into land. While sufficient to keep current land in production, the moderated prices do not provide the kind of price signals that would lead to an over-expansion of productive capacity and lower prices over the longer term. Net farm incomes averaged over the 10 years are almost identical (\$79.2 billion per year under the current program and slightly higher with MDIS at \$79.6 billion). From 1998 to 2010, farmers would have benefited from price signals that more accurately reflect the supply/demand situation at a given time, than when futures prices reflect herd-following speculative behavior on the part of some market participants.

MDIS Benefits Conservation

MDIS holds significant conservation benefits because price stability puts less pressure on environmentally sensitive land. During high price years, for example, demand pressures on land is reduced because farmers will not be incentivized to break native grassland or bring Conservation Reserve Program acres back into crop production. During low price years, net farm income would remain higher under MDIS. This means that farmers have more money to invest in conservation in order to meet their cost-share requirements under programs such as the Environmental Quality Incentives Program.

MDIS Benefits Livestock Producers

Less volatile commodity prices under MDIS help livestock producers keep input costs more stable and help prevent skyrocketing grain prices, which can bankrupt livestock producers. In the 2006 to 2010 period, higher prices put some producers over the financial edge; however, MDIS would have reduced commodity prices to a more reasonable and survivable level. Livestock producers are vulnerable to rapidly increasing feed prices, which they cannot quickly pass on to the consumer. Overall, MDIS would have provided livestock producers and industrial users with security in the availability of feed supplies and a more reasonable range of prices.

MDIS Benefits the Ethanol Industry

Abnormally high commodity prices are also damaging to the ethanol industry and can cause disruptions in the supply chain. Having access to a stable supply within a more predictable price range allows ethanol producers to engage in long-range planning. MDIS decreases price fluctuation faced by ethanol plants and ensures more stable production, which in turn helps put America on the road to energy independence.

MDIS Benefits Taxpayers

Throughout the study period, government payments for crops totaled \$152.2 billion. Had MDIS been in place from 1998 to 2010 rather than the existing programs, taxpayers could have saved more than \$95 billion compared to what the Federal Government actually spent on farm programs. This is a nearly 60 percent reduction in expenditures. Government payments with a continuation of the current programs and shocked production total \$65 billion over the 10 years from 2012 to 2021; with MDIS the estimated cost is \$26 billion, also a 60 percent reduction.

Equally important, MDIS addresses perceptions among some consumers that the government is giving unwarranted handouts to farmers. By setting up a system that allows the price to range closer to costs of production, these policies allocate the costs to the major users of commodities, both domestic and international, rather than expecting the U.S. Federal Government to subsidize their purchases. In addition to the benefits they would receive under MDIS as taxpayers, U.S. consumers would benefit from more stable commodity prices that would reduce the volatility of food costs. While commodity prices under MDIS increased in the 1998 to 2005 period according to the model, the farm portion of most processed food costs that U.S. consumers eat is relatively small, resulting in minimal long-term pressure on food prices. Average commodity prices in the 2006 to 2010 period under MDIS would not have increased as much as they did under existing policies, reducing upward pressure on food prices.

MDIS Benefits the Impoverished

In developing nations, a small increase in commodity prices can mean the difference between putting food on the table and going hungry. MDIS reduces the price swings that cause many people who are directly reliant upon staple crops like corn to go hungry when they can no longer afford food. Importers of U.S. corn, wheat

and soybeans would have been assured of a stable supply of storable commodities, reducing the need for countries to protect local supplies of grains.

With farmers constituting as much as 60 to 70 percent of the poor in developing countries, higher prices in the 1998 to 2005 period under MDIS would not adversely affect these farmers because of the large amount of food that they produce for self consumption. In addition, they would receive a more stable income for the product they do sell into the market. In times of high prices, many subsistence farmers and urban poor are often priced out of the market, increasing the number of chronically hungry persons in the world. As a result of the price spike in 2007 and 2008, more than 200 million people fell into the chronically hungry category. By moderating the price spikes, MDIS reduces the price pressure on the poor in developing countries. In addition, MDIS assures participants in the marketplace of an adequate supply of grain, reducing the hoarding tendency, which often results in localized price spikes.

Conclusion

Many challenges lie ahead in the writing of the next farm bill. Funding will be tight and it will be critical to come together in a bipartisan manner to outline the top priorities for the omnibus agricultural legislation.

The average American pays less than ten percent of his or her disposable income on food, which is the lowest rate of any industrialized nation in the world. It is a fantastic bargain. This deal is the result of our national investments in agriculture through farm policy, which have ensured that America's farmers and ranchers can continue to provide the safest and most abundant food supply in the world. The primary purpose of the next farm bill ought to be as a strong safety net that protects farmers and ranchers during tough times for the health of our nation and our rural economies. A forward-thinking and well-designed safety net will be much more cost-effective than reactionary legislation that is put forward in times of emergencies.

When writing the next farm bill, lawmakers must be penny-wise, but not pound-foolish. The MDIS program will have a cost, but as the study by the University of Tennessee demonstrates, it will save money in the long term. Permanent disaster programs, too, save money. For example, the U.S. spent \$30 billion between 1996 and 2002 in emergency and *ad hoc* disaster programs to help farmers and ranchers when prices collapsed and the farm bill had no safety net for them.⁹ Keeping that in mind, the cost to extend SURE and similar disaster assistance programs for 5 years, which could have replaced those *ad hoc* disaster programs, is \$8.9 billion.

We must also complete the next farm bill this year to protect against even further cuts to agriculture. USDA cut \$4 billion from agriculture programs by renegotiating the Standard Reinsurance Agreement in 2011. Congress approved a budget reduction to agriculture programs of more than 15 percent for Fiscal Year 2012, a cut that was two to three times deeper than the average across-the-board reduction in discretionary spending. By waiting until 2013 or later to complete the next farm bill, there may be even less funding available, making it nearly impossible to pass a farm bill that will protect America's family farmers and ranchers in tough times.

By coming together in a strong, bipartisan fashion, it is possible to craft a fiscally responsible 2012 Farm Bill with an adequate safety net to protect America's family farmers and ranchers and to help make rural communities vibrant. On behalf of the members of National Farmers Union, thank you for the opportunity to outline our priorities and I look forward to working with you to enact this critical legislation.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Mr. Anderson, you may begin when you're ready.

STATEMENT OF WOODY ANDERSON, COTTON AND WHEAT PRODUCER, COLORADO CITY, TX

Mr. ANDERSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm Woody Anderson, predominantly a dryland cotton farmer in West Texas, Colorado City, Texas. Actually, the locals call it "Colo-ray-do" City. It's located in the rolling plains, right in the middle of Midland and Abilene and Lubbock and San Angelo. I want to thank you and the rest of the Committee for the opportunity to share my views on the next farm legislation this morning. I'd also like to thank, a special

⁹USDA Economic Research Service, retrieved from <http://www.ers.usda.gov/Data/FarmIncome/FinfidmuXls.htm>.

thanks to my Congressman, Congressman Mike Conaway, for his work on this Committee and for his work as Chairman of the Subcommittee on General Farm Commodities and Risk Management, and for the great job he does for the 11th District of Texas.

Agriculture is one of the most important industries in Texas and in the United States. As a result, an effective farm bill that supports production agriculture is also an effective jobs bill for the general economy. Overall, U.S. farmers have been benefitting from relatively high commodity prices, when compared to historical averages. However, it is important to remember that the cost of essential inputs, such as seed, fuel and fertilizer, are also at historically high levels. As a result, profit margins for many remain thin. Higher prices have also brought increased market volatility. When coupled with increasingly unpredictable weather, the risk of producing a crop has never been greater.

As a dryland producer in Texas, I have firsthand experience of the risk that farmers face. In 2011, Texas suffered the most devastating drought since records have been kept. On my farming operation, I was unable to harvest even an acre of cotton that I had planted last year. Without the safety net provided by crop insurance and other programs, all authorized by farm legislation, it would have been virtually impossible to survive that devastating loss.

As this Committee works to reauthorize farm legislation, I appreciate the challenges that are posed—that have been posed by difficult budget times in Congress and by those in Congress that continually question the need for farm programs. While agriculture is willing to make a proportionate contribution to deficit reduction, it's vitally important that budget constraints and farm program critics not be allowed to undermine the effectiveness of our farm safety net.

With respect to production agriculture, I strongly encourage this Committee to take into consideration the diversity of production prices, cost structures, and risk profiles. What works for my operation isn't going to be the same as for farmers in California, North Dakota, Iowa, or even here in Kansas. A one-size-fits-all program cannot address this diversity, and I hope that the eventual farm bill will offer a range of programs structured to address the needs of different commodities and production regions.

I also urge the Committee to complete the farm bill this year. We need some certainty regarding farm programs as we look to investments necessary to keep our farming operations economically viable and to assure our bankers that there is going to be an adequate safety net.

While I occasionally grow other crops, I consider cotton to be my primary crop. The 2008 Farm Bill served cotton farmers extraordinarily well and, in recent years, has required minimal Federal outlays. However, deficit reduction efforts are placing unprecedented pressure on the existing structure of farm programs. The cotton industry also faces the unique challenge of resolving the long-standing WTO Brazil case.

In order to respond to the challenges of designing the most effective safety net with reduced funding and to make modifications that will lead to a resolution of the WTO case, it is very important

that the next farm legislation includes the cotton industry's proposal of a new revenue-based crop insurance program which will result in strengthening the grower's ability to manage risk. By complementing existing products, the Stacked Income Protection Program, or STAX for short, will provide a tool for growers to manage that portion of their risk for which affordable products are not available currently. This revenue-based crop insurance safety net would be combined with a modified marketing loan that is adjusted to satisfy the WTO case. Even with those modifications, the marketing loan will remain an important source of cash flow for our producers and our merchants.

Given the diversity of weather and production practices, the menu of insurance choices should be diverse and customizable, allowing for maximum participation and effective coverage. In the 2008 Farm Bill, the introduction of enterprise unit pricing gave producers one more option for insuring against risks that are beyond their control. I strongly support the continuation of that option in the 2012 Farm Bill and would urge consideration of expanding it to allow a producer to apply enterprise unit pricing to the acres that are separated by irrigated and non-irrigated.

As a farmer who understands the vital importance of effective insurance products, I am very concerned about the GAO report that calls for limits on insurance payments. My concern is founded in the fact that crop insurance is a basic safety net that only indemnifies a grower when he incurs a loss. Even then, the grower is not made whole and is only compensated for a portion. For Texas, I can assure this Committee that any limits on eligibility requirements that deny farmers the opportunity to purchase affordable insurance products will completely undermine the ability to secure production financing.

Farmers understand that agriculture is an extremely risky endeavor, but they also understand that effective risk management is a key to long-term viability. While the goal of farm programs is not to completely remove the risk associated with farming, farm programs should strive to provide opportunities for effective risk management, and for me personally, I think STAX accomplishes that goal.

I very much appreciate the opportunity to provide these comments and I look forward to any questions at the appropriate time. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Anderson follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF WOODY ANDERSON, COTTON AND WHEAT PRODUCER,
COLORADO CITY, TX

I am Woody Anderson, a predominantly dryland cotton and grain producer from Colorado City, Texas. Colorado City is located in the Rolling Plains of Texas, right in the middle of Midland, Abilene, San Angelo, and Lubbock. I want to thank Chairman Lucas and Ranking Member Peterson for the opportunity to provide my thoughts on the next farm legislation. I would also like to offer a special thanks to my Congressman, Representative Mike Conaway, for his work on this Committee, his chairmanship of the Subcommittee on General Farm Commodities and Risk Management, and for his dedicated representation of 11th District of Texas.

Agriculture is one of the most important industries in Texas and the United States. Numerous businesses, financial institutions and individuals provide supplies, financing and services to the farmers and ranchers that produce our nation's food and fiber. In Texas, it is estimated that farm and farm-related employment ac-

counts for 14% of all jobs. As a result, an effective farm bill that supports production agriculture is also an effective jobs bill for the general economy.

Overall, U.S. farmers are benefitting from relatively high commodity prices when compared to historical averages. However, it is important to remember that costs of essential inputs such as seed, fuel and fertilizer are also at historically high levels. As a result, profit margins remain thin. Higher prices have also brought increased volatility. When coupled with increasingly unpredictable weather, the risk of producing a crop has never been greater.

As a dryland producer in Texas, I have first-hand experience of the risks farmers face. In 2011, Texas suffered the most devastating drought since record-keeping began. Statistics cited in a recent report by the Texas Comptroller indicate that direct and indirect losses from the drought are approaching \$9 billion. On my farming operation, I was unable to harvest even an acre that I had planted to cotton. Without the safety net provided by crop insurance and other programs authorized by the farm legislation, it would be virtually impossible to survive such a devastating loss.

As this Committee works to reauthorize farm legislation, I appreciate the challenges posed by the difficult budget climate in Congress and by those in Congress that continually question the need for farm programs. While agriculture is willing to make a proportionate contribution to deficit reduction, it is vitally important that budget constraints and farm program critics not be allowed to undermine the effectiveness of our farm safety net.

With respect to production agriculture, I strongly encourage this Committee to take into consideration the diversity of production practices, cost structures and risk profiles. What works for my operation isn't going to be the same as farmers in California, North Dakota or Iowa. A one-size-fits-all farm program cannot address this diversity, and I hope that the eventual farm bill will offer a range of programs structured to address the needs of the different commodities and production regions.

I also urge the Committee to complete the farm bill this year—in advance of the expiration of the current legislation. We need some certainty regarding farm programs as we look at the long-term investments necessary to keep our farming operations economically viable; and to assure our bankers that there is an adequate safety net.

While my farming operation occasionally includes grain production, I consider cotton to be my primary crop. The 2008 Farm Bill has served cotton farmers extraordinarily well and, in recent years, has required minimal Federal outlays. However, deficit reduction efforts are placing unprecedented pressure on the existing structure of farm programs. The cotton industry also faces the unique challenge of resolving the longstanding Brazil WTO case.

In order to respond to the challenge of designing the most effective safety net with reduced funding and to make modifications that will lead to the resolution of the Brazil case, it is very important that the new farm legislation includes the cotton industry's proposal of a new revenue-based crop insurance program which will result in strengthening growers' ability to manage risk. By complementing existing products, the Stacked Income Protection Plan, or STAX for short, will provide a tool for growers to manage that portion of their risks for which affordable options are not currently available. This revenue-based crop insurance safety net would be combined with a modified marketing loan that is adjusted to satisfy the Brazil WTO case. Even with modifications, the marketing loan will remain an important source of cash flow from merchandisers and producers.

Farmers understand that agriculture is an extremely risky endeavor, but they also understand that effective risk management is the key to long-term viability. While the goal of farm programs is not to completely remove the risk associated with farming, farm programs should strive to provide opportunities for effective risk management. STAX accomplishes that goal.

Given the diversity of weather and production practices, the menu of insurance choices should be diverse and customizable, allowing for maximum participation and effective coverage. In the 2008 Farm Bill, the introduction of enterprise unit pricing gave producers one more option for insuring against those risks that are beyond their control. I strongly support the continuation of that option in the 2012 Farm Bill, and would urge consideration for expanding the option to allow a producer to apply enterprise unit pricing to acres that are separated by irrigated and non-irrigated practices.

Regarding crop insurance products, there has been increased scrutiny given to those programs as indemnities for the 2011 crop have increased. However, despite the dramatic increase in indemnities for last year's crop, total indemnities remain below total premiums, and thus, the program is operating at a loss ratio less than 1.0.

As a farmer who understands the vital importance of effective insurance products, I am very concerned about a recent report by the Government Accountability Office that calls for limits on insurance programs. My concern is founded in the fact that crop insurance is a basic safety net that only indemnifies a grower when he incurs a loss. Even then, the grower is not made whole and is only compensated for a portion of his loss. The value of crop insurance coverage is based directly on the expected market value as determined in the futures market. In Texas, essentially all farmers purchase insurance on all of their acres in crop production. For cotton, most acres have coverage between 60 and 70%. If a grower receives an indemnity under that type of policy, that indemnity leaves a 30 to 40% loss that is uncompensated. Now, there are efforts by GAO and some in Congress that attempt to deny that basic coverage to producers by imposing arbitrary limits. I would also oppose any conservation compliance requirements in order to be eligible for Federal crop insurance benefits. For Texas, I can assure this Committee that any limits or eligibility requirements that deny farmers the opportunity to purchase affordable insurance products will completely undermine the ability to secure production financing.

Along those lines, I also encourage this Committee to resist efforts to further tighten existing payment limits and income means tests on other support programs. Artificially limiting benefits is a disincentive to economic efficiency and undermines the ability to compete with heavily subsidized foreign agricultural products. Artificially limited benefits are also incompatible with a market-oriented farm policy.

As a final point, cotton farmers understand that our ability to produce a crop is directly tied to there being a strong and stable demand from the textile manufacturers that produce yarn, fabric and a wide variety of textile and apparel products. We are fortunate to sell our cotton to mills in the United States, as well as several countries in the international market.

For U.S. mills, the 2008 Farm Bill introduced an economic assistance program, and I am pleased to say that the program has been a resounding success. We have seen a revitalization of the U.S. textile manufacturing sector, as evidenced by new investments and additional jobs. I urge this Committee to continue this program in the new farm bill.

To maintain a healthy presence in highly competitive export markets, continuation of adequately funded export promotion programs such as the Market Access Program and Foreign Market Development Program is critical. Individual farmers and exporters do not have the necessary resources to operate effective promotion programs which maintain and expand markets—but the public-private partnerships, using a cost-share approach, have proven highly effective and have the added advantage of being WTO-compliant.

I very much appreciate the opportunity to provide these comments and look forward to answering your questions at the appropriate time.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Mr. Hunnicutt, you may begin when you're ready.

**STATEMENT OF ZACHARY HUNNICUTT, CORN, SOYBEAN, AND
POPCORN PRODUCER, AURORA, NE**

Mr. HUNNICUTT. Thank you, Chairman Lucas and the rest of the House Agriculture Committee, for the opportunity to discuss the upcoming farm bill and its impact on my operation and the general farm economy.

My name is Zach Hunnicutt and I'm a fifth generation farmer in Hamilton County, Nebraska, raising irrigated corn, soybeans, and popcorn with my father and brother. My wife Ann and I have two kids who will hopefully be the sixth generation on the farm one day. I've been farming full-time for 5 years, and though not representing any particular group today, my wife and I do serve on the Young Farmers and Ranchers Committee for Nebraska Farm Bureau and American Farm Bureau Federation.

While the country's been mired in a protracted recession, constantly looking for evidence of green shoots, the agriculture section of the economy has flourished. Given the recent prosperity and the historic Federal budget deficit, the farm bill will be a target for cuts. I understand that the burden to reduce budgets will be

shared across the board. However, I would encourage the Committee to ensure that farmers and ranchers are not penalized for this success by bearing an unequitable share of the cuts and would urge the Committee to provide an environment that allows flexibility for farmers to respond to market signals, to maintain healthy programs that have proven successful, and to take care in crafting a bill to make it as easily explained to the public as it can be.

Federal crop insurance has been a valuable tool for our operation and I would strongly oppose harming this program. The ability to purchase insurance that protects against catastrophic losses provides an effective risk management tool, especially for beginning farmers. When I began farming, the availability of crop insurance was important in securing operating capital, and this is definitely a factor for many others in my situation. It does not and should not guarantee a profit, but establishing a known flow of revenue and mitigating severe risk factors are invaluable for acquiring operating loans.

I would also urge the Committee to maintain the public-private partnership with crop insurance companies, rather than moving the servicing of insurance to the Farm Service Agency. The time and resources required to effectively manage insurance policies would be too great to add on to the responsibilities already taken on by the FSA.

In recent years, we've seen multiple hail events during the growing season, and even with a staff dedicated solely to adjusting and processing claims, it can take several months to sort out all the details. Piling these responsibilities on the FSA office would harm both the insurance program and the management of FSA's current functions. Our insurance agents and adjustors do an outstanding job of managing this complex and time-sensitive process, and it would severely weaken the entire program to take it out of their hands.

Any safety net provisions, conservation programs, insurance programs, or any other agricultural aspects of the farm bill should have the following aims: To allow farmers flexibility to respond to market signals; to be as streamlined as possible; and to be easily explained to the public.

Creating incentives for farmers to make decisions based on government payout rather than what the market is dictating is the last thing any of us want to see, as it will undermine the whole program and distort the market, as well as discourage innovation and production. A safety net should protect from catastrophic loss, but not guarantee profit for participants.

Streamlined programs will reduce the cost to maintain and will provide simple, more easily understood options for producers. This is obviously a challenging goal, with the myriad agricultural products represented in the farm bill, but one that's worth the payoff. It's likely that budget cuts will force this to happen in some manner. My hope is that it will be done in a way to maximize efficiency, rather than just to cut costs.

Finally, it's imperative that this policy be easily explained and defended to the public. Agriculture is on display and under the microscope like never before and there will be much public scrutiny of any government spending in this arena. We're in a time where

the 24 hour news cycle has been shortened to the 140 character cycle. Misinformation and misunderstandings, like we saw with the recent pink slime debacle, can have tremendous impacts in a very short amount of time. It's critical that the aims and motivations of this legislation be presented in a way that makes sense to an ever-more interested public.

This legislation is being crafted at a unique time of record farm prosperity and record deficits, and with critical elections looming. It's my hope that a bill that meets the needs of producers and fits in the current environment of budgetary cutbacks can be passed yet in 2012.

Thank you for your time, the opportunity to provide input, and I will be open to questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Hunnicutt follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ZACHARY HUNNICUTT, CORN, SOYBEAN, AND POPCORN
PRODUCER, AURORA, NE

I would like to thank Chairman Lucas and the House Agricultural Committee for the opportunity to discuss the upcoming farm bill and its impact on my operation and the general farm economy.

My name is Zach Hunnicutt, and I am a fifth-generation farmer in Hamilton County Nebraska, raising irrigated corn, soybeans, and popcorn with my father and brother. I have been farming full time for 5 years.

While the country has been mired in a protracted recession, constantly looking for evidence of green shoots, the agriculture sector of the economy has flourished. Given the recent prosperity, and the historic Federal budget deficit, the farm bill will be a target for cuts, and I understand that the burden of reduced budgets will be shared across the board. However, I would encourage the Committee to ensure that farmers and ranchers are not penalized for this success by bearing a greater share of the cuts, to provide an environment that allows flexibility for farmers to respond to market signals, to maintain healthy programs that have proven successful, and to take care in crafting the bill to make it as easily explained to the public as it can be.

Federal Crop Insurance has been a valuable tool for our operation, and I would strongly oppose making any cuts to this program. The ability to purchase insurance that protects against catastrophic losses provides an effective risk management tool, especially for beginning farmers. When I began farming, the availability of crop insurance was important in securing operating capital, and this is definitely a factor for many other beginning farmers. It does not—and should not—guarantee a profit, but establishing a known flow of revenue and mitigating severe risk factors are invaluable for acquiring operating loans.

I would also urge the Committee to maintain the public-private partnership with crop insurance companies, rather than moving the servicing of insurance to the Farm Service Agency. The time and resources required to effectively manage insurance policies would be too great to add on to the responsibilities already taken on by the FSA. In recent years we have seen multiple hail events during the growing season, and even with a staff dedicated solely to adjusting and processing claims it can take several months to sort out all of the details. Piling these responsibilities on the FSA office would harm both the insurance program and the management of FSA's current functions. Our insurance agents and adjustors do an outstanding job of managing this complex and time-sensitive process, and it would severely weaken the entire program to take it out of their hands.

Any safety net provisions, conservation programs, insurance programs, or any other agricultural aspects of the farm bill should have the following aims: to allow farmers flexibility to respond to market signals, to be as streamlined as possible, and to be easily explained to the public.

Creating incentives for farmers to make decisions based on government payout rather than what the market is dictating is the last thing we want to see, as it will undermine the whole program and distort the market. Innovation would be discouraged in this type of setup as well. Safety nets should protect from catastrophic loss, but not guarantee profit for participants.

Streamlining programs will reduce the costs of maintaining them and provide simple, more easily understood options to producers. This is obviously a challenging

goal with the myriad agricultural products represented in the farm bill, but one that is worth the payoff. It is likely that budget cuts will force this to happen in some manner, and my hope is that it will be done in a way to maximize efficiency rather than just to cut costs.

And finally, it is imperative that this policy be easily explained to the public. Agriculture is on display and under the microscope like never before, and there will be much public scrutiny of any government spending in this arena. In a time where the 24 hour news cycle has been shortened even further to the 140 character cycle, misinformation and misunderstandings can have tremendous impacts in a very short amount of time. It is critical that the aims and motivations of this legislation be presented in a way that makes sense to an ever-more interested public.

This legislation is being crafted at a unique time of record farm prosperity and record deficits, with critical elections looming. It is my hope that a bill that meets the needs of producers and fits in the current environment of budgetary cutbacks can be passed yet in 2012. Thank you for your time and the opportunity to provide input in the development of the farm bill.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Mr. Hunnicutt.

I now recognize myself for 5 minutes.

Mr. Anderson, you mentioned that you grow wheat in addition to cotton, so set your cotton hat to the side for just a moment. What would be the most effective safety net for your wheat crop?

Mr. ANDERSON. Mr. Chairman, I apologize for that wheat getting in there. I am not a for-profit wheat producer. I grow cotton. I grow—

The CHAIRMAN. That's what my wife accuses me of being.

Mr. ANDERSON. The wheat that I grow is for conservation tillage, for rotation purposes, and I'm going to have to punt on that question on wheat production for profit. I'm primarily a cotton producer. I do grow grain sorghum for a rotation crop.

The CHAIRMAN. Fair enough. In our discussions last fall, we looked at requiring RMA to separate irrigated and non-irrigated policies by practice, both on an enterprise unit and a crop-by-crop basis. What would that option—would that option benefit your farm?

Mr. ANDERSON. It would help me greatly. I have two circles under irrigation and 30 acres of drip, 4,000 acres of dryland, and we used enterprise units on my farm last year. We were so dry at planting time, with the limited water that I had, I never turned my circles on. I certified them all dryland. Had I been forced to—had I gotten the crop up to a good start and been forced to irrigate it, it would have cost my whole farming operation about \$100,000; so if we could separate those from dryland and irrigated by practice, I think it would vastly improve the choice for producers that have both.

The CHAIRMAN. One more question. In your written testimony, you talk about the heavily subsidized foreign competition. Can you describe some of your competitors, what they're doing?

Mr. ANDERSON. The cotton industry, Mr. Chairman, has been concerned for some time about internal policies in China and in India, and I guess a good case in point here of late would be India's prohibition on exporting cotton in from their country; and the subsidies, the per pound subsidies that China's growers have been benefitting from, I think currently, the subsidy to cotton in China is about \$1.23 a pound; so access to their markets and the manipulation in their internal policies that they can regulate stocks, and consequently, stocks around the world, and how they put those stocks back on the market vastly affects what we do.

The CHAIRMAN. Do you believe the United States Trade Representative is doing anything to challenge any of these issues; challenge them, so to speak? You can answer that carefully. I understand that.

Mr. ANDERSON. I know that our Trade Representatives have this information before them, and I'm not sure how obvious the response has been to that information. I do know that they've been made aware by the cotton industry of some of the challenges that we have in getting our products into those markets.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Mr. Harper, you mentioned in your testimony, I think your written testimony, H.R. 3798, the Egg Products Inspection Acts Amendments of 2012, which was recently introduced. The legislation, for some of the folks here with us today, would impose specific production standards for egg farmers. It would define physical cage size dimensions, air quality conditions, labeling requirements and other production practices in a Federal law. As a cattle producer, do you believe it's appropriate to impose Federal standards on livestock producers that are the result of a, shall we say in a polite way, a negotiated agreement between a trade group and an animal rights group?

Mr. HARPER. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the question. This legislation is truly a concern for me as a livestock producer. I think sometimes we're tempted to go down a path that seems to maybe, at the time, seem like a comfortable solution to a near-term problem. The problem with adopting production practices, I think we as producers out in the country are the best at determining what production practices are best for our livestock and are best for efficiencies and best for producing the most amount of product we can. I think that going into that area of adopting those practices—probably the biggest concern for me is I think it limits innovation in the future.

I think it—you know, we're constantly striving to improve our production practices and that's obviously with—I'll just state, for example, the amount. You know, we have about half as many cows as we did back in the 1950s and 1960s and we're producing as much beef as we were back then, and that's just a great example of the innovation that industries do on their own. I think to get tied into particular production practices is really a concern for livestock producers.

The CHAIRMAN. And to steal the question, if you've got a problem, is it fair to share it with all your friends, too, so to speak? Yes, I understand where you're coming from.

Mr. HARPER. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Hodgson, the Committee will take a serious look at lowering the acreage cap for the Conservation Reserve Program, and also in the process of deciding the purpose of the program in the future. Given the increased demand for grain, because there is a variety of uses we didn't have for it 15 years ago out there, high crop prices, increasing land values, what do you see as the future role of the Conservation Reserve Program, CRP? And along with that, what changes would you like to see, if any, in the CRP program?

Mr. HODGSON. I would not do away with CRP. I'm not advocating that, and really, I say I think some of this could go back into work-

ing lands, and I think that's going to happen anyway. As you say, the higher price of land and higher price of grain, I think people are going to make the choice, if the government doesn't raise their rental rates, to say we can make more money producing than preserving, conserving, so you know, the acreage caps, I know they're talking about changing. I don't know if that's a dramatic difference. I think a lot of this, it's going to come down to what will the government do with the rental rates, and if those aren't changed dramatically, I think obviously, a lot of that land's going to come back into production.

The CHAIRMAN. A lot of my neighbors in Oklahoma say that if we're going to put 45, 50 percent of the corn crop through the ethanol cookers, depending on what crop yields are and weather conditions are in any given year, that from a livestock perspective, from an animal and food, human food perspective, we have to have more product. There is a driving effort in some areas out there, not in opposition to renewable fuel, not in opposition to ethanol. But, to simply say if the Federal Government is going to mandate 13 billion gallons of ethanol, we've got to have more, because the classic retort to me this last winter was a certain amount of those 20 percent pellets that were being bought by cow/calf operators were basically made out of crud out of the bottom of the bins. We have to have more feed grain, so CRP, in the tough budget circumstances we're in, and the other issues we're dealing with, is just one of those things on the table.

I now turn to the gentleman from Texas for his 5 minutes. Mr. Conaway.

Mr. CONAWAY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and Woody, I appreciate those kind words. I just wish my mom was in the audience. She'd have been really happy. Thank you very much.

Woody, you briefly mentioned the STAX program and the relatively difficult effort within the cotton group at large to come up with that program. Could you give us some sense, are all producers just ecstatic with this or are they just, are some folks on the other side looking at it and saying, "Gosh, you're trying to cut a fatter hog than everybody else." Can you give us some perspective on how STAX came together?

Mr. ANDERSON. I don't think any way you look at it, Mr. Conaway, it would be cutting a fat hog. It has been a very difficult process to reach consensus in transforming cotton's policy over the last 12 to 18 months. The STAX product is a result of a hard look at the WTO findings and what might best get cotton off the front page, if you will, and how we deal with limited resources going into this farm bill under those budget constraints that I know you're well aware of.

We have consensus within the cotton industry. We had—we've held—we've actually, in the process within the council, have a farm policy task force as an area, a council-wide group. We have an American Cotton Producer farm policy task force, and you actually have the Chairman of both of those groups in your district. It's not been an easy process, but we have reached consensus. The growers across the belt are fully behind the STAX proposal.

It doesn't—the diversity we—even within the cotton industry, one size doesn't fit all. That's why it's important that STAX in

some areas will allow producers to insure revenue from 70 to 90 percent, where they may not be carrying a 65 or 70 percent underlying buy-up coverage. In our area, obviously, we're going to carry the buy-up coverage and look at the revenue side of it, depending on what the price selection and crop insurance is that year.

Mr. CONAWAY. In your testimony, you mentioned there was a combination of STAX and modified marketing loan program. Can you talk to us about how the marketing loan program works in your enterprise?

Mr. ANDERSON. The marketing loan in my enterprise is a little different. I don't market my own cotton. I market it through a cop pool through the PCCA in Lubbock, but it allows the pool and producers, too, to level out the payments off that crop throughout the marketing year. It allows them to have an orderly marketing of the crop and not just hold it and dump it on the market at one point in time. It also provides the security to the financial institutions and our bankers that allow them to see that there is going to be a bottom price on their loan.

Mr. CONAWAY. All ten of the witnesses have asked for choices; have asked for options; have asked for not to have a one-size-fits-all program, but we also have immense criticism of the complication of the existing safety net, ACRE, SURE, all those kinds of things. One-size-fits-all has a certain elegant simplicity to it, but nobody wants that.

Anybody on the panel want to speak to us? Do you realistically think that we can craft something that will do all those things where you get all those choices, be explainable to your banker and to the financiers and others, and avoid the criticism of being too complicated for producers to comply with? Any of the panel want to take a shot at that?

Mr. ANDERSON. Let me take the first shot, Mr. Conaway. At the risk of stepping on some toes, and I certainly don't intend to, not in this room, in 1996, we had a simple farm bill and it was purported to be a simple farm bill, Freedom to Farm, and it was just going to be a straight payment kind of program and it did not fit all of us, and ultimately, we had to go back in 1980 and look at the DCP kind of program, or 1985, the DCP program that we've enjoyed for the last three farm bills.

The STAX part of the proposal is a crop insurance-based program, and it shouldn't be too difficult to explain as we develop it in the buy-up policy and in the gap coverage policy in STAX.

Mr. CONAWAY. Anyone else want to take a shot at that?

Mr. Hodgson?

Mr. HODGSON. I do think we need flex—options. You know, I heard somebody say we actually get paid for making management decisions, so different programs for different areas of the country. You know, people in the next county farm differently than I do. In the next state or next area, obviously they've got to have some difference in programs.

Mr. CONAWAY. So your consensus would be, even if it does complicate your business, you would prefer choices and options, rather than one-size-fits-all programs?

Mr. HODGSON. I would, yes.

Mr. CONAWAY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman's time has expired. We turn to our host from the great State of Kansas, Congressman Huelskamp, for 5 minutes.

Mr. HUELSKAMP. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Same questions, I guess. First, Mr. Harper, you're the cow/calf producer here. The others kind of do a little bit of it, and you made some reference in testimony about the livestock title. I understand that as well. There are other things in the farm bill, I presume, that impact the bottom line for beef producers. We are in cattle country here, and can you tell me what one or two things in the farm bill would create the most difficulty for the livestock industry and which you would be most concerned about?

Mr. HARPER. Thank you for the question, Mr. Huelskamp. I think a couple things. You know, the conservation programs are a very important part to livestock producers as well as crop producers. I think programs like EQIP have been very good for implementing conservation practices in the livestock industry. Things such as pasture improvements by distribution of water, better distribution of water, cross fencing and things like that, EQIP funding has been very important as far as getting certain operations under compliance with the regulatory issues; things along those lines.

You know, one thing that has been a concern, and it's been kind of talked about quite a bit, is a possible proposed ban on packer ownership. I think that's a big concern for livestock producers like myself. In these volatile times, I'm sure there have been volatile times in the past, but in my term since I started farming after college here about 20 years ago, it's certainly the most volatile times that I've seen. The way we manage that volatility is probably as unique as our individual farming operations. When you take an opportunity away from livestock producers to market their livestock by banning the particular ownership or narrowing the time frame that a particular sector can own cattle, I think that's a big concern for us. We'd just like to have the freedom to market livestock the best way we see fit, and we truly feel like the livestock producers are the best to do that.

Mr. HUELSKAMP. Mr. Hunnicutt, you mentioned you had a couple kids here that you have. I've got my 10 year old here, so I want to ask you about the Department of Labor regulations, whether you've heard about that, dealing with child labor. He's listening closely to your answer. Tell me your thoughts on that.

Mr. HUNNICUTT. Well, we're getting into planting season. We've been doing some field work and I've had my 4 year old son out there with me and before he starts playing with my iPad after a couple hours out there, he's asking all kinds of questions and I'm telling him why I'm out there strip tilling, why it's good for the soil, what's going on, and he's up in the big tractor in a closed cab, buckled in. I mean, he's safer there than he is in our car going down the highway, and because I farm in partnership with my dad and brother, I wouldn't be able to do that if these regulations pass.

I mean, just the—I understand some of the ideas behind it, the idea of maybe there's some labor out there that's being treated badly, but this goes so far beyond. I mean, this is a sledgehammer to kill a mosquito kind of idea, just the loss of knowledge that we'd have to pass on to kids just from them working on the farm. You

know, I got my—my Social Security savings goes back to when I was 5 years old walking soybean fields, you know. That kind of thing that would be gone. I mean, it would be—that would harm our farm economy more than about anything else that could happen.

Mr. HUELSKAMP. I have a question on bankers and credit, Mr. Hodgson. Can you describe any changes in the credit markets with some of the regulations out of Washington, or as we do have a credit title in the farm bill, can you discuss any suggestion of what we need to do within that arena?

Mr. HODGSON. I guess I'm not real familiar with what's going on there. I guess I wouldn't—I don't know.

Mr. HUELSKAMP. Mr. Anderson or Tom, do you have any comments on those?

Mr. ANDERSON. I would, actually. I serve on the loan committee on a little small bank in my community, and regulations have really tightened up. Like Mr. Chairman, Chairman Lucas said earlier, we have to have in the file the insurance product. We have to have cash flow stated. We have a file for every producer.

The CHAIRMAN. Along with a tax return.

Mr. ANDERSON. Along with a tax return, yes, sir. Regulations have really tightened up, particularly on the small community banks. The larger banks that have the staff to handle it, I think it's probably not been nearly the burden on, but the small community rural banks, it's really been a problem for, and our producers, too.

The CHAIRMAN. The gentleman yields back his time. I would note to my colleagues on the Committee, one of the things I learned in my stewardship under then Chairman Roberts at the House Agriculture Committee a few years ago, it's good to be Chairman. Therefore, I'm going to ask one last question in my role as Chairman.

Mr. Hunnicutt, you said the safety net should protect from catastrophic loss. Can you define what a catastrophic loss would look like in your operation and the best way you think protection against that kind of loss could be addressed?

Mr. HUNNICUTT. Well, up to this point in time I've been farming, I fortunately haven't had to deal with that sort of situation.

The CHAIRMAN. Lucky man.

Mr. HUNNICUTT. I have a lot more years coming, hopefully.

The CHAIRMAN. Yes.

Mr. HUNNICUTT. You know, we have a lot of storms roll through our part of Nebraska. You know, we—drought isn't such a—that isn't a concern in our area because we're irrigated, so we're pretty well covered with that. I mean, we could be pretty well devastated with a hailstorm. I mean, you can get pictures from storms, luckily not around us last year, but you couldn't tell that there was corn out there. It looked like it was winter, covered with all the hail. You know, when—if we had half of our acres get hit by that and we're not able to insure that properly, we're out that cost of production there. I mean, that would be—that sort of thing would hit us pretty hard. I mean, I'm—when you talk about catastrophic loss, you're looking more at things that are outside of our control, like the weather and that sort of thing, not just economic changes.

The CHAIRMAN. One last question. You, of course, say that the safety net should protect against that catastrophic loss and not guarantee profit for participants. Have you had an opportunity to review any of the farm bill proposals that have been offered by a variety of the groups, and if so, do you have any concerns about that any of these would, "try to guarantee a profit?"

Mr. HUNNICUTT. I haven't had the opportunity to review any of the proposals yet at this point. We've looked at those in the upcoming months, but I think there might be a tendency by some out there to want to kind of promise the Moon or look to make sure we can take care of things. I would look at it more as, I need to manage my business and if there is a bad loss or a repeated loss over several years, that's the sort of situation where you look at a safety net; not just to cover general losses that would come in the course of production.

The CHAIRMAN. Absolutely. Absolutely. I believe all the time has expired for questions. As is the custom when we're in the home district of one of our Agriculture Committee Members, before we adjourn, I would invite Mr. Huelskamp to make any closing comments he might have.

Mr. HUELSKAMP. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman. A fascinating number of witnesses and the testimony thereof, and real interesting, and I might say for the audience, in looking across here, about the diversity. We see folks here with five or six or two or three or four different crops. Other parts of the country, it's not quite that way, but it makes sense and shows how difficult it is to write a farm bill with that many crops in just this area, and we have the rest of the country.

I certainly appreciate the Chairman and my other colleague, Mr. Conaway, for joining us here and I want to thank the Committee staff. It is a long ways from Washington. I actually like it that way, Mr. Chairman, but it is a long ways to get here, and I do appreciate you coming here and listening.

This is the fourth and final field hearing, and I just want to say on the Chairman's behalf, I just wanted to get out, honestly, get out of Washington, D.C., and hear what real producers have to say before we get started on the farm bill. I thank you for accepting the invitation and being here today. I know it was quite a trek for many here, and I thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Absolutely, Tim, and I want to thank you all again for being here today also. I think we've heard a lot of truly valuable input today. I'd especially like to thank our witnesses for their time.

As I said when we started, there are some challenges that vary by region. We need to tailor our farm policy to fit those unique requirements. I think it's true that farmers and ranchers across the country share many of the same experiences. Whether you're raising corn in Kansas, wheat in Oklahoma, cotton in Texas, soybeans in Nebraska, sorghum in Colorado, we face many similar challenges and your input is an important part of the puzzle as we put together this farm bill, a farm bill that will work for all farmers in all regions of the country.

Once again, I would like to remind everyone listening to our hearing today here in the room also that the House Agriculture

Committee has a website where you can learn more about the 2012 Farm Bill. In addition, you may submit comments to be considered a part of the Committee's farm bill hearing record. Your comments must be submitted using the website before May 20, 2010. That website is *agriculture.house.gov/farmbill*.

Your perspective is vital to this process and I thank all of you for participating today. Under the rules of the Committee, the record of today's hearing will remain open for 30 calendar days, to receive additional material and supplemental written responses from the witnesses to any question posed by a Member.

This hearing of the Committee on Agriculture is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 10:51 a.m. (CDT), the Committee was adjourned.]

APPENDIX

**Compilation of Responses to Farm Bill Feedback
Questionnaire, 2012**

NOVEMBER 2012

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE,
Washington, D.C.

PREFACE

Prior to writing a new farm bill, the House Committee on Agriculture traditionally embarks on a series of field hearings throughout the United States. The purpose of these hearings is to gather comments and information from those whose livelihoods are most affected by the policy that the farm bill creates. For those who did not get a chance to testify at the field hearings, the Agriculture Committee created an online questionnaire through which any interested party could submit constructive suggestions for the upcoming farm bill. The responses are presented here, in alphabetical order, by individual name.

The Committee would like to thank all those who participated in this process. The information presented in this compilation will be helpful in the formulation of the next farm bill.



Visit the House Agriculture Committee's website to learn more about America's 2012 Farm Bill. Additionally, you may submit comments to be considered part of the Committee's Farm Bill field hearing record. Your comments must be submitted using the website address below by May 20, 2012.

<http://agriculture.house.gov/farmbill>

Chairman Frank D. Lucas
House Committee on Agriculture | 1501 Longworth House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515
202.225.2171 | <http://agriculture.house.gov>



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You Tube: AgRepublicans

COMMENT OF MS. MAYA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:24 p.m.

City, State: Columbus, NM

Occupation: Retired—Artist—Alternative Living

Comment: Our organization uses EM (effective microorganisms) from Teraganix—a digestive microbe developed in Japan by Dr. Higa. We have one of the best wastewater lagoons in the state of NM. I use EM in compost, on plants. I use no pesticides. I worked with USDA in Las Cruces and was appalled at their support of pesticides and poisons rather than leading edge alternative safe methods. Our current methods are killing the planet, the soil, the air, the water.

COMMENT OF CHRISTINA ABATE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 3:35 a.m.

City, State: Chester, NY

Occupation: Engineer

Comment: More localized farming and perennial crops please. Also, please aid in protecting farmers against the biofuel industry and international agribusinesses such as Monsanto or Cargill.

COMMENT OF DEBRA ABBOTT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:06 p.m.

City, State: Chico, CA

Occupation: School Garden Educator

Comment:

1. Increase subsidies for those who are growing healthy fruits and vegetables for the citizens of this country. For too long, the corn, soybean and wheat agribusinesses have been the main recipients of subsidies, and as a result, there has been a dramatic increase in obesity, diabetes and heart disease in this country.
2. Nutrition programs that provide food for those who are most at risk of nutritional deficiencies—children, the elderly and the disabled—must be fully funded.
3. Fully fund those programs that support socially disadvantaged farmers and sustainable food production systems.
4. Fund studies that research the effects of agricultural chemicals on the health of the population

Thank you,

DEBRA ABBOTT.

COMMENT OF BARBARA ABERSOLD

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:09 a.m.

City, State: Boise, ID

Occupation: Retired Teacher

Comment: I would like the subsidies to stop for large industrial farms. I want to see support for local organic growers. I am against GMO crops in general and dislike the wide spread use and overuse of pesticides that are poisoning our water supply and us.

COMMENT OF SANTOS ABEYTA

Date Submitted: Monday, April 16, 2012, 9:12 a.m.

City, State: Albuquerque, NM.

Occupation: Catholic Deacon/Spiritual Advisor for St. Vincent de Paul Society

Comment: Just speaking for food needs in the Albuquerque metropolitan area: Holy Family Parish is currently serving an average of 300–350 families each month with a food box.

All of the food distributed comes to us through the Roadrunner Food Bank (RRFB). We have very little food in the form of USDA commodities this past year. We have had to depend on free fruits and vegetables from RRFB to supplement the food boxes.

It is imperative that our U.S. Government increase the USDA commodities, to at least previous years' levels, so that the unemployed, low wage and people on SSI and the elderly on fixed incomes have an adequate level of food supplies.

Thank You for your consideration. There should be no reason why any person living in the USA should go hungry.

COMMENT OF JON B. ABRAHAMSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:26 p.m.

City, State: Waconia, MN.

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables.

Size: Less than 50 acres.

Comment: I have a right to have pure food and water. Not a bunch of so called food with chemicals, hormones, vaccines, antibiotics, or fetal flavor enhancers in it!

You Are What You Eat!

BTW: I was leading the charge against Monsanto's Ethoxiquin that was killing our pets some 20 years ago! Same science then as today.

Thank you,

JON B. ABRAHAMSON,
Waconia MN.

COMMENT OF BETH ABRAMS

Date Submitted: Wednesday, April 18, 2012, 1:03 p.m.

City, State: San Francisco, CA.

Occupation: Nonprofit Director

Comment: Please do not cut or reduce SNAP, which is a critical lifeline to millions of Americans. Half of food stamps recipients are children. I direct a food program in San Francisco that feeds 2,000 people a week and are strained to feed to people that we serve. In fact, we are in danger of closing down due o lack of funds. Cutting food stamps strains all the smaller safety nets to the breaking point. The bottom line is that if you cut food stamps, mass starvation will result, in the richest country in the world. This goes against the ethics of this country, every major religion, and the values that determine a society that claims to uphold human decency and basic human rights. Do not cut SNAP!

COMMENT OF BONNIE ACKER

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 16, 2012, 6:02 a.m.

City, State: Burlington, VT

Occupation: Artist and Farm 2 School Volunteer.

Comment: Around Vermont, we have been building an amazing Farm 2 School movement where food-service staff, farmers, students, teachers and others from the community are getting wonderful local foods into our school cafeterias. There is no greater happiness than to see children—from all walks of life—enjoying delicious, nutritious meals and excited about growing food. At the Integrated Arts Academy here in Burlington—where the children speak 23 languages other than English—all 300 students helped plant 300 raspberry seedlings last week. They cheerfully shared shovels, laughed as they discovered worms, and dreamed about the harvests to come. They were so proud of their work.

May all people in this country be granted enough nutritious and delicious food to live healthy and happy lives. I ask all of you to fund food-assistance programs to an even greater extent than ever before. People here in Burlington, Vermont and in so many other communities will be so uplifted. Thank you so very much.

COMMENT OF SHEILA J. ACKER

Date Submitted: Monday, March 26, 2012, 12:28 p.m.

City, State: Rock Island, IL

Occupation: Farm Owner/Rent Acreage.

Comment: Please ensure our next farm bill encourages organic farming and enables both small and large farms to attain this status without undue costs.

Please also ensure standard farming does not affect organic farming (cross contamination).

Our children deserve the health that comes with non-genetically engineered food. Scientific studies have proven GMO's alter our genes until we can no longer reproduce. Please do not do this to the next generation.

Sincerely and thank you,

SHEILA J. ACKER.

COMMENT OF SOPHIE ACKOFF

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 11:41 p.m.
City, State: Cold Spring, NY
Producer/Non-producer: Producer
Type: Vegetables
Size: 50–150 acres
Comment: Dear Chairman Lucas,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony to the House Committee on Agriculture on the next farm bill. My district representative is being copied on this testimony. I am a young farmer currently farming in the Hudson River Valley. I know that this country desperately needs young farmers and I have been proud of the programs such as the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program that help the next generation of growers gain the essential skills necessary to farm. Glynwood, the farm at which I currently work, is launching a farmer incubator program thanks to BFRDP funding. This program is going to give many young farmers an opportunity for land and resources. These resources are very difficult to obtain on our own! I ask that the Committee endorse all of the provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236), including:

- Mandatory funding for Individual Development Accounts at \$5 million per year. This program helps new farmers raise capital to start farm businesses and is tested and proven by organizations like Practical Farmers of Iowa and the California Farmlink.
- Mandatory funding for the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program at \$25 million a year. This program funds essential education for new farmers around the country. Authorize a new microloan program, to enable young and beginning farmers to better access FSA loan programs.
- Revise FSA rules to make loan programs more accessible to more young and beginning farmers.
- Reaffirm the existing cost share differential for BFRs within EQIP. Also, reaffirm the advance payment option allowing beginning and socially disadvantaged producers to receive an advance payment for the project's costs for purchasing materials or contracting services, but increase the limit on the advance payment from 30 percent to 50 percent of costs.
- Amend the Farm and Ranch Land Protection Program (FRPP) to make farm viability part of the purpose of the program and to give discretionary authority to the eligible entities that implement the program to give priority to easements with an option to purchase at the agricultural use value, deals that transfer the land to beginning and farmers and ranchers, applicants with farm succession plans, and other similar mechanisms to maintain the affordability of protected land.

These and other provisions within the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act will help new growers succeed and I urge you to include them in the next farm bill.

Sincerely,
 SOPHIE ACKOFF.

COMMENT OF ROBERTA ACTOR-THOMAS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:22 p.m.
City, State: Lakeport, CA
Producer/Non-producer: Producer
Type: Poultry/poultry products
Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Real reform is needed. The Earl Butz policy of "get big or get out" has devastated American small farms and rural communities. We struggle to create local markets for local products from small farms but face dumping by the big beneficiaries of the farm bill. Last I heard, the local food pantries are getting commodities at 10¢ per pound. How about a subsidy for local growers of healthy meat and poultry, fruits and vegetables instead of dumping diabetes-causing trash food on our rural communities?

COMMENT OF RICHARD ACUZZO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:18 a.m.
City, State: Chico, CA
Occupation: Unemployed

Comment: We need healthy food that is raised and grown properly. We need small farmers to be helped with subsidies and subsidies for large farmers to be reduced or eliminated. Raw Milk and Raw Milk products must be legalized.

COMMENT OF AUDREY ADAMS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:54 p.m.

City, State: Renton, WA

Occupation: Mother

Comment: As a mother I am very concerned about the direction of unhealthful practices of food production and the Big-Ag protectionism bias from Federal government. Small farmers, especially those producing organic foods, need the MOST protections rather than the least, as it now stands. Taxpayers do not want to subsidize the least healthy foods, such as corn and soy! Subsidies should be reserved for small organic farming only.

Specifically, I support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

COMMENT OF BRENDA ADAMS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:48 p.m.

City, State: Minneapolis, MN

Occupation: Mediator, Communication Teacher

Comment: I am writing to request that your consideration of the consequences of this act for the next seven generations.

In doing so, you will see the wisdom of:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

To deviate from the progress we are making with local, sustainable, organic foods will bring further harm to people and the Earth.

Profits do not drive sustainable business. Profits are the outcome of doing work in harmony with human and Mother Nature. Non-sustainable business harms humans and Mother Nature.

I grew up on a farm. That farmland is now a smothered with chemicals. I eat organic food. I will never support agribusiness as it is now. I teach others the hazards of chemicals and the benefits of wholesome organic foods.

Our taxes need to support people's health and well-being.

The green revolution is over. The rest of the world has rejected GMO foods.

We have a responsibility to work with nature. While at times harder, it is also more fulfilling, rewarding and, of course, it is sustainable.

We must work together to ensure farms and farmers produce healthy food that generate sustainable profits over time, rather than 'gross' profits from unhealthy 'food stuffs' in the short term.

This is the way of all of us, all business, the future to be healthy.

Beginning from the ground up is the way for us to work that works for everyone on the planet together.

Most sincerely,

BRENDA ADAMS.

COMMENT OF CONSTANCE ADAMS

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 2:25 a.m.

City, State: The Villages, FL

Occupation: Retail

Comment: It's very important to me as a consumer to count on products grown in the USA or elsewhere not to be genetically modified or if they are then it should be mandatory to have labels stating that it is put on it. I feel that with what I have read regarding Monsanto that it is a big bully & also money hungry. I for one detest being used as a guinea pig by anyone. Please help our local farmers be able to grow what they want with the seeds they so choose without Monsanto locking them in to having to purchase their seeds every time. Also as a consumer who purchases organic items I don't want Monsanto's seeds cross breeding with that either. Please help our country be the best producer of great produce! Big business is **Not** always the best & farmers as well as consumers should deserve a fair choice in that to as well as better selections! It might not matter to some but it does matter to me & my family/friends too.

Thank you kindly for your time.

Sincerely,

CONSTANCE ADAMS.

 COMMENT OF GLORY ADAMS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:06 p.m.

City, State: Eau Claire, WI

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Please write a bill that supports small, family farms; not large corporate farms or confined animal operations. Include support for programs that support the poor to the extent that they now do—nothing less. Please do not include any support for out-of-country farmers in Brazil or anywhere else. This support is for only American farmers and American citizens. In no way offer any kind of support to corporate conglomerates such as Monsanto, those spewing pesticides/herbicides, or GM seeds.

 COMMENT OF JOYCE ADAMS

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 9:12 a.m.

City, State: Boynton Beach, FL

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: I have allergies to sulfate and sulfites. It is important that I have healthy food. Please do what it takes to keep chemicals off of our food. I would like all children to have access to healthy food. Thank you!

 COMMENT OF JUDITH ADAMS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:04 p.m.

City, State: Seattle, WA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Look around you . . . Americans are in a health crisis. We are one of the unhealthiest nations on this planet, with so many resources at our finger tips and yet we continue to poison ourselves and our children. The facts bear this out . . . consumers and scientists are finally in agreement that the way and what we eat determines our health. Young girls today are facing a crisis that no one talks about. They are maturing at an alarmingly young age. Tumors of the reproductive system are on the rise. Girls are losing their ability to reproduce due to these rapidly growing tumors. And where do they come from? Growth hormones in animals that we eat and milk that we drink; chemical toxins in our food that cause synthetic estrogen to grow in our bodies. Stop this madness! Support organic farming and ranching practices! Stop letting the big agricultural machine run the show. Show that you care for the people of America.

 COMMENT OF LISA ADAMS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:47 p.m.

City, State: Lake Pleasant, MA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Other

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: We are new farmers. We just bought a farm because we were tired of watching local farm land be sold and because my daughter and I have MANY food sensitivities. I have to be meticulous about reading labels.

I think it's a disgrace that for my tiny farm I have to make my jam in a commercial kitchen so that I can sell it on a small local farm stand, but Monsanto gets a pass on responsibility.

I can't be a responsible parent and can't take proper care of us both if I'm reading a label that is missing information.

Monsanto just keeps taking. Now they need to join the rest of us. Down with Monsanto and the **Bullying**.

COMMENT OF MARINA ADAMS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:01 p.m.

City, State: New York, NY

Occupation: Artist

Comment: **Organic Farming** will help solve many of our crises, including climate change (global warming), health (cancer and many illness), environmental degradation (land and water bodies) Please READ Maria Rodale's, *Organic Manifesto*. **Truth To Power!** We are all connected. Monsanto CEO eats Organic while promoting GMO's and chemical farming. Disgraceful. Vote your conscience.

COMMENT OF MARTHA ADAMS

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 6:38 a.m.

City, State: Toledo, OH

Occupation: Writer

Comment: I fully support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

I do not support:

- Taking food from the mouths of the hungry to create a \$33 billion new entitlement program that guarantees the income of profitable farm businesses. That's on top of \$90 billion in subsidies for crop and revenue insurance policies.
- Cutting \$4 million from organic research funding and cut funding to support Beginning Farmers in half.
- The subsidized insurance program Congress proposes which will allow giant commodity farmers and insurance companies to walk away with billions in taxpayer dollars while putting the land, soil and environment at greater risk.

Sincerely,

M.J. ADAMS,
Toledo, Ohio.

COMMENT OF NANCY ADAMS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:21 p.m.

City, State: Le Roy, MN

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Nuts

Size: 50–150 acres

Comment: Please include the following in the new farm bill:

- Support for the next generation—beginning farmers and ranchers
- Making healthy food widely available to all Americans
- Protecting our natural resources and help farmers care for their land
- Driving innovation for tomorrow's farmers and food entrepreneurs
- Reforming outdated subsidies and restoring fiscal responsibility in farm policy; and
- incentives for renewable energy and energy conservation.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF SHIRLEY ADAMS

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:29 p.m.

City, State: Evanston, IL

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Please reduce pesticide use, support land conservation, and encourage more organic farming. Reduce subsidies to large growers and increase subsidies for small farmers. Focus on healthier food for all citizens. Stop the use of GMO foods that carry pesticide protection within them.

COMMENT OF TIFFANY ADAMS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:41 p.m.

City, State: Langhorne, PA

Occupation: Registered Nurse

Comment: The health of our country strongly depends on the health of our food. We need to move our focus from growing cheap, commodity crops that only serve to feed the obesity epidemic and, in turn, support growing rates of chronic diseases like diabetes and heart disease; to growing varied, fresh, local fruits and vegetables in nutrient dense soil, using sustainable farming practices. We need to make these foods inexpensive and available to all Americans. We owe this to our children: to reverse the trend of shorter lifespan and increasing deaths from preventable illness in our country. This is why I support the full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286.) I also support fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs. I support the implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236), as well as maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative. Thank you for your serious consideration on this important topic.

COMMENT OF KATHRYN ADAMSKY

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 11:21 a.m.

City, State: Union, ME

Occupation: Home Gardener

Comment: I would like the farm bill to represent the interests of the consumer. Healthy, non-GMO, pesticide free food should be available to all people. Small farms are wonderful because these people live their beliefs and improve the community. Our food should not be a strictly profit driven business run by huge corporations that have no interest in the quality of the product except for its ability to fill their wallets. As a tax payer I expect that the government will use my tax money to protect my interests. That is the original purpose of our government—to protect us from abuse and harm by unethical peoples (corporations). Food and shelter are necessary basics and they should not be exploited or the choices limited by those with power (money). I ask that you do not bow to the money and corruption that threatens to take over this essential piece of our lives. Thank you.

COMMENT OF BALTHASAR ADELL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:47 p.m.

City, State: Los Angeles, CA

Occupation: Educator

Comment: Now that the Internet actually exists, and I have access to information which is far away from me, but directly affects me, I have to ask myself, why does our government subsidize the production of high fructose corn syrup when we know it contributes to heart disease? It's really evil and you should be held accountable.

COMMENT OF JONAH ADELS

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 11:21 a.m.

City, State: Putnam Valley, NY

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Specialty Crops

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: As a small farmer in the Hudson Valley, it is vitally important to my livelihood that support for local food systems and care for the environment be supported in the upcoming farm bill. Too long has the farm bill funneled billions of tax-

payer dollars into the hands of agribusiness giants at the expense of small farmers. We are the ones producing the food that will feed New York as gas prices increase. We are the ones creating jobs. Don't make our job harder. Just the smallest cuts in subsidies to the largest producers and insurance guarantees to commodity producers would allow massive job creating, small business supporting changes to our local food systems here in NY. We need your support! Please preserve, as a matter of justice, the vital nutritional assistance programs, and cut the programs that are legitimately wasteful, that distort the free market by tipping the scales in the favor of corporate giants, and the big government that supports it. Funnel just a percentage of those cuts into support for small farms, local food systems, and conservation programs, and you will win the votes of the growing percentage of my generation who is scraping a living by producing food for all of our families. Specifically, please support in the next farm bill:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Thank you!

COMMENT OF CAROLYN ADESSA

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 8:46 a.m.

City, State: Mamaroneck, NY

Occupation: Social Services

Comment: Please vote to **Subsidize Small Family Farms** and **Organic** farmers, Provide **Food Stamps** for the Poor. **Stop Subsidizing Huge Agribusinesses.** **Please,** vote with your conscience not with the influence peddlers.

COMMENT OF ADIRONDACK COUNCIL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:57 p.m.

City, State: Elizabethtown, NY

Occupation: Environmental Nonprofit

Comment: Dear U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Agriculture,

On behalf of the undersigned, thank you for reviewing our comments regarding the 2012 Farm Bill. We represent a variety of organizations that support farming in Northern New York.

Despite the significant budget issues we all face in 2012, we are continuing to collaborate and work towards addressing the Agriculture and Forestry challenges in the North Country of New York State and beyond.

While a strong local farming movement is emerging, there are still considerable threats and challenges that farmers in the Champlain Valley and St. Lawrence Valley face. The 2012 Farm Bill has had significant improvements but we believe there are several programs that must be supported by legislation and funding. We are especially concerned with the following issues:

Forest Biomass for Energy Program

The undersigned requests that the Committee continue to support research & development of renewable energy. We ask that you authorize appropriations to encourage forest biomass for energy production especially in the Northeast region of the United States.

Environmental Quality incentives Program Organic Initiative & Conservation Stewardship Program

These valuable programs assist in the growth of organic farming and conservation of ecologically important lands. These programs administered by NRCS help to encourage improvement of conservation efforts of farm & forest. We ask that the committee fully maintain support of these opportunities for the American people.

GE/GMO Drift Contamination Mitigation and Research

We ask the committee to address our concerns over the damaging, rapid proliferation of GE/GMO plantings on our region's scarce and precious healthy soils, including the unregulated contaminating drift of GE/GMO patented pollen, herbicide resistant weeds, and unwanted seeds onto adjacent, unadulterated farmlands, a rap-

idly increasing threat to the financial viability of the sustainable farming movement and its non-GMO, non-chemical soil conservation practices.

Rural Development

We strongly urge the Committee to continue supporting Rural Development programs. Investing in rural development initiatives helps small farms and communities access support services, such as slaughterhouses and quality health care. Rural America needs help to improve their struggling economies and community health.

The Local Farm, Food & Jobs Act

The farm bill should support family farms, expanding farming opportunities and investing in the local economy. Programs are needed that will help regional agriculture address production, processing and distribution problems while improving consumer access to healthy foods.

Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act

We ask that the Committee fund this act as it supports economic opportunities for beginning farmers, ranchers, and military veterans through loans and other development programs. Programs like the Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Program, 4-H programs and others have provided great assistance and should be continued. Research and educational programs are critical to the health and well-being of Americans in the future.

The Expanding Access to Farmers Markets Act

This amendment of the Food Stamp Act will improve access to healthy foods and increase purchases through the SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program), WIC (Woman, Infants and Children), School Food Programs, Senior Farmers' Market Program, and the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Programs. We the undersigned, believe that continued and enhanced support of these programs are essential to growing agricultural economies and nutrition education.

The 2012 Farm Bill can be an excellent tool, having a positive and uplifting effect on the rural farming economies of Northern New York State. Much like the New England States to our east, we have an emerging local farming economy that can provide food and farm products in a sustainable manner to the residents. The bill also provides secure farm bill funding for critically important programs that support family farms, expand new farming opportunities, create rural jobs, and invest our local food and agriculture economy.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

BRIAN L. HOUSEAL, *Executive Director*,
Adirondack Council;

KATE FISH, *Executive Director*,
Adirondack North Country Association;

JOHN BINGHAM, *member*
Ag Natural Resource Advisory Committee, Cornell Cooperative Extension.

COMMENT OF JOHN ADKIN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:26 p.m.

City, State: Punta Gorda, FL

Occupation: Retired

Comment: We desperately need an Organic Foods Bill! We have children and grandchildren who need organic foods to survive. Please don't let the huge agricultural farms kill our family!

COMMENT OF JANET ADKINS

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 1:43 p.m.

City, State: Lawrenceville, GA

Occupation: Food Services Employee—Public Schools

Comment: Please make our farm bill with our children's' health in mind. We already know well that there are too many chemicals in use and inspection needs to be more thorough to prevent foodborne illnesses. Our children are the future leaders of our once-great nation.

COMMENT OF STEPHEN ADLER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:15 p.m.

City, State: Luray, VA
Producer/Non-producer: Producer
Type: Dairy, Livestock, Poultry/poultry products, Vegetables
Size: Less than 50 acres
Comment: We are a small local farm. The farm bill needs to work for the small farmer also. Help us help the local population of concerned healthy eaters.

COMMENT OF LOUIS D. AGNEW

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 15, 2012, 8:19 p.m.
City, State: Milwaukee, WI
Occupation: Chemist
Comment: Dear Honorable Gwen Moore,

With the new Food Farm and Jobs Act, it seems pertinent that we should be taking into consideration that we are in an era of extreme weather events, hurricanes, tornadoes, flooding, drought, heavy snows or rains that cause mudslides and deep soil erosion, and, for whatever reason, it may be short term or it may be here to stay for awhile.

In light of this, it is important that we both look towards mitigating the severity of potential crises for agriculture, focusing heavily on conservation measures wherever possible, as well as taking a serious look at soil conservation and soil nutrient conservation practices.

Second, but in no way less important, is maintaining a nutritious food supply chain, not only measured in calories, but in mineral nutrients, vitamins and flavor, for the most vulnerable people in our society, including school children, families, elderly, minorities and immigrants.

Some of the programs that are important to the solution to these, most recently of great concern issues are:

- The Value-Added Producer Grants Program (VAPG) which provides seed money to help farmers innovate in agriculture and create jobs while securing a sustainable path to market-based farm profitability,
- The Conservation Stewardship Program needs to be improved by ranking applications exclusively on their conservation benefits. Farmers count on CSP and other conservation programs to conserve soil for future generations, keep water and air clean, and create habitat for wildlife—all while farming profitably.

We need to guarantee \$25 million per year in mandatory funding for the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program. We need a national strategy and commitment to support beginning farmer and ranchers entering agriculture. Without new farmers, we are missing out on the new knowledge and innovations that can facilitate the goals of sustainable agriculture.

To protect soil and survive uncertain weather conditions, the best strategy is one with an emphasis on close attention to the situation combined with a willingness to innovate. One of the best programs we can fund is the Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative at \$30 million per year as mandatory funding. Investment in agricultural research is vital to continued productivity and innovation in growing and diverse sectors of American agriculture.

Also, we must provide flexibility for states to use existing food procurement programs to purchase fresh, healthy food from local farmers and ranchers, especially for school meal programs so that our nation's children can become healthy and productive members of our society.

Finally, we should scale back the more uncertain factors in agricultural experimentation today, such as diminishing the rate at which trans-genetic crops that depend upon complete vegetative removal or non-crop removal, which otherwise holds soil in place during severe weather events. The money removed from this sort of research should go towards the more organic engineering strategies that use plant and beneficial organism combinations to effect food production systems. Such systems have higher probabilities of remaining productive during severe weather events, as well as being more reflexive and adaptive in the face of such events.

Thank you for your attention in this matter.

Sincerely,

LOUIS D. AGNEW.

COMMENT OF ANN AGUILAR

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 10, 2012, 2:04 p.m.
City, State: Oak Park, IL
Occupation: Disabled Adult

Comment: Dear Members of the House Committee on Agriculture,

As a person who receives SNAP benefits and volunteers for a food pantry I strongly urge you to refrain from eliminating the food stamp program. It is not only vital to me, but to millions of Americans who are disabled, living below the poverty level, *etc.*

Thank you for your concern.

COMMENT OF ISABEL AGUILAR

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 2:28 a.m.

City, State: Lakewood, CO

Occupation: Biology Student

Comment: We all Americans deserve to know what we eat, what we feed our children. It is important understand highly toxic food, organ damaging organisms, are in the market today. It needs to be removed completely from the shell urgently. Let's start working together to plant seed of life. Our generation are facing uncertain future; we cannot allow Monsanto continue his experiment with our children. Our children deserve organic food and natural. Let's, plant organic corn, organic soy, organic cotton seed and so on. We cannot destroy our planet also by spraying contaminants products like Round Up which is causing pollution and degrading our home. No, let's take action now! Monsanto must be arrested for crime of the humanity, there are many evidences how detrimental damaging caused Monsanto around world. There are kids with no arms, what would you do if that baby were your? There are many human beings with detrimental deformities, people dying with cancer, we have to raise our voice today! In Argentina for example, there are people suffering and Doctors and authorities are being deaf, blind, and ignoring the sad reality of their own people. We cannot continue with crossed arms without moving our finger.

COMMENT OF BASHEERAH AHMAD

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 9:53 a.m.

City, State: Atlanta, GA

Occupation: Fitness Expert

Comment: As a health and wellness provider I see firsthand, how detrimental the lack of healthy food choices can be. People are losing their battle on health everyday either due to poverty, ignorance, and often indifference. This situation will only become worse if our government takes away funding from programs that actually are helping.

COMMENT OF MAIMOONA AHMED

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:18 p.m.

City, State: Concord, CA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: We need to protect our future, our children and grandchildren. Farmers were once 90% of the U.S. population. They are disappearing at a rapid rate. We depend on family farms to produce natural food without the GMO ingredients which are shown to destroy the health of all of us. Agriculture should not just be a business for profit but a business to maintain and enhance the health of all Americans. Food and water are the basis of life. You can protect us by endorsing all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act, fully funding conservations programs, maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative and implement all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act.

COMMENT OF TRACEY AHRING

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 2:19 a.m.

City, State: Dennard, AR

Occupation: Self-employed

Comment:As a lifelong citizen of this country, I am tired of organic and family farms being shoved aside in order to subsidize bloated, unhealthy, and unsustainable agribusiness.

It's easy to forget now, but this country was founded on the backs on small family farms, producing a wide variety of safe, healthy, organic foods.

And it is way past time to honor that heritage.

Agribusiness has done nothing but produce cheap, toxic food that rewards a limited few with profits while eating away at the vast majority of lives and land on which it relies.

And I'm tired of its attempts to put a stranglehold on my freedom to choose what I feed myself and my family.

If this is indeed the United States, then I should be able to choose the very basics of my existence—and that means safe, healthy, organic food, produced by families that truly care about the land and keeping it fertile for decades to come.

Not agribusiness and its Monsantos and Cargills, who wish to control now and forever the very basics of life and drive all alternatives to extinction—un-American activity at its most extreme.

Therefore, I am requesting a farm bill that honors the real farmers of this nation and all its citizens—one that finally stands for the people and against the corporate welfare that's propped up that parasite called agribusiness.

I am also requesting the full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286):

1. Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
2. The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
3. Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF DEBBRA AIKEN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:54 a.m.

City, State: Coppell, TX

Occupation: Home Gardener

Comment: Freedom is what our country was built on. It is and should be my right to feed myself my own food I have grown, without GMO's or at least properly label them. Your children eat this same GMO food. Don't you care what you are doing to them? Or is it only lining your pockets with corporate money you care about? Stop interfering with my rights.

COMMENT OF JAMES AINSLIE

Date Submitted: Saturday, March 24, 2012, 12:58 p.m.

City, State: Hoffman, IL

Occupation: Retired Federal Worker, Volunteer at USDA Food Pantry

Comment: Facts:

- (1) Hunger in our country is continuing to increase.
- (2) Food insecurity is a growing issue that is affecting our retired population and the very young.
- (3) The farm bill constitutes less than or equal to 2% of our Federal Budget.

Comments:

While I believe that all programs need to be reduced to enable our country to address the growing deficit, the current parameters of the SNAP program should continue. There has been discussion in the media of changing the program to block grants. This is the wrong direction for a program that is effective and is among the most efficient in the Federal government. Block Grants for food assistance, given to states will ensure that high population areas will be serviced at the expense of low population areas that have the same requirements.

The concept that private donations can fill the void is fallacious reasoning. Currently the private sector is trying to help fulfill the need, but private funding and assistance during troubled financial times is not a certain solution. I am optimistic that the country is started down the road for economic recovery, however, it is far from certain.

This legislation needs to be accomplished this year. Too many stake holders need to know their future. These stake holders include the farmers and the 49 million individuals who are food insecure. The SNAP program and the Food Banks/Pantry system is only providing 51% to 55% of the monthly meal requirements. Significant reductions or major rewrites to the formula for providing benefits would result in serious negative results for the individuals using this service.

I urge the members of congress to be prudent but also compassionate in enacting legislation that affects your constituents that need assistance. Visit food pantries in

your district and see first hand the human cost of not supporting this important legislation.

COMMENT OF REV. DAVID AJA-SIGMON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:33 p.m.

City, State: Brooklyn, NY

Occupation: Pastor

Comment: House Agriculture Committee, Thank you for considering what is best for our citizens and the farms.

As someone who daily works with the poor but also has an awareness of national issues in farming. I would like the committee to re-focus the farm bill. It seems like we are more interested in investing in powerful agribusiness (subsidies go to them at a rate that far outweighs small independent farmers) losing the governments money. If we were really considering the U.S. government's money we wouldn't give it all in subsidies to huge successful businesses, then expect the poor to foot the bill through cutting food stamps programs in a terrible economy.

Therefore, I would like to endorse the following measures:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Sincerely,

REV. DAVID AJA-SIGMON.

COMMENT OF FRED ALBACH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:58 p.m.

City, State: Burbank, CA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I support small farmers and I oppose any and all actions taken by government and large agribusiness which hinders the small farmer. Too many regulations make it difficult for the small farmer to survive. Why do I support the small farmer? Because the quality of his good is generally superior to that grown on a large corporate farm.

COMMENT OF CARRIE ALBARADO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:15 p.m.

City, State: Pflugerville, TX

Occupation: Homemaker

Comment: I have a love/hate relationship with food. Food is a unifying substance that we all need to survive, and with the wrong knowledge and the funding of the wrong programs the country becomes to hate food. With the right programs and the right knowledge, food becomes a positive enlightening aspect that can and should be shared by all. End the profits of large non-sustainable monoculture by ending the subsidies, the funding, and make policies where the true cost of the "bad" production of food is captured. Only then can we begin to grow and learn to love, not hate, our food. I support local, organic, and sustainable agriculture and can only hope that it becomes feasible for everyone to be able to attain such.

COMMENT OF ROBERT ALBEE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:46 p.m.

City, State: Williams, OR

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Fruits

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: I ask that small producers such as myself be considered as you formulate where to allocate farm bill funds. Small, organic producers are committed land stewards that require funding assistance to implement programs and farm improvements that lead to a cleaner watershed. Fair allocation of government funds to those implementing sustainability will encourage even more participation in agro-ecology.

COMMENT OF JAIME ALCOBA

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 9:33 a.m.
City, State: Miami, FL
Occupation: Office Support
Comment: This farm bill would be good because it better allows those who want to stay as farmers to do so. We should not take our hard won agricultural lead overseas the way we did other industries.

COMMENT OF DAWN ALEXANDER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:02 p.m.
City, State: Monroe, WA
Occupation: Sales Representative
Comment: I am a consumer and I am tired of the “ Frankenfoods ” that fill our grocery stores, causing obesity in America. I do not purchase any of this food. I am all for cutting back on large corporate agriculture subsidies. I am against GMO foods and if the food is genetically altered—it needs to state that on the label. I am all for supporting more Organic Farms in this country. We need to stay safe and healthy.

COMMENT OF ELIZABETH ALEXANDER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:28 p.m.
City, State: Cranbury, NJ
Occupation: Clergy
Comment: Please support sustainable organic farming in New Jersey. Also, help prevent GMO farming that interferes with organic farming. My grandfather was a NJ farmer who suffered the consequences of using unsafe pesticides in the early 1900s. Today our communities want nutritious and safe fresh local foods to eat.

COMMENT OF SIMONE ALEXANDER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:38 p.m.
City, State: Chicago, IL
Occupation: Employee at Community Based Organization
Comment: Please ensure that we prioritize the needs of our farming communities before large agribusiness, and that we continue to support the families across the country who are struggling to put enough food on the table and relying on programs like SNAP to do this. The farm bill has incredible potential to support the livelihood of small farmers and improve our food system, while also maintaining a strong safety net that is so necessary in this economy.

COMMENT OF PESERI ALEXANDRA

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 02, 2012, 10:50 a.m.
City, State: Oyster Bay, NY
Occupation: Student
Comment: Dear Representative,
 The following is a list of priorities I feel the farm bill should incorporate:
 I would like to see increased assistance for young, beginning farmers, in the form of microloan and agricultural education programs. The farming population is aging, and newer, younger farmers will need to establish themselves. It would benefit our country's agricultural economy and livelihood to help beginning farmers.
 Conservation efforts, although funded generously, have begun to degrade due to lack of stringent enforcement. Water quality is a major issue and often occurs due to agricultural runoff. Farmers sometimes feel burdened by government regulation in this area, but still, water quality remains an issue. The Federal government needs to find a medium, whereby rules will be enforced, but also, where farmers are not too strained. Promoting organic agriculture is a feasible and beneficial option that can reduce the degradation of water quality, since it uses less pesticides.
 Indeed, funding for organic and integrated farms, both of which use less pesticides and result in much less environmental harm than does conventional agriculture, is essential.
 Thank you for your time.

COMMENT OF SUZANNE ALFORD-HODGES

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:29 p.m.

City, State: Russellville, AR

Occupation: Small Business Owner—Retail Picture Framer and Gallery Owner

Comment: Dear Representative Womack, bills that promote health, education about real food and sustainable agriculture while allowing our independent farmers to thrive is critical to turning around our unhealthy population. Lawmakers are subsidizing non food products and the uninformed public is wasting money and destroying their health buying these heavily advertized non-foods. Place high taxes on non-foods, like soft drinks and flavored “water”! Stop subsidizing chemical creations like high fructose corn syrup and genetically modified foods. I believe that the big agri food business is in the same category as big banks: Making huge profits at the expense of the health of our nation, physically and economically. I’d be interested to know if you are familiar with Michael Pollan’s books, in particular, *The Omnivore’s Dilemma*? If not, may I send you a copy?

SUZANNE ALFORD-HODGES

COMMENT OF MICHELLE ALIOTO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 9:58 p.m.

City, State: Oak Park, IL

Occupation: Student, Mother

Comment: I spend many of my community service hours at the local food pantry and see what a difference a little money makes in feeding thousands of families per month. Why cut this Federal budget to feed these poor families? Please put my tax dollars to good use and take care of our struggling neighbors. Thank you for your time.

COMMENT OF MARY ALLEMIER

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 10:23 a.m.

City, State: Hesperus, CO

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: 50–150 acres

Comment: I am a beginning farmer and would like to see more support for the industry. I feed my family and sell a small bit at the local farmers market, but we could do so much more with a little guidance and financial help. Please consider these things in any new farm bills introduced.

COMMENT OF BARBARA ALLEN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 7:02 p.m.

City, State: Alexandria, VA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: As an active member of the faith community, our congregation supports and collects a variety of canned goods, pasta, jellies, peanut butter and other food supplies. We also collect personal hygiene and baby items each first and third Sunday of each month.

Although as one congregation, we have increased the amount of supplies donated each month, the food pantry often has empty shelves that must be replenished because of the high need of our neighbors.

Too many of our brothers and sisters, and our neighbors are still out of work or are paid a low wage that makes it difficult for them to take care of their families without the benefit of our local food pantries to meet the needs of our neighbors.

We demand that you pass a strong Farm bill that protects programs like SNAP (supplemental nutrition assistance program), TEFAP (the emergency food assistance program), and CSFP (commodity supplemental food assistance program) which help provide food for our local neighbors and millions of America’s most vulnerable seniors, children and working poor.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF CHRISTINA ALLEN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:37 a.m.

City, State: Elko, NV

Occupation: Warehouse Associate

Comment: We need good quality produce in the markets and we need to ensure that the seeds we buy will be safe for all farmers including back yard enthusiasts.

No GMO seeds! Please help us find a solution that will feed America and keep us safe and free of altered and unhealthy food.

COMMENT OF DIANN ALLEN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:51 p.m.

City, State: Cupertino, CA

Occupation: Designer, Writer

Comment: It is important that **You** take feeding the people that you represent in a healthy way. We must reward the best stewards of our main resources—our land, water and air—and stop providing biggest funding for those that deplete **Our** resources. Feeding our entire population healthy foods, is of utmost importance for a healthy future. We have seen how poor diet has impacted the health of our population and has filled the pockets of industrial giants across the board. Your next steps are being watched and scrutinized. Take positive action to support the people and our land. And don't be confused about the term "people." A picture of a corporation will never be included as part of the true definition of what a person is. Are you a person? Take action to support clean farming.

COMMENT OF JERROLD E. ALLEN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:14 p.m.

City, State: Falls Church, VA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: I would like to offer my views and expectations on the upcoming farm bill. It is time—in fact long overdue—to pass a farm bill that is truly in the interest of the American people.

The large "agribusiness" companies do not need public support. They have adequate resources for what they are trying to do, which is frequently not in the public interest. The farm bill should foster policies that set a new direction.

1. A new farm bill should support small farmers. It should implement all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3235)
2. A new farm bill should support local agriculture. It should fully endorse all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286)
3. A new farm bill should support the trend toward organic farming. It should maintain the EQIP Organic Initiative.
4. A new farm bill should support agriculture for food, not for fuel. Subsidies for corn ethanol are neither good food policy nor good energy policy.
5. A new farm bill should support a movement away from the toxic chemical monocropping agriculture that has damaged so much soil, weakened nutritional values, and caused illness among consumers, to say nothing of farm workers. It should fully fund conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program.
6. A new farm bill should end subsidies to large agricultural corporations—but the proposed subsidized insurance program is not a satisfactory replacement because of its opportunities for fraud and abuse.

Agriculture is and always will be the foundation of a healthy economy—all must eat. Please offer a farm bill that considers the overall public welfare and not that of agricultural corporations looking for a handout.

COMMENT OF JONATHAN ALLEN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:59 a.m.

City, State: Brookline, MA

Occupation: Electronics Design Engineer

Comment: My parent's families were all farmers, and so had healthy, unpolluted lifestyles. Without a well balanced farm bill, such living will become totally extinct, and our options as consumers will be eliminated.

COMMENT OF LYNN ALLEN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:00 p.m.

City, State: Santa Fe, NM

Comment: Maintaining safe food, Air, Water, and environment is fundamental to life of all species—including us!

Please protect and enhance that safety by cutting the subsidies to large corporate interests, and maintaining support for “real people” who are devastated by the current economy. Corporations **Are Not Real People**, regardless of their legal status and what politicians may say. Real People need support, not corporations, especially corporations with “Net Profits”!

Your obligation is to the majority of real people, not to corporate interests.

We want to watch you as you serve the real peopled future of this nation and act according to the mission of your governmental department.

COMMENT OF MARIE K. ALLEN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:01 p.m.

City, State: Waco, TX

Occupation: Landscape Consultant

Comment: We need healthy people to have a healthy nation. Unless we have healthy, sustainably produced food, we cannot become or remain healthy. Small, local farms are in the best position to provide such food.

COMMENT OF MATT ALLEN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:11 p.m.

City, State: Raleigh, NC

Occupation: Environmental Geologist

Comment: I would like to see subsidies for big agriculture removed as well as subsidies for corn ethanol. I would like to see more support for small local farmers and incentives for people to get into small farming. The future of our agricultural system is in danger by big agriculture. The food that we currently eat is nutritionally poor and loaded with pesticides and artificial fertilizers. Please open this dialogue and give it some serious thought.

COMMENT OF MITCHELL ALLEN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:33 p.m.

City, State: Clinton, WA

Occupation: Engineer

Comment: Local economies are in disparate need, and a locally focused, small farmer focused farm bill is one of the best ways to support and stimulate local economies.

COMMENTS OF TRISHA ALLEN

Date Submitted: Friday, April 27, 2012, 9:16 a.m.

City, State: Hobe Sound, FL

Occupation: Wine Consultant

Comment: I am for food labeling, in particular the country wide lawsuits involving Monsanto and what percentage of ingredients in our foods that are “UN-naturally” added. I have a friend who has been a beekeeper and am horrified by the over whelming influence this company has had over the quality of our foods. The people are watching how congress and senators vote on this issue very closely. Do the **Right Thing**, and stop voting with your pocket books and political gain for yourselves!

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 03, 2012 9:15 a.m.

Comment: We need GMO labeling on every product Monsanto touches with their conglomerate over our food sources and what they are doing not just in this country, but around the world. We **Need Not Be Afraid** of their \$\$\$ available to fight legislation to keep these bill off the Nov ballots around this country. I am contacting all state legislators and friend and family to be aware and make our voices heard on this issue. It is **Very** important to me and my family’s future.

COMMENT OF WHITNEY ALLEN

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 03, 2012, 11:50 a.m.

City, State: Forest Park, IL

Occupation: Social Worker

Comment: I am a social worker on the West Side of Chicago and every day I see the impact of hunger in these communities. TEFAP and SNAP are absolutely essential resources for millions of Americans. Please do everything you can to strengthen funding for TEFAP and SNAP and oppose proposals that would change SNAP’s structure or reduce funding, restrict eligibility or reduce benefits.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF DR. JOHN ALLOWAY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:24 p.m.

City, State: Cabin John, MD

Occupation: Natural Physician

Comment: As a physician and nutritionist, I am appalled at what passes for food in this country. All you need to look at is the health of Americans to see that a much better food situation is super necessary. Pass the organic food bill or you will see much worse health situations in the future.

COMMENT OF MIRIAM ALLRED

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 10:06 a.m.

City, State: Salt Lake City, UT

Occupation: Technical Writer

Comment: Programs like SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP provide vital assistance to many Americans. I want to live in a country where everyone has the food that they need. Please protect these programs.

COMMENT OF KATHERINE ALMEIDA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:47 a.m.

City, State: Somerville, MA

Occupation: ESL Teacher

Comment: I would like my food to remain local so I know what is in it and who grows it. I am willing to pay higher prices for it, but above all, I want my food to be food, not a genetic lab experiment.

COMMENT OF MIKE ALTEMOSE

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 2:09 p.m.

City, State: Hartford, CT

Comment: Our country (USA) is still in a recovery process from not only what happened on Wall Street, but also from past natural disasters. For proof look at what is happening here in Hartford: shootings and robbery in the streets and at home, people still being laid off from companies in large numbers. Kids being pulled by authorities from their families. Now, to make it worse, Congress is considering cutting the SNAP program that just started and put the burden on D.S.S. and the people they are trying to help. What's up America? This has become the land of the broke and hungry not free and brave.

COMMENT OF ANDREW ALTMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:14 p.m.

City, State: Wyncote, PA

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: I will be teaching my students about the new recommendations for healthy eating. Then I will teach my students about how our government supports farmers. Will my students learn that our country supports healthy eating or huge industrial farm businesses? You decide. I urge you to support fruit and vegetable growers as well as small family farmers and others using humane and sustainable farming practices.

COMMENT OF ARMAND ALTMAN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 6:13 p.m.

City, State: Hyde Park, VT

Comment: Please support this bill, and hopefully your not influenced by the lobbyists. This bill is not only for the health of your family now, but your grandchildren, and future children.

I hope that your not another politician who compromises his vote and values to support the lobbyists on this bill!

COMMENT OF BILLY ALTOM

Date Submitted: Monday, April 02, 2012, 3:18 p.m.

City, State: North Little Rock, AR

Occupation: Advocate for People/Farmers with Disabilities

Comment: April 2, 2012

Hon. FRANK D. LUCAS,
Chairman,
House Committee on Agriculture,
Washington, D.C.

Honorable Chairman Lucas, Ranking Member Peterson and Distinguished Members of the Committee:

Rural policy is driven in large part by the farm bill. The farm bill, however, covers much more than agriculture. Disability issues have generally had little consideration in the bill, with the exception of some attention to housing and technology (e.g., AgrAbility). It is time to change that, and infuse disability into relevant parts of this important rural legislation. This is why the Association of Programs for Rural Independent Living (APRIL) believes that people with disabilities in rural America need to be recognized in the 2012 Farm Bill.

APRIL is a national membership organization dedicated to advancing the rights and responsibilities of people with disabilities in rural America. We provide leadership and resources through a national network of rural centers for independent living, organizations and individuals concerned with the unique aspects of rural independent living. The goal of APRIL is to work with others to find solutions to common problems and to bring rural issues in independent living into focus on the national level.

Farmers and ranchers with disabilities were rightly recognized in 1990 with the creation of the AgrAbility programs. APRIL, and its members, work closely with the state and national program to insure farmers and ranchers with disabilities can remain in their vocation. We seek the same recognition for other rural people with disabilities in this bill.

The health and economic vibrancy of the rural American landscape affects everyone. This includes people with disabilities. Therefore, APRIL urges policy makers to specifically recognize people with disabilities in the reauthorization of the farm bill.

APRIL would urge policy makers to include people with disabilities in all sections of the bill relating to the titles on rural development. For example, in the current bill the section describing "underserved and disadvantaged" populations should specifically include people with disabilities in the list of populations mentioned.

Second, APRIL urges members of Congress to fulfill its promise to rural people with disabilities seeking employment. In 2008 the bill included a new program in Title VI, Subtitle A, Consolidated Farm and Rural Development Act, specifically section 6023.

The short title defined the new program:

The Secretary shall make grants to nonprofit organizations, or to a consortium of nonprofit organizations, to expand and enhance employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities in rural areas;

And,

AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section \$2,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2008 through 2012."

While section 6023 was authorized in the bill and a recommendation of the proposed level of appropriations was included in the bill, no appropriation was ever made, and rules to establish the program were not promulgated.

This reauthorization creates an opportunity for policy makers to be inclusive of all rural Americans as we strive to strengthen our communities.

Respectfully Submitted,

BILLY ALTOM,
Executive Director,
Association of Programs for Rural Independent Living,
[Redacted].
North Little Rock, AR 72114

COMMENT OF JOSE ALVARADO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:04 p.m.

City, State: Colorado Springs, CO

Occupation: Technical

Comment: Large agribusiness does not care about the health effects all the toxins agribusiness uses to produce crops that jeopardize our nation's health thus put-

ting greater strain on our healthcare system and ultimately the general health of our nation. **Its All About Profit Only!**

COMMENT OF JOSE D. ALVARADO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:41 p.m.

City, State: San Pablo, CA

Occupation: Agriculture Engineer

Comment: As consumer, I have the right to know what is the content of my food, as well when I buy clothes, the labels describe me the material of what the clothes are made.

Sincerely,

JOSE D. ALVAADO,
USDA/APHIS/PPQ Officer.

COMMENT OF ANA ALVAREZ

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 3:01 a.m.

City, State: Clermont, FL

Occupation: Disabled ex EMT

Comment: Farmers and eaters across the U.S. benefit from a fair and healthy farm bill. We have to stop the subsidies that guarantees more income to the profitable farm businesses, they don't need it. We have to stop the \$4 million cut from organic research funding and the cut in ½ to the funds to beginning farmers. We have to stop that new subsidize insurance program that leading sustainable agriculture advocates are calling rife with opportunities for fraud and abuse.

While congress is looking to get rid of direct payments to commodity farmers, the subsidized insurance program it proposes to replace it with will allow giant commodity farmers and insurance companies to walk away with billions in taxpayers dollars while putting the land, soil and environment at greater risk. By failing to place limitations on crop insurance subsidies and to re-attach soil erosion and wetland conservation requirements to crop insurance programs, the Committee has failed to do the full reform that it needed. We can't allow this to happen. We need a real reform and a healthy organic future.

COMMENT OF MARGARITA ALVAREZ

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 9:04 p.m.

City, State: Chicago, IL

Occupation: House Wife

Comment: I am currently working on the data collection side of a research project assessing fresh food accessibility in the United States, and is related to child obesity, and I have traveled dozens of communities across the contiguous U.S. and have seen almost no fresh fruit and vegetable availability that is sourced locally. I drive the streets and roads of these, many times rural, communities and find so much agriculture, but none that is destined to be sold locally. More often than not they are commodity crops, or crops to be shipped hundreds or thousands of miles away. I have been in towns that have plenty of grazing land, and many times land roaming with grass-fed cattle, but just around the corner at the local diner, the meat served didn't come from the town itself, it comes from a large agribusiness type company, thousands of miles away, from where the local chain supermarket purchases its meat. This is extraordinarily inefficient! Please make it so that significantly more food is sourced locally in more places across the country. Make this viable for the farmers and the public. One of the **Only** places where I have seen a local bounty of fresh fruits and vegetables readily available via produce stands scattered all over the roads is on the way to Madera California, which produces all kinds of fruits, vegetables and nuts. It is embarrassingly ridiculous how poorly we have reversed progress, as compared to our European counterparts, who have been sourcing so much of their foods locally as has been the case for centuries. Why is it so easy to help large scale agriculture, with subsidies but not small scale agriculture? Why is government so stubborn to change this, when they can see that the only ones that benefit are the ruthless, insatiable large agribusiness companies that seem to run it all. Enough of this, it is slowly killing us all. I want to feel proud of the food I eat. I want to be healthy and I want the land to be healthy. Soybean and Corn by-products should never more be a priority over fruits and vegetables. That kills. Don't you understand, a healthier nation, is better and less of a costly for the nation. We all know somebody affected by obesity or are obese ourselves, so it is obvi-

ous obesity is a top killer in America, and you can do something about it, but will you?

COMMENT OF VERONICA ALVAREZ

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 3:36 p.m.

City, State: Honolulu, HI

Occupation: Restaurant Worker

Comment: We need an Organic Farm Bill. As humans, we cannot continue to ignore the fact that unsustainable petroleum based farming methods will leave the vast majority of us unhealthy and hungry in the long run. We need to take care of our 'aina and our ohana. Food stamps are an important part of keeping people with roofs over their heads and getting families food they need during these uncertain economic time. Mahalo for serving the interests of Hawai'i and all the people here.

COMMENT OF ERV AMDAHL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:22 p.m.

City, State: Sierra Vista, AZ

Occupation: Residential Remodeling Design and Sales

Comment: When the original farm bill was enacted many years ago, it was to help the family farm, but somewhere along the way, it lost its intended purpose and the majority of money goes to corporate farms. That needs to end and go back to helping the small farms and organic farms that produce healthier crops and less or not contaminated by chemicals or genetically modified genes that who knows what the dire consequences could be many years down the road. We already know of many harmful things happening because of genetically modified crops and my guess is, that it's only the beginning of all the problems we'll find out in the future, many of which that are already known but hidden by the likes of Monsanto for their own greed.

COMMENT OF SHARILYN AME

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 11:56 a.m.

City, State: Corvallis, OR

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Dry Beans & Peas, Field Crops, Poultry/poultry products

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: It is time to support small farms, organic farms, and local production for local markets. Food security of regional crops for regional markets needs to become a priority as we enter into an era of increasing fuel insecurity, global climate change, and the corresponding imminent need to wean ourselves off of egregious waste of fossil fuels in food production and distribution.

We must also encourage the transfer of farmland from the aging, soon-to-retire-farmers into the hands of younger, emerging farmers, thus protecting farmland from development and resource extraction. If we are to maintain our freedom and autonomy as nation, proactive recruitment of the next generation of farmers on their own terms is crucial.

More money needs to be set aside for expansion of organic production. Subsidies to big corn and soybean producers must be curtailed, for the health and future of American children is suffering (this is the first generation in recorded history slated to have a lower life expectancy than their parents!), as is the health and future of our soil, our water, and our democracy.

SUBMITTED LETTER BY AMERICAN JEWISH WORLD SERVICE; BREAD FOR THE WORLD; CARE; CHURCH WORLD SERVICE; INSTITUTE FOR AGRICULTURE AND TRADE POLICY; MARYKNOLL OFFICE FOR GLOBAL CONCERNS; MERCY CORPS; MODERNIZING FOREIGN ASSISTANCE NETWORK; OXFAM AMERICA; PARTNERS IN HEALTH; PARTNERSHIP TO CUT HUNGER AND POVERTY IN AFRICA; UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST JUSTICE AND WITNESS MINISTRIES; UNITED METHODIST CHURCH, GENERAL BOARD OF CHURCH AND SOCIETY

May 2, 2012

Hon. FRANK D. LUCAS,
Chairman,
House Committee on Agriculture,

Hon. COLLIN C. PETERSON,
Ranking Minority Member,
House Committee on Agriculture,

Washington, D.C.;
 Hon. ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN,
Chairwoman,
 House Committee on Foreign Affairs,
 Washington, D.C.;

Washington, D.C.;
 Hon. HOWARD BERMAN,
Ranking Minority Member,
 House Committee on Foreign Affairs,
 Washington, D.C.

Dear Chairman Lucas, Chairwoman Ros-Lehtinen, Ranking Members Peterson and Ranking Member Berman,

We the undersigned organizations write to voice our strong support for U.S. international food aid programs, and request that these critical, life-saving programs be strengthened through reforms to improve effectiveness and efficiency. Through programs authorized under the farm bill, U.S. food aid is estimated to have reached more than 65 million people in fiscal year 2010. Emergency relief and development programs supported through food aid can make a difference in the lives of people in need. Benefits include preventing or reversing malnutrition in young children, meeting the food needs of victims of man-made or natural disasters and improving food security for chronically poor households.

This year's reauthorization of the farm bill presents an opportunity to evaluate current program authorities to determine whether they continue to best meet both emergency and development needs. We hope you will take this opportunity to increase the flexibility of the current food aid program structure while maintaining U.S. leadership on global hunger and food security. By building on program improvements introduced in the *Food, Conservation and Energy Act of 2008*, U.S. food aid can reach millions of additional people while maintaining current spending levels.

As you contemplate further updates to the food aid program, we would urge your attention to two specific issues:

- **The expanded use of local and regional procurement as an additional tool for delivering food assistance;**
- **The increased provision of non-food resources to cover program expenses coupled with heightened efficiency targets for monetization activities.**

Local and regional procurement:

Since 2008, the United States has increased support for local and regional procurement of food aid (LRP), including through Section 3206 of the 2008 Farm Bill which authorized a \$60 million pilot program to implement and study LRP activities in both emergency and non-emergency settings. The LRP pilot has been shown to save money and time, adding an important and versatile tool which can be used to reach people in need. **We urge the Agriculture Committee to incorporate greater use of LRP across food aid programs authorized in the farm bill.** Toward this objective, we strongly encourage you to maintain and expand authorities currently provided on a pilot basis under Sec. 3206 of the 2008 Farm Bill. Authorized funding should be set at no less than \$100 million annually.

Increased resource flexibility and addressing monetization:

For most food aid programs, limited funding exists to support the implementation of complementary food security activities alongside direct food distribution. Monetization, the sale of food aid commodities in developing country markets, is commonly used to generate funds needed for these activities. The process of monetization has proven to be an inefficient means of supporting complementary food security activities: according to the Government Accountability Office (GAO), between fiscal year 2008 and 2010, \$219 million in food aid resources was lost as a result of low cost-recovery rates in monetization activities. The same GAO report found that cost recovery for monetization activities averaged 58 percent for USDA administered programs and 76 percent for programs administered by USAID.

In many instances, the use of monetization is not the optimal solution to fund development activities and would not be employed if alternative cash resources were available as part of the food aid programs authorized through the farm bill. In order to address current program limitations, **we urge you to incorporate changes that will increase available non-food resources in food aid programs and improve efficiencies in monetization activities.** Specifically:

- The McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program authorizes the "procurement of agricultural commodities and the provision of financial and technical assistance" to carry out school feeding and maternal and child nutrition programs. This model, in which an implementing partner can request both cash and commodities for program activities, should be replicated in the Title II program.

- Additionally, section 202(e) of the Food for Peace Act should be expanded. Currently, this section authorizes up to 13% of the appropriated levels of the Title II budget to be provided for use in the areas of program logistics, management and certain program-related costs. The Agriculture Committee should expand applicable uses of 202(e) resources and lift the existing 13 percent limit to 18 percent.
- In conjunction with increased cash resource availability, the use of monetization should be curtailed in instances where substantial cost recovery cannot be obtained. Consistent with previous practice and guidance provided by USAID, the farm bill should direct USAID to utilize monetization in instances where at least 80% cost recovery can be achieved, and to use cash resources to fund complementary program activities in countries that cannot achieve this threshold. Oversight, including through regular, public reporting of monetization cost recovery levels achieved by implementing agencies (USAID and USDA) and post-monetization market impact assessments, should also be supported in legislation.

We appreciate your thoughtful leadership on this issue and look forward to working with you to craft improvements to U.S. food aid programs to ensure that they meet the humanitarian and development needs of the 21st century.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

American Jewish World Service	Oxfam America
Bread for the World	Partners In Health
CARE	Partnership to Cut Hunger and Poverty in Africa
Church World Service	United Church of Christ Justice and Witness Ministries
Institute for Agriculture and Trade Pol- icy	United Methodist Church, General Board of Church and Society
Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns	
Mercy Corps	
Modernizing Foreign Assistance Net- work	

CC:

Members of the House Committee on Agriculture;
Members of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs.

COMMENT OF GARY AMMIRATI

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:52 p.m.

City, State: Los Angeles, CA

Occupation: Customer Service

Comment: I have started a small organic edible garden on my land, because it is so hard to trust that food created by others is healthy.

I support the following:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

I believe we need to get off our dependency of oil, almost all pesticides and fertilizers are petroleum based and therefore toxic to humans, that is a good place to start, stricter regulations on the chemicals used in farming, but most of all we need to move from our current large farm farming practices to bio-dynamic farming practices.

COMMENT OF JAMES AMORY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:04 p.m.

City, State: LeRysville, PA

Occupation: Cheesemaking Consultant

Comment: Small dairy farms in general have lower costs and higher profit per cow than mega-dairies, yet we are losing the small units. The "Margin Insurance"

proposals of NMPF, DFA and others does nothing to address this problem, and introduces insurance companies and more speculation into milk pricing.

Please address the real issues of chaotic and manipulative milk pricing.

COMMENT OF LAURIE AMSLER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:59 p.m.

City, State: Albany, NY

Occupation: Furniture Sales

Comment: Instead of money going to big business like Bayer and Monsanto . . . I will no longer buy their products . . . we should be looking into making organic farming better . . . how to work with nature not against her . . . If we don't stop we are going to kill ourselves . . . that's right . . . we are already are . . . please do the right thing and pass this bill.

COMMENT OF SEPTEMBER AMYX

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 4:10 a.m.

City, State: Marysville, CA

Occupation: Retired Military/Disabled

Comment: I used to be a Veterinary Technician for the U.S. Air Force, and part of that job was public health, inspecting food. I find the situation concerning GMO foods, food additives, and the rate of illness and obesity in our country more than alarming. Do you actually realize what sort of quandary our country will be in without good, healthful, 'as God made it' food? You are already seeing the results of low level long term exposure to pesticides and GMO crops; super bugs, subtle but significant alterations in human development, and strange new diseases. Please, do the USA and all of us, including you, a favor. Stop, Think. Whatever your decision is based on, morals, greed, or corporate coercion, it will affect everyone for a far longer time than anyone thinks or has said to you. You've seen what fracking has done to some water supplies, despite all the assurances that it was totally safe. Don't let our food supply suffer the same fate by human manipulation through genetic tampering or unwise use of chemicals, however 'natural' it may presented. Please, I'm asking YOU to be the moral, ethical, and incorruptible government official who makes the difference.

COMMENT OF AMY ANDERSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:39 p.m.

City, State: Saugerties, NY

Occupation: Disabled

Comment: We MUST move towards organic agriculture in order to survive on planet Earth: global warming has become an obvious reality and organic agriculture sequesters CO₂ while non-organic agriculture adds greatly to the CO₂ burden. For this reason I support the following:

- Full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286);
- Fully funding conservation programs such as the Conservation Stewardship Program and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs;
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236); and
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Thank you for your consideration.

COMMENT OF CAROLINE ANDERSON

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 7:58 p.m.

City, State: Tucson, AZ

Occupation: Diagnostic Medical Sonographer

Comment: These last 4 years have been so incredibly difficult for so many, losing jobs and homes, and now we are left with so many more families of all kinds who are struggling to just survive from day to day. Please, while the rest of the country is getting back on their feet, don't forget those having the hardest time just trying to keep sustenance in their children's mouths until they can find a step up to more self-reliance. By passing the farm bill, we hold a helping hand to give those programs which help struggling families something to hang onto until they can again be productive themselves.

COMMENT OF CAROLYN ANDERSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:15 p.m.

City, State: Mt. Pleasant, SC

Occupation: Interior Designer

Comment: I want access to clean, unadulterated, organic food as a means by which to maintain my health and well-being. I also understand that Nature has ways of regaining balance that has been undone by monocultural farming, which tend to be devastating to human and other life. Therefore, I support independent, organic farming in which the care and nurturing of the soil is the best means by which to avoid pests and to grow the most abundant crops.

COMMENT OF CHRISTOPHER J. ANDERSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 2:19 p.m.

City, State: Madison, WI

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: Dear Farm Bill committee,

I am writing to express my hope that you will improve the farm bill so that it better serves America's health and environmental needs. Programs that support projects to put more healthy foods in the hands of low-income individuals (and really all families) demand support in the midst of an obesity epidemic that is taking a staggering toll on lives and our health care bills. At the same time, I hope you'll also support programs that provide training for current and aspiring farmers so that they can develop farming methods that reduce agriculture's environmental impacts. Without this piece we are taking great risks with our shortsightedness. Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,

CHRISTOPHER J. ANDERSON,
High School Biology teacher.

COMMENT OF DAE ANDERSON

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 10:09 p.m.

City, State: Utica, NY

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Please stop subsidies for Big Ag Commodity crops & offer more support for "Specialty Crops" (*i.e.*, fruits and veggies). **Do Not Allow** a Cut to SNAP (food stamp) benefits. People are hungry and need more food money as prices are going up all the time. I am disabled and need this assistance. Please help support greater Conservation spending to protect our lands and waters and to heal the damage that has been done by corporate interests.

Thank you Mr. Hannah.

COMMENT OF ELIZABETH ANDERSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:12 p.m.

City, State: Brooklyn, NY

Occupation: Graphic Designer

Comment: Living in an urban environment far removed from the production of the food that we eat, it is important to ensure that we have access to the best options for both consumers and producers alike. Reducing the gap from farm to table by supporting local farmers, and keeping that option affordable for all city-dwellers and not just the wealthiest, is essential.

COMMENT OF ERIC ANDERSON

Date Submitted: Friday, March 23, 2012, 5:04 p.m.

City, State: Viola, IL

Occupation: Forestry Consultant

Comment: I realize that shrinking Federal budgets will result in program cuts and reductions. I want to express how useful EQIP has been for so many landowners that just want to do the right thing. Please work to maintain funding for EQIP.

I spoke briefly to Representative Schilling following the House Ag. Committee hearing in Galesburg. I wanted to give further feedback on EQIP (Environmental

Quality Incentive Program), a program about which Rep. Schilling inquired. As a forestry consultant I have worked with the EQIP program since about 2007. Each year the program has been tweaked and improved by the NRCS to be evermore relevant to landowner needs. As a consultant I work with an ever growing number of private landowners (currently about 50) mostly in Illinois, but some in Iowa.

In a recent conversation with two long-time timber buyers nearing the end of their careers, the discussion turned to the diminishing quality of hardwood timber in our region. They lamented landowners not planting trees 30 and 40 years ago on harvested timber property. The remaining trees, which were forgotten about and allowed to grow, were low quality or undesirable species (with some exception obviously). This low grade stock makes up much of the mature timber that present day landowners, interested in forest management, must nurse back to health.

EQIP is helping make forestry sustainable in corn and soybean country. It off sets the cost of planning, planting new trees, managing invasive plants, and removing undesirable weed trees, mostly on non-tillable acres. The short term effects of EQIP improve wildlife habitat, aesthetics and work to decrease erosion. Longer term, managed forestry will produce even better wildlife habitat and high quality forestry products.

In the short term EQIP has created interest in managing and making more productive otherwise forgotten farmland and allowed me, as an entrepreneur, to take a passion for conservation that sprouted growing up on the farm in Kansas, matured through my time as a U.S. Peace Corps Volunteer, and blossomed into a job for myself, two full time employees and a number of seasonal employees, in a few short years.

COMMENT OF GAIL ANDERSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:56 p.m.

City, State: Roswell, GA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: It is difficult, at best, to comprehend that I am actually having to write a letter asking my government, the USA, to support the planting and harvesting of non poisonous food. Wouldn't you think this is a no brainer? No one, not even your Grandchildren, wants to eat foods that have been genetically altered and poisoned. How long can you sustain life while breathing, drinking and eating toxins? Please use your common sense and support H.R. 3286 and H.R. 3236, as well as fully funding the Conservation Stewardship Program. Also make sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs. Last but not least, the EQIP Organic Initiative must be maintained. Please don't cut your noses off to spite your faces. Do this for the **People!**

COMMENTS OF GLEN ANDERSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:56 p.m.

City, State: Lacey, WA

Occupation: Retired Government Professional

Comment: The farm bill must include:

- Help for poor people in the U.S. **And Also** in other countries to eat healthful, nutritious food.
- Protection for consumers **Against** genetically modified food and **Against** domination by large agribusiness corporations.
- Protections for small family farms and organic farms.
- **Labeling** of foods containing genetically modified ingredients
- **Labeling** of meat and poultry that came from "factory farms"
- **Vigorous Inspection** of poultry by USDA officials, rather than by poultry processing company employees.

Date Submitted: Friday, April 27, 2012 11:06 a.m.

Comment:

- (1) Protect environmental quality from destructive farming practices (*e.g.*, conserve soil, water, *etc.*, limit pesticides).
- (2) Protect **Small Family Farms** from huge agribusiness.
- (3) **Stop Subsidies** to huge farming operations and to nasty crops such as tobacco and sugar.
- (4) **Protect Farm Workers** from exploitation.
- (5) **Stop Genetically Modified Crops.**

(6) Make school lunches **Healthy And Nutritious** without sugar and junk food, but with fresh fruits and vegetables, and with whole grains.

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012 5:37 p.m.

Comment: **Fully Fund** programs to help poor people, children, the elderly, and other vulnerable demographic groups. **Fully Fund** programs that protect the environment. **Fully Fund** programs that help **Small Farmers** and **Organic Farmers**. **Stop Subsidizing Big Agribusiness, Polluters, etc.**

COMMENT OF JOY ANDERSON

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 10:18 p.m.

City, State: Reno, NV

Occupation: Yoga Instructor

Comment: Get your heads out of your wallets and into the health of this and future generations, money means nothing if you do not have your health No more food devoid of nutrients!

COMMENT OF LEONORA ANDERSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 7:40 a.m.

City, State: Stockholm, NJ

Occupation: Docent

Comment: I urge you to support the farm bill. Many seniors need our help just to be able to put food on their tables. Our older Americans shouldn't have to choose between food or medication, or food and rent. Let's think of ALL seniors and care for them.

COMMENT OF MARILYN ANDERSON

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 11:51 a.m.

City, State: Mill Valley, CA

Occupation: Bookkeeper

Comment: We need to stop supporting big AG that uses pesticides and GMOs that are harmful to our health, and change focus to supporting local family farms that provide good healthy food. Subsidies for Big AG have to stop. Let's use that money instead to provide school lunch programs that teach kids healthy eating habits and in the long run cut our health care costs.

COMMENT OF MARK ANDERSON

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 11:01 a.m.

City, State: Bailey, CO

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Greenhouse/nursery, Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Community and school greenhouses using hydroponic growing systems can be a profitable self sustaining way for communities to learn about the importance of locally grown organic produce. They do not require fertilizers, herbicides, pesticides or any other foreign chemicals an use less than 10% of the water required by traditional farming methods.

For more information on the solution to our agricultural problems call Mark: [Redacted].

COMMENT OF NATHANIAL ANDERSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:13 p.m.

City, State: La Crosse, WI

Comment: Something is killing honey bees, and even as billions are dropping dead across the world, researchers are scrambling to find answers and save one of the most important crop pollinators on Earth.

What is called "colony collapse disorder" hit bee keepers all over the world including 1/2 of the U.S. last spring. Now it has spread to all but a handful of states.

Hives can go from healthy and active to dead and gone.

"In the Australian story, researchers have dissected bees that have died, and they have found that their immune systems have "totally gone to pieces".

As the global collapse of honeybee populations threatens the sustainability of the world food supply, some European organizations are at least trying to do something about it. Today, Britain's largest agriculture co-op announced it would ban eight

pesticides thought to be causing colony collapse disorder. (One of them is called imidacloprid.)

In Germany's Baden-Württemberg state, 500 million bees died in Spring 2008, due to the insecticidal seed treatment agent clothianidin. Another example is the case of a Swabian beekeeper, who destroyed his whole honey harvest because it contained pollen of the GM corn MON810, after an administrative court declared the honey as 'non marketable'.

So far, there are few answers, but there is a long list of possibilities, which include pesticides and genetically modified crops, also known as GMOs or GMs.

However, I have been learning that not much is known about the accumulating impact of pesticides on insects, animals and even people when you consider, in this modern world how many combinations of pesticides are used. One pesticide by itself might not destroy honey bees, but what happens when farmers spray herbicides, fungicides, insecticides and rodenticides on land that also has genetically modified crops with pesticides built-in?

The United States grows nearly $\frac{2}{3}$ of all genetically engineered crops. Last year about 130 million acres were planted with GMs. Much of the soy, corn, cotton and canola have had a gene inserted into their DNA to produce pesticides systemically throughout the plants created and patented by Monsanto. Monsanto also produces genetically modified crops designed not to die when herbicides are sprayed on them. In a perfect biotech world, only the weeds would be killed. But Mother Nature has a way of outwitting human designs. So, now the weeds are becoming resistant to the herbicide sprays and frustrated farmers are putting on more and more poisons.

What this genetically engineered trait does is allow a farmer to spray the herbicide right on the crop, which would have killed the crop, would kill the soybeans, prior to introduction of this gene. The gene comes from a type of bacteria that is found in the soil and it makes the plant immune to the herbicide.

The consequence of this is that glyphosate and Roundup, which is sold by Monsanto—the same company that also sells the seed of the type of soybeans that are immune or resistant to the herbicide—that herbicide has become the most widely used herbicide in the world. The consequence of that is you have one particular herbicide used on a tremendous amount of acreage in the U.S. and elsewhere, especially Argentina and Brazil.

As any biologist would expect, when you have such tremendous pressure on weeds to try to survive this herbicide, some of the weeds that are resistant are selected for and all their competition is killed off. The resistant weeds then proliferate and can no longer be controlled by glyphosate. Then you have a situation where the use of this herbicide has gone up, and on probably millions of acres, other herbicides are having to be used as well as glyphosate in order to control the resistant weeds.

So, what we've been seeing in the past few years is that the overall level of herbicide use is increasing, and it will almost inevitably continue to increase. In this case, it's causing the rise of these resistant weeds and the increased use of herbicides and potentially, may be harming amphibians to boot.

The active ingredient in Round-up is the isopropylamine salt of glyphosate. Glyphosate's mode of action is to inhibit an enzyme involved in the synthesis of the amino acids tyrosine, tryptophan and phenylalanine. It is absorbed through foliage and translocated (moves through plant sap) to growing points. Weeds and grass will generally re-emerge within one to 2 months after usage. Because of this mode of action, it is only effective on actively growing plants. Round-up is not effective as a "pre-emergence herbicide." Monsanto also produces seeds which grow into plants genetically engineered to be tolerant to glyphosate which are known as Round-up Ready crops. The genes contained in these seeds are patented. Such crops allow farmers to use glyphosate as a post-emergence pesticide against both broadleaf and cereal weeds. Soybeans were the first Round-up Ready crop, which was produced at Monsanto's Agracetus Campus located in Middleton, Wisconsin. Current Round-up Ready crops include corn, sorghum, cotton, soybeans, canola and alfalfa.

So here we have it: GMO's Round-up and other pesticides are killing our Bee's, without them the whole world will face starvation!

It is the big pharmaceutical companies that need to be stopped. In the end, they will not only be killing bees, they will be killing us.

It's time we do something!

Kill the poison, save the Bees!

COMMENT OF RAYMOND ANDERSON

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 3:04 p.m.

City, State: Cottage Grove, MN

Occupation: Lifetime Learner

Comment: Eliminate competing objectives:

- Cheap food that contributes to poor nutrition that leads to poor health is not cheap.
- USDA Organics permits additive (carrageenan) shown to cause inflammation, diabetes, and neoplasia. Dr. Joanne K. Tobacman is convinced beyond doubt that it should be eliminated from food. Industry misrepresents the dangers and cannot be trusted.

COMMENT OF REGINA ANDERSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 12:44 p.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Urban Planner/Project Manager

Comment: It is critical that government programs provide a “level playing field” for those engaged in farming, so that small scale and sustainable (non-industrial method) farms can produce and allow farmers to make a good living. The benefits of small scale, sustainable farms to their communities, regional health (by providing very high quality product), and the environment (by providing food products closer to where they are consumed, cutting out “food-miles” travelled) are extremely important impacts that should not be overlooked. Please make sure the Farm Bill 2012 supports small scale, sustainable farming!

COMMENT OF ROBERT ANDERSON

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 6:33 p.m.

City, State: Decorah, IA

Occupation: Biologist

Comment: Please retain or expand conservation programs. With the current high price of corn at this time conservation and protection of soil is taking a back seat. We are losing waterway and buffer strips like mad. Iowa is taking on what could be called scorched Earth with little or no CRP or conservation programs. It is extremely depressing to see all conservation efforts being put under plow all for high fructose corn syrup and ethanol. Please retain conservation programs or better yet expand them. Again, it so very depressing to see all of the conservation efforts being pulled out all in the name of high corn prices. There is little or no CRP left in my area of NE Iowa. I am seeing many conservation efforts like waterways, buffer strips being plowed under for a product that has little to do with food for man.

COMMENT OF SHARON ANDERSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:49 p.m.

City, State: Hammond, OR

Occupation: Senior Citizen with Health/Nutrition Needs

Comment: Please support all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286) and implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).

We in Clatsop County, OR have a great interest in developing a sustainable local food economy, with many young people starting up new farms. They face nearly impossible road blocks on a regular basis. Because they are not large enough to qualify as a “small farm” they cannot get reduced interest rates on loans to buy their land, which will cost one young couple an additional \$89,000 in interest over the course of their 30 yr. loan.

These people love farming more than anything else they’ve ever done in their entire life, they generously donate time and product to local food projects and represent a bright future for our area.

Please help them.

COMMENT OF SHEL ANDERSON

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 7:27 p.m.

City, State: Durham, NC

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I understand the value of corporate agriculture, but I do not want it to be the only option in our country. Having good conservation policy; having opportunity for young farmers to enter the occupation; providing for farmers’ markets and grants to small producers to get extra value for their crops; supporting the organic farms; and making sure that all agricultural investments by taxpayers do NOT go to large corporations—these are my concerns.

COMMENT OF SYLVIA ANDERSON

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 3:33 p.m.

City, State: Albuquerque, NM

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Subsidies and supports for Organic growers. No subsidies or support for growers or producers using government land grazing, chemicals, hormones or GMO products.

COMMENT OF CORLISSA ANDIS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:13 p.m.

City, State: Fremont, CA

Occupation: Hairstylist

Comment: We need balance.

These gigantic ag-farms are a nightmare environmentally. This bill needs to encourage new farming, local farming & organic farming. Do you realize many kids don't know that carrots & potatoes grow in the ground? This is a very noble profession. Community gardens & education are important for our children to experience the importance of farming & feeding the world.

COMMENT OF DARIAN ANDREAS

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 10:28 a.m.

City, State: Falls Church, VA

Occupation: Health/Education

Comment: Dear Congressman Moran,

I am very concerned that reforms in Agribusiness may take this country several steps backward. Insurance subsidies should only be provided to those who meet a minimum conservation standard, and we need more, not less, incentive for new small farmers who use sustainable farming methods. I support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

COMMENT OF CAROLINE ANDREWS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:14 p.m.

City, State: Fullerton, CA

Occupation: Retired Teacher

Comment: The government subsidies and support for big agriculture have been a big part of the obesity epidemic in this country, with hybridized staples and processed food full of additives like high fructose corn syrup becoming the standard diet of so many Americans. It's times to focus support on organic farmers who grow healthy food so that Americans will have a healthy choice.

COMMENT OF DAVID ANDREWS

Date Submitted: Tuesday, March 20, 2012, 6:10 p.m.

City, State: Lubbock, TX

Occupation: Disabled

Comment: It is time for the Farmers of America to stand on their own 2 feet just like everyone is expected to do. We are not guaranteed a wage amount, so nor should the farmers that think they have to have brand new tractors and equipment every year or so. I know a lot of farmers as I have grown up around farmers all my life, and they do not need my taxpayer money to make a living. I am sick and tired of supporting millionaires, I also think we need to do away with the CRP Program, which only pays people to own land. I had to buy my land without any assistance, so I expect people that own land to have to pay for it just as I had to.

COMMENT OF ELAINE ANDREWS

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:09 a.m.

City, State: Boulder, CO
Producer/Non-producer: Producer
Type: Specialty Crops
Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: I believe that the future of food security in this country and the ability of global agriculture to feed the world's people rest with local farmers selling directly to their communities and a plethora of small, biodiverse, independent farms engaged in adapting creatively to changing climatic conditions. This is in contrast to the current trend of relying more and more on industrialized agriculture. Vulnerable monocultures, and high-tech chemicals and practices. Please include in future agricultural legislation, clear support for research in organic and low-tech farming practices and the removal of obstacles making it difficult for small farmers to make a go of it.

COMMENT OF YVONNE ANDREWS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:26 p.m.

City, State: Limington, ME

Occupation: Lic. Vet Tech

Comment: I do not want to eat GMO products, I buy organic seedlings for my garden when I don't start my own seeds, try not to eat too many prepared foods that are not organic and encourage my friends and family to do the same, we need your help!

Thanks.

COMMENT OF JAN ANGEL

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 10:37 a.m.

City, State: Littleton, CO

Occupation: Educator

Comment: There is a gap growing that can lead to a complete closure of communication between the political representatives and the intelligent constitutes that they represent. Just because large quantities of the educated populace have not chosen to go into politics as a career it does not mean that they are not informed or action oriented. The intelligent and educated factions are indeed aware of the manipulation of our food quality by those who seek to ignorantly make a greedy profit by growing chemically toxic produce. This continued practice will eventually lead to the downfall of these corporate practices. There might be the belief that politicians are the most educated and powerful. Yet the fact remains that if enough educated and concerned citizens want healthy food . . . there is nothing that can stop that from happening here in the U.S. We are at that point. Please step up to this and set up a structure that defends American health and well being and turns away from corporate farming practices that are based upon the least intelligent and obviously lowest self serving motives.

COMMENT OF DONALD ANGELL

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 1:35 a.m.

City, State: Battle Creek, MI

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I urge you to pass a farm bill that strongly supports local, small, family farms. Agribusiness is about profits, not healthy, safe food, humane treatment of animals, and protection of the environment. Do you job to support the thousands of small farmers who you represent, not the handful of agribusinesses that throw money at you. Remember who you work for!

I support:

- the full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

COMMENT OF KAREN ANGSTADT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:47 p.m.

City, State: Port St. Lucie, FL

Occupation: Homemaker

Comment: I support the following initiatives for the farm bill:

1. The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
2. Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
3. The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
4. Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

It is essential that agriculture policies adapt to the most urgent needs of the American people—even if they negatively impact large industrial agribusiness. The American people need access to more affordable vegetables and fruits and less over-subsidized and over-processed grains.

I understand that funds are scarce and this is why I ask you to put the needs of the American people ahead of the interest of industrial farming corporations.

In the interest of improving our health and nutrition, the desire to reduce obesity and new cases of type 2 diabetes, and the opportunity to support best practices for growing more nutritious foods, **Please** overhaul where the money goes. Support the needs of the people who are eating.

COMMENT OF NATALIE ANGSTREICH

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 15, 2012, 12:00 p.m.

City, State: New York, NY

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Field Crops, Forestry, Fruits, Greenhouse/nursery, Nuts, Specialty Crops, Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: As an urban grower and educator in nutrition and health, it is essential to keep the funding lines for nutrition and nutrition-education programs supported.

Any cuts to SNAP are unacceptable, as they are the only systemic address of gross income inequality as it manifests in food insecurity. Otherwise we are starving the poor, what's that for compassion?

Please support the following:

- Community Food Projects Program—\$10 million per year to help communities build food self-reliance.
- Farmers Market and Local Food Promotion Program—\$20 million per year to develop farmers market capacity and create food hubs to connect farmers with schools, hospitals, grocery stores and other markets.
- Hunger-Free Community Incentive Grants—An average of \$20 million per year for a new SNAP local fruit and vegetable incentive grant program at farmers markets and other healthy food retailers.

This is the LEAST allocation for healthy food, instead of commodities that are pushed on the American public, fueling heart disease, obesity, and diabetes.

It's time to put our farm subsidies, IF ANY, where they belong: on fresh fruits and vegetables and nuts and seeds: **Real Nutrition.**

COMMENT OF JENNIFER ANSON

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 4:55 a.m.

City, State: Gilbert, AZ

Occupation: Registered Nurse

Comment: I support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Please do not cut organic research and support for beginning farmers. I know how much better I feel when I eat organic and as a citizen feel this is too important of

an area to cut funds from. It is bad enough GMO's are not labeled but to take funding away from our healthy options as citizens should not be allowed and I should have a right to voice supporting funding to the health of myself and family. Our children are not science experiments and healthy alternatives to biotech need to be available and supported.

Sincerely,

JENNIFER ANSON.

COMMENT OF CHERYL ANTHONY

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 10, 2012, 11:12 a.m.

City, State: Fayetteville, GA

Occupation: Unemployed

Comment: America cannot afford to cut food stamp benefits! **So Many** people are still out of work, and barely able to survive. Perhaps the approval process for receipt of food stamps needs to be re-vamped to ensure that only those people who are in dire straights receive them, but cutting food stamps for those who depend in them for their survival would be devastating for many, many Americans.

COMMENT OF JAMIE ANTONE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:32 p.m.

City, State: Houston, TX

Occupation: Retail

Comment: I support an Organic Farm Bill to stand up for farmers, eaters and the environment.

If Congress and the current Administration are serious about the health of America's citizens, our environment and the economic viability of independently owned family farms, they will:

Implement a \$25 billion plan to transition to organic food and farming production, to make sure that 75 percent of U.S. farms are U.S.D.A. organic certified by 2025.

Feed organic food to all children enrolled in public school lunch programs by the year 2020.

Pass a Beginning Farmer and Rancher Bill to place a million new farmers on the land by 2020.

Link conservation compliance with government-subsidized insurance programs and create a cutoff so each farm receives government funds for land only up to 1,000 acres.

COMMENT OF BETH APPEL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:53 p.m.

City, State: Chicago, IL

Occupation: Rabbi

Comment: We need a farm bill that supports sustainable agriculture. We need a farm bill that helps the neediest of this country's citizens with SNAP benefits. We need a farm bill that prioritizes the production and distribution of healthy foods.

COMMENT OF SALLY APPEL-GATE-RODEMAN

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 12:15 p.m.

City, State: Indianapolis, IN

Occupation: Retired Teacher

Comment: Dear Representative Burton,

As your constituent, I favor a farm bill which makes healthy and even organic food widely available to Americans. I would like the bill to support the family farmer and the next generation of farmers. The bill needs to support farming while protecting the American environment. No special subsidies or incentives need be given to large agribusiness concerns such as Monsanto or Bayer. I support the Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative and the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program. Both are relatively inexpensive to fund, at \$30 million and \$25 million respectively, and would do much to improve America. Thank you.

COMMENT OF LISA ARBUCKLE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:54 p.m.

City, State: Gilbert, AZ

Occupation: Healthcare

Comment: Mr. Flake:

We cannot allow programs for healthy and organic grains, fruits & vegetables to be cut. These are exactly the programs that need to have additional funding. If you want to take money OUT of the budget—take it from big ag corporations like Monsanto that have killed our soil and have stolen the soul from the farming industry.

These big ag companies make billions of dollars a year. WHY are we paying them subsidies? They should be paying all of us in order to subsidize our health care costs for their poisonous products.

Make no mistake, the politicians who are supporting the big ag monster will not keep their jobs in the next election. The veil has been lifted and it's time our politicians are held accountable for their greed and corrupt dealings.

I fully support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Do The Right Thing. Stand up for **People** and stand up for our future on this planet.

COMMENT OF LISA ARENDS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:38 p.m.

City, State: Brooklyn, CT

Occupation: Manager

Comment: Please:

- Protect our food chains, streams and environment.
- Protect and encourage locally grown organic farming.
- All human beings should have access to natural foods free of pesticides, chemicals and genetic modifications.
- All food should be properly labeled to allow consumers to make informed choices to protect themselves from allergic reactions and cancer causing food additives.
- Fully fund conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- Fully fund local agriculture initiatives.
- Allow local food processing facilities to minimize nationwide *Salmonella* & other food borne illnesses.
- Implement Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunities.
- Maintain Organic Initiatives.
- Endorse honest labeling for all food.
- Mandate farm to school initiatives to get locally produced healthy fruits & vegetables in the hands & mouths of our school children.

COMMENT OF ROBERT ARGUE

Date Submitted: Friday, April 27, 2012, 9:16 a.m.

City, State: Bridgman, MI

Occupation: Nonprofit Coordinator

Comment: TEFAP and SNAP are sometimes the only way that children, low-income parents and senior citizens have anything to eat during the day. Do not cut these programs.

COMMENT OF ALTO ARIE

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 12:37 p.m.

City, State: Cranston, RI

Occupation: Musician

Comment: Yo, I think that the way our food is produced is whack. There are chemicals in everything from garlic to grape fruit! I honestly feel that we should stop all use of pesticides and other crazy stuff I don't even know about. I am a compassionate **Vegan** and know that the dairy-egg-meat industry is ruining the world

as we know it and greatly damaging our health! I think that farmers markets are good because they grow locally and build communities . . . Plus they are good for the economy because people can use food stamps to buy vegetables and fruits . . . This message is meant to support the House Agriculture Committee and hopefully inspire people to partake in wiser and more reasonable practices regarding the cultivation, distribution and promotion of whole organic plant based food sources. If you agree you have my support 110%.

Be Vegan Make Peace,

Mr. ALTO ARIE.

COMMENT OF SHIVANI ARJUNA

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 11:20 p.m.

City, State: Belgium, WI

Occupation: Wellness Consultant

Comment: We need REAL reform. Please support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

It would be a terrible mistake to cut \$33 billion from the food stamp program while leaving farm subsidies unscathed and/or spending \$33 billion to guarantee the income of profitable farm businesses.

Cutting funding for organic research and Beginning Farmers is another terrible idea.

While getting rid of direct payments to commodity farmers, the subsidized insurance program proposed to replace that would allow giant commodity farmers and insurance companies to walk away with billions in taxpayer dollars while putting the land, soil and environment at greater risk.

We need **Real** reform!

COMMENT OF ANDREW ARLT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:12 a.m.

City, State: St. Paul, MN

Occupation: Teacher (Science)

Comment: As an environmental and science educator in a low-income, high-needs alternative school, I have seen the effect that limited food resources for things like school lunch and community food access programs can have on children and families.

Nutrition programming for schools and communities must be stepped up if we are going to be able to provide a skills-based change for hunger. Money for school garden initiatives, community gardening programs, and local or urban farms must be a priority over subsidizing and supported agribusiness.

By returning money from corporate agribusiness and reallocating funds towards smaller scale, family operations, we will be providing jobs, stability, and food security for a new generation of farmers—even for those with no family history of farming.

Please help redistribute and fund the local farm and food system in America!

Sincerely,

ANDREW ARLT.

COMMENT OF CASEY ARMAN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 10:57 a.m.

City, State: Waitsfield, VT

Occupation: Interior Design and Sales

Comment: Please stop supporting and subsidizing big business farms and predatory corporations like Monsanto. I believe your support and funding should instead be directed at supporting smaller, locally and family owned agricultural producers, especially those that operate using environmentally friendly, sustainable farming practices and organic growing methods.

COMMENT OF KEN ARMIJO

Date Submitted: Thursday, April 12, 2012, 7:07 p.m.

City, State: Bosque, NM

Occupation: Farmer

Comment: I participate in a food drive every month through the Saint Vincent de Paul Society and the New Mexico Roadrunner Food Bank. We donate food for over 100 families living in poverty conditions. The food we donate is mere subsistence that these hard-working folks from Veguita, Las Nutrias and La Joya, New Mexico depend on. Please do not let the TEFAP food fund decrease again. We need this fund.

COMMENT OF KATHARINE ARMSTRONG

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:16 p.m.

City, State: Denver, CO

Occupation: Urban Forager

Comment: Let's support the small sustainable family farms and let the big AgBiz fend for themselves. I do not want my tax dollars to go for the producers of toxic food-like substances. I want to support the healthiest ways of producing foods, including healthy for the environment and the soils.

COMMENT OF ROBIN ARMSTRONG

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:42 p.m.

City, State: Glastonbury, CT

Occupation: Taxpayer

Comment: It is absolutely **Criminal** that our government allows big agribusiness to poison our food supply without giving the people so much as a warning. If GMO foods were as good as the real thing, corporations should have no issue with simply labeling them. By the fact that Monsanto threatens to sue the state of Vermont for requiring labeling is a clear indication that GMO's are poison. Organic farming can not be threatened by corporate greed. **Wake Up** and do what is right for the human race—require GMO farming to be completely isolated so it does not contaminate the Earth, allow organic farmers to sue agribusiness for crop contamination if GMOs are not contained, force agribusiness to pay for the environmental destruction they have caused, just like big oil and tobacco, and most of all require GMO foods to be **Labeled** so that we can make a democratic **Choice!**

COMMENT OF STANLEY ARMSTRONG

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:28 p.m.

City, State: Martinez, CA

Occupation: Hardware Store Sales

Comment: Please consider our agriculture future as a gold mine. Our agriculture needs to keep us strong and healthy. We need to eliminate toxins from our foods. We need to be responsible with our soil for future generations to survive.

COMMENT OF SUSAN ARMSTRONG

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 7:57 a.m.

City, State: Hackettstown, NJ

Occupation: Writer

Comment: Organic farming is crucial to the health of our country and planet. It is a crime that the food supply, obviously essential to life, is in the hands of chemical companies like Monsanto, a creator of agent orange and other deadly products. Small sustainable farms, run by farmers who respect and understand the land as a living organism should be supported, not criminalized. Many countries do not even allow GMO's yet in the so called land of the free, we are fighting for the simple right to label these poisons.

“A society that no longer recognizes that Nature and Human Life have a sacred dimension and an intrinsic value beyond a monetary value commits collective suicide.” Hedges

Thank you and please allow your humanity to speak instead of your bottom line.

COMMENT OF VIVIENNE ARMSTRONG

Date Submitted: Wednesday, April 11, 2012, 5:31 p.m.

City, State: Dallas, TX

Occupation: Registered Nurse

Comment: I am a registered nurse at The Visiting Nurse Association of Texas. I see senior citizens struggling to meet their daily nutritional needs. I recall some who have gotten only a sack of potato chips and a can of high sodium soup from a food bank! With traditional food streams declining, the area agencies continue to find it difficult to meet the needs of our community, despite the improvement of the economy. We need a strong farm bill to make sure that we can put food on the table for those that are still struggling. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP. These programs are a lifeline to people struggling with hunger in your district, and I urge you to make them a priority in the next farm bill.

COMMENT OF WANDA ARMSTRONG

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 08, 2012, 2:35 p.m.

City, State: Orlando, FL

Occupation: Supportive Housing Specialist

Comment: I help a great deal of homeless in the Orange County area. I would hate to know that food is not available for most of them to eat. Without TEFAF foods I know we could not stay open for them.

COMMENT OF GAIL ARNOLD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:02 p.m.

City, State: Watertown, MA

Occupation: School Teacher

Comment: Dear Representative Markey, I had the pleasure of meeting you at an event with Nancy Pelosi 2 weeks ago.

I won't take much of your time, but I do hope that you support the farm bill, particularly the need to support small farmers and to consider the nutritional needs of children and allow substantial funding for programs that promote healthy food choices for children (and adults).

Thank you,

Sincerely,

GAIL ARNOLD.

COMMENT OF LAURA ARNOLD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:29 p.m.

City, State: San Diego, CA

Occupation: Business Owner—Recruiting

Comment: Citizens need to have the right to know what they are eating and have a choice to purchase 'certified' Organic without exposure to GMO contamination.

COMMENT OF MATT ARNS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:17 p.m.

City, State: Evans, CO

Occupation: Analyst

Comment: The farm bill should be used to help local farmers produce enough food to sport their communities, not to subsidize monopolistic multibillion-dollar agribusiness giants that are more interested in magnifying the petrochemical market than in actually producing food of the quality and quantity needed to sustain the American people, while also keeping our land fertile and sustainable for future generations.

COMMENT OF ADAM ARONSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:54 p.m.

City, State: New York, NY

Occupation: Education Professional

Comment: It is important to me that the value of organic farming be recognized in the next version of the farm bill. It will not only help promote small farmers for making a sustainable wage, but also ensure healthier options for families.

COMMENT OF NANCY ARPIN

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 9:15 a.m.

City, State: Ludlow, MA

Occupation: Information Technology Analyst

Comment: The time has come to truly reform our farming industry in the U.S. it is a sad state when I would feel more comfortable feeding my children food from other countries because I know that they require clear labeling identifying important information about the food, such as containing GMO's.

Our government makes decisions that are in the favor of giant lobbyist agriculture biotech companies when it should be acting on behalf of its citizens. Anyone in their right mind can understand that a chemical company should not be leading our farming industry. It doesn't make sense.

It is also sad to know that in order to feed my family food that will not keep me awake at night means that I have to put myself into the poor house to purchase pricey organic foods. We should be supporting organic farming methods, not methods that are laden with pesticides, herbicides, and all the like, that are putting our health, our children, and our environment at detrimental risk!

Please do the right thing.

COMMENT OF MELISSA ARRA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:24 a.m.

City, State: Brooklyn, NY

Occupation: Freelance Artist

Comment: I would like to see greater support for small and mid-sized farms, especially those producing organic foods and practicing sustainable farming methods.

I would like to see fewer subsidies going to large agri and factory farms and more subsidies going to smaller farms—family owned and cooperatives.

I'd also like increased support for our farmers using less pesticides/herbicides and chemicals. I believe these farmers are producing healthier more nutritious foods and ensuring a cleaner planet that will sustain generations to come *versus*. contributing to the overwhelming amount of chemicals that are currently used in many farming practices.

COMMENT OF ALICE ARTZT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:49 a.m.

City, State: Princeton, NJ

Occupation: Classical Musician

Comment: Stop letting farmers use pesticides that are killing bees and other pollinators. Stop the use of GMO crops—or at least label them so we can avoid eating toxic stuff. Stop feeding GMO crops to farm animals rendering them unfit to eat also. Stop helping and subsidizing big factory farmers and start helping the little organic family farms.

COMMENT OF LTC MARK ARVIDSON

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 1:24 a.m.

City, State: Eagle River, AK

Occupation: Retired Army, Building Home/Landscape

Comment: As a former emergency preparedness officer (WMD-CST) for the U.S. Army, and an agricultural advocate, I firmly believe the U.S. should ensure that food security is a priority. This is especially important here in Alaska, where we support local agricultural initiatives such as Alaska Grown, local farmers' markets, urban agriculture and the recent initiatives in Fairbanks such as Resilient Alaska and vertical farming. It is critical to maintain biodiversity and to shorten the distance from farm to table.

Kind Regards,

MARK ARVIDSON, *Lieutenant Colonel*, U.S. Army (Retired).

COMMENT OF ELICIA ARWEN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:05 p.m.

City, State: Boulder, CO

Occupation: Psychotherapist

Comment: I believe small organic farms should be encouraged and supported by the United States government. Organic and sustainable farming should be the fu-

ture of farming in this country. Beginning farmers practicing organic and sustainable farming should also be supported.

COMMENT OF JASMIN ARZATE

Date Submitted: Wednesday, April 11, 2012, 4:04 p.m.

City, State: Albuquerque, NM

Occupation: School Counselor

Comment: Our school's population is a very high-needs and poverty is a huge issue; the roadrunner food boxes have been a huge benefit to our students and it would be a tremendous loss to not receive them anymore or even to cut the amount we receive—many students do not have food in the house and rely on the meals at school for nourishment; the food boxes allow them to have something to eat, while their parents (if in the picture) can focus their funds on paying rent or utilities. Please do not consider decreasing the funding to the Roadrunner Food Bank—they serve a huge population that many benefit from!

COMMENT OF JOHN ASADOURIAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:00 p.m.

City, State: Prescott, AZ

Occupation: Carpenter

Comment: In order to make no-till agriculture work, you have to get the feedback from those in the industry who are applying the chemicals and know from their own health concerns, there must be other options. By enhancing soil bacteria with fulvic and humic acid, the no-till soil approach can still work but with a sustainable spin. Whomever in the House is looking at these comments, do you feed your family only organic produce and meat products? Thanks for your time.

COMMENT OF MUAREEN ASH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:08 p.m.

City, State: River Falls, WI

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Field Crops

Size: 151–300 acres

Comment: I continually hear that organic agriculture is inefficient and cannot feed the world. Conventional agriculture is not doing it, either. Why is it so heavily subsidized through research institutions such as our local college? We organic farmers had to teach each other. That is just one way in which industrial ag gets a break.

COMMENT OF EVELYN ASHER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:39 p.m.

City, State: Bloomfield, NY

Occupation: Health Care

Comment: Continuing to force-feed Americans herbicide and pesticide laden produce, devoid of essential nutrients, and meats loaded with antibiotics, hormones and other toxic ingredients, while harassing farmers who produce healthy, clean and nutrition foods is a criminal act beyond imagination. If enemies were sneaking these toxic ingredients into our food supply, it would be considered a terrorist act, so why should our own industrial farmers be allowed to make us all sick? If you don't start protecting Americans from the travesty of industrial farming, Americans will not have much of a future. **We Need Sustainable, Chemical-Free Agriculture. Protect Our Small Farms From Monsanto And Other Big-Ag Bullies!**

American Consumers Want Clean Nutritious, Organic Food And "Yes" It Is Possible To Produce This On A Large Scale. The World Health Organization Agrees. Check It Out!

COMMENT OF MARGARET ASHLEY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:30 p.m.

City, State: Cambridge, MA

Occupation: Nurse

Comment: Please support small family farms and organic farms. Support programs that teach children and parents about good nutrition and fresh whole foods.

COMMENT OF GERRARD ASHTON

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 4:11 p.m.

City, State: Everett, WA

Occupation: Unemployed

Comment: There is absolutely no doubt that America is in the worst health crisis this world has ever seen—with preventable diseases. With highly processed, high calorie, nutritionally bankrupt foods, you will never solve this problem. Also, more drugs, more research and surgeries will never solve the problem. People don't have medication deficiencies, they do have nutritional deficiencies. The only way to ever get ahead of it, is with locally grown, fresh, **Affordable** unprocessed organic food. Every family I talk to tells me that produce is too expensive, they end up feeding their family 6 days a week at fast food restaurants. Yes, pretty much all of them are overweight and suffering health problems. I ask them if produce and whole food were more affordable if they would change their diet, and every one of them says yes.

We need to get every American off the S.A.D. (standard American diet) diet!

COMMENT OF JANICE ASHWOOD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:58 p.m.

City, State: Vermont, IL

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Field Crops, Livestock

Size: 1,000+ acres

Comment: I am in total agreement with Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack. *Agrinews* (May 18, 2012) He is talking about the tremendous opportunities agriculture presents “there’s no better calling to be able to improve the environment of this country, to make sure we continue to have the soil that allows us to have this rich diversity of agricultural production, to be able to clean up the waters of our country”

When writing this farm bill consider our environment, our soil and most of all, our most precious commodity, our water.

COMMENT OF MICHAEL ASKEW

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:49 p.m.

City, State: Dallas, TX

Occupation: Marketing Professional and Organic Consumer

Comment: Please support the crucial area of organic farming and produce. Do not cut research or other funding for this as it is crucial to our generation and the next ones.

Thank you.

MICHAEL ASKEW.

SUBMITTED STATEMENT BY ASSOCIATION OF KANSAS FOOD BANKS

Chairman Lucas and Ranking Member Peterson, thank you for the opportunity to submit this statement for the record on behalf of the Kansas Food Bank, Harvesters—The Community Food Network and Second Harvest Community Food Bank, which are the Feeding America food banks serving Kansas.

On behalf of the nearly 200,000 Kansans we serve each year, we urge you to protect and strengthen Federal nutrition programs in the upcoming farm bill

Our three food banks collectively serve every county in the state. We represent the state’s network of emergency food providers, which includes nearly 400 emergency food pantries, soup kitchens and shelters. We serve nearly 200,000 people in need in Kansas annually and work closely with Kansas’ farmers, processors, retailers, schools, churches, community organizations, and the public sector to meet the needs of the hungry in our state.

The demand for food assistance has increased significantly during the recession, and Kansas’ network of food banks, church pantries, soup kitchens and other local agencies are stretched thin trying to keep up with requests for assistance. Our three food banks and our local partner agencies have seen a significant increase (approximately 40%) in the number of people turning to our network for assistance since 2008. Many of us are barely able to keep up with current demand, let alone serve even more people seeking food for their families if they lose Federal nutrition assistance.

Federal nutrition programs provide a lifeline for low-income families struggling to make ends meet. Local charities could not provide current levels of food assistance without support from The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) and the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP). In addition to emergency feeding, many of us also work to connect eligible clients with the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) when they are in need of more than the short-term, emergency food assistance we provide. We suggest the following in the 2012 Farm Bill:

Policy Recommendations:

The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP): TEFAP is a means-tested Federal program that provides food commodities at no cost to Americans in need of short-term hunger relief through organizations like food banks, pantries, soup kitchens, and emergency shelters. Nutritious food commodities provided through TEFAP are an essential resource for Feeding America food banks. As the demand for food remains high at food banks across the country, a continuous stream of TEFAP commodities is necessary for the provision of a steady emergency food supply.

- TEFAP commodities account for approximately 25% of the food moving through Feeding America food banks. Food banks combine TEFAP with private donations to maximize TEFAP benefits far beyond the budgeted amount for the program. In this way, food banks exemplify an optimum model of public-private partnership.
- TEFAP has a strong impact on the farm economy. According to the USDA's Economic Research Service, producers of commodities provided as bonus TEFAP (those purchased by the USDA to intervene in weak agricultural markets) receive an estimated 85¢ per dollar of Federal expenditure. Producers of other commodities provided through TEFAP receive about 27¢ per dollar. By contrast, only about 16¢ of every retail food dollar goes back to the farmer.
- Declines in Section 32 funding and strong agriculture markets resulted in a nearly 30% decline (\$173 million) in TEFAP purchases during FY 2011. This decline is expected to continue in FY 2012 as food banks struggle to meet increased need. The shortfall between supply and demand will only worsen when the SNAP ARRA benefit boost expires, as many participants turn to food banks to make up for the reduction in benefit levels.
- TEFAP Administrative funding supports the storage, transportation and distribution of TEFAP commodities, providing food banks and partner agencies with the resources to get emergency food assistance to those in need. Fuel prices increased by 26.4% in 2011, on top of an 18.4% increase in 2010, significantly increasing the costs of transporting and distributing commodities and decreasing the purchasing power of these funds.
- As food banks serve a growing number of clients, TEFAP Infrastructure Grants support the infrastructure needed to ensure effective and efficient delivery of TEFAP foods. In FY 2010, USDA had at least four times as many applicants for these grants as they had funding to award, demonstrating the need for infrastructure support.

Farm Bill Priorities for TEFAP:

- Increase funding for mandatory TEFAP to better reflect the need for emergency food assistance.
- Clarify the Secretary of Agriculture's authority to purchase bonus commodities in times of high need for emergency food relief in addition to times of low commodity prices so the program is responsive both to excess supply and excess demand.
- Reauthorize funding for TEFAP Administrative funding at \$100 million per year and rename it TEFAP Storage and Distribution Funds to accurately reflect the funding's purpose.
- Reauthorize funding for TEFAP Infrastructure Grants at \$15 million per year.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP): SNAP is the cornerstone of the nutrition safety net, providing more than 46 million low-income participants with monthly benefits via a grocery debit card. Eligibility is based on household income and assets and is subject to work and citizenship requirements. SNAP is one of the most responsive safety net programs, expanding quickly to meet the rising need during the recession. The program is targeted at our most vulnerable; 76% of SNAP households contain a child, senior, or disabled member, and 84% of all benefits go to these households.

- As the number of people unemployed grew 94% from 2007 to 2010, SNAP responded with a 70% increase in participation over the same period. As the economy slowly recovers and unemployment begins to fall, SNAP participation and costs, too, can be expected to decline.
- The SNAP accuracy rate of 96.19% (FY10) is at an all-time program high. SNAP error rates declined by 61% from FY 1999 to FY 2010, from 9.86% to a record low of 3.81%.
- SNAP benefits supplement a household's food budget but are insufficient to last most participants through the month, causing many participants to rely regularly on food banks. Among Feeding America food pantry clients receiving SNAP benefits, over ½ (58%) reported having visited a food pantry at least 6 months or more during the prior year.
- The average SNAP household has a gross monthly income of \$731 and countable resources of \$333, consists of 2.2 persons, and participates in the program for 9 months. The average household receives a monthly benefit of \$287, or about \$1.49 per person per meal.

Farm Bill Priorities for SNAP:

- Protect SNAP by opposing proposals to cap or reduce funding, restrict eligibility, reduce benefits, or otherwise impede access or benefit adequacy. Recent proposals to block grant the program would prevent it from responding effectively to fluctuations in need, and efforts to limit broad-based categorical eligibility would increase administrative costs and access barriers.
- Restore the cut to the SNAP ARRA benefit boost used to pay for the 2010 child nutrition bill and phase out the boost in a way that protects families from a cliff in benefit levels.
- Encourage better nutrition by maintaining nutrition education, incentivizing the purchase of healthy foods, and ensuring that retailer standards balance adequate access to stores with access to a range of healthy foods and moderate prices.
- Build on SNAP's strong record of integrity and payment accuracy by issuing guidance to states on the eligibility of lottery winners and college students and upgrading resources and technology for trafficking prevention.

Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP): CSFP leverages government buying power to provide nutritious food packages to approximately 599,000 low-income people each month. Nearly 97% of program participants are seniors with incomes of less than 130% of the poverty line (approximately \$14,000 for a senior living alone). Currently, 39 states and the District of Columbia participate in CSFP. Another six states (CT, HI, ID, MD, MA, & RI) have USDA-approved plans, but have not yet received appropriations to begin service.

- CSFP is an efficient and effective program. While the cost to the USDA to purchase commodities for this package of food is about \$20 per month, the average retail value of the foods in the package is \$50.
- CSFP helps to combat the poor health conditions often found in seniors who are experiencing food insecurity and are at risk of hunger. CSFP food packages, specifically designed to supplement nutrients typically lacking in participants' diets like protein, iron, and zinc, can play an important role in addressing the nutrition needs of low-income seniors.
- Many seniors participating in CSFP are able to have their food boxes delivered directly to their homes or to senior centers nearby, an important benefit for those who are homebound, have limited mobility or do not have convenient access to a grocery store.

Farm Bill Priorities for CSFP:

- Transition CSFP to a seniors-only program while grandfathering in current participants to promote greater efficiencies and recognize CSFP's evolution to serving a primarily senior population.

For a growing numbers of Americans, food banks are the only resource standing between them being able to put food on the family dinner table or going to bed with an empty stomach. However, the charitable food assistance network alone cannot meet the needs of these families. It is only through our public-private partnership with the Federal Government through programs like TEFAP and CSFP and sustained support for SNAP and other programs in the nutrition safety net that we can make real strides in the fight against hunger.

As Congress drafts the next farm bill, we ask you to remember the families in Kansas who are facing hunger and the important role that nutrition programs play in their health and well-being, especially for vulnerable children and seniors. We are

continuing to explore opportunities to enhance support for Federal nutrition programs through programmatic or policy innovations, and look forward to working with you as you review the title IV nutrition programs and begin the work of crafting the next farm bill. Congress must keep the nutritional safety net strong—the health of our communities depends on it.

Respectfully Submitted,

BRIAN WALKER,
President & CEO,
Kansas Food Bank;

KAREN HAREN,
President & CEO,
Harvesters—The Community Food Network;

DAVID DAVENPORT,
Executive Director,
Second Harvest Community Food Bank.

COMMENT OF MARK ATHERLAY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:44 p.m.

City, State: Los Angeles, CA

Occupation: Voiceover Actor

Comment: PLEASE allow farmers the dignity of doing what they do best, **Farming!** (Without Agri-Business interfering and squeezing them out of business.) **We the People** demand it!

COMMENT OF MARY ATKINSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:16 a.m.

City, State: Richmond, VA

Occupation: Working Artist—Painter

Comment: Enough of Big Ag . . . our food becomes more and more frightening, toxic and lacking in cleanliness. Please support small farms and organic farms,
MARY ATKINSON.

COMMENT OF GURUNAM ATWAL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:52 p.m.

City, State: Eugene, OR

Occupation: Student

Comment: We all deserve to eat healthy, wholesome, organic food that nourishes our bodies. Would you feed your children this food? It is important to maintain a food system that listens to the natural ecosystem that has been functioning on its own for centuries before we came along. We must work hard to maintain a food system that grows food as close to the natural ecosystems as possible.

COMMENT OF FRANCES AUBREY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 04, 2012, 9:58 p.m.

City, State: Kensington, CA

Occupation: Artist and Writer

Comment: I eat only local, organic meat and produce. In order to reduce our country's dependence on oil, we must support small farmers, especially organic farmers. We should not subsidize huge agribusinesses which ruin the soil with chemicals. We must move toward food independence on a local level, and not rely on produce and meat flown in from other countries.

COMMENT OF MARISHA AUERBACH

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 15, 2012, 11:04 a.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Other

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Diverse farms based on the principles of nature support healthy community ecosystems. Please encourage closed system design where the soil is built onsite using natural processes like composting and strategies for attracting diverse pollinators into the field. The strength and resilience of our national food system comes from tending to our soils for long term stability.

COMMENT OF DARCY AUGELLO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:11 p.m.

City, State: Doylestown, PA

Occupation: Bookkeeper

Comment: I have been a grower of Organic Vegetables for over 15 years and Organic Free Range Egg. Given the extensive amount of information that is now readily available to the **Average** American it is imperative that a farm bill is created with conservation and support for organic and sustainable agriculture as it's number one priority. The American People will stand for nothing less.

COMMENT OF RICHARD AULICINO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:36 p.m.

City, State: Lake George, NY

Occupation: Holistic Dentist

Comment: Farm policy must favor small farms, organic farms = health of the population. GMO and Monsanto like progress is at the expense of human life which is subservient to profit. The more I find out about health and food the more greed seems to come up *versus* respect for nature and each other and the animals. We are part of this Earth and it will take care of us as we care for it. Small farms and organic farms are key.

COMMENT OF RICK AUMAN

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 4:37 p.m.

City, State: Las Vegas, NV

Occupation: Web Developer

Comment: Small farms help America in so many ways: most use sustainable practices, keeping the soil from being devastated from nutrients and holding pollutants/toxins down.

COMMENT OF CAROL AUSTIN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:32 p.m.

City, State: Bellingham, WA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Livestock

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Do you think you can hold off on helping giant corporations make us sick and kill us with their bad practices, and actually work for the people who elected you? Oh wait, I forget that getting rich helping giant corporations is what most politicians do. Then after you let them make us sick, you can hand us over to the health care and insurance corporations so they can finish milking all our money out of us before we die. Thus insuring that there is nothing left to pass to our children. That's the American way all right—the politicians and corporations get it all while the 99% end up with nothing.

COMMENT OF LESLEY AUSTIN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:08 p.m.

City, State: Burlington, VA

Occupation: Homemaker, Entrepreneur

Comment: It is very simple, please start to care more about the Earth and the farmers and the animals than corporate greed and power. Please acknowledge the connections between the way the Earth is tended and the health of our food, our people, our land. It is so clear to see that far too many decisions in farm policy are made to placate the huge companies and their desire to hold on to and grow their profits rather than protect and support small farmers, who ought to be the at the heart of our farm policy.

How I wish Thomas Jefferson was here to eloquently remind you of the importance of holding our country's agricultural health higher than the seeking of more monetary wealth for the pockets of a comparative few.

Please do the right thing!

COMMENT OF RICHARD AUSTIN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:13 p.m.

City, State: Rio Frio, TX

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: I am in support of an Organic Farm Bill that protects and subsidizes small, organic family farms and removes support from large agribusinesses. This change is vital for the health of all Americans.

COMMENT OF SHELLY AUSTIN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:08 p.m.

City, State: Newbury Park, CA

Occupation: Planner

Comment: Please help protect organic farms and the health of the American. We need small, sustainable farms to be given government assistance—not big agricultural companies who are taking the nutrition out of our food and making us fat!

COMMENT OF ANNEMARIE AVANTI

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 6:01 p.m.

City, State: Phoenix, AZ

Occupation: Retired Director of Social Services

Comment: As a former director of programs for Seniors, I've witnessed firsthand retired elders choosing between paying for their medicine, housing and food. I've witnessed some who've chosen to eat canned pet food so they could afford to pay all their bills. At one point in my career, I oversaw a daily evening meals program for the hungry. A majority of those eating dinner, were elderly citizens whose retirement income did not support regular healthy nutrition.

These situations are a travesty in our country. Poor nutrition for seniors only increases our country's Medicare bills. Cutting the (SNAP) food stamp program, (TEFAP)emergency food assistance program, and (CSFP) food boxes for seniors, will leave millions of seniors hungry.

Please protect these programs and fund them to their fullest capacity.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF ROBERTA AVIDOR

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:59 a.m.

City, State: Minneapolis, MN

Occupation: Illustrator

Comment: We must support family farms that use environmentally benign methods of cultivation. The health of our soils is of utmost importance not only for the environment, but for human health as well. Big Ag depends far too much on harmful pesticides, herbicides and huge amounts of petroleum for arguably dubious products.

COMMENT OF FRANK AYERS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 9:41 p.m.

City, State: Hollidaysburg, PA

Occupation: Automotive

Comment: I would like to see the shift toward organic farming as much as possible. This is a much safer method of farming in regards to the farmers and farm workers. It also produces a safer product for the end consumer (the public), especially with regards to children.

I believe the Federal government should take an active role in persuading pesticide manufacturers to make the gradual transition to producing primarily organic pesticides. The manufacturers would still maintain their sales and profits, and meanwhile it would make the environment safer as well as creating safer, land sustainable farming. Thanks.

FRANK AYERS.

COMMENT OF HAROLD AYERS

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 03, 2012, 1:37 p.m.

City, State: Gainesville, TX

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Livestock

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: With a all-time low approval rating, you sink to an all new low. Shame on you. This is without a doubt, the most ridiculous bill that I know of to

even be up for debate. Why is this even tabled still? This should be a no-brainer. **No!**

COMMENT OF CAROL AYOOB

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 9:05 a.m.

City, State: Presque Isle, ME

Occupation: Community Organizer, Artist, Musician

Comment: Please **Do The Right Thing** for our health, our children, and the future of this planet! Support local organic farms—by funding best practices—and not funding **BiG** interests! I am appalled to find such lack of respect for the integrity of farmers who practice **Real** farming! Index prices not to one standard, but relative to food! This is all too complicated to write here and I resent your lack of long-term planning for a sustainable future.

COMMENT OF BENOIT AZAGOH-KOUADIO

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 11:20 a.m.

City, State: South Dartmouth, MA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Fruits, Livestock, Poultry/poultry products, Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Dear House Committee on Agriculture,

It has reached my attention the presently the farm bill is being redrafted. As a recent member of a small scale agricultural production team, I would like to express some of the reservations that I have about the nature the upcoming bill and what I understand to be a continuation of the entrenched sheltering of industrial agriculture through large scale subsidies and insurance waivers. I believe that there is enough evidence to show that the proliferation of the industrial agriculture model has gone a long way toward negatively impacting farmers and the wealth of actual local farm based economies. Furthermore by flooding the grocery market with a base of cheaply available highly processed monocultural ingredients (soy, corn, beef, *etc.*) this model of business is contributing to the increasing public health and chronic disease epidemic in this country. As a legislative body is your job to be open to understanding the cause and effect relationship of policymaking and to steer the direction and energy of regulation towards the health of this people. We can no longer ignore the ramifications of continuing this industrial cycle and need to find a way to realize a shift significantly towards productions models that encourage contribution to localized economy and direct support to farmers using permacultural and organic methods. I strongly urge you to do so by fully endorsing such provision as he Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act, the Conservation Stewardship Program, the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act, and the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF TATIANA B.

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 11:50 a.m.

City, State: Los Angeles, CA

Occupation: Physical Therapist

Comment: I believe our strength, independence and health as a nation greatly relies on how we manage our food supply and the quality of food we produce. Please consider supporting small family-run and organic farms instead of subsidizing large industry farms.

As the committee considers the 2012 Food and Farm Bill, I urge you to:

- Support our fight against hunger by maintaining and strengthening critical nutrition programs in this time of unprecedented need. We must not solve our budget problems on the backs of those experiencing food insecurity, including our most vulnerable—our children, the elderly, and the disabled;
- Provide an even “plowing” field by fully funding programs that support beginning and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, organic farming, regional farm and food economies, and rural development. We need more farmers and ranchers, more sustainable food production, and more economic opportunity in our food system;
- Support family farmers that really need help, not the biggest farms that don’t: End subsidies (aka direct payments and countercyclical commodity programs), and replace them with loophole-free agriculture risk coverage. Additionally, implement a cap on crop insurance premium subsidies;

- Ensure that limited conservation funding maximizes lasting environmental benefits: Limit funds to Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) for animal waste management infrastructure by eliminating the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) Livestock Set-aside and protect the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) from disproportionate cuts, and improve it by ranking applications solely on their conservation benefits.

COMMENT OF YVONNE BABB

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:07 p.m.

City, State: Bend, OR

Occupation: Teacher, Science, Agriculture, Naturalist

Comment: Dear Representative Walden;

Please do your best to balance the long term needs of sustainable agriculture when voting on the attached bills.

Tell Congress that you support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

We must keep the research on organic farming and ranching practices, which are essential to solving the problems which are caused by large scale practices which do not mimic nature. The problems with bees, pesticides and antibiotics in meat are not remedied by old thinking. We need the environmentalists and farmers/ranchers to work together to solve problems with the best interest of the human in mind.

Thank you,

YVONNE BABB.

COMMENT OF MICHELLE BABIN

Date Submitted: Sunday, March 25, 2012, 7:06 p.m.

City, State: Sutton, MA

Occupation: Dietetic Intern/Student

Comment: March 25, 2012

To whom it may concern,

As a concerned citizen who takes pride in our country's land, commodities and overall health of our nation, I would like to voice my gratitude and encouragement for the 2012 Farm Bill. As a future registered dietitian, I have had the rewarding opportunity to witness first-hand how the farm bill has truly made a difference in people's lives as well as my own personal life. I was fortunate enough to work at a local WIC office in rural North Carolina for a few weeks. To be honest, I was never a strong proponent of food stamps and many other government-funded programs, but my opinion has definitely been altered. I was not very familiar with WIC and what the program actually entailed. As I learned the ins and outs, I realized that this program was properly developed to truly meet the needs of lower income families who honestly need the help. The fact that this program requires quarterly health checks for not only the infants and children but also the mothers, gives this program a lot of credibility. Not everyone is able to qualify for this program. It is a give and take process, in which the client needs to put in some effort and if they follow through, they will be rewarded.

I met a few families who outwardly seemed to be making ends meet, but in reality were facing some very difficult times. Some families who had it all only a few months ago, were now scrounging for a way to provide for their children. Many of these people were hard working, honest people who were hit hard by the depressed economy. Seeing their faces light up when we explained that they were qualified and what that truly meant was gratifying. This program does not have the funding to provide a lot for these families, thusly why it is called a supplemental program. Its purpose is to help lighten the burden significantly, provide the necessities. After this experience, I am a true proponent for this nutrition program and pray that it may continue into the future.

On a lighter note, growing up I was fortunate enough to live in a small New England town. I cannot see into my neighbor's house or can a throw a baseball and hit

it. We have land; beautiful lush land. My father has kept a large garden in our backyard since I was a child, something I have truly missed now that I am on my own. I have been very blessed to grow up in an amazing part of the country. Much of the industry in our town is agriculture based; therefore, I know just how important it is for our farmers to have proper representation within our government.

One of the major local agricultural spots is a dairy farm. I personally know the family and have witnessed firsthand what a depressed economy can do to their business. Not only is their family affected, but also the whole community hurts with them. It is so crucial that our farmers and agricultural workers have proper support so that even in hard times, they will have someone to lean on if need be. These are some of the hardest working people you will ever meet. You know they will do anything they possibly can first before having to ask the government for aid. These are the honest, true Americans who have sustained this nation for hundreds of years; therefore, there should be no hesitation when it comes to providing a strong backbone for them if they ever need to rely on it.

It is evident that this farm bill lies true and dear to my heart and always will. My future career relies heavily on this bill and without this funding, I can honestly say that it will be a devastating loss to millions of people. This is not just some small bill looking for some fame in Washington; this bill has the potential to change millions of people's lives. We all need and rely on food; therefore, everyone in this country will be affected if this bill does not receive adequate funding. I will continue to advocate in honor of this bill and know I have hundreds of friends, family and co-workers who will do the same. Thank you for this opportunity, stay strong and together we can make this happen.

Thank you,

MICHELLE BABIN,
Dietetic Intern.

COMMENT OF LIA BABITCH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:22 p.m.

City, State: Copake, NY

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: 301–500 acres

Comment: It's time for real reform that does not favor huge farms that have damaging environmental and social practices, but makes the marketplace fair and reasonable for all farmers, and doesn't favor size. Small farms, like other small businesses, where the jobs are, if small farmers aren't discriminated against, and struggling to survive. It's also time to stop subsidizing unhealthy foods, while people growing the things we should be eating can hardly make ends meet, and the cheapest food is the worst for us all, and making us fat and sick, and costing us lots of money in healthcare.

COMMENT OF BONNIE BACH-MITCHELL

Date Submitted: Saturday, April 28, 2012, 8:17 a.m.

City, State: Cincinnati, OH

Occupation: Artist/Writer & Activist

Comment: Farming is a hard profession. They need all the help and assistance they can get—stop messing around w/ the farming people—they need your help—and after all—they vote too! Please don't mess them up—protect 'farming' what do we have left? They are the people of the Earth! They feed the rest of us too!

BONNIE BACH-MITCHELL.

COMMENT OF PEGGY BACKUP

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:25 p.m.

City, State: Redwood Valley, CA

Occupation: Plant Pathologist

Comment: I am a former farmer and current backyard and community gardener. We no longer need commodity crops to be subsidized, and we can't afford them. We need to grow more fruit, vegetables, nuts, and we need to do it locally and sustainably. Put the farm bill money into helping local communities regain their food security, helping farmers take care of the environment, and creating a more healthy diet for all of us.

COMMENT OF CRYSTAL BACON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:58 p.m.

City, State: Bryn Mawr, PA

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: Please do what's right to protect our land, air and water by putting money into small, ecologically viable and responsible farms producing organic, local food. We have the capacity to feed all of our people and protect our land. No more agribusiness and factory farms!

COMMENT OF DAVID BACON

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 2:11 p.m.

City, State: Santa Fe, NM

Occupation: Energy Consultant

Comment: Healthy, thriving family farms and ranches is not a left/right issue, it is a human survival issue. Here's hoping our corporate congress critters can pull out of the mega ag gravity field to do the right thing for every single American, plus our precious soil and water.

COMMENT OF PAT BACON

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 10:26 a.m.

City, State: Milan, NH

Occupation: Registered Nurse

Comment: It is a travesty that in America our farmed food sources are horror's. The treatment of the farm animals is absolutely beyond belief. How can these people do the things they do? Please make big changes and make America a country to be proud of in it's treatment of all animals and livestock.

COMMENT OF TAYLOR BACON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:13 p.m.

City, State: Tempe, AZ

Occupation: Student in School of Design

Comment: It is required that the ingredients be labeled on prepared foods. Truth is, those ingredients listed are worthless without knowing the ingredients or the makeup of those ingredients. I have dealt with many illnesses because of a lack of integrity in foods. I am not even referring to fast food, prepared or packaged food. I am referring to "whole food" supposedly "unadulterated" foods in the produce department. Not to say that all of my health issues are strictly a result of modified products, however, it certainly initiated and prolonged my extensive digestive and hormone issues. Please, help put the fear I have for my children, family, and future generations at ease by at least labeling the source and treatment methods of the foods currently on the shelves. It is common knowledge we as consumers deserve to know. If there is a concern that people will not buy the products if they are labeled with such information, then the argument would be that they should not be sold for human consumption and nourishment to begin with. Thank you! I do hope that you hear me, at just 21 years of age, and my plea to simply be informed not only for my own sake, but to save future generations and teach health and food's purpose nourish.

COMMENT OF WILLARD BACON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:31 p.m.

City, State: Newport News, VA

Occupation: Retired Federal Civil Service Employee

Comment: You people are suppose to be looking out for the health and safety of the foods we Americans consume. You are negligent and remiss in fulfilling your responsibilities. Big Money has bought and paid for you and your decisions. It's high time all of you were fired. Trained monkeys could do a better job.

As Americans paying your salaries, we have the right to know what we are eating and whether or not it has been genetically modified or genetically manipulated. It should be up to us whether or not we want to buy and consume products so created.

COMMENT OF BIRKE BAEHR

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:21 p.m.

City, State: Knoxville, TN

Occupation: Student, Youth Advocate, Future Organic Farmer

Comment: I am writing to ask that more funding is given to small farmers who are organic or in transition to organic. The future of agriculture needs to go back to taking care of the soil and growing organic nutrient dense food without genetically modified organisms (seeds, *etc.*) Funding should go to help farmers with pasture based livestock and even growing non-GMO and organic supplemental feed for poultry and pork. I speak to groups all the time who tell me that this is what they want from American agriculture. We need more small local Biodiverse farms and less monocultures.

COMMENT OF PATRICIA BAEHR

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:26 p.m.

City, State: Knoxville, TN

Occupation: Stay-at-Home Mother

Comment: I urge the support of organic farming research to continue and grow in addition to assist beginning farmers to get started to continue to grow local food systems. We need more biodiverse farms growing chemical free food locally for the future of this country and the health of our children. I support less funding for chemical agriculture including genetically modified and genetically engineered livestock and seeds and more for organics.

COMMENT OF NANCY BAER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:47 a.m.

City, State: Pickens, SC

Occupation: Health Care Administrator

Comment: I know my tea party congressman Jeff Duncan will be all about cutting spending in the wrong places. Stop subsidies to agribusiness conglomerates and CAFOs and take steps to support small farmers and local production by fully funding programs that support beginning and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, organic farming, regional farm and food economies, and rural development. We need more farmers and ranchers, more sustainable food production, and more economic opportunity in our food system.

COMMENT OF RON BAGINSKI

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:13 p.m.

City, State: Cleveland, OH

Occupation: Marketing

Comment: Stop all crop subsidies and let the market decide what is best. All GMO crops and foods must be labeled clearly on all products so consumers make the choice.

COMMENT OF HAYLEY BAGWELL

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 4:33 p.m.

City, State: Longmont, CO

Occupation: Health Care Industry

Comment: We deserve to have the information we need to make educated decisions about our food! We also deserve to be able to support farmers and agriculture that is honest, healthy and safe; not corrupt and bullied. Label it and let us decide!

COMMENT OF FREDDAH BAH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:11 p.m.

City, State: Marietta, GA

Occupation: Retail (Grocery Store)

Comment: I've been a "health nut" for many years. It's disgusting to see all the CRAP that is allowed to go into our food. We've been lied to about many, many things.

Stop the lies! Stop big farms from bullying and putting out of business smaller organic and family run farms. Stop Monsanto! Stop genetically modified food! (Why has Monsanto been banned in 38 countries, one of which is **Not** the United States? Oh yes, **Money!**)

Support Organic Farming and healthy food!

COMMENT OF B. BAILEY

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 11:49 a.m.

City, State: Cincinnati, OH

Occupation: Homemaker

Comment: I find it very disturbing that as a consumer I am being denied the right to know how my food is being produced and what is being fed to the animals to produce it. It should be everyone's right to know what they are eating or what they are feeding their families. Large agribusiness answers to no one, lobbyists are killing family farms and small businesses across our nation because they can. You, our representatives can change that. We ask you to support change for our local farmers, especially those who choose to use organic methods of farming. If we don't take control of our food supplies now and care for our environment in a responsible way what are we telling future generations? How are we going to live long enough to right this wrong?

COMMENT OF LARISSA BAILEY

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:42 a.m.

City, State: Novelty, OH

Occupation: Homemaker

Comment: Please don't allow companies like Monsanto to control our food supply. Make it illegal to use genetically modified seed to grow the food we eat.

COMMENT OF MARCIA BAILEY

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 2:24 p.m.

City, State: Dunedin, FL

Occupation: Retired Social Worker

Comment: I would like the farm bill to support the growing of fruits and vegetables. We really need to change the way our population is eating because of the high incidences of diabetes and obesity. These diseases cost us millions in health care, and they are fueled by the fact that the government subsidizes corn for cheap corn syrup, wheat for cheap baked goods, soybeans for cheap oil for frying, *etc.* Let's support the foods that will make our citizens healthier instead of those which make us sicker.

COMMENT OF MELISSA BAILEY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:19 a.m.

City, State: Kinston, NC

Occupation: Migrant Education Program Recruiter

Comment: You should know that the level of oppression among farmworkers is becoming unsustainable. Those of us who have spent years on this side of agriculture have never seen them so oppressed and agitated. Consider that when crafting your legislation. You are quickly reaching the tipping point in North Carolina.

COMMENT OF TINA BAILEY

Date Submitted: Friday, March 16, 2012, 9:26 a.m.

City, State: Alva, FL

Occupation: Homemaker

Comment: Please don't let big ag take over. I love the KMF campaign. I know what goes into the food I eat. I'm taking care of my local community. Together we're taking care of and treating our land with respect. I don't trust big ag to do the same.

COMMENTS OF VICKI BAILEY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:14 p.m.

City, State: El Dorado, KS

Occupation: Grandmother

Comment: Growing children regardless of their economic status HAVE to have good food to grow in a healthy way. We ALL pay the price for sick kids and families. Is **Big Business** more important than our **Children** and their families? It would seem so. Food stamps are one important way we currently have to provide them with food. What takes its place if it is taken away? Will agribusiness step in? Really?

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 3:02 p.m.

Comment: My 90 year old mother lives in her own home but does not drive. Her daughters help her get her food but mom has friends who do not have family and have to patch together ways to get the things they need. My mother is still in good health because she can access good food. Some of her friends have not been nearly so lucky. Please consider carefully the food programs like SNAP, TEFAP & CSFP that help them stay healthy. This is so much more cost effective than winding up in a nursing home needing 24 hr. care!

COMMENT OF BOBBI BAILIN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:09 p.m.

City, State: West Falmouth, MA

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: We need good healthy food for our children and healthy soil. Support organic methods that replenish the soil and non-GMO products that do not compromise health. Support needs to be given to farmers committed to this direction—they are smaller and require more hours and help, and this way of providing food and this lifestyle is severely threatened by big business.

COMMENT OF ALTA BAIRD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012m 4:10 p.m.

City, State: Fallon, NV

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I am very **Concerned** about what is happening to our farmers as well as what is going on with our produce, I purchased some strawberries, I left some of them uneaten on purpose to see what would happen, they were left refrigerated for 3 weeks and they never did spoil they just withered, now I am old enough to know that is **Not Normal**. What is going on with our farmers and our produce is frightening. **I Prefer Matural Organic Produce Please**. Thank you,

ALTA BAIRD.

COMMENT OF MARTHA BAIRD

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 1:51 p.m.

City, State: Dallas, TX

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Many years ago I heard the U.S. would soon be out of food. It would be hard to realize this by looking at some of the people. The illegal's have gained weight after coming here, yet they keep producing children . . . at our countries expense; never once considering how the farming communities can keep producing food products. The poor farmer has had his hands tied by many of the farm bills. Help is needed from the Agriculture Committee to start assisting the farmer rather than holding him back!

COMMENT OF MICHAEL BAISE

Date Submitted: Monday, March 26, 2012, 2:37 p.m.

City, State: Bloomington, IN

Occupation: Agricultural Advocate

Comment: Agriculture is critical to our national security. The next farm bill should include safety net provisions for agricultural producers who have numerous risks beyond their control, but in exchange for that tax-payer funded protection, farmers should be required to abide by conservation compliance for crop and/or revenue insurance.

COMMENT OF ANITA BAKER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:29 a.m.

City, State: Indianapolis, IN

Occupation: Business Development

Comment:

- Support sustainable farming methods
- Ensure good food for children in the schools including retaining breakfasts
- Put in policies that support local farmers as well as organic farming
- End subsidies for large food corporations like Archer Daniels especially the production of corn

- Eliminate cruel animal practices like chickens being forced to overcrowd as well as livestock

COMMENT OF CATHERINE BAKER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:34 p.m.

City, State: Lanesboro, MN

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Poultry/poultry products

Size: 151–300 acres

Comment: We need food access that is locally sustainable. Government regulation can and must encourage small producers and organic practices that do not answer to mass-production regulations—but relies for food safety instead on education, local transparency and personal responsibility to produce fresher, higher quality, less processed foods than are readily available now. Community kitchens that are supported by local buy-in and customer loyalty need funding and encouragement. A pilot in Lanesboro, MN would be a good starting place, as the community cohesiveness, mindset and work ethic are unparalleled.

COMMENT OF CYNTHIA BAKER

Date Submitted: Tuesday, April 10, 2012, 7:22 p.m.

City, State: Albuquerque, NM

Occupation: Nonprofit Supported Living

Comment: Please remember that due to a rough economy, we have more needy, hungry people than ever! Please do not forget them.

COMMENT OF JENNIFER BAKER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:32 p.m.

City, State: Las Vegas, NV

Occupation: Finance

Comment: I urge you to consider making ‘farm to table’ options more affordable and readily available to our schools and struggling families. It is extremely important that our children get the best food possible—hunger directly effects scholastic achievement. We live in the richest nation in the world and there is no reason our children, or any of our citizens, should go hungry!

COMMENT OF KATHLEEN BAKER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:08 p.m.

City, State: Newcastle, OK

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I am deeply disturbed at policies being aimed at our American family farms. Big Agra has declared war on the family farmer and Washington is marching arm in arm with Big Agra to destroy those farms through legislation. We’ve have the best farmers in the world, please help them and not harm them. Thank you.

COMMENT OF KEITH BAKER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:33 p.m.

City, State: Cincinnati, OH

Occupation: Carpenter

Comment: As the population of the U.S.A. becomes more obese and less healthy, it is obvious that the other industrialized countries are doing something right. We should learn from them and let the health of the nation dictate the policies of the pending farm bill, not the profits of agribusiness.

COMMENT OF MELANIE BAKER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:08 p.m.

City, State: New York, NY

Occupation: Musician

Comment: Please write a bill that sustains the small farms, helps people get access to food who need it, keeps pesticides out of the food, and puts in place monitors on the big agribusiness farms, since that is where it is most needed. Thank you.

COMMENT OF NANCY BAKER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:18 p.m.

City, State: Kalamazoo, MI

Occupation: Massage Therapist

Comment: I support our local farmers who operate in a safe manner. Many who are not educated do not have the awareness of what is going in their bodies. Everyone deserves to eat food that is not contaminated. Food keeps getting larger. Hormone fed. Yuck.

No wonder we have obesity. We are fed to many hormones and chemicals.

COMMENT OF PATRICIA BAKER

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 3:25 p.m.

City, State: Laguna Hills, CA

Occupation: Pharmacist

Comment: I feel that the SNAP program is especially important to children and seniors. Both these groups of citizens have large numbers who are at risk for hunger. Snap aids the nutrition of children so that they are better able to learn, and to aid seniors whose health is made better by better nutrition.

COMMENTS OF ROSALYN BAKER INGHAM

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:03 p.m.

City, State: Grand Rapids, MI

Occupation: Marriage and Family Therapist

Comment: There is nothing more important than healthy food. Please stop the poisoning of our children so we can decrease Autism—now one in 85.

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012 1:51 p.m.

Comment: Evidence is clear that the Autism rate of 1 in 85 has some relationship to the toxic food we eat. Please protect us adults but more importantly, you have a responsibility to protect our children.

COMMENT OF JENNIFER BAKER-TRINITY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:06 p.m.

City, State: Beaver Springs, PA

Occupation: Writer, Musician, Stay-At-Home Parent

Comment: I encourage supporting organic farming and smaller, regional farms. I buy from local farms when possible and want to see these farms thrive so that our carbon-footprint is reduced. I support legislation that supports rural development and encourages more independent farms.

COMMENT OF JERI BAKHSH

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 3:54 p.m.

City, State: San Diego, CA

Occupation: Sales

Comment: Over the decades I've watched how corporate agribusiness has done great damage to small farmers and ranchers. I support the organic and local foods movements. You guys just can't keep up the corporate welfare. You really are destroying our great country.

COMMENT OF SUSAN BAKKE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:47 p.m.

City, State: Lacey, WA

Occupation: Educator

Comment: I want all my food to be organic, non GMO, grown as locally as possible. This is what should be fostered in communities across the country. We save money, resources, decrease pollution by decreasing transportation, and our health is improved from fewer chemicals.

COMMENT OF NORA BALDUFF; ON BEHALF OF LISA HAMLER-FUGITT, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, OHIO ASSOCIATION OF SECOND HARVEST FOODBANKS

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 2:37 p.m.

Comment: May 20, 2012

House Committee on Agriculture

Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Lucas, Ranking Member Peterson, and members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on the upcoming farm bill reauthorization. Given the ever increasing need for food assistance in our state and the declining supply of Federal commodity support, I strongly urge you protect and strengthen nutrition programs in the 2012 Farm Bill.

The Ohio Association of Second Harvest Foodbanks is Ohio's largest charitable response to hunger. Our network represents 12 foodbanks, providing food, funding, training, and technical assistance to more than 3,300 food pantries, soup kitchens, homeless shelters, and supplemental food providers.

We see every day how important Federal nutrition programs are in our community and how effectively they are working to ensure that Ohioans can provide enough food for their families. "In the last quarter of 2011, hungry Ohioans made 2,305,463 visits to our member food pantries, soup kitchens, and shelters alone."

Nationally, the Feeding America network of more than 200 foodbanks has seen a 46 percent increase in foodbank clients from 2006 to 2010. In Ohio, our member foodbanks and member agencies have experienced a 23.6 percent increase in demand since 2009, with a 35.6 percent increase in demand from adults over the age of 60. Without strong farm bill nutrition programs like The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP), foodbanks across the country would be struggling even more to meet the increased need.

We recognize the challenge you face drafting a farm bill in a time of deficit reduction, but we are also sensitive to the tremendous, ongoing need in our state. As such, we have two key priorities for the farm bill.

First, we urge you to strengthen TEFAP to help us keep up with increased demand. TEFAP supplies about 25 percent of the food moving through Feeding America's national network of foodbanks, and 27 percent of food distributed throughout Ohio. But because of high commodity prices, TEFAP food declined 30 percent last year, and our member foodbanks are struggling to make up the difference. We urge you to make TEFAP more responsive during times of high need by tying increases in mandatory funding to a trigger based on unemployment levels. We also propose to enhance the Secretary of Agriculture's authority to make TEFAP bonus purchases at times when the need for emergency food assistance is high—for example, during periods of high unemployment—in addition to times of weak agriculture markets so that the program can respond to both excess supply and excess demand.

Second, we also strongly urge you to protect SNAP from harmful funding cuts or policy proposals that would restrict eligibility or reduce benefits. SNAP has responded effectively to growing need during the recession with benefits that are timely, targeted, and temporary. The average SNAP household has an income of only 57 percent of the Federal poverty level, and 84 percent of benefits go to households with a child, senior, or disabled person. The program is working to support vulnerable Ohio families, and our foodbanks and local agency partners would not be able to meet the increased need for food assistance if SNAP were cut.

These programs have a real impact on your constituents, many of whom must rely on the foodbank and Federal nutrition programs to meet their basic food needs. I would encourage you to visit the foodbanks serving your district before the committee marks up a farm bill so you can meet the constituents standing in our food lines and see firsthand how Federal nutrition programs are working to protect vulnerable Americans from hunger.

The Ohio Association of Second Harvest Foodbanks believes that feeding our neighbors is a shared responsibility, and foodbanks like ours rely on a variety of food streams to support our communities, including generous support from partners in retail, manufacturing, and agriculture. However, the Federal government is an equally critical partner through programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP, and with tremendous, ongoing need in our state, Federal support is more important than ever.

As the House Agriculture Committee moves forward with farm bill reauthorization, the Ohio Association of Second Harvest Foodbanks urges you to protect the nutrition safety net and offers the specific recommendations below.

Sincerely,

LISA HAMLER-FUGITT,
Executive Director,
Ohio Association of Second Harvest Foodbanks.

Feeding America Farm Bill Priorities

The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP): TEFAP is a means-tested Federal program that provides food commodities at no cost to Americans in need of short-term hunger relief through organizations like foodbanks, pantries, soup kitchens, and emergency shelters. Nutritious food commodities provided through TEFAP are an essential resource for Feeding America foodbanks. As the demand for food remains high at foodbanks across the country, a continuous stream of TEFAP is necessary for the provision of a steady emergency food supply.

- TEFAP commodities account for approximately 25 percent of the food moving through Feeding America foodbanks. Foodbanks combine TEFAP with private donations to maximize TEFAP benefits far beyond the budgeted amount for the program. In this way, foodbanks exemplify an optimum model of public-private partnership.
- TEFAP has a strong impact on the farm economy. According to USDA's Economic Research Service, producers of commodities provided as bonus TEFAP (those purchased by USDA to intervene in weak agricultural markets) receive an estimated 85¢ per dollar of Federal expenditure. Producers of other commodities provided through TEFAP receive about 27¢ per dollar. By contrast, only about 16¢ of every retail food dollar goes back to the farmer.
- Declines in Section 32 funding and strong agriculture markets resulted in a 30 percent decline in TEFAP purchases during FY2011. This decline is expected to continue in FY2012 as foodbanks continue struggling to meet increased need. The shortfall between supply and demand will only worsen when the SNAP ARRA benefit boost expires, as many participants turn to foodbanks to make up for the reduction in benefit levels.

Farm Bill Priorities for TEFAP:

- Make mandatory funding for TEFAP food more responsive to changes in need by providing a trigger that ties funding to unemployment levels
- Enhance Secretary of Agriculture's authority to purchase bonus commodities in times of high need for emergency food relief in addition to times of low commodity prices so the program is responsive both to excess supply and excess demand
- Reauthorize funding for TEFAP Storage and Distribution Funds at \$100 million per year
- Reauthorize funding for TEFAP Infrastructure Grants at \$15 million per year

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP): SNAP is the cornerstone of the nutrition safety net, providing over 46 million low-income participants nationally and 1.8 million Ohioans in February 2012, with monthly benefits via a grocery debit card. Eligibility is based on household income and is subject to work and citizenship requirements. SNAP is one of the most responsive safety net programs, expanding quickly to meet rising need during the recession. The program is targeted at our most vulnerable: 76 percent of SNAP households contain a child, senior, or disabled member, and 84 percent of all benefits go to these households.

- As the number of people unemployed grew 110 percent from 2007 to 2010, SNAP responded with a 53 percent increase in participation over the same period. As the economy slowly recovers and unemployment begins to fall, SNAP participation and costs too can be expected to decline.
- The SNAP accuracy rate of 96.19 percent (FY10) is an all-time program high. SNAP error rates declined by 61 percent in FY1999 to a record low of 3.81 percent in FY2010.
- SNAP benefits supplement a household's food budget but are insufficient to last most participants through the month, causing many participants to rely regularly on foodbanks. Among Feeding America food pantry clients receiving SNAP benefits, over ½ (58 percent) reported having visited a food pantry in at least 6 months or more during the prior year.
- The average SNAP household has a gross monthly income of \$731 and countable resources of \$333, consists of 2.2 persons, and participates in the program for 9 months. The average Ohioan participating receives a monthly benefit of \$138.00, or about \$1.50 per person per meal.

Farm Bill Priorities for SNAP:

- Protect SNAP by opposing proposals to cap or reduce funding, restrict eligibility, reduce benefits, or otherwise impede access or benefit adequacy. Recent proposals to block grant the program would prevent it from responding effectively to fluctuations in need, and efforts to limit broad based categorical eligibility would increase administrative costs and access barriers.

- Restore the cut to the SNAP ARRA benefit boost used to pay for the 2010 child nutrition bill and phase out the boost in a way that protects families from a cliff in benefit levels.
- Encourage better nutrition by maintaining nutrition education, incentivizing the purchase of healthy foods, and ensuring that retailer standards balance adequate access to stores with access to a range of healthy foods and moderate prices.
- Build on SNAP's strong record of integrity and payment accuracy by issuing guidance to states on the eligibility of lottery winners and college students and upgrading resources and technology for trafficking prevention.

Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP): CSFP leverages government buying power to provide nutritious food packages to approximately 599,000 low income people each month, and 20,463 Ohioans. Nearly 97 percent of program participants are seniors with incomes of less than 130 percent of the poverty line (approximately \$14,000 for a senior living alone). Currently, 39 states and the District of Columbia participate in CSFP. Another six states (CT, HI, ID, MD, MA, & RI) have USDA-approved plans, but have not yet received appropriations to begin service.

- CSFP is an efficient and effective program. While the cost to USDA to purchase commodities for this package of food is about \$20 per month, the average retail value of the foods in the package is \$50.
- CSFP helps to combat the poor health conditions often found in seniors who are experiencing food insecurity and at risk of hunger. CSFP food packages, specifically designed to supplement nutrients typically lacking in participants' diets like protein, iron, and zinc, can play an important role in addressing the nutrition needs of low-income seniors.
- Many seniors participating in CSFP are able to have their food boxes delivered directly to their homes or to seniors' centers nearby, an important benefit for those who are homebound, have limited mobility, or do not have convenient access to a grocery store.

Farm Bill Priorities for CSFP:

- Transition CSFP to a seniors-only program by phasing out eligibility of women, infants, and children while grandfathering in current participants.

COMMENT OF MARY BALDWIN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 3:29 p.m.

City, State: Bedford, OH

Occupation: Direct Marketing

Comment: I am so concerned about the subsidies paid factory farmers to the detriment of our health, environment and economy and that business holds sway over the average citizen. Please support sustainable agricultural practices, healthy livestock production and clean air and water.

COMMENT OF BESSIE BALLARD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:45 p.m.

City, State: Hoodspout, WA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: As an consumer who is very unhappy with the terrible produce we are getting in our markets . . . we are seniors on a fixed income with health issues and cannot afford to keep throwing spoiled vegetable away that are rotting and shriveling up within a day of purchase due to the horrible cancer and other deadly disease causing chemicals sprayed on our produce by Monsanto and Cargill. Please vote to give us chemical free food products in our markets. Please **Vote Against Any Attempt To Continue The Deadly Spraying Of Our Food.** Thank you very much.

COMMENT OF EUSEBIUS BALLENTINE

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 10:10 a.m.

City, State: Honesdale, PA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: The government ought to help the process that is already happening, they ought to pay attention and see what it is that people want and then aid them

in attaining that goal. All the polls indicate how people want to have safer food and know where it comes from with less chemicals and is better for the environment. It's up to the government to not be tempted by corruption and money and simply do the bidding of the people. It's going to happen either way and we can achieve a better food future now or later. If we choose the later we also increase our chances of devastating events that could derail humanity for a very long time. Do the right thing!

COMMENT OF ANNA BANDFIELD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:25 p.m.

City, State: Port Orchard, WA

Occupation: Customer Service

Comment: Small farmers and organic farmers are supremely important, and they need and deserve appropriate funding. The problem with non-organic produce is not only the pesticides, it doesn't have any nutrition! Americans are overfed but malnourished—and have vitamin deficiencies because commercial produce lacks nutrition. Please don't cut funding for organics and beginning farmers.

COMMENT OF BETTY BANHAM

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 10:21 p.m.

City, State: Willits, CA

Occupation: Housewife

Comment: America could grow enough food to feed all of us and many third world countries as well. Keep our farmers working. Get rid of GMO's, we have the knowledge for sustainable agriculture.

COMMENT OF GENE BANISTER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:07 p.m.

City, State: Wenatchee, WA

Occupation: Retired Engineer

Comment: As one who grew up on a farm, I am aware of how food is produced. I fully support the desire of people to make their own choice of what food to buy. There are risks with buying food directly from the farmer but there are also risks with buying food grown following government rules. I prefer to be able to buy directly from a person I trust. I do **Not** trust bureaucrats to protect my food. Please allow people to take responsibility for their choices.

COMMENT OF BRIAN BANKS

Date Submitted: Thursday, March 22, 2012, 5:15 p.m.

City, State: Bowie, MD

Occupation: Director, Public Policy & Community Outreach

Comment: My annual salary is over \$70,000 a year. After I pay the basic bills, gas, haircut, school bills for son, and other **Needed** items I can barely buy groceries for myself and son. However I always find a way, and no I am not eligible for any safety-net programs. However I work to get eligible people signed up for the programs that will help their families. My staff and I cannot work fast enough as the number of people at risk of hunger seem to rise daily for these people the farm bill is a vital importance to their lives. Food . . . we all need it to live, it is our most basic need and the one thing every living being has in common. People rely on these programs to live, these programs help people get back on their feet and because of these programs people are able to contribute to their community, children are able to learn, and less illness will come about because of a healthy diet. My question to you all is can you name the last five meals you ate, what did you have? How much did it cost? Do you know the price of a pound of grapes, or a gallon of milk? If not chances are you do not need the safety net programs and are not hungry. People that are need the safety-net. Please fund these programs at a high level, and review my suggestions below. Thank you.

Farm Bill Priorities for TEFAP:

- Make mandatory funding for TEFAP food more responsive to changes in need by providing a trigger that ties funding to unemployment levels
- Enhance Secretary of Agriculture's authority to purchase bonus commodities in times of high need for emergency food relief in addition to times of low commodity prices so the program is responsive both to excess supply and excess demand

- Reauthorize funding for TEFAP Storage and Distribution Funds at \$100 million per year
 - Reauthorize funding for TEFAP Infrastructure Grants at \$15 million per year
- Farm Bill Priorities for SNAP:
- Protect SNAP by opposing proposals to cap or reduce funding, restrict eligibility, reduce benefits, or otherwise impede access or benefit adequacy. Recent proposals to block grant the program would prevent it from responding effectively to fluctuations in need, and efforts to limit broad based categorical eligibility would increase administrative costs and access barriers.
 - Restore the cut to the SNAP ARRA benefit boost used to pay for the 2010 child nutrition bill and phase out the boost in a way that protects families from a cliff in benefit levels.
 - Encourage better nutrition by maintaining nutrition education, incentivizing the purchase of healthy foods, and ensuring that retailer standards balance adequate access to stores with access to a range of healthy foods and moderate prices.
 - Build on SNAP's strong record of integrity and payment accuracy by issuing guidance to states on the eligibility of lottery winners and college students and upgrading resources and technology for trafficking prevention.

Farm Bill Priorities for CSFP:

- Transition CSFP to a seniors-only program while grandfathering in current participants to promote greater efficiencies and recognize CSFP's evolution to serving a primarily senior population.

COMMENT OF CARTER BANNERMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:51 p.m.

City, State: Seattle, WA

Occupation: Retired Broadcast Engineer

Comment: I eat. So do you. We need strict standards for organic growing, and there is almost no economy of scale for it past a pretty small farm. Do not allow agribusiness to weaken the standards. Please, stern and scientifically reasonable standards and universally safe growing and food.

COMMENT OF LYNNET BANNION

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:07 p.m.

City, State: Loveland, CO

Occupation: Manager of Food Cooperative

Comment: Please stop giving billions to large corporations to grow GMO commodities, and start supporting small farmers, family farms, organic and healthy foods.

COMMENT OF MATTHEW BANSFIELD

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 7:39 a.m.

City, State: Worcester, MA

Occupation: Carpenter, Small Business Owner

Comment: I support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

While Congress is looking to get rid of direct payments to commodity farmers, the subsidized insurance program it proposes to replace it with will allow giant commodity farmers and insurance companies to walk away with billions in taxpayer dollars while putting the land, soil and environment at greater risk.

Most importantly, however, organics are the future.

Sincerely,

MATTHEW BANSFIELD.

COMMENT OF MARGARET G. BANTA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:22 p.m.

City, State: Topeka, KS

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I don't like Monsanto choosing the food my family can eat, *e.g.*, GMO's. I want more inspectors at factory farms. I want more support for small family farms and organic farmers. It's a matter of Homeland Security and public health. Thank you!

COMMENT OF DANIEL BARACH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:34 p.m.

City, State: Oswego, NY

Occupation: College Professor of Music

Comment: It is time to write a bill that is helpful to small local farms that are producing high quality food of an organic nature that is friendly to the environment and healthy for the individuals that eat them. It is time to stop subsidizing big agribusinesses that pollute our environment and soil and that devastates our health. We need to invest in non chemical healthful farming practices that build health and our soil.

COMMENT OF MARSH BARBARA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:49 p.m.

City, State: Anchorage, AK

Occupation: Small Business Owner of Soap Company

Comment: Please look carefully at preserving the health of our food supply by keeping it chemical free and non GMO. Support our farmers and farm workers, not the big agribusiness and lobbyists that get the corporation's the best deal on the backs of the consumers. Our health depends on a good, clean, healthy food supply.

COMMENT OF KYLE BARBER

Date Submitted: Thursday, March 29, 2012, 5:53 p.m.

City, State: Hamilton, MT

Occupation: Conservation & Stewardship @ Bitter Root Land Trust

Comment: Over the past 2 years, the Bitter Root Land Trust has partnered with 5 agricultural producers to protect over 1,000 acres of working landscape in the Bitterroot Valley. These projects were voluntarily initiated by the landowners and funded in part by the Farm and Ranchland Protection Program (FRPP), a program of the farm bill. The compensation provided to the landowners by the FRPP has supported the local and regional economy in a number of ways, from circulating through the agricultural services sector to allowing landowners to expand their operations. The FRPP program helps perpetuate the scenic, economic and cultural values of Western Montana's landscape. Please support continued funding to this program in the upcoming farm bill re-authorization. This program means a lot to your constituents.

COMMENT OF KILEY BARBERO

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 4:05 p.m.

City, State: Port Angeles, WA

Occupation: Interpretive Park Ranger

Comment: Now is the time for action! Every 5 years Congress reauthorizes the National farm bill, which gives massive taxpayer subsidies to huge farms growing unhealthy food using toxic chemicals. We have the opportunity to transform Federal farm and food policy—take action **Now!** WE want farm policy that helps family farmers produce healthy food, vibrant communities and sustains the environment. Please vote for our citizens!

COMMENT OF JEANNINE BARDO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:03 p.m.

City, State: Brooklyn, NY

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: Congressman Grimm,

Please consider the long term health of our food system and our citizens. An ethical, sustainable farm community will help to ensure the quality of our food remains

high and our land will not be poisoned and laid to waste. Access to nutritious food should be an American right for everyone. A healthy citizenry is the best way to cut health care costs substantially. Please use principled and creative foresight when making budgetary decisions for your constituents.

I support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

COMMENT OF GENEVIEVE BARILE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:39 p.m.

City, State: Seattle, WA

Occupation: L.M.P.

Comment: Healthy food is essential to our well being. Our country is showing the serious effects of ignoring this fact. Healthy food should not be a luxury—it is a basic need for every person.

COMMENT OF CATE BARKER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:23 p.m.

City, State: Cedar Rapids, IA

Occupation: Advertising Writer

Comment: I have a couple of suggestions:

1. Reduce farm subsidies;
2. Convert crop insurance from an income guarantee for already profitable agribusinesses to a hedge for family farmers against catastrophic crop failure;
3. Use the savings to reduce Federal debt and fund programs that improve human health (*e.g.*, increased SNAP benefits) and the environment (reduce soil erosion, protect drinking water by reducing pesticide runoff).

COMMENT OF DWINNA BARKER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:28 p.m.

City, State: Crowley, TX

Occupation: Disabled Legal Secretary

Comment: Just one rule of thumb to go by on the safety of our food is that if it is produced by cruelty and inhumane treatment of animals or if it is genetically altered to the point that we don't even know what we are eating anymore, it is probably not good for humans to consume!

COMMENT OF TIMOTHY R. BARKSDALE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:43 p.m.

City, State: Choteau, MT

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Forestry

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: When my father lost his 7,500 acre farm in 1969, my parents divorced. Since my background now includes financial, agriculture, wildlife ecology and more my suggestion is to shift the farm bill to support small family farms more. I ask you to support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Each of these adds to important revisions in our current direction.

Thank you,
TIMOTHY R. BARKSDALE,
Choteau, MT.

COMMENT OF CLAIRE BARNETT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:49 p.m.
City, State: Hillsdale, NJ
Occupation: Teacher
Comment: It is time to stop supporting agribusiness and instead support small-scale, family-owned farms. We need to encourage sustainable agricultural practices for long-term viability.

COMMENT OF TRACY BARNETT

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 02, 2012, 6:35 p.m.
City, State: San Antonio, TX
Occupation: Journalist
Comment: Please support a strong farm bill—one that supports organic and independent producers, and one that provides support to the needy among us through programs such as TEFAP, SNAP and CSFP. Thank you!

COMMENT OF TOM BARNEY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:13 p.m.
City, State: Jacksonville, FL
Occupation: Healthcare
Comment: Please help us to remove the fine that organic producers have to pay to do the right thing and put a **Heavy Fine** on the factory farm and commercial food production industry for all of their pollution, poison and land damage. We need to get the subsidies redirected from those damaging our lives and put them toward those doing the right thing. Thank you.

COMMENT OF DEBBIE BARR

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:42 p.m.
City, State: Concord, MA
Occupation: Senior Services Program Manager
Comment: It is essential for our health to broaden support for organic farmers in the farm bill.
I ask for your full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
Equally important is to maintain the level of funding for SNAP. I work with an Area Agency on Aging, and the Meals on Wheels program is all that keeps some of our seniors from serious hunger . . . it runs at a deficit.
It is simply wrong to continue big ag subsidies and eliminate programs for our most vulnerable elders.
I ask you to fully fund conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and continue to support new entry farmer programs.

COMMENT OF ROGER BARR

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 11:15 p.m.
City, State: North Fork, CA
Occupation: Volunteer
Comment: Our farm bill is grossly counter to the needs of the American people. By primarily subsidizing the production of corn and soy we are only benefiting agribusiness to the detriment of everyone else, and the detriment of our environment. We need to move away toward more natural production methods.

COMMENT OF LISHA BARRE

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:17 a.m.
City, State: Boulder, CO
Occupation: Physician
Comment: As a physician I am sick of watching my patient's grow sicker and fatter on the processed garbage promoted by Big Food. Support for this bill is essential to preserving the health of our nation.

COMMENT OF CARLOS BARRIO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:36 p.m.

City, State: Chicago, IL

Occupation: Software

Comment: The government should do everything it can to promote the production of a wide variety of food, not just yellow corn. It should begin infrastructure development for farming capability without fossil fuels, food prices should not be influenced by OPEC. There should be a big push to have food production, especially meat, scale back its use of water. Development of sustainable U.S. based energy infrastructure and water conservation should be the top priority. Do not leave for tomorrow what can be done today.

COMMENT OF BARBARA BARRY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:51 p.m.

City, State: Woodinville, WA

Occupation: Organic Gardener

Comment: Please do not sell out to Monsanto and Con Agra!

Our country need small farmers who support local communities with laws and protection from Big Chema and Big Agra. We are watching how you vote and who you are serving, the citizens of the United States or Citizens United! Do not pander to your lobbyists!

COMMENT OF KATHRYN BARRY

Date Submitted: Thursday, March 29, 2012, 8:30 p.m.

City, State: Suffern, NY

Occupation: Retired Educator

Comment: As you know this bill is terribly important for both the present and future health of our people and our land.

Please subsidize only non-food renewable energy sources *e.g.*, switch grass, algae *etc.* Subsidizing food renewable energy sources, *e.g.*, corn, grossly distorts our food supply costs.

Please shift some of the commodity subsidies given to corporate farms to small family farmers growing fruit and vegetable crops. This will give us better and more stable, local food sources saving energy and providing a healthier food supply.

Please do not cut any of the nutrition programs such as SNAP. There are so many more hungry people these last 3 years. To cut these necessary programs—which today do not fully meet their needs—to still lower levels is unthinkable.

COMMENT OF KENNETH BARTA

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 1:21 a.m.

City, State: Spotswood, NJ

Occupation: Retired

Comment: End subsidies to big Agra. Subsidize instead Organic Farming. Get rid of Monsanto GM junk. Stop subsidizing ethanol. Stop polluting farm land and crops with toxic herbicides and pesticides. Stop factory farming of animals and the pollution they cause in waterways. Get better inspection of food and meat. Stop harassing raw milk producers.

COMMENT OF BOB BARTELL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:56 p.m.

City, State: Snohomish, WA

Occupation: Sales

Comment: We need support for real farmers. Big Ag with its unlabeled GMO crops puts us at risk. Can't buy food in the store without wondering if it is healthy or a Frankenfood. My family has resorted to growing our own vegetables as much as possible because of this.

COMMENT OF LEE BARTELL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:24 a.m.

City, State: New York, NY

Occupation: Retired Teacher

Comment: Farm policy needs to focus on actual farmers, **Not** on the multinational corporate farms. Organic farmers need to know that there's no GMO seeds blowing onto their land, and that there's help when catastrophe comes.

COMMENT OF RICHARD BARTELS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:19 p.m.

City, State: Pineville, KY

Occupation: College Faculty Member

Comment: Dear Mr. Rogers,

I realize that budget cuts are having to be a reality that all of us must live with. As changes are made in farm subsidies, please make sure that conservation gains made through various cooperative stimulators for farmers do not get washed away because the new provisions don't make the conservation connections. Having good water is essential to all of us (farmers included) so please make sure that the farmers have the necessary incentives to keep our water sources clean and safe.

Thank you and thanks again for your years of faithful service to the people of the Fifth Congressional district.

RICHARD BARTELS.

COMMENT OF KATHY BARTON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:00 p.m.

City, State: Northport, NY

Occupation: Business Owner

Comment: I want all food to be labeled with all ingredients and I want GMO's to be eliminated. I also want the farmers to stop being harassed because of the government being in bed with Monsanto. It is ridiculous and it doesn't take into effect the people. I also want organic foods to be more readily available.

COMMENT OF DUNCAN BARUCH

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 1:20 a.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Library Clerk

Comment: The writers of the next farm bill must heed the wishes of the majority of American citizens, not the wishes of the few who run Big Agriculture. Americans want healthful foods, foods without GMOs and poisons. Organic foods grown by small farmers. Foods produced with next to no impact on climate. No factory foods.

To make the above, positive changes will take a drastic and courageous effort away from the current model. Now is the time.

COMMENT OF ALMA BARUTH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:27 p.m.

City, State: Mesa, AZ

Occupation: Housewife

Comment: They are taking away "**Job**" from American **People**—citizens or **Not** . . . they are working to keep U.S. of A. going . . . then take the "price" of "shipping and handling from overseas" . . . then they (**Jack**) up the **Prices** on Us **U.S.A. Citizens . . . And The 'Growers' . . . 'Producers' Are The Ones Who Make The Big Money . . . On Us . . . !**

COMMENT OF ANDREA BASCHE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:27 p.m.

City, State: Ames, IA

Occupation: Graduate Student in Crop Production

Comment: A great economic opportunity exists in localized markets and smaller producer infrastructure. This cannot happen without more resources from the farm bill directed toward beginning farmers, access to credit and land, insurance for non row crop agriculture. Young people in places like Iowa **Want** to manage the land differently but lack the ability to enter into this capital intensive field. The FB policies could be directed toward the right rural development and not more of the same.

COMMENT OF STUART BASDEN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:20 p.m.

City, State: Chicago, IL

Occupation: Web Developer

Comment: Agricultural subsidies need to be reversed, so that they encourage the small- to mid-sized farms, encourage sustainable farming practices, and encourage farmers to protect their land. We need to tax those farms that damage the land, whether through factory farms, mega-ranches, or monocropping.

Our farmland needs diversity to be robust and stable, and with the growing unpredictability of the climate, we need to make our food more secure. The way to do this is by banning monocropping, and encouraging seed diversity and crop diversity.

COMMENT OF JANE BASLER

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 16, 2012, 10:17 p.m.

City, State: Saint Louis, MO

Occupation: Director of Construction Management

Comment: Help the small farmers survive and allow for diversity and choices besides corporate Agribusiness. Continue to provide 30 million to small disadvantaged farmers. America was built by farming communities!

Thank you for your attention to this matter and consideration!

JANE BASLER.

COMMENT OF CAROL BASON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:22 p.m.

City, State: Santa Barbara, CA

Occupation: Psychotherapist

Comment: The food system in the United States is deeply broken. Subsidies are paid for products which become cheaply priced junk food (corn and soy), producing monumental health problems and obesity, while "real food" (fruits and vegetables) become more and more expensive. Small organic farms are pushed to the brink, while agribusiness holds all the power and money. I have very little hope that Members of the House of Representative will change this situation as you are addicted to the money which comes to you from large corporations.

COMMENT OF VIRGINIA BASTONE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:45 p.m.

City, State: Hawthorne, NY

Occupation: Teacher & Nutritionist

Comment: Pesticides affect our youth's nervous system . . . Why do we have to continue to poison our food system? Please consider safer alternatives that are not toxic.

Choosing safer alternatives would also reduce health care costs since there would be less toxins in our food cycle. Thank you for considering alternatives. Studies have also shown more nutrients are retained when food is grown organically. Our bees would continue to pollinate fruits and vegetables. Thank you again for strengthening our farm bill to create better health for our nation!

COMMENT OF ANNETTE BATCHELOR

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:46 p.m.

City, State: Newcastle, CA

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: Our country needs legislation to protect against chemicals in our food and will benefit from a fair and healthy farm bill. Please do the right thing and support the Organic Farm Bill and also fight big companies such as Monsanto to label our foods GMO when used in our food.

COMMENT OF DIANE BATES

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:05 p.m.

City, State: Booneville, MS

Occupation: Disabled

Comment: Set policy that encourages small family farms and limits big corporate farming. Outlaw all genetically altered food, eliminate use of pesticides, herbicides and fungicides. Outlaw hybrid seeds. Get farming back to nature's way; organic, rotating crops, replenishing the soil nutrients, seed bearing crops, *etc.*

COMMENT OF JACKIE BATTREAL

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 15, 2012, 8:43 a.m.

City, State: Irving, TX

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Fruits, Livestock, Nuts, Vegetables, Other

Size: 50–150 acres

Comment: I would like to have or know of incentives for second generation farmers who inherit their parents' property. My dad was a rancher until his death in 1997. My 91 year old mother has continued to live there but has leased the property for income and tax benefits. I will inherit the property and would like to have it producing a profit as I lost my job last year and at my age of over 60 have not been able to find other employment.

Are there programs for me as a woman and second generation farm owner to help me develop the farm for income?

Thank you.

COMMENT OF BERENICE BAUER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:16 p.m.

City, State: Glen Ellyn, IL

Comment: Although I am not a farmer nor do I deal in farm products other than as a consumer. I feel that whatever is put into a farm bill it should include the study of organic crops. I feel that the more we use genetically altered foods the more dangerous our foods become to humans. How to get the most from organic crops should be of primary concern.

COMMENT OF CHANTE BAUER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:34 p.m.

City, State: Lincoln, NE

Occupation: Nonprofit

Comment: In the upcoming farm bill, please place emphasis on small-scale farmers *versus* large industrial farming practices. We as a country need to focus on environmentally sustainable agriculture practices that do not utilize mono-culture crops; heavy use of pesticides, herbicides, and fungicides; GMO seed; fossil-fuel burning equipment; and 1,000+ mile transit of foods. Staple crops like corn and soybeans should not be heavily subsidized. Additionally, Confined Animal Feeding Operations (CAFO) needs to be replaced with grass-fed cattle and pasture-raised pork and chickens. The current farming infrastructure is depleting our natural capital, while giving preferential treatment to large industrial farming corporations. I urge you to transfer this infrastructure to empower the small-scale farmer who acts as nurturer and steward of our food and our planet.

I thank you for your thoughtful consideration in this matter.

COMMENT OF KATYA BAUER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:56 p.m.

City, State: New York, NY

Occupation: Artist

Comment: America at its core is about small farmers who have always understood what sustainability means. Without respect for the land, there is no food and no future. It's that simple.

COMMENT OF LESLIE BAUER

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 10:21 p.m.

City, State: Austin, TX

Occupation: Nutritional Educator and Chef

Comment: Folks, we are running out of time. Now, more than any other time in the history of this planet, we need to make serious changes in how we produce food, how we share food and how much energy we need to produce whole foods! We are **Dying** as a nation because we are not grasping the problem at the core of the nutritional level. We need organic, nutrient dense foods that truly nourish the human body. We need to put animals back on pasture, where they belong, eating grass to make the fats, protein and nutrients that we need; no more manmade crap that is killing us! No pesticides, herbicides, hormones, GMO's, artificial flavorings, rancid fats, toxic poisons in our food, our air, our soil, our water! **Wake Up Folks**, we are dying with all of these horrific poisons in our world and we can make the

changes that we need to be healthy. Big agribiz has strangled this nation and the people we elect are in accordance with their lies. **Wake Up** and know that we have a responsibility here, to ourselves and each other, to do the very best we can with what our Earth has provided for us. We have poisoned ourselves enough, and the evidence is everywhere; cancer, heart disease, diabetes, obesity . . . you name it, we have created it with our lack of care towards our planet and all her gifts of abundance.

We elect you officials to actually **Care** and educate yourselves about the issues, not be paid off for what? You will still have to eat these poisoned foods, breathe this toxic air, drink polluted water. DO you not 'get it' yet? Are you really all that stupid? Or are you all just lying to yourselves and selling out to the rest of us? It is more than tragic, and just plain disgusting what has happened over the past 60 years in this country. People are so hurting, so confused, so angry at what is going on, and you people, those in power, have the ability to **Lead** the people of this great nation! Start with the most fundamental of all the issues, with our food. If you do not, then I hope you have found another planet to go to. Mother Earth has had just about enough of the poison and cannot take much more of it. There is no question in my mind that we are rapidly destroying ourselves and we need radical changes made to our farm bill if we are to survive. **Wake Up** and do your jobs and make the necessary changes that will **Help** our great nation!

COMMENT OF RACHEL BAUER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 7:45 a.m.

City, State: Memphis, TN

Occupation: University Professor

Comment: Please fight to maintain the EQIP Organic Initiative and do all that you can to endorse local foods and farms. It is also extremely important to me that beginning farmers/ranchers are supported—I firmly believe that big agribusiness needs to be reined in because they are rapidly causing the decline of food standards here in the U.S. Big agribusiness has a stranglehold on American food—it needs to be controlled.

COMMENT OF HELEN C. BAUM

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:17 p.m.

City, State: Manteo, NC

Occupation: Speech and Language Pathologist

Comment: It is of utmost importance that we protect our farm lands and produce organic foods. Every year we have more people in our country dying of cancer and other neurological diseases. We cannot afford to cause greater risk to our people, land and environment. How many people in our district do you know who have cancer or neurological diseases? That number grows daily. Please do your part to protect the people in your district!

Thank you,

HELEN C. BAUM.

COMMENT OF GAIL BAUMAN

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 4:25 p.m.

City, State: Incline Village, NV

Occupation: Worker

Comment: In order for human beings to live they need to have water and food. Do you think it might be possible that the people that want to cut food programs have **Never Been Hungry?** Maybe if they went just one day without food they would realize the importance of food and how important it is for mental functioning, physical functioning and most important in order to **Live!** In my opinion the job of Government is to assist the people so that their lives can be as happy and healthy as possible?

Have a Beautiful Day!

GAIL.

COMMENT OF JOSEPH BAUMANN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 1:35 p.m.

City, State: Cottonwood, AZ

Occupation: Retired

Comment: The farm bill should help and protect sustainable organic farmers. That includes protection via seed program and pesticide over-spraying from big agri producers such as Monsanto and their health untested GMO and pesticing plant DNA.

COMMENT OF SUSAN BAUMGARTNER

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 16, 2012, 3:46 p.m.

City, State: Waukesha, WI

Occupation: Mom

Comment: I want a farm bill that gives schools the means to feed kids whole fruits, grains, vegetables, dairy and meats that are grown by sustainable farms and not CFOs and monoculture-based corporations. I want money spent to promote farms that practice biodiversity and crop rotations. I want the government to support cutting-edge sustainable food production that supports health in people and the environment.

COMMENT OF JENN BAUMSTEIN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:57 a.m.

City, State: Putnam Valley, NY

Occupation: Nonprofit Food Community Member

Comment: Hello,

I am both a small personal farmer and a member of a nonprofit that promotes local food production and education. We HAVE to work to make our farm bill sustainable and fruitful. Our students/constituents/clients are passionate about a world in where we can all have access to good, clean food. It is **Totally** unacceptable for us to provide subsidies to farmers who help feed our ever fattening and lazy nation. We want to promote moving—eating—**Living** well. Supporting young farms, small family farms, young farmers is essential. **Please** think about all of us who are trying to get good food out there when making these decisions. We want our government's support, not their frowned eyebrows. Thank you.

COMMENT OF ADRIENNE MOORE BAXTER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:46 p.m.

City, State: Olathe, KS

Occupation: Registered Dietitian Licensed in Kansas and Missouri; Telehealth Provider; Clinical Instructor of Health Profession Students

Comment: About the Food and Farm Bill . . .

- Please fund programs that support beginning and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, organic farming, regional farm and food economies, and rural development.
- We need more farmers and ranchers [most are as old as I am—60 years]. Kansans want more sustainable food production. Food service managers are seeking local producers prepared to sell to institutions whose customers want fresh food.
- Build more economic opportunity in our food system; Support family farmers that really need help, not the biggest farms that don't: End subsidies (aka direct payments and countercyclical commodity programs), and replace them with loophole-free agriculture risk coverage. Additionally, implement a cap on crop insurance premium subsidies;
- Ensure that limited conservation funding maximizes lasting environmental benefits: Limit funds to Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) for animal waste management infrastructure by eliminating the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) Livestock Set-aside and protect the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) from disproportionate cuts. Improve CSP by ranking applications solely on their conservation benefits.

COMMENT OF JESSICA BAXTER

Date Submitted: Monday, May 07, 2012, 2:40 p.m.

City, State: Tucson, AZ

Occupation: Food Banker

Comment: Please do not make cuts to the Federal feeding programs that support the most vulnerable members of our community. Children, seniors, working poor, and the homeless should not pay the price for the richest Americans to enjoy tax breaks. Feeding people is an American value. It is a human value. It is the right

thing to do. From the far right to the far left—Americans support these feeing programs.

Emergency Food Boxes, Food Stamps, and CSFP are more necessary now than ever before. Do not cut these programs. Not now, and not ever.

COMMENT OF SANDRA BAYES

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:40 p.m.

City, State: Flagstaff, AZ

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Farm subsidy reform is badly needed now! We need to place limitations on crop insurance subsidies and to re-attach soil erosion and wetland conservation requirements to crop insurance programs.

It is time for the Federal government to start placing the health of it's citizens first rather than placing the monetary gain of large farm corporations first.

COMMENT OF LAURA BEACH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:13 p.m.

City, State: Yadkinville, NC

Occupation: Pastor

Comment: Before becoming a pastor, I worked on a small-scale, family farm that used sustainable methods of production. For the health of our people, our economy, and our land, please put measures in the farm bill that support sustainable agriculture and family farms. Write policies that increase access to good, healthy food for the most vulnerable in our society, not policies that increase the profits of agribusinesses that have created the health crises in our country.

COMMENT OF DAVID BEANE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:54 p.m.

City, State: Portland, ME

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: The House Agriculture Committee needs to realize that the American people want their food supply to be safe and healthy. This most definitely means protecting organic and healthy food subsidies.

COMMENT OF GEORGE BEATTIE

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 1:29 a.m.

City, State: Decatur, GA

Comment: At a time when healthcare is of such critical importance in the life of our nation, nothing could be more germane to that issue than ensuring the highest standards of healthy foods and nutrition. A substantive, forward-thinking organic food bill is the lynchpin in establishing those standards. To the members of the Committee, this is your chance to really make a difference.

COMMENT OF KATHLEEN BEAUBIEN

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 11:39 a.m.

City, State: Farmington, ME

Occupation: Retired Teacher

Comment: I want a farm policy that encourages and supports small farms, family farms, organic farms, and that protects and replenishes the Earth, the water, and the air—not just in our country but all around the planet—one that respects the physical **And** economic realities of other countries. If used prudently, this Earth has the water, soil, and capability to sustain us all in a healthy way. We must use our best thinking to be good stewards of the earth—to preserve, protect and defend it from exploitation for economic gain without regard to its health or that of the people it supports and feeds.

Water is sacred, soil is sacred, and we need to protect and replenish these resources, fully aware of our impact, not just in our country, but upon the whole planet. It is, as you know, all connected.

COMMENT OF GRETCHEN BEAUBIER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 11:47 p.m.

City, State: Albuquerque, NM

Occupation: Homemaker

Comment: As a consumer, I am concerned with the availability of fresh, safe food available at the grocery stores. I want food labeled in a way that I can make rational and informed decisions about my purchases; GMO-content goods should be labeled as such.

I also believe that we must not solve our budget problems on the backs of those experiencing food insecurity, including our most vulnerable—our children, the elderly, and the disabled.

I firmly believe that we should create an even “plowing” field by fully funding programs that support beginning and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, organic farming, regional farm and food economies, and rural development. We need more farmers and ranchers, more sustainable food production, and more economic opportunity in our food system.

We should support family farmers that really need help, not the biggest farms that don't: We must end subsidies (aka direct payments and countercyclical commodity programs), and replace them with loophole-free agriculture risk coverage. Additionally, implement a cap on crop insurance premium subsidies.

I do **Not** want us to continue with senseless subsidies for giant conglomerate farmers and feed-lot polluters.

I want Congress to ensure that limited conservation funding maximizes lasting environmental benefits: Limit funds to Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) for animal waste management infrastructure by eliminating the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) Livestock Set-aside and protect the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) from disproportionate cuts, and improve it by ranking applications solely on their conservation benefits.

 COMMENT OF MALLORY BEAUDREAU

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 16, 2012, 1:43 a.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Educational Counselor

Comment: The farm bill is an enormous opportunity to serve the people of the United States, and not corporate interests. Please bear in mind that an unprecedented number of Americans are using supplemental food aid, and this is often the only assistance they have as they search for jobs. Meanwhile, subsidies are going to gigantic agricultural corporations to produce cash crops that are fueling diet-related diseases such as diabetes and heart disease. Please remember that the spirit of the food bill is to grant access to healthy, nutritious food to Americans, and not to serve the greed of the few.

 COMMENT OF KATHY BEAULIEU

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:05 p.m.

City, State: Fall River, MA

Occupation: Grandmother

Comment: Congress has changed nothing since 1975. There were the same problems with our food supply back then. Red food dye from Mexico was harming our food supply, too much sugar in cereal, too much advertising of unhealthy foods to children were prevalent back then. We need better labeling, no GMO allowed in our food supply, more food stamps for children and elderly.

 COMMENT OF JANET BEAZLIE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:20 p.m.

City, State: Forestville, CA

Occupation: Gardening Teacher and Sustainability Consultant

Comment: We need to have a farm bill that meets the health & food needs of Americans and the small family farmers' needs. We need incentives for organic growing methods and for diverse crops. We need incentives for habitat and riparian restoration and conservation easements. We need incentives for clean energy farms with solar, wind, biomass, and other renewable, green energy. We need incentives to sequester carbon on farms and drop greenhouse gas emissions. We need to support farmland acquisition by young people. We need farming education for young adults and school gardens in K-12. We need to stop supporting large corporate farming agribusinesses from controlling U.S. agriculture. We need to have our seeds protected from GMOs and corporate control.

COMMENT OF DANIEL BECK

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 3:42 p.m.

City, State: Redondo Beach, CA

Occupation: Hazardous Waste Specialist

Comment: We need clean organic foods with no GMO's that give us cancer. We need non pesticide laced foods. We need good men, with sold morals representing us. We need people who work for a living making decisions for the people who work for a living, not money laundering fake lobbyist for large corporations with no pulse. We need the America that the world loved and looked to for guidance and help. We need are men to stop selling us out for short sighted dreams and the quick buck. We need my old ancestors back, because the new breed of American man is disgusting and Arrogant. We need a miracle to escape the morons running this country, and continually make the decisions. I support the following:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).

COMMENT OF MARYLIN BECK

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:53 p.m.

City, State: Dedham, MA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: We need to know where our food is grown and that it is not filled with hormones and antibiotics. Local farmers are best at assuring the quality of their meat and produce. They should be allowed to butcher the meat they raise. They should be given subsidies to bring food to the many food deserts that exist in this country. Stop subsidizing Agribusiness.

COMMENT OF DIANE BECKER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:42 p.m.

City, State: Gillett, PA

Occupation: Homemaker, Gardener, Artist

Comment: There is nothing more important for the health of all Americans than a healthy food supply. That means foods produced without the use of hazardous chemicals and using organic methods. This is done very well on small family owned, local farms, and, I hope, for many in our own gardens. The small farms need protection from the corporations that seem to care nothing the environment we must all live in or for the American people in general.

COMMENT OF ELAINE BECKER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 4:04 p.m.

City, State: Roanoke, VA

Comment: Stop using the farm bill as Corporate Welfare for huge agribusiness. This is suppose to help **Small** farmers offer diverse produce to the public to help nutritional intake!

COMMENT OF ELIZABETH BECKMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:06 p.m.

City, State: Florence, CO

Occupation: Website Designer, Marketing, Used Car Sales

Comment: Please discontinue all farm subsidies. The current policies result in corruption and flooding the market with cheap high fructose corn syrup which is making Americans obese.

COMMENT OF DEANNE BEDNAR

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 10:58 a.m.

City, State: Oxford, MI

Occupation: Sustainability Educator

Comment: We need and want food systems that support small farmers, value-added, organic systems. In order to meet our needs now without diminishing the ability of the future to meet their needs we absolutely need non-toxic and economically friendly food production.

SUBMITTED STATEMENT BY BARRY BEDWELL, PRESIDENT, CALIFORNIA GRAPE & TREE FRUIT LEAGUE

The California Grape & Tree Fruit League (League) is a voluntary, non-profit agricultural trade association that represents fresh grapes, berries and deciduous tree fruit grown in California. CGTFL is the key public policy organization that represents the needs and interests of its members by advocating on legislative and regulatory issues, at state, Federal, and international levels. On behalf of our membership, I thank you for the opportunity to discuss the current farm bill reauthorization effort and am encouraged to work with you to ensure adequate recognition of California's specialty crop sector.

The League is a Steering Committee member of the Specialty Crop Farm Bill Alliance, a national coalition of more than 130 organizations representing growers of fruits, vegetables, dried fruit, tree nuts, nursery plants and other products. The Alliance was established to enhance the competitiveness of specialty crop agriculture and improve the health of Americans by broadening the scope of U.S. agricultural public policy.

The Alliance successfully advocated for a 2008 Farm Bill that for the first time made a strong investment in specialty crops. The bill included provisions that helped the U.S. specialty crop industry compete and grow in domestic and global markets. It assisted specialty crop producers in many areas, including:

- Establishing a Specialty Crop Research Initiative to develop and disseminate science-based tools to address the needs of specialty crop producers.
- Increasing funding for state-level specialty crop grants that focus on local, regional and statewide programs to enhance producers' ability to compete in the marketplace and provide consumers with safe, abundant food.
- Enhancing critical trade assistance and market promotion tools that will grow international markets for specialty crops.
- Investing in prevention and mitigation programs and tools to combat invasive pests and diseases, which cost the U.S. economy billions of dollars per year.

The California Grape & Tree Fruit League, as part of the Alliance effort, stresses the importance and desire to continue the strong investment in specialty crops in the 2012 Farm Bill reauthorization effort. With release of farm bill legislative language by the Senate Agriculture Committee we are encouraged by the intent to continue investments in many important areas. However, it is imperative that as the debate shifts to the House, your advocacy on the House Agriculture Committee protects the following areas, as well as, serves to support other vital components of the legislation (as recommended by the Alliance):

Title III—Trade:

Market Access Program (MAP):

Policy Recommendation—The Specialty Crop Farm Bill Alliance, representing a broad range of interest and participants in the Market Access Program, supports the Coalition to Program U.S. Agricultural Exports to maintain funding for MAP at no less than \$200 million per year.

Mandatory Funding—\$200 million per year (\$1 billion over 5 years); Senate language contains \$200 million per year mark.

With over forty percent of fresh table grapes and approximately 20 percent of tree fruit going to markets outside the U.S., the Market Access Program with a proven track record of success is a key and vital component that should be maintained at the \$200 million per year level. A program with a 35:1 return on investment ratio is something to be admired not cut.

Technical Assistance for Specialty Crops (TASC):

Policy Recommendations:

Funding—Mandatory funding at no less than \$9 million per year. This is the level of mandatory funding authorized for Fiscal Years 2013 and 2017.

Proposed Changes to Authorizing Language—The program should provide direct assistance through public and private-sector projects as well as technical assistance to remove, resolve, or mitigate sanitary and phytosanitary and technical barriers to

trade. These barriers are defined under the World Trade Organization Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) Agreement.

Quick Response Capability—TASC was originally designed to be a nimble and effective way to help the private sector resolve technical barriers to trade. These barriers can emerge unexpectedly and require fast action to prevent market closures and trade disruptions in established markets. TASC was also designed to take advantage of opportunities that arise on short notice, such as meetings or travel by U.S. officials to foreign countries where industry representation might be of assistance. With the positive growth in funding and the expansion of projects designed to be carried out over multiple years, the process for approving projects has become more rigid, with a focus on allocating funds to increasingly larger projects. Congress should direct the Secretary to hold in reserve an adequate amount of TASC funds for quick response projects that might emerge on short notice over the course of the year as well as establish an approval process for such projects in order for decisions to be made in less than a week. Quick response language not included in Senate language.

Mandatory Funding—\$9 million per year (\$45 million over 5 years); funding of \$9 million per year included in Senate language.

Technical Assistance for Specialty Crops (TASC) grants also have proven to be effective in removing, resolving or mitigating sanitary and phytosanitary technical barriers to trade. Our organization has witnessed firsthand what TASC grants have been able to accomplish. In our case, Mexico has now become the number two market for stone fruit, peaches, plums, nectarines and apricots, due specifically to this program. The Alliance recommends mandatory funding at \$9 million annually. This was the figure contained in the Senate markup.

International Maximum Residue Limits (MRL) Database:

Policy Recommendation—The SCFBA should coordinate with the Minor Crop Farmer Alliance to develop its policy recommendation. The Minor Crop Farmer Alliance is working with FAS to develop a permanent funding solution for the International MRL database. The level of yearly funding required is estimated at less than \$500,000. Congress should fund this program at \$500,000.

Mandatory Funding—\$500,000 per year (\$2.5 million over 5 years); Mandatory funding not included in Senate language.

Another key component of growing trade for U.S. growers revolves around the need to maintain a database for international Maximum Residue Limits (MRL's). We feel it is very important to recognize this fact by allocating mandatory funding of \$500,000 per year to maintain such a database. The Senate version currently does not contain this amount.

Title VII—Research

Enhancement of the Specialty Crop Research Initiative (SCRI):

Policy Recommendations:

Research Priorities—Congress should make changes that expand research priorities for specialty crops for crop characteristics, threat from pest and disease, handling and processing. In addition, Congress should incorporate stakeholder outreach when developing these priorities. Finally, Congress should provide USDA the flexibility to not require funding for each of the priority areas.

Review Panel—The SCFBA recommends Congress institute a policy that establishes a two-step process for reviewing research project under SCRI. The first review would be conducted by industry stakeholders. The stakeholder review panel would be focused on industry-specific proposals and would be asked to rank from “relevant to not for further consideration.” The second panel would be similar to the current SCRI review process established under the 2008 Farm Bill and would be based on scientific merit around the proposals.

Mandatory Funding—\$100 million per year (\$500 million over 5 years); Senate language establishes baseline for SCRI of \$50 million (FY13 \$25 million, FY14–15 \$30 million, FY 16 \$65 million, FY17 \$50 million).

In regard to enhancement of the Specialty Crop Research Initiative (SCRI), we concur with the Alliance recommendation that establishes a two-step process for reviewing research project under SCRI. The first review would be conducted by industry stakeholders. The stakeholder review panel would be focused on industry-specific proposals and would rank proposals accordingly. The second panel would be similar to the current SCRI review process established under the 2008 Farm Bill and would be based on scientific merit around the proposals. We also agree with those that would make research available to qualifying universities and not just land-grant institutions. The Alliance recommends mandatory funding of \$100

million per year. The Senate language establishes a baseline of SCRI of \$50 million with FY 13 being \$25 million, FY14–15 \$30 million, FY16 \$65 million and FY17 \$50 million.

Title X—Horticulture and Organics:

Specialty Crop Block Grant Program:

Policy Recommendations:

No-Match Requirement—Congress should maintain the non-requirement of matching funds for grant recipients. However, states should be required to gather and maintain matching-fund data.

Grower-Level Projects—Congress should encourage states to further expand or prioritize grower-level projects. There are concerns in the industry that research critical to grower needs is not being adequately funded.

Strengthening Definitions—While states are required to undergo a thorough review process of grant requests, Congress should encourage states require applicants to provide appropriate justification for how a project “enhances the competitiveness” of specialty crops. By addressing this important issue, Congress will ensure funds are being targeted to the purpose of the block grant program while enhancing the integrity of this critical specialty crop policy tool.

Multi-State Projects—Due to the growing issues that impact specialty crops that are commodity specific or regionally critical, the SCFBA encourages USDA to consider policy options to help states facilitate the utilization of multi-state partnership projects. The SCFBA recommends Congress include language allowing USDA, at the initiation of two or more states or applicant(s) seeking to conduct a multi-state project, to coordinate grant approval through the multiple state processes. Senate language includes funding which ramps up from \$1 million (FY13) to \$5 million (FY17). Senate language has program targeting projects on Food Safety, Commodity Specific Issues, Pest & Disease and other programs deemed necessary by the Secretary.

Mandatory Funding—Support Senate recommendation of \$70 million per year (Current baseline is \$55 million per year).

Block grants have proven, especially for states like California, to be an effective and efficient way to address specific concerns and challenges for specialty crops. We support the Senate recommendation of \$70 million per year as well as language allowing USDA, at the initiation of two or more states or applicant(s) seeking to conduct a multi-state project, to coordinate grant approval through a multiple state process.

Title X—Pest and Disease Programs:

Plant Pest and Disease Management and Disaster Prevention:

Policy Recommendation—The SCFBA recommends an increase in mandatory funding of \$25 million per year for each of the next 5 years (\$125 million).

Mandatory Funding—\$75 million per year (\$375 million over 5 years); Senate language sets funding at \$60 million (FY13–16), \$65 million (FY 17). Current funding level, per 2008 Farm Bill, is set at \$50 million per year.

Given the growing trend of an increasing introduction of invasive species, no area of this bill may be more important than to adequately fund efforts related to plant pest and disease management and disaster prevention. Current funding level, per 2008 Farm Bill, is set at \$50 million per year. The SCFBA recommends an increase in mandatory funding of \$25 million per year for each of the next 5 years. Currently Senate language sets funding at \$60 million (FY13–16), \$65 million (FY17).

In summary, the so called farm bill is many things. Most, as we know, has little to do with actual farming. I have attempted to highlight just a few prime areas that are of direct importance to our members and ultimately consumers. We also want to mention our support for air quality provisions in the bill which will be addressed by some of our colleagues and which is absent in the Senate version. In addition, we do not want to discount the importance of nutrition programs in this legislation. Whether it is the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable program, the DOD Fresh program or the fruit and vegetable incentives for the SNAP program, we concur with the importance that the current Senate language has placed on these areas as well. Because in the final analysis this legislation can do much to combat the obesity epidemic this nation faces by changing individual eating habits to consume more healthy fruits, vegetables and nuts. And all of us win in the end when we have a healthier population.

Sincere thanks to you Congressman Cardoza, Congressman Costa for all of your efforts. We all know that your work is cut out for you in the House and we very much hope that the Valley Congressional delegation will show

the bipartisanship leadership necessary in these difficult fiscal times to produce a bill that will appropriately invest in specialty crops for the benefit of all. Thank you again for this opportunity to speak to you today.

COMMENT OF DIANNE BEE

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 1:07 a.m.

City, State: Salina, KS

Occupation: Consumer

Comment: No Farm Bill For Anything But 100% Organic Farms Or Those Switching To Organic With Absolutely No Genetically Modified Organisms.

No more of my tax dollars should be going to unsustainable farm practices that destroy the environment, kill the bees, pollute the gene pool of my body and all of the population, and contribute to the growing disease problems including cancer, autoimmune diseases, obesity, and countless other diseases. GMOs that my tax dollars subsidize are grown by corporations that do not need nor deserve any support. I'm tired of lobbyists paying you off to vote for farm bills and GMOs, all while stomping on the Bill of Rights and undermining everything that this country used to stand for. It's time you take your oaths seriously or ship out, preferably to a communist third world country—after your citizenship rights are stripped—where your ideas will fit in.

COMMENT OF KARA BEEBEE

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 2:47 p.m.

City, State: Columbus, OH

Occupation: Student

Comment: A subsidized insurance program congress proposes to replace what exists with will allow giant commodity farmers and insurance companies to walk away with billions in taxpayer dollars while putting the land, soil and environment at greater risk.

We need **Real** reform. Think of local and small farmers, the true members of our American community, when you are reforming this bill. Thank you.

COMMENT OF JUDY & DOUG BEERS

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 8:40 p.m.

City, State: Honeoye Falls, NY

Occupation: Educator

Comment: We need a farm bill that helps farmers, not farm factories and corporations like Monsanto. Put our **Healthy** food supply and the welfare of our independent and co-op farmers at the top of priorities where it belongs.

COMMENT OF ALICE BEETZ

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 13, 2012, 12:01 p.m.

City, State: Fayetteville, AR

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Please work to create a farm bill that supports farming sustainably. It's time to reduce subsidies for commodity cropping. It's time to link financial support to practices and farmers who conserve our soil and protect fresh water resources for all of us.

Investing in today's and tomorrow's farmers makes economic sense in general. And it also helps ensure a continued supply of food for everyone. Food security!

Let's figure out how to produce good food without such dependence on petroleum.

Can you resist those whose lobbying means money in your coffers? Can you vote for the long-term good of the country's agricultural sustainability?

We are watching to see.

If yes, I will vote for you.

ALICE BEETZ,
Fayetteville, AR.

COMMENT OF LINDA BEG

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:39 a.m.

City, State: Denville, NJ

Occupation: Administrator

Comment: All power in the hands of the few always ends in disaster. The uncontrolled use of dangerous pesticides and GMO's in big AG supports Big Pharma and destroys our bees, people and the planet. Support for family farms is where money should go and distributed fairly to all, then if you have someone misusing the system, the rest balances it out, not so when all the power of food production is in too few hands.

COMMENT OF BILL BEHREND

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 2:16 p.m.

City, State: Albany, GA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Other

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: I am a beekeeper. The best thing the new farm bill can do is limit pesticides and GMOs, and promote chemical free, sustainable agriculture that supports many small producers rather than fewer, larger producers, and locally produced ag products. But that won't happen because Congress has been bought by monied interests. Just do what is necessary to help bees survive—it will benefit us all.

COMMENT OF CARLA BEHRENS

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 10, 2012, 11:14 a.m.

City, State: Longmont, CO

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: I believe there should be more support for family farms, esp. organic farms. I believe that no American should go hungry; it is an atrocity that so many American children go hungry . . . we need to maintain programs such as SNAP.

COMMENT OF KATE BEHRENS

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:17 p.m.

City, State: Madison, WI

Occupation: Healthcare

Comment: I would like to see much more support for **Organic** agriculture. Less or no subsidies for growing corn for HFCS or ethanol, or anything else.

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Thanks for all you do!

KATE BEHRENS.

COMMENT OF PEGGY BEIRISE

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:15 a.m.

City, State: Dayton, OH

Occupation: Insurance Agent

Comment: The health of the citizens of this nation depends on the food produced by the country's farmers. The current Farm Policy subsidies allows for cheap unhealthy food to flow abundantly in our food supply. This in . . . turn makes it easier for our population to consume, which is one of many factors contributing to the obesity epidemic. I'd like to see a farm bill that makes healthier food flow abundantly to our citizens. So that an easier, more affordable, and wiser food choice is made readily available to everyone in our communities. The small, local farms need your help.

COMMENT OF MICHELLE BELANGER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:14 p.m.

City, State: Winston Salem, NC

Occupation: Self-Employed Carpenter/Musician

Comment: I support the following for the upcoming farm bill:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

I also believe that GM crops should be labeled, although I don't know if that is part of the scope of this bill. I have voted with my money for what kind of world I would like to live in for the last 30+ years. I vote for minimal use of chemical intervention, fair and humane treatment of farmers, farm workers and farm animals. Many agribusiness practices go against these values. The organic and local markets have seen some of the most consistent growth because large numbers of people agree with the common sense of these values and have been casting their votes as well. The farm bill should honor this. Specifically, I would like to mention, in the way of fair treatment for farmers, I ask that you be sure large distributors and processors who have monopolized markets for livestock are not allowed to take advantage of small farmers by, for example, requiring investments that take farmers several years to pay for, and then only giving contracts for one year. There are many other documented abuses and I hope you are aware of them and doing your diligence to make sure these issues are addressed. You can find out more from the organization RAFI USA. They have an excellent record of helping farmers who have been mistreated and helping legislators understand what needs to change. I also hope you will help this country move toward farming practices that use less fossil fuel, both in the form of fertilizers and other chemicals used on crops that are made with petroleum and natural gas, and less dependence on large machinery that uses a lot of fuel. I would like to see an end to subsidies that support such practices, as well as those that go to wealthy people who don't even work on their farms. We should go back to paying farmers for storing commodity crops to be sold when the price goes up, instead of just paying them to dump it on the market for a below market price. The current practice drives down world market prices and causes small farmers in poor countries to go out of business. That, in turn, increases the number of immigrants. We must do better.

COMMENT OF DANIEL BELGUM-BLAD

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 9:34 a.m.

City, State: Atwater, MN

Occupation: Lutheran Minister

Comment: Members of Congress,

As a concerned citizen who works as a pastor with farm families and non-farm families, in rural Minnesota, I know how important farm policy is I have some concerns I would like you to address.

I support the full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286). This is a common sense approach to food supply issues.

I also support the full funding of conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies is tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.

I also believe more people should have the opportunity to 'break into' farming. So I support the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).

I believe we need to support sound farming practices, and organic farming should be encouraged. So I urge you to maintain the EQIP Organic Initiative. This is good for soil, water, food quality.

I understand, from my reading, that Republicans in the House Agricultural Committee have already voted to slash \$33 billion from the food stamp program while leaving farm subsidies unscathed. This is a travesty of justice! I strongly urge that this be blocked, and amended. The Food Stamp program saves tax payers billions "down the road" in increased health care costs for underprivileged people.

In addition, it helps the most vulnerable: children.

I ask you to consider the above measures, and ask that you support them.

Sincerely,

DANIEL BELGUM-BLAD

COMMENT OF JUDITH BELL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:51 a.m.

City, State: Oakland, CA

Occupation: President, PolicyLink

Comment: At this crucial time in the farm bill process, we urge you to include language authorizing the Healthy Food Financing Initiative (HFFI).

HFFI will help address the nation's obesity epidemic by increasing access to healthy food, and will also create jobs and spark much-needed economic development across the country. For decades, low-income communities, particularly communities of color, have suffered from lack of access to healthy, fresh food. HFFI will provide one-time loan and grant financing to attract grocery stores and other fresh food retail to underserved urban, suburban, and rural areas, and renovate and expand existing stores so they can provide the healthy foods that communities want and need.

HFFI will bring much needed jobs and investment to low-income communities by constructing and renovating grocery stores and markets in underserved areas. Many studies show that when healthy food is available in these communities, people make healthier choices about their diets, and studies also show a connection between healthy food access and lower rates of obesity and diet-related chronic disease. For instance, in April 2012, the American Journal of Preventive Medicine found that children living in neighborhoods with healthy food and safe play spaces are 56 percent less likely to be obese than children in neighborhoods without these features. HFFI holds great promise for helping combat childhood obesity by improving families' access to fresh, healthy food.

A similar program in Pennsylvania has resulted in 88 projects being built or renovated in underserved urban and rural communities across the state, more than 5,000 jobs created or retained, and 400,000 people who now have increased access to healthy food. Thirty million invested state dollars has resulted in projects totaling more than \$190 million.

Additionally, in 2011, using the Pennsylvania program as a model, the Obama Administration launched the inter-agency Healthy Food Financing Initiative with the goal of increasing fresh food access in underserved rural, urban, and suburban communities across the country. Since its launch, Congress has allocated \$77 million for HFFI and projects improving access to healthy food at the Departments of Health and Human Services, Treasury, and at the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Partners, including PolicyLink, The Reinvestment Fund, The Food Trust, The National Grocers Association, and numerous agriculture, health, civil rights and industry groups support HFFI.

We are thrilled at the tremendous momentum around the country right now to bring grocery stores to places that need them, but this national effort is still in a very nascent stage. In order to realize the incredible success that Pennsylvania achieved over 5 years, we will need a large and sustained effort over several years. The good news is that we know what to do and can do it successfully. The Pennsylvania's program's success rate has been better than the grocery industry overall. This one time infusion of grant and loan funds create ongoing, sustainable business that continue to provide a vital economic lifeline for their communities. This is critical for rural communities where grocery stores are both economic and social anchors.

Representatives Schwartz (D-PA), Burgess (R-TX), and Blumenauer (D-OR) have introduced legislation (H.R. 3525) to establish a national Healthy Food Financing program through the creation of a national fund manager housed within USDA. This structure would mirror closely the original public private partnership of the PA FFFI and allow the leverage of millions in private capital at the national level. Given the flexibility and range of projects that HFFI can support from supermarkets to farmers' markets and from Co-ops to CSAs, the farm bill is the appropriate vehicle to fully invest in a national effort to bring healthy food access to every city and small town that needs it.

The Senate Agriculture Committee's bipartisan Agriculture Reform, Food and Jobs Act of 2012 recently included language authorizing HFFI. In recognition of the multiple benefits that this initiative brings to underserved urban, suburban, and rural communities across the nation, we ask that the House Agriculture Committee also includes language around this tested and highly successful HFFI model as you move through the farm bill process.

Thank you.

JUDITH BELL, PolicyLink

JOHN WEIDMAN, The Food Trust

PATRICIA SMITH, The Reinvestment Fund

COMMENT OF CYNTHIA BELLINI

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:32 p.m.

City, State: Eagle, CO

Occupation: Author—Health Books

Comment: The local farmers in their area need to be able to produce healthy food without introducing GMO's, pesticides, toxic sprays. This is destroying the soil and people's health. Enough is enough.

COMMENT OF STEPHANIE BELSETH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:14 p.m.

City, State: Minneapolis, MN

Occupation: Pediatric Nurse Practitioner

Comment: I support local, organic farming which uses health-focused, environment-focused, sustainable practices, grass/natural-fed animals, a focus on vegetables and fruit over grains like GMO corn and soy that increase our waistlines and all of the related chronic illness that go along with that, rather than profit-focused, chemical, antibiotic and hormone laden money-first-based practices that pollute our water, land and air and make America sick. I see daily in practice, children with nutritional deficiencies, chemical and pesticide exposures that affect their behavior, schoolwork, relationships, and health. Some are overweight, some eat only processed foods, others have precocious puberty, others diabetes, high blood pressure, depression, anxiety, ADHD and autism.

COMMENT OF BARRETT BELVEAL

Date Submitted: Friday, March 16, 2012, 10:53 a.m.

City, State: Westport, WA

Occupation: Retired Pensioner

Comment: I support my local food bank, and I know they are struggling right now to meet the needs of my community. I ask that you pass a strong farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP. These programs are a lifeline to the millions of Americans struggling with hunger, and I urge you make them a priority in the next farm bill.

In the mad rush to cut domestic spending Congress is operating on a strictly penny-wise, pound-foolish, basis for the sake of a debt that is not otherwise insurmountable. Stay out of Iran, close the off-shore bases and moor the Navy in U.S. Ports before taking one more dime from the domestic budget.

COMMENT OF ANNE BEMBENEK

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 11:50 p.m.

City, State: Almond, WI

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Livestock

Size: 50–150 acres

Comment: Dear Chairman Lucas,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony to the House Committee on Agriculture on the next farm bill. My district representative is being copied on this testimony. I wanted to let you know what my husband and I face, as small farm owners. We raise our few grass fed steers organically, but cannot afford the time and education to go thru the certification to be legally recognized as organic. As a 'new' farmer and considered under the class of disadvantaged because I'm a woman (new farmers mean less than 10 years) I was extremely interested in getting the FSA loans to lower our payments and allow us to make desperately needed repairs and upgrades. We live in fear of our one tractor dying and we cannot afford the \$30,000 to buy a newer basic model with the horsepower we need. The local FSA offices have closed, so I had to drive 1 hour and 15 minutes each way, several times to meet with an agent. After trying to fill out the paperwork and jumping thru the hoops, we were notified that there was no money to lend, even if I were to qualify. The program is underfunded. Farming is the only career that you have no control over. We live at the mercy of mother nature, adjustable rate loans, being unable to qualify for standard residential fixed rate loans because banks won't touch farm loans. We work off the farm jobs to pay the bills and get health insurance. There is no pension plans or 401(k)'s for small farmers. No disability insurance in one of the most dangerous jobs in the country. We work 100 hour weeks and don't draw a paycheck because we can barely keep the lights on. With the increase in the cost

of fuel, we have been reduced to buying our fuel \$100 at a time. On paper, we are middle class. We are land rich and cash poor. Farm land has held its value during this terrible down turn in the economy, but it doesn't matter if it's worth \$1, or \$1,000 an acre if we can't pay the mortgage. The programs that were put in place to protect the small farmer have turned into mini lottery winnings for large land owners and multinational companies. In 2000, we received just over \$900 in a corn subsidy payment. It's the only government money we've ever received or qualified for. We import poisonous food from other countries, while our own farmers find themselves so burdened by debt, and a broken system, that too many families have lost everything. When a farm family goes bankrupt, they don't just lose their house. They also lose their jobs and everything they have ever worked for. Unemployed and homeless. With other careers, there is a chance to find another job. A chance to buy another house down the road.

With the amount of money it takes to even buy a tiny place like ours, get decent used equipment, plant crops, and buy fertilizer, it's 100's of thousands of dollars just to get started. Who can afford that? Then, with that amount of debt sucking the accounts dry, there is nothing left to put away for bad weather years, or retirement, or even replacement equipment. Importing food is an unrecognized fuel to the recession crisis fire. A farmer needs land to plant crops in. That raises tax revenue, helps fuel housing recovery and creates jobs. We buy tractors. Those tractors come from parts that need to be manufactured. Parts from many different companies that keep people employed. We need seed to plant. That keeps the seed mill running. We need fertilizer. That keeps the fertilizer plant going. We are always needing repairs. Again employed people to make parts, mechanics to fix them. Truckers taking those parts from factory to shop. We buy those big trucks everyone hates because we need to pull equipment with them, and fill them with things too heavy and large to fit into cars. We hire people to help plow, plant, and harvest. We advertise trying to convince our neighbors that the food grown locally is healthy, and safe. That they aren't really saving 2¢ on that can of peas at Wal-Mart. Because that 2¢ is what creates all the jobs the grows the food, and that money stays here, in our country, in our neighborhoods. We support our schools and try to convince young people that farming isn't a job that ruins your body, and is like having a child that never grows up. It always has be watched and tended to. There's no days off, no sick time. Animals don't care it's a holiday. They need fed and watered. Our tractors don't know that fuel is \$4 a gallon. They just know if the tank is dry, they are not going to turn over. Every penny that is spent importing food from other countries, buries this country further in debt. Being able to feed ourselves is a national security issue. We depend on other countries to feed us. To supply our fuel. To make the parts we need to keep things running. What happens when the day comes that one of those over populated countries with more than a billion people decide that they are going to call in their loans. That they can own us, instead of just loaning us money to keep us going. That they need our food more than we do. What happens when there is fuel, but no food? We need programs that help current farmers stay on their farms. Programs that are actually funded, and based on the real world needs of toda's farmers. We need to educate our citizens about what our country does actually produce, and what is in season. We can live without strawberries in December. We need to become more realistic about the capital needed to buy a new place, or keep an old place running. We need to realize that farming isn't like other jobs, and that the ebb of flow of weather patterns balance out. That the banks can't expect every year to be better than the last.

We need banks to offer fixed rate loans to farmers at competitive rates. When 30 year fixed rate loans went below 4%, our adjustable rate mortgage was at 8.25%. We had good credit and plenty of equity but there is little competition because there are so few farm lending institutions. We need to cut down on the amount of paperwork required to qualify for the programs that already exist. A credit card company will give an unsecured credit line to an 18 year old, but hesitates to give a loan to a farmer with good credit because farming isn't considered a reliable profession. If we want our young people to be farmers, we must make it possible for them to have a hope of owning their own land. We need to have an apprenticeship program. Where kids can spend their summers learning how farming actually works. Once it's in your blood, once you see the field of dirt from the spring, suddenly green up, grow and mature into a crop that needs harvested, the sense of accomplishment, and the wonder of mother nature is hard to let go of. We live in a mobile society. Owning a farm puts roots down to the center of the Earth. We are part of the land, and the land is part of us. The only way we go mobile is in illness and bankruptcy. We need help. There will never be future farmers, if today's small farmer can't hold on. We will risk our lives to save a frozen calf, bring it into our basement to warm it up, because that one calf, is a years work lost if it dies. There's no replacing the

money lost. It's dead and worthless. And the bank looks at our books and decides what we do is too risky to grant loans to. We can drive less to save fuel, but we still need to eat everyday. We can have Doctors finding cures to terrible diseases, but those Doctors can't do anything without fuel for their bodies. We can give up vacations to save money, but we still have to eat. No matter what you do, or who you are. Rich or poor. Successful or homeless, we must eat. The head of the most powerful nation on Earth can command horrible destruction upon other countries, but in 3 days, with no food, he won't be able to keep his thoughts straight. We need food, like we need air to breath, and yet farming is a dying profession.

It's time to make changes that make farming as important as the Doctor who treats our bodies. It's more important than even those that will vote on whether changes are made, and those changes are practical and based on real world knowledge and not what big companies tell you farming is. Farming is not 3,000 dairy cows confined to tiny stalls with 3 shifts of low paid workers hooking up machines. That kind of farming is how tainted food gets into the system. Those low paid workers have no vested interest in keeping those cows healthy and happy. You let those workers own a piece of those cows, and you'll see them bend over backwards to make sure their animal has the right feed, is comfortable, and is healthy. You'll see them not want to keep that cow in that huge barn, because that's not what's best for the cow. We need to offer people the chance to own and control their most basic need. Food. Please talk to small farmers. Take this chance to actually pass a bill that is smart and is composed from common sense. Get out of the office, go to the local technical college in an agricultural community, and talk to the students. Ask what drives them to farming, and away from farming. Come to my house and see the amount of money it takes to keep our tiny 80 acres going. Talk to our local University extension office and ask them the hurdles that local farmers face. Time magazine ran an article about the way to get rich in this poor economy is to farm. The only people getting rich right now, are people that actually were rich, and now are richer because of all the bankruptcy and picking up land at bank sales. Even here, in central Wisconsin. Our tiny run down farm is worth \$320,000 with just land value. That's without a building on it. If a person wanted to buy it, they'd need great credit and 20% down. That's \$64,000 before a single foot of cement is poured for a house, or a piece of equipment is bought. No septic system installed for at least \$6,000. A well for running water another \$10,000 or more. They need a place to live.

A small new house is pretty inexpensive here compared to other parts of the country. You can get by for \$100,000. Our house was build from 1902-1906. From a plans bought thru the Sears catalog. It's not old and quaint, it's old and we've spent almost as much as if we'd bought a new house to remodel and update. There's \$60,000 for a shed to keep equipment in, once they can buy it. For descent used equipment a farmer starting from scratch has already spent \$320,000 on land, \$16,000 so they can have water to wash and a place to flush a toilet when the house goes up. \$100,000 for a small house. \$60,000 for a shed. \$30,000+ (Big tractors go for 100's of thousands of dollars, plus combines and 24 row seeders). \$12,000 for a disc to break up the soil. We grown a few steer and hay so we'll I'll use our equipment. \$6,000 for a seed drill and roller. \$7,500 for a haybine (to cut the hay), \$12,000 for a descent round baler, or about \$8000 for a 30 year old 40# kicker square baler (like we use), \$10,000 for 4 bale racks (we need at least 2 more and these are what the bale of hay shoot into after they come out the back of the baler), \$30,000+ for a barn to put the hay in, \$2,000 for an elevator to get hay to the upper parts of the barn. We rent fertilizer spreaders and are in the market for a manure spreader for cheap. The new farmers tab is at over \$600,000 and they haven't spent a dime for fuel, seed, or fertilizer. They haven't purchased a vehicle, or anything for the house. No electricity, heating or cooling the house. No insurance, property taxes, liability insurance (another things with little competition because most carriers won't touch it). Workers compensation if they need to hire help. No employment taxes. Self employment taxes. Disability insurance for when they get hurt, and I'm pretty sure the injury rate is 100% over a lifetime. No retirement plan. No medical payments, dentists, clothing, and every other things needed in everyday life. A new farmer, in our area, if they are lucky will only need to get loans for roughly \$750,000. That's if they don't plan on having a dairy operation which is much more expensive to start and maintain. All that, and no vacations, days off, sleeping late, paid holidays, health insurance, retirement plans, working 60-100 weeks and still not making enough to pay the mortgage, all the while having people, after they find out you own a farm, yell at you because the cost of food so high. Which is a joke because we get \$.90 a pound for beef if we're really lucky. Buy it at the store and a steak is over \$12. Our grocery bill, without meat because we raise our own, is about \$400 per month. Farmers who can't afford to eat. That's how broken the system is, and it will only get worse if more worthless farm bills are passed. Don't talk

to the people who supply Wal-Mart, talk to our neighbor Harlan, or Roy. Harlan can't retire even though his son has worked the farm with him his whole life, and Roy lost his farm to the bank. Again, our food supply is a national security issue. Please give it the time, research and effort that goes into keeping our borders safe, and supplying our soldiers, because time is running out.

If you want to keep eating safe food, domestically grown, there needs to be a shift in perception of farming and how important it is to our entire nation. Tomorrow, don't eat. Voluntarily fast for a day and see how important food becomes by the end of the day. You don't see your Doctor everyday, but you do hope to see food on your plate everyday. Shouldn't the people supplying that all important commodity be held in the same respect as healers, or lawyers, or lawmakers? We need help, we need it now, and this isn't being dramatic. The numbers don't lie. Nobody wants to work 365 days a year to help others, and have our government ignore or minimize how important the job we do is. We need new people to replace those that bankrupt or can't work anymore. We don't need handouts, we need sound financial programs that let us do our job, and make that job appealing to the next generation. The form letter follows my personal letter. Thank you for your time, and I truly pray that you will pass a farm bill that helps American's feed America. Sincerely,
Anne Bembenek Almond, Wisconsin

I am a young farmer and I'd like to share my support for programs that help the next generation of growers build strong farm businesses. As it's estimated that 125,000 farmers will retire in the next 5 years, it's absolutely critical that farm bill programs help citizens get started in this challenging field. I ask that the Committee endorse all of the provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236), including:

- Mandatory funding for Individual Development Accounts at \$5 million per year. This program helps new farmers raise capital to start farm businesses and is tested and proven by organizations like Practical Farmers of Iowa and the California Farmlink.
- Mandatory funding for the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program at \$25 million a year. This program funds essential education for new farmers around the country.
- Authorize a new microloan program, to enable young and beginning farmers to better access FSA loan programs.
- Revise FSA rules to make loan programs more accessible to more young and beginning farmers.
- Reaffirm the existing cost share differential for BFRs within EQIP. Also, reaffirm the advance payment option allowing beginning and socially disadvantaged producers to receive an advance payment for the project's costs for purchasing materials or contracting services, but increase the limit on the advance payment from 30 percent to 50 percent of costs.
- Amend the Farm and Ranch Land Protection Program (FRPP) to make farm viability part of the purpose of the program and to give discretionary authority to the eligible entities that implement the program to give priority to easements with an option to purchase at the agricultural use value, deals that transfer the land to beginning and farmers and ranchers, applicants with farm succession plans, and other similar mechanisms to maintain the affordability of protected land.

These and other provisions within the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act will help new growers succeed and I urge you to include them in the next farm bill.

Sincerely,

ANNE BEMBENEK.

COMMENT OF RONI BEN-DAVID

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:23 p.m.

City, State: San Francisco, CA

Occupation: Educator

Comment: Please do your part to make reforms to the farm bill including:

- More funding towards a healthy school lunch program.
- Less subsidies for commodity crops and big agribusinesses
- More subsidies for small organic family farms
- Keep the SNAP program providing low-income individuals with support in shopping at farmer's markets

- Amend our international Food Aid program so that we can source food aid from the recipient country (not just food produced in the USA).

COMMENT OF EMILY BENDER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:38 a.m.

City, State: Fairfax, CA

Occupation: Nutritionist

Comment: How we produce our food and what we support as a nation impacts the health of the Earth as well as public health. Please support a farm bill that takes away subsidies from agribusiness who produce commodity products for processed foods, and instead support farmers producing organic fruits, vegetables, dairy and meats in a sustainable way.

COMMENT OF NANCY BENDER

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 10:05 a.m.

City, State: Chicago, IL

Occupation: Gallery Manager

Comment: Support the small farmer and stop giving away the subsidies to the corporate farmer. The small farmer takes better care of their animals and the land.

COMMENT OF OEBM BENDRAH

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:46 p.m.

City, State: Hawthorne, FL

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I am just a home gardener. My thoughts are that America's people, land, and food supply are greatly benefitted by smaller farms and reformed methods of crop growing. Please support farm policies that favor these. When it comes to healthier people, land and food that is way we need to go.

COMMENT OF CRISTA BENEDICT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:30 p.m.

City, State: Chico, CA

Occupation: Paralegal and Student

Comment: As Representatives of the citizens of this country, it is imperative that you stand up for their rights to have a healthy diet. You should not cater to industrial farming. Studies have shown time and time again that medium sized, organic farms produce more food, are healthier for the environment (*i.e.*, no pesticide run-off, no development of superbugs, no risk of contamination to other foods) and actually have nutrients.

This is an extremely critical issue. The rural communities are dying and part of that is because of the provisions of the farm bill—Congress has cut funding to rural development and small farms while catering to big business and industrial farming. It has to stop. It has to stop for our health and for the future of food.

It will be your fault when we have a food collapse because of the funding that is cut to vital programs. This is in your hands. Do the right thing.

I support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Keep in mind that large industrial farms and the companies that own them (Montsano, Dupont, *etc.*) do **Not Need The Subsidies**. Subsidies should be reserved for those farmers that actually need them. Farmers that struggle to make ends meet. Farmers that don't make a profit. Farmers that want to grow more than one crop.

You are ruining our ecosystems with the monoculture you fund through the farm bill. Stop.

COMMENT OF AL BENNER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:57 a.m.

City, State: Honesdale, PA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Other

Size: 50–150 acres

Comment: We are a small bio-diverse organic farm in your district, and we believe our country needs more incentives for small scale farms that are farming in ways to protect the environment and our health to have more protection and incentives to compete with large scale farms. GMO crops are a huge concern as is our reliance on synthetic chemicals/fertilizers on monoculture type agricultural systems with just a handful of species makes us all vulnerable. We also **Must** get Federal subsidies out of Washington for large corporations and reduce regulations for small scale farmers so we can compete on a level playing field.

Thanks,

AL BENNER.

P.S.: I had to check “other” because we are raising a little bit of everything—a good way to go because it balances the ecosystem and requires little to no external inputs—learn more at: www.oldschoolfarmers.blogspot.com.

COMMENT OF ALLISA BENNETT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:12 p.m.

City, State: Denver, CO

Occupation: Permaculture Design Consultant

Comment: Thank you for putting the well-being of your constituents before the profits of corporate agribusinesses. Our country’s ability to thrive in these changing times and the health of our children and grandchildren may depend on your decisions in this realm. Your best efforts are needed in support of growers who build rather than erode soil quality, who harvest rather than waste water, who grow food primarily for themselves and their own region, for those who promote biodiversity rather than monocropping and for those who are starting or maintaining small and medium-sized organic and biodynamic farms. Thank you for using all the resources at your disposal to affirm that this is our Father’s world and that Nature’s Divine Design does not need fixing. Thank you for relying on the tried and true economies of natural systems, culture, and agriculture rather than the false economies of genetech and toxic chemical intervention in food production. Do your research and listen to your soul rather than to the loudest lobbyists. Again, thank you for your public service.

COMMENT OF MATTHEW BENNETT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:04 p.m.

City, State: Westville, NJ

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Forestry, Fruits, Specialty Crops, Other

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: We need to outgrow outmoded, degenerative methods of feeding ourselves, and because we are blessed to live in a Democracy, we can choose to do so.

Please support a farm bill that supports small, innovative, organic, ecological, and permaculture farms. Cultivating higher quality foods for all that also improves soil fertility is essential to sustaining the progress of our Nation.

COMMENT OF STACEY BENNETT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:46 a.m.

City, State: Blandon, PA

Occupation: Instructional Technologist

Comment: Please let’s have some real reform in the farm bill to create a better future for all of us! Organics should be supported and embraced because all other ways of producing food are leading to the demise of our population. Organic **Can** feed the world and it needs to be given a chance. This starts in the farm bill!

COMMENT OF VIRGINIA BENNETT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:12 p.m.

City, State: Honolulu, HI

Occupation: University Professor

Comment: It is time this country went back to putting its ordinary citizens in first place. Now Congress seems totally in control of the Big Agribusiness companies, which supply us with less the healthful foods—more likely with health-endangering food products. It's now up to legislators to show us that they work for us, not "Big Ag," and pass an organic farm bill!

COMMENT OF PEYTON BENOIT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:20 p.m.

City, State: Prescott, AZ

Occupation: Student

Comment: More money needs to be put into organic agriculture. Pesticides are bad for our health and the environment. We should be putting money into health and the environment.

COMMENT OF ERLE BENSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:46 p.m.

City, State: Boulder, CO

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: Two issues I believe are important to consider carefully. The first, the area of environmental support for Organic farming. The second directly relates to the first . . . how to control the use of GMO seeds and farming. No

COMMENT OF GAYNELL BENSON

Date Submitted: Thursday, March 22, 2012, 3:29 p.m.

City, State: Waco, TX

Occupation: Administration

Comment: As a former recipient of the SNAP (Food Stamp Program), I can truly attest to the fact that the program was a Blessing to me and my three children (now adults). I worked hard to provide for my family and to make ends meet; no matter how long the hours, the pay was still not enough, but we made it. This program gave us a hand-up so that we would not go hungry. Now the USDA has been involved in providing free breakfast to all school age children who may or may not have eaten the night before. This free breakfast also assists in the productivity and the ability to function in school. So, therefore H. RES. 564 is a wonderful bill to support; not only will it continue to ensure that good nutrition and health awareness is promoted, but it will also ensure that our children will be able to focus/enhance their learning in the classroom to become productive citizens. As a mother/grandmother I would like to urge you to support this bill so that SNAP and other nutritional programs will continue to be a Blessing to the less fortunate.

Sincerely submitted,

G. BENSON.

COMMENT OF JOSH BENSON-MERRON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:57 p.m.

City, State: Santa Cruz, CA

Comment: We need to protect the future of our food system in America. Right now our food system is broken and if we continue the way we are going we could face another dust bowl—industrial agriculture is overexploiting the land and is not sustainable. People should know where their food came from and how it was grown because it is vital not only for their health but for the health of the land. We need to stop experimenting with nature and return to a farming system that we know is healthy and sustainable.

COMMENT OF CHARLES BENT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:43 p.m.

City, State: Wilton, NH

Occupation: Interior Decorator

Comment: We need to get pesticides out of our food. Please give us the chance to live healthy lives. Agribusiness is motivated by greed, not healthy nutrition.

COMMENTS OF MARY BENTLEY

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 11:22 p.m.

City, State: Mason City, IA

Occupation: Disabled

Comment: Please keep in mind that there are a lot of people suffering with prices in the markets—the cost of food to eat healthy; especially those with limited incomes & those with health issues. Thank you.

Date Submitted: Saturday, April 28, 2012, 12:09 a.m.

Comment: There are so many people that are struggling so much just to keep food on the table, some are elderly, some with children, & the disabled. It would be very sad to think that these food programs could be cut when the need is so great, especially with people having no jobs or able only to find part-time work. Thank you for your considerations.

COMMENT OF DIMITAR BERBATOV

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 02, 2012, 4:52 p.m.

City, State: Providence, RI

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Other

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: As a concerned taxpayer and resident of Rhode Island, I am writing this letter to voice concerns about the provisions being proposed in the 2012 Farm Bill. Understanding that significant budget cuts and reforms need to be made in this year's bill, I would like to underscore my concern for revisions to conservation compliance programs. Because federally subsidized crop insurance is currently not subject to conservation compliance, I would like to express support for measures ensuring long-term sustainability in order to ensure the continued productivity of our nation's cropland.

COMMENT OF LINDA BERD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:18 p.m.

City, State: Magdalena, NM

Occupation: Thoroughbred Horse Industry

Comment: I am continually, terribly disturbed at the direction of our food production "industry"—toward factory farming (inhumane & ecologically destructive) and subsidizing already profitable large agribusinesses—to the detriment and exclusion of the small farmer & the healthiest food one could find . . . local; organically grown; family farmed. And now there are those hideously selfish individuals in Congress who are perfectly willing to kowtow to the multi \$\$\$\$ from agribusiness and throw the rest of those trying to bring good food to the table, and indeed even cut food stamps and send the poor **From** the table—those who will not heed the majority who want **Healthy Food and Do Not Want To Subsidize Big Business**. You'd better listen For several years I have not bought factory farmed meat/poultry and never will until those animals we slaughter are treated **Humanely**. And I get my produce from locals—including eggs. If you only care about being re-elected that's your problem. My problem is getting food that won't kill me. And for some, getting any food at all, thanks to **Food Stamps**. Shame . . .

COMMENT OF PATRICIA BEREZKI

Date Submitted: Friday, May 04, 2012, 1:31 a.m.

City, State: Vancouver, WA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I am very disappointed that the Agribusinesses are so against the independent family farmers by pushing Monsanto contaminated products. Then going after farmers by taking them to court because the genetically engineered seeds blew over onto their property. Family farmers are the backbone of our country and must be treated more fairly. I don't want to eat genetically engineered food and I don't want my family, or anybody else's, to have to either. We have choices and we should be allowed to choose which foods we will eat. That is why my family eats as much local and organic foods as we can. And, we are much healthier for it. Thank you.

COMMENT OF ALEX BERESNIEWICZ

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:01 p.m.

City, State: Seattle, WA
Occupation: Publisher
Comment: Jim,

It's time to end subsidy's to large farms that don't need it and CAFO's that don't deserve it. Aim the subsidy's at nutrition programs, small producers, and organic farming. **Please!**

COMMENT OF ABIGAIL BERG

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:14 p.m.
City, State: Sequim, WA
Occupation: Auditor

Comment: We depend on the government to TRY and be fair and giving large farm subsidies and **Not** supporting organic agriculture OR food stamps (which need some reform), is atrocious.

COMMENT OF PAMELA BERG

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 1:15 p.m.
City, State: Philadelphia, PA
Occupation: Public Health Researcher

Comment: We need a farm bill that does more than provide handouts to large wealth agribusiness to grow corn and soy for animal feed on one hand and provide free food to the poorest people on the other. We need a common sense farm bill that supports a healthy food system for everyone—a farm bill that matches what the USDA and all nutrition experts tell us we should eat. The MyPlate does not have GMO corn or soybeans on it, so why should our tax dollars support overproduction of these commodities!?

COMMENT OF PAULA BERG

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 10, 2012, 5:54 p.m.
City, State: Oak Park, IL
Occupation: Manager/Oak Park River Forest Food Pantry

Comment: I am humbled and saddened at the amount of people in our community who are truly food insecure and need assistance.

These are our neighbors, our friends and fellow human beings, having to worry how to feed themselves and their families.

Please **Do Not** allow cuts to SNAP. Our neighbors deserve our support and respect.

COMMENT OF PETER BERG

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 4:48 a.m.
City, State: Kamuela, HI
Producer/Non-producer: Producer
Type: Greenhouse/nursery
Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: It's past time to understand and act upon the fact that factory agricultural & current chemical fertilizer & pesticide practices are major contributors to the health problems experienced by a growing number of Americans. These problems will be compounded as time goes on—and if you don't understand this, you haven't done your homework. Don't let the big agriculture producers be the only source of information on this critically important issue.

Thank you,

PETER BERG.

COMMENT OF BY BERGER

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 12:05 p.m.
City, State: Sierra Madre, CA
Occupation: Kindergarten Teacher
Comment: Mr. Drier

I am a member of Slow Foods. I am in favor of a farm bill that encourages small acreage, organically oriented farmers and against GMO and pesticide contaminated food.

COMMENT OF CHRISTINE BERGER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:01 p.m.

City, State: Oakland, CA

Occupation: Accounts Payable Coordinator

Comment: I support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

I am really hoping to see some changes in the disaster that is our current management of agriculture. With corporate agribusiness giving in to poisoning the population and non-identification of GMO crops (as opposed to what most other countries of the free world do) to the trampling of small farmers who do not use pesticide or who are organic it is at the point where I am afraid to eat anything produced here other than what I can get at the farmer's market or grow in my own back yard. Please realize that we are in trouble with our food supply and that we the people need you to step up and make the necessary changes. Please.

COMMENT OF JANNA BERGER

Date Submitted: Monday, May 14, 2012, 10:02 p.m.

City, State: Falls Village, CT

Comment: Please support programs that use government dollars to increase the viability of an enduring and secure food system such as SARE grants (of which our farm is a recipient to research no-till organic vegetable systems), Beginning Farmer Rancher grants, Value Added Producer Grants, the Conservation Stewardship Program, and the Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative.

COMMENT OF JANICE BERGERON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:02 p.m.

City, State: North Branford, CT

Occupation: Unemployed

Comment: I am lucky to live in a farm town, family farms that is. I support them and buy organic whenever I can. It tastes better and lasts longer on the shelf . . . organic bananas last nearly 10 days! And Monsanto suing small farmers because of accidental cross pollination? Why don't organic farmers sue **Them** for polluting **Their** crops?

COMMENT OF AUDRA BERGMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:02 a.m.

City, State: Great Falls, MT

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Livestock, Poultry/poultry products, Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Going into our third growing season as beginning farmers(My husband and I), I feel that it is imperative to continue to support and fund programs for beginning farmers and ranchers. Specific challenges one faces in starting up are: access to land and access to capital/equipment. The Beginning Farmer and Rancher Loan programs through FSA are especially important; our country needs to invest in small/family agricultural producers throughout the nation, not big agribusiness and centralized production. Thank you.

COMMENT OF DEBORAH BERGMAN

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 5:32 p.m.

City, State: Sarasota, FL

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Local farms are good for the economy, the pocketbook of the consumer and the perpetuation of family farms. Please support these farms.

COMMENT OF HENRY BERKOWITZ

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 9:17 p.m.

City, State: Sabinsville, PA

Occupation: Counselor

Comment: If you are interested in doing the right thing, you will pass a farm bill that encourages conservation, and organic farming, and providing help for the small farmer. We don't need you to give more to the mega corporations, they already get too much from this government. I'm hoping you will vote to help the people who actually need the help.

COMMENT OF JANICE BERLEPSCH

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 9:12 p.m.

City, State: St. Augustine, FL

Occupation: Retired

Comment: We want healthy safe food . . . vote for an organic food bill and stop subsidizing millionaire corporate farms.

COMMENT OF MARCIA BERMAN

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 8:39 a.m.

City, State: Berkeley, CA

Occupation: Retired Psychotherapist

Comment: Pay attention to the small family farms trying to give us fresh, healthy produce and be sure to heavily supervise and regulate big Ag from beginning to end.

End genetically modified food production completely. Not healthy. Grown with pesticide inside. Ugh!

Do the right thing. Fulfill your responsibility to keep America's food supply safe and ever-present. No big Ag. Too hard to regulate and supervise. Not good. Thank you.

COMMENT OF SUSAN BERMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:23 p.m.

City, State: Longmont, CO

Occupation: Educator

Comment: Please support all legislation that protects our food sources as organic as possible. And protects farmers who need support to supply organic products.

COMMENT OF HANNAH K. BERNHARDT

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 10:54 p.m.

City, State: Brooklyn, NY

Occupation: Organizer

Comment: Dear Chairman Lucas,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony to the House Committee on Agriculture on the next farm bill. My district representative is being copied on this testimony. I am an aspiring farmer, beginning farmer advocate, and volunteer for The Greenhorns and the National Young Farmers' Coalition, and I'd like to share my support for programs that help the next generation of growers build strong farm businesses. I grew up on a family farm in southern Minnesota, and even with those roots, I never considered a career in farming until recently because of the many obstacles I knew I would face. As it's estimated that 125,000 farmers like my father and my friends' fathers will retire in the next 5 years, it's absolutely critical that farm bill programs help young people get started in this challenging field. I ask that the Committee endorse all of the provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236), including:

- Mandatory funding for Individual Development Accounts at \$5 million per year. This program helps new farmers raise capital to start farm businesses and is tested and proven by organizations like Practical Farmers of Iowa and the California Farmlink.
- Mandatory funding for the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program at \$25 million a year. I have worked on a BFRDP grant with the Greenhorns nonprofit and the Cornell Small Farms Program and saw first hand how these programs are essential to new farmer education.

- Authorize a new microloan program, to enable young and beginning farmers to better access FSA loan programs.
- Revise FSA rules to make loan programs more accessible to more young and beginning farmers.
- Reaffirm the existing cost share differential for BFRs within EQIP. Also, reaffirm the advance payment option allowing beginning and socially disadvantaged producers to receive an advance payment for the project's costs for purchasing materials or contracting services, but increase the limit on the advance payment from 30 percent to 50 percent of costs.
- Amend the Farm and Ranch Land Protection Program (FRPP) to make farm viability and affordability of protected land part of the purpose of the program. Give discretionary authority to the eligible entities that implement the program to prioritize easements with an option to purchase at the agricultural-use value and deals that transfer the land to beginning farmers and ranchers or applicants with farm succession plans.

These and other provisions within the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act will help new growers succeed and I urge you to include them in the next farm bill.

Sincerely,

HANNAH K. BERNHARDT,
Marketing Director,
[Redacted],
Brooklyn, NY.

COMMENT OF JANET BERNSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:42 p.m.

City, State: Sherman Oaks, CA

Occupation: Expressive Arts Therapist

Comment: Organic food is our best answer to good health for all citizens . . . all of which translates into a healthy community/country. Both short and long term effects of chemically maintained and genetically enhanced foods may be good for corporate interests but not for the humans who work for said industry or the people who buy their products and ultimately not for communities. Anything less than organic and biodynamic is economically foolish and a human travesty.

COMMENT OF SIMON BERNSTEIN

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 02, 2012, 9:51 p.m.

City, State: Galena, IL

Occupation: Illinois Licensed Doctor of Naprapathic Medicine

Comment: Small family farms using sustainable farming methods are our best hope for the future. Not industrial farming methods controlled by the corporate lobbies! Support Family Farms **Not** Factory farms!

COMMENT OF SHARON BERTT

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 10, 2012, 12:01 p.m.

City, State: Tucson, AZ

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: I do not agree with cutting money from these programs. Please reconsider and maybe not send money to foreign countries for food aid. We need to feed our own before they get any help.

COMMENT OF AMANDA BERRY

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 10:35 p.m.

City, State: Fort Myers, FL

Occupation: Hospitality Professional

Comment: I would like to see the farm bill address healthy, sustainable farming practices with a greater focus on agro-diversity and natural methods driven by small, private farms and co-ops. Thank you.

COMMENT OF ANA BERRY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:30 p.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Student

Comment: Stop subsidizing foods based on benefits to mega companies like Monsanto. Support the people you were elected for:

- (1) label our food properly—when it's GMO, when it's truly organic, when it has dangerous carcinogens in it
- (2) subsidize small farms to distribute good local food
- (3) we all know it costs the government more to take care of our obesity epidemic and heart problems than it would cost to subsidize good food.

COMMENT OF BEN BERRY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:01 p.m.

City, State: Cedar, NC

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: I support research and innovation funding. We need to focus our energies on diversifying our farms, increasing transparency, and encouraging competition. Less subsidies to commodity crops! Remember that organic is the largest growing sector in agriculture. Support the transition and interest in local and organic.

COMMENT OF CATHERINE BERRY

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 02, 2012, 1:21 a.m.

City, State: High Point, NC

Occupation: Disabled/Retired

Comment: Please consider safe and abundant water provisions. Investment into organic produce. Assistance to farmers who produce chemically free, humanly raised and slaughtered farm animals.

COMMENT OF MICHAEL BERRY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:26 p.m.

City, State: Omaha, NE

Occupation: CPA

Comment: It is time to stop subsidizing processed food in our country. The cost of obesity and the associated health problems is exploding. It is time to roll back the farm policies enacted under the leadership of Earl Butz and enact smart and ultimately healthy farm policies. As with the dramatic reforms of Earl Butz, farmers will adapt to the changes and again begin to supply our country with healthy food.

COMMENT OF J. ELLEN BERRYHILL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:12 p.m.

City, State: Menlo Park, CA

Occupation: Director of Quality

Comment: Dear Anna,

I urge you to support the provisions of the farm bill that do the following:

1. Support small farmers (~1,000 acres), organic farmers and new farmers trying to get into the industry.
2. Support for local farmers markets
3. End subsidies (direct payments and countercyclical commodity programs), and replace them with loophole-free agriculture risk coverage. Also, implement a cap on crop insurance premium subsidies.
4. Support nutrition programs for the elderly, the poor and for disadvantaged children.
5. Focus conservation funding on lasting environmental benefits.
6. Protect the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) from disproportionate cuts. Improve CSP by ranking applications solely on their conservation benefits.

Thank you very much for your support.

J. ELLEN BERRYHILL.

COMMENT OF BILL BEST

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:34 p.m.

City, State: Berea, KY
Producer/Non-producer: Producer
Type: Vegetables
Size: 50–150 acres

Comment: I have farmed for over 60 years and still participate actively in two farmers' markets. I also operate an heirloom seed business and produce and sell seeds of heirloom beans, tomatoes, cucumbers, and winter squash. If we depend on the agricultural giants for our food, we will be taking a path to our own destruction.

COMMENT OF CHERYL BEST

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:17 p.m.

City, State: Staunton, IL

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: I see firsthand the impact the chemicals have produced in my students . . . diabetes, behavior disorders, and obesity to name a few. We have to protect future generations!

COMMENT OF VICKI BEST

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:21 p.m.

City, State: Tallahassee, FL

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I think that the farm subsidies for large agribusiness should be discontinued, genetically modified foods should be labeled or not used at all, and the ethanol program should be discontinued and corn goes back on the food market not the fuel market. Protect us not big business! We voted you in, they just pay the bills.

COMMENT OF LINDA BETHEL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:18 p.m.

City, State: Punta Gorda, FL

Occupation: Registered Dietitian, Licensed Nutritionist

Comment: Please advocate that the House Agriculture Committee ensures that the health of Americans is protected with safe growing practices for our food supply. That means avoiding harmful chemicals and genetically modified foods, as well as protecting the viability of the soil for future production. Industrial farming relies too heavily on harmful chemicals.

COMMENT OF SKYE LINDANNE BETHEL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:20 p.m.

City, State: Glenn Allen, VA

Occupation: Retired Counselor

Comment: It is time for reform. Organic food produces excellent health for the consumers and for the Earth. We can make changes in our healthcare by affording more people healthy organic food, we can clean up the environment and we can improve the quality of life for people who want to produce food for locally.

COMMENT OF RAMONA BEVILLE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:27 a.m.

City, State: Benicia, CA

Occupation: Adult Education Teacher

Comment: Quit subsidizing foods that are going to be heavily processed. Subsidies are benefiting the manufacturer's of cheap food and unhealthy food and this is contributing to the rate of chronic illness and obesity in this country. This is not a passive or indirect contribution but literally the cause of many illnesses is the consumption of highly refined and processed foods instead of live, healthy foods that are less shelf stable. The fact that lower income people are at higher risk for chronic diseases has to do with the fact that healthier food is more expensive and cheap foods are artificially cheap. Quit putting money in the pockets of the manufacturers and providing cheap ingredients to them, quit subsidizing feed for animals and creating an artificial cost for these animal foods. Make farming on a small scale attractive to farmers. Make working on the farm an attractive way to make a living. Stop subsidizing the mono crops that have ruined our top soil, require chemicals to make them fertile and are ruining our streams and rivers and creating dead zones in the

ocean. Stop factory farming practices as they are not paying the full price to operate their factories, they are leaving behind environmental residue that no one is addressing. Work with farmers to get fresh produce to people instead of providing factories with cheap resources to sell back to us to make us sick.

COMMENT OF SALLY BIANCO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:33 p.m.

City, State: Chico, CA

Occupation: Botanist

Comment: Herger, as a gift to your constituents before leaving us, please consider the consumers rather than the profits of the agriculture industry and pass reform laws. As a plant scientist and someone who lives surrounded by farmland, I know that heavy chemical use, lack of crop species/varieties diversity, and many other practices of the ag industry are harmful to everyone. Please gift us with your true support for a farm reform bill that supports and encourages organic farming, crop diversity, reduction of erosive and polluting cultivation measures, and scientifically meaningful nutrition programs.

COMMENT OF RONNIE BIAS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:49 p.m.

City, State: Las Vegas, NV

Occupation: Retired

Comment: For GODS sake, please stop poisoning the American people and do what's righteously right, we have to give farmers everything they need to feed us healthy foods not GMO poison.

COMMENT OF ANDY BICKING

Date Submitted: Thursday, April 05, 2012, 11:41 a.m.

City, State: Poughkeepsie, NY

Occupation: Director of Public Policy, Scenic Hudson; on behalf of Land Trust Statement

Comment: Land Trust Statement by Andy Bicking, Director of Public Policy, Scenic Hudson

Farm Bill Field Hearing

March 9, 2012

Saranac Lake, New York

Thank you for arranging today's field hearing on the farm bill and for this opportunity to submit comment.

Scenic Hudson is a 49 year old nonprofit environmental organization and land trust that works to protect and restore the Hudson River and its majestic landscape as an irreplaceable national treasure and a vital resource for residents and visitors. With more than 25,000 ardent supporters, we are the largest environmental group focused on the Hudson River Valley. Our team of experts combine land acquisition, support for agriculture, citizen-based advocacy and sophisticated planning tools to create environmentally healthy communities, champion smart economic growth, open up riverfronts to the public and preserve the valley's inspiring beauty and agricultural and natural resources.

New York Farms Essential to Economy, Food Security

In New York State and the Hudson Valley, agriculture is a critical component of the local, regional and statewide economy. Farm production and food processing sectors generate \$22 billion annually for New York's economy and employ tens of thousands of workers, yet approximately \$32 million in agricultural output was lost in 2010 due to farmland loss. In the Hudson Valley, between 2002 and 2007 (the most recent years for which data is available), the valley experienced a 10 percent loss in farmland. Considering the region plays a central role in providing fresh, nutritious food to 10 million New Yorkers stretching from New York City to Albany, this represents a serious threat to food security and public health.

This situation has been acknowledged the Northeast Association of State Departments of Agriculture (NEASDA). New York State's Commissioner of Agriculture Darrel Aubertine has been a leader in developing a multi-state agenda for the farm bill that calls for promotion of job creation and agricultural market development as well as protection of consumers and the future of farming. The Farm Bill's Conservation Title—and the Farm and Ranchlands Protection Program in particular—is among NEASDA's priorities.

Conservation Easements Critical Strategy for Farm Viability and Urban 'Foodsheds'

Public and private land conservation has an important role in ensuring that farming is sustained and grows to meet increasing demands. Through the purchase of conservation easements, land trusts can ensure that working lands remain accessible to the next generation and viable. Easement programs also provide direct payments to farmers that often aid in sustaining farm operations. Over the past 15 years, Scenic Hudson has put nearly \$25 million directly into the hands of farmers participating in easement programs. This has had a positive effect on related businesses in the agricultural sector (tractor repair, large animal veterinarians, farm supply and value added producers) that rely on farmers as their principle clients. The result has been increased availability of fresh, healthy food to our rural and urban communities, and conservation of natural resources from high-impact development. To underscore this point, a high percentage of vendors and products in New York

City's highly successful Greenmarkets hail from the Hudson Valley Region. The Hudson Valley region is truly the "foodshed" for one of the most populous regions in the country.

The principle of public-private partnerships with Land Trusts is one that must be preserved in the 2012 Farm Bill. Together, land trusts, municipalities and the Federal government have important roles to play in upholding this principle. The Farm Bill's Conservation Title, and the Farm and Ranchlands Protection Program (FRPP) in particular, are critical to enable this dynamic and leverage Federal-local-private investments.

In the past year, significant progress also has been made in advancing thee goals in New York State. On Sept. 26, 2011, Congressman Chris Gibson with local farmers, the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service, Scenic Hudson, Dutchess Land Conservancy, and officials from state and local government announced Federal farm bill funding to complete the purchase of conservation easements on 10 farms in Dutchess and Columbia counties. The total cost of all 10 projects is more than \$3.6 million, including \$1.8 million in funding from the FRPP, \$1.2 million from Scenic Hudson, \$615,000 from the Town of Red Hook, and a grant from the New York State Environmental Protection Fund. Since there are multiple projects occurring in the same communities, this 'critical mass' approach to conservation provides a direct infusion of capital to the farmers involved, who then have the choice to invest the funds in the productive capacity of their farms. By protecting multiple farms in a given community, important relationships between farmers and access to credit, supplies and machinery essential for profitable operations are enhanced.

As we complete these projects, we are looking forward to the next application round for FRPP funds. We have been working with other farm families on another assemblage of several farms in Columbia County and Dutchess counties. The impact of strategically conserving groups of farms in these communities will be significant as farmers are provided the certainty that surrounding lands will remain in agriculture; institutions that lend to farmers can be sure their investments are stable; and, suppliers of equipment, seed, feed and other support services will have certainty their clients will remain vital.

Farm Bill Must Enable Partnerships with Land Trusts to Protect Working Lands and Regional Strategies that use "Critical Mass" Approach to Conservation

To preserve these opportunities for the Hudson Valley, New York and north-eastern states, Scenic Hudson recommends that the 2012 Farm Bill include and support the following provisions:

- No disproportionate cuts to the Conservation Title and the Farm and Ranchlands Protection Program in particular;
- Support for the principle of public-private partnerships with land trusts, efforts to protect regions' "foodsheds", and plans that ensure a that "critical masses" of farms are protected;
- Fair treatment for small acreage farms typical of the northeast in the Farm and Ranchlands Protection Program; and,
- If consolidations are considered for Conservation Title Programs, management of programs that protect working lands through permanent easements should be separate from those that seek to retire lands from production.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide comment. If you have any questions, I can be reached at [Redacted] or [Redacted].

COMMENT OF ELAINE BIDSTRUP

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:41 p.m.

City, State: St. Louis, MO

Occupation: Retired School Counselor

Comment: Dear Mr. Akin,

It is time to create a farm bill that supports family farms and healthy food, while at the same time providing jobs for many. “Big” agriculture with its “factory” farms and antibiotic filled animals and genetically altered produce are not doing this. Please support a farm bill that will pay family farmers to grow healthy produce and raise healthy animals, instead of allowing their property to be taken over by big agriculture, which doesn’t seem to have this country’s health as its main concern.

COMMENT OF LAUREL BIEDERMANN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:29 a.m.

City, State: Colorado Springs, CO

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: I want to be able to have my crops SAFE from GMO contamination. I want to know which foods contain GMO in the stores. I want to be able to water my crops with uncontaminated water that hasn’t been tainted with chemicals from ‘fracking’ . . .

Please don’t be short-sighted in looking at these issues. “Frankencrops” provide ‘food’ but not sustainability long-term. Fracking provides ‘power’ short term but not sustainability. Please protect the integrity of our REAL food . . . heirloom seeds and water in our State.

LAUREL BIEDERMANN.

COMMENT OF LAUREN BIEDRON

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 16, 2012, 1:51 p.m.

City, State: Chicago, IL

Occupation: Nonprofit

Comment: Hello,

I am writing to express my concern about proposed changes to the farm bill that may negatively affect hungry families.

Currently, I work for Feeding America, the nation’s leading domestic hunger-relief charity. Prior to this, I worked at Chicagoland’s food bank—which provided food to more than 678,000 (unduplicated!) individuals each year through a network of local food pantries.

My entire career has been in hunger relief, and through my work, I have seen firsthand that many families in my community—and across the country—are struggling. Simultaneously, food banks and other feeding agencies are seeing dramatic declines in the availability of food through TEFAP. This, coupled with increasing efficiencies in manufacturing (which often result in less product being available for donation) and rising food costs (which limit hunger relief agencies’ abilities to purchase food to offset the aforementioned declines) have created the “perfect storm” for families in need and the organizations trying to help them.

Simply put, we are trying to feed more people, with less food.

This is a significant problem, and while hunger relief agencies are fortunate to benefit from strong community support, the philanthropic community alone cannot be expected to fill the gap in the number of meals needed to meet community demand.

Further, proposed cuts to the SNAP program—our country’s primary defense against hunger—have significant potential to drive more families into food pantry lines and place additional burdens on an already limited charitable assistance network.

Hunger is a serious problem in our country. A strong farm bill will make sure that struggling families can put food on the table. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP. Families simply cannot afford cuts to these programs.

Thank you,

LAUREN BIEDRON.

COMMENT OF WENDY BIENVENU

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 2:45 a.m.

City, State: Keene, NH

Occupation: Communications

Comment: The way we grow food & raise animals is a reflection on our values and our humanity, but at this time it is not reflecting well on our species. I want the purest organic heirloom seed foods I can get, not the cheapest. No shortcuts. This affects too many things that are precious: health, children, the environment. Get those corrupt FDA people out and get someone in there to do the job right. Go organic, label everything, and **Please No GMO's!** Stop with the Frankenfoods. NO!

COMMENT OF JODY BIERGIEL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:49 a.m.

City, State: Santa Cruz, CA

Occupation: Organic Certifier

Comment: As a citizen and a consumer, as well as an agricultural industry member, I urge you to re-envision the farm bill and be innovative with solutions. The goal should be to support health and provide benefit to as many people as possible. Social programs and support for agriculture systems that have less impact on our health and the environment—such as organic systems—should be your top priorities. Thanks!

JODY BIERGIEL.

COMMENT OF ELIZABETH BIERKO

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 7:44 p.m.

City, State: Yorktown Heights, NY

Occupation: Teaching Artist

Comment: I am increasingly concerned about the quality of our food in the USA. The use of pesticides and genetically modified fruits and vegetables seem to pose health risks for us and our children. I believe GMO's should be labeled, or better yet outlawed as in Europe. Please do not allow agribusiness interests to rank higher than the health and well-being of U.S. citizens.

COMMENT OF KORY BIERLE

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 12:51 a.m.

City, State: Midland, SD

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Livestock

Size: 1,000+ acres

Comment: Dear House Ag Committee,

Please streamline the program and sign up process. There are too many deadlines. Also, it would be nice to have some risk back in agriculture for all players. Too many larger producers are guaranteed a great gross margin through programs and subsidized insurance in various forms coupled with mandated markets for their production.

Another idea would be to not only tighten the participation requirements, but to limit payments on a graduated scale for larger producers. For each area and crop find the average size of operation, set the payment rate, and for larger producers still pay, but at a diminished rate for the acres that they operate at for example 50% more than the average. Example: The average size of an operation in an area is 5,000 acres. Pay the same rate to everyone on their first 5,000 acres but from 5,001 to 10,000 pay a reduced rate and pay a further reduced rate for acres 10,001 and above.

For NAP insurance, don't pay renters of BLM or Forest Service land more than their annual bill for summer lease! Sometimes producers get paid to summer their cattle! As a private land producer, I cannot compete with that.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF DANIEL BIERMA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:51 p.m.

City, State: Holland, MI

Occupation: Student—Social Work/Divinity

Comment: We have too much corn and soybeans. Stop subsidizing big industry agriculture by supporting specific crops that are not producing healthy foods. Please support diversity in crops and support the people that consume them. Farmers markets that provide locally grown crops and support the local economy are the way to go.

COMMENT OF JOHN BIERNBAUM

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:54 p.m.
City, State: Haslett, MI
Occupation: Horticulture Professor, Michigan State University
Comment: Congressman Rogers,

Your support for agriculture in Michigan is essential. It is important that the continued growth of organic and ecological agriculture be supported through the Organic Research and Extension Initiative and Beginning Farmer and Rancher Initiatives. Small scale intensive farming can make a big difference in rural and urban Michigan. The EQIP initiatives including the organic initiative and the high tunnel initiative and the conservation stewardship program can all contribute to jobs, the local economy and our food security and health. Please make the farm bill a priority and be willing to support the efforts of Senator Stabenow to support specialty crops and efforts to protect farmers and our environment. If you want to see how it can make a difference, please ask for a tour of the Michigan State University Student Organic Farm and you can see firsthand.

JOHN BIERNBAUM.

COMMENT OF JOHN BIGLER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:54 p.m.
City, State: Mount Pleasant, SC
Occupation: Patent Attorney

Comment: Food must be grown in a way that is sustainable and not destructive of the environment or potentially toxic to the people who produce it. The emphasis on chemicals and GMO's is dangerous and damaging our precious resources.

COMMENT OF JEFF BIGMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:26 p.m.
City, State: Sylmar, CA
Occupation: Graphics

Comment: support organic farming, label **GMOs** or **Remove** them from the market. Protect our health! Keep Monsanto **Out** of the FDA. Our food supply should be sacred, we need to be protected from corporate greed.

COMMENT OF MIKE BILGER

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 3:43 p.m.
City, State:
Producer/Non-producer: Producer
Type: Roanoke, VA
Size: Vegetables
Comment: Less than 50 acres

- America needs a farm bill that creates jobs and spurs economic growth—support programs like the Value Added Producer Grants Program by guaranteeing \$30 million of mandatory funding per year. VAPG provides seed money to help farmers innovate in agriculture and create jobs while securing a sustainable path to market-based farm profitability. The Local Farms, Food, and Jobs Act includes numerous provisions that would promote entrepreneurship, job creation, and sustained economic development in rural areas.
- America needs a farm bill that makes healthy food widely available to all Americans—including schoolchildren! We must provide flexibility for states to use existing food procurement programs to purchase fresh, healthy food from local farmers and ranchers. The Local Farms, Food, and Jobs Act directly addresses these needs by supporting local, community based food system development—its key provisions should be in the farm bill.
- America needs a farm bill that protects our natural resources—protect the Conservation Stewardship Program from unfair funding cuts, and improve it by ranking applications solely on their conservation benefits. Farmers count on

CSP and other conservation programs to conserve soil for future generations, keep water and air clean, and create habitat for wildlife—all while farming profitably. In my work with NRCS and Extension personnel (at SARE PDP trainings where I have presented, the Conservation Innovation Grant that I am involved in, and other contexts), I have become aware just how stretched USDA agency personnel are—especially NRCS—by constant budget cuts. Most of these folks are doing their level best, and inadequate funding is a major factor in their not fully meeting their mandate to serve the farming community through conservation programs, *etc.*

- America needs a farm bill that invests in the next generation of farmers and ranchers—guarantee \$25 million per year in mandatory funding for the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program (BFRDP). We need a national strategy and commitment to support beginning farmer and ranchers entering agriculture. With an aging farm population, now is the time to invest in the future of American agriculture by nurturing new agriculture start-ups.
 - One current BFRDP project is The Virginia Beginning Farmer and Rancher Coalition Project, coordinated through Virginia Tech with 25 partners, including VABF, Appalachian Sustainable Development, Local Food Hub in Charlottesville, SustainFloyd, and Fauquier Education Farm. This BFRDP-funded Coalition has developed an extensive beginning farmer training curriculum with five modules (whole farm planning, land acquisition and tenure, sustainable production practices, marketing, and holistic business planning), and is establishing a statewide farm mentor network to facilitate hand-on training of new farmers by experienced farmers. Already, many new and aspiring farmers in Virginia are looking toward the Coalition as a vital resource to help them become successfully established. Their success benefits all in our region: more and higher quality local food, more jobs and entrepreneurial opportunities, stronger rural communities, and better resource conservation.
 - The BFRDP, first authorized at \$19 million per year under the 2008 Farm Bill, is funding many projects and initiatives like this across the U.S., but has also had to turn down many other excellent proposals because of limited funding. Thus, we are asking the House Agriculture Committee to include in its 2012 Farm Bill at least \$25 million per year for BFRDP.
 - In addition to training and technical assistance, new and aspiring farmers need help gaining access to land, capital and credit resources, and conservation programs in order to realize their goals. The Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236) introduced by Rep. Tim Walz (D-MN) and Rep. Jeff Fortenberry (R-NE) contains many additional provisions that address these needs, and thus should be part of the 2012 Farm Bill.
 - America needs a farm bill that drives innovation for tomorrow's farmers and food entrepreneurs—fund the Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative (OREI) at \$30 million per year in mandatory funding. Investment in agricultural research is vital to continued productivity and innovation in growing and diverse sectors of American agriculture, such as organic agriculture. The Specialty Crops Research Initiative provides vital research information for producers of fruits and vegetables, foods that are especially important for human health and for preventing childhood obesity and type II diabetes. It should be re-authorized at its current level of \$50 million per year. [Note—this is not the same as the Specialty Crops Block Grants which have supported VABF's research on winter and summer squash the past several years. Funding for the Block Grants appears safe; however it does not hurt to advocate for its continuation when you comment on research issues within the farm bill.]
 - > One regional example of the benefits of the OREI is the planning grant for organic management of a recently-introduced invasive pest, the Brown Marmorated Stink Bug, that threatens to cause devastating losses to a wide variety of fruit and vegetable crops. The project team is submitting a proposal for a full research and outreach program to develop an integrated, organic approach to controlling this pest. In order to ensure sufficient funding for this and many other vital research proposals in organic production, OREI funding should be increased from the current \$20 million to \$30 million per year (not reduced to \$16 million as proposed in the Senate bill).
 - > Another important research issue is the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI), which is currently the USDA's largest competitive research grants program. Clarifying language is needed in the 2012 Farm Bill to (1) ensure that Requests for Application are fully open and competi-

tive (applicants may include individuals or nongovernmental organizations as project leaders, not restricted to universities and colleges); (2) set aside at least 5% of AFRI funding for classical animal and plant breeding leading to the release of farm-ready public (non-patentable) crop varieties and livestock breeds; and (3) make sustainable and organic production systems a research priority within AFRI.

- Note that here in the Southeast, the Organic Seed Alliance conducted a survey and identified a strong need among farmers for organic and locally adapted seed, and assistance in seed production [this relates to the need for public varieties in general—vital for crop germplasm diversity/conservation, farmer viability & empowerment (non-patented seed), and adaptation to local conditions and changing climate.]

The big question that will be asked over and over within the Committee (and on the floor of both House and Senate) will be: OK, how are we going to pay for all the requested programs and their maintained or increased funding? Answer: there has been a major shift in farm bill Funding from Commodity Subsidy programs to Crop Insurance programs, so that the latter now actually spends slightly more than the former. Commodity Subsidies have traditionally had per-farm payment limits and conservation compliance requirements (though seriously undermined by loopholes); however Crop Insurance programs currently have no such limits. It has been estimated that imposing reasonable limits and conservation requirements on crop insurance could save about \$1 billion a year—easily enough to make up for the many small increases requested under the NSAC farm bill agenda, and even to restore Conservation Program funding to current levels.

COMMENT OF ELIZABETH BILISKE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:25 a.m.

City, State: Baltimore, MD

Occupation: Retired Social Worker

Comment: The farm bill should focus on encouraging small, sustainable farms and programs that support good nutrition for low income people. The current price supports that encourage corporate farms to produce environmentally destructive non-nutritious food must go. This includes large inhumane feeding lots for livestock and the stranglehold large corporations like Monsanto have gained over food procurers with genetically engineered crops.

COMMENT OF KELLY BILLBROUGH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:06 a.m.

City, State: Branchville, SC

Occupation: Civil Engineering Technician

Comment: Please help make our food safe and clean, remove all additives and allow local grown foods in our schools. Stop purchasing foods processed overseas and keep our local produce on our local store shelves. Mostly, Remove additives and items that we know are dangerous to our overall health. Keep our foods all natural.

COMMENT OF LAUREN BILLINGS

Date Submitted: Tuesday, April 24, 2012, 12:08 p.m.

City, State: Forest City, NC

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Specialty Crops, Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Small organic and family farms need your support. we are fortunate to have one spouse working outside the farm, who is able to earn a decent living; many of our neighboring farmers do not have outside income, and they live on what they can make on their farms. They (and we) have dedicated their lives—giving up creature comforts in order to produce healthy, organic food.

Please consider passing a farm bill that gives working families the upper hand—not a giant company like Monsanto.

Please discontinue subsidies for corn. It pollutes our land, poisons our drinking water, and leads to obesity in children. It also puts small organic farms at a disadvantage while filling the pockets of Monsanto.

COMMENT OF CHARLES BINGHAM

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:14 a.m.

City, State: Sitka, AK
Occupation: Corporate Communications Specialist/Nonprofit Health Organizations
Comment: It's time for real food reform, more organics, more community gardens, more family farmers, no GMO crops, real farming with crop rotation (no monocrop fields, it's how the Dust Bowl started).

COMMENT OF JOHN BINGHAM

Date Submitted: Wednesday, March 14, 2012, 12:18 p.m.
City, State: Essex, NY
Occupation:
Comment: The House Agriculture Committee's "field hearing" in Saranac Lake made no mention of the grave threat of unconstrained GMO farming practices to non-GMO farming and farmlands.

GMO buffer zones by GMO farmers, and GMO seed "Caution" labeling by patent owners, should become mandatory. GMO contamination of non-GMO land (both land in production and fallow, field and forest, private and public parcels) is real and expanding rapidly.

While farmers and consumers struggle for curtailment of law suits against non-GMO farmers, for institution of insurance for non-GMO farmers (paid for by GMO seed companies), and for mandatory labeling of GMO food products/ingredients including GMO animal feeds, all important curtailments, the very critical issue of holding GMO farmers and seed producers responsible for curtailing physical and financial damage to others is being ignored.

Pollen and seed drift buffers need to be mandatory on GMO field edges (*e.g.*, no GMO planting within 600 ft. of adjoining properties). And GMO farmers need to be held legally responsible for removal (without chemicals) of GMO plant contamination, migration of Herbicide Resistant weeds onto non-GMO private and public lands and roadways, and restitution for lost income from lost crop yields. Non-GMO farms must not be forced to lose the field productivity of a 600 ft. buffer zones on their already small parcels.

Unchecked by Congress, without GMO buffers on GMO fields themselves, and without GMO seed labels requiring these GMO buffer perimeter, U.S. farmlands will become increasingly GMO degraded. With loss of soil fertility and infestations of resistant weeds, U.S. farming, both GMO and non-GMO, would most likely migrate across the landscape, moving increasingly off-shore, "wherever food grows best (land is cheapest)", devastating the agricultural base of small and large family farms, both at home and abroad, threatening America's future ability to feed itself.

COMMENT OF HAROLD BIRCH

Date Submitted: Tuesday, April 03, 2012, 9:07 a.m.
City, State: Piasa, IL
Producer/Non-producer: Producer
Type: Field Crops
Size: 1,000+ acres
Comment: As the farm bill is considered I would recommend removing the direct payments. I would recommend at the same time that we continue to support crop insurance as this is the safety net for farmers. Downsizing the FSA offices and keep insurance sales to the public would be another savings and keep service at the choice of the American farmer rather than limiting insurance choices to government employees. These types of choices can reduce the cost of programs to the government while maintaining the safety net and keeping choices in the public.

COMMENT OF WALTER BIRDWELL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:52 p.m.
City, State: Laguna Vista, TX
Occupation: Retired
Comment: Support family farmers and individual owners. Continue and increase support for conservation and organic farm programs. End subsidies for corporate and incorporated farms.

COMMENT OF JASON BISCHOFF

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 10:55 a.m.
City, State: Madison, WI

Occupation: Chef

Comment: What we put in our bodies is the most important thing in the world. America is far behind other nations in passing legislation that prevents GMO's and other experimental foods in our stores/markets/on our farms. While it is important to grow enough food that can feed the nation, it is also important we don't consume harmful substances. I believe while heatedly that modifying the genes of plants to grow when they shouldn't, be resistant to bugs and pesticides, to only grow once and then die so a new crop must be planted every year—these things and more are wrong. Please pass legislation that stops the unnecessary profiteering from food. Thank you.

COMMENT OF MELISSA BISHOP

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:03 p.m.

City, State: Setauket, NY

Occupation: Programmer/Analyst—State Employee

Comment: I'm tired of being worried about what is in my food. We are being force fed unhealthy, dangerous, science experiments. Our livestock is tortured and pumped up with so many drugs and force fed food it was never meant to eat.

America was founded on the backs of local farmers & small businesses. It is time we return to our roots. Supporting local farmers & businesses will restore our economy, bring us healthy, local food and stop the torture of livestock. It sickens me that small town America is being wiped out and that local farmers are being forced out of business.

COMMENT OF SCOTT BISHOP

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 4:28 p.m.

City, State: Olympia, WA

Occupation: Retired/Volunteer

Comment: End all subsidies for all non-organic food operations. Limit speculation on food commodities to folks in the food business. Break up the large industrial agriculture food companies and eliminate their monopolistic practices.

COMMENT OF JANET BLACK

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:50 p.m.

City, State: Hattiesburg, MS

Occupation: Retired Nurse Practitioner and Former Farmer

Comment: Please come up with a farm bill that supports organic, sustainable agriculture and small farmers. The big agribusiness companies don't need subsidies; the small farmers do.

Do what is right for consumers and support healthy food!

COMMENT OF LAURIE BLACK

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:32 p.m.

City, State: Seattle, WA

Occupation: Technology

Comment: As a consumer I want to know what I'm eating is grown in a sustainable way that supports small, local and regional farms rather than U.S. big Ag and imported foods. Our farm policy should be more supportive of this, as well as organically grown foods rather than handing out big subsidies to corporate agriculture that does not practice sustainable farming.

COMMENT OF PAUL BLACK

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:27 p.m.

City, State: Des Moines, IA

Occupation: Fitness Instructor

Comment: Right now I am working with a nutritionist concerning food sensitivities I have. It is important for me to know what is in the food I eat and it is also important for me to have some foods as organic. There are many more people in this same situation and this needs to be considered when looking at the Farm bill.

COMMENT OF SYLVIA BLACK

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:12 p.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Housewife

Comment: It is truly time to support the small U.S. farmer. Large corporate farms do much to diminish the quality not only of food but also the environment. On the other hand small farms, particularly organic farms, produce food which has much more nutritional value as well as favorably treating the environment. Small farmers also provide nutritional information to the public at farmers' markets and at other venues they sell their produce. Corporate farms are responsible for much or the terrible products used not to combat insects and other organisms they feel are harmful to their crops, putting the public at risk due to the increased chemical use. Our citizens need to be able to trust their food supplies and not be always fearful of what might be lurking in their fruits and vegetables.

COMMENT OF TANEKA BLACKBURN

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 9:22 a.m.

City, State: Atlanta, GA

Occupation: Admin. Assistant

Comment: I want organic natural foods at the farmers markets, the local grocery stores. I refuse to battle cancer and other life threatening diseases due to the food I buy in good faith . . . Chemicals and other additives and preservatives are ruining our nation's health more and more as time passes all for the profit of corporate food companies. I have a God given right to live a healthy life to the beat of my ability. Corporate companies should never be able to interfere with this God given right for the sake of profits and capital gains. **Never.**

COMMENT OF ALLOISE BLACKOWIAK

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:14 p.m.

City, State: Sarasota, FL

Occupation: Engineer

Comment: Dear Congressmen and Women,

We as a nation are suffering the terrible health consequences including rapidly rising obesity, diabetes and heart disease that are directly linked to the over consumption of sweet and fatty foods that have been subsidized by farm bills in the past. Our medical system is a financial disaster because of the extreme medical costs of diseases like diabetes which killed my father, and it will be impossible to control our national debt without reducing medical costs.

A healthy farm bill can help resolve all of these problems. Please phase out all agricultural subsidies while boosting support for farmer's markets, land conservation and organic farming which protects farm workers against dangerous pesticides.

Our nation does not need to subsidize large farmers and food companies. We can all benefit from healthier not cheaper food.

Thank you!

DON.

COMMENT OF CAROLYN BLAKE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:22 p.m.

City, State: Kapaa, HI

Occupation: Artist and Ag Related Business Owner

Comment: The time has come to stand up for small-farms and farmers! Please do not add additional regulations and barriers on these backbones of rural and urban communities. Instead, stop giving taxpayer handouts to chemical and seed companies, and large industrial farms that destroy communities, degrade our environment and the health and well being of our people.

COMMENT OF SALLY BLAKEMORE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:41 p.m.

City, State: Santa Fe, NM

Occupation: Book Designer and Book Packager

Comment: We need good organic food for this nation.

Big corporate farms torture their animals, provide hormones and antibiotics in the food chain and now the radiation coming in from Fukushima needs monitoring and top soil testing. We must support real farmers and their family farms. **Vote For Good Food For America.**

COMMENT OF KATHLEEN BLANC

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:45 p.m.

City, State: Bemidji, MN

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: As a grower and consumer I want GMO seeds and food to be labeled. Sustainable growing methods need to be funded and explored. The public needs to be told the **Truth** about our food supply *i.e.*, that as is it is causing degenerative disease. I want organic food to be the norm in our country. I want to be told the truth and at the very least be able to make choices based on the truth on the ingredient labels.

I want our government to start acting with integrity and wisdom instead of the money grubbing bottom line stuff that feeds the big business people. I am saddened at who we have become at the political level. I want our government to be responsive to we the people when it comes to growing and being able to eat healthy, wholesome food.

COMMENT OF LYDIA BLANCHARD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:20 p.m.

City, State: Santa Cruz, CA

Occupation: Psychotherapy

Comment: I require organic, non-genetically modified, GMO-labeled food, where workers, all animals, and soil are fairly treated. I am 78 years old and must have this for my productive health.

Thank you for initiating and voting for these things, thereby showing kindness, respect, and gratitude for others and yourselves.

Between Mothers' and Fathers' Days.

COMMENT OF KATHLEEN BLANK

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:05 p.m.

City, State: Park City, UT

Comment: Please support healthy local food by supporting a farm bill that puts nutrition, conservation and support for organic and sustainable agriculture first, not the best interests of big agribusiness.

COMMENT OF NANCY BLANNING

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:45 p.m.

City, State: Denver, CO

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: My family and I eat organic foods because we know it is the best quality and most health providing for our lives. We have our own organic garden and are committed to this mode of food production. We ask that a farm bill will recognize that support of independent food growers is essential to our future. The quality of food is at stake with modification of seed. There is an honesty and integrity to the small farm that is so in contrast to agribusiness whose only motivation and goal is to make as much money as they can without thought for others or the future. Please honor and respect the independent farmer in his or her commitment to protect and guard our food supply as truly life supporting, not just calorie producing.

COMMENT OF RICHARD & VALARIE BLAU

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:24 p.m.

City, State: Tampa, FL

Occupation: Food Law Attorney

Comment: The Farm bill as currently drafted should be amended to adjust priorities in favor of (i) providing support for expanded organic **And** sustainable farm productivity, and (ii) supplying healthier food to our nation's most vital future resource—our children.

In order to accelerate the expansion of our nation's organic and sustainable agriculture, we need more than economic incentives. Agricultural research at the USDA and land-grant universities has overwhelmingly focused on non-organic methods. While these policies have greatly increased crop productivity, it is time with this farm bill to take the next step and support more progressive agriculture. Organic and sustainable agriculture do not use all of the patented products that conven-

tional agriculture does, and thus do not have the industry supporting research at the same level. This is where we need the Federal government's support. The farm bill must be amended to specifically provide increased support for these initiatives.

As for our nation's children, the farm bill must increase, rather than cut, financial support for school nutrition programs. During the depths of the Great Recession (in 2010–2011), the number of students receiving subsidized lunches rose to 21 million from 18 million in 2006–7, a 17 percent increase, according to an analysis by The New York Times of data from the Department of Agriculture, which administers the meals program. Eleven states, including Florida, Nevada, New Jersey and Tennessee, had 4 year increases of 25 percent or more, huge shifts in a vast program long characterized by incremental growth.

These alarming increases are not abating as the Recession recedes. For example, this year statistics from the Wyoming Department of Education show that 37 percent of students in Wyoming receive breakfasts and lunches subsidized by the Federal government; the 33,052 students qualifying for free and reduced-price meals represent a 2 percent increase over the 32,384 in the 2010–11 school year. Likewise, 60 percent of Georgia's public school students now receive either a free or reduced lunch every day, with an increase of almost 50,000 students in the last 5 years; in 2010, the program fed more than 31 million children.

Not only is the need to feed rising, but we have food quality issues as well that the farm bill must address now. Young Americans consume huge amounts of refined starch, sugar, red meat, very inadequate quantities of fruits, vegetables, beans, nuts, and whole-grain high-fiber foods. Copious amounts of research data confirm that those factors are directly related to the increase in juvenile diabetes and will, in the future, increase risk of cardiovascular disease. We now also have very direct evidence that the quality of our school-supplied foods is directly affecting the rates of adolescent obesity in this country.

The farm bill needs to be amended to increase funding for successful and positive food programs such as the Women, Infants, [and] Child[ren] (WIC) program which does very specifically promote healthy food and exclude unhealthy food. The legislation also must be revised to redirect funding for less successful programs such as the SNAP Program, (the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program); although well-funded at almost \$80 billion a year, the program functions mainly as a conduit for underwriting the producers of junk foods and soda. While SNAP is an essential program for many people, the quality of what foods qualify this program must be redefined to avoid feeding the existing epidemics in juvenile diabetes and obesity.

Amending the SNAP Program to preclude sugar-sweetened beverages is an obvious place to start. Each day, the government and tax payers pay for the purchase of 20 million servings of sugar-sweetened beverage. That's per day. Such purchases arguably are the single most important contributor, as a single food, to obesity and related chronic diseases. A farm bill that continues to allow spending \$4 billion a year for that one product category which everyone acknowledges offers little if any positive health benefit cries out for change. Congress should amend it to make those changes.

Thanks for your time and consideration.

RICHARD & VALARIE BLAU,
Tampa, Florida.

COMMENT OF PHILIP BLAUSTEIN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:43 p.m.

City, State: Parrish, FL

Occupation: Physician

Comment: Please promote organically grown produce. Also cage free, hormone & antibiotic free meat & eggs. Cut back on GMO's please and label them so we know what we're getting.

COMMENT OF DANIEL BLAUSTEIN-REJTO

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 02, 2012, 8:48 p.m.

City, State: Providence, RI

Occupation: Student

Comment: Dear Representative Cicilline,

I want to express my support for increasing funding for the Assistance for Community Food Projects program under Title IV of the farm bill, and for increasing funding for the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program. These two initiatives support innovation in the agricultural sector and in food access, two areas that our country desperately needs changes within.

Additionally, I hope that you support the Senate's proposed elimination of Direct Subsidies. However, I would like to point out that shifting to crop insurance alone will not support long term farm and crop resilience. In light of predicted increases in climate and weather variability with climate change, crops and farms will likely experience wider fluctuations in yield. Providing insurance alone will not incentivize farmers to adapt to these projected changes. If insurance is to be provided it should at least be tied to incentives for farmers to diversify their crops and management practices in anticipation of future weather and climate risks.

Thank you for taking the time to consider this feedback,

DANIEL REJTO.

COMMENT OF DONNA BLAUW

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 2:55 a.m.

City, State: Lake Forest Park, WA

Occupation: Unemployed

Comment: Please support our organic farmers. We need food not laced with GMO and chemical fertilizers. Please support our organic farmers that are attempting to supply us with food not contaminated by chemical fertilizers and GMO.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF BRENDA BLEVINS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:41 p.m.

City, State: Lebanon, TN

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: As a parent I have switched over as much as possible the amount of organic foods my children eat. I believe the health benefits alone outweigh the increase in my grocery bill. As an educator I see the effects of unhealthy eating with my students who come from poverty. It is very important to me that more funds are put into making our children healthier as a nation.

COMMENT OF MELISSA BLINDOW

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 11:39 p.m.

City, State: Milford, NH

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Poultry/poultry products

Size: 50-150 acres

Comment: Dear Charlie,

I got some of my very first hands on farming experience at Rosaly's! I'm now a certified organic producer of milk and eggs in Bedford, NH, on town-owned land. As a beginning farmer, I need the support of programs like this to grow my business and enrich the communities of Southern NH with delicious, healthy local food. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony to the House Committee on Agriculture on the next farm bill. My district representative is being copied on this testimony. I am a young farmer and I'd like to share my support for programs that help the next generation of growers build strong farm businesses. As it's estimated that 125,000 farmers will retire in the next 5 years, it's absolutely critical that farm bill programs help citizens get started in this challenging field. I ask that the Committee endorse all of the provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236), including:

- Mandatory funding for Individual Development Accounts at \$5 million per year. This program helps new farmers raise capital to start farm businesses and is tested and proven by organizations like Practical Farmers of Iowa and the California Farmlink.
- Mandatory funding for the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program at \$25 million a year. This program funds essential education for new farmers around the country.
- Authorize a new microloan program, to enable young and beginning farmers to better access FSA loan programs.
- Revise FSA rules to make loan programs more accessible to more young and beginning farmers.
- Reaffirm the existing cost share differential for BFRs within EQIP. Also, reaffirm the advance payment option allowing beginning and socially disadvantaged producers to receive an advance payment for the project's costs for purchasing

materials or contracting services, but increase the limit on the advance payment from 30 percent to 50 percent of costs.

- Amend the Farm and Ranch Land Protection Program (FRPP) to make farm viability part of the purpose of the program and to give discretionary authority to the eligible entities that implement the program to give priority to easements with an option to purchase at the agricultural use value, deals that transfer the land to beginning and farmers and ranchers, applicants with farm succession plans, and other similar mechanisms to maintain the affordability of protected land.

These and other provisions within the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act will help new growers succeed and I urge you to include them in the next farm bill.

Sincerely,

MELISSA BLINDOW, Benedikt Dairy in Bedford, NH.

COMMENT OF CHARLES D. BLISS

Date Submitted: Tuesday, March 20, 2012, 10:09 a.m.

City, State: Maquon, IL

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Field Crops

Size: 1,000+ acres

Comment: I have farmed for 56 years and know that we need a safety net to protect us from volatile income fluctuation. A good sound crop insurance plan is the best form of protection that we can have. Please work to include such a plan in the new farm bill. Thank You.

COMMENT OF LEAR BLITZSTEIN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:19 p.m.

City, State: Alameda, CA

Occupation: Cook

Comment: The government should not let mega-corporations dictate how organic food is labeled, nor should companies like Monsanto force small farmers into debt because "their" Franken-foods contaminated nearby small farms—and then sue them for copyright infringement!

COMMENT OF LAUREL BLOMQUIST

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:39 p.m.

City, State: Madison, WI

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Please level the playing field for small producers, and take Organic Standards into consideration. Also, if you want to really do something about the obesity epidemic, you should subsidize vegetables, and not just products that make cheap (but unhealthy) food.

COMMENT OF LARRY BLOOD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:10 p.m.

City, State: Santa Cruz, CA

Occupation: Radio Producer

Comment: Agribusiness has ruled the roost too long. The benefits of more local operations are multifold. Farmers markets, organic farming, family farms need to be better supported in the new farm bill.

COMMENT OF CHERYL BLOOM

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:54 p.m.

City, State: Little River, CA

Occupation: Landscape Gardener

Comment: We need a farm bill that supports the small, organic farmers who do not usually get subsidies from congress like big agribusiness producers have. It is very important to help and allow small farms to grow a large variety of foods that are sustainable for the health of our citizens, plants and animals. It is **Not** impor-

tant to subsidize the negative, depleting, unhealthy and detrimental practices of large agriculture at the expense of the health of the land.

COMMENT OF WILLIAM BLOOM

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 6:11 p.m.

City, State: Lovettsville, VA

Occupation: Director of Technology Services

Comment: Dear Representative Frank Wolf,

I need fresh local farm food for my health without government regulations preventing it. This is not just my choosing, but I have been directed by my doctor to go this way of life if I want to live a longer life after several bad health events have happened to me. Please support:

- (1) The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- (2) Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- (3) The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- (4) Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

We do not need the Government controlling farms, especially small local farmers who can barely make ends meet. If the government is concerned about health risks, just have the consumer sign a form with the local farmer that the consumer understands their may be health risks to locally grown farm products. The form is to be kept on file by the local farmer only. This is the most that government should get involved and even that I believe is too much and unnecessary. In this day and age of the Internet, the consumer has at their finger tips all the research available for them to make a wise decision. Also, if the government is really concerned about health and is willing to stand up against big companies like Monsanto, require manufacturers to label if the food in stores has been genetically modified (GMO).

Thank you for your support of local farmers. As you know, Loudoun County has a lot of local farms still that want to help people like me.

BILL.

COMMENT OF JEFFREY BLOVITS

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 5:15 p.m.

City, State: Vancouver, WA

Occupation: Retired—Engineering Program Mgr. (H-P)

Comment: I have the fortunate opportunity as a regular volunteer for Oregon Food Bank, SHARE and Clark County Food Bank (four mornings weekly). Need for basic nutrition has only increased in the years I have been participating. Reductions in support are a misdirected and tragic error in leadership.

COMMENT OF ELIZABETH BLOW

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:34 p.m.

City, State: Rohnert Park, CA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: There is no reason why farmers and farms, (in particular small to medium sized), can't grow organic, nutritious crops void of genetically modified/engineered organisms (GMOs), and the pesticides & herbicides that accompany such unhealthy crops. I support local farmers/farms. Why don't you as my representative? I don't eat GMO crops do you? Let's reform now in favor of an organic agricultural paradigm shift!

COMMENT OF JARED BLUMER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:07 p.m.

City, State: Ambler, PA

Occupation: Educator

Comment: With oil prices on the rise accompanied by global food prices, a drastic shift towards local food production is essential. The encouragement of small organic farms through subsidies, farm lease programs, and farmer education can revitalize a stalled economy, reduce carbon emissions, and provide much needed jobs for Americans. The public is demanding local, fresh, and safe food and the government

can support this growing market through the rational policies described above and the many others not mentioned. I look forward to hearing how the new farm bill will revitalize America's food system and lift us from this recession. Thank you for your consideration.

Best,

JARED BLUMER.

COMMENT OF MEGAN BLYWEISS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:18 p.m.

City, State: Philadelphia, PA

Occupation: Speech Language Pathologist

Comment: Everyone deserves the right to organic, healthy produce—free of chemicals that harm our bodies and change the way nature intended us to grow. More health problems, early puberty . . . all of this can be linked to poor food quality due to chemicals. Leave our produce safe!

COMMENT OF MARK BNEOLKEN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:33 p.m.

City, State: Minneapolis, MN

Comment: Organic farmers must have the same considerations as Big Ag. Farmers must be able to protect the integrity of their crops. They must also be protected from punitive lawsuits that occur because of seed or pollen floating on the wind. They want no part of Monsanto's GMO seeds. They don't want these frankenseeds polluting their efforts. A growing number of us (20% a year and growing) don't want to consume GMO products. Those need to be labeled by law so we can make informed decisions.

MARK BENOLKEN.

COMMENT OF NATALIE BOATNER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:01 p.m.

City, State: Pittsburgh, PA

Occupation: Line Cook

Comment: The southwest PA region has so much to offer in the way of farming and bringing farm fresh foods to the population. This is truly one of the most beautiful, healthful and community-strengthening aspects of living here. Please do what you can to preserve and enhance our access to good farming. Thank you sincerely. NKB.

COMMENT OF SARAH BOAZ-SHELLEY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:17 p.m.

City, State: Walnut Creek, CA

Occupation: Director of Engineering, E-commerce

Comment: I support the full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).

I support fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.

I support the implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).

Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

I support a U.S. food and agricultural policy that focuses on adopting best agricultural practices that put the health of its citizens, the land and the livelihood of farmers and farm workers over the interests of industrial agriculture lobbyists.

COMMENT OF ROXANNE BOBICK

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 4:58 p.m.

City, State: Ripley, WV

Occupation: Health Counselor

Comment: We need a new farm bill! The current one has helped to create more obesity, heart disease, and diabetes for the public. Please craft a new bill that will

help make healthy and organic foods more reasonably priced and accessible to the public. People deserve to be able to have good food and good health.

Thank you,

ROXANNE BOBICK,
Certified Health Counselor.

COMMENT OF CLARE BOBO

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:04 p.m.

City, State: Waikoloa, HI

Occupation: Caterer, Leader of Slow Food Hawaii

Comment: *Aloha Mazie,*

Please help us move towards good, clean and fair food for everyone by ending subsidies to giant farms and garnering more support for our small local farmers. I urge you to support a farm bill that is more supportive of small family farms and helps move us away from CAFOs and other factory farms.

Mahalo for all you do,

CLARE BOBO.

COMMENT OF LEONA BOCHANTIN

Date Submitted: Friday, April 27, 2012, 6:35 p.m.

City, State: St. Louis, MO

Occupation: Retired

Comment: We need to protect the poor and hungry. Small and organic farmers need subsidies. Get rid of subsidies for the large agribusinesses, they should not get subsidies. We need the conservation programs.

COMMENT OF MARY BODDE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:47 p.m.

City, State: Mt. St. Joseph, OH

Occupation: Retired

Comment: The Bill should include financial support for farmers who need it to successfully seed the crops that feed the Nation, *e.g.*, in seeds or other assistance in order to help them carry out their role of feeding the Nation.

COMMENT OF CATHERINE BOE

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 9:31 p.m.

City, State: San Jose, CA

Comment: I would like you to consider the future for those that have to take care of themselves—making just enough to pay to put food on the table and meet the most urgent needs of our children. I want to have the ability to buy real whole not chemically altered food at a grocery store that is affordable and grown sustainably. Make changes as if they are to benefit **Your** health not mine. Thank you.

COMMENT OF DIANA BOEKE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:22 p.m.

City, State: Culpeper, VA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: My husband and I make a full-time living from farming our 5 acres in Virginia. We are a diversified farm with vegetables, small fruits, cut flowers, and pastured poultry. We have received invaluable assistance from state and Federal programs designed for small sustainable farmers like us. We are proud to be producers, and provide our community with nutritious, affordable, healthy food. We ask that you continue to support local small farmers by the following:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).

- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

COMMENT OF ROBERT BOETTCHER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:37 p.m.

City, State: Big Sandy, MT

Occupation: Retired Producer

Comment: It is time for an Organic Farm Bill. Everyone in the U.S. would benefit from a fair and healthy farm bill. It is very frustrating that the large producers get so much money.

COMMENT OF JILL BOHR JACOB

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:03 p.m.

City, State: Ketchikan, AK

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Fruits

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: To the House Agricultural Committee,

A decade ago I helped my mother transition our family orange grove in California into organic production. For the first time in a generation it made a profit AND the soil healed and the surrounding bio diversity was not poisoned and my children could eat our oranges without scrubbing the toxic sprays off.

Please support;

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Thank you,

JILL BOHR JACOB.

COMMENT OF SAMUEL BOLES

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 10, 2012, 1:16 p.m.

City, State: Atlanta, GA

Occupation: IT

Comment: Food stamps are important to the security of our citizens and to the ability of folks to get out of poverty. Don't try to build sustainability or fiscal responsibility on their backs and with the suffering of our weakest neighbors most in need of our protection.

COMMENT OF CHRISTY BOLOGNANI

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 4:42 p.m.

City, State: Buena Vista, CO

Occupation: Medical Assistant

Comment: Organic and sustainable agriculture are integral to the healthy survival of our food system in America. We must pass laws that protect these forms of farming from agribusiness corporations such as Monsanto. Please protect our health and family farmers with a fair Farms Bill that doesn't concede solely to the special interests of large corporations.

COMMENT OF MARY BOLZ

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:29 p.m.

City, State: Vacaville, CA

Occupation: Oriental Medicine Doctor and Acupuncturist

Comment: Sustainable and nonchemical farming is very important to the health of humans and animals and plants, and even the Earth itself. If you cannot see this, you will just be one of those Federal regulators bought off by big money. There are things more important than money and you **Must** take risks. Worrying about your reelection or reappointment is moot. Do something good for your country and Earth.

COMMENT OF VICTORIA BONA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:59 p.m.

City, State: Seattle, WA

Occupation: Bookkeeping/Mother

Comment: I want our legislature to support laws that protect every person in the United States by restricting GMO crops (and definitely NOT giving companies like Monsanto the right to sue small farmers whose heirloom seeds have been pollinated w/GMO DNA—something the farmer cannot control), by banning the use of pesticides/herbicides and chemical fertilizer, by supporting the innovation of **Organic** farming; by labeling requirements for what is in food and how it was produced (*i.e.*, **Label** GMOs that are in food products), by removing corn from the diets of cattle and poultry, by scaling back on the mass production of corn (removing subsidies for corn farmers)—to name a few. I feel like legislators (with the exception of a few independent thinkers) rule in favor of big business (money) and throw the rest of us, and the health of the planet, under the train. Please consider the bigger picture of a healthy nation when you prepare the next farm bill.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF ELIZABETH BOND

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:56 p.m.

City, State: Santa Ana, CA

Occupation: Research Assistant

Comment: I support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

I do not support cutting WIC or Food Stamp programs. I do not support Monsanto's interest in making all farmers buy and use their sterile hybrids. I am not against all GMO's (it would be great to modify rice to have a complete protein, for example) but see no harm in making growers label them with **What** has been modified, clearly stated.

COMMENT OF S. BOND

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:40 p.m.

City, State: Naperville, IL

Occupation: Technical Director

Comment: I support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Do not cut \$4 million from the organic research funding nor the funding to support Beginning Farmers.

Do not subsidize insurance programs, which will allow giant commodity farmers and insurance companies to walk away with billions in taxpayer dollars while putting the land, soil and environment at greater risk.

Place limitations on crop insurance subsidies and re-attach soil erosion and wetland conservation requirements to crop insurance programs.

COMMENT OF MICHAEL BONILLA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:43 p.m.

City, State: Fairbanks, AK

Occupation: Carpet and Upholstery Cleaning

Comment: This is a great opportunity to reform agriculture to be more healthy for Americans. There should be subsidies for organic and vegetable farming and reduction in soy and corn subsidies. There are very few healthy foods that come from corn and soy and by subsidizing them you are encouraging a more unhealthy and sickly America. Thank you.

COMMENT OF ALLEN BONINI

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 10:18 a.m.

City, State: Urbandale, IA

Occupation: Resource Manager

Comment: We need a strong conservation title in the farm bill and any farm payments or subsidies **Must** be linked to complete conservation compliance. This is especially true for crop insurance. If my tax dollars are going to subsidize 60% of the cost of crop insurance then farmers should be expected to operate in a sustainable manner and follow an approved conservation plan. No one should ever get a hand-out from government without some sort of *quid pro quo*. And farmers are no exception!

COMMENT OF ANGELA BONK

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:15 p.m.

City, State: Manitowoc, WI

Occupation: Ladies Buyer

Comment: Please consider the organic farmers and those of us that choose to eat wholesome, farm raised meat and dairy. We believe strongly in truth in labeling. We are firmly against GMO's. We need to know which farmers use Roundup Ready seed.

COMMENT OF PATTY BONNEY

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 16, 2012, 12:06 a.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Every year my daughter-in-law requests donations to the Oregon Food Bank for birthday and Christmas. As a school counselor she sees so many hungry children.

COMMENT OF ANDREA BONSIGNORE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:32 p.m.

City, State: Castro Valley, CA

Occupation: Student

Comment: There should be strict guidelines regarding the production of genetically modified crops. With concern of the future of seed and our food source, authentic organically produced crops should be supported in this bill and genetically modified crops severely restricted. Please do a small amount of research as to the effects of genetically modified crops on biodiversity, the welfare of farmers, and the health effects seen thus far on animals and you will take this comment to heart.

COMMENT OF BARBARA BOONE

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 15, 2012, 3:06 p.m.

City, State: La Jolla, CA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I believe we should emphasize teaching and encouraging people to grow as much of their own food, organically, as possible. This should be happening worldwide. This would help enrich the soil as well as teaching people to live responsibly and eating more nutritionally.

COMMENT OF MALCOLM BOOTH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:21 p.m.

City, State: Sebastopol, CA

Occupation: Businessman

Comment: The current system of agriculture, and the provision of food in the U.S. is clearly broken and has been for decades. This is rapidly coming to the national consciousness and bottom up changes are happening all over the country de-

spite what the government does. It's time to get on board and get the system fixed. The country badly needs affordable, local, healthy food and education on what to eat and how to grow it. The big corporations are only interested in one thing and the people have suffered as a result. Do right thing . . . please.

MALCOLM BOOTH,
Sebastopol, CA.

COMMENT OF NICOLE BOOTHMAN-SHEPARD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:18 p.m.

City, State: New Orleans, LA

Occupation: Strategy Consultant for Fortune 500 Company

Comment: I implore you to rebuff lobbyists and give us—the consumers—the power and access to choose healthy, local, organic foods for our families. I don't want GMOs in the food supply, but I have a right to know if they are there so I demand labeling.

I want AG to have programs that actively encourage more local farmers to produce organic, no and low pesticide foods so it is fresh, healthy, supports the local economy, and actually tastes like food rather than Styrofoam.

Subsidies and friendly policies for mega-farms have eviscerated the land, and more importantly, developed a national dependence on too few types and strains of plants and animals. As a subject matter expert on natural and man-made disasters, I am deeply worried about the food security crisis this limited bio-diversity has created. Engage DHS for a vulnerability and risk analysis—the results will be terrifying if disease or pests kills off the too few crops and strains that we grow now mass-produce.

By supporting legislation that makes local and organic farming more achievable, we will resolve our food security risk while catalyzing local economies.

COMMENT OF MARTHA BOOZ

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 10:55 a.m.

City, State: El Sobrante, CA

Occupation: Home Gardener

Comment: The farm bill should eliminate subsidies to industrial agriculture, "big" agriculture, and should implement policies that will encourage organic agriculture. Organic agriculture has been shown to be as productive as industrial agriculture, without the use of deadly pesticides and herbicides which don't work against the current crop of Super Weeds bedeviling farmers. Organic agriculture builds soil, and will eliminate the Dead Zone in the Gulf of Mexico if implemented fully across the U.S. Local farmers markets should be encouraged as well. Programs which benefit women with children should be continued and fully funded. Incentives should be offered to farmers of vegetables and fruits, which are healthy foods that fight obesity, another huge national problem facilitated and encouraged by subsidies to industrial agriculture.

Thank you for your attention to my comments.

COMMENT OF MARGARET BORDAGARAY

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 10:55 p.m.

City, State: Doylestown, PA

Occupation: Therapeutic Bodyworker

Comment: If you do not regulate and enforce labeling the food we purchase from stores you will force a lot of consumers to either start growing their own food or purchasing from local farmers whom we can trust. I expect as a job holding, tax-paying, and voting citizen to be aware and have the choice of what I am feeding myself and my family!

COMMENT OF NATHAN BORDER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:49 p.m.

City, State: Thornton, CO

Occupation: Registered Nurse

Comment: We desperately need reform to sustainable and locally connected communities and food growers. Organic foods are the healthiest and safest food and we need national recognition and support for locally grown organic foods and agriculture.

COMMENT OF CLAUDIA BORDIN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:13 p.m.

City, State: Sacramento, CA

Occupation: Designer

Comment: Please make subsidies for growers of fruits and vegetables and not give subsidies to meat producers. This country desperately needs to eat more veggies and by having them more accessible and cost effective, more people will buy them. It will also help make our planet more sustainable by (cutting down meat production) lowering toxic gases to our environment that cattle produce. By having a healthier population, it can also lower our nation's health care costs.

COMMENT OF ANDREW BOREYKO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:20 p.m.

City, State: Massapequa, NY

Occupation: IT Programming/Systems

Comment: Mr. King, I respect you and all that you have done, and continue to do. Please be pro-active and **Do Not** cut any funding to any programs vital to our nutrition, conservation and especially programs funding organic farming and agriculture.

COMMENT OF JOE BORGERDING

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 8:13 p.m.

City, State: Belgrade, MN

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Dairy, Field Crops

Size: 500-999 acres

Comment: It is my hope that common sense and fairness come to the rescue of the dairy farmers who will be hurt by the proposed dairy legislation. The 3 percent that produces 50 percent of the milk, and thus the surplus, is being rewarded with the option of multiple opportunities to benefit from loop-holes, while getting unlimited margin insurance subsidies. "Socialize the risk, privatize the reward" is not the way to fix our broken, out-dated, milk pricing system, and it can-not work because it will rely on the same old price triggers that are not accurate enough, now. It does not even stop the U.S. from being the balancer for the world dairy market, as we will be expected to cut milk when program triggers are met.

COMMENT OF JOYCE BORGERDING

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:57 p.m.

City, State: Spring Valley, WI

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Livestock

Size: 50-150 acres

Comment: We are a small producer of direct marketed meat. Sometimes we have our hayfield in corn before replanting to alfalfa. Even when we don't grow corn, we have this corn acreage 'base' that we get a subsidy for! It seems crazy . . . the ag service calls us even though we say we have no reason to get money! They want us to do it. Lots of farmers get this money for doing nothing. This does not seem a good use of the ag monies. And others, big land owners do **Not** need the extra subsidy. Please spend the tax money wisely.

COMMENT OF RAYMOND BORKTON

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 5:07 p.m.

City, State: Costa Mesa, CA

Occupation: Controller

Comment: I'd like the government to support the small sustainable farmers instead of the industry giants that are using GMO's and pesticides recklessly. Support labeling of all GMO's and require more independent testing of GMO's. Please limit the overuse of pesticides. Our bees are a direct result of all this industry abuse. Support the farmers, not the industry giants that keep greasing politicians pockets each year. Be respectful of your constituency and be honorable. Thanks.

COMMENT OF GERALDINE BORRELL

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 2:25 p.m.

City, State: New York, NY

Occupation: Music Teacher

Comment: Please make the farm bill one that:

- supports farmers, not agribusiness;
- creates jobs and spurs economic growth;
- makes healthy food widely available, both financially and by location, to all Americans;
- protects our natural resources by ranking CSP applications solely on their conservation benefits.
- invests in the next generation of farmers and ranchers by guaranteeing \$25 million annually in mandatory funding for the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program.
- drives innovation for tomorrow's farmers and food entrepreneurs by supporting the Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative at \$30 million per year in mandatory funding.

We need a better farm bill. Please make it happen now.

Many thanks for representing me.

COMMENT OF MICHAEL ANGELO BOSCH

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 11:08 p.m.

City, State: Jersey City, NJ

Comment: Please help secure those elderly in need folks who paved the way to America's future. Those who were our past leaders and teachers who help mold and build this country our Doctors lawyers police officers fire fighters our soldiers scientist *etc.*, who are now in their prime and have fallen through hard times, many are going hungry and more needs to be done in this country to help those in need. Please help us help them.

P.S. . . . and please get **Monsanto's** out of our farms. Thank you.

COMMENT OF PAMELA BOSCH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:15 p.m.

City, State: Bellingham, WA

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: Obscenely profitable junk food is destroying the vitality of our people. Profit for health is not a good trade off. Reward organic, small, local agriculture, not mass-manipulated craving. Give double food stamp values for organic produce—save health care expense and energy costs. Life through real food, not consumption for cold hard cash.

COMMENT OF H. ADAM BOSSCHIETER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 9:41 p.m.

City, State: Sanger, CA

Occupation: Developer, Biomass to Diesel Technology

Comment: Support small farms and you support the ability for people to generate their own income.

No need to wait for this elusive promise called a 'job'.

COMMENT OF HEATHER BOSTIAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:24 p.m.

City, State: Flagstaff, AZ

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: The Monsanto poisoning has **Got To Stop**, just cause a few elite think they can get away with killing humans , plant & animal life. **You** all are **Not** God and karma will get you in the end. **No** more GMO, no more messing with what Nature provides perfectly! Get into alignment with yourselves, get into integrity not greed gratification for the moment. Your lives are pathetic.

COMMENT OF LUKE BOTTICELLO

Date Submitted: Tuesday, April 24, 2012, 6:18 p.m.

City, State: Lebanon, CT

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Dairy

Size: 50–150 acres

Comment: I am a third generation dairy farmer who just started milking a small heard and am just barely staying afloat due to plummeting milk prices and skyrocketing fuel and feed prices. Please help us to make a fair market price that is in line with this trend. I love doing this as did the generations before me and want the fourth generation, my son, to be as proud and secure as this industry could be with your help.

Thank you,

LUKE BOTTICELLO.

COMMENT OF VICTORIA BOUCHER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:54 p.m.

City, State: Hyattsville, MD

Occupation: Retired Librarian

Comment: Perhaps my most imperative concern I have concerns the nation's health as it is revealed that hormones, antibiotics, genetic modification and other horrors are what one can expect from the food offered in supermarkets. I think that products from small farms are less likely to be tainted. Even were it not for health concerns, I am tired of seeing the survival of the greediest passing itself off as progress. I descend from decent well-educated small farmers and while a librarian I still love the land. I know that farming in the true sense ended with my grandparents and that now it's become just another irresponsible and heartless mega-industry. I would like to see a farm bill that favored small farms, and really regulated all farms, even those of large contributors to congressmen.

COMMENT OF DOMINIQUE BOUILLON

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 2:31 p.m.

City, State: Brooklyn, NY

Occupation: Community Outreach Coordinator

Comment: I would like to see more of the Federal Budget designated to supporting healthy food in schools, Farmers' Markets in Food Deserts and supporting small organic farms. Federal funding of corn based products result in diet related illnesses that is costing people their lives and this country lots of money. I would like to see more funds invested in our schools, in our kids and in the environment. Industrial Farming practices are damaging the Earth. We need more organic farms, we need people being educated about food and people given the access to healthy food. Thank you for hearing my thoughts on this matter.

COMMENT OF KATHERINE BOULAY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 10:01 p.m.

City, State: Oak Park, IL

Occupation: Professor—University of Illinois—Chicago

Comment: I volunteer every week at the Oak Park/River Forest Food Pantry. I have done so since the beginning of 2012. Each week I am stunned at the need in my community. I cannot tell you how many **Working** families, senior citizens, **Veterans**, and people with disabilities require our services. Last week a woman my age (45 years) came in. Not only did she not have earn enough from her job to feed herself and her two children but she was unable to spare any money to buy sanitary napkins. She wept with thanks that this was an item with which we were able to provide her. It is a shame that we must beg for money so that working members of our community can occasionally access the most basic of needs. Cutting SNAP would be criminal. It allows us to help people in our communities who have fallen on hard times. **Please Do Not Cut Snap!**

COMMENT OF PAUL BOURDON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:19 p.m.

City, State: Southborough, MA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Livestock

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: As a small scale farmer, I understand the difficulties in making a farm profitable. I also understand that the industrial agricultural model while able

to produce large quantities is also producing large amounts of highly processed food of very low benefit to the consumer and which is contributing to spiraling health costs. These industrial farms receive huge subsidies while very little goes to small farms. These subsidies to the producers of processed foods should be cut while increasing the support to small farms. Thank you.

JOINT COMMENT OF STEVE AND CYNTHIA BOVA

Date Submitted: Friday, April 20, 2012, 10:02 a.m.

City, State: Ocean Shores, WA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: We live on the coast in the state of Washington where Japanese eel grass has recently been classified as a class 'c' weed. This allows for even more spraying of the chemicals imazapyr and glyphosate (**Round-Up**) on commercial shellfish beds to control this grass, along with spartina grass, which has been sprayed since 1996.

A new chemical—imadicloprid—is being tested to replace carbaryl (SEVIN) for mud shrimp control on these same beds. SEVIN use started in 1964 and, after 48 years, was outlawed in 2012, more than likely after scientists figured out the long-term effects.

There are numerous independent university and research facility studies on the potential dangers of these chemicals to humans. “The EPA, FDA and the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) should immediately order more extensive and unbiased testing for all chemicals in these products—sprayed or otherwise—and, if appropriate, set consumption limits especially for pregnant women and children as they do on other many foods like freshwater fish and other seafood.”

Please tell all your family members and friends of the potential dangers of eating chemical/water filtering GMO shellfish that have been exposed to these chemicals. Don't be the guinea pigs for the next new and improved poison.

Whales are dying and autism is becoming epidemic. Could there be a connection?
STEVE AND CYNTHIA BOVA.

COMMENT OF ANDREA BOWEN

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 3:31 p.m.

City, State: Lawrence, KS

Occupation: Volunteer

Comment: We have a surplus of food to feed the poor and seniors that are having trouble, instead of having this food rot we should be using it to help our nation.

COMMENT OF LAURA BOWEN

Date Submitted: Friday, April 27, 2012, 6:46 p.m.

City, State: Marion, IL

Occupation: Service

Comment: I know most of you there at Congress have never gone hungry, but imagine having three beautiful daughters . . . and one must go to bed hungry. I was that one that went to bed hungry several nights cause there wasn't enough for all of us to eat. No kid should go hungry for any reason. Keep TEFAP, SNAP, and all other programs going.

The phrase “No Child Left Behind” should be applied to these programs as well.

COMMENT OF KATHRYN BOWERS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:33 p.m.

City, State: Estes Park, CO

Occupation: College Professor

Comment: It's time for the U.S. government to support small farms growing healthy foods for Americans, instead of huge agribusiness companies, whose main concern is profit over healthy products.

The money that agribusiness pours into support for its friends in Congress should be an embarrassment to everyone involved.

The health of our nation is at stake! If we think health care is costly, and we think that health issues, such as autism, are proliferating, then we need to ask some hard questions. What are we putting into our mouths that has not been prop-

erly tested and that is causing these abnormal issues? I'm not an expert, but my guess is that it's chemicals in our food that should not be in our food.

I hope you will do the right thing for the American people and design a farm bill that will help lead Americans to healthier lives.

COMMENT OF SARAH BOWLER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 10:59 a.m.

City, State: Niwot, CO

Occupation: Retired Teacher

Comment: We have just moved and are carefully watching our representation in the House. Please support the full endorsement of H.R. 3286, fully funding conservation programs, and all other healthy food laws.

While protecting our food seems a no brainer, it is personal for me. As a brain cancer survivor, my life literally depends on access to good, clean, organic food. Is this America, or what?

COMMENT OF ANDREW BOWMAN

Date Submitted: Thursday, March 22, 2012, 8:25 p.m.

City, State: Oneida, IL

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Field Crops

Size: 1,000+ acres

Comment: As a 25 year old producer, I am deeply concerned with the lack of long-term planning in Federal policies, including in many respects, the farm bill. Specifically, I urge the House Committee on Agriculture to focus on Agricultural Research. I have my own strong opinions on Crop Insurance (a valuable tool and the lesser of all evils when considering subsidies) and other components of the Commodity Title. But the Commodity Title is overblown when thinking about producers my age that have another 45 years in the industry—research now pays incredible long-term dividends. Studies show an internal rate of return (IRR) on agricultural research of 20–60% according to Dr. Robert Thompson, the former endowed chair for Agriculture Policy at the University of Illinois. Instead, I see too much worrying about short-term programs—like the well-intentioned, though unhelpful SURE Program—rather than the long-term vision that American agriculture needs to remain at a comparative advantage to other global competitors. If we don't start increasing our investment in the future through research, then we are slowly allowing Brazil and other production centers to catch up to our level of competency . . . and eventually, overtake us.

COMMENT OF CECILIA BOWMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:53 a.m.

City, State: Clayton, IN

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Forestry, Fruits, Greenhouse/nursery, Nuts, Poultry/poultry products, Specialty Crops, Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: As an organic farmer and previously and USDA and ISO 65 accredited organic certifying agent, I ask that you:

- Fully fund the Organic Research and Extension Initiative (OREI) at the 2008 level.
- Endorse all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Support all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintain EQIP Organic Initiative and do NOT cut the Conservation Stewardship Program.

I have worked in organic farming and certification since 1989. These programs are crucial to the growth and quality development of organic agriculture in the U.S. I urge you to support these programs.

If you have any questions with regard to my experience with these programs I would be happy to speak with you. I have seen them in action from the farm, research and financial assistance level and I have worked with thousands of organic farmers over the years that start at the dawn of the Organic Foods Production Act.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of this important issue.
 Best,
 CECILIA BOWMAN,
 Center Valley Organics.

COMMENTS OF ALICE BOWRON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:55 p.m.
City, State: Minneapolis, MN
Occupation: Retired
Comment: I am a disabled person who had to retire early re: health problems. I am medically ordered to eat organic food due to sensitivity to certain chemicals as well as severe allergies to antibiotics. I deserve to be able to eat organic food—not food laced with antibiotics.
Date Submitted: Friday, April 27, 2012, 9:22 a.m.
Comment: I am sensitive to a lot of pesticides and other aspects of commercial farming; I am disabled and have been medically advised to eat only organic foods.

COMMENT OF POLLY BOYAJIAN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 7:35 p.m.
City, State: Lacey, WA
Occupation: Retired Social Service
Comment: The huge agricultural industry is killing our bees, mistreating pigs, chickens and cows, endangering our health with hormones, pesticides and antibiotics.

COMMENT OF NANCY BOYCE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:23 p.m.
City, State: San Rafael, CA
Occupation: Health Care, Public Health Nurse
Comment: It is time to get this right! The primary responsibility of this bill should be the health and welfare of the public, not the bottom line of corporations.

COMMENT OF ALLEN BOYER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:50 p.m.
City, State: Seattle, WA
Occupation: Spiritual Poet
Comment: Please get these demons to stop putting poison in everyone's food. I'm a vegetarian also and would like clear understanding of the ingredients in everything I buy not these big words nobody even know what they mean. All these suppliers are selfish, money motivated, careless **Demons**.

COMMENT OF ELIZABETH BOYLAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:01 p.m.
City, State: Lexington, VA
Occupation: Administrator
Comment: The more I educate myself on this issue, the more I am afraid to buy anything in a grocery store! From inhumane treatment of animals, to chemicals and hormones in our meat and plants, to contamination, how do we even know what we are putting in our mouths?

COMMENT OF STEPHEN BOYLE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:54 p.m.
City, State: Detroit, MI
Occupation: Photographer and Website Developer
Comment: As a health conscious consumer I worry about the food that is available to me. Some would say that if I worry about it so much that I should grow my own . . . I can't begin to take on growing everything I eat. If you stay away from the heavily commercialized crops you find that you can taste the impurities in them. The race to improve upon what the Earth provides has lead society into very frightful conditions. Government is willing to put excessive funding into existing large capital, heavily commercial farming. Those farms produce the lowest quality mass produced food. Small farmers need much more support, and they shouldn't

be required to team up with big outfits, which demand them to sacrifice their quality crops for inferior quasi-foods and Franken-foods. Patented seeds from everything I've read are simply big money keeping start-up business down. If you want to **Grow Real Jobs, Subsidize Small Farms** and stop allowing seed patents! Give the people their health instead of a medicated crop of bland produce.

COMMENT OF ALANNA BOYNTON

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 11:25 p.m.

City, State: Seattle, WA

Occupation: Research Dietitian

Comment: As a nutrition professional, I believe that the next farm bill is an excellent opportunity to make the kinds of changes that we desperately need in order to ensure a healthier population. We all know what constitutes a healthy diet, and that fresh fruits and vegetables are of key importance, but unfortunately the food system is not set up to allow equal access to nutritious foods.

I support:

- Continued funding of nutrition and food assistance programs.
- All provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Limiting funds to Concentrated Animal Feed Lots.
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.
- Restructuring agricultural subsidies to fund more farmers of fruits and vegetables rather than focusing on commodity crops such as corn and soybeans.
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.

Thank you for your consideration.

ALANNA BOYNTON, M.S., R.D.

COMMENT OF KENT BRAATHEN

Date Submitted: Friday, March 16, 2012, 3:43 p.m.

City, State: Grand Forks, ND

Occupation: Custom Grain Harvester

Comment: There has never been a more important time for a farm bill than now. We need to be assured of a safe, bountiful food supply for the people of this country and abroad. We need to have a crop insurance program that meets the needs of all producers to insure we have producers in this country to help meet the needs of an increasing population worldwide. I don't think many people that live outside of the farming regions in the USA understand the importance of agriculture and a good stable farm bill that will provide a secure food supply. The assurance that we will have the producers here to put the food on the table is and should be a top priority.

Thank you,

KENT BRAATHEN,
VP U.S. Custom Harvesters, INC.

COMMENT OF DENISE BRACKEN-HODGE

Date Submitted: Friday, April 27, 2012, 10:36 a.m.

City, State: Columbia, MD

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I think in your bill, you should give farmers a big tax credit if they agree to donate a percentage of their crops to feeding America and local pantries. Most pantries give a lot of canned items that are loaded with a lot of sodium which is not good for America . . .

COMMENT OF WILMA BRADBEER

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 2:40 p.m.

City, State: Charlottesville, VA

Occupation: Retired Editor

Comment: The new farm bill is crucial for the interests of the poor and the elderly, for the health of the land, and for the economy.

In this time of economic hardship especially, it should retain full funding for the SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP food programs.

The huge subsidies of the past for wealthy producers of sugar, wheat, corn, cotton and soy should be greatly reduced or removed, and small farmers and organic farmers, who are excellent producers and have received little help, should get more assistance.

Large factory animal farms are hugely polluting of our waterways. Provisions should be in the farm bill to minimize this.

Measures to protect land and waterways should be in the Bill.

COMMENT OF JASKA BRADEEN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:10 p.m.

City, State: Brookfield, VT

Occupation: Agricultural Worker, Homesteader, Entrepreneur

Comment: Members of Congress,

I know there is a lot at play in the creation of the farm bill. It is an unwieldy document, and the interests of many go into its creation. I would ask, as a citizen, constituent, and person involved in agriculture, that you do something huge this year:

Think about the small farmers. Please. **Please. I Know** there is no money in it for the lobbyists who are pushing you. But **Please**, think about the truly small farmers. Please think about the young people, who want to get into farming, but cannot find the financial means to do so. Think about the implications of huge subsidies to corn *etc.* The dairy industry is **Broken**. Industrial-scale agriculture is **Broken**. We keep propping them up with American tax dollars, but to what end? Short-term gains for a very few? So what? What will that matter when it all starts to really crumble and we cannot feed our own citizens? **Please**, please, when you write this farm bill, **Think About The Future** of agriculture. Not the now, or the yesterday. Not the big ag lobbyists on your doorstep in DC, but the farmers with 2 acres or 2,000, or more, who are just trying to make ends meet. Think about the innovators who are going back to the future, trying to save a broken system. Think about your kids' kids food. Think about how much money we as a country waste on subsidies to huge corporations that DO NOT need it, while we let the little guys drown. **Please**, think about the future of this country.

COMMENT OF LES BRADEN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:13 p.m.

City, State: Madison, WI

Occupation: Landscaper

Comment: I'm very concerned about the influence agribusiness lobbies have over food policy and find myself very scared of what they want to sell me. I see all around me people suffering from mysterious ailments for which we have no remedy and I wonder how much the weakened nutritional value of our mass produced genetically altered foods have to do with that. We are not a nation that values high nutrition and that is a serious oversight. We are already sick from unknown causes and this will only get worse as Monsanto and other chemical corporations strengthen their stranglehold on our food chain. I buy less and less packaged food. I am growing more of my own from organic seeds that have to import. I just don't trust what's on the shelves of the grocery stores anymore. I also can't trust any of our food regulators because they all seem to be influenced by corporate lobbies that bias their actions in favor of their own profit agendas and not public health. It's time for us to wake up and take back control of our food manufacturing with real health in mind and not profitability.

COMMENT OF LYNNE BRADEN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:15 p.m.

City, State: Bartlett, IL

Occupation: Project Manager

Comment: Obesity and its related medical issues such as diabetes, heart disease, and cancer are out of control in America. If we are serious about reducing government expenditures on healthcare, we must also get serious about ending farm subsidies of large, corporate, toxic farm foods (such as corn, dairy, and livestock). If any foods must be subsidized, let's ensure that these are **Only** healthy alternatives (such as vegetables and fruits, or organic-only foods).

Making vegetables, fruits, and organics more affordable for average Americans will provide healthier eating options which in turn will lead to reduced health care costs. This is overwhelmingly common sense!

I urge you to put the health needs of Americans above the desires of the big Ag lobby and end the madness of our current farm bill once and for all.

Thanks,

LYNNE BRADEN.

COMMENT OF KATHRYN BRADFORD

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 6:36 a.m.

City, State: Rockport, MA

Occupation: Massage/Bodywork

Comment: The large crop/commodities agribusiness has produced many ills. Please fully support the Local Farms, Food, and Jobs Act S. 1773, H.R. 3286. I would like to be a producer/have a family farm and retreat center in the not too distant future. This type of lifestyle can reconnect, establish a strong identity as stewards of the land.

Thank you,

KATHRYN.

COMMENT OF EILEEN BRADSHAW

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 01, 2012, 2:06 p.m.

City, State: Tulsa, OK

Occupation: Director of Food Bank

Comment: Please keep TEFAP distribution and SNAP funding levels at present levels or increased. Oklahomans' food insecurity and related problems are a deterrent to academic and work performance. This reduces attractiveness to prospective employers considering expansion in our state, and essentially weakens our whole state's economic performance. It is a small investment with a big potential gain, and it is the moral thing to do.

COMMENT OF SUSAN BRADY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:45 p.m.

City, State: Aspen, CO

Occupation: Wellbeing Counselor/Consultant

Comment: The Roaring Fork Valley could be one of the leaders in organic and sustainable agriculture and this bill would be a step in the right direction for supporting a future which would be healthy for generations to come. Please support it!

COMMENT OF YASMIN BRAHMBHATT

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 1:00 p.m.

City, State: Philadelphia, PA

Occupation: Physician

Comment: Please ensure that all organic farmers are supported in producing real organic produce and make these foods available to everyone at affordable prices. Please think of our people's health and wellness ahead of monetary gain. Please do not allow corporate businesses/farming companies (Monsanto) to produce non-labeled GM/pesticide foods. Our future is in your hands. Do the right thing.

COMMENT OF AMY BRAIN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:39 p.m.

City, State: Walnut Creek, CA

Occupation: Retail Business Owner

Comment: The Farm bill needs to start reflecting clean healthy food and support Organic farmers. The food that is being grown by large Agriculture is making me and my daughter ill. We cannot eat corn, wheat, soybeans.

Whether it is the chemicals on the food, the genetic changes in the food, the big Ag foods make us sick.

Please support healthy food.

COMMENT OF TIM BRAINERD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:33 p.m.

City, State: Natick, MA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Priority is food safety and nutrition, not large agribusiness profits. If anybody needs a subsidy, it is local, small, organic focused producers . . . not the web of interlocking farms with mega-ownership.

COMMENT OF ANGIE BRAKE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:25 p.m.

City, State: San Jose, CA

Comment: Please don't cut funding for organic foods! We need organic is the healthiest thing out there. What you need to do is cut funding for Monsanto and eliminate them from the world. They are poisoning us and killing us slowly.

COMMENT OF DORIS BRALEY

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 2:17 p.m.

City, State: New Brighton, MN

Occupation: Retired Nurse

Comment: I am buying organic food and grown local if I can and NO GMO's. Agribusiness, Monsanto and other companies are getting subsidies, sending products to developing countries stating they are going to feed the starving. I have seen what this has done in other countries where GMO seed has infested a farmers crops. Also why doesn't our media or congress acknowledge the research done in other countries? I guess only money talks if one is being brought off and the heck to the rest of us. So disappointed in our government and even our president whose spouse is promoting organic, better food and he is into free trade and corporations. I will not be alive to see what is happening with GMO's and I wonder if the CEO's of these corporations eat what they promote.

COMMENT OF ANITA BRANDARIZ

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:23 p.m.

City, State: Brooklyn, NY

Occupation: Retired Civil Servant

Comment: Stop funding factory-farms/agribusinesses. They don't grow food they manufacture it in their labs. Save sustainable farms by funding them and not Cargill, Monsanto, ADM and all those other chemical corporations that don't give a damn about farming are only concerned about bottom lines. Anything to make more money no matter how much harm they do to humans and the planet. Don't support them, please.

COMMENT OF CARISSA BRANDS

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 12:17 p.m.

City, State: Point Reyes Station, CA

Occupation: Habitat Restoration

Comment: I urge you to support and fund the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act, Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236), maintain funding for conservation programs, especially the Conservation Stewardship Program.

Keep subsidies for small-scale, organic and restoration/conservation oriented agriculture practices and programs in the farm bill. Cut out subsidies for big agriculture lobbyists and practices that harm the health of people and land.

COMMENT OF EMMA BRANDT

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 02, 2012, 2:46 p.m.

City, State: Shaker Heights, OH

Occupation: Student

Comment: U.S. Farm Policy in the present and the future needs to focus on creating an agricultural system that can be sustained for the next 10, 20, 100 years—that is sustainable. The production and wider availability of fruits and vegetables—currently classified as “specialty crops”—should be emphasized, and time and money must be put not only into encouraging new and younger farmers (much of America's farmers are over age 65) but into encouraging them to farm in ways which, aside from any lovely thoughts about organic and local, are not destroying the ecosystems and communities they are a part of. Industrial agriculture is not working for America and the world; at least, it is not working in its present form. Farms should be prevented from leaching harmful substances into their local communities, as in the case of pig farms in North Carolina and manure and fumes, and must treat the soil

in a way that allows it to keep producing crops. There is evidence that attempting to integrate the farms into the natural systems they are situated from (see: multifunctionality initiatives in Europe) is ultimately more productive and more economically feasible in the long run than trying to fight them. Shifting focus from meat and commodity crops to vegetables and fruits, which are more nutritious, will assist in this process, as will extending support to smaller farms and beginning farmers. The purpose of the farm bill has not changed much since it was instituted to respond to the needs of farmers after the Depression: a farm bill for the 21st century would address the issues we will face as we attempt to supply our country with food in the next century and beyond.

COMMENT OF KIMBERLY BRANDT

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:29 a.m.

City, State: St. Helens, OR

Comment: One need I see is to give farmer/producers tax credit when they donate crops/product to food banks to feed those in need. Until the economy truly recovers and people really get work we need to feed Americans. Food and shelter are real needs. Please give them credit for doing the right thing. Our government doesn't have the means to supply the food so why not work with them and give them a break for helping as you do for banks, auto industry, corporations, etc.

COMMENT OF NANCY BRANDT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:30 p.m.

City, State: Chicago, IL

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I am just a consumer, but I care about our farms and farmers. I urge you to use the savings from no more direct subsidies to promote sustainable farms and local food—not use it for subsidizing insurance mostly for big farms or agribusiness. This is your opportunity to do something really great and bold. Surprise us!

COMMENT OF JEANNE BRANNIGAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:42 p.m.

City, State: Orland Park, IL

Occupation: Retired

Comment: The ag industry needs real reform. Our food quality has deteriorated to the point where health conscious people have to work far too hard at finding food that is worth eating (such as organic). Let's get back to nature and good farming practices of old.

COMMENT OF MIKE BRANNIN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:52 p.m.

City, State: Orlando, FL

Occupation: Retired School Counselor

Comment: We need a farm bill that allows independent and organic farmers as much consideration as the mega ag producers. We also need a bill that allows the consumer the ability to choose if they want organic and chemical free poultry, meat and produce.

COMMENT OF TAMI BRANSFORD

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 2:33 p.m.

City, State: Jacksonville, FL

Occupation: Paralegal/Business Owner

Comment: Working in my profession I see a lot of elderly without the funds to buy food and having to seek out food donations because their income is limited and medical and medicine costs are overwhelming. I had a family member pass away untimely due to his inability to afford his blood pressure meds. A client that received only \$6 a month in food stamps and depended on her church for food because her medicine costs exceeded \$200 a month. No American should live in such a way . . . what's wrong with taking care of our own? We seem to be too wrapped up in taking care of other countries problems and we ignore the ones right under our nose in our own country. It's a shame.

COMMENT OF LYNN BRANTLEY

Date Submitted: Wednesday, March 28, 2012, 6:11 p.m.

City, State: Glenn Dale, MD

Occupation: President & CEO

Comment: I have worked on hunger issues here in the Washington, D.C. community for over 43 years. I have never seen a time of such overwhelming need as now. The farm bill has far reaching consequences for farm families, for people who suffer hunger, cities, for agribusiness and for the economy in general. I hope that congress understands that this is a time to remember who we are as a people and nation. We must remember our faith traditions, and that to feed the hungry is at the very core and fabric of our being. Please do not cut food and nutrition programs that help people feed their families and to maintain a degree of sanity as they struggle to survive this economy that has striped and eviscerated their souls of the very things that it takes to maintain and keep a family healthy and hopeful. Bread is the very essence of life, the ag bill and the nutrition programs are central to survival. When we speak of family values there is no greater value than that of being able to feed ones family. I pray that congress understands the gravity of the situation that so many good, hardworking people in this nation are facing. Come walk in their shoes to understand. I pray that you will vote in a way that is in keeping with who we are as a nation! So that all may eat, food is a gift to us all, our own humanity is determined by how we respond.

COMMENT OF KATHERINE BRATTON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:27 p.m.

City, State: La Crescenta, CA

Occupation: Law Firm Administrator

Comment: As a consumer, I am very much concerned about protecting small farms as well as producing food free from pesticides and antibiotics. We rely on the government to control monopolies and quality and appreciate all you can do to ensure healthy competition and food products. Thank you.

COMMENT OF JOAN BRAUN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:49 p.m.

City, State: Weld, ME

Occupation: Psychotherapist, Mom, Grandmother

Comment: I want food grown without pesticides. I want non-organic pesticides banned.

I do not want GMO foods grown anyplace in the United States or shipped anyplace in the world.

I want to know that my food is organic and safe

I want any GMO foods clearly labeled.

I don't want any subsidies for big agriculture.

I want sustainable agriculture that does not overuse or harm the soil it's grown on.

I want no impediments put in the way of small farms, or rules that make the cost of meeting them prohibitive.

I want small farmers to be able to sell their food locally without elaborate requirements. The buyer knows the farmer and the product and can take care of himself/herself.

The same with the sale of raw milk. Let the consumer make the decision about whether to consume it or not.

Thank you. I am your employer, Agriculture Committee. My taxes pay your salary. Please start listening to us.

COMMENT OF K. BRAUN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:51 a.m.

City, State: Great Cacapon, WV

Occupation: Middle-Class Worker

Comment: If you truly represent the public, you must give equal footing in **All Legislation** to practitioners of organic and sustainable farming methods—including the small family farmer, the icon of American ingenuity and entrepreneurship—which we want to see continue and **Thrive** in reality—not just as an archaic and quaint caricature that our children's children will never see. This lies in your hands. The Earth provides a perfect example of continuation—which the human race would do well to embrace and emulate.

COMMENT OF STEPHAN BRAUN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:37 p.m.

City, State: Decatur, GA

Occupation: Executive Chef

Comment: We need the Variety from the local small Farmers to feed and educate your guest, Children and future generations to come. If we leave this to big corporations, big money and GMOs, that will be the end, they look only out for their profit and the shareholders. If we lose the small farms and the support their off, we lose a choice, we lose a part of the future, we lose sustainable growth. Small family farms. If we give up the easy what will they take from us next, everything needs to be conform, run by a few, big money to be made for a few. What will they eat, chew on their dollars or looking for real food. What will happen with the next generations to come, our children, climate change.

COMMENT OF JIM BRAUNER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:16 p.m.

City, State: Ballwin, MO

Occupation: Business Owner

Comment: It is imperative that we stop catering to agribusiness profit desires but rather to what is good for "The People" and the farmers/producers. **Enough is Enough!**

COMMENT OF KOLYA BRAUN-GREINER

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 15, 2012, 5:26 p.m.

City, State: Takoma Park, MD

Comment: I am concerned about the future of farming in our nation. We need farm policies that promote greater soil conservation, sustainable farming practices, and organic methods to preserve health and food producing capacity for future generations.

COMMENT OF JENNIFER BRAVERMAN

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 4:12 p.m.

City, State: Syria, VA

Occupation: Part-Time Paralegal

Comment: We need fresh, local foods for our nation to be healthy. Low or No spray foods are better for our children, and will help save the bee population. We need to keep our roots with the soil, which is LIFE. Training new farmers and making it a viable profession is very important to our nation.

COMMENT OF DENISE BRAZELL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:05 p.m.

City, State: Wilmington, DE

Occupation: Access Coordinator Davidson School

Comment: I meet people on a weekly basis who are very interested in what they eat. We want to know how and where the food was grown, and we also want to know that the food is not laden with potentially harmful chemicals. Knowing that there are farmers who want to grown organic foods makes us hopeful that we can enjoy quality foods that benefit our health . . . we should have that choice. Do not interfere with their efforts to produce the kind of food that I and others want available to purchase.

COMMENT OF ALLISON BRAZIL

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 11:47 a.m.

City, State: Olalla, WA

Occupation: Technical Professional and Hobby Farmer

Comment: I do not want to consume pesticides or genetically modified food. I do not want to plant GMO seeds that have been created to withstand pesticides such as Round Up—do I want to eat fruits or vegetables that come from plants that have been doused with Round Up—I don't think so. We need to stop subsidizing corn, soybeans and wheat. These are the highest allergen foods. I won't buy dog food with those ingredients so why would I want to eat them. I don't want to eat corn fed beef. There needs to be land set aside for organic farming and non GMO seeds avail-

able to small farms. When possible my family buys organic and during the summer we eat what we grow.

COMMENT OF ROBERT BREEDEN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:33 p.m.

City, State: Philadelphia, PA

Occupation: Retired Federal Employee

Comment: The view that small farmers using organic methods will become increasingly vital over the next 2 decades, as factory farming with terrifying chemicals produce Frankenfruits and Veggies at great cost to the environment and our health, is gaining more and more acceptance. Indeed, such large farms may, in the not-too-distant future, no longer be viable, as the consequences of Peak Oil set in, making transportation of products to distant cities cost-prohibitive. Local, organic farming may be the only way to feed our people. This is not the time to cut funding to what may be our lifeline.

COMMENT OF APRIL BREES

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:39 p.m.

City, State: Tacoma, WA

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: Cutting funding to vital programs such as nutrition, conservation and support for organic and sustainable agriculture is not in the best interest of America. We used to be a nation proud of its products and producers, now moms are scared of what we're forcing into their children's lunches and subsidies to big agro have killed the small farmer. Where is the integrity?

COMMENT OF NADINE BRENEMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, March 16, 2012, 1:25 p.m.

City, State: Stockton, CA

Occupation: Secretary

Comment: I ask you endorse a very strong FARM BILL that will support those groups feeding the hungry. We cannot sit by and not do everything possible to feed our own. We owe it to our citizens to cover their needs. Let our eyes and hearts be as open to our population as to the rest of the world. Too many Americans are hungry every day. **Far Too Many Children Are Going Without Food!**

COMMENT OF DON BRENNAN

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 11:16 a.m.

City, State: Roan Mountain, TN

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I am not a weed to be poisoned by roundup resistant produce or a commodity for the profits of agribusiness. I am trying hard to grow organic non GMO food for my family—we are what we eat—our gov. should be helping us grow local healthy food for the people, not shareholder profits.

COMMENT OF RICK BRENNER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:46 p.m.

City, State: Jamul, CA

Occupation: Accounting

Comment: Hi,

Please take these comments into account when considering the farm policy in the USA.

The first thing I'm stunned about is how anyone can argue rationally that the public shouldn't be allowed to know what they are eating! It's beyond comprehension that our government could support the non-labeling of GMO foods for example. What could possibly be the rationale behind that besides being bribed by Monsanto, etc.?

Also, I support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.

- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Thank you,

RICK.

COMMENT OF JUDITH BRENNICK

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:37 p.m.

City, State: Weymouth, MA

Occupation: Registered Nurse

Comment: Please Consider this bill. Allergies have increased in our children; cancer is on the rise. **We** fill our food with chemicals, etc; and don't seem to have the power to stop Monsanto and others from taking over the food supply. Be very afraid of Round Up. We are destroying the Earth with our chemicals. We want expediency and instant gratification with no concern what it is doing to our environment, not to mind ourselves. Help keep this world be a little safer for your grandchildren—be a part of leaving them a safe legacy! Thank you!

COMMENT OF L. BRESNAN

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 1:57 p.m.

City, State: Ballwin, MO

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: Please vote for us and our children as the future of the U.S. After years of vague illnesses misdiagnosed as hypoglycemia, migraines, insomnia, possible early fibromyalgia and more and one child with memory issues, the other ADD, we all turned out being poisoned by heavy metals and reactions to chemical exposure despite no typical or obvious environmental exposures. We are recovering, but have lost much in the interim. Ensuring our food supply is handled well, testing chemicals that are used for food **Before** they are allowed on the fields or in production and that the water and land that crosses our food's path is essential.

Therefore I plead with you to support:

- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Our futures are directly tied to your vote. We rely on you. Thank you.

COMMENT OF JEANNINE BRESSIE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:28 p.m.

City, State: Santa Rosa, CA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Please stop rewarding the worst polluters in the country, the agribusiness multimillionaire Monsanto friendly producers of the worst garbage on the planet. There are responsible farmers who are good stewards of the land, who are struggling, while you continue to reward those who do the opposite. Reward the small family farmer who raises food sustainably, and **Responsibly**.

COMMENT OF ALEXIS BRESSLER

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 16, 2012, 12:00 p.m.

City, State: Blacksburg, VA

Occupation: VISTA Volunteer—Hunger Relief in the New River Valley

Comment: I believe that Americans need a farm bill that ensures that all citizens have access to fresh, healthy produce. This includes the preservation of current Federal food assistance programs or the development of new programs that are more locally based. If current food assistance programs are to undergo budget cuts then funding should be reallocated to support locally based agencies that meet the needs of food insecure individuals in their communities.

COMMENT OF NINA BRETON

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 16, 2012, 9:04 p.m.

City, State: Beaverton, OR

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: I am looking for healthy food. I would like to see a farm bill that supports variety in production. Our produce has less nutrients in it now compared with several decades ago. I am interested in a bill that supports sustainable practices to restore nutrition.

COMMENT OF MARCIE BREWSTER

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 3:06 p.m.

City, State: Huntsville, AR

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Fruits, Greenhouse/nursery, Poultry/poultry products, Specialty Crops, Vegetables, Other

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Please find a way to support a diversified, sustainable farming approach. Please also look for ways to support small, organic/sustainable farms that grow fruits and vegetables. Right now it costs more to eat healthy foods like vegetables and fruits than it does to eat unhealthy ones like chips and sugary snacks. We should be looking for ways to make healthy food more affordable. Large, concentrated food production systems such as we have today, are more susceptible to contamination. We need more small farms spread out around the nation. There are plenty of people who would like to be farming if it were economically more viable. Additionally a more broad based agricultural system would make for a more secure food system for our country.

COMMENT OF ROGER BRIAND

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 11:53 a.m.

City, State: Eugene, OR

Occupation: Self-Employed/Business

Comment: We'd like to see far more tax dollars going to subsidize the farmers who are committed to organic growing. We know the corruption of our laws helps the chemical companies because they give huge amounts of money to our politicians.

Our legislators, with few exceptions are driven by the money that has corrupted our system via the organized criminals who brought us Citizens United. Let's start with all getting together to rescue our democracy by taxing the ultra-wealthy corporation/banks so they don't have so much money to corrupt our laws. Down with Citizens United!

COMMENT OF ELLA BRIANS

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 3:43 p.m.

City, State: Princeton, NY

Occupation: Ph.D. Student

Comment: A safe, sustainable farm plan is essential to our food security. Small, family farmers have led the way here, while large scale monoculture farming strips the soil and leads to a vicious cycle of pesticide resistance, run off and erosion.

Supporting local farms by cutting subsidies to agribusiness, creating flexible inspection procedures and helping farmers stay on—or start—small farms is good for farmers, good for the economy, good for the environment, and good for consumers.

COMMENT OF ADRIENNE BRIETZKE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:14 p.m.

City, State: North Little Rock, AR

Occupation: Public Affairs and Community Relations

Comment: While congressional Republicans refuse to consider raising the taxes of the 1% to match my percentage—nearly 30% while they pay 15–17%, and congress stonewalls about getting rid of big oil subsidies—to the tune of \$11 Billion—people in the United States **Go Hungry**—and frequently don't know where or if the next meal is going to come. **How Can Congress Allow This State Of Affairs?** Big Oil is making historic profits—note: profits are what they get **After** they invest in research and development—so the excuse of “higher costs involved in harder to recover and refine oil products” doesn't justify starving citizens in our great country, while adding more pork for those who don't need it.

COMMENT OF CATHY BRIGHAM

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 9:41 a.m.

City, State: Chardon, OH

Occupation: Insurance Adjuster

Comment: I think the health of our nation depends on a sound food policy. The public needs to have confidence in the safety of its food supply. The farm bill needs to protect family farms, local *versus* corporate production. It is no coincidence that the rise in chronic disease can be traced back to the beginnings of a food policy based on industrial farming. Please consider the well being of the consumer, the farmer, the animals and the land as you write the new farm bill. Corporations are **Not** people and do **Not** deserve the same consideration, which comes at the expense of public well-being.

COMMENT OF DANIEL BRIGHAM

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:20 p.m.

City, State: Houston, TX

Occupation: Consultant

Comment: Here are a few items that I support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.
- **Something To Give Me The Option To Avoid Consuming Any Genetically Modified Foods.**
- **Legal Recourse For Organic Farmers Whose Crops Are Contaminated By Unsafe, Untested Genetically Modified Foods!**

SUBMITTED LETTER BY GAIL BRILL, FOUNDING DIRECTOR, ADIRONDACK GREEN CIRCLE

Date: March 7, 2012

To: Hon. FRANK D. LUCAS,
Chairman,
House Committee on Agriculture,
Washington, D.C.

From: Adirondack Green Circle, Saranac Lake, NY (www.adkgreencircle.org) a project of Adirondack Sustainable Communities, Inc. (www.adksc.org) Gail Brill, Founding Director

Re: 2012 U.S. Farm Bill

Dear Representative Lucas,

The Adirondack Green Circle urges our government to promote policy that supports small, rural farmers.

Small farms provide fresh, local, ecologically grown food.

Americans increasingly seek fresh, local, ecologically grown food. This is evident by the growth of farmers' markets and consumer demands on supermarkets for both local and organic products. According to the National Restaurant Association, 2012 marks the fourth year running that "locally sourced food" is chief among the top food trends.

Here in the northern-most rural area of New York State, prices for fresh local food are much higher than prices for similar food in the supermarket. That is the case because consumers are paying the full price of locally grown food, rather than paying for supermarket food that has been heavily subsidized by the government. One result of this is that many people who desire fresh local food simply cannot afford it. A second result is that farmers struggle to stay in business. But according to U.S. Agricultural Census data, more than 60 percent of U.S. small family farmers don't even qualify to receive Federal subsidies under current agricultural policy in our country.¹ Instead, this nation's farm policy favors agribusiness and industrial farming.

¹<http://www.organicconsumers.com/ofgu/subsidies.htm>.

We have willing young farmers here in the North Country of New York who have demonstrated their passion, season after season, to make a go of farming. Of these numerous small farms, more than 30 offer community-supported agriculture. As this movement to eat fresh local food (rather than food that has been shipped long distances at great energy costs) grows, we look to the government to help our local farmers and our local consumers by creating policy which supports our small farms, instead of favoring large-scale commodity farmers. According to the Environmental Working Group, only \$100 million taxpayer dollars each year are earmarked to support the increase in local food production, distribution, and consumption as compared to nearly \$12 billion in annual subsidies awarded to large scale, agribusiness and industrial production of commodity crops. As the United States faces unprecedented crises on the front lines of both the national economy and fight against obesity and diet-related illnesses, now is the time for our government to support and embrace the growth and harvest of whole, real food, instead of subsidizing and encouraging the large scale farming of commodities that are used heavily in processed food.

It is more cost effective to provide healthy, local, ecologically grown food than pay health care costs.

We cannot deny the negative effects of government subsidies to large commodity crops. The incidence of obesity and subsequently diabetes in our population is growing at an alarming rate. Obesity threatens the health of Americans and increases the cost of health care enormously. A recent study revealed that the average American has gained 16.3 pounds during the 21 years between 1988–2008, resulting in an average weight gain of 0.77 pounds annually.² Obesity has become a huge problem in the United States with over ¼ of the population categorized as obese, and a major cause of obesity is the availability of inexpensive (in price per calorie) heavily processed foods, especially snack food. Almost without exception these foods contain sugar, and often high fructose corn syrup, commodities that are heavily subsidized by the government.

Dietary change is a major way to begin to limit the obesity epidemic. It is certainly more cost effective for our government to support small farms that can deliver fresh, ecologically grown food, than it is to pay for health care associated with obesity and diabetes. Consuming local, ecologically grown food brings known health benefits that include: (1) higher levels of beneficial nutrients, like antioxidants, in local organic produce and (2) a different and healthier fat composition in organic meat from pastured animals.³ Locally grown food also promotes food safety and serves to lessen contamination issues, since it meets with fewer chances for adverse conditions and spoilage along its path from farm to table, than its average grocery store counterpart.

Locally grown food saves energy.

The fossil fuel consumption resulting from shipping, trucking, and flying food cannot be underestimated. Local foods travel short distances to get to consumers. This reduces the energy transportation costs of our food supply, and conserves fossil fuel. Also, farms that use ecological growing practices are unlikely to use nitrogen fertilizers, thus decreasing the use of fossil fuels needed to produce them, and also decreasing release of nitrous oxide, a powerful greenhouse gas.

Small Farms = Jobs, Economic Revitalization, and Community Growth.

Small farms can and do result in thriving local business revitalization and the economic growth of communities both big and small. A successful farm in New York State has many a willing and ready customer, and our state ranks second nationwide for the number of farmers' markets.⁴ The Farmers Market industry in New York State is a vibrant and rapidly growing industry that encourages local business growth, economic development, and tourism. Local markets serve to make the town or village center where the market is held a destination attraction. Add live music, artisan festivals or theater performances to these market events, and this factor grows exponentially. The spillover from these markets effectively increases tourism, adding tax revenue and job growth to communities, and the residual beneficial effects of the community building atmosphere of a Farmers Market are without measure.

²“Evaluating Advertising Strategies for Fruits and Vegetables and the Implications for Obesity in the United States”, Jura Liaukonyte, Bradley J. Rickard, and Harry M. Kaiser, Dyson School, Cornell University and Timothy J. Richards Morrison School of Agribusiness, Arizona State University.

³*The Omnivore's Dilemma*, Michael Pollan, The Penguin Press, NY, 2006.

⁴<http://www.nyfarmersmarket.com/resources/faqs.html>.

But the economic growth which the local food movement brings is not limited to small, rural areas. Consider that in the midst of our recession-era economic climate, the \$4.8 billion sales of local food nationwide in 2008 were predicted by the USDA to reach \$7 billion during 2011⁵—a growth figure unmatched in most other economic sectors in recent years. Farms can drive a local economy; not only do small farmers bring a product to local markets, they create job growth for farm workers who in turn purchase products, equipment, and services in their communities. It is clear that growing food and promoting its local distribution and access is an American investment in America that truly generates dollars.

Now is the time to create good farm policy in the 2012 Farm Bill.

Real change can happen for the scaling up of local food economies in our nation by the support of policy reforms outlined in the Local Farms, Food and Jobs Bill, introduced by Rep. Chellie Pingree (D-Maine) and Senator Sherrod Brown (D-Ohio) and cosponsored by 63 representatives in the House and nine in the Senate. This bill aims to connect economic interests of small-scale farmers and ranchers with the ever-rising consumer demand for accessible and affordable local ecologically grown food amid what is currently a highly decentralized local food system. New policy proposed by the Local Farms, Food and Jobs bill will allow for increased aggregation and distribution of these fresh products, making it easier for locally grown and raised food to reach not only household consumers and restaurants, but the populations served by schools and hospitals while increasing access to such food for low-income senior citizens and food stamp recipients. Increased financial support for the Specialty Crop Block Grant program will enhance access for small farms to affordable credit, appropriate crop insurance, and other vital economic supports for smaller scale and beginning farmers. The cost of these programs is in the millions—only a fraction of the \$18 billion in tax dollars annually which is now funneled to those large-scale farms currently reaping the lion's share of the today's farm subsidies.⁶ Also poised to make a difference is the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act of 2011—introduced with bipartisan support of 18 cosponsors and referred to the House Committee on Agriculture in October—which promotes USDA programs, trainings, competitive grants and micro-lending programs to beginning farmers.

In summary:

The rise of the small farmer who struggles to find credit, constant consumer demand for affordable and locally grown whole foods, the U.S. economic climate, and the steady increase in our nation's obesity—each of these things exemplifies the need for a responsive and democratic farm bill in 2012. It cannot be denied that the local food movement is thriving but the support of food policy makers on the national level is vital to its ultimate success in our lifetimes.

This statement is also supported by Sam Hendren of the AuSable Valley Grange (www.ausablevalleygrange.com), and Fledging Crow Farm in Keeseville, NY (www.fledgingcrow.com).

GAIL BRILL,
Founding Director,
Adirondack Green Circle.

ATTACHMENT

Who is the Adirondack Green Circle?

Started in 2007, we are a regional group of 200 concerned citizens that tackle issues in four arenas: climate change, over-consumption, self sufficiency and energy use.

How do we do that?

- We are advocates for our small, local farm community that surrounds us.

Three years ago we started the **Farm 2 Fork Festival** in Saranac Lake that draws well over 500 people from the region to see home cooks cooking dishes using vegetables and meats from the farmers market.

In 2011 we started **Chefs & Farmers: Taste The Adirondacks**. Saranac Lake's first food tasting pairing local chefs and area farms.

- We lead "Lost Arts Workshops" that teach people long forgotten skills such as cheese making, pickling and fermentation, soap making, bread making, wild edible plant identification and more.

⁵ <http://www.ams.usda.gov/AMSv1.0/getfile?dDocName=STELPRDC5070995>.

⁶ <http://grist.org/farm-bill/2011-10-24-will-lawmakers-rewrite-the-farm-bill-in-less-than-two-weeks/>.

- We have led workshops on Sustainable Living, Voluntary Simplicity, Ecological Eating and Climate Change.
- We set up tents and receptacles and collect recyclables at area events.
- We bring pertinent and groundbreaking films to the community to raise consciousness through our annual Wake-Up Film Festival.
- We partner with the area college and high school environmental groups: Youth Climate Summit at the Wild Center, Junk to Funk at North Country Community College and more.
- We got the Mayors of Lake Placid and Saranac Lake to sign the Mayor's Climate Protection Agreement in 2008.
- We were instrumental in getting the Saranac Lake Community Garden off the ground.
- We started the **Green Grace Project** which delivered baskets of local food to needy families on Christmas Eve.
- Our founding Director traveled to Finland on a State Department grant to learn about Climate Change and to build bridges between two countries facing similar economic changes as a result of Climate change.

COMMENT OF SHANNON BRINES

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:22 p.m.

City, State: Dexter, MI

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Dry Beans & Peas, Fruits, Greenhouse/nursery, Nuts, Poultry/poultry products, Specialty Crops, Vegetables, Other

Size: 50–150 acres

Comment: As an organic (not certified) fruit and vegetable farmer of over 80 acres I think we should be transitioning from subsidies and programs that create unhealthy food to programs that work towards more healthy food. Ultimately I'd like to see a level playing field for all producers in the distant future where all subsidies are phased out.

Currently, of programs to be in the farm bill I would back:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

COMMENT OF KATHI BRINKMAN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 4:04 p.m.

City, State: Greensboro, NC

Occupation: Customer Relationship Manager II

Comment: Monsanto needs to be stopped! Farmers need money to continue to send wholesome produce to the grocery stores so we can eat healthy and not put GMO's into our bodies.

COMMENT OF GAIL BRINKMEIER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:58 a.m.

City, State: Saint Paul, MN

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Livestock

Size: 500–999 acres

Comment: I am a 5th generation farmer in Minnesota. This is what my family has been doing since we came to America.

My farm used to be far out in the country, but now it is in the ex-urbs. I know that in my children's life time it will cease to be a farm and become part of the city.

That is not my ideal development, but I am OK with it, it is the life of place to move, change and grow.

What I am not OK with is the current state of agriculture in America.

There should be a symbiotic relationship with the hard working honest people who grow real food and the everyday average American who buys it. Special inter-

ests and monopolistic middle-man should not reap the King's ransom in this exchange.

As the committee considers the 2012 Food and Farm Bill, I urge you to:

- Support our fight against hunger by maintaining and strengthening critical nutrition programs in this time of unprecedented need. We must not solve our budget problems on the backs of those experiencing food insecurity, including our most vulnerable—our children, the elderly, and the disabled;
- Provide an even “plowing” field by fully funding programs that support beginning and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, organic farming, regional farm and food economies, and rural development. We need more farmers and ranchers, more sustainable food production, and more economic opportunity in our food system;
- Support family farmers that really need help, not the biggest farms that don't: End subsidies (aka direct payments and countercyclical commodity programs), and replace them with loophole-free agriculture risk coverage. Additionally, implement a cap on crop insurance premium subsidies;
- Ensure that limited conservation funding maximizes lasting environmental benefits: Limit funds to Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) for animal waste management infrastructure by eliminating the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) Livestock Set-aside and protect the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) from disproportionate cuts, and improve it by ranking applications solely on their conservation benefits.

Thank you for your time and interest in reading my comments.

Sincerely,

GAIL BRINKMEIER.

COMMENT OF SUSAN BROADHEAD

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 2:45 p.m.

City, State: Barnardsville, NC

Occupation: Retired

Comment: As a consumer, I wish to have organic foods available to me. I believe there are many Americans who share this desire. We need a farm policy that supports and facilitates the production of organic food without putting needless roadblocks in the way.

It is also a source of good jobs for many young people.

COMMENT OF BONNIE BRODERSEN

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 8:39 p.m.

City, State: Ashland, OR

Occupation: Lawyer and Homemaker

Comment: Please endorse all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286) and fully fund the Organic Research and Extension Initiative (ORE) at the 2008 level. I grew up on a 160 acre working farm in Iowa and still own farm land. I have been eating organically-grown food for over 15 years. I do so because I have seen the increase of cancer in farmers in my hometown. My mother, a farmer died of leukemia and her doctor said her leukemia was probably benzene-related. In the 1970's my parents started farming with herbicides and fertilizers containing benzene. Please help farmers and consumers by giving your full support to **Organic** farming. Thank you.

COMMENT OF KIMBERLY BROERMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:00 p.m.

City, State: Atlanta, GA

Occupation: Pastor/Teacher

Comment: Over the past few years, I have undertaken a serious exploration of where our food comes from, and have restructured our diet to try to eat as much local, seasonal, and organic food as possible. We are so grateful for the local farms and farmers market making great food available to us. I also teach a course called Mindful Eating to raise others' consciousness about our food choices. As a person of faith, I am really disturbed by the environmental, communal, social and health impacts of our current food system and want to support efforts to bring more clean, fair and sustainable food to more people. So I support these recommendations proposed by Slow Food USA, of which I am a proud member:

As the committee considers the 2012 Food and Farm Bill, I urge you to:

- Support our fight against hunger by maintaining and strengthening critical nutrition programs in this time of unprecedented need. We must not solve our budget problems on the backs of those experiencing food insecurity, including our most vulnerable—our children, the elderly, and the disabled;
- Provide an even “plowing” field by fully funding programs that support beginning and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, organic farming, regional farm and food economies, and rural development. We need more farmers and ranchers, more sustainable food production, and more economic opportunity in our food system;
- Support family farmers that really need help, not the biggest farms that don’t: End subsidies (aka direct payments and countercyclical commodity programs), and replace them with loophole-free agriculture risk coverage. Additionally, implement a cap on crop insurance premium subsidies;
- Ensure that limited conservation funding maximizes lasting environmental benefits: Limit funds to Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) for animal waste management infrastructure by eliminating the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) Livestock Set-aside and protect the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) from disproportionate cuts, and improve it by ranking applications solely on their conservation benefits.

COMMENT OF DIANNE BRONKHORST

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:30 p.m.

City, State: Parkland, FL

Occupation: Stay-at-Home Mom

Comment: The U.S. food & agricultural policy must focus on adopting best agricultural practices that put the health of its citizens, the land & the livelihood of farmers & farm workers over the interests of industrial agriculture lobbyists.

We need funding to vital programs such as nutrition, conservation & support for organic & sustainable agriculture.

We need a better farm bill today & it’s time for real reform.

Please support what I support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms & Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, & making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.
- No GMO’s in our food supply.
- Fair wages & health benefits to farmers & farm workers.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF INDEE BROOKE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:04 p.m.

City, State: Montrose, CA

Occupation: Secretary

Comment: It is vital that sustainable agriculture be supported and promoted as part of a responsible stewardship approach to present and future food production that protects and promotes eco-systems with many different species of plants and animals. The deeper and broader the species within any ecosystem, the more stable that ecosystem is and the more capable of responding to environmental stress. Current agribusiness practices tend toward plant crop monoculture and also result in runoff of fertilizers that cause imbalance in nearby waterways.

COMMENT OF ROBERT BROOKS

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 8:29 p.m.

City, State: Hayward, CA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I spent 13 years in the San Joaquin Valley. The small farmers desperately need help, but most of the help goes to huge commercial farming & they don’t need or deserve it.

COMMENT OF SERENA BROOKS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:57 p.m.

City, State: Kings Park, NY

Occupation: Librarian

Comment: I think it is vital that we support organic farmers and farmers that humanely raise animals, as opposed to the factory farms and those farmers growing foods with harmful pesticides. Our very health and the health of our nation depend upon it. This is not only an animal rights issue, but a human rights issue, as mistreated animals that are pumped full of antibiotics and produce that is laden with pesticides are both extremely detrimental to the health of the humans eating them!

COMMENT OF T.J. BROOKS

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 6:45 a.m.

City, State: Seminole, FL

Occupation: Retired

Comment: There is a growing segment of the population that is retiring and seeking to live on small farms. These voters wish to be recognized as a distinctly separate type and size of agricultural producer.

Their customer base is one which seeks foodstuffs grown without chemicals. This segment of farmers need to be recognized and treated by law not as corporate farms but as the originators of agriculture once were in this country.

COMMENT OF CLAIRE BROOME

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:47 p.m.

City, State: Berkeley, CA

Occupation: Public Health

Comment: The new farm bill is of central importance to the country—our farmers, consumers, economy, and environment. Please **Invest** our tax dollars for the benefit of the whole country, not subsidizing foods that increase obesity, or providing welfare for wealthy agribusiness. Most importantly: any subsidies or insurance should have income limits so that they go to smaller units that really need them

Regarding specific provisions:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

COMMENT OF LOUIS BROUILLET

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:25 a.m.

City, State: San Anselmo, CA

Occupation: Food Entrepreneur

Comment: Policies to help our nation become healthier are long overdue. How can our government support subsidies to food that makes us sick and let our health be in disarray?

The solution is simple, our government needs to stand for something and stop being the big AG and Food companies puppets.

Please help us live better lives by stopping the subsidies to corn and soy and funnel the money to real farmers.

COMMENT OF JAMES R. BROUSSARD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:06 p.m.

City, State: New Iberia, LA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Fruits, Nuts, Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Like in other areas of the economy, it is not healthy if we let the corporations become dictators in agriculture too. Agribusiness is important but it is not

to become the only game in town. If it does, we producers will become serfs far more enslaved than in the Middle Ages. Beware of Robber Barons!

COMMENT OF LISA BROWDY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:01 p.m.

City, State: Oak Park, IL

Occupation: Health Coach

Comment: Our country is suffering an obesity crisis. It is ridiculous that we subsidize corn, wheat, soy and CAFO meat (which is bad for us) rather than fresh produce and sustainably-raised meat, which is better for us and the environment! Please don't let the Agribusiness lobby make you do the wrong thing!

COMMENT OF RYAN BROWER

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 02, 2012, 9:12 a.m.

City, State: Cedar Run, NJ

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Fruits

Size: 50–150 acres

Comment: Small farms need to be preserved and not be required to meet the astronomical standards of large-scale farms. Small farms are the life blood of many communities around the world, and they should have their own set of standards and regulations.

COMMENT OF ANGELA BROWN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:03 p.m.

City, State: N. Chesterfield, VA

Occupation: Retired Social Worker/Child Advocate/Caretaker for Elderly Relatives

Comment: Do your duty and give us real reform, not slashing organic studies and initiatives and food stamps while yet again subsidizing the big interests.

I have been a food stamp worker and seen truly hungry children in this country like you likely never have. Meanwhile I try hard to safeguard the food supply for future generations while big interests undermine our health and small business interests at every turn. Please understand that there is a huge market out here for clean practices and clean unchemicalized food. Please understand that when you sell out to big interests you are selling out the future of America as a free land. Is this what you want for your descendants and for America? If I have to buy food from Costa Rica to know it is organic than I will, but what a shame. I used to buy American when possible, but you are making it increasingly difficult to feel good about that. I do not want to support big interests like Monsanto and huge farms when there are still family farms in my state. My grandmother grew strawberries and my father in law raised a small number of cows when he retired so my heart is with the small farmers. Just today I was in Costco buying apples and noticed that they came from several states away when we have apple orchards right here in my state. I did not see a single item that was grown in my state. When I asked they said that they were likely cheaper elsewhere, but there is still a cost from the pollution that came with transporting it here and the extreme packaging that the apples came in that I see my neighbors bring home and that presumably will go into the landfills or use energy even if recycled. But big interests can do such eye candy. Doesn't make it right, though. Fresh and closer by would be better. And organic. Not big interests. Check out Costa Rica where the whole country is organic. You can see the difference in their produce and probably in medical costs . . .

COMMENT OF BONNIE BROWN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:34 p.m.

City, State: Lynn, MA

Occupation: Unemployed

Comment: The farm bill should be about **Food**, the food that Americans eat—or should eat—every day, not about commodities and profits for large corporations. Please make the farm bill focus on healthy, local food for all Americans.

COMMENT OF CAMERON BROWN

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 9:21 a.m.

City, State: Thiells, NY

Occupation: Musician, Composer and Music Teacher

Comment: We must wake up and understand that we need an agricultural policy that focuses on organic food and sustainability—the long-term health of the land, people and animals. The big corporations are being allowed to use us as guinea pigs in their voracious hunt for profits. We have no idea about the long-term consequences of all this genetic tinkering. We need to focus on totally natural methods of food production. The health of the planet, it's people and it's farm land are not a good subject for capitalistic exploitation. Shouldn't that be pretty obvious!

COMMENT OF CARL BROWN

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 03, 2012, 8:10 p.m.

City, State: Griggsville, IL

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Field Crops

Size: 301–500 acres

Comment: Have AIP/RMA protect only the 60% to 85% of the crop x% paid for with farmer premiums.

Have FSA/Government protect 0% to 60% of the crop x% paid for with Direct Payment money instead of paying it directly to the farmer.

Direct Payments are killing the small farmer.

COMMENT OF CAROL BROWN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:39 p.m.

City, State: Columbia, MO

Occupation: Mother, Seamstress, and Small Business Owner

Comment: I am very concerned about the short term and long term effects that the farm bill has on the types of food, and the prices of food available to consumers in our country.

I am disheartened that farm bills in the past have subsidized unsustainable farming practices, and the production of terribly unhealthy food.

I would like our farm bill to subsidize smaller farms, sustainable organic agriculture, and farms that produce food that can be eaten directly rather than crops that are highly refined into unhealthy products (like high fructose corn syrup for example).

It is obscene to be supporting the production of products like high fructose corn syrup with our tax subsidies.

The farm bill can work to support farmers who grow fruits and vegetables.

The farm bill can support local farmers' markets.

The farm bill can subsidize the use of food stamps at these farmer's markets, as is the case at one of the many farmers' markets in my town, making locally grown organic produce affordable to even the poorest of my neighbors.

The way I see it, the current farm bill subsidizes giant agricultural companies. It subsidizes the production of products that become fast food hamburgers and chicken nuggets. It subsidizes the crops that are grown to be processed into high fructose corn syrup. It subsidizes unhealthy food production, unhealthy farm practices, unsustainable food production method. We know all of this. The average American knows all this. The average member of Congress knows all this. All of us know that it could be different. It all starts with the farm bill. We are all watching to see what you all come up with.

COMMENT OF CYNTHIA M. BROWN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 2:12 p.m.

City, State: San Diego, CA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: The **Best** United States agricultural practices, put the health of our citizens, the land and the livelihood of farmers and farm workers over the interests of lobbyists for industry! And, many of our politicians do not have the same morals and values as the majority of the American people! They are in it for power and money. And corporate greed feeds on that! It is destroying the American way of life.

We need to change all of that, now!

American farmers and food consumers will benefit from a fair and healthy farm bill.

Some of the ideas that have been presented are completely out of touch and incomprehensible: including cutting funding to vital programs such as nutrition, con-

servation and support for organic and sustainable agriculture. What the hell is that all about . . . really!

The American farm bill needs to be created in the right way!

My family and I are against Monsanto and the like; and what they have been doing to our environment here and around the world. We want real food . . . not GMO poisons.

We want family farmers to be able to grow healthy food, in healthy soil, have a good livelihood, in peace, working for themselves and for the American people, and not be hounded by corporate bastards.

And we want our food labeled too.

Get it done the right way!

COMMENT OF GARY BROWN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:41 p.m.

City, State: Honolulu, HI

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I demand that all foods intended for human consumption be properly labeled for organic and GMO content. I have a right to know and choose what I put into my own body.

COMMENT OF HEATHER BROWN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:14 p.m.

City, State: Brooklyn, NY

Occupation: Chef

Comment: I am writing you to urge your support for the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286), and Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236). I would also urge you to support retaining the full funding of the Conservation Stewardship program and maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

It is important to keep good things in place while making improvements to fix the broken food system in this country.

As the granddaughter of Iowa dairy farmers I am deeply saddened by the loss of family farming, but incredibly hopeful and encouraged by the new movements afoot to reinvigorate agriculture in this country.

You are such an amazing Congresswoman. I am so honored to have you as my representative. Thank you for your service!

HEATHER.

COMMENT OF INGA BROWN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 10:20 a.m.

City, State: Layton, UT

Occupation: Holistic Plant Based Nutritionist

Comment: Dear members of congress,

I would greatly appreciate your consideration of these issues facing organic farmers. It is critical to the lives and health of people in this country to have access to organic produce that has not been compromised with GMO products. The strong hold that big agriculture has on the farming industry is devastating to the livelihood of the organic farmer and also to the health of everyone who consumes GMO products. In this country, we should have a choice and opportunity to consume the kind of produce and meats we choose. I already pay higher prices for organic produce and organic meats, so please don't devastate this small industry any further. Even in Europe, they have rejected the GMO by Monsanto and realize that these GMO products are not good for us. If you so choose to maintain the big agriculture, you are ultimately affecting people's health. At the very least, please give the organic farmer's the freedom to farm and provide natural produce that has not been adulterated by genetically modified seeds and sprayed with herbicides and pesticides that are toxic. We the consumers have a right to have organic foods and not have the government determine what we can eat. It angers me to think that decisions are made in congress that only affect the money and control the government has on the farmers rather than considering what is best for the health of people in this country. This shouldn't be about money and excess production, but should be about the health of individuals, the health of animals and the purity of the produce grown. Please allow us the freedom of choice. The last I checked, these are the principals this country was founded upon.

Sincerely,

INGA BROWN.

COMMENT OF JAMI BROWN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:47 p.m.

City, State: Chattanooga, TN

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Please don't cut funding for small farmers. Corporate Agriculture Industries don't need government subsidies. Small time farmers do! Remember who you work for as representatives of all Americans not Corporations!

COMMENT OF JENNIFER BROWN

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 10:36 a.m.

City, State: Denton, TX

Occupation: Mother and Medical Assistant

Comment: I want to be able to feed my daughter the same quality of foods I grew up on. I lived near a farm growing up and always had fresh, organic produce. I grew up healthy. I am rarely sick and have never had any serious medical problems. I now purchase organic produce for my family and find it difficult to find all the organics that I would like to be providing. On occasion I go with the regular produce, but with GMO's being put out without any labeling whatsoever, I will not be able to supplement the lack of organics with something that is produced to be it's own toxin. It was bad enough that I felt guilty using produce that was treated with toxins, hoping that "this one time" won't do too much harm. I just want to be able to confidently feed my little girl and know there is no way what I am giving her will ever harm her. **Ever.** It is outrageous that there are so few regulations to protect us in regard to foods that could very well be a cause in serious illnesses.

COMMENT OF KIMBERLY BROWN

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 8:07 a.m.

City, State: Bedford, NH

Occupation: Stay-at-Home Mom

Comment: Every time I go to the grocery store, I fear for the health of my children. I try to buy organic, but it's very expensive. Other countries in Europe and even China are outlawing industrial food practices that we still allow. But we should be the lead country in controlling our food supply and we're far from it! Please stop letting industries control our food supply. Our government may be protecting us from terrorist in Afghanistan, but they are not protecting us from the terrorist who control our food supply all in the name of the might dollar. Thank you for your time and efforts concerning the health of Americans.

COMMENT OF NICOLE BROWN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:26 p.m.

City, State: Camas, WA

Occupation: Production Lead Operator

Comment: We as a nation need to continue sport to good clean healthy food! Please continue support for small local farmers. We need to cut our ties with big ag and corrupt businesses like Monsanto, Libby, Dow. Our environment and children depend on us to make the right choices for their protection. Please make the right choice.

COMMENT OF RODERICK BROWN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:48 p.m.

City, State: San Diego, CA

Comment: America deserves clean, fresh, organic food and drink as does our farm stock pets and wildlife, (fish, fowl and animals). Please remember, do only that which serves the people.

Thank You.

COMMENT OF SHEILA BROWN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:10 p.m.

City, State: Vashon, WA

Occupation: Gardener

Comment: Time now for real reform, not slashing benefits to the poor. My son is seriously mentally disabled and really need every dollar of his food stamps and DSI check. Thanks for caring for the least of us. Sheila Brown

COMMENT OF THERESA BROWN

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 8:39 p.m.

City, State: Johns Creek, GA

Occupation: Real Estate Agent

Comment: I would along with millions of others would like to see a fair organic farm bill. We would like for congress to work for the people and not for Big Agriculture. We have the right to eat healthy food and we must protect the planet in order to do so. It should not always be about how much money some cooperation can make and how much the stockholder earning will increase. It's about the health of the planet and the health of the people on it. So please do the **Right** thing and pass an organic farm bill.

Thank you,

THERESA BROWN.

COMMENT OF VICTORIA BROWN

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 02, 2012, 10:49 a.m.

City, State: McAllen, TX

Occupation: Student

Comment: More members of House of Representatives representing more farms within their districts without becoming inefficient and impersonal

- encourage a younger generation of farmers who received a higher education
- make the information and details about the farm bill more accessible and understandable to the public
- reevaluate the criteria for food stamps, so it promotes purchasing food from farmer's markets

COMMENT OF R.J. BROWNE

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 4:36 p.m.

City, State: Weed, CA

Occupation: College Instructor

Comment: No one should suffer from hunger. It is within our means to provide food for everyone—our nation is blessed for its abundance and prosperity and humanity. Good nutrition is crucial, most importantly organic foods; these must be protected and expanded and should take precedence over agribusiness's nonorganic crops. Organic foods should be and must be the only kind of crops grown.

COMMENT OF TIMOTHY BROWNE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:07 p.m.

City, State: Atlanta, GA

Occupation: Sales of Produce

Comment: Let's raise the bar. Europe is already leading the way in emissions and clean air acts. They also have much better farming practices. Organic farming is a wonderful thing for everyone. With the exception of some corporate interests that have ruin the god given duty to grow one's own food naturally and fruitfully. Organic farming is farming the way that god intended plants to be grown. These men and women in Washington banned stem cell research but sit idly by whilst corporate scientists mix human genes into rice crops. At least stem cell research saves lives. Please help raise the bar and set organic farming as the standard all in the land should meet. Thank you.

COMMENT OF BRENDA BROWNING

Date Submitted: Tuesday, March 20, 2012, 9:49 a.m.

City, State: Lubbock, TX

Occupation: Retired Blue Collar

Comment: As we do live in the country and appreciate the CRP grass keeping the dirt down, I wonder why farmers cannot do their own planting at their own expense rather than have the tax payers pay for that as well as subsidies on their crops. I feel we need to really stop some of the programs. Would love to assist them, but times are too tough to help everyone. We also need to stop foreign aid to other

countries until we can get our country back on track, that includes Afghanistan. Thanks for the opportunity to voice my opinion.

COMMENT OF LORI BROWN-PATRICK

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:03 a.m.

City, State: Lanesville, IN

Occupation: Editor, Writer

Comment: Food needs to be close, clean, and sustainable. We need more (and smaller) farms, scattered among us, everywhere people live—neighborhood food producers who can survive by what they do and help their neighbors to do the same by the fruits of their labor. We need more farmers, even if we have to give them land to begin on, insisting that they use sustainable farming methods and trade honorably with their neighbors—and their neighbors must be encouraged to support them. We need a new vision of food and farming in this country—one that respects the Earth, the people who work it, and the sacred nature of the contract between the three: Earth, farmer, and consumer. Please make sure any farm legislation makes room for humane, small, sustainable, local farms and elevates food production to the honorable calling it once was and must be again.

As the committee considers the 2012 Food and Farm Bill, I urge you to:

- Support our fight against hunger by maintaining and strengthening critical nutrition programs in this time of unprecedented need. We must not solve our budget problems on the backs of those experiencing food insecurity, including our most vulnerable—our children, the elderly, and the disabled;
- Provide an even “plowing” field by fully funding programs that support beginning and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, organic farming, regional farm and food economies, and rural development. We need more farmers and ranchers, more sustainable food production, and more economic opportunity in our food system;
- Support family farmers that really need help, not the biggest farms that don’t: End subsidies (aka direct payments and countercyclical commodity programs), and replace them with loophole-free agriculture risk coverage. Additionally, implement a cap on crop insurance premium subsidies;
- Ensure that limited conservation funding maximizes lasting environmental benefits: Limit funds to Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) for animal waste management infrastructure by eliminating the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) Livestock Set-aside and protect the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) from disproportionate cuts, and improve it by ranking applications solely on their conservation benefits

COMMENT OF PATRICIA BRUINSMA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:46 p.m.

City, State: Williamsburg, VA

Occupation: Accountant

Comment: Please don’t let Congress cut \$4 million from organic research funding and cut in half funding to support Beginning Farmers. Tell Congress to support organics. Our physical health, as well as the health of the world as a whole, depends on your diligence in this matter. We must stop polluting our bodies, and our Earth, with toxins. We need organic funding today and always.

Thank you for your time,

PATRICIA BRUINSMA.

COMMENT OF CHRISTINA BRUNS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:26 p.m.

City, State: Dallas, PA

Occupation: Retired Public and Catholic School Teacher

Comment: I believe that America can produce healthy food for our people. I do not want factory food produced for my children and grandchildren. Research proves what is healthy and we should follow their lead for wholesome food not food for profit. My entire family is vegetarian because of our belief it is best for health and for the environment and we can feed the world on a vegetarian diet. Why must industry dictate health, industry and corporations are not people, people are people. Our laws should reflect what is best for us and future generations.

COMMENT OF ERIC BRUYNSEELS

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 5:06 p.m.
City, State: River Forest, IL
Occupation: Student
Comment: Please, do not cut SNAP. Cutting SNAP will mean even less food for hungry people already in poverty—think of the children.

COMMENT OF LEO BRUYNSEELS

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 5:41 p.m.
City, State: River Forest, IL
Occupation: Retired
Comment: Please do not cut SNAP. Cutting SNAP will result in even less food being available to single people and families who are already poor and hungry. Think of the children: it will be even more difficult for them to concentrate on their school work if, on top of everything else they experience, they go hungry! We are a rich country and we can afford it. We waste huge amounts on other things. Prioritize!

COMMENT OF LOUISE BRUYNSEELS

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 5:22 p.m.
City, State: River Forest, IL
Occupation: Retired
Comment: Please, do not cut SNAP. Every month I serve hungry people at our food pantry. Cutting SNAP will mean even more people will go hungry—please think of the children.

COMMENT OF ALEX BRYAN

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 10:06 p.m.
City, State: Lansing, MI
Producer/Non-producer: Producer
Type: Vegetables
Size: Less than 50 acres
Comment: Dear Chairman Lucas,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony to the House Committee on Agriculture on the next farm bill. My district representative is being copied on this testimony. I am a young farmer and I'd like to share my support for programs that help the next generation of growers build strong farm businesses. As it's estimated that 125,000 farmers will retire in the next 5 years, it's absolutely critical that farm bill programs help citizens get started in this challenging field. I ask that the Committee endorse all of the provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236), including:

- Mandatory funding for Individual Development Accounts at \$5 million per year. This program helps new farmers raise capital to start farm businesses and is tested and proven by organizations like Practical Farmers of Iowa and the California Farmlink.
- Mandatory funding for the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program at \$25 million a year. This program funds essential education for new farmers around the country.
- Authorize a new microloan program, to enable young and beginning farmers to better access FSA loan programs.
- Revise FSA rules to make loan programs more accessible to more young and beginning farmers.
- Reaffirm the existing cost share differential for BFRs within EQIP. Also, reaffirm the advance payment option allowing beginning and socially disadvantaged producers to receive an advance payment for the project's costs for purchasing materials or contracting services, but increase the limit on the advance payment from 30 percent to 50 percent of costs.
- Amend the Farm and Ranch Land Protection Program (FRPP) to make farm viability part of the purpose of the program and to give discretionary authority to the eligible entities that implement the program to give priority to easements with an option to purchase at the agricultural use value, deals that transfer the land to beginning and farmers and ranchers, applicants with farm succession plans, and other similar mechanisms to maintain the affordability of protected land.

These and other provisions within the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act will help new growers succeed and I urge you to include them in the next farm bill. Owning a business in the state of Michigan is important to me. It is especially important to follow in the footsteps of my grandfather, an apple grower of Mid-Michigan. Without support to level the playing field for beginning farmers like myself, I will struggle and likely fail. For a state with such a large reliance on agriculture, this is not acceptable. I would very much appreciate any and all support you can give to make sure these important programs remain funded.

Sincerely,

ALEX BRYAN.

COMMENT OF MARJORY BRYAN

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 16, 2012, 2:32 a.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Marketing

Comment: I am a single (and only) parent living without family.

I use food stamps and hate that I have to but without it my 5 yr. old & I would be very very very very hungry and although I've never asked for public support be . . . I'd be forced to ask for cash benefits for food, should SNAP be altered or diminished.

COMMENT OF MARYANN BRYAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:29 p.m.

City, State: Prescott, AZ

Occupation: Homemaker

Comment: We need full and honest representation that reflects our concerns about health and food safety and labeling of our food to reflect what is in it, especially GMO's.

I already wrote to Rep. Gosar about this and got a reply that totally supports keeping the GMO's hidden. I feel that we are not being listened to.

With dismay,

MARYANN BRYAN.

COMMENT OF BRIT BRYANT

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:44 p.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Grocery Store Manager

Comment: Please prioritize local, natural, organic whole foods produced by small farmers. We have an amazing opportunity to affect the health of a generation by making responsible choices in what we prioritize.

COMMENT OF ELLEN BRYANT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:19 p.m.

City, State: Eureka, CA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: The farm bill must be written for farmers that are interested in keeping the land, food and people of America healthy. Mega-Corp(ser)phood is for profit and it's up to you to stop their destruction for profit assaults on U.S.(A).

COMMENT OF EMILY BRYANT

Date Submitted: Monday, May 14, 2012, 3:04 p.m.

City, State: Indianapolis, IN

Occupation: Executive Director, Feeding Indiana's Hungry, Inc.

Comment: As the number of families struggling to make ends meet increased significantly during the recession, Indian's food insecure population now includes more than one million Hoosiers. Even as unemployment remains near 9 percent and food banks continue to be pressed to meet need in their communities, we have experienced significant declines in Federal commodity purchases and charitable donations.

In partnership with more than 1,700 local agencies, 62% of which are faith-based, our food banks are now feeding roughly 700,000 Hoosiers a year. We could not meet current need without support from Federal nutrition programs like TEFAP and CSFP, nor could we meet added demand if other Federal nutrition programs like SNAP were weakened or charitable giving tax deductions were limited.

As Congress addresses the farm bill, Feeding Indiana's Hungry urges legislators to safeguard nutrition assistance and other safety net programs.

TEFAP Food Commodities accounted for 24% of the food moving through the member food banks of Feeding Indiana's Hungry in 2011, including mandatory commodities required by the farm bill and bonus commodity purchases made by USDA either to satisfy farm bill specialty-crop purchase requirements or in response to market conditions. TEFAP commodity support dropped by nearly 30% (\$173 million) in FY2011 due to strong agricultural markets, and rising gas prices weakened the impact of TEFAP distribution funding.

We urge you to in the 2012 Farm Bill to make TEFAP commodities more responsive to changes in need by tying mandatory funding to unemployment levels and clarify the Agriculture Secretary's authority to purchase bonus commodities in response to high need as well as low commodity prices. We also urge you to reauthorize TEFAP Storage and Distribution Funds at \$100 million per year and TEFAP Infrastructure Grants at \$15 million per year.

We ask that the 2012 Farm Bill transition CSFP to a seniors-only program by phasing out eligibility of women, infants, and children while grandfathering in current participants to promote greater efficiencies and recognize CSFP's evolution to serving a primarily senior population.

We finally ask that the farm bill maintain SNAP funding to support current eligibility and benefit levels and oppose harmful policy changes.

Respectfully submitted,

EMILY WEIKERT BRYANT, *Executive Director*, Feeding Indiana's Hungry, Inc., Indiana's state association of Feeding America affiliated food banks

COMMENT OF RUSSELL BRYANT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:06 p.m.

City, State: Omaha, NE

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Dairy

Size: 50-150 acres

Comment: Organic is important to maintain health of this country with less food . . . I have proved that on our Dairy herd. We have had first place quality milk in Nebraska for 6 years. It takes top quality live soil to produce top quality food for healthy people. This will help our budget by cutting medical costs.

COMMENT OF BEDZAIDA BRYEN

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 08, 2012, 8:57 a.m.

City, State: Ft. Myers, FL

Occupation: Volunteer Manager

Comment: Food banks struggles daily to meet the growing need for food in our communities. One of the most impressive facts about Food Banks is that they do not work in autonomy, but congruent with government and other nongovernmental organizations to ensure that no one adult, child or aging go to bed hungry.

We should not consider a weak, to no safety net, it would be catastrophic. We need a strong farm bill to safeguard that struggling families do not plunge further into despair, but can at minimal put food on the table.

I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP. Our community cannot afford cuts to these programs.

COMMENT OF HELEN BRYENTON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:50 a.m.

City, State: Knoxville, TN

Occupation: Violinist

Comment: I want to KNOW that the food in my grocery store is safe and healthy. An increase in the cost of safe food offsets the costs of ill health from low quality and less healthy foods.

COMMENT OF BETTY BUCHANAN

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 13, 2012, 2:45 a.m.

City, State: Bakersfield, CA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Less or no subsidies for big corporate farms and ranches, lots more subsidies for independently owned ones. Get GMO products labeled or better yet put a stop to them!

COMMENT OF WADE BUCHANAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:51 p.m.

City, State: Colorado Springs, CO

Occupation: Unix Systems Administrator

Comment: I understand the need to reign in budgets and the crazy spending, but some things do require investment and support. I support the following things and ask that you do as well:

1. The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
2. Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
3. The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
4. Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

It is time to start cutting large farm subsidies for crops that are over produced, and have largely lead to the obesity epidemic in our country and start making investments where it counts. We all hear the lamenting of the vanishing small farmer and local economies so here is your opportunity to do something to reverse that trend.

Thank you for you time and support.

COMMENT OF CATHY BUCK

Date Submitted: Thursday, April 19, 2012, 10:12 a.m.

City, State: Pittsburgh, PA

Occupation: Client Associate

Comment: Never in a million years did I ever think I would need help feeding my family. When my husband, a successful self-employed contractor, suddenly had no work due to the economy and my income was just enough to keep the bill collectors at bay, food was something that became pretty scarce—and with two children (ages 10, 5) that's not something you can skimp on. So we applied, and thankfully, were approved for food stamps. Now food is not a problem.

Being self-employed you get nothing if you are out of work—those are the people that need the help. Please continue to feed families. Thank you.

COMMENT OF SHERMAN BUCK

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:01 p.m.

City, State: Seattle, WA

Occupation: Harborview Medical Center—Patient Services Specialist

Comment: U.S. food and agricultural policy must focus on adopting best agricultural practices that put the health of its citizens, the land and the livelihood of farmers and farm workers over the interests of industrial agriculture lobbyists. To not do so is to continue the same insanity rooted in greed and market monopolies.

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Cutting funding to vital programs such as nutrition, conservation and support for organic and sustainable agriculture.
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

The House Ag Committee has already voted to slash \$33 billion from the food stamp program while leaving farm subsidies unscathed. Creating a \$33 billion new entitlement program that guarantees the income of profitable farm businesses on top of \$90 billion in subsidies for crop and revenue insurance policies is hypocritical at best, and at its worst subsidizes those agribusinesses that don't need yet more subsidizing.

Ironically, the Senate Ag Committee has already voted to cut \$4 million from organic research funding and cut funding to support Beginning Farmers in half. The lack of support in these key areas is indicative of those on the committee who continue to support corporate agribusiness agendas vested maintaining a monopoly on markets. To continue ignoring this problem is to continue legitimizing dysfunctional practices that benefit the few, while continuing destructive practices for the environment and escalating health and wellness issues with those who continue to consume foods that are less than adequate for consumption. Putting the fox in charge of the hen house is similar to corporate interests in charge of the House Agricultural Committee.

The Senate Ag Committee has also voted to get rid of wasteful subsidy payments. It has proposed to replace it with a new subsidized insurance program that leading sustainable agriculture advocates are calling rife with opportunities for fraud and abuse.

While Congress is looking to get rid of direct payments to commodity farmers, the subsidized insurance program it proposes to replace it with will allow giant commodity farmers and insurance companies to walk away with billions in taxpayer dollars while putting the land, soil and environment at greater risk. According to the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition's Ferd Hoefner, "failing to place limitations on crop insurance subsidies and to re-attach soil erosion and wetland conservation requirements to crop insurance programs, the Committee has failed to do the full reform that is needed."

This sort of nonsense of eliminating wasteful subsidies in favor of another form of wasteful subsidies is nothing new in the corporate politically run government. I'm strongly suggesting that those on the committee begin to assess their level of honesty and integrity on how they perform their responsibilities to U.S. citizens as a whole, rather than maintaining a closed door policy in maintaining a system that is completely worthless except to those in the corporate sectors who continue to gain and maintain dominance in markets as well as in the creation of continued farming bills that exclude much needed reform in practices and oversight. These committees continue to be a mockery of the democratic process.

One might as well call it the corporate process these days.

COMMENT OF ALEXIS BUCKLEY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:17 p.m.

City, State: Boston, MA

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: Representative Capuano,

Just a quick note to let you know that I would appreciate your supporting small and family farmers. Subsidizing corporate farms has made "food" more affordable, but it's also encouraged incredibly unhealthy practices that people ended paying for in the end with their health (obesity, cancer, developmental issues). These are well researched and well documented consequences of corporate greed. While at first glance supporting small, local farmers (and even urban farmers) may seem a costly shift, but—again—we pay for it in the end either way. why not go for the healthier option that can also generate more creative and sustainable jobs?

Thanks for your time & consideration.

COMMENT OF PAULA BUCKNER

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 1:31 p.m.

City, State: Eugene, OR

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Cutting funds for farms is like shooting ourselves in the foot. Reform now, not later! Our government mouths the words of promoting physical health, organic farming, yet politicians act in ways that undermine the very support structure that leads to the actuality of better collective health. "No Hunger Allowed" should be our motto. Elevating our food supply standards and maintaining them is a sign of progress and a wise investment.

COMMENT OF BETH BUCZYNSKI

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:12 p.m.

City, State: Cheyenne, WY

Occupation: Freelance Writer

Comment: Farmers and eaters across the U.S. benefit from a fair and healthy farm bill. Yet politicians like yourself are so out of touch with the values of the

American people, you have allowed corporate agribusiness to exert a stranglehold on our regulatory system. As my supposed representative in the House, please know that I support: The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286);

Full funding of conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs;

The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236); and Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative. You were not elected to do what you and your corporate sponsors think is best for Wyoming. You were elected to do what the people want for Wyoming. Please do your job.

COMMENT OF SUSAN BUDDE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:28 p.m.

City, State: Manchester, CT

Comment: Don't let Congress cut \$4 million from organic research funding and cut in half funding to support Beginning Farmers. Tell Congress to support organics.

Thank you!

COMMENT OF JENNIFER BUFORD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:37 a.m.

City, State: Fort Wayne, IN

Occupation: Marriage and Family Therapist

Comment: Considering the recent controversy over pink slime in our beef, I feel it's more important than ever that local farmers be better subsidized, and better assisted by our government in their efforts to produce safe and desirable meats for human consumption. I find it greatly offensive that our government allow the same standards and practices to human nutrition as they would our dogs and cats. It is this type of decision making that makes the American people ever leery and mistrustful of its own government. It is time to stop secrets in food practice if the American taxpayers are funding a department to oversee food production on our behalf, otherwise what is the point? I feel the only way these issues can effectively be addressed is to help local farmers who focus on quality food rather than saving nickels and dimes.

Respectfully Yours,

J. BUFORD.

COMMENT OF ELISE BUHN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 7:01 p.m.

City, State: Santa Rosa, CA

Occupation: Landscape Architect

Comment: Please repeal unneeded subsidies for the mega producers of our food! It is profoundly unsafe to allow a small number of producers to determine our food supply. We must subsidize the beginning farmer, the organic farmer, the small farms and the families who have hung onto their heritage of farming through some really tough times. If you look at the origins of our presidents, a majority of them grew up on farms. It should be a proud occupation, not an unrewarded and despised occupation. Please help us all change the direction we have been gaining since the days of Earl Butz.

COMMENT OF RITA BUHR

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 5:03 a.m.

City, State: Graham, WA

Occupation: School Assistant

Comment: It's unthinkable what has happened to our main food supply with the chemicals the GMO foods *etc.* that we're forced to eat unless we can get organic. Our kids can't even think straight anymore! All kinds of mental health, physical and behavioral problems much due to the worthless foods fed to our kids! They'd be better off eating grass! To subsidize farmers to grow these toxic foods and not give organic farmers decent funding so "we the people" (that includes you too!) can have better choices, is basically criminal. Tax payers have the right to eat decent food! How does the government expect to have a good taxpaying workforce with such unhealthy food? Or is it really ok to just let us become more unhealthy so we have

to rely on pharmaceuticals to perform at all. Then that helps your buddies have more profits too.

We get it!

Please, do the right thing!

COMMENT OF MICHAEL BULGER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 6:37 p.m.

City, State: Astoria, NY

Occupation: Student/CSA

Comment: Thank you for taking the time to read my comments.

My hope is that the farm bill will direct help to those who need it most. By this I mean curtailing benefits to wealthy farmers in favor of supporting small and lower-income farmers. I also mean maintaining nutrition programs that provide not only enough calories, but also healthy foods.

An overwhelming amount of research tells us that Americans need to increase their consumption of fruits and vegetables. The farm bill should reflect this goal. The days of farm bills whose main benefactors are feed grains, livestock producers, and junk food, must come to a close.

It's time to support real, healthy nutrition and rural Americans who need it most. Thank you.

COMMENT OF JENNIFER BULLEIT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:13 a.m.

City, State: Verona, WI

Occupation: Nurse

Comment: We are subsidizing meat, corn and soy factory farming. In these times of limited budgets, let's subsidize the workers, family farm operators, not farming corporations and subcontractors. When we protect the vegetable and fruit growers I will know this nation cares about its people.

COMMENT OF LINDSAY BULLOCK

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:33 p.m.

City, State: Olympia, WA

Occupation: Waitress

Comment: We need back our farmers to produce good healthy food and crops! We need to get back to our old ways of doing what is best for our land and vegetation! Independent Farmers are at our best interest and large money hungry company are **Not!** It is a shame to what the U.S. has become with all of these corporate companies changing our Earth! In the end no one should be on top and everyone should be together!

COMMENT OF JANE BULTEDAQB

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:18 p.m.

City, State: Sequim, WA

Occupation: Homemaker

Comment: One day I will have grandchildren, and I want them to have the good food that is available if we give our farmers, and not big business, our support. We need to put **People** before **Profit!**

COMMENT OF PENNY BULTEN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 11:54 a.m.

City, State: Boynton Beach, FL

Occupation: Parent

Comment: GMO food should be labeled, Big agribusiness should not be able to use regulations to shove out their smaller competitors, and farmers should not have to go through miles of red tape to reach their customers.

COMMENT OF SUZANNE BUNKER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 3:39 a.m.

City, State: Eugene, OR

Occupation: Educator: College

Comment: Although I may not appear to be someone who has close ties with agriculture, I spent many years working as a fruit picker, vegetable packer and farm

truck driver when I was much younger. In those days, questionable practices were closely scrutinized by local producers, communities, and buyers. Since the advent of agribusiness and factory farms, one can easily fear eating since questionable farming practices abound! I urge you to take the steps needed to ensure that your fellow citizens are protected from dangerous agricultural practices, and empower us with a future of safe, untainted food sources!

COMMENT OF LAUREL BUNKERS

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 10, 2012, 10:23 p.m.

City, State: Oak Park, IL

Occupation: Executive Assistant

Comment: Please don't cut SNAP benefits. I volunteer one Saturday every month at my local food pantry, and the need is **Not** decreasing. Families tell us that the pantry, combined with the little help they receive from SNAP helps them be able to keep a roof over their families' heads. Without it, many will be sent over the brink. Please, don't take this away from them.

COMMENT OF JIM BURBRIDGE

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 4:04 a.m.

City, State: East Greenwich, RI

Occupation: Contractor

Comment: The current Monsanto/corporate based FDA is counterproductive to health and happiness, thus un-American. Sustainable farming is the wave of the future.

COMMENT OF MELINDA BURD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:07 p.m.

City, State: Deerfield Beach, FL

Occupation: Manager

Comment: Please, do not cut any funding for organic research or cut any funding to support beginning farmers. Please, support organic farming by increasing funding for research and reducing government subsidies for conventional farms.

COMMENT OF HENRY BURDEN

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 7:55 p.m.

City, State: Havre de Grace, MD

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Until the nation's businesses can be persuaded to pay a full day's living wage to anyone who works a full day, a humane nation must provide the assistance that assures availability of necessary nourishment to all its citizens.

COMMENT OF SUSAN BURDEN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:23 p.m.

City, State: Eureka Springs, AR

Occupation: Handmade Garment Manufacturing

Comment: It is imperative that all the people on Earth eat food that is natural to the Earth's cycles of nature. The Earth does not belong to us, we belong to it, and we have no business altering food to suit agribusiness practices, especially since their practices are known to cause illnesses. Furthermore, agribusiness practices further deteriorate all other life forms and pollute drinking water. We must do all we can to protect water, food, and air because it is those three elements that give life to all. We are only hurting ourselves and others by eating, drinking and breathing poisons, chemicals, genetically altered seeds and animals. Supporting farmers who grow by using natural methods will be a huge step in Health Care Reform. If you care about the health of anything or anyone then you must get informed and more concerned and careful about what we eat, drink and breathe. Support the farmers who grow organically and the ones who do not pollute and poison and unnecessarily and foolishly alter nature.

SUSAN BURDEN.

COMMENT OF JANIS BURGER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 1:27 a.m.

City, State: Port Angeles, WA

Occupation: Park Ranger—Subsistence Gardener

Comment: I've been trying to grow my own produce and support local farmers to help get healthy, local food to our community, cutting fuel for long-distance transport, support local jobs, preserve open space. This is a much more sustainable paradigm than CAFOs and agribusiness and subsidies for commodities that often aren't very good for us anyway. I hope you'll support the provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286), as well as funding for conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.

The implementation of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236) is important for sustainability and local jobs. And as more of us strive to consume healthier food (for us and the land) it's important that we maintain the EQIP Organic Initiative.

COMMENT OF BEN BURGESS

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 10, 2012, 11:39 a.m.

City, State: Atlanta, GA

Occupation: Food Bank Procurement Coordinator

Comment: Please, **Do Not** cut the Food Stamps program. Too many people need right now! I see it every day. These aren't people gaming the system . . . they are people that just need help getting back on their feet.

COMMENT OF SHARRON BURGESS

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 11:54 p.m.

City, State: Rileyville, VA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I'm in charge of a new volunteer group called Sustainable Shenandoah. Our garden is organic but not certified. Our growing standards are higher than what is classified by the government as acceptable.

As a group, we have undertaken intensive studies of the present agriculture in this country. I am personally appalled by the condition; food recalls for contamination by major food companies, small farmers unable to compete with major agri-corp, complex legislation that favors the major agri-corp, the increased rate of diabetes, hypertension, cardiac disease and obesity especially the increase in younger and younger people.

Enough nice talk—in a nut shell—the major agri-corps are only interested in their bottom line, not the welfare of their customers. Farmers are losing their farms, the general public is getting cheap foods that lack the proper amount of nutrients found in organic foods and why—because healthy food would decrease their profits that are based on using chemicals.

I often wonder what the corporate heads of the mega-agri-corps eat and how healthy they are and how much they spend on medical care for themselves and perhaps their families.

COMMENT OF PETER BURKARD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:31 a.m.

City, State: Sarasota, FL

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Fruits, Greenhouse/nursery, Poultry/poultry products, Specialty Crops, Vegetables, Other

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Stop subsidizing agribusiness and producers of commodity crops. We are so unhealthy as a nation partly due to the ag subsidy system. If you are going to subsidize anybody, make it the producers of healthy products like fruits and vegetables and small organic farmers. (**Note:** While this is what I am, I'm not interested in any subsidies for myself.)

COMMENT OF FRANCES BURKE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:37 p.m.

City, State: Davis, CA

Occupation: Retired Farmer and Small Business Owner

Comment: Simple changes in the farm bill could improve the health of Americans and improve the economy by spreading the funds to real people doing local

business and helping on a more grass roots level. Feeding all taxpayer money to ADM and other Huge corporations is doing real working people harm. Cheap fast food and ethanol is costing us not helping us.

COMMENT OF MOIRA BURKE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:49 p.m.

City, State: Dixon, CA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Forestry, Livestock, Other

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Stop subsidies to large commodity ag (ADM *etc.*); focus on helping new farmers buy land via ag conservation easements. Second, provide user friendly help for smaller farmers, not hurdles designed for larger, well funded producers. My farm is >50, forest is 471 acres.

COMMENT OF DAVID BURLEY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 11:00 a.m.

City, State: Hammond, LA

Occupation: Professor

Comment: Hello,

Please give the nation a farm bill that will put more people into work growing our food and one that supports farmers that grow a diverse amount of food sustainably. We should be encouraging and rewarding farmers who grow food and livestock that does not pollute the air, water, land and our bodies but nourishes us without chemicals. We shouldn't be encouraging policy that creates fewer farmers and encourages more use of synthetic chemicals. We also need to encourage the new generation of farmers who are yearning to grow food but are held back by such things as lack of access to land and health insurance. On that note, please increase funding for such things as the Value-Added Producers Grants Program and guarantee \$25 million per year for the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program and fund the Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative at \$30 million per year in mandatory funding. Thank you so much.

COMMENT OF RETHA BURNETT

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 12, 2012, 9:57 a.m.

City, State: Garnett, KS

Occupation: Supported Living Assistant for Developmentally Disabled Persons Served

Comment: I have worked in this field for over eleven years. I do a lot of shopping for my folks and assist them with making their money stretch each month. They work in workshops and other local area jobs to try to supplement their disability checks but grocery prices are rising faster than the money they can earn. Without food stamps most of my folks will not be able to get the nutrition they need to be healthy. Before coming to my job I currently hold, I ran a licensed daycare for over 18 years. I know about nutrition and how important to have the right amount of protein, carbs, and fats a individual needs to be healthy. With the proposed cuts my folks WILL NOT be able to have their nutrition needs met. Please don't put that burden on organizations and churches that are barely surviving themselves. My folks did not ask to be born with their disabilities. They fight every day to survive until the next day. They are my angels here on Earth. I work for a low wage even thou I have been at my job for over 11 years. I struggle to make a living out of low wages but to see their smiles each day brings sunshine to my life each day. I am so proud of them and they are the real heroes. Please consider those who by no fault of their needs these programs such as SNAP. Thank you for taking your valuable time to read this plea.

Sincerely,

RETHA BURNETT.

COMMENT OF DEBORAH BURNS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:02 a.m.

City, State: Williamstown, MA

Occupation: Book Editor

Comment: As a book editor overseeing books on farming, I am witnessing a groundswell of interest in small farms—from both producers and consumers. Our

area of Mass. is still rural, and a revival of the local food system will help all levels of the community access fresher food and keep farmers on the land, which has inestimable benefits. I urge you to approve the aspects of the farm bill that will support small farmers, moderate-sized farmers, beginning farmers, sustainable farming, nutrition programs, and the health of our environment—in other words, a fair and healthy future for all involved.

COMMENT OF EDWARD BURNS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:03 p.m.

City, State: Ocala, FL

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Your proposed subsidized insurance program will allow giant commodity farmers and insurance companies to walk away with billions in taxpayer dollars while putting the land, soil and environment at greater risk.

We don't need more pesticide/herbicide laden foods by the giant monopolies. We need healthy organic foods that our small farmers grow. They are the ones that need your help and protection!

COMMENT OF GEORGE BURNS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:37 p.m.

City, State: Loysville, PA

Occupation: Retired

Comment:

1. Support food democracy.
2. Support all measures that facilitate local farmer successful operations without intrusive and expensive government regulations.
3. Support legitimate measures that facilitate organic food production, advertising and sales.
4. Support measures that streamline government agencies providing regulations and oversight of American farmers.
5. Eliminate illegitimate farm subsidies.
6. Eliminate cozy relationships between large corporate farms and their suppliers and Federal congressional and administrative agencies. Protect local, small family farmers from excessive government intrusion. It is big business farms and food processing facilities that cause the vast majority of food contamination; not small/local farms. In fact, supporting small/local farms is the best means to contain any such outbreaks.

COMMENT OF JEFF BURNS

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 2:02 a.m.

City, State: Van Nuys, CA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Stop subsidizing corn and other food exports that destroy small farmers in foreign countries. Stop subsidies to large corporate farms and support small family farms. Support non-GMO and Organic producers. Stop the contamination of heirloom crops by GMO's.

COMMENT OF SCOTT BURNS

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 15, 2012, 8:03 p.m.

City, State: Franklin, NC

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Other

Size: 151–300 acres

Comment: As a healthy food consumer and producer of food for myself and close friends I want to give some input on what values I place in our farm bill! I am drawing upon a friend's research but would like to share these three ideas with you as to how money should be appropriated for the bill that I feel is **Most** important. Here are three suggestions!

1. Community Food Projects Program—\$10 million per year to help communities build food self-reliance.
2. Farmers Market and Local Food Promotion Program—\$20 million per year to develop farmers market capacity and create food hubs to connect farmers with schools, hospitals, grocery stores and other markets.

3. Hunger-Free Community Incentive Grants—An average of \$20 million per year for a new SNAP local fruit and vegetable incentive grant program at farmers markets and other healthy food retailers.

COMMENT OF MICHAEL R. BURON, SR., IHHP

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:36 a.m.

City, State: Forked River, NJ

Occupation: Holistic Health Practitioner

Comment: Dear House Agriculture Committee,

I am a Healthcare Professional who works with local Doctors in my area. I see their patients and help them with chronic health complaints. The first item on the agenda is the quality of their food. The best solution to this is to introduce them to local farmers who are following the principles of organic farming. It is unfortunate that the Government only allows to subsidize commercial farming of crops such as the conventional farming of soy and corn, in order to artificially lower the cost of these foods. You are in essence supporting the destruction of our soils by allowing mono cropping and the use of harmful fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides, and fungicides, all of which encourage soil depletion and contamination of our food supply and environment.

I urge you to consider the fact that without proper stewardship of the land, as promoted by organic farming, the U.S. will continue to lose farmable land and increase our reliance on outside sources to feed our own citizens. It is impossible to produce healthy crops or animals from depleted, polluted soils. It is the subsequently impossible to have a healthy population from eating depleted, poisoned crops and sick animals.

Please do not let the large lobbying groups cloud your vision on what is best for the people. After all, you are supposed to represent the masses of voters, not large corporations only concerned with profit and not health.

Respectfully yours,

MICHAEL R. BURON, SR., IHHP.

COMMENT OF KELLY BURRELL

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 6:16 p.m.

City, State: Bristol, CT

Occupation: Retail

Comment: We need to preserve, help & fund sustainable agriculture, not make cuts in these areas. Agribusiness can afford to fend for itself and is not looking out for the best interests of the people. Local, organic farmers are. Our future lies with them. The only way we are going to get healthy is to stop eating factory farmed products and get back to eating healthy animals and organically grown, non-GMO fruits & vegetables. Please support local agriculture.

COMMENT OF KATHY BURROW

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:40 p.m.

City, State: Elkhorn, NE

Occupation: Residential Manager/Social Services

Comment: Dear House Agriculture Committee,

As a lifetime resident of Nebraska and a concerned parent, I am contacting you in regard to the farm bill issue. In my opinion it is extremely important to end subsidies for the large corporate agricultural operations which are making huge profits and focus on helping out the family farmers who desperately need the assistance in order to be able to continue to make a livable income in the face of large scale competition. Our great state has a long standing heritage of family farms which has helped make us the proud hard working people we are today. We have an obligation to stand by the family farms in our state and making them our top priority. Without this approach the jobless rate in our area will only worsen as farmers leave farming because they can no longer make enough money to support their families.

Thanks for your thoughtful consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

KATHY BURROW.

COMMENT OF MARY BURROWS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:32 a.m.

City, State: Reno, NV

Occupation: Artist

Comment: It's time to get smart about food and do what's right for the people . . . not corporations. After becoming a parent, I've educated myself and have come to realize that large corporations are controlling the food system and the majority of the United States doesn't know what real food is. We can change this and it can start with you. Please educate yourself as much as you can as to the harms of factory farming, pesticides, GMOs, and fake food. Our people and farmers (not corporations) deserve better, as well as our animals. Thank you!

COMMENT OF ALAN BURSTEIN

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 6:52 p.m.

City, State: Austin, TX

Occupation: Certified Internal Auditor

Comment: Please help the poor and hungry with the farm bill. There are millions of people (including me) who are still unemployed. I have not had a job in 8 months. Please, please do not cut funds from the hungry and poor—its just wrong. We are hungry enough as it is.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF MIMI BURSTEIN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:56 p.m.

City, State: Paoli, PA

Occupation: Librarian

Comment: I am very concerned that programs to conserve land and water resources are fully funded and that all efforts are made to ensure cooperation with conservation efforts by all those involved in agricultural businesses. Also, I strongly support any and all efforts to fund research into organic farming practices. American citizens care very much about healthy food, safe water and protections for our land, and if damage to these resources is allowed to go unchecked, those of you who have permitted this to happen will be held to account by the electorate.

COMMENT OF GERRI BURTON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:15 p.m.

City, State: Bryn Mawr, PA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Everyone in the U.S. benefits from a fair farm bill. Cutting funding to vital programs that ensure access to nutritional diets and cutting funding for organic and sustainable agriculture is penny-wise and pound foolish.

COMMENT OF KATE BURTON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:43 p.m.

City, State: Vancouver, WA

Occupation: School Librarian

Comment: As big agribusiness pushes out the little farmer and as bio and chemical engineered crops pollute our environmentally sound crops, we need to support the small farms by protecting their rights. Please do not encourage large corporate farms to change the dynamics of farming in a way that will be detrimental to the land, our seeds and the small farmers who struggle to make ends meet. The number of unique species is shrinking as we succumb to uniform crops planted by mindless corporations. We need ensure that we continue to promote a rich seed base and that we eliminate chemically altered and bio engineered crops that limit the crops we have and will potentially one day jeopardize farming. As we alter crops with chemicals, we also alter the pests who attack these crops. If our crop pool is limited and the pests are hardy, we could come up with a situation where we can no longer provide a quality food product. Our actions have consequences and we need to consider them.

COMMENT OF MARK BURWINKEL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:01 p.m.

City, State: Cincinnati, OH

Occupation: Retired Veteran

Comment: Please support organic and small local farming. Don't cut \$4 million from organic research funding and cut in half funding to support Beginning Farmers. Oppose GMO's and genetic pollution and Monsanto suing for genetic pollution.

COMMENT OF JEFF BUSH

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 2:41 p.m.

City, State: Yoncalla, OR

Occupation: Anthropologist

Comment: Corporations have too long dominated our farming and industrial infrastructure. It has lead to a serious disregard for the public's health, our ecology and economy. We need to get money and power back in the hands of small farmers and businesses who have a genuine concern for the physical and economic health and well being of the people of this country.

Let's get our priorities straight. We broke away from Britain a little more than 200 years ago not only because of the king's taxes, but because of corporate abuses. We have already fallen into the same trap, and now we must get out of it.

Agribusiness neither deserves nor needs our money and should be cut off cold. Put that money into the hands that really need it and will do some good with it.

COMMENT OF SARAH BUSH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:44 a.m.

City, State: Belmont, MA

Occupation: Business Owner Of Healthcare Business

Comment: Please act on the behalf of us citizens who care about the future for our children. Act on the behalf of creating sustainable and healthy sources of food so that we can engineer our future and make it want we want it to be rather than having the environment fight back at us in the form of disease, mal-nutrition, poor soil quality. Please seize this opportunity to lay good agricultural plans for our future that are safe, responsible and sustainable. **Please!** The time has come!

Thank you,

SARAH BUSH.

COMMENT OF BRYAN BUSHLEY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:56 p.m.

City, State: Honolulu, HI

Comment: We need to be promoting more healthy, sustainable choices for our agriculture, while supporting more small and medium sized farmers. Maintaining strong support, incentives and programs to ensure nutrition, conservation and organic agriculture. Please support these measures in the farm bill!

COMMENT OF MARTHA W.D. BUSHNELL

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 10, 2012, 5:16 p.m.

City, State: Boulder, CO

Occupation: Homemaker

Comment: Please pass a strong farm bill that protects programs like SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP which help provide food for millions of America's most vulnerable children and seniors.

Please ensure that no millionaires receive farm subsidies. The cut off point for farm subsidies should really be \$250,000. That is cut off farm subsidies for all farmers making more than \$¼ million.

COMMENT OF NILES BUSLER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:23 p.m.

City, State: Townsend, MA

Occupation: Real Estate Broker

Comment: If the government puts corporate interests above the people (consumers) then eventually both will lose. The government must regulate the ambitions of corporations to "promote the general welfare", as mandated in our Constitution. Individual citizens generally have only one weapon against corporate greed their elected representatives. If our elected representatives won't do the job we elected them to do, then we will need remove them by election and replace them with more responsive politicians.

COMMENT OF JUSTIN BUSWELL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:33 p.m.

City, State: Oceanside, CA

Occupation: Sales

Comment: Our food should be safe from the use of harmful chemical of any type at any level. Animals should be treated humanely with pasture and space as well as sun and air. They should have much room to roam. Really our food should be produced just like the advertising we get with it shows. Smiling cows and open fields. Really it should be common sense.

COMMENT OF ALISON BUTLER

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 15, 2012, 8:47 p.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Resource Specialist for Community College Students

Comment: Our students depend on programs like SNAP to feed their families. While I do not support farm subsidies to large corporate farms, I believe the supplemental nutrition programs are crucial.

COMMENT OF CHRISTIN BUTLER

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 11:08 a.m.

City, State: Columbus, OH

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: I'd like to see more support for small family farms that serve local markets and less support for industrial scale farms.

Thanks, and please keep us eaters in mind. We want access to fresh, healthy, and local food for our families.

COMMENT OF ELIZABETH BUTLER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:25 p.m.

City, State: Henderson, KY

Occupation: Computer Administrator

Comment: Priority needs to be given to small producers, family farms, and organic farming.

Large subsidies to big industrial ag firms and absentee landlords are a waste of taxpayer dollars and eliminating them is a good way to reduce the deficit.

COMMENT OF LISA BUTLER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:27 p.m.

City, State: St. Cloud, FL

Occupation: Realtor

Comment: Please stop this tyranny!

Please stop agenda 21, which is ultimately what this issue and many others is all about!

Please stop trying to kill your fellow humans with poisons . . . GMO's . . . pharmaceuticals . . . pesticides . . . chemtrails that are intentional spraying of toxins and metal particles into the atmosphere!

We want organic food and labeling of GMO's and all other toxic ingredients, including hormones injected into anything!

At least 40 countries are treating their citizens better than the us government is treating citizens here! Reps have forgotten their oath of office and that they work for we the people . . . not "them."

Bring on peace & unity and kick greed to the curb . . . no, kick it off the planet! It is time to let love rule and freedom reign for Earth and all inhabitants! (Bold used for emphasis, never yelling)

COMMENT OF REBEKAH BUTLER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:06 p.m.

City, State: Branford, CT

Occupation: Photographer

Comment: Our basic survival needs are clean water and clean food. Without proper funding, education and support for our country's farmers, citizens and political leaders, we will most certainly be negatively affected and suffer the con-

sequences. It is due time to praise our farmers and advocate for a healthy food and agricultural industry if we are to prevail in the future.

COMMENT OF SHELBY BUTLER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:59 p.m.

City, State: Jackson, MS

Occupation: Middle School Teacher

Comment: I wish the farm bill wasn't so focused on corn and soy and instead looked to promoting smaller family farms that produce vegetables. I am particularly interested in supporting more sustainable farming practices.

Thank you,

SHELBY.

COMMENT OF LISA BUTTERFIELD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:02 p.m.

City, State: Eureka, CA

Occupation: Retired Educator

Comment: I live in a rural county with many small family farms. Our children need to grow up knowing that there is a place for them and a meaningful life available working on a small family farm.

COMMENT OF LISA BUZZARD

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 1:32 p.m.

City, State: Winston-Salem, NC

Occupation: Consumer

Comment: Please . . . Please . . . Protect our country! I believe a sustainable healthy and as close to natural (Organic) farming is the only way to ensure our health and safety.

These are the topics I hope you will support!

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

I feel support for organic farming is vital and would provide jobs for many as more small family farms could thrive! Our rural areas should be preserved and cherished.

And an aside Please Label all GMO food! I am not a guinea pig! Thank you

Sincerely,

LISA BUZZARD.

COMMENT OF ROBERT BYERS

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 6:56 p.m.

City, State: Spring, TX

Occupation: Purchasing

Comment: I would like to see organic farming as a priority in this bill for our citizen's good nutrition and health. Please prune the Big Ag subsidies and instead focus upon real capitalistic approaches such as correct labeling (*i.e.*, Genetically Modified) so that consumers can purchase correctly with full knowledge of what they are purchasing. Let the markets show how well capitalism can work by leveling the playing field in the food business—reward hard working organic farmers with their outstanding food products, and stop subsidizing Big Ag through tax payer subsidies. Thanks.

COMMENT OF DOROTHY BYRNE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:11 p.m.

City, State: Port Townsend, WA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Stop subsidizing corn. It's poisoning our food supply, creating obesity. National public health problem. Stop being owned by Monsanto. It's a disgrace. Watch your votes because I am. I do not trust anything but local organic and local meat eggs. I won't be poisoned but what about my neighbors who are brain washed to eat according to ag. profit pyramid that promotes vested interests not health, *e.g.*, sugar, grains full phytic acid. I could go on and on.

COMMENT OF MARY JANE BYRNE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:22 p.m.

City, State: Norfolk, NY

Occupation: Retired Teacher

Comment: I want to have the healthiest, most chemical free food possible to be available for consumers. It is often scary to realize what is being sold to us in our stores that we think should be healthy and isn't. Please do whatever is necessary to protect us. Thank you.

COMMENT OF M. C.

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:32 p.m.

City, State: Snelling, CA

Comment: Please support organic farming, we need non-GMO food production. The big agricultural businesses have more than enough money and support to go around, organic farmers struggle far too much. Thank you.

Sincerely,

M. C.

COMMENT OF R. C.

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:10 p.m.

City, State: Ashland, OR

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Our Country Needs to go Organic! **No** GMO foods should be allowed, **Ever**, anywhere! Check the records . . . GMO foods are Not healthy, but, just the opposite. America needs to Wake Up!

COMMENT OF JUDITH CABANAW

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:16 p.m.

City, State: New Boston, MI

Occupation: Retired Nurse

Comment: A good organic farm bill would support organic farmers and make it worth their while to grow clean pesticide free, **Non-GMO** crops/Tax break would help them/Stop accepting lobby money from Monsanto and others who would destroy our health with pesticide and GMO laden foods. Label our food with clear, honest facts, if it has GMO products in it **Label It** as such. Some will choose to buy it anyway, but we need to know what we are eating and we will be healthier for it. Thank you.

COMMENT OF SARAH CADORETTE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:43 p.m.

City, State: Shoreview, MN

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: Please consider the impact of slashing funding for food stamps assistance, a critical component of supporting the citizens in most dire need and keeping many out of certain poverty, which in turn impoverishes the nation. I support all parts of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286), and would rather see money spent on support for new and organic farmers than to give further subsidies to farmers who grow useless commercial crops, such as corn and rice (which are often just dumped as international aid, anyway, a benefit neither to our country nor the ones receiving grains they often don't consume). Thank you for your time.

COMMENT OF DEBORAH CADY

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 1:16 p.m.

City, State: Manchester, CT

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Please do not cut funding for Organic Research. This research has much more long term benefit to human welfare, including your children and grandchildren, than the dangerous and destructive methods of Industrial farmers or planters who subscribe to Monsanto-like GMO crops.

Farming with sustainable methods is the future. Think of providing your offspring with cancer-free, neurologically healthy lives and promote chemical-free farming and food.

COMMENT OF ELISA CAFFERATA

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 1:22 a.m.

City, State: Reno, NV

Occupation: Women's Health Care

Comment: Our health centers see over 50,000 clients a year in Nevada. Almost all of them are without insurance and struggling to make ends meet. Now, more than ever, the direct services our patients receive—including SNAP—are critical to their families' health and survival. Please protect our clients.

COMMENT OF ARIEL CALDWELL

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 02, 2012, 2:47 p.m.

City, State: Stone Mountain, GA

Occupation: Student

Comment: As you the next farm bill is being considered I would really like you to keep in mind U.S. minorities and young adults. Currently, the next farm bill is doing little to support these two demographics. The funding for Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program is inadequate and must be increased if we are to have proper support. Further, minorities are only increasing in terms of U.S. population, therefore, they should be supported as they will become, and already are, the new backbone of America.

Also, I really support the current proposed reforms to commodity subsidies that would replace the automatic direct payments with a shallow loss revenue-based payment. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

ARIEL.

COMMENT OF CONSTANCE CALDWELL

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:27 a.m.

City, State: Asheville, NC

Occupation: Bookseller

Comment: American food should be sustainably good. We work hard and need to insure our diet be one with health objectives and to be good fuel for our bodies. Good rules for healthy food is a must!

COMMENT OF JAMES CALLAWAY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:45 p.m.

City, State: Franklin, TN

Occupation: Botanical Processing

Comment: It is crucial that we craft an agricultural future that reflects the needs and desires of the public as well as the stewardship of our Earth and its resources. Organic and natural farming should be encouraged both as essential for quality food production and as a job creating enterprise. There is no excuse for not labeling GMO crops. The feeling is that our government has sold out to Monsanto and other big ag businesses.

You have the opportunity to be part of a solution. Please don't let it pass you by.

COMMENT OF TRACY CALLOW

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 12, 2012, 3:08 p.m.

City, State: Wimberley TX

Occupation: Graphic Designer

Comment: My family relies heavily upon the local farmers to bring fresh, healthy organic produce to our table daily. Every year, more and more of our local farmers are driven out of business because it's so difficult to compete with the Agri-giants, funded by our government. They are the same ones polluting our waterways, clogging our system with Genetically Modified Organisms (to which my kids are aller-

gic), and driving out existence varieties of vegetables due to their large scale monoculture. Our fine country desperately needs a farm bill that invests in the next generation of farmers and ranchers—not the rich Agri-giants—by guaranteeing \$25 million per year in mandatory funding for the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program. A strategy and commitment to support beginning farmer and ranchers entering agriculture is desperately needed. With an aging farm population, now is the time to invest in the future of American agriculture by nurturing new agriculture start-ups and supporting the small farmer more than the large farming corporations.

COMMENT OF RODERICK CALLOWAY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:25 a.m.

City, State: Frederick, MD

Occupation: Retired Pilot

Comment: The most important issue related to farming in this country is the strangle hold Monsanto has on the Legislators in congress. Family farms are becoming Extinct because Monsanto GMO seeds can unintentionally infect natural farms, thereby allowing Monsanto the right to sue otherwise innocent farmers of patent infringement. If you allow this monster to continue, your children will and grandchildren will become forever mutated from eating mutated foods. (A hint to the wise is sufficient).

COMMENT OF LESTER CALTVEDT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:27 p.m.

City, State: Elmhurst, IL

Occupation: Professor

Comment: I urge you to support organic and healthy agriculture. We buy only organic, if the products are available. We are in a health crisis, which is much worse than the deficit issue!

COMMENT OF DOROTHY CALVANI

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 6:46 p.m.

City, State: New York, NY

Occupation: Nurse

Comment: Our 2012 Farm Bill needs reforms that will:

- Ensure a sustainable future for American agriculture
- Create jobs and spur economic opportunities
- Equip rural communities for the 21st century
- Level the playing field for producers
- Support innovation for tomorrow's farmers
- Protect our natural resources

Thank you.

COMMENT OF CHRISTOPHER CAMERA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:33 p.m.

City, State: Columbus, OH

Occupation: Business

Comment: I am a veteran who served honorably in the military and comes from a long line of American patriots—dating back to the founding of this country and work with other such people who feel the same as me.

Stop corporations that are slow-killing the American people. Stop Monsanto and Dow from poisoning us—or else we will demand that they and you be forced to eat the GMO food yourselves. Why is does the Federal government raise the radiation levels of what is considered safe, thousands of times after Fukushima? Why are the Federal government and media covering up the massive fallout occurring and building up in the U.S. food, water, and air supply? Why are the leaders letting people be poisoned and die from this radiation and telling the people who they are supposed to serve? What do we need to do—start measuring ourselves all the radiation so we have it documented and then have a trial to try all our so called leaders for manslaughter and collusion with the monopolies? Once found guilty, the just punishment would be for those public servants to be forced to eat the GMO radiated food and water and not have any other options—like many poor people do not these days, after the monopolies in the banks have deliberately gambled away \$1 quadril-

lion and then expect the taxpayers to bail them—so they can continue crushing small businesses and any sense of a free market.

You're our public servants—not our kings—and we do not serve you—you have the honor of serving us. Do your jobs! The research from Dr. Don Huber and many others shows that GMO's cause organ damage and infertility. Why were there no safety studies done before putting this on the market—are you colluding with elites to kill us? Why are European countries, that are in many scientific areas much more advanced than the U.S., protecting their citizens from this poison while Americans are being poisoned? Any and all Federal officials in any three branches will be held accountable to the American people and God Almighty for any and all approval of letting this happen. May the Lord deal with you ever so severely if you do not start protecting the people like your supposed to do.

COMMENT OF ANNIKA CAMERON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:33 p.m.

City, State: New York, NY

Occupation: Artist

Comment: THE most important issue to me has become FOOD. In a country where supposedly we have no want for food availability and options, I have found that I worry about it more than anything else. I will not eat food that someone has compromised for their own gain. I will not allow my children to be guinea pigs of profiteers.

COMMENT OF CHRISTOPHER CAMERON

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 1:26 p.m.

City, State: Seattle, WA

Occupation: Preschool Teacher

Comment: I believe that nutrition is the first and foremost strength of a people. We're either living well together or suffering heedlessly. Funding health supplies both direct, and more importantly, indirect and long-lasting/long-term benefits which gives rise to a system of vigor and high function rather than one that becomes sick and seeks (as we begin to do) to self-annihilate/sabotage/depreciate.

COMMENT OF KAREN CAMERON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:40 p.m.

City, State: Seattle, WA

Occupation: CFO

Comment: Please stop funding the agricultural status quo and start funding local, sustainable, organic farming, conservation and education. Corporate agriculture and our corporate food culture are destroying our top soil and polluting our rivers, devastating the health of our people and driving up medical costs for preventable "lifestyle" diseases. Please stop bowing to big money and start leading our country to a better place.

COMMENT OF SALLY CAMERON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:21 a.m.

City, State: Rancho Santa Margarita, CA

Occupation: Chef, Food Blogger, Health Coach

Comment: You must make the farm bill work, not for big agriculture and big government, but for all of America and the people who count on good food for their families. This **Must** change! Please, fight to make it happen!

COMMENT OF C.H. CAMMON

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 06, 2012, 11:47 a.m.

City, State: Atlanta, GA

Occupation: Senior Community Service Coordinator

Comment: Why is there a proposed budget cut?

Has the Food Stamp budget decreased? If so, why are there advertisements encouraging seniors to apply?

If there is a budget issue, why not limit what participants can purchase? Presently, no non-food items can be purchased. What about excluding Shrimp, Lobster, Crab, T-Bone Steaks, Prime Ribs, Standing Rib Roast, high end food items. The "working people" who works 365, are surviving on group beef, pork, chicken and just

plain fish. What about all the junk food? There should be a listing of what nutritious items that can be purchased. I agree that we should help the needy with their nutritious needs, but I believe also that there should be some type of control as to what can be purchased.

I believe that if the distribution of the food benefit would return to the way that the Government Commodities were given many years ago, more people would find jobs.

We complain about people being over-weight, a lot of people are eating very well

I agree that many individuals need support, but some do not, there are holes in the system and some fall in and never come out. Some people have been receiving and not needing . . . but dressing better, eating better and bragging about how they're getting over on the system . . . something is wrong, and the real needy are being left in the behind.

I believe that the minimum benefit for seniors 65 and over with low income should be \$25.00, and they should not have to provide any type of bills . . .

Do the policymakers really know and understand what is going on in the "valley of truth"? Do the policymakers really care?

Why not set up focus group sessions to get opinions? I would definitely love to voice additional opinions and suggestions.

When can the public meet before the Members of the House Committee on Agriculture?

Thank you.

COMMENT OF DAVID CAMP

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 6:52 p.m.

City, State: Bellingham, WA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Forestry, Fruits, Greenhouse/nursery, Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Please use the power of government to foster and protect small local farmers. Agribusiness doesn't need subsidies; agribusiness should sink or swim without government assistance.

And re-legalize hemp! What kind of evil monopoly capitalist endeavor would ban it in the first place? Why don't you start representing the people and not the monopoly capitalists who buy you your jobs?

Systematic corruption is hard to overcome but don't you have any moral compass at all?

COMMENT OF BENITA CAMPBELL

Date Submitted: Friday, April 27, 2012, 9:00 a.m.

City, State: Burgettstown, PA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Other

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: First of all, separating us into producers and non-producers is very divisive. There are wealthy individuals who farm just enough parcels on their estates only for the purpose of subsidies. Second, I'm concerned about heartless politicians who magically believe that further restricting food stamps to people, some whose only income is food stamps, will make hunger go away. Perhaps these politicians think hunger in America is fine as long as we don't pay attention to it. As long as we continue to grind down the economy with budget cuts, hunger will rise.

COMMENT OF C. MARTIN CAMPBELL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:39 p.m.

City, State: Draper, UT

Occupation: Scuba Instructor/Scuba Business Owner

Comment: You only need to see the proliferation of organic produce in your local supermarket to realize this is a wonderful & sustainable practice. Please do the right thing here folks. Make your children proud of you. Thanks!

Sincerely,

C. MARTIN CAMPBELL & FAMILY.

COMMENT OF HOLLY CAMPBELL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:41 p.m.

City, State: Athens, GA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Specialty Crops

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: To whom it may concern:

All people deserve fresh, clean, healthy food. As the public wakes up to the practices of modern agriculture: eroded soils, polluted water, GMO crop dangers, degraded wildlife and ecology, and spikes in human illness, there is a demand for alternatives to these outmoded practices. People want organic agriculture (as evidenced in its exponential market growth) and the demand for buying local, chemical free produce, humanely raised meats & eggs, and from farms committed to wisely using their natural resources has continued to increase. The market is there, the farms are there, but we need to support this movement equally to modern agriculture.

Organic agriculture is the future of farming. Fund the future, not the practices that are harming our future, like modern agriculture. We need to funnel significant farm bill funds towards the public's interest, not the corporate interest. Please support organic agriculture and sustainable natural resource management for equal if not greater funding in the upcoming farm bill, because it is the future. We need to better support, financially shaping that future today.

Warmly,

HOLLY CAMPBELL.

COMMENT OF SUE CAMPBELL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:29 p.m.

City, State: Blue Ridge, GA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Field Crops, Fruits, Livestock, Vegetables

Size: 50–150 acres

Comment: Folks, I'm a 51 acre farm owner in a rural area of Southern Appalachia. What little I know and understand of the politics of addressing farm issues, I plead with you to keep the small scale farmers assisted and not threatened by the 'big boys'. Also important for you to consider (on behalf of the small farmer) is the threat of the 'big guys' in their crowding out the small farmer with GMO tactics that are dangerous to the basic food quality for the people to eat as well as to the livelihood of us farmers. Not only scary, there reeks of political favors and all the side issues of power-plays the small farmer has no 'in' to counter. We are all too darn busy keeping going!

Having been born and raised in rural Indiana, I know of relatives who have 'sold out' to the 'big guys' for the money and increased crop production—at the expense of health and who knows 'what' for future generations. Most of the folks I know (here and in Indiana) are not educated to what they are doing in the long run to jeopardize generations of people. Too much goes on over the heads of the common man.

As an overall plea, **Please** consider the welfare of basic farming practices without cow-towing to the 'big guys' promoting poisons and pesticides and GMO's. We farmers are an independent bunch, hard-working, and honest. We provide sustainable methods and quality food. That's the bottom line in deciding where to go from here!

Thank you so much for allowing this forum that I hope is earnest and not just a placating measure.

SUE CAMPBELL.

COMMENT OF SUSAN CAMPBELL

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 10, 2012, 5:19 p.m.

City, State: Oak Park, IL

Occupation: Healthcare IT Analyst

Comment: Dear Representative Davis,

Please fight hard to reverse any cuts made to the SNAP program in the farm bill. I volunteer at my local food pantry and I see the people this program helps every month. My understanding is that this is a well-run program and that the money spent in our communities has a positive ripple effect. I know that we have to get our fiscal house in order, but it does not reflect well on us to balance our books on

the backs of the poor when we are unwilling to raise taxes or close tax loopholes for those with influence.

Thank you,
SUSAN CAMPBELL.

COMMENT OF CLERAINE CAMPER

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 16, 2012, 9:04 p.m.

City, State: Oak Park, IL

Occupation: Social Worker

Comment: Please do not cut benefits to needy families and low income individuals who struggle to feed themselves and their families. I am involved with an number of hunger organizations and have face to face contact with hungry people. They need assistance from their political representatives to help them get the food they need to feed their family. Why can't we, as one of the richest nations in the world feed our people and our children. Something is wrong if we cannot so this. I ask for your help, not only in your vote, but in being a voice for the people who need help to eat. **No** one should be hungry on America.

COMMENT OF MARK CANRIGHT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:21 p.m.

City, State: Asbury, NJ

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Dear Congressman Lance and Members of the House Committee on Agriculture:

I am an organic farmer in New Jersey and I am hoping you will pass a farm bill in 2012 that supports organic farming, conservation programs including the Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program (FRPP), and the Beginning Farmer Program.

My family and I preserved our farm in 2004 using funds from FRPP, which is currently being combined with the Wetlands Reserve Program into a combined easement program. We hope you will fully fund this easement program, as it helps protect our critical farmland and wetlands.

I am concerned that farmers must be held to Conservation Compliance if they/we expect to receive any type of farm subsidy. As farmers, we face many threats to our land and water due to a changing climate and pollution, and we must do everything we can to keep our natural resources clean for all future generations. Tax-payers pay for most of the farmers insurance premiums at a price of over \$7 billion a year, and should expect a return from those receiving these payments in the form of natural resource conservation.

I strongly urge you to tie conservation requirements to federally subsidized crop insurance premium subsidies. To receive commodity subsidies or farm bill conservation payments, producers should have to comply with soil erosion prevention plans if they farm highly erodible land and promise not to drain any wetlands on their property. As you know, under the original conservation provision passed by Congress as part of the 1985 Farm Bill these very basic requirements applied to the receipt of crop insurance subsidies, but that requirement was later removed as part of the 1996 Farm Bill.

I agree with the National Farmers Union position of support for "the reestablishment of compliance requirements for Federal crop insurance eligibility so that all existing or new crop and revenue insurance or other risk management programs are subject to all conservation compliance provisions."

Thank you very much for the opportunity to comment on the 2012 Farm Bill.

Sincerely,

MARK CANRIGHT,
Asbury, NJ.

COMMENT OF MARGARET CANTER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 7:22 p.m.

City, State: Tallahassee, FL

Occupation: Nurse-Midwife

Comment: End subsidies to industrial farming and support the small farmers who need the help to produce healthy foods for our families. As a nurse-midwife I see the poor health consequences of government support to monoculture farming

that makes sugary high fat food cheap. We need more small farms producing fruits and vegetables without the use of harmful pesticides.

COMMENT OF JUDY CANTOR-NAVAS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:32 p.m.

City, State: Los Angeles, CA

Occupation: Writer/Music Programmer

Comment: We need infrastructure for providing healthy nutrition for our families, not practices that put our health in danger for the benefit of corporations. Create legislation that supports organic farming and access to healthy food for all.

JUDY CANTOR-NAVAS.

COMMENT OF PAT CANTWELL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:18 p.m.

City, State: Boulder, CO

Occupation: Computer Programmer

Comment: Please support only sustainable, organic farming practices! It is the only way we can protect future generations! Nature never intended itself to see chemicals and we must guard that closely for our children's sake!

COMMENT OF ELISE CAPLAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:16 a.m.

City, State: St. Petersburg, FL

Occupation: Independent Sales

Comment: We as Americans have become scared of our food the more we learn and see of the atrocities happening through ultra mechanized farming and bad animal care.

There is proof in the upswing popularized farmers markets. We want our food grown small and local and that's all there is to it.

COMMENT OF NANCY CAPONI

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:29 p.m.

City, State: Santa Barbara, CA

Occupation: Nonprofit Director

Comment: It is time to end tax-payer subsidies to huge agribusiness corporations that are destroying our clean air and water resources with dangerous GMO crops and toxic chemical applications. Instead, we want our tax dollars to support the food stamp program and small organic farmers only. Thank you.

COMMENT OF CAROLE CAPRIOTTI-MAY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:45 p.m.

City, State: Wilmington, DE

Occupation: Retired Registered Nurse/Nutritionist

Comment: The time has arrived that we have to act on feeding ourselves **Healthfully** in a responsible **Qualitative** manner as a nation instead of quantitatively. We are creative enough to halt the congested wheels of quantitative corporate feeding of ourselves and still be able to ensure all get nourished in this nation. Just let us do it! Transform agribusiness as it is known now to **All** organic, locally produced food supply and I feel totally confident that our creativity amongst our nation's people will pull together to ensure all are more healthfully nourished. **Please Be Bold & Courageous** and do what is right for our health & prosperity as a nation!

COMMENT OF NOEL CARDEN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:03 a.m.

City, State: Richmond, VA

Occupation: Sales Executive

Comment: I support the elimination or minimization of subsidies to large agribusiness and would like to see our farm policy work more for the benefit of smaller farmers.

COMMENT OF KATIE CARDENAS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:59 p.m.

City, State: Garner, NC

Occupation: Educator

Comment: In so many ways, it is important that we make a stand for this bill: Nutrition programs are critical to the health of children, but also to the well-being of our future. Hungry or undernourished children cannot learn as well so we are draining our future's intellect.

Give opportunities for people to become the answer. Funding programs that support beginning and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, organic farming, regional farm and food economies, and rural development. We need more farmers and ranchers, more sustainable food production, and more economic opportunity in our food system. When we support our farms, we value our land. We will better protect and preserve what we value.

Let people farm. Enough of machines in the field and suits in the office running things. Support family farmers that really need help, not the biggest farms that don't:

- End subsidies (aka direct payments and countercyclical commodity programs), and replace them with loophole-free agriculture risk coverage. Additionally, implement a cap on crop insurance premium subsidies;
- Ensure that limited conservation funding maximizes lasting environmental benefits: Limit funds to Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) for animal waste management infrastructure by eliminating the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) Livestock Set-aside and protect the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) from disproportionate cuts, and improve it by ranking applications solely on their conservation benefits.

COMMENT OF MELINA CARDENAS

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 11:33 a.m.

City, State: Draper, UT

Occupation: Administrative Manager

Comment: I support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

I believe it is very important, in fact the responsibility of people in power, to maintain order over the food that is being produced in this country. I do not believe that a giant agribusiness necessarily has in mind, the good of the people it is feeding, on the contrary, it feasts on profits. It is important to allow organic farmers to thrive, in order to let that choice of food be an option for people in this country. It is never a good thing when one entity has such a great deal of power; healthy competition is necessary to create a beneficial balance for the citizens of this country.

COMMENT OF TONYA CARDWELL

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 11:14 a.m.

City, State: Blacksburg, VA

Occupation: Mother

Comment: The "quick fix" that companies like Monsanto provide for our food is nothing but detrimental to the welfare of the American people. Sacrificing millions of people's health and safety for the sake of a handful of CEO's profits is a disgusting practice and can **Not** continue.

COMMENT OF ANNE CAREY

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 7:29 a.m.

City, State: Highland Park, NJ

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: I support a farm bill that is fair and supports healthy food.

I support the full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286). I also support fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.

As well as supporting the implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236) and maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

I want this farm bill to put the health of the people and the small farms ahead of the interests of the industrial agricultural lobbyists. The only way to stop the obesity epidemic in this country is to support the production of real food, not food derived from various corn products. There are thousands of people in this country that want to work towards this and we need a farm bill which supports that goal or gives us an opportunity to build our future. Thank you.

COMMENT OF DORIS CAREY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:32 p.m.

City, State: Cherry Hill, NJ

Occupation: Retired Biochemist and Nutritionist

Comment: Protect the farmer who makes his living by farming not the people who grow a little produce to get lower taxes. Also no subsidies to mega agriculture. Protect the organic farmers from the cross pollination and wind drift from GMO crops.

COMMENT OF THEODORE CARLAT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:44 p.m.

City, State: Dayton, WA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Poultry/poultry products

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Support Certified Organic agriculture and local food production. **No More** corn and soy subsidies. Support small farms, and farm diversity not monocropping. **Fund** a food system that feeds people nutrition not mass commodity crops. **Local, Organic** and **Fair** competition for food producers. **Do Not** subsidize chemical farming at all. Stop the chemical dependency now.

COMMENT OF ANDREW CARLILE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:40 p.m.

City, State: Salt Lake City, UT

Occupation: Mechanical Engineer

Comment: With healthcare costs soaring, an obesity epidemic, and diabetes rates increasing something in our food system has to change. We can't allow profits to come before the health of the general population. Organic and or healthy food needs to be a priority.

COMMENT OF DREW CARLSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 1:40 p.m.

City, State: Madison, WI

Occupation: Energy Efficiency Advisor

Comment: I believe that more of a focus on small producers providing food to local community is a must for our health. We need to work to not only improve rural food production but also urban food production as well. Please focus on sustainable, non-GMO and better that USDA organic food production policies and visions.

COMMENT OF GWENNA CARLSON

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 5:45 p.m.

City, State: Richland, WA

Occupation: Retired Office Clerk

Comment: Please consider the plight of senior citizens when discussing the farm bill. We work for many years, paying taxes, but with no voice in how those taxes will be used. So far seniors have had Medicare coverage and Social Security raises reduced and when we try to go back to work to close the gap between income and expenditures, we're unemployable except for an extremely few part time, minimum wage jobs. Most of us must choose between food and medical bills, utility and trans-

portation, *etc.* Please help us retain some dignity in our advanced years by allowing some care for those of us who have put out much for many years and now must put out more for failing bodies. Thank you.

COMMENT OF STACEY CARLSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:03 p.m.

City, State: Brooklyn, NY

Occupation: Freelancer

Comment: It is time for real reform, not handouts to only commercial farmers. We need to protect our land from over producing and use of dangerous pesticide and GMO seeds. It is time to support and protect our nation's food supply and system but not taking the easy road and letting commercial companies take over everything.

COMMENT OF FLORENCE CARNAHAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:19 p.m.

City, State: Burlington Flats, NY

Occupation: Anti-Fracking Activist, Retired

Comment: I do not produce for sale, only for my family. I raise all produce, meat chickens, berries that we use during a year and I share with friends and local food pantries. I buy from neighbors who produce what I can't grow.

Small farmers are the bread and butter of a rural community like the one I live in. And we need to encourage sustainable practices not big industry farming. We need regulations that are fair and balanced—not heavily in favor of the big corporations who produce toxic products that are killing the very soil the food is growing in. The chemical industry is in control and it doesn't benefit the Americans who need to eat the food produced in our nation it only benefits the corporations. They need to be persuaded that the patriotic thing to do is to grow safe food for Americans.

We have food deserts in the urban and the rural areas. Farmers markets are important for both populations. We have to drive at least 15 miles from our home to purchase anything fresh and not found in a convenience store. How can we have healthy Americans if we can't buy healthy food? I am starting to work on a farmer's market for several adjoining towns.

Subsidies for large corporate farms is not a fair and balanced way to produce healthy food that is available to all. When we had a farm years ago we had to sell out b/c we couldn't compete with large producers or products from overseas. "Get big or get out" is decidedly not a good American value.

There needs to be some way for small farmers to make enough money to see a future without selling out to fracking to make ends meet.

And we need farmland for food, not ethanol, gross amounts of animal feed or corn syrup, for example.

COMMENT OF STARR CARNEY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:36 p.m.

City, State: Cottonwood, AZ

Occupation: Retired

Comment: The health of the people of this country must come before the interests of big agra. Most of all, the people of this nation have the right to make choices concerning what they eat; our government is totally out of touch and act like they never got out of grade school or are from another planet.

COMMENT OF BARBARA CAROLAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:15 p.m.

City, State: Bayside, CA

Occupation: Consumer

Comment: Fresh, local, regional, statewide and national produce, fish, meats and dairy are what I buy and need to have encouraged and supported by this farm bill.

COMMENTS OF KENNETH CAROLUS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:37 p.m.

City, State: Brookville, OH

Occupation: Retail Sales

Comment: I also want a 2012 Farm Bill that expands opportunities for family farmers to produce good food, sustain the environment, and contribute to vibrant communities!

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:31 p.m.

Comment: I support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

COMMENT OF DR. LORRAINE CARON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:07 p.m.

City, State: Fort Collins, CO

Occupation: Naturopathic Physician, Mother

Comment: As a physician and a parent, I know just how important healthy food and a healthy environment is to our well-being. Our current farm bill certainly does not appropriately tend to both of these. It subsidizes corn and soy rather than fruits and vegetables. It doesn't go far enough toward supporting organic, sustainable and local farming and food initiatives. It's time to change this!

I support the full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).

I support fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.

I support the implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).

I support maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Thank you for your time.

DR. LORRAINE CARON.

COMMENT OF DEBORAH CAROSELLA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:01 p.m.

City, State: Los Altos, CA

Occupation: Self-Employed

Comment: I support the following and would encourage you to also:

1. The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
2. Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
3. The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
4. Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Sustainable farming and food production, environmental protections, development of Organic farming practices, Small Farm growers, Labeling of GMO's, Humane Farming practices—these are the most important issues for a healthy citizenry, country and planet. It's time we started leading the way again and not just in profits for the agribusiness, pharmaceutical, chemical, and biotech corporations who appear to own this country.

Do **Not** allow for cutting funding to vital programs such as nutrition, conservation and support for organic and sustainable agriculture.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF JOHN CAROSELLA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:21 p.m.

City, State: Los Altos, CA

Occupation: Therapist/Small Business Owner

Comment: Sustainable agriculture should be our goal. Organic production methods are less costly and more effective, and **Certainly** more sustainable than our

current conventional farming practices. GMOs are inadequately tested and demonstrably dangerous.

I support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

I encourage you to do so as well. Any other stand should be justified in terms of the will of the people, the sustainability of agriculture in this country, and overall environmental and economic sustainability.

Let's have a farm bill that encourages healthy foods—produce, not grains and starches, smaller farms, more localized production, and organic, sustainable agriculture. Profit for agribusiness should **Not** be the goal of the farm bill.

A healthy, sustainable food supply for the people of the United States should be the goal, and is a fundamental responsibility of the U.S. Government. Our current system, and the elements of the current proposal that have been made public, are not in alignment with this goal and responsibility.

Think about it. Please. Don't let lobbyists and campaign funding drive your priorities. Redirect the billions of taxpayer money towards a healthy, sustainable agricultural future for America.

Make a choice for the **People**.

Thank you for your attention.

COMMENT OF AMY CARPENTER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:08 a.m.

City, State: Eugene, OR

Occupation: Bookseller

Comment: Government support and subsidies for agriculture should NOT be going to already-profitable huge agribusinesses!

The farm bill must support the best agricultural practices: put the health of our citizens and our environment, and the livelihood of individuals (farmers and farm workers) ahead of the interests of industrial agriculture lobbyists.

To this end, I support:

- The Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- The EQIP Organic Initiative.

COMMENT OF SUE CARPENTER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 5:13 p.m.

City, State: Sequim, WA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: We feel there is room in our society for both organic and other commercial growers without one side having all the power. Please consider a more balanced approach so that those who chose to try to maintain a healthier lifestyle still have the freedom to do this. Now it seems that Monsanto holds too much power and encroaches on the rights of the small individual farmer.

COMMENT OF CAROL CARR

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:38 p.m.

City, State: Santa Rosa, CA

Occupation: Registered Nurse

Comment: Our farmers, our farms and our food need protection and support! Food is so much more than money! Please protect the farms and farmers that provide so much for a way of life that will disappear if you don't protect and preserve our lands and individual farmers.

Thank you,

CAROL CARR.

COMMENT OF IRENE CARR

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:38 p.m.
City, State: Duluth, MN
Occupation: Physician
Comment: Unsubsidized, organic raised food and livestock is essential to our survival. Now is the time for all of us to make the most evolutionary choices.

COMMENT OF SARAH CARR

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:44 p.m.
City, State: Plainfield, MA
Occupation: Therapist
Comment: I understand Members of the House Committee on Agriculture are currently accepting comments on the topic of agriculture. I hope you will hear and consider mine. Food is the most basic thing there is. As a therapist, I can say confidently that we literally and profoundly are what we eat. The state of food effects not just our physical health but our emotional balance and mental clarity. Food also ties together all other issues on this planet from corporate industrialization to class to spirituality to the environment and more. It is so incredibly basic that what happens with food is therefore global and far-reaching in its effects. Therefore, it is worth paying very close attention to what has happened to our food system. Whomever is overseeing food production holds an incredible amount of responsibility for the well-being of society.

I personally am very concerned about the state of so-called "food" in this country. Industrial agriculture has transformed our food system into one that is based entirely on 3 food substances: corn, soy, and wheat. Most food products at this point are food-like substances, not actual food. I used to be worried about the additives. Now I am disturbed by what happens to it before it is even grown (genetic manipulation). More and more people in this country are disconnected from the sources of food and their own bodies. So many are suffering from both obesity and malnutrition, not to mention sugar addiction caused by high fructose corn syrup in every product, food allergies created by an over-consumption of highly processed and repetitive foods, endocrinological disruptions, *etc.* I spend more on food than any other category on my life. It is so important to me to eat food that is healthy. I eat and want food for myself and everybody that has real nutrition and is really food, that is produced locally by people I know. I want it to be free of genetic manipulation and chemical pesticides and fertilizers. I want clean water coming out of the faucet, not full of fluoride or chlorine, and not available only in plastic bottles at the supermarket. I want a food production system that helps connect people to the source of their food, both the Earth and the people who grow it. And I want the production system to benefit all, not toxifying the air and water with chemicals nor wasting precious fossil fuels transporting it gigantic distances. I would like to see food production decision-making power given back to local governments.

Thank you for hearing and seriously considering my comments.

COMMENT OF CYNTHIA CARRIER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:15 p.m.
City, State: Bristol, CT
Occupation: Sell Holistic Dog Food
Comment: I feel that it is our right as Americans to know and chose what type of foods we are buying. The use of GMO seeds is of great danger to our organic crops, other countries do not allow this type of seed. Please take this into consideration next time you eat produce grown in the USA, and when you write the next farm bill. It should not be in the hands of just big corporate America, we have all seen what that has done for this country.

COMMENT OF SHEKINAH CARRILLO

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:55 p.m.
City, State: Pahoia, HI
Producer/Non-producer: Producer
Type: Field Crops
Size: Less than 50 acres
Comment: Small, local food producers are better equipped to provide food for the community than are the large agribusiness farms. We need to be supported, with more research done toward organic production. Low income households are better

able to provide for themselves working within these models, with a more sustainable future for all.

COMMENT OF LINDA CARROLL

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 12, 2012, 6:54 p.m.

City, State: New Orleans, LA

Occupation: Professor

Comment: Americans need a farm bill that helps small farmers, that provides people with healthy food, that protects the environment by avoiding harmful chemicals including those complicit in the Gulf Dead Zone and excessive use of water, and that helps rural communities.

COMMENT OF MIKE CARROLL

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 06, 2012, 10:05 p.m.

City, State: Bernalillo, NM

Occupation: Firefighter/Paramedic

Comment: The local foodbanks are a huge investment and prevent strains on other resources like healthcare. If people can receive better nutrition many simple diseases do not get to the point where people need to utilize emergency services.

COMMENT OF SCOTT CARROLL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:04 p.m.

City, State: West Tisbury, MA

Occupation: Landscaper/Artist/Activist

Comment: This is such an imperative issue at such a crucial time. The impact that this will have on our lives and the lives of our children and future generations is far reaching, from personal freedom to a myriad of health issues for both humans and the planet.

COMMENT OF SUSAN CARROLL

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:24 a.m.

City, State: Murray, UT

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: Farming in the United States should not be a private reserve for any business. Monsanto and other mega businesses should not be allowed to terrorize other producers. I want to eat real food—not food filled with spliced in pesticides. When a genetically modified plant kills birds and insects, that is not a plant to be eaten by humans. Return farming to farmers who care about the quality and safety of the food on my table.

COMMENT OF ANDREA CARTA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:19 p.m.

City, State: Manchester, NH

Occupation: Technical Support Representative

Comment: Support and promote Organic farming. Organic foods have a higher nutritional value. As a result, you feel fuller with less food. I am a living example of this as well as many people I know who have switched to organic foods.

Make it the **Law** that **All** GMO foods Must be labeled as such . . . **No Exceptions!**

No GMOs! They are extremely bad for the body, whether it is people or animal. The body is intended to take in foods as natural as the land they're on. When you start altering the food you plant, you alter the land it is growing on. Once you unleash that, you are starting a nightmare that could very like cause the land to be unusable because crops just won't grow. Even if it does grow, GMO foods have been linked to many health issues.

GMO is bad for the land. GMO is bad for the body. There is no place for it, regardless of whether it fills a company's or politician's pocket with money. In the long-run, that company and politician are going to be eating the same food they are poisoning the environment with. Once you poison the environment, there's no turning back. It's not worth the risk!

COMMENT OF BETH CARTER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 1:06 p.m.

City, State: Shoreline, WA
Occupation: Homemaker/Gardener

Comment: In the last few years, I have had to educate myself over many related and unrelated topics regarding nutrition and health. Through connections with friends and family, the information shared includes such notables as a USDA survey sent to landowners in Washington State asking for specifics of whether or not they grow crops on their parcels—under threat of incarceration. Yes, that's right. A survey was demanded via threat of incarceration.

Honey bees are becoming quite a hot topic and for good reason. Industrial agriculture business has become too big of a force internationally. All of this was possible due to the giveaways from the farm bill. Thus I must ask you to carefully and intentionally curb industrial concerns and protect, nay, revive interest in small farms with small net worth. Diversification is all well and good in an investment portfolio, but it has become *gauche* anywhere else. This, however, is exactly what is needed to save America as the dumbing down of America has begun through the food chain.

Protect family farmers from industrial concerns by working the farm bill to do just that.

Thank you for your time.

COMMENT OF KATHY CARTER

Date Submitted: Thursday, April 12, 2012, 9:10 p.m.

City, State: Chelsea, MI

Occupation: Homemaker

Comment: I'm a local food advocate and get over 70% of my food from local farms—small farms. That's sometimes hard to do, but getting easier. I want a farm bill that will make it easier for small farmers to take care of the land and reach out to local customers. I don't think large corporations need any more help in the form of subsidies, special regulations, marketing, *etc.*

COMMENT OF MARJORIE CARTER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:58 p.m.

City, State: Ballwin, MO

Occupation: Attorney/Mediator

Comment: Our food supply in this country must be safe for all of us and not laced with antibiotics and poisons or from genetically modified foods. Please pass legislation that protects our food supply and that does not protect greedy corporations.

COMMENT OF MARION CARTWRIGHT

Date Submitted: Monday, April 30, 2012, 5:44 p.m.

City, State: Lake Forest, IL

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: As you craft the new farm bill, please retain mandatory status/funding for the Know Your Farmer/Know Your Food. In particular we need to reduce costs for farms to transition to organic practices because the long term costs of the current chemical and monoculture practices are unsustainable both for the health of the soil, the health of the American public and the health of the water and pollinators. We also need to build in incentives for farmers to sign up for conservation compliance agreements. That is all going out the window if you switch to this revenue insurance plan that has no conservation-compliance requirement. We need to diversify crops on our farms as well. Acres and acres of potatoes or almond trees or corn or soybeans is not sustainable with pesticides. I am also very concerned about the fact that the Round-Up Ready crops now facing 11 (and counting) round up resistant weeds and now companies are working on 2,4-D ready crops. This is ecological insanity. Short term profits over long term health. Short term lower food prices for long term expensive health care issues.

COMMENT OF BETH CARUSO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:22 a.m.

City, State: Windsor, CT

Occupation: Registered Nurse

Comment: I want to eat food that is free of pesticide that does not hurt bees or contaminate human water as a result. I want to eat food that is non-GMO. Right now I have to shop at an Asian market to get non-GMO soy. I want to give my family healthy food that does not hurt the environment or our bodies. Until there is a food bill that helps local communities and takes big corporations out of the loop I will be boycotting factory owned farms and **Only** buying at my local farmers markets or food from overseas that is non GMO. Get the point? Thanks for reading.

Sincerely,

BETH CARUSO, a very concerned citizen.

COMMENT OF KATE CASALE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 7:19 p.m.

City, State: Alameda, CA

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: After a decade of working in communities affected adversely by a food system that prioritizes corporations and profits over communities and health, I urge you to advocate for our well-being.

Specifically, I ask you to advocate for:

- Full Funding for Programs that Strengthen Economic Opportunities for Small and Mid-sized Farmers and Ranchers and Improve Consumer Access to Local, Healthy and Sustainable/Organic Food. These include rural economic development programs, Farmers Market Promotion Program, the Value-Added Producer Grant program, Organic Certification Cost-Share Program, equitable crop insurance for organic producers, and Beginning Farmer Development and Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers loan programs. We urge you to reform the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program so that more funding goes to support healthy food access and local and sustainable food production and distribution. We also encourage innovations to better link urban and rural areas to maximize benefits for everyone.
- Protecting and strengthening USDA food assistance programs that fight hunger and improve nutrition. We must ensure that the Federal deficit is not reduced at the expense of low-income Americans by reducing funding for SNAP/CalFresh, WIC and other major food programs.
- Increasing Access to and Affordability of Healthy Food and Beverages in Underserved Communities. We urge you to support the Healthy Food Financing Initiative program, the Community Food Projects Grants Program, and incentives for healthy food and beverage purchases by clients of Federal food programs (including facilitating the use of SNAP, WIC and SSI benefits at farmers' markets, community supported agriculture and other direct marketing/delivery programs)
- Healthier Diets for Children. It is vital to increase the percentage of fresh fruit and vegetable purchases in school food procurement programs and expand the Fruit and Vegetable Snack Program. The government should incorporate more local fresh fruit and vegetable purchases into the USDA Commodity Foods program and the Department of Defense's (DoD) Fresh program for school meals. Shifting to better food and beverages would not necessarily raise costs and would improve health.
- Full Funding for Agriculture Conservation & Research and Extension Programs. Conservation, research and extension are crucial to helping farmers and ranchers protect soil resources, improve air quality and conserve water and wildlife habitat. Critical programs include the Environmental Quality Incentives Program and Conservation Stewardship Program. We also urge you especially to support research focusing on whole-farm management systems, on-farm solutions, and infrastructure that strengthen ecologically sensitive, local and regional food production. Existing programs include ATTRA/The National Sustainable Agriculture Information Service, Sustainable Agriculture Research Education, and the Organic Research and Extension Initiative.
- Full Funding for Programs to Promote Healthier Diets for All Americans. Healthy diets are essential for happy lives and save billions of dollars in health-care costs. Dietary improvement programs run by USDA's Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion, which oversees the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and MyPlate, should be protected and expanded over time.

Please support efforts to define a new Food and Farm Bill in line with today's needs. In the last century, the farm bill successfully ensured an abundant supply of cheap but often lower-quality calories. In this century, it must support healthier diets, diverse and resilient farming systems, and economic revitalization to help eliminate hunger.

Thank you so much for your support.
 Please take an opportunity to look at what young people are doing in their communities to make change at: (<http://www.rootedincommunity.org>) (<http://www.youthfoodbillofrights.com>).

COMMENT OF KIM CASPER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:17 p.m.
City, State: Seattle, WA
Occupation: Writer
Comment: We do not inherit the Earth; we borrow it from our children. Let the Earth be happy, the way **Nature** intended; she knows best. These other ways of manipulating foods destroys health in two generations. Let us honor the wisdom of Nature/God and take her abundance the way it is offered.

COMMENT OF JEN CASSELS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:00 p.m.
City, State: Bell Buckle, TN
Occupation: Teacher
Comment: Support small farmers and organic farming. Don't cut \$4 million from organic research funding and don't cut in half funding to support Beginning Farmers.

COMMENT OF TAMMY CASTEEL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:52 p.m.
City, State: Independence, MO
Occupation: Homemaker
Comment: We need access to locally grown organic produce, nothing else affects our health as much as this subject. Please support local organic. Thank you.

COMMENT OF JOHN CASTELLINI

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 5:27 p.m.
City, State: Tinton Falls, NJ
Occupation: Chiropractor
Comment: The ultimate source of all economies, including our own, is the land. The health of our bodies, of our communities, of our cultural and political institutions, of our nation and ultimately our planet are directly contingent upon our skilled and respectful use of this most precious and irreplaceable resource as well. We have confused exploitation with proper and ethical husbandry. Our policies have valued corporate profit over the well being of people and communities. If our children and grandchildren are to have a viable future, and given our current policies and farming methodologies this is seriously in doubt, we must, and soon, move from an industrial agriculture back to a local and human-scaled form of farming.

COMMENT OF JULIE CASTILLO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:59 p.m.
City, State: Fort Bragg, CA
Producer/Non-producer: Producer
Type: Dry Beans & Peas, Field Crops, Fruits, Greenhouse/nursery, Vegetables
Size: Less than 50 acres
Comment: I am a garden educator in 2 elementary schools. I have a teaching credential and a bachelor degree in Horticulture. I have been working with kids and nutrition education for 15 years and have seen changes in eating habits due to our garden program in partnership with our food service. The changes are profound and extend to the family and the community. Please support funding that helps school meal programs provide fresh fruit and vegetables and whole grains. We are making change and it needs to continue for the sake of the next generation and those that follow.

COMMENT OF K.A. CASTLE

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 10:50 p.m.
City, State: Pitcairn, PA
Occupation: Warehouse Worker

Comment: I fully support small organic independent farmers and I feel there should be laws in place that protect both their livelihoods **And** their lands from big arga-businesses such as Monsanto who only care about making money and do not care about what they are doing to our planet or the human and animal species with their GMO crops and hazardous pesticides. I have a **Right** to be health and to choose healthy and **Safe** food options. This is your planet and your family too! It is time to wake up and protect us all!

COMMENT OF BRIAN CASTLEFORTE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:46 p.m.

City, State: Van Nuys, CA

Occupation: Graphic Designer

Comment: Mr. Sherman, please understand the gravity of our situation in regard to the food system as it now stands. We are in grave danger of so many current and potential problems with not only our health and our environment, but in the survival of our species on the whole. There is no more time for red tape BS. The time for action is now. I beg you to please stand up for what is right, to not be bullied by these deplorable corporate chemical producing killers, and do what's right. Please do the right thing and help save our food system before there is no return. Thank you for your time and attention to this matter.

Respectfully,

BRIAN CASTLEFORTE.

COMMENT OF ELIZABETH CASTNER

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 02, 2012, 2:49 p.m.

City, State: Piscataway, NJ

Occupation: Student

Comment: The current iteration of the farm bill has the potential to change agriculture and food markets in America to address many economic and social issues, but serious attention needs to be given to how funds are distributed and what regulations are put in place. For example, some organizations have suggested attaching conservation compliance to crop subsidies in order to make ecological concerns a central focus, which is important because of our uncertain environmental future and its impacts on farming.

The intention of the original farm bill was to provide financial security for America's farmers, which was what was needed at the time. Food has become available and affordable for many Americans, but external ecological costs and health concerns have resulted from the agricultural system we have today. Farmland needs to be conserved and protected so that we will be able to continue producing food in the future. Commodity crops receive the greatest subsidies, but contribute the most to nutrient-poor diets that are causing health problems in communities that can't afford healthier options. Providing subsidies for vegetable farmers would encourage accessibility of healthier crops.

I think re-structuring of subsidies and implementing regulations of food available in SNAP are important changes to be considered. The livelihoods of farmers and equitable accessibility of nutritious food should be supported as well.

COMMENT OF LAURA CASTRO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:25 p.m.

City, State: Boone, IA

Occupation: Chemist

Comment: I am writing to ask the members of the House Agriculture Committee to support organic agriculture, and reject cutting research funds aimed at developing new and improved techniques to help us produce agricultural products in a way that is environmentally friendly, and sustainable. We as a nation must avoid recurring to agricultural practices that pollute the environment and degrade our natural resources.

We also need to have an improved farm subsidies system that doesn't put organic farmers at an unfair disadvantage. It would be wise to reduce the amount of money going to subsidize standard agricultural practices that don't yield healthy and nutritious food. The health of average Americans would benefit from reducing exposure to pesticide residues and genetically-modified crops that lack scientifically-sound safety studies, especially in light of scientific evidence that suggests otherwise.

Please lend your support to:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

COMMENT OF MORGAN CATALINA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:58 a.m.

City, State: Austin, GA

Occupation: Account Executive

Comment: We must consider the health of the nation over the benefit of large corporations for food security. We need diversification and to keep small American farms alive!

COMMENT OF ANTHONY CATALINO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:54 p.m.

City, State: New York, NY

Occupation: Restaurant Manager

Comment: We need to know what is in our food. I'm amazed that our country allows the food we eat to have so much unnecessary crap in it, that no other country allows. It appears to me that there is something our government is missing! We need more nutrition classes so our kids and adults know what to eat!

COMMENT OF ELIZABETH CATRAMBONE

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:25 a.m.

City, State: Millersville, MD

Occupation: Stay-at-Home Mom

Comment: Please do not cut funding for organic farming. Organic produce and foods used to be a specialty market. That is no longer the case. Consumers now know the impact pesticides and hormones have on our health and the health of our children. There is much more demand now for pure-farmed, non-GMO foods, pushing organic into mainstream markets, despite our existing economic condition. Thank you so much for your continued hard work and unbiased consideration on matters affecting the health of our kids. Not much is more important.

COMMENT OF RICHARD CAUDILL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:10 p.m.

City, State: Campbell, CA

Occupation: Retired Semi-Working Senior

Comment: It is essential that we support local farmers and encourage organic methods that lead to sustainable farming. If corporations are allowed to control the quality of food products and distribution solely for profit then we must object. Our government is our last hope for justice.

COMMENT OF MARK CAUSEY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 10:17 a.m.

City, State: Snellville, GA

Occupation: College Professor

Comment: Please ensure that the new farm bill has protections for small and midsize farmers, encourages and helps new and younger farmers to get started, and favors local, sustainable and organic agriculture. It should encourage and support farm to school programs as well as expanding the availability of fresh foods to under-served and economically challenged areas.

COMMENT OF LISA CAVENDER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:16 p.m.

City, State: Hartford, AR

Occupation: Computer Services Technician, Fort Smith Public Library

Comment: I strongly urge the members of the House Agriculture Committee to reconsider the current farm bill as it stands before you now. In particular, I ask that you reconsider cutting \$4 million from organic research funding and also to reconsider cutting the funding to support Beginning Farmers by ½. I feel very strongly that both organic farming and small farmers are the way to strengthen our health, our communities and our country as it strongly relates to our country's food safety.

I also support the full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286); full funding of conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs; the implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236); as well as maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Thank you for you time.

Yours in a healthy, organic future,

LISA CAVENDER.

COMMENT OF TONI CAYA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 4:40 p.m.

City, State: Woodstock, GA

Occupation: MUST Cherokee Volunteer

Comment: Please don't vote for this bill. Many people are without jobs and are having a hard time providing for their families since the economy is in such a mess! If the WIC or other means of help such as this is cut more people especially children will go hungry! Please reconsider voting for this bill, if for any other reason than for the innocent children!

COMMENT OF REBECCA CECENA

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 2:40 p.m.

City, State: Pine Valley, CA

Occupation: Health Equipment Sales Rep.

Comment: The only way for Americans to be healthier is to eat healthier. This means **No** chemicals, **No** GMO's and **No** hormones in our food supply. I am an organic gardener and strive to only eat and feed organic foods to my family of four.

Please look to the future of all of our children, including farmers, and **Do The Right Thing** for everyone's health. **Stop Pandering To The Big Money Ag Biz** and their lobbyists. Thank you!

COMMENT OF EMILY CECIL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 1:04 p.m.

City, State: Greeley, CO

Occupation: Dietetic Student

Comment: Sustainable farming practices, including organic and non-GMO crops of grains, roots, fruits, and vegetables need to be subsidized in order to protect our current and future food supplies and to insure the health of future voters.

COMMENT OF AMY CEDERLIND

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:35 p.m.

City, State: Lincoln, NE

Occupation: Disabled

Comment: Please fully endorse all provisions of H.R. 3286, fully fund the Conservation Stewardship Program and make sure any new insurance subsidies are tied to compliance with conservation programs, implement all provisions of H.R. 3236 and maintain the EQIP Organic Initiative in the new farm bill.

It is very important that beginning organic, sustainable farmers have the funding and support they need to start and maintain their farms. It is crucial that our land, the treatment and care of our animals and the health of our nation be supported in this farm bill.

Big Ag is to put it plain and simply evil. It has made our land sterile, our environments unhealthy, treated animals cruelly and disregards the health of humanity to make a profit. Sustainable organic farming supports the quality of the land. Free range, hormone free and grass fed animals provide more nutrients and are much healthier than Big Ag's pesticide grain fed, poorly treated, hormone filled animals.

The obesity epidemic and health crisis in America can be directly traced to Big Ag practices in this country.

Furthermore, GMO anything should in the least be illegal and at the most be labeled so that consumers know whether they are eating dangerous foods. Studies done in Europe have proven that GMO foods cause liver and kidney damage in mice. Hormone treated cattle has been proven to cause cancer and fertility issues in humans. Pesticides have been directly linked to cancer and other health issues in humans also.

I just can't say it enough, we need sustainable, organic farmers in this country. We need to go back to the way farming was before Big Ag took over and companies like Monsanto and Tyson have completely monopolized our food sources with their greed and shoddy, unhealthy practices. Not to mention buying the USDA off so that people don't even know, unless they really educate themselves, what exactly is going into the food they eat.

I for one will continue to spread the word about these practices, the corruption of the USDA by these companies and our governments' compliance with it and that eating local sustainable organic food is the only way at this time to avoid and not support Big Ag's evil ways.

All of congress is elected, not by Monsanto or Tyson, but by the people. They may fill your re-election coffers but we are the ones who vote. I will be watching how this farm bill turns out and spreading the word to all of my friends, family and basically anyone I can as to what is in it and who voted to approve it. So I can guarantee that at least some of you will be affected by your vote on this bill (Mr. Fortenberry).

Please do the right thing. You definitely have the support of the people of this country who vote if you do. We need healthy food, you need to stop supporting the greed of Big Ag business as usual and support sustainable organic farming that protects the land, the health and good treatment of our animals and the well being of our society. This is what you were elected to congress for.

Sincerely,

AMY CEDERLIND.

COMMENT OF MONA CENATIEMPO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 5:49 p.m.

City, State: Boonville, MO

Occupation: Retired Registered Nurse

Comment: America needs a farm bill that makes healthy food widely available to all Americans—including schoolchildren! We must provide flexibility for states to use existing food procurement programs to purchase fresh, healthy food from local farmers and ranchers.

COMMENTS OF CENTER FOR RURAL AFFAIRS

Date: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 3:28 p.m.

Name: Brian Depew

City, State: Lyons, NE

Producer/Non-Producer: Non-producer

Organization: Acting Executive Director, Center for Rural Affairs

Comment: Dear Agriculture Committee Members,

Along with 2,200 of our supporters who signed their names to this testimony, we write today to ask you for a 2012 Farm Bill that supports the best of rural America—family farming and ranching, entrepreneurship, and vibrant communities.

To that end, the next farm bill must include the following:

1. Limit farm payments—Cap unlimited payments. They subsidize the nation's largest farms to drive smaller operations out of business. Unlimited subsidies are the single most wasteful and counterproductive feature of current farm policy. Both farm subsidies and crop insurance premium subsidies should be subject to caps, so that payments are targeted to the small and mid-sized farmers who need them most.
2. Protect conservation programs—Conservation and good stewardship of agricultural lands should be encouraged and rewarded. The 2008 Farm Bill included several conservation programs that were steps in the right direction, and the next farm bill should improve and enhance these programs. The Conservation Stewardship Program and the Environmental Quality Incentives Program Organic Initiative are especially valuable incentives for farmers to conserve nat-

ural resources on their land. The 2012 Farm Bill should maintain strong support for both these and other conservation programs.

3. Invest in rural America—Investment in rural development has fallen by nearly $\frac{1}{3}$ since 2003. Reversing this decline is critical to creating and sustaining vibrant rural communities. At minimum, the farm bill should fund two critical programs to support rural entrepreneurship—the Value Added Producer Grants Program and Rural Microentrepreneur Assistance Program. The latter provides loans, training and help with business and marketing plans to enterprises with up to ten employees.

4. Support beginning farmer and ranchers—Getting started in farming can be expensive and extremely difficult for even the most motivated new farmer. The 2012 Farm Bill must seek a cross-cutting comprehensive approach to address beginning farmer and rancher needs. Among other things, it should provide funding for the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program, increase set-asides for beginning farmers and ranchers in conservation programs, and make credit easier to obtain.

By incorporating these four critical elements, the 2012 Farm Bill will support our small towns and rural communities in building a better future. It will create good jobs, and reflect the highest values of all of America.

Best regards,

BRIAN DEPEW,
Acting Executive Director,
Center for Rural Affairs.

Date: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 3:57 p.m.

Name: Steph Larsen

City, State:

Producer/Non-Producer: Non-producer

Organization: Center for Rural Affairs

Comment: Dear Agriculture Committee Members,

The Center for Rural Affairs gave our supporters an opportunity to make comments about the farm bill. 700 people took the opportunity and time to write to you. Here are their comments.* Please consider them as you make decisions about farm policy. Rural Americans want caps on farm subsidies and crop insurance subsidies, strong conservation programs, help for beginning farmers and strong rural communities. Please prioritize them.

Best,

STEPH LARSEN,
Center for Rural Affairs,
Lyons, NE.

(1) 90% of farms in the U.S. are deemed small by the USDA and while we may only provide 10% of the production we supply our local economies with good food to eat and jobs. Don't deny small farms their due. There is more to consider than just efficiencies of scale.

(2) A cap on payments is long overdue.

(3) A real turn toward sustainability in our food production system is essential to our long-term ability to feed ourselves. Think forward. Move beyond the status quo. Build a safe and sustainable farm and food economy.

(4) A very sad day in American when the small farmers that love the Earth cannot be heard and their families be put in a hardship situation.

(5) A viable rural needs young farmers and young farmers need financial encouragement to compete. Young farmers support the local community. Big farmers often go direct to wholesalers.

(6) Actually fund and utilizes the services listed in any farm bill!

(7) Additionally, small farms provide a source of fresh produce to local residents in rural areas—providing healthier food options with low transportation costs.

(8) Agricultural communities today face numerous threats. They include the consolidation of land ownership in the hands of large farmers, corporate farms and investment groups. This manifested itself recently when land in our area rented for over \$340 per acre. More recently there is an accelerating assault on mineral rights and natural resources to facilitate natural gas development by increasingly controversial practice of "Fracking". This method of extraction appears to ignore the stewardship that has long been the trademark of rural com-

* **Editor's note:** there are comments that are duplicated in this listing; however, they are retained as an overall part of the Center for Rural Affairs submitted comments.

munities. Remarkably, this process appears to be facilitated by an opaque alliance of elected/appointed officials, development practitioners and “special interests”. The farm bill needs to reconcile resources with need, and return equity to a process that has transitioned from the support of sustainable family farms to what appears to be corporate subsidies.

(9) Agriculture is the backbone of this great country of ours. Please hear the voice of the rural American farmer. We are struggling already to keep our rural communities alive. I have two small boys that we are raising on our cattle ranch. Without your support their future in agriculture and the future of our family ranch is in great jeopardy.

(10) Agriculture is the backbone of this great nation and FAMILY farms and ranches are the heart of agriculture. The farm bill needs to focus on Family farms and ranches and do whatever it takes to help beginning farmers and ranchers get started in the business to keep American agriculture strong and flourishing.

(11) Agriculture is the number one revenue stream in many of our States and your job is tied directly or indirectly to its success. The 2012 Farm Bill deserves your careful consideration.

(12) America has become way too much large corporation oriented. It's about time that the political pendulum swing back towards individuals and small producers. Otherwise we are going to lose more and more of our liberties.

(13) America needs more local organic family farms. The health of the country depends on healthy citizens. Healthy citizens make a prosperous country. Thank You.—BARRY W. WILT.

(14) American agriculture is in a sad state. As a farmer I feel caught in a system where my choice of financially viable production practices is more about choosing the least harmful practice to the environment and my community, rather than being able to produce crops and livestock in positive sustainable ways. Please don't cave to political hyperbole and corporate pressures that will only result in an even more unhealthy, industrialized agriculture.

(15) American Farms are suffering. They need our help.

(16) Americans depend on our small farmers, please support the 2012 Farm Bill.

(17) America's strength since before the war of independence was always the small farms and farming families. Agrobusiness doesn't need support; small farms do!

(18) Another essential program to fund is the National Center for Appropriate Technology's Sustainable Agriculture Project, formerly known as ATTRA. It provides invaluable information to farmers about how to work with the land and manage their businesses in ways that regenerate the local ecosystem, which in turn increases the stability of their business, decreases the costs of healthcare and disaster relief in the region by cleaning and stabilizing the ecosystem, and provides a healthier future for our grandchildren.

(19) Another thing that happens by supporting small farmers is the increasing Farmers Market movement in the country. These Markets encourage people to get together meet each other and buy good food. What could be better?

(20) Any logic for not doing what is put forth above completely escapes me. I do not want continued welfares for large farming operations to the demise of our natural resources and family farm operations.

(21) Any real chance at food sustainability has to include support for small & beginning farmers!

(22) Any reasonable person can understand that to be a good steward to the land, there are limits as to how much land any one landowner can manage. A government program that limits payments to that reasonable limit is a responsible government.

(23) Are hardworking farmers are a great benefit to a rural community and they should be given a fair shake. The monster farms, not so much.

(24) As a beginning farmer I think it's pretty tough to have a contract in its second year of three cancelled and see large farms (with lots of money) in our area continue to receive their funding and added funding . . . How does this work?

(25) As a business owner in a rural community, we partner with and support our neighborhood farms.

(26) As a farmer in Rensselaer County, NY and particularly one who is focused on grass-fed and grass-finished beef production, I very definitely want to see full funding for the USDA NRCS Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative, EQIP, CRP, and WHP programs. More particularly we need to focus on the great opportunities available to grazers in Up-state New York and New Eng-

land. In New York alone we have 3.5 Million Acres of unused or under used grassland and proximity to the largest meat consuming market in the country. Also, I will say ALL USDA subsidies to corn and soybean producers need to **End Now.**

(27) As a former migrant farm worker—I can only say that the back-breaking, pesticide-illness-laden work of our farms workers, is long overdue for humane compensation and work conditions.

(28) As a grandson of a late and successful farmer, it is important that today's generation have the same opportunity that my late grandfather did when he began farming, a long time ago. Let's help the small and mid-sized farmer because farms are an important component to our economy.

(29) As a longtime resident of the south and a small farmer I have a full understanding of the potential for agriculture in the region both environmentally and economically—but it only works if we return to the model of the small farmer! To do so we need to be free of corporate lobbyist interests that make small farms difficult to grow, to sell, and to start. I am a young person with hopes of contributing to my community through agriculture but have little hope to do so without legislative support on the Federal scale. Thank you for your time and your open ears.

(30) As a member of California Rare Fruit Growers I am constantly dealing with the problems caused by industrial scale agriculture when the smaller operation, and even suburban backyard growers get little or no help.

(31) As a small farmer, I feel that I am a crippled David against a healthy Goliath and it will get worse. Please make changes with the small farm in mind.

(32) As a strong supporter of organic farming, I strongly advocate for organic farming systems and ask that you . . . Fully fund the Organic Research and Extension Initiative (OREI) at the 2008 level. Endorse all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286). Support all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236). Maintain EQIP Organic Initiative and do NOT cut the Conservation Stewardship Program.

(33) As a woman who raised award winning sheep on this farm in an environmentally sensitive way for 47 years, I cannot emphasize enough what programs like EQIP and the Conservation Stewardship Program have meant to me! I rotationally grazed my sheep on birdsfoot trefoil pastures for up to 10 months a year, (in Minnesota), and I held my ground! No erosion here! I have also been active in starting a very successful beginning farmer program in MN 25 years ago, and it is still going strong. Stand up for the small farmers, they are the backbone of this country. Stop babying the CAFO's and the Big Corn and Soybean Boys . . . they don't need it, they are bad for the land, and THEY DON'T hold their ground!

(34) As a young person interested in farming and healthy food, it is critical that congress pass legislation that prioritizes the creation of a healthy and sustainable food system that allows for young people to take leadership, as well as learn from the generations before.

(35) As an organic produce farmer I have been an important part of my community by providing year round and seasonal jobs that pay at or above the going rate. Farm programs have never offered anything to me until the EQIP and CSP program came along. We now participate in EQIP and it is a valuable incentive to invest in conservation measures that we value but that are difficult to justify when creating budgets and doing cost analysis. Please continue to include funding for them. Also, please increase funding for specialty crop insurance. Food farming is even more risky than grain and other commodity crop farming and is equally important to our rural community's health and the health of our urban partners—the consumers.

(36) As an urban resident, I know the importance of supporting rural communities, and especially small and mid-sized farms, but urban farmers need support as well.

(37) At this time, it is important to support small businesses including family farms and ranches. The big businesses have enough, do the right thing.

(38) Average of American farmers makes it a demographic essential for beginning farmers to get a leg up.

(39) Be Just to Rural America!

(40) Beginning Farmers and Ranchers should be provided timely job-related information and current awareness service by the Extension agents.

(41) Being from Mississippi, farm legislation is very important to our state. Our rural towns are suffering and Federal initiatives to support small business and family farms is good for our communities.

(42) Better wise up and start representing the constituency that you're supposed to serve, not the monied interests and corporate farmers that lobby for that huge AG bill payoff . . . follow the lead of those who elected you or you will be voted out of office.

(43) Big Agri business is getting handouts while the smaller farmers struggle with funding cuts and loss of Government funding. Why is corporate America getting handouts for taking their business overseas? Why are small farming communities struggling to employ their citizens? Invest in Rural America! Generate employment for Americans! Stop Corporate Agri-Business welfare!

(44) Big farming needs no help right now. It is the small and organic farmers and their belief in conservation that is our future.

(45) Biochar and the Agrachar product will sustain the soil that small farmers grow food with. Please save the soil, air and water !

(46) Bring back funding for the RC&D's, that group has been missed this past year.

(47) Bring back small farms and sustainability.

(48) By subsidizing huge farms and feed lots you are damaging Americans in the following ways: (1) destroying small farming, (2) polluting our precious air, soil & water, (3) fostering the "foods" that are most detrimental to our health: animal products and high fructose corn syrup. Consequently, we will also have to pay the cost for environmental degradation and healthcare!

(49) By supporting the smaller farms you are supporting the small communities with the buying power of the many individuals that will continue the support their communities. It isn't so with the larger corporations who go elsewhere for their supplies. They also do not comply as readily with the conservation practices of the smaller farmer.

(50) Cap unlimited farm payments. They subsidize the nation's largest farms to drive smaller operations out of business. Unlimited subsidies are the single most wasteful and counterproductive feature of current farm policy. At minimum, the farm bill should fund two critical programs to support rural entrepreneurship—the Value Added Producer Grants Program and Rural Microentrepreneur Assistance Program. The latter provides loans, training and help with business and marketing plans to enterprises with up to ten employees.

(51) Cap unlimited farm payments; protect conservation programs—everyone in farming should know that monoculture is means death sooner rather than later—look up Irish Potato Famine to learn more about monocultures. Small farmers usually produce different crops to keep the soil productive and crops healthy. Corporate farms rely on monoculture (and possibly GM) crops and chemicals. Time will show this will kill us. **Invest In Rural America.**

(52) Cap unlimited payments and keep the programs that support the small and mid-sized farmers that need the most. I support the dialog that is presented above and hope that you do the same. Thank You,

(53) Cap unlimited payments. Thankx—JOHN PROCTOR.

(54) Capt. USAFNC . . . disabled 100% . . . beginning sustainable farmer with the help of my family and the FVC . . . Farmer Veteran Coalition. Pay attention and avoid another Post-Viet Nam mess . . . once was enough . . . this time help the vets from the very beginning, not 30 years later.

(55) Clean Up the River Environment (CURE) fully supports these four critical elements of the 2012 Farm Bill.

(56) Congress must end this collusion with big business agriculture to eliminate the small farmers. Once a monopoly on food is achieved by 2 or 3 conglomerates who will then supply the bulk of America's food supplies, the lack of actual competition will allow price fixing as has occurred in every other financial enterprise in history. This is totally unacceptable and cannot be allowed to happen. Support the small American farmer and allow the competitive marketplace to flourish as this is one of the cornerstones of a free market society.

(57) Congressman Lucas, where is the truth and transparency? We only get double speak from you sir.

(58) Conservation compliance should be tied to insurance programs. That is one way that we ensure a return for our investment in U.S. farms. We also need clean water and healthy soils.

(59) Conservation of natural resources and CRP programs are very important and should be maintained or enlarged.

(60) Corporate farming and ranching is killing the heart of American farming and ranching, heritage and values. Government subsidies and lenient regulation of corporate farms have led to the demise of the quality food produced and to the extinction of true farming and ranching in local communities across the country. It is the small farms and ranches and their practices that represent

real food, real people and real America. Support beginning farmers and ranchers and put an end to carte blanche support of corporate farm and ranch enabling in America. Give beginning farmers and ranchers a real chance to live and continue the American Heritage of agriculture and ranching.

(61) Corporate interests cannot continue to shape our policies, especially on matters as important as reliable food production. Having thousands of independent farmers is far safer than a few larger corporate facilities that can more easily fail, get bought out by foreign countries, or mismanage their facilities and land. Our country was built by family farmers, don't destroy them.

(62) Could we consider fairness? . . . that seems to be a word from a foreign language . . . But it is encouraging that it is beginning to get some attention. I am retired but am a willing cheerleader in your efforts.

(63) Create insurance programs that work for beginning farmers and diversified crop/livestock farms. Currently there is no insurance for producers like that.

(64) Crop Insurance and other farm payments must be tied to conservation compliance to save our soil and water for future generations. This should be national policy.

(65) Current farm prices have been a boon to rural communities, a cyclical decline in prices—which will happen again—will be a real bust.

(66) Cut Aid To The Largest Farms But Not Too The Small And Mid Size Farms.

(67) Dear Legislator, The 2012 Farm Bill is essential to our nation's health. It is essential that we stop paying large farmer's subsidies to continue to ruin the environment with mono crop farming. We need to encourage small farmers to make a significant contribution to the nation's output with special crops that no large farm can produce. Thank you in advance for your support.—ROBERT FRIEDMAN.

(68) Dear Legislators: Please consider capping payments to wealthy farmers. Did you know that wealthy farmers purposely purchase new equipment and extra farm-services only to get out of paying Federal taxes? Also, these wealthy farmers are at or near retirement. That means 55 years old and up. Did you know that the average U.S. farmer is 55 years old? What about our beginning farmers? They can't hardly get their foot in the door because farming is not affordable. And, right now, the land market is too competitive. But, it won't be in twenty years. Who will feed our country in twenty years? Almost every farmer in my county is nearly sixty years old! Their children up and moved away to the cities. They have no interest in farming. How do we encourage beginning farmers? Support them. Invest in rural communities. This means money. We're in trouble if we don't. The future of U.S. farming relies on government action. Put a cap on subsidies to wealthy farmers—they'll still farm without them. They don't need a government reward. Reward the beginning farmers that show an interest in feeding America now and into the future. Let's throw conservation and mentoring beginning farmers into the same hat. By nurturing both our beginning farmers and our land we will be able to economically and environmentally sustain our country. Thank you.—HANNAH JAKOB.

(69) Dear Sirs—Please consider the "Transition" (TIP) and beginning farmers options that will most benefit our returning troops and even those College graduates that need the help to transition into farming as a profession.

(70) Diversify, Diversify, protect small farmers not corporate growers—they're trying to kill us.

(71) Do not forget about the millions of small farmers who continue to work hard to provide safe food and protect our water and natural resources. Require people who receive subsidies to live and work on the farm.

(72) Do not forget the importance of the family farm to the future of our small towns and small schools. The rural economy needs more entry level farmers, not more absentee landowners who see land only as a profit machine.

(73) Do not forget what an actual farm is.

(74) Do the right things and stop supporting huge corporate farms who need it the least, even if they are the ones lining Congress' pockets.

(75) Do you represent us or the corporations?

(76) Don't bend over for special interests. Do the right thing.

(77) Don't forget small towns and rural areas!

(78) Don't forget the little guys.

(79) Don't let Cargill run the show! And get them out of the USDA! Notorious market-rigging "Crop Reports" are destroying both USDA's and Congress credibility! Do your Job!

(80) Each town, village & county needs to invest in rural development. No more kissing up to the industrial mega “farms”.

(81) End all payments and subsidies to corporate owned farms and ranches (those not family-owned)

(82) Enough has been said, thank you

(83) Every farmer should be included.

(84) Everything is for the corporation farms . . . who in-turn hire unionized works to help push up the prices of all agricultural items . . . This country was begun because of the family farms who supported the growth with prosperity to the families and those who bought the goods from them . . . Don't turn your backs on the small farmers who lively hoods depends on what they grow (fruits vegs. live stock) and also show the children the integrity and responsibility of a work ethic that carries them throughout their live . . . (Protect conservation programs. Invest in rural America . . . Support beginning farmer and ranchers by incorporating these four critical elements, the 2012 Farm Bill will support our small towns and rural communities . . . in building a better future . . . It will create good jobs, and reflect the highest values of all of America.)

(85) Every time we have a recession in the national economy and, or inflation hits, value of our natural resources at the farm gate decreases in relation to the cost of all purchased inputs for their production. Rural producers are forced to cut corners to remain in business, or produce a great deal more with less. It does not take long to see that this system is not sustainable, economically, environmentally or socially. Shall we continue to support a system that is leading to either foreign rule or corporate totalitarian rule? Who in our system supports democratic principles? I was an Agricultural teacher for 30 years and in my town the people closest to the land who understood the basics of land stewardship, economics and civic responsibility where primarily 60(small farmers). Every one of them voted in the local government, today less than a dozen live on the land and vote or participate in the local government decision making process, though several have more influence on local decision making than all the rest due to political and business influence. What is happening to the democratic system that we teachers taught for 30 years through FFA and Experiential Education? Those people are all retired and out of decision making. Who took their place? A few corporate “persons”, no doubt. What can you do about it? Support small rural business, farming, and Agricultural Education. Limit the subsidy to large Farms.

(86) Factories are important. Farms are important. But factory farms?

(87) Factory farms are poisoning ‘we the people’ and our government is paid off to let it happen

(88) Fair's fair! Let's help the metaphorical 99 percent of family and smaller regular farmers keep their heads above water and serve the 99 percent of us Americans.

(89) Families in rural America can a little assistance in this economy.

(90) Family farms are a way of life. Corporate farming kills this way of life—and kills small towns, too. Support small to midsize family farms and help new producers get started!

(91) Family farms are the true supporters of the American people. The American people want fresh, local food that supports their neighbors and local environment. Congress must recognize this and support the family farms in return.

(92) Family farms have been the backbone of America for generations and generations. Mega/Corporate farms are not only a fairly recent development, they are overwhelmingly ecologically unsustainable and destructive. Don't reward the mega-farms; support the family farmer!

(93) Family farms have our interests in mind and they understand the importance of taking care of the environment. They need our support.

(94) Farm payments should be limited to small farms and AGRIBusinesses should be excluded

(95) Farm payments to the nation's large farm corporations need to be capped. It is the medium to small farmer that needs the financial assistance. Conservation should be encouraged for landowners if our country wishes to continue to have the beautiful land we have now.

(96) Farmers are NOT represented by Farm Bureau. The farm bill must make things easier for small farmers—not large farms.

(97) Farming is a very comprehensive endeavor and the small farm will save the U.S.

(98) Farming is still important in the U.S. and congress should provide funding for people like myself who want to start a farm but lack the funding and need support and training to achieve this dream.

(99) Farming is the backbone of America. It is important that we support rural farmers.

(100) FDR started this to help the family farms survive. Someone argued that was unfair to big and corporate farms so they were included. Now whatever is left of the family farms is forced out and only the biggest are allowed to survive. I suspect this might be so that all agriculture is encouraged or even forced to join the stock market and help support the struggling Wall Street and bankers who seem to need much more than they are now getting.

(101) Food consumers want safe food choices that only small farmers offer right now. The big companies care only about profit and NOT the safety of the food sources. People do not want GMOs, pesticides and other gross negligence to continue from our agencies that are supposed to protect us. Those seats are filled with self-agenda seekers who only are working for their own agenda, NOT the safety of the food Americans eat. Once we poison all of this generation there won't be a way to undo what has been done. Is anyone listening to American people?

(102) Food is a necessity, not a commodity. We need the next crop of small farmers to provide fresh, local, organic foods to our communities. Agribiz can hike somewhere else. We don't need vast monocultures, genetic modification or chemical conglomerates owning our seed stock.

(103) Food is our most valuable natural resource. We should not leave it to corporate profit to determine how and what we grow what goes on our tables. Please support sustainable, safe, and healthy agriculture. It is good for the farmers, good for us, and good for those who come after us.

(104) For a strong healthy agricultural base for our country, invest in small farms. The repeated pollution-events from mega farms is shameful and should not be encouraged by subsidies.

(105) Forestry is part of America's agriculture, don't forget it. conservation and rural development go hand in hand.

(106) From the ground up . . .

(107) Fund programs that get fresh food direct from farmers into schools to get a new generation excited about fresh healthy food.

(108) Get in touch with the small farmers, the organic farmers, the people who truly steward their land, and stop being tools of Big Ag and the lobbyists for companies like Monsanto

(109) Get rid of ethanol subsidies as well as ethanol programs, the use of 40% of U.S. corn production on ethanol, more than is used on livestock feed or human consumption . . . a product that is a hydrocarbon net loser, is absurd . . . advocate a non food source oil source for running diesel engines on pure oil, not biodiesel, another net loser . . . pure vegetable oil to run diesel engines for farm and highway use, from crops grown by small landowners and small entrepreneurs to distill the oil into usable form . . . just make Detroit/Japan/Korea/etc. get on board w/ technology that was proven at world's fair in 1900 . . . a non food source oil for diesel engines, grown by landowners w/ 200 acres or less . . . Yours in utter dismay—Stephen Murphy

(110) Get the lead out! Limit payments to mega farms and dummy corporations

(111) Get your hands out of the working man's pockets!

(112) God bless—do continue to help the "little person"

(113) Good demand for grain crops at this time has made grain prices raise to a proper level so direct payments are not need at this time. Weather is the problem. It can destroy a crop in a very short time so the Crop insurance program is critical to keep but it must be supervised by USDA to keep it working properly for all areas of farming.

(114) Government "subsidies" aid American farmers provide the lowest percentage of food costs of any nation in the world.

(115) Gov't programs should level the playing field by encouraging young beginning farmers. The established farmers don't need assistance.

(116) Healthy food production needs assistance, not corn for methanol, sugar for creating unhealthy foods, tobacco (for obvious reasons), and more wheat.

(117) Help save the smaller farmers—they need it.

(118) Help the small family farms of America. They are what this country was built on. Don't desert them now. I don't want the factory farms to eat up the land. Help young soldiers come home and start their farms and their families. That is what America is about.

(119) Help the small farmers and those just starting out.

(120) Help the small farms which are the back bone or our new farming systems that are closer to the end-user.

(121) Help those who have helped us

(122) Help those who need it most. Isn't that what subsidies are for?

(123) Helping small family farms get started creates more jobs than one factory farm. We need more farmers.

(124) Here in northeast Iowa we are proud of the many small farmers who feed us healthful, local, and often organic produce. We believe they deserve the same consideration and support as large commodity producers. In fact, we believe they are contributing more to soil and environmental health than industrial agriculturalists.

(125) Hi: I want to repeat what has already been said. The 2012 Farm Bill must support the best of rural America—family farming and ranching, entrepreneurship, and vibrant communities. To that end, the next farm bill must include the following: 1. Limit farm payments—Cap unlimited payments. They subsidize the nation's largest farms to drive smaller operations out of business. Unlimited subsidies are the single most wasteful and counterproductive feature of current farm policy. Both farm subsidies and crop insurance premium subsidies should be subject to caps, so that payments are targeted to the small and mid-sized farmers who need them most. 2. Protect conservation programs—Conservation and good stewardship of agricultural lands should be encouraged and rewarded. The 2008 Farm Bill included several conservation programs that were steps in the right direction, and the next farm bill should improve and enhance these programs. The Conservation Stewardship Program and the Environmental Quality Incentives Program Organic Initiative are especially valuable incentives for farmers to conserve natural resources on their land. The 2012 Farm Bill should maintain strong support for both these and other conservation programs. 3. Invest in rural America—Investment in rural development has fallen by nearly $\frac{1}{3}$ since 2003. Reversing this decline is critical to creating and sustaining vibrant rural communities. At minimum, the farm bill should fund two critical programs to support rural entrepreneurship—the Value Added Producer Grants Program and Rural Microentrepreneur Assistance Program. The latter provides loans, training and help with business and marketing plans to enterprises with up to ten employees. 4. Support beginning farmer and ranchers—Getting started in farming can be expensive and extremely difficult for even the most motivated new farmer. The 2012 Farm Bill must seek a cross-cutting comprehensive approach to address beginning farmer and rancher needs. Among other things, it should provide funding for the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program, increase set-asides for beginning farmers and ranchers in conservation programs, and make credit easier to obtain. By incorporating these four critical elements, the 2012 Farm Bill will support our small towns and rural communities in building a better future. It will create good jobs, and reflect the highest values of all of America. I hope you will consider these point when you vote and make decisions on the behalf of farmers and ranchers. Sincerely—ERIK CLEVELAND.

(126) How about showing support for the family farmers who are “hanging on” to their legacy? It's time someone at the bottom gets rewarded.

(127) How can small produce and pork producers get any help ?

(128) I agree help the small farmer and stop giving to huge corporate run farms . . . These laws were meant to help small struggling farmers not mega giants . . .

(129) I agree with the National Rural Life Conference, we need a better farm bill. Do not take money from SNAP.

(130) I am 17 years old and beginning my career in organic agriculture, We young and beginning farmers need the governments help to regenerate the land and boost our local economies.

(131) I am 25 years old and have just started working on a 20 acre organic farm in western Minnesota. We are an organic island in a sea of Round-Up Ready; all the huge farms around us, soy and corn mostly, are conventional farmers destroying their land, and ours with chemicals, and are recipients of insurance subsidies. While we're out 10 hours a day hand weeding and cultivating, the farmers across the road throw their seed in the field and hope for disaster, because in most cases they'll get more money from the insurance than from the actual crop. This is a backwards way to encourage people to go into farming, to provide the real food that our communities need. Support organic and support healthy soil that can keep feeding our country for generations. Support local farms and support the local economies that keep our country running. Please support these points on the farm bill.

(132) I am 34 years old and have been around farming my whole life. I have always wanted to farm, but I find it impossible to get started.

(133) I am a beginning Farmer in Connecticut and I just funding cut—not too happy when I am seeing local large truck farmers still getting their payments

(134) I am a beginning farmer in western Montana. I would not be able to develop my farm business without programs such as NRCS' Organic EQIP program that cost shared critical infrastructure to get my business going. Please keep money designated to programs that kick start farmers like myself.

(135) I am a beginning farmer who produces mixed vegetables, the continual growth of large scale monocultures that are decreasing the economic resilience of rural economies, decreasing the amount of people (and jobs) needed per parcel of land, and encouraging practices that poison our land and water should not be subsidized by the government to continue running out family farms and increasing the price of land barring all those except large players to enter the market. I appreciate your attention to this issue.

(136) I am a small farmer who has received absolutely no Federal aid to build an aquaponic greenhouse and sustainably manage my land . . . because there are no funds available. You bet I'm concerned.

(137) I am a young farmer, ready to spend my life providing food for my country, thanks for listening to my voice

(138) I am among the small farmers who are fortunately not affected by the lack of any subsidy but I am among a minority who are fortunate enough to find ourselves in this position. Too many larger operations than mine are essentially living from hand to mouth while the largest operations are awash in cash and have no trouble receiving subsidies. If it weren't so pernicious it would be funny but none of us are laughing. It is well past time for both sides of the aisle to recognize we are all Americans an stop with the partisan gridlock that is strangling the majority of the hardest working sectors of our economy. Try digging a hole and setting a fence post by hand and you will get the picture.

(139) I am an experienced small farmer, and I recognize the need to support enthusiastic young farmers who are the future of our national food security. Please make sure that beginning farmer programs continue to be funded, as well as programs like EQIP that can help beginning and disadvantaged farmers with the funds they need to get started with farm infrastructure. Thank you.

(140) I am disgusted that big farms have subsidies at all, and dismayed at the many cuts to small farm programs and to farmers market nutrition programs. Big agribiz does not need or deserve help from my taxes but small farmers struggling to help bring quality food to their neighboring communities do. **Cap Payments** to large farm producers!

(141) I am for conservation programs and helping farmers save their land. HOWEVER, there needs to be a limit and we NEED small and mid size farmers to be able to sustain their living. Please CAP the unlimited payments and reward good stewardship by supporting the Conservation Stewardship Program and the Environmental Quality Incentives Program Organic Initiative.

(142) I am not for sale, are you? End crony capitalism or the voters will.

(143) I am sick to death of for-profit legislators that sell out their constituents.

(144) I am speaking up for small farmers urban and rural and for those of us that want to obtain our food from the small producers that utilize sustainable practices and that produce food that myself and many others I know want to eat. It is apparent as well that the notion of free enterprise doesn't exist and that many of those that claim that there is too much regulation that constrains business don't mind legislation that is protectionist and opens the public coffers to them always at the expense of small producers, the working classes and of course the poor. This is shameful yet representative of the take over of government branches, Do the right thing and support the producers that need the most assistance and those of us that want THEIR food!

(145) I am writing you in support of a 2012 Farm Bill that is supportive of small and medium size farms and ranches that operate sustainably taking into consideration environmental stewardship and the need for a safe and nutritious food system for this country. The 2012 Farm Bill needs to encourage and support local and regional food systems that connect growers to their local markets. There needs to be support in the farm bill for capping payment and crop insurances that is equitable and supportive of smaller growers. As the population of farmers and ranchers age, we need to promote careers in sustainable agriculture and to promote the entrepreneurial spirit in U.S. Agriculture. This is not an endorsement for the corporate framing model. The 2012 Farm Bill needs to support a greater link within our food system between rural and urban communities. I have been instrumental in the promotion of Urban Agriculture in

Detroit, MI. and continue to promote educating the community, particularly youth, on matters of sustainable agriculture practices. I appreciate this opportunity to share my views with you as together we create a more sustainable and equitable food security system for this great nation.—RICK SAMYN.

(146) I believe all subsidies should be shared equally.

(147) I believe Oregon's Delegation knows the importance of the small family farmer and rural farms, but they cannot compete with big corporate farms. Your voice is more important than ever.

(148) I believe that there definitely needs to be caps on payments to large farmers and more help focused on small to mid-sized farmers. More help for individuals that would like to begin farming, that do not have substantial resources available to them or a family to back them up. I am an individual that would love to enjoy the farming way of life, but do not have the resources to start myself at this time.

(149) I do not agree that GMO crops are the same as natural or heirloom crops, I believe they should be studied and tested. Not rubber stamp approval

(150) I don't like to see big payments going to big operators so they can continue converting oil into "food" in non-sustainable ways. I work with college students that would love to go into farming to grow healthy food at a fair price. How do we help them?

(151) I don't think small farmers should have a cap on payments because then how will they ever become big farmers.

(152) I don't think this farm bill should even be on the table until the presidential election is over. Right now we have too many paid for Republicans. They are on the dole and bought and paid for by factory farm interests. If the rural, small farm, and conservation interests are not taken care of I plan on voting everyone of them out of office.

(153) I favor a level playing field for small farmers, including new farmers. It's only fair.

(154) I feel it is critical for small farmers to be able to take back some of the ground that they once were able to farm. They are the backbone of America's meaning!

(155) I grew up in Rural Nebraska and know how vital running a farm is to the community. Allowing for the growth of new young farmers is important to keep the community thriving.

(156) I grew up on a 160 acre farm in Southern Illinois . . . and my farming community is dead; the people scattered, and the land is mostly unfarmed. It was not the soil giving out, but the pressures and price changes and the price controls by large corporations (read: *The Omnivores' Dilemma*) that destroyed my farming community. Today, thanks to those manipulated price structures and subsidies to giant corporate farms, small farmers are an endangered species. Small farmers, like small business everywhere are the backbone of American ingenuity and entrepreneurship; they are part of the wholesome part of America that has built us into a strong nation. And we are losing that. Please support small farmers, keep subsidies for small farmers above and beyond the subsidies for the large and wealthy factory farms. This is a part of America we can't afford to lose.

(157) I have been a long time supporter of the Center on Rural Affairs and my parents supported the Center before me. They truly represent the best interests of the rural communities and those who produce our food. I join their comments.

(158) I have seen these outrageous payments for large farmers for decades. We have budget problems and farmers have very high commodity prices. It is now the time to stop this nonsense. If you do not it tells me you do not care about the deficit and it is just lip service.

(159) I have two daughters who currently farm with me who want to own their own operation in the future and will need this type program to make that possible.

(160) I know it is hard for you to put yourselves in someone else's shoes. But you are intelligent people. Please do what is right and return our agriculture back into the valuable system it is supposed to be. Thank you.

(161) I know this won't do much good, the fat cats will still get their payoffs from the entrenched—but maybe someday you will have an honest streak and stop the payola to BigAg and do what is right and support small family farms. **We Do Not Need** so much corn! Disgusted with all you paid for rubber stamps in D.C. . . .

(162) I like to have funding for beginner farmer without stipulation of pre-farming experience.

(163) I live in Texas on a small farm. I am sick of this going on year after year, the Big Ag farms getting their subsidies when their profits don't even warrant subsidization. You are supposed to look out for the farmers who need help.

(164) I live in town now, but I still have family and friends on the farm. Most of them are old. Rural communities will die unless these changes are made to encourage young people to live and farm in rural Kansas and other states.

(165) I myself have taken advantage of the beginning farmer programs offered. They helped me to better understand the importance of conservation and land stewardship. they also gave me a jump start into being a producer

(166) I really want support for beginning farmers.

(167) I really wish that they would help out beginning farmers like myself. Till this day they have denied me help but i won't stop trying because we are the future of community supported agriculture. Thank you.

(168) I respect stewardship and conservation on agriculture land. I believe that stewardship of the land is linked with the small communities in farm country. I support resources dedicated toward developing and enhancing vibrant rural communities in the farm program.

(169) I should hope that I can look at my law makers with respect by the time I will pass my bar exam and that justice IS being served on behalf of small beginning farmers even at the expense of the large ones. You would not want to hear me at any of your hearings sir/madam.

(170) I should not have to pay income taxes to support millionaires.

(171) I shudder to think what our food would be like if there were only a few big and influential farm-concerns left. Please don't let that happen.

(172) I stand with Justin Doerr. All returning vets need financially and emotionally supportive programs to reintegrate them into society. Justin's choice to farm (organically, I hope) lends new meaning to the phrase, "Food not Bombs!" Please support Justin's ideas and all others that peacefully reintegrate our hard-working, often traumatized vets into society. If we have money for war, we can find money for these life-giving, creative programs.

(173) I strongly agree that farm payments need to be limited. The "large" farms are not the ones that supply the farmers markets and get food directly to the consumer.

(174) I strongly concur with all of the recommendations made by the Center for Rural Affairs, and I respectfully urge you to act in accordance with them. Thank you very much. Sincerely—MATT MEACHAM.

(175) I strongly support Justin's position . . . it is in America's best interest

(176) I support a cap on unlimited payments. The farm bill is meant to help family farms, not large corporations whose mantra has been profit over conservation and sustainability.

(177) I support beginning farmers and ranchers. They are the heart of family and small business enterprises. It is important to support our small towns and rural communities in efforts to create good jobs and support the American Dream.

(178) I support FAMILY farmers and sustainable agriculture.

(179) I support organic, local farms. Please help support them as well. Provide good healthy food, keep the environment clean and healthy and create new jobs. Please, Please support this bill!

(180) I support programs for beginning farmers and land conservation.

(181) I support programs for beginning farmers and land conservation. I believe farm payments should be capped—to reinvest in rural development and the small and mid-sized family operations that need them most.

(182) I support programs for beginning farmers and land conservation. I believe farm payments should be capped—to reinvest in rural development and the small and mid-sized family operations that need them most.

(183) I support small farmers and ranchers. I believe you should re-think this bill.

(184) I support the four critical elements outlined above, and believe that they MUST be included in the 2012 Farm Bill.

(185) I support the small farmer, all need to be supported, but the big farmers are like corporations, they need to lose their perks

(186) I think it time to end all farm subsidies. Crops are at record prices, insurance all but eliminates any risk, The large corporate farmer is milking the system. End all subsidies

(187) I think it's vitally important to give new farmers a chance to get started farming, especially on small, organic farms. Giving Vets this chance is doubly important. Thanks.

(188) I urge our legislators to do all in their power pass legislation that will protect the small family farmer and make it possible for more young people to begin farming. Small family farms have always been the backbone of our nation. The small farmer takes better care of the land than these owners of huge farms who are interested in buying up as much land as possible.

(189) I Urge You To Support A Bill That Provides Money For Farmers Of Fruit And Vegetables And Not Just Corn, Cotton, And Soybeans. Our National Obesity Epidemic Needs To Be Fought With Better And Affordable Food. Also Support The Conservation Easement And Protection Parts Of Farm Legislation.

(190) I want my tax dollars used to support small and moderate sized farms that produce food locally, sustainably by people who are invested in the health of their land and local economy.

(191) I want small farms and beginning farmers to receive the support they need to run successful farming businesses.

(192) I want the farm bill to emphasize support for small farmers, rather than agribusiness. The bill must include provisions that facilitate small farmers' success. Programs for veterans should get special attention and long-term support/funding.

(193) I want the farm bill to support family farmers and organic agriculture, not factory farms.

(194) I want to be a farmer someday . . . and I don't plan on it being any more difficult than it should be.

(195) I want to say increase the number of minority women like to me in this farm bill. I need space to create space on a farm in East county to grow yams for my business. Please give me some options. Thank you.—BERYL MCNAIR.

(196) I want to see folks buy clean, healthy, local and affordable food. Statistics show that I'm not alone. You want to build your campaign war chest. Perpetual campaigning and bowing to the biggest donors supports that statement. Our interests are not aligned. Casting your vote for favors (campaign contributions) paid with taxpayer money (subsidies to massive operations) is not doing the vast majority of the public much good. Please, please take a stand and support beginning and small farmers and ranchers. Support the ancillary businesses involved with these smaller operations, *i.e.*, small, independent food processors, packagers, butchers and *etc.* This will increase jobs and decrease waistlines (medical expenses). Be a hero and save some small communities from going the way of the ghost town, while you're at it. You help us; we'll help build that war chest of yours. Hundreds of thousands of small donors will have no problem outpacing a few big donors. Farmers Market season is upon us. I'd love to campaign for a legislator that campaigns for me. Thank You.

(197) I want to see payment limits! Stop abusing a logical system (intended to support farmers during occasional hard years) to routinely subsidize corporate farms

(198) I was told that internet petitions mean nothing to Legislators. But, I will sign anyway. Small farms need help to establish and survive. More and more are developing out of passion and necessity and it seems the Federal Government is trying to squash them. Only the Legislators can make a difference to help small farms and if they don't, we will vote them out. Because, people are tired of big government and big food. They want small local farms back.

(199) I whole heartedly agree that raising the payment limitation resulted in government funded expansion of larger farm operations. Farm payments were designed to insure that average sized farms could stay in business through the tough years. Allowing larger payments gave operators funding for larger machinery and land, crowding out smaller farmers.

(200) I would like a bill that supports sustainable agriculture, organic interests and the research and people interested in innovative integrated agricultural systems that take the best of organic and conventional practices in order to design new cropping systems that limit environmental impacts while maintaining economic viability. Incentivize environmentally sound agronomic practices even if they require diversification!

(201) I would like the farm bill to support sustainable farming initiative by the small local farmer which would encourage and enhance their ability to sell locally. This includes beef, eggs, chickens, and raw milk.

(202) I would like to thank Senator Debbie Stabenow for her efforts on the farm bill and the favorable "specialty crop" provisions. However, more needs to be done

(203) I would reiterate, cap or do away with farm subsidies and insurance subsidies. These subsidies should target small farmers who need them to weath-

er tough times, not to industrial “farms” who use them to drive down price, compromise food safety, and maximize short-term profits at the expense of the land and the consumer.

(204) If Congress keeps on taking stands from lobbyists, these officers should all step down. They are no longer for the people. Below is what we want, not GMO crops, nor dead animal carcass

(205) If smaller farms go under, we'll have sold-out our entire agricultural production means to the corporations.

(206) If the wealthy corp farmers get 90% of Government payments, lets change it to wealthy get 10% and the poor and middle class get the 90%. You would have a more stable market in agriculture and no one would be squeezed to struggling condition of survival. actually there would more business for the equipment manufactures and more jobs available.

(207) If We Can Help The Banks We Should Help A Young Farmer Get Started!

(208) If we hope to have any future. If we want to return to quality foods, community, and right lively hood. We need to ensure that it's not only big business and the rich who can get started in farming.

(209) If we want the USA to become more sustainable, the farm bill must reflect the needs of rural farmers.

(210) If We Want To Help Young People Be Employed Then Helping Them Get Started In Farming Is Essential. Hats Off To Young People Willing To Work Hard To Feed The Citizens Of Our Country! We Owe Them Our Support.

(211) If we're going to subsidize we should give more to “special crops” (what regular people call food) and less to row crops which are primarily farmed by corporate farms.

(212) If you don't help the small and midsized farmers you are un American.

(213) If you pass any more farm bill components that benefit the conglomerate farmers, and deny family farms to start and succeed, you are no different than any of the major U.S. corporations who had to learn the hard way that shipping jobs outside of the portion of the economy that ensures their future, and you should be ashamed and abolished from future representation of ANY American other than yourself!

(214) I'm a small farmer and wouldn't be anything else. Please do the right thing!

(215) I'm trying to start a small farm here in whites creek tn and setting aside money for ventures like my families is what helps us get started. This is a bill that could really get small business started and sustained here in TN. Include money for small and mid-sized farms!

(216) I'm volunteering about 20 hours a week to provide support & guidance for our community's farmers' tailgate market. Please include our small farms in funding for their fiscal health.

(217) I'm w/a disabled Marine and I held on to 25 ac. for 29 yrs living in another state. Since the economy has gone down the home we live in in VA we can't buy and plan on utilizing my land to live and do a start up farm helping Vets somehow. Those that own around my acreage have caused nothing but problems including destroying wetlands. I spent days researching my local area FSA and Conservation Program contacts, loan data programs you name it if I could find something useful I hunted it. Lotta Veterans are looking to farm don't leave a Vet out because they do represent the future of rural towns and their existence. Heck where my land is the population is 3,800 in town yet they managed to produce an Eagle Scout who is building a Memorial to Vets whom passed from the town, 28 in all.

(218) In a growing population of small farmers, specialty crop growers and multiple species herding operations, we need to realize that people want to grow and raise their own “healthy” food. sustainable farming is the future, NOT the big corporate farms. Please support the small acreage farmer as they are our future for nutritious food.

(219) In addition, each thriving small farmer can help reduce our dependence on gas & oil for transportation and also get produce to the table while it is still fully fresh and healthful.

(220) In addition, it is critical to fully maintain support funding for the National Organic Program (NOP).

(221) In addition, please maintain funding for the Outreach and Assistance for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers (OASDFR) program. This a vital program for helping the next generation of farmers.

(222) In my opinion, small farms are the only thing between us and a looming food shortage. Mega-farms, not only deplete the soil by not rotating crops, they poison our land by dumping huge amounts of chemicals, and consequently, they poison our water supply. In addition, GM crops also contaminate “clean fields” and they use even more chemicals than conventional crops. If we are to survive as a species, we must assist the small farmers. For they are the last line of defense.

(223) In my opinion, the farm bill is critical to those of us in rural America. Please support a farm bill that creates opportunities for farmers instead of further putting them at a disadvantage.

(224) In Oregon, healthy, sustainable, and financially stable local family farms are an absolute necessity for community vitality. The health of the land and promoting the next generation of farmers is the life blood of our future. The 2012 Farm Bill is a make or break bill for the future of Oregon.

(225) In summary, please help support family farms in Kentucky by using the above measures. Thank You

(226) In these difficult budget times it is ridiculous to extend taxpayer dollars to the largest corporate farming operations. They have the efficiencies of scale to compete on their own—without any government payments.

(227) Include greater incentives for organic and sustainable practices, land preservation and perhaps reimbursements for acknowledging and preserving endangered species found on the property.

(228) Increasing funding and attention to small local farms and beginning farmers is vital if an effort to save and restore our economy is what our ultimate goal really is.

(229) Industrial farming is bad for the environment, rural communities, food quality, young farmers, and our health. The U.S. government should not subsidize corporate farming.

(230) Instead of large payments for a few big farmers we need to support more young farmers who want to start farming as well as efforts in conservation in hopes of having stronger rural communities.

(231) Invest in individual development accounts for beginning farmers and ranchers—access to land and capital are the two biggest factors preventing farmers from getting started.

(232) Invest in rural America—Investment in rural development has fallen by nearly $\frac{1}{3}$ since 2003. Reversing this decline is critical to creating and sustaining vibrant rural communities. At minimum, the farm bill should fund two critical programs to support rural entrepreneurship—the Value Added Producer Grants Program and Rural Microentrepreneur Assistance Program. The latter provides loans, training and help with business and marketing plans to enterprises with up to ten employees.

(233) Invest in rural America and small farmers and ranchers!

(234) Investing in rural America is critical for our nation's future. Please protect our children's future and stop giving large corporate farms unlimited resources.

(235) It has been shown that food produced from small, organic operations is the healthiest. Where would you like to get your food from? Support small farms!

(236) It has never been more crucial to protect, support and grow our smaller-to-midsize ag operations and invest in rural America. It is imperative to cap unlimited payments to the huge corporate farms and foster and protect smaller operations in order to keep diversity and fairness in the marketplace. No less important is real, substantial support of conservation and agricultural stewardship programs. We must feed the world, and that must drive the decisions made regarding the 2012 Farm Bill. There is more riding on these issues than simply who gets the money . . . rather, who will feed us affordably and maintain a venerable, now vulnerable way of life. Rural Americans are still the best stewards and the steadiest environmentalists of the Earth. It is a natural result of making your way and living close to the land. Protect and invest in rural America. The average age of the Sandhills, Nebraska commercial cattle rancher is about 73 . . . Who will replace him/her? Support new farmers and ranchers ,create opportunities for more and better jobs in our rural areas. A good example is the CO Rural Rehabilitation Program which allows motivated individuals to find funding for agribusiness in creative ways ,important in that current banking policies have NO interest building or even supporting growth in ag. In fact banks have been known to state that they have interest in lending ONLY to those who don't need financing; those inheriting ag operations, for example. You represent us—so represent our interests. Thank you.

(237) It is a travesty to see money flowing to large operations while small and beginning farmers struggle desperately to survive. Please find it in your hearts to help hard working people who love the land and strive to raise quality animals and crops, while protecting the environment.

(238) It is critical that farm policy do two things: (1) support small and mid-size operations, and (2) maintain limits on the amount of subsidies available to a one "farmer."

(239) It is extremely important in this time of economic hardship to do everything possible to assist the small family farm and those trying to get started in farming and ranching. The economic impact of small farms/ranches in rural areas are much more than most people realize. Please help protect and support a treasured way of life.

(240) It is high time to make meaningful changes in the farm bill. You've been making excuses for years. Cap those subsidies and put the money into the conservation programs as well as Beginning Farmer programs.

(241) It is imperative that we encourage young beginning farmers in every way we can!

(242) It is important to protect our local food supply, but not at the expense of our environment. Smaller, local producers are usually gentler on our lands, are stewards rather than the exploiters that massive agro-business is.

(243) It is more important now more than ever that small town farm spaces be allocated the necessary means to keep producing food for the future.

(244) It is the small and medium sized farms that are the lifeblood of rural communities. Support a farm bill that supports them. It's good for family farmers. It's good for rural communities.

(245) It is the small farmer who needs the help, not the big corporate ones. They make enough profit and have plenty of perks. Small farmers are better stewards of the land, use fewer pesticides, and don't practice monoculture.

(246) It is the wrong time to reduce supports for food aid to poor and permanently unemployed, elderly and handicapped. If anything, these programs need to be augmented as the ranks of needy grow.

(247) It is time to get rid of the commodity support payments which are distorting agricultural practice. U.S. funds are better used in programs targeted to maintain a farming population and conserve critical resources such as soil and water.

(248) It should require labeling of GMO foods, discourage the planting and use of GMO foods and encourage and support organic agriculture.

(249) It's all about driving the small family farmer out of business and having big farms control food production. This land is being set up so only the wealthy will have anything. They only want the rich and the poor. No room for a middle class anymore. A handful of people will own this country, just like those countries in Central America.

(250) It's crucial to invest in rural America. It's my future and yours. The time is now.

(251) It's important to cut the subsidies to large farms and ignore programs helping the poor and small farmers. Your conscience should be your guide.

(252) It's important to help new farmers get started as they are the future. Helping the wealthy and powerful is just plain stupid as they're doing fine on their own. Giving start up farmers a hand up is important so they can plant and grow our food of the future.

(253) It's time for our legislators to stop doing the "you pat my back and I'll pat yours" program and start looking out for your average constituents instead of the very wealthy just to get campaign funding.

(254) It's time to get your hands off agriculture and allow people to produce all the food that they can, keep what they earn and live their lives as free people with God-given rights and a constitution of free people. Stop the Corporate handouts and the outright theft of money from hard working American Citizens! Do your job for a change and stop lining your pockets—live Morally!

(255) It's time to protect and support small to mid-sized farmers in our state!

(256) It's time to start aligning agricultural policy to support growth of healthy foods (*i.e.*, fresh fruits and vegetables) rather than commodity surpluses. Don't cut SNAP, TEFAP, CFSP funding! Stop trying to balance the budget on the backs of the most vulnerable members of our population!

(257) It's time to turn things around and put Small farms first and do what we want to keep them going.

(258) I've moved to Lawrenceburg, IN 47025 Please change my mailing ZIP Code.

(259) I've wanted to start in agriculture for years but haven't been able to for the same reasons as Justin Doerr. I'd love to have the chance to follow my dream and work Gods beautiful land and supply America with much needed resources.

(260) Just do us right!

(261) Keep beginning farmer programs funded. Without new farmers there is no need for farm bills down the road.

(262) Keep farm business growing. This is past, present and future need for our country. God bless you in the act of approval the Bill for growing this business to feed the hungry.

(263) Keep funding for EQIP and NRCS fencing and High Tunnel programs . . . absolutely essential to starting up a vegetable operation!

(264) Land is expensive and my family lacks the capital to fulfill our fervent wish—to farm. I hate to say it, but anything the government can do to make it easier to farm, start farming and stay farming, including “gotcha” regulation enforcement would help.

(265) Large agribusiness and large farmers are a threat to economic efficiency, the environment and rural communities. You know what the right thing to do, so do it.

(266) Large corporate farmers should not receive Federal support. Only small family farms should.

(267) Large farming operations and agricultural corporations are concerned only with quantity and profit. This is what commodities are all about—produce more so we can feed the world (and boost out profits). Do you know that corn commodities don't feed people? The majority of corn produced feeds cattle (confinement lots, not grass fed) and cars (ethanol, not really the best fuel)—and all for quantity and profit. The largest public outlets for commodity products are the Wal-Marts and Menards (goal: large quantities, lower cost—a bribe). The result of all of this? People in our own backyard are hungry, unhealthy, and have access only to highly processed foods increasing obesity, diabetes, cancer, *etc.* (increasing health costs). And, small farms and small town local grocery stores are disappearing, eliminating locally grown foods and locally owned businesses. Please do not make any decisions that will allow large corporations more profit and more power—they already own too much of people's lives. Please support a farm bill that emphasizes quality of food, quality of local businesses, and quality of life for all local people.

(268) Let's bring farming back to a an honest profit and loss business. Invest in rural development instead of giving subsidies to the wealthy few.

(269) Let's do what we can to support smaller farmers and cut back on the financial support to big agribusiness.—DONALD MARSDEN.

(270) Let's pass legislation that ends Corporatocracy and brings back Democracy.

(271) Let's put equity at the front of this farm bill! I support small farms, organic agriculture, conservation programs, and support for beginning and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers.

(272) Let's stop capitalism and for once support the peasants, the working class who want healthy organic food for less. Provide help to the small farmer who just want to survive.

(273) Let's support Alabama and the nation's farmers.

(274) Let's support the family farms our nation was built on, not the corporate farms that would destroy our heritage in the name of profits.

(275) Let's try to have a sane and fair farm bill.

(276) Let's work hard to develop rural communities in a sustainable way with diversified economic bases.

(277) Liberty must be accompanied by justice.

(278) Limit pesticides and herbicides. Promote organic agriculture.

(279) Limit the subsidies . . . small farmers are needed in our country. They have been the backbone of our nation . . . don't let the big farmers destroy them. Enough has already been done.

(280) Limiting payments for the largest subsidized farms will save taxpayer money in the long run without really doing much harm to the largest corporate producers. Please support individual, smaller farmers and stop giving welfare handouts to large commodity farmers.

(281) Limits should be tightened to give small and beginning producers a better chance for success.—WARREN.

(282) Link the farm bill to existing conservation and environmental protections, such as the Endangered Species Act. The farm bill is an important tool for protecting habitat while concurrently preserving nutrient-rich topsoil.

(283) Local far/ranch economies need your support to prosper and strengthen their communities.

(284) Local farmers markets and local small farmers are needed and need help more than the large corporate farms that drive out the little guys.

(285) Local food from local growers is the healthy way to do business. Please keep big business out of the food supply. Please invest in our children's future while helping to set the food chain right again. Legislate for your constituents, not agri-über business.

(286) Local food production is one of the keys to saving our planet. We need many more farmers. We need more producers and less consumers if we want to hold onto any hope of saving our planet! Please help save our planet and economy!

(287) Lower the ratio between farm agents and farmers

(288) Major factory farms do most of the worst health abuses, make the worst pollution, and do the least to take care of the long-term fertility of the land. Invest in young farm families to preserve rural America!

(289) Make conservation a requirement for crop ins.

(290) Make sure the farm bill supports small and medium-sized family farmers by capping farm subsidies. Unlimited subsidies are the single most wasteful and counterproductive feature of current farm policy. Both farm subsidies and crop insurance premium subsidies should be subject to caps, so that payments are targeted to the small and mid-sized farmers who need them most. Reinvest in rural America by supporting farmers, not corporations pretending to be farmers.

(291) Make the 2012 farm bill part of your legacy—advocate for small to midsize farmers and help our tax dollars make their way back into the pockets of people in rural America. Stop wasteful government giveaways to only the biggest, meanest Ag companies who are the most likely to ruin America's soil and water for future generations (if they are deregulated and given millions in subsidies). We the people are speaking out—are you listening?

(292) Make the Farm bill for farmers and ranchers, directly involved in agriculture, do not include the welfare programs with it.

(293) Mega-farms are killing the land they use because of heavy chemicals and the lack of crop rotation. This will soon cause a crisis in food supply. Mega-farms do not need subsidies. **Small Farms Do Need Subsidies!** Small farmers (family and organic farms) are the backbone of our food supply which is being threatened. These are the farms that need assistance if we hope to survive as a species.

(294) Middle class farms will be eliminated in time

(295) Money for farming is to be given to those who are struggling, not the big farmers.

(296) More beginning farmers are interested in working in an ecologically and organically sound way. This will also help the rest of us!

(297) Move to subsidizing sustainable farming (organic) not huge big ag and genetically modified.

(298) My Dad (well, our whole family) farmed 160 acres in York County Nebraska in the 1940's, 1950's, and 1960's when I was a youngster. We had milk cows and beef cattle, pigs and chickens. We baled our alfalfa hay. We irrigated from the Big Blue River. My Dad was conservation-minded: He was careful with the amount of water we put on our corn and milo. He plowed and planted grassed waterways and contours on the hillsides. Our wonderful life would not be sustainable today. Why should entire families be preempted by huge farmers? Why would my country subsidize big operations at the expense of small families?

(299) My family also farms, and we agree that the payment limit has to be capped on farm subsidy payments. The large farmers receiving these subsidies (which are absolutely not needed, with crop insurance, and strong commodity prices to back it up), are only driving out smaller family farms and getting wealthy in the process. In our area of SW Minnesota, they are driving up land rents and prices to astronomical levels, simply to gain control of more and more land, because they are "using the system" for huge financial gains.

(300) My heritage is a family farm, on which minimum-till and other conservation practices were used. Please vote to protect these invaluable resources. Thank you.

(301) My name is James Bailey. I would urge you to vote the course that provides for the majority of people.

(302) My parents own a farm in Nebraska and I can not afford to take it over for financial reasons. I joined the Army and now live out of the state. I would love to be able to farm again.

(303) My siblings and I were all raised on small family farms. Now when we drive through the rural areas, we see nothing but these huge farms and enormous farm equipment. It is past time for something to be done to curtail the subsidy that the large farms are receiving.

(304) My statement to my legislators (Arkansas), Our farmers, and especially small and veterans deserve our support, including a way to transition back to their communities with jobs and a stable environment. I support the new farm bill as a economic development tool/resource to help rural America offer much needed economic development opportunities for these groups and others. Thank you.

(305) Nationalize corrupt and fascist agribusiness and support family and organic farming. Nationalize and jail Monsanto, Dow, ADM, Cargill and the rest under the RICO laws.

(306) New and Beginning Farmers are our future and thus, they are the ones whom we should be helping. Investments in Rural America have always shown upward effect on local resources. Conservation programs are a proven commodity and should be maintained at least at the present levels.

(307) **No More Funding** for Big Farms and **NOTHING** for Agribusiness . . . they have created a health crisis with their poisonous ways . . . we are all watching very closely all involved with this matter. . .and sharing widely . . . I urge you to do the right thing and abide by what the people of this country want . . . this is OUR country after all . . .

(308) **No Payouts To Mega-Farms! Instead, Subsidize Small, Family Farms And Promote The Future Of Healthy, Sustainable Food That Is Good For Our People And Good For Our Country! Thank You.**

(309) No subsidies to anyone who doesn't actually work a farm.

(310) Not to limit payments to the largest, wealthiest farmers and not to support middle-sized and small farmers is not only unjust, but short-sighted.

(311) Number 1 payment limits are the key necessity on dairy extend MILC and stop support prices for large dairies

(312) Once again Congress is proposing to subsidize the largest farmers with a majority of support payments while beginning and mid-sized farms need the help most to stay in business, let alone begin farming . . . and USDA just keeps predicting that America's mid-sized farms will simply continue to disappear! The farm bill has departed far from its original purpose: to help all American Farms as needed. It suffers from the influence of **Big Business** as had most other legislative provisions in this do-nothing-significant Congress.

(313) One of the largest farms is taking away my own rights and many of these farms are also taking away the rights of many people. It's time to move toward good land stewardship and to support a new crop of farmers and ranchers.

(314) One of the most important elements of the beginning farmer and rancher programs are new provisions to set aside money specifically for military veterans who want to get into farming. I know you can appreciate this, since we owe it to returning vets to help them in any way we can in finding meaningful employment. I have talked to many veterans who have, or would like to get agricultural training and/or start new farms. Because farming has many similarities to the military experience, farms are often a place where wounded veterans and those having difficulty with readjustment can find meaningful work that suits their particular needs. I hope you will support beginning farmer programs in general, and specifically promote programs that support our military veterans in entering farming careers.

(315) Organic farming is a proven method for conserving our natural resources. Small organic farms need support and protection to keep the conservation of natural resources moving in the right direction.

(316) Our best farmland is fast disappearing. Please consider its importance in the 2012 Farm Bill. It's the source of the daily food of our families.

(317) Our Congressional District is the most rural in the country. The farm bill most support sustainable rural development if we are going to have healthy rural communities.

(318) Our country needs small farmers.

(319) Our family owned farms should get more help than they are receiving.

(320) Our government, which is not "our" government any longer because we small farmers as well as the majority of the U.S. population, are not represented once the larger lobbyist get through to you once you are in congress.

PLEASE help protect the small farm and our natural resources in our country. Remember small business is the key to keeping our country from full out recession, even though small farmers are going out of business every year because they can't compete against mega farms that get most of funds. Our government is upside down on its priorities. Please help us put confidence back in government. Thank you for considering this post.

(321) Our great nation was built by farmers and we must do everything that we can to support them.

(322) Our greatest concern is for the small food producers in our area. They are an invaluable resource for our health and nutrition as well as exceptionally good stewards of the soil, water and air. Please make sure they have the same support and encouragement as large-scale farmers.

(323) Our small family farmers are the foundation blocks of our social, economic and moral society. Helping our small farmers helps our society.

(324) Our small farmers are vital to the U.S. food security. They need and deserve funding to grow their farms to provide for the consumer.

(325) Our society must support new small-scale and existing small-scale farmers. One way would be to provide low-interest loans to them. Another would be to remove the "specialty crop" status from fruits, vegetables, and nuts, which are essential to human health. These crops ought to have the same status as commodity crops and ought to be supported through similar funding mechanisms and policy guidelines. Fruit, vegetable, and nut farmers are heroes. With the growing trend of obesity, especially among children, in this country, people need greater access to fruits, vegetables, and nuts, and our farm policies ought to support farmers who want to grow them. I also agree with the platform detailed above by the Center for Rural Affairs. A reduction in massive support to large-scale and corporate farming operations with a concomitant increase in support for small-scale farmers is needed. Farmers not only grow our food but also provide valuable ecosystem services through their conservation of open spaces and resource management practices. A primary reason that America is so beautiful is the effort of our farmers to hold on to their acreages!

(326) Our taxes should not be used to subsidize some of the world's biggest corporations! Farm payments need to be a safety net, not a way of life!

(327) Pay attention.

(328) Pay attention, or you'll be voted out.

(329) Payment limitations are a must, and should be lowered, not eliminated. Please act on behalf of rural America, not the wealthy few who are draining it for their profit.

(330) Payments to large farm enterprises/corporations are "out of line" and contribute to the destruction of family owned and small farms where true diversity and sustainability are nurtured. Large monoculture systems are foreign and unsustainable while hurting our ability as a country to be well prepared to meet environmentally sound food systems that will ensure production "at home". We are at risk as a country. Our "wrong-farming" creates dead soil, dead bees, dead industry, and a dead future for the nutritional needs of Americans. Please stop paying large farm operations and put more money into supporting diverse small family farms!

(331) Personally I think that payments for commodity crops like corn, cotton, soybeans, wheat and rice should be eliminated. Funding for this should be transferred to conservation and beginning farmer and rancher programs. We need more environmental stewards among our farmers. The two go together and we should encourage it. All we encourage now is monoculture farming that benefits corporations.

(332) Please consider the needs of your average constituents, not just big agribusiness!

(333) Please act to further these aims.

(334) Please continue to give assistance to small famers and beginning ranchers

(335) Please do not continue to subsidize the "**Huge** farmers." It is important to limit farm payments! It is the small and middle-sized farmers who need this help—not the mega-farmers. **Limit Farm Payments!**

(336) Please do not cut funding and eligibility for food stamps! This is essential to the ability of millions of American children and adults to learn in school and be healthy enough to work.

(337) Please do not force more small farmers out of business and off their land! We need more farmers not less to feed us!

(338) Please do whatever you can to support small and beginning farmers to ensure a healthy and viable food future for all Americans.

(339) Please do what's right, if we cut out the heart of the country it will be hard to keep on beating.

(340) Please end taxpayer supported monopoly agribusiness. We need successful family farms not industrial agriculture; vibrant rural communities not ghost towns; a local food system not a globalized energy intensive food system.

(341) Please examine your priorities. Vote for food every time. You can't go wrong.

(342) Please give these vets a chance to succeed!

(343) Please help me so I can save my family's farm that's been in our family since the turn of the Century.

(344) Please help our small farmers NOW. Thank you.

(345) Please help out the small farmers. The big farmers do not need to get any bigger. Why do they get the subsidies?

(346) Please help save our way of life and this county in the process!

(347) Please help the young farmer and Disabled Veterans have a chance at a dream that helped shape America as the Breadbasket of the world.

(348) Please help those of us making a Grass Roots effort in Agriculture.

(349) Please it's time to pursue alternatives to take really care of our future and resilience capacity! Please support the next young farmer's generation and a diversified agricultural future

(350) Please limit farm payments, because unlimited payments create an unfair system that undermines individual farmers and small business owners. Unlimited payments benefit large farms and corporations that never were intended to be the beneficiaries of payments. Please help keep the field competitive by limiting farm payments. We need to help rural America grow more by helping the small business owners and farmers. Thank you.

(351) Please limit farm payments, because unlimited payments create an unfair system that undermines individual farmers and small business owners. Unlimited payments benefit large farms and corporations that never were intended to be the beneficiaries of payments. Please help keep the field competitive by limiting farm payments. We need to help rural America grow more by helping the small business owners and farmers. Thank you.

(352) Please limit payments to the big ones—it is absurd that we should be “subsidizing” any farm owner who takes in more than \$250,000. If they are to have help with crop insurance, of course, they should be subject to a compliance program; we should not be helping farmers who cannot put in the effort to carry out basic soil conservation measures. Saving the soil as well as the small farmer should be the goal of the farm bill.

(353) Please limit the amount of money paid to large farms to keep money for the small & medium sized operations that are trying to make a living in a lifestyle that supports rural communities by keeping them alive and vibrant. Thank you for your consideration.

(354) Please make rural development a priority. The tradition of farming does not include greed, yet the current farm bill encourages greed and leaves out the common sense farmer

(355) Please make the farm bill fair, where all the resources are distributed evenly between all farmers and really focus on the loopholes where billions are funneled.

(356) Please move the money from large corporate farms that damage the Earth and produce poor quality food to small farms that have a lighter carbon footprint and produce better, safer food.

(357) Please pass the farm bill so, young Americans can begin farming, and start the thousands of memories, the strong work ethic, and build the determination that is developed through farming. Farmers feed the world, and without them no one can survive. So, help them help you!

(358) Please pay attention to the needs of our small farmers! We need more farmers in rural America, not fewer.

(359) Please pay attention to this. We are small farmers

(360) Please ponder Bill McKibben's book, *Deep Economy*. You will no longer support the 'suicide pact' that the \$\$\$boys have designed to put money in their pockets at our expense.

(361) Please preserve and expand programs supporting new, small and medium farmers. Subsidized mass scale commercial scale agriculture must end; it encourages and supports unsustainable ag practices and creates unfair business practice that thwarts better methods and approaches that preserve the soil and produce more nutritious products. Instituting this would have enormous positive effects on citizen health, costs and environment. The very subjects that are in the headlines and for which no real radical solution is being proposed—and

actually the solution is not that radical, it is mere common sense, more intelligent design and operating with integrity. Please stop treating raw milk and other more wholesome farm-to-consumer products as if they are illegal contraband or banned substances—and promulgate regs that allow them. Purchasers of such products are generally more responsible people anyhow based upon their ideals. Support industrial hemp once and for all and recognize that in other large producer countries, the population hasn't turned into a bunch of potheads. Industrial hemp is not the same plant and I am tired of these old fallacious arguments against it—it would revolutionize U.S. agriculture. Latest statistics indicate U.S. teenage kids are using the other cannabis at alarming rates—however, this has nothing to do with industrial hemp growth and DEA can confer with other producer countries to determine how they control illegal growth in legal fields. Farm succession planning must be supported. There are a large number of young Americans that would like to farm—please make it economically feasible for them to do so. How can any legislator/law maker in good conscience create laws and bills that violate the rights of those that want vibrant living soils, no GMOs, nutritious food, fewer chemicals and localized food production? Where is the downside? There are plenty of studies to support the feasibility of all these approaches to adequately provide for the populous. Thank you for your consideration.

(362) Please protect the little guy for a change . . . We are not stupid we no a fix when we see one. Stop hurting the little guy . . .

(363) Please provide support where it is needed and will benefit our rural health . . . to true family farmers practicing stewardship, not mega-farms.

(364) Please put caps on farm subsidies to large farming operations—it is not needed, and is taking funding away from support for family farming operations, beginning farmers, and rural small business support. Support the USDA RMAP program, which provides loans and technical assistance to businesses in small towns and rural America!

(365) Please retain all conservation requirements included in the present farm bill. With greatly increased use of what was traditionally pasture for raising corn, habitat for many prairie bird species is disappearing at an alarming rate.

(366) Please reverse the trend that has been occurring in agriculture business and stop legislation and subsidies that support big ag and start supporting beginning farmers and ranchers. NOW.

(367) Please show your support of America and its' entrepreneurs . . . **Not Corporate** farmers and ranchers, and pass a farm bill that includes Limited Farm payments to corporate farms and Protective Conservation Programs. Thank You!

(368) Please stop large payments to large farmers. I would suggest that payments should be limited and tied to the size of the farm. One farmer, farming a whole county does the state, or nation any good. It would be much better to have multiple families living on the land. The minimum should at least be that the farmer has to live AND work the farm.

(369) Please stop subsidizing genetically modified corn and soy—it's making our country fat, sick, and subjecting our children and our environment to the biggest genetic experiment in history. The future of farming is small, and organic! Chemical fertilizers will be obsolete when natural gas runs out, which may be less than 20 years from now. It's likely that petroleum production has peaked, which will impact food production and distribution. We need small farmers and diversified crops to ensure our food security for the future. Finally, stand up for the health of our soil. Soil depletion has predated every collapse of an organized society. Protect conservation, limit or eliminate farming practices that strip the soil (and thus the food) of nutrients. Magnesium deficiency in foods due to soil depletion is documented, and leads to increased risk of Alzheimer's and Diabetes, among other health concerns. Stand up for the health of future generations and support a better farm bill.

(370) Please support a 2012 Farm Bill that invests in the healthy revival of the small and beginning family farms we are nurturing here in the mountains of WNC and southern Appalachia.

(371) Please support conservation programs, beginning farmers, local food initiatives, and small and moderate-sized farms by tightening payment limits on subsidies.

(372) Please support conservation programs, beginning farmers, local food initiatives, and small and moderate-sized farms by tightening payment limits on subsidies.

(373) Please support efforts to sustain and encourage family farming. Without small farming families, our rural communities will continue to lose critical mass that allows us to support vibrant small towns.

(374) Please support organic farmers, too!

(375) Please support organic farming research and education programs.

(376) Please support our local farmers.

(377) Please support our young farmers & ranchers & small farmers

(378) Please support rural American families and farmers instead of giant corporate agriculture!

(379) Please support small and midsize farmers and the rural communities they live in by, capping the subsidies to the mega farms, supporting the Beginning Farmer and rancher programs and rural microentrepreneur Assistance Program. This will keep small towns viable and conserve our nation's natural resources for generations not yet born. Thank you!

(380) Please support small beginning farmers. As fuel costs increase along with transportation costs it will be more critical to develop more local supplies of farm products both produce and livestock including aquaculture products. It is crucial that small producers be supported for the food security of our country.

(381) Please support small farmers and educational programs already in existence that encourage and develop our rural and urban farming communities!

(382) Please support small rural farms!

(383) Please support sustainable, soil building farming that produces high quality, nutrient dense food to create healthy people; it is in all of our best interest. WES ADAMS, Adams Blackland Prairie.

(384) Please support the farm bill, it helps the people that keep us alive!

(385) Please support the small and family farms, not the big corporations

(386) Please support the small businesses and farms who are the backbone of our culture and economy.

(387) Please support the small farmer!

(388) Please support those farmers who practice sustainable farming and humane treatment of animals.

(389) Please take a stand on behalf of small farmers, for cultivating young farmers, for localized and organic food systems and for labeling any and all GMOs. Thank you.

(390) Please take care of our independent farmers. The big agribusiness is only looking out for themselves!

(391) Please take the time to pursue rural development and do all of the above. It's time for American farms to save and preserve the land and give young farmers an opportunity to pursue their passion.

(392) Please think of the small farmers. This is very important to our country and our heritage.

(393) Please, please, please support farmers with dirt under their fingernails.

(394) Please, please, protect the family farm. Having lived on a small farm in my childhood and young adulthood, I know how the family loves and cares for the land. Land is so precious.

(395) Please, small farms made America. Industrial farms are killing their way of life and are polluting our Earth and contaminating the nation's population.

(396) Protect our farmers' livelihoods, eliminate and prohibit the use of all GMO's

(397) Protect small and new farmers for the security of our country.

(398) Protect SMALL farms. Stop subsidizing BIG farms.

(399) Put limits on crop insurance. Make sure the soil is protected. Keep rural America in the mainstream of economic development. Protect family farms from corporate farms and livestock cartels. Those are the elements of a good farm bill.

(400) Put Obama in the Penitentiary. Put the Nebraska state of education there also. They lied to me as a child. To lie to a child is to be a pedophile. They thus stole my ranch and my farm, forcing me into homelessness, murdering my progeny.

(401) Quit subsidizing the nation's largest farms, many times not to grown food, but get paid huge sums of money. While smaller farms work hard to try raise crops to feed Americans & barely make a living! A very concerned citizen, who's aware of what's going on, & needs stopped by the government & every state.

(402) Recent obesity discussion on WPR that we subsidize corn and beans and pay for obesity illnesses from too much corn syrup and other unhealthy food. food industry is like tobacco industry. cut them off, please.

(403) Regional food security is too important a factor to be left to special interest groups and multi-national corporations. Please, invest in small farmers. Only 2% of the population in the United States identify as farmers today. This is not enough. Luckily, there is a resurgence of interest in farming! When I completed The Evergreen State College's Practice of Sustainable Agriculture program in 2007, there were about 25 people in my class. This year, there are 50. I plan to begin the journey of farming next spring, at age 30, and I'm not alone in my dream of wanting to enrich community, enhance regional food security, and contribute to my local economy through my farm business. I can't tell you how hard my journey has been though. Several my grandparents belong to the faction of farmers who basically couldn't 'make' it anymore because of the way the food system is set up. I've put myself through agriculture school, volunteered numerous hours, and read a lot in order to get to the point where I feel knowledgeable enough to begin farming. I have no idea how I will acquire land, which is why I haven't started farming sooner. I think I will have to rent land for a long time before I can buy some. This situation is common for today's beginning farmers, and one I consider a tragedy. How can we invest in orchards, make long term investments in soil health, and be good stewards of our land without any confidence we'll be there for more than a couple of years? The farmers telling you that the subsidy system and the farm bill that we have right now is great are the farmers who aren't really farmers—corporations posing these days as 'people,' or people who don't know what real farming is anymore. Please, put your belief and money in the direction of an improved food system. One which is good for farmers, good for consumers, and good for the environment. (Many studies that I've read indicate that small farm farmers are more likely to be better stewards of our shared resources than large corporate farm structures.) If my testimonial sounds a little crazy, then I encourage you or your assistants to read some of the current literature on food politics and farm policy—of which there is a lot. The encyclopedia articles, numerous peer-reviewed articles, websites, and thoughtfully written books I've read have deepened my understanding and formed my biases on this matter. I honestly believe that if you side with the big interest groups that stand to gain the most from the current farm bill, you are either uninformed or on their side. Sincerely,—KANDICE CALDWELL, Gresham, OR

(404) Reinforce and properly fund the Resource Conservation and Development Councils as authorized in the farm bill. They know how to get leveraged dollars maximized in America!

(405) Remember it was the little farmers that built this country—not corporate farmers!

(406) Remember—it's the **Farmer** who feeds us all! Protect farming land, and honor farmers!

(407) Remember small and mid sized farms; they are good for all of us.

(408) Remember the little guy . . . limit the mega-farms.

(409) Remember, fewer small and medium size farms/ranches are going to have to up production, on less land, to keep the growing population fed!

(410) Remember, fewer small and medium size farms/ranches are going to have to up production, on less land, to keep the growing population fed!

(411) Remove the barriers. Allow and encourage people to steward the land and bring back agriculture and land management to the people, not just corporations.

(412) *Remember The Many Contributions Of The Single Farmer Since The Beginnings Of This Nation! Thanks.*

(413) RESEARCH The farm bill needs to expand research into sheep production and especially grass-fed genetics. A massive export market exists. In the North East there are many small farms, esp startups where sheep could be raised for export. And we cannot forget about the 9 billion mouths that will be looking for protein in forms other than soy in the next 25 years. In Ag it takes about 25 years for new technologies to become wide spread.

(414) Re-vitalizing local food systems by helping new farmers put idle land around cities back into food production will provide jobs, food security and a higher quality of life. Capping payments to wealthy farmers and using those savings to fund assistance programs to new small farms and beginning farmers makes sense. Do it!

(415) RMAP Funds are vital to continue the work the Rural Enterprise Assistant Project (REAP) in Rural Nebraska. The ability to use this fund to purchase Commercial Real Estate Buildings and the flexibility to do the loan for a 10 year term will help many microbusinesses.

(416) Rural America Needs Help. There are no big philanthropists to help us like there are in urban America. Most Federal agencies make it too difficult for rural communities to compete for grants.

(417) Rural America needs programs to assist beginning Farmers to maintain a strong Agricultural structure in Nebraska and surrounding states.

(418) Rural communities need small farms to survive. Towns cannot thrive when surrounded by large corporate producers. Please encourage the growth of rural entrepreneurs and the growth they bring to rural areas by focusing on the needs of smaller producers and not the largest farms. Thank you,—MARY KATOS, Sidney, Nebraska

(419) save our farmland and quality of life, stop all immigration now!

(420) Save small and family farms!

(421) Save the community. Small farms keep America alive.

(422) Send my tax dollars to small farmers, I don't eat food from Big Ag so they shouldn't be getting my tax dollars.

(423) Seriously, you want to kill small farms?

(424) Seriously. We need some incentives to bring people back to farming.

(425) Show some courage. Vote for healthy people, communities, and rural environments. Stop subsidizing polluting farmers. Cap farm payments.

(426) Small American Farms are important to a healthy economy, please vote to protect and invest in our small farms.

(427) Small and medium farms are the future of rural America!

(428) Small and mid-sized farmers are essential—the expertise and understanding of the land outside corporate hands is essential for competition and health of U.S. citizens

(429) Small and middle size farms need to be protected. Keeping good stewards on the land should be a priority over mega farms whose interests are only profits.

(430) Small and mid-sized farms are our last hope for generating healthy food sources and developing local economic development in our country. I ask you, as a legislator, to consider your constituents' voice. Big Ag doesn't speak for the heart of America.

(431) Small business growth has been the backbone of economic development in the rural communities. Please do not eliminate these valuable programs such as Rural Microentrepreneur Assistance Program (RMAP); Rural Energy Assistance Program (REAP); Rural Business Enterprise Grants (RBEG); conservation programs and other vital programs to our rural communities. Please do not cut/eliminate these programs from the 2012 Farm Bill

(432) Small family farms are discriminated against under the currently proposed farm bill. A beginning farmer hardly can raise the capital to start farming and it's getting worse. Large subsidies to big farmers only enable them to crowd out the smaller farmer by paying astronomical land prices, far beyond what the land can produce as income.

(433) Small farmers—NOT the large agribusiness farmers, but the small farmers—are the heart and soul of America's agriculture. Small farmers must be encouraged AND supported financially, even at the expense of corporate agribusiness interests!

(434) Small farmers are part of the 99%

(435) Small farmers contribute in a meaningful way to the local community. There are too many obstacles in the way and if you want to "grow" the economy in rural communities this is one way to do it.

(436) Small farmers deserve a level playing field. Through some dough @ them. Fed up with big agribusiness.

(437) Small farmers have a hard time making ends meet. Big producers are making lots of money—they don't need more support.

(438) Small farmers have a lobby too . . . and we are it !

(439) Small farmers have and will continue to feed the world—and save our land as well.

(440) Small farmers pay more taxes and should be supported by government programs to help the small farmers.

(441) Small farms are part of our heritage and should be protected and supported. They are an important part of this country in which we all have a vested interest. Our laws were written against the whole concept of monopolies and corporations that destroy smaller businesses. It is the governments sworn duty to uphold not only the letter of the law but also the spirit. Corporate farms that destroy small farms should not be supported by government subsidies. It goes against the letter and spirit of the law It is the duty of legislatures to represent

people in particular farmers and the people who depend on their produce not corporations!

(442) Small farms are the fabric on which our country was built. I'm a product of what a small farm provides. Our family learned what work meant and the lessons learned led to furthering our education and becoming very productive members of our community and points beyond. We became teachers, doctors, engineers, and hard working members of our communities. I firmly believe in helping out our small farmers so they can provide a sound structure for their families, communities and country. Thanks for your support.

(443) Small farms have my best interest at heart. Corporate farms are out to make the most money they can without regard to the public.

(444) Small farms provide more local organic produce at less cost to the environment. They also provide employment for thousands of people of all ages. Don't let big commercial farms shut down small family farms.

(445) Small farms should be more protected as they can adapt to agricultural change faster and easier. Stop just supporting big money

(446) Small Farms will thrive if they get a fair chance. Changing the subsidize so that the small local farms can survive and grow is just, right and serves the American People rather than Industry and Corporations.

(447) Small local farms is the preference for purchasing food in the Northwest, we fully support Locavore living here.

(448) Small responsible farming should be encouraged

(449) Small start up farms need to be able to write of expenses during the start up process, even before they are operational.

(450) Small to mid-sized farmers have a disadvantage of buying more land, *etc.* because huge farms get a lot more subsidies to get even bigger! How are we going to get our young farmers started farming when the capital expenses (land prices) are driven up so much?

(451) Small, family agriculture was what made this country great, and it continues to be the healthy backbone of our nation.

(452) So much of U.S. job growth is said to be from small business, so limiting funds to small farmers does not make sense. Are they not considered a small business?

(453) Something needs to be done, now. Not later to save the small farms. There will be no family farms and or beginner farms if action isn't taken to save what this country was based around. There is no reason why we can't supply our own food, and stop importing meat/dairy to fill the needs of the country. Allowing the large "factory dairies" is ruining the small family farms. Sort of like what Wal-Mart has done to the Ma and Pa shops. Made them extinct. Congress needs to Stop filling their pockets and help fill ours. It shouldn't be about quantity, but more about quality.

(454) Sounds like a monopoly. This must be stopped!

(455) Stimulation of entrepreneurs can create a significant growth trend and to focus on the small farmer, who can respond to changing demands quickly is prudent.

(456) Stop driving small farms out of business. You are supporting the producers of the worst food in the USA. Time to stop.

(457) Stop giving away free money to rich people!

(458) Stop letting big businesses try to take out the small business. Small business is the heart of jobs and keeping America working.

(459) Stop making our farms struggle. It's all we have to eat healthy foods.

(460) Stop Monsanto, Dow, and Bayer Chemical from destroying our food and our Earth.

(461) Stop paying the biggest farmers, farms and support small farms, sustainable farms, healthy production practice.

(462) Stop punishing small and organic farmers just to make the chemical and factory farming interests think you have worked to justify the "political payola" they paid to you. It's time to level the "playing field."

(463) Stop selling out your constituents' interests to the highest bidder. You were elected to represent the people of your state, not the corporate institutions that are stealing from them everything of value, including the future of this country.

(464) Stop subsidizing the largest corporate farms. Spend money for small farm preservation and growth in local communities.

(465) Stop subsidizing the largest farms.

(466) Stop subsidizing the nation's largest farms, stop driving smaller farm operations out of business.

(467) Stop the political payoffs! Stop promoting things like farm bills that you have no knowledge of. The rhetoric only makes sense to dummies.

(468) Stop the subsidies completely. Even paying crop insurance for agribusinessmen is unnecessary. Put in more conservation programs. As I drive across Iowa and Nebraska, I see dust storms and dirt blowing everywhere. We need programs to stop erosion and to counteract all the tree loss which farmers are now causing.

(469) Stop unlimited payments to the largest farms and support the small rural farmers who need the money the most. Invest in good stewardship and conservation programs. The 2012 Farm Bill needs your (Congress) support the Value Added Producer Grants Program and Microentrepreneur Assistance Program. Set aside more for beginning farmers and ranchers and make credit easier to obtain. In doing the above more jobs will be created, HELP our small towns and rural communities, this is America reflect our values.

(470) Stop using chemicals on food products that harm our health. Stop factory farms! Stop abusing animals that are heading for our food chain. You would be prosecuted for treating your dog like you treat many farm animals.

(471) Strong payment limits will help to prevent the continued unraveling of rural America. Stand with the backbone of American Agriculture, the small and medium sized farmers, by ensuring strong payment limitations, conservation programs, rural development programs and programs to help support the next generation of farmers.

(472) Subsidies should be to help those who need financial assistance to become a viable taxpaying entity. Not a money give away to those with influence in Washington.

(473) Subsidies to large commodity producers are one of the most wasteful uses of taxpayer dollars. I encourage you to support programs for small and mid-sized farmers, for beginning farmers, for conservation programs, for rural development and for nutrition/school lunch programs. Thanks much.

(474) Support the USDA RMAP program which provides much needed loan capital AND technical assistance for small town businesses in rural America.

(475) Support beginning farmers by creating program to help succeed.

(476) Support equality in crop insurance for organic producers.

(477) Support family farming and small farms.

(478) Support family farming!

(479) Support family farms and ranches, invest in entrepreneurship opportunities in rural America and help us grow vibrant communities!

(480) Support family farms and small businesses!

(481) Support family farms, not huge agribusinesses. We want safe food, not chemically treated food.

(482) Support farmers not agribusiness!

(483) Support Food Security And Support the Economy. Create legislation that will allow as many Americans as possible to farm. Create programs that support local food, organic food, sustainably grown food.

(484) Support local family farmers!

(485) Support our small farms! Unlimited subsidies to the nation's largest farms don't make sense. Show America's small family farms and beginning farmers that you prioritize their success!

(486) Support people who have an interest in protecting and preserving our land by carrying on the tradition and work needed for our survival.

(487) Support programs that emphasize sustainable farming practices.

(488) Support rural communities and beginning farmers eliminate subsidy payments to corporate farms.

(489) Support small and local organic farms. Not agribiz and factory farms.

(490) Support small family farmers, they are the backbone of the USA, not giant agribusiness.

(491) Support small farms because they are the last thing that keeps us connected with "real" sustainable local food.

(492) Support SNAP and SCHOOL LUNCH! They need more help!

(493) Support the conservation programs—including the RC&D programs.

(494) Support the Food Sovereignty movement.

(495) Support the small farmer, they feed their local communities

(496) Support true farming. Use means testing for Ag supports.

(497) Sustainable food systems are the life blood of our country. Access to healthy local foods and the support of farming will keep our country healthy and re-educate Americans on how to be proactive in personal health and well being.

(498) Take care of the small farmers. They will be the saving grace of the rural economy.

(499) Tax payer money has no business paying farmers not to produce. Free will, supply & demand should be what determines the market . . . Not the Government, not greedy corporatism big business. Companies & business should fail if they are corrupt, have bad management *etc.* . . .

(500) Tax-payer funded direct payments have ruined small family farms, causing the demise of small towns all over America, until nothing is left but massive agribusiness operations. There is no longer any care or concern for the land, and these producers are among the country's wealthiest people. Please do not continue subsidies which have caused so much harm.

(501) Thanks for the good work :-)

(502) That is what the American dream was all about. Where did it go. We need this.

(503) That's perfect! Maybe add crowdfunding to funding mechanisms, such as a small lender guarantee program.

(504) The 2012 bill needs to simplify and enhance its beginning farmer programs. Current programs are underfunded and hard to apply for.

(505) The 2012 Farm Bill must support the best of rural America—family farming and ranching, entrepreneurship, and vibrant communities. To that end, the next farm bill must include the following: 1. Limit farm payments—Cap unlimited payments. They subsidize the nation's largest farms to drive smaller operations out of business. Unlimited subsidies are the single most wasteful and counterproductive feature of current farm policy. Both farm subsidies and crop insurance premium subsidies should be subject to caps, so that payments are targeted to the small and mid-sized farmers who need them most. 2. Protect conservation programs—Conservation and good stewardship of agricultural lands should be encouraged and rewarded. The 2008 Farm Bill included several conservation programs that were steps in the right direction, and the next farm bill should improve and enhance these programs. The Conservation Stewardship Program and the Environmental Quality Incentives Program Organic Initiative are especially valuable incentives for farmers to conserve natural resources on their land. The 2012 Farm Bill should maintain strong support for both these and other conservation programs. 3. Invest in rural America—Investment in rural development has fallen by nearly $\frac{1}{3}$ since 2003. Reversing this decline is critical to creating and sustaining vibrant rural communities. At minimum, the farm bill should fund two critical programs to support rural entrepreneurship—the Value Added Producer Grants Program and Rural Microentrepreneur Assistance Program. The latter provides loans, training and help with business and marketing plans to enterprises with up to ten employees. 4. Support beginning farmer and ranchers—Getting started in farming can be expensive and extremely difficult for even the most motivated new farmer. The 2012 Farm Bill must seek a cross-cutting comprehensive approach to address beginning farmer and rancher needs. Among other things, it should provide funding for the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program, increase set-asides for beginning farmers and ranchers in conservation programs, and make credit easier to obtain. By incorporating these four critical elements, the 2012 Farm Bill will support our small towns and rural communities in building a better future. It will create good jobs, and reflect the highest values of all of America.

(506) The 99% should just jail the 1%. The rich people in America are a criminal class.

(507) The backbone of our country is the small and midsize farmer and rancher. It is about time they get help—**Not** the corporate giant.

(508) The beginning farmers and rural America need assistance, not the big boys farming thousands of acres. They already make it hard enough for others to get started. Or treat everyone the same and get rid of it period!

(509) The best food and the best jobs are local grown.

(510) The choices that you make now will impact small farms forever . . .

(511) The concept that a farm bill making wealthy producers more wealthy with corporate welfare from our tax dollars without giving substantial support to organic farms and those treat soil, animals, ground water, etc with long-term sustainable methods is a **Criminal Act** against the future of us all.

(512) The family farms are what started this country and fed it. They deserve any help that will keep them solvent and competitive with corporate farms. Their products and produce are healthier for us too!

(513) The farm bill affects too many people for it to become the domain of a privileged few. The current version cuts too much from our anti-hunger pro-

grams, throws conservation to the wind, and remains a boondoggle benefitting a few wealthy corporations with inordinate control over our food system.

(514) The farm bill has to protect and help small and mid-sized farmers—not only corporate farms. It's these smaller farms that keep agriculture alive and diversified—and America great.

(515) The farm bill is a lifeline for many rural Wisconsinites. It is unfair to put the Haves against the Have-Nots when it comes to an area which already gets less attention than it deserves. I hope you will stress these four elements into the farm bill.

(516) The farm Bill is being abused for large chemical corporations and rich land owners. This money should be going to REAL farmers growing real food not GMO's, not rich investors who don't even farm.

(517) The farm bill is the most critical Federal legislation for protection of soil and water quality in Iowa and other agricultural states. Funding for conservation programs should be strengthened rather than cut as proposed by the Senate Ag committee.

(518) The farm bill is to promote agriculture we can keep up with indefinitely and to support small and medium farmers. It is to protect farmers from bankruptcy, as the old grain reserve used to do, not support them for unlimited exploitation.

(519) The farm bill needs to redirect its energies to helping responsible and ethical agriculture grow in the U.S. It should not solely be a tax or corporate welfare bill for large, industrial agriculture. I know we need to be competitive globally but more importantly we need to provide nutritious, environmentally grown food and make access to that food a pillar of our efforts. We are dealing with the long term health & well-being of our people and our planet. In my company we make responsible food choices everyday that impact the lives of our customers, our workers and the communities we live in . . . it is time for our Federal leadership to do the same!

(520) The farm bill should address needs of small farmers and ranchers. Preserve and continue to fund the 2501 Program to ensure that small producers have outreach and technical assistance to make them successful.

(521) The farm bill should also include a strong farmland protection program.

(522) The farm bill should also incorporate provisions for organic farmers. There is a growing number of Americans who do not want GMO's and pesticide laden food. Monsanto and Dow do not need subsidy. They need more oversight. They are allowed to unload their inferior product on the American public to ruin our health, all with the aid of our tax dollars. Corporate farms are not the only method of farming and our farm bill needs to be able to address all aspects of America's diverse farms.

(523) The farm bill should be about all farmers, not biased toward mega operations, which have hurt farming in America. It's time we stop wasteful and unnecessary subsidies to big companies and make those dollars really matter for small town America, conservation, and small businesses.

(524) The farm Bill should be designed to help those who need it most, not help the rich get richer.

(525) The farm bill should be helping to promote local family farms and agriculture not the industrial, corporate or factory agriculture that truly do not need the American taxpayers help. We should also be establishing and expanding programs that preserve the environment and agricultural land through conservation programs. Americas small family farms truly need America's help. We need to prioritize and work for those actions and items that are truly important.

(526) The farm bill should include micro entrepreneur programs specifically for individuals with disabilities who want to farm, develop co-ops, raise live stock, *etc.*

(527) The farm bill should support several things regarding the practice of agriculture: (1) conservation, (2) support for small and beginning farmers, and (3) organic produce. Additionally, efforts should be made to support small businesses that create value-added products from farm produce. Finally, food (organic especially) should get to people who are hungry (SNAP, food banks) and to schools in non-processed form. These measures would support sustainable agriculture and rural communities by providing labor (*e.g.*, cooks in school kitchens, labor in the value added businesses); it would help keep food local, thus saving transportation costs, and keeping money circulating in the local community. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

(528) The farm bill was envisioned to help struggling farmers and has evolved into a giveaway program for rich farmers. Please support those farmers that are struggling to feed us with wholesome and non-toxic food.

(529) The focus of agriculture should be on local production as much as possible to lower transportation costs and increase quality and freshness.

(530) The future of the planet depends to a high degree on our agricultural system. Our present one, corporation farming is totally broken. Global warming and the overall condition and functioning of our planet (we only have this one) depends on getting a holistic agriculture.

(531) The heart, health and future of America depends on local sustainable farms. The farm bill should be to the benefit of small to medium farms and not going to large farms that already control a large portion of the market and have a much larger carbon foot print.

(532) The large commercial farms are not producing the products that America wants or needs. Small farms can do that and in the process create a better, more secure America. Bigger is NOT better and in many cases NOT desirable.

(533) The largest farms do not need unlimited subsidies. Small farms do. This is an issue of food safety and sustainability. More people, like myself, are buying food from small local farmers. The 2012 Farm bill must protect and support them. The mega farms are doing fine without unlimited subsidies.

(534) The little farmer needs help. The large farmers do not.

(535) The most important thing for the health of our food supply is to support small vs. mega farmers—and it would go a long way to help our economy and environment!

(536) The playing field needs to be leveled. Big Ag is just a bully to the small and midsized farmer. Time to tell the bully to go home and make way for the little guy.

(537) The proposed farm bill is only more corporate welfare for **Big Farmers** and does absolutely nothing for family farmers . . . we are fifth generation farmers here! Anyone who tells you differently is in the pocket of corporate America already!

(538) The respect for the planet movement will finally eliminate legislators not in touch with the seriousness of this huge movement. The new silent majority.

(539) The resurgence of agriculture in northern NY has been driven by community supported agriculture. (CSA). Seed funding to promote CSA as a rural economic driver in distressed communities would be a great addition to this bill and supported at a fraction of unlimited payments.

(540) The small and medium farmers are on the whole far better stewards of the land and far more likely to practice sustainable farming. Enough erosion and chemicals in our air and water already.

(541) The small and mid-sized farmers actually matter the most.

(542) The small farm needs the all payments he can get not the farms operating under many names and operations getting paid huge payments.

(543) The small farmer needs help. They are an important part of our economy.

(544) The small farmers are the backbone of our community and need help much more than the agri-farms.

(545) The small needs help.

(546) The success of our country is dependent on the health of our communities and the knowledge we have of our regional ecosystems. This knowledge will enable state and local economies and cultures to flourish. This new paradigm is not a backwards shift but a much needed integration of the educational, environmental, economic and cultural systems. Our increased awareness of the gifts of our local ecosystems will pay itself back in creative regional manufacturing opportunities, accountability for the sake of improved community relations and economic opportunities. Change is inevitable—accountability is necessary and educational integration of these systems is necessary to begin to move our nation towards fair, prosperous and creative systems that reap rewards for us all. The next farm bill should incorporate regional ecosystem education in all grades of public schools—this knowledge will lead to much healthier communities and creative innovations.

(547) The U.S. young farmers who will farm sustainably, not mine the soil and farm the government. We need farmers who will help sustain their communities by producing and providing a safe, secure and sustainable food supply to all people including the poorest and most vulnerable. Industrial food factories and transnational agribusinesses do not do that. Independent family and individually operated farms do.

(548) The Value-Added Producer Grants (VAPG) and Rural Microentrepreneurial Assistance Program (RMAP) make a real, sustainable, fantastic difference in our communities. It's tailored to exactly what we need by

the folk in who live there. Give us the means to help ourselves and our rural communities. We feed you—don't starve us.

(549) The values of small farming are multiple: in touch with the Earth, possibility of sustainable farming, opportunities of working together, a means of supporting self and family.

(550) There are a lot more people who want healthy food in Minnesota than there are industrial farmers. Cap the subsidies—in fact, just stop them and invest in healthy food grown in healthy environments.

(551) There are so few who decide to go into farming. You should be supporting these start up farmers and develop programs that reward good stewards of the land.

(552) There is a trend—across all industries and interests in this country—for government policies to help those who need it least. This should not be the role of government. In essence, the actions of many of our legislators are being heavily influenced by powerful lobbying interests, leading to a government of the wealthy and powerful people, by the wealthy and powerful people, and for the wealthy and powerful people. It's time to put a stop to this nonsense. Please consider the important role that small and mid-sized farmers play in this nation's economy, the conservation of our nation's resources, and the health and survival of our rural communities and focus the farm bill on them, **Not** the privileged agribusiness firms.

(553) There is absolutely no justification for providing subsidies to large farmers. They already have cost of scale advantages. The money could be spent much more wisely, to promote smaller farmers, conservation, rural development, healthy and organic food, fruits/vegetables, *etc.*

(554) There is so much at stake for the health and economy of our nation—Don't keep subsidizing crops (corn and soy beans) that produce unhealthy, addictive foods—while what we really should be eating—fruits and vegetables—get such little help.

(555) There should at least, be payment limits ton large farms and there needs to be more money and support for small farms.

(556) These are reasonable approaches to promoting family farms.

(557) These are the same hypocrites who lie to the younger folks about the elderly not saving retirement money when in fact we paid & made Social security what it is, we also paid into pensions that some of these folks ripped off via their lobbyists & corporations. These same people have divided the American people(not since the civil war has this happened) with their lies & their selfish acts. Insurance companies are the bane of human existence & never be allowed to be giving anyone special favors like decreased premiums to bigger farms. That's part of the division!

(558) These ideas will protect small business, small farms and is on course with the direction of our country.

(559) These **Inequities Must Stop Now!** Stand for the **People Not Big Agra!**

(560) These measures along with winding down the unhealthy & unnecessary subsidies to America's wheat & corn crops and channeling those funds to support healthy foods would go a long way toward helping our obesity problems!

(561) These must be included in the farm bill for 2012.

(562) These people are the lifeblood of this country

(563) These policies help to restore the value of people in our agriculture, please support these efforts.

(564) **These Things Must Be Approved To Help Our Farmers Grow Like They Need To Do.**—BARBARA & WAYNE.

(565) These young people will not be able to farm without help. Even if they inherit the family farm, taxes will cause them to go deeply into debt. How should this be paid for? Try plugging the \$4 BILLION hole called "Additional Child Credit" that is a tax refund that is going to illegal's and even to families with nieces and nephews that do not live in the USA.

(566) They have fed us, clothed us, and been the glue that has held America together. Will we now turn our backs on our family farms and ranches, I hope not.

(567) They have totally forgotten about disadvantaged farmers and ranchers who are already in danger of losing their livelihood in this area.

(568) Think about helping urban farmers, and those beginning farmers who are very close to urban centers. This is a wise use of limited resources (fuel for moving the produce) as well as a nice way to green-up the cities with trees and plants.

(569) This bill is an opportunity to return to real American values of wholesome food production, humane husbandry, and respect for the land. Don't use it to subsidize abuse.

(570) This bill makes good sense for the long term.

(571) This has been put most eloquently and precisely. I am happy to endorse this presentation.

(572) This is a very important issue, and it's not just about rural America—it affects the rest of the country, too. Thanks for listening.

(573) This is immoral and you know it.

(574) This is important! I would like very much like to have a small farm someday, farm land is very expensive right now, but that is what i am working for. it is my dream. why should only the big farmers and the corporate farmers get all the help? the biggest share should go to the little guys of less than 100 ac. Thanks for letting me have mu say,—MECHELE SEUBERT.

(575) This is not just a theoretical issue for those of us in the Midwest. It's our lives. Historically the action is on the coasts, but life happens in the middle, on the family farms. Help us to protect them—it's our future—not just here, but for our nation.

(576) This is such an obvious place to help rein in the Federal budget. Excessive subsidies for big farmers are not good for keeping family farmers on the land, they are not good for the land, and they are certainly not good for a balanced budget.

(577) This last year I lost my 95 year old mother and the farm I had been brought up on. It got sold out from under me because I couldn't get enough funding quick enough to buy out my brother and sister. I settled for a very small acreage with buildings (16 acres) and they kept what little cash I would have inherited. Fortunately, my sons and I will be able to do some specialty vegetable farming as well as raising fiber animals but all of this would have been much easier if working with the FSA were not so difficult.

(578) Those that complain loudest about farmers are usually doing it with their mouths full.

(579) Time for Give-the-wealthy Big Farms to end!

(580) Time to stop subsidizing the wealthy big farm corporations—and helping the small family farmer.—E. LEOPOLD.

(581) To be able to grow and produce food for my fellow citizens has been the only thing I have ever wanted to do. Unfortunately, I wasn't born on a farm or with land handed down to me. Somehow, I need to procure land and the ability to produce food on it while supporting myself and my family. I would like to be able to achieve that goal one day and the programs offered by the current farm bill will allow me to do that. Please do not cut these programs from the Bill. It is one part of the multitude of taxes that I don't mind helping to pay for.

(582) To be healthy, Americans need to eat more fruits and vegetables—BUT fruits and vegetables in quantity are too expensive for many of us. So the farm bill should subsidize the growing of fruits and vegetables.

(583) To be healthy, Americans need to eat more fruits and vegetables—but fruits and vegetables in quantity are too expensive for many people. So the farm bill should be written subsidize the growing of fruits and vegetables.

(584) To REALLY support small business, facilitate America's goal of upward social mobility and keep our food supply safe, please support this in the bill.

(585) Try having committee meetings out in the states, not only in D.C. Get other viewpoints, for heaven's sake!

(586) Ultimately, we will all pay the price for a lack of small farms and farmers. Think about what your children and your grandchildren will be eating . . .

(587) Under #1—Limit farm payments—I would totally **Stop All Subsidies** to everyone who now gets any since this sort of governmental interference distorts markets and makes crop prices depressed. The small farmers don't need props for prices; they need the ability to let the market for their produce find its natural level. Crop insurance is a necessary evil. However, it must be uniformly low-cost and freely available to all farmers as protection against crop failure due to poor weather, pest infestations, and the like. Under #4—Support beginning farmers and ranchers—It is IMPERATIVE that newcomers to farming and entrepreneurs in agriculture, horticulture, aquaculture, *etc.* be afforded the ability to get low-interest loans to start their operations. Purchasing land, equipment, seed, irrigation equipment, *etc.* is all capital-intensive and requires a serious investment opportunity be afforded such individuals.

(588) Unlimited direct payments to large farmers has done more to destroy family farms and rural communities than any other factor involved. It has driv-

en up land prices and cash rents. The farm program and crop insurance programs are abused by lying about yields especially in dry years like 1987–88.

(589) Unlimited farm subsidies are wasteful and compete with small and midsize farmers who do the most toward conservation as well as yield. Along with that they support employment.

(590) Unlimited payments to large farmers are preventing beginning farmers from getting started. These large farms that receive these huge payments use this money to outbid beginning farmers, thus preventing new farmers from even getting a chance to run new ground . . . we are constantly outbid and it is because of these unlimited payments.

(591) Unlimited payments will insure that eventually, we will have one remaining farmer per county who will vertically integrate the operation, further displacing locally owned rural input businesses. We need policies that encourage the new entry of young farmers and farm input businesses, not the continued consolidation of the largest farms. The new farm bill should have, as it's corner stone, federally subsidized crop and livestock production insurance offering coverage ranging from 65% to 85% of the county's past 5 year per acre gross farm or ranch revenue. This is basically a gross revenue per acre insurance policy and it must be capped at \$500,000.00 annually per farm.

(592) USDA is spending millions of dollars in taxpayer money to subsidize the wasteful and unnecessary production of commodities, primarily corn, soy, and wheat. This system, renewed every 5 years by the farm bill, is grossly wasteful of both money and natural resources, and constitutes a pure giveaway of both to already wealthy agribusiness interests. The American public no longer has an interest in increasing the supply of commodity crops, which substantially are either wasted along the supply chain or used for animal feed rather than direct human consumption. America's once-great natural landscapes have been converted into oceanic monocultures of crops with no external purpose that a normal market would indicate. Our interest instead lies in conserving our scarce natural resources for a future in which our food security will be far more precarious. For the sake of human health, we have an interest in discouraging the excessive production of low-grade meat in excess of dietary requirements. We also have an interest in sustaining the character, environment, and social fabric of rural America, all of which are being torn apart by an invasion of factory farms, an evacuation of residents that can no longer operate competitively among the mega-producers, and a steadily disintegrating natural environment that will be incapable of adequate food production in the distant future. Please rewrite the farm bill now to protect our natural resources, send the agribusiness companies away from their con job against rural America, and restore nutritional quality to our food supply.

(593) We all hear about banks too big to fail. Well, we have farms and farmers too big to fail now, largely due to Federal subsidies. They have squeezed out small farmers by not being subjected to market forces and potential losses. It is not good for the country to have \$1 million (annual income) farmer instead of ten or more smaller farmers.

(594) We also need support for the REAP programs so thanks to those who are including it in the their version. Renewable energy is good for all parts of the nation.

(595) We beginning & minority farmers need: Limited farm payments + conservation program protection + financial investment in rural America + funding for the Beginning Farmer & Rancher Development all of which will create good jobs while reflecting this country's highest values

(596) We cannot afford to hand out huge sums of money to huge producers who don't need that kind of support. We need to put more people to work with living income, which means smaller payments to more people, not bigger payments to wealthy giants.

(597) We have a crisis on our hands, the active farm population is aging and it is almost impossible for a young person to start farming. Allow provisions in the new bill to assist young aspiring farmers get started.

(598) we have an old family farm, it had been in timber, basically a CRP program, and yet we did not qualify for CRP, as no row crops had been grown, to the detriment of our land for years, so we received no Federal money . . . then last April 27 an EF5 tornado came through Chickasaw county, MS . . . the best the Federal govt. could do for us, who lost 33 of 35 acres of old growth Hickory and oaks, 200 years avg., and 40–50 yr old pines and hardwood . . . wiped it out . . . FSA is offering us \$300 dollars after we clear the total devastation, to regrow pine monoculture, after we pay for all expenses . . . this is an extreme example of misuse of funds after a disaster, we are not entitled to timber

loss, or an estimated cost of replanting that is reasonable . . . I say stop the ethanol subsidies, cut back crop insurance protection for the rich 1%, and help small landholders who want to make something of their land and resources . . . if you as a representative cannot do this never try to solicit my vote . . . if the people establishing the new farm bill will not include conservation and first time farmer/rancher funds I will likely lose any opportunity to produce anything with it, especially since local FSA does not think out of box, for innovative crops for small farmers . . . too far outside power structure . . .

(599) We have four sons that would each like to farm on their own, but don't see a way to because of the high price of land/rent. I teach and it is so sad that my students aren't sure where their food comes from! We need more people tilling the soil, not less!

(600) We have had it with subsidies of large corporate farms. Save the small family farm

(601) We have no functioning nation without healthy farms.

(602) We have so few wild animals left. When I was young and we would go to my mother's farm which is just outside a little town called Zurich, KS, there were Pheasants, Turkeys, Owls, Hawks, and all kinds of wild animals including Opossum, Raccoons, Bobcat, amongst others. The last 10 years especially I have noticed these in dwindling numbers. Now there are very few. Conservation assures that these animals have natural habitat to live in as well as gives the land a usually much needed rest. You city dwellers have no idea what these small farms mean for the communities they are around. Why don't you do something to help the world and limit the number of children people can have instead of paying premium amounts and allowing tax breaks to those who have large families. The major problem the world faces at this time is human population, the "man animal" (because humans are animals and belong to the mammal group) and is the animal that is causing the most problem to the Earth. Sincerely,—LAURA L. CASEY.

(603) We may need to look out for the small people . . . people that need to start green houses or community garden projects. This is part of keeping our country independent.

(604) We must protect and help small farms and small family farms. Locally raised food and organic food is important to many of us folks in America today. We need to help the little guys make a decent living farming. Don Landstra

(605) We need a comprehensive long-term, 20 year, farm bill that works to save soil and improve U.S. ag not support agribusiness, *e.g.*, the Ethanol subsidies are pushing marginal land into cultivation and paying for a non-food crop.

(606) We need a farm bill that will support the rapidly expanding "real" (edible) food production that is rampant in Iowa. More corn is **Not** the answer!

(607) We need a responsible farm bill

(608) We need Family Farmers, NOT corporate farms!

(609) We need farmers!

(610) We need many smaller farms for a healthy farm economy that sustains life in our rural communities! I'm so glad young people are still drawn to this vocation. We need to help them survive! The big operations don't need help.

(611) We need more farmers, we need younger farmers. We need speculators out of the commodities markets. and we need millions of more acres of organic production to meet the demand. Organic acres organic farms organic livestock. Policy people have no clue on how many acres are needed to meet the demand. We also need policing of organic certified companies and farmers because of the demand.

(612) We need more money for beginning farmers

(613) We need more **SMALL** farmers who really need help **Not** more big ones who already control most of the markets!

(614) We need more small farmers! Please help them and not these mega corporations that want to take over the entire industry! Help the family farms stay in business. Thanks JIM

(615) We need more small, local farmers growing a variety of fruits and vegetables, nuts, herbs and spices and raising healthy pastured animals. And a lot fewer corporate agriculture producing monocrops and CAFO animals that are bad for the environment and are health and are cruel. Stop subsidizing the foods that make us sick.

(616) We need much more preservation action taken on all levels, in all areas of America to preserve rural America for many decades to come! No more sprawl, metro annexation, big roads, population increases, *etc.*! Protecting rural areas is the most beneficial thing to do in conserving American farmland!

(617) We need our small farmers to survive as a country. Stop giving money to the big farmers to save for the small one.

(618) We need rural farmers. it's not fair to only support the big guys! I want my money to go to the small farmers

(619) We need the farm bill to keep our agricultural system strong for the future by investing in conservation and beginner farmers and ranchers; and by keeping it diversified through investment in small scale producers and rural areas. Thank you!

(620) We need the support,

(621) We need to be good and just caretakers of our resources. That means that the goods of the Earth belong to all!

(622) We need to be growing our own food!

(623) We need to be promoting local food and local producers so jobs and money stay in the state, not funneling it out of state to big corporations who don't care about us. Those lawmakers who say they promote small business and local producers will support provisions that build rural communities and, especially, young people.

(624) We need to continue to support provisions to provide technical assistance to new and beginning farmers and fund EQIP's organic initiatives which benefit small-scale producers with cost-share programs on hoopouses and high tunnels.

(625) We need to ensure the opportunities for farming to continue on a small scale. For the good of our country and the overall population within, let us protect and support those individuals who are willing to farm America.

(626) We need to make the farm bill work for small family farmers and it needs to have provisions to feed those most in need.

(627) We need to protect our farms and our farm land.

(628) We need to protect our small and mid-size farmers because that's good for the economy and good for the environment. The Conservation Stewardship Program and the Environmental Quality Incentives Program Organic Initiative are especially valuable incentives for farmers to conserve natural resources on their land—we need much more support for these and other conservation programs!

(629) We need to stop subsidizing big agribusiness at the expense of small and midsize farmers, who actually supply us with more healthy food than the "big boys." Cap farm payments to large corporate operations and support small farmers. Protect conservation programs that help make organic farming sustainable both for the farmers and for the Earth. Invest in programs that support rural America. And support beginning farmers and ranchers! Farming and ranching used to be handed down from one generation to the next. We've lost that generational connection. We need to make it easier for young people to learn and start farming.

(630) We need to support family farms which are the backbone of this country. Stop Unlimited pavements that subsidize the nation's largest farms and drive smaller farmers out of business.

(631) We need to support new farmers.

(632) We need to support our returning veterans and providing them financial means to lead us into the next century with a viable farm program for success is the way to go. Let's do it! They gave their all for us, let's do the same for them.

(633) We need to support rural development and small and mid-scale farmers, not the big corporate farmers.

(634) We need to support the small farmer!

(635) We need to take back America and this is a good place to start.

(636) We should be looking after the family farmers and encourage more help for the young beginning farmer who is just getting started in farming not the big corporate farms.

(637) We should continue to reduce farm support payments. Education and research should be the main thrust of our agricultural policies.

(638) We should not be subsidizing big farms. The little farmer is important here and if anything we should be subsidizing him.

(639) We should spend more on conservation and on loans or subsidies for small and medium sized farms.

(640) We the people need small farmers and ranchers.

(641) We want to maintain a well rounded economy. That means generating and protecting the multiple variety of small farming operations that contribute to and maintain a diverse base for the economy.

(642) What agriculture the 3rd District has is small farmers, not giant agribusiness. Don't support further subsidies to the best-off agricultural enterprises.

(643) What are called 'hobby farms' 'community farms' *etc.* needs attention! These 'sub-culture' farmers are adding a lot of Farm Products via the Farmer's Markets (7,000+ in USA). If given some 'seed money' via 'Land Banks' 'Granges' they could become full production Farms. Especially here in Coos County, Oregon. Until, the 1940's our largest 'cash crop' was Agriculture, why not again; we still have the land (under-utilized), Sun and Water. We are two to three generations away from the 'true' farmer. Geno Landrum

(644) What Congress does should always encourage and never discourage small farmers. Diversity is a word Americans love. But in Agriculture, what does it mean? It means many places to grow food and many kinds of food—not big centralized, industrial model agriculture. Let's keep American agriculture a great place to be a small farmer. Everyone will benefit. Do you really want your food supply all in one basket?

(645) What ethical justification can Congress possibly come up with for not supporting rural development and continuing to allow the rich farm companies to get richer—this country depends on the middle class and it's time we get back to our roots!

(646) What happens to consumers when their choices are narrowed down to a few choices? We are headed for an oligopoly of the worst sort. What will become of us when corporations with only esurience as a motive? Keep the production of food diverse. Community based agriculture must be given priority over Wall Street.

(647) When all the land and all the money is held by multinational corporations, the rest of us become slaves and beggars.

(648) When I had an 8,500 acre cotton operation in west Texas in the late 1980's I only received \$50,000 in subsidies other than land that was in CRP

(649) When Obama ran for president on his flyers was a section about rural farmers, I took it home. I am taking 2 classes at Clemson on the subject in the fall. I am wanting to be a tree farmer of some type (not Christmas trees) I don't have money to go buy a lot of equipment or many acres to plant unless I can get some sort of grant. I am in Georgia and grew up in SC so I would prefer this area. The republicans seem to always favor the rich people or corporations. I vote both ways but since Obama stated about helping rural farmers, lets go democrats pass some small person/family help here. It is always big farm corporations trying to corner the market to force their angle on everything.

(650) When our agricultural system is controlled by large Ag businesses, the rest of farmers and consumers suffer. Here in Vermont we have a new economy of locally grown, diversified foods, and it is contributing a lot of new money to our state. It would be nice if the U.S. government would help support us, rather than try to destroy us by supporting only big AG.

(651) When we take care of the small businesses including the farms, we support the foundation of America making us all stronger.

(652) Why does Congress continue to drive small and successful farmers out of business and just favor the top 1% farmers? Take care of the 99%!

(653) Why pay farmers in the good years? It's the bad years that we need it the most? Think about it! We farm with our two sons and are by no means considered "big". But we are surrounded by a "big" farmer who pays big rent and buys up the land around us. What kind of future do you think our sons have? Use some commonsense which I hear there is a shortage of in D.C.

(654) Why should the biggest, wealthiest farmers get unlimited payments, while Congress is cutting programs to small and mid-sized farmers? This makes **No** sense to me . . . I respect our small-mid-sized farmers a lot more than the big ones . . . they **Care** a lot more about me and what I eat . . . please do the right thing and help our small farmers . . . thank you.

(655) Why so mean?

(656) We needs agriculture and the jobs that it will provide, any help from farm bill funding is necessary, especially to small farmers.

(657) Will Rogers, about topsoil: "They don't make none of it no more." Conservation of soil and water are tantamount to productivity benefiting all Americans. Therefore, Conservation programs should be maintained and encouraged in the farm bill. Hunger: SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program; formerly "food stamps") has grown by 70% from 2006 to 2011. Unemployment grew by 94% during the same period. Cutting hunger programs does not solve job loss. Provide jobs and hunger issues will be resolved.

(658) Without Famers you wouldn't eat!

(659) Without food on our tables, the future doesn't look very rosy!

(660) Without the 'family' farm, there will be no families to carry on our heritage and traditions. The 'Big Box' producers are not family friendly, nor are they Earth friendly.

(661) Work and family define the rural communities of this country. We see it around us every day and it is worth giving it more support. Huge farms don't have the heart of the smaller units in the community.

(662) You could bring my PA community back to life if you helped new farmers. And the people in the communities would be healthier.

(663) You eat well, right? It was your great grandfather, or grandfather, maybe an uncle who made it possible. We owe an equal chance to them, to farmers, who feed us so well. We need rural development, sound conservation programs well funded, a limit on payments to big farms, direct aid to start-up farmers. You want your children and grandchildren to eat well, don't?

(664) You eat well, right? It was your great grandfather, or grandfather, maybe an uncle who made it possible. We owe an equal chance to them, to farmers, who feed us so well. We need rural development, sound conservation programs well funded, a limit on payments to big farms, direct aid to start-up farmers. You want your children and grandchildren to eat well, don't? Ralph Watkins, a city dweller.

(665) You have the opportunity here to be really forward thinking, please do not squander it. Stand up for what is right, not just for those with the most money to influence. Sincerely,—KRISTINE SNOWDEAL.

(666) You need to strengthen your small operators. They will deliver better food and further develop communities than continuing to pay people to do nothing (CREP & CRP) or granting subsidies.

(667) You should push for more farmers so no one will be hungry.

COMMENT OF NOREEN CERINO

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 5:00 a.m.

City, State: Reno, NV

Occupation: Designer

Comment: It seems that everything done in Washington lately is to the benefit of big corps at the expense of the people (those would be the people who elected you . . . remember them?). All your rhetoric about sustainability and "green solutions" while pandering to those who poison our food and destroy our ecosystem with GMO's is quite sickening and really doesn't fly anymore. Why don't some of you grow a backbone. Stop pandering to the people who are supplementing your "retirement funds" and support small farmers who are growing clean, healthy food in a sustainable environment. Do you think it won't, or hasn't, affected your grandchildren? Or don't you care about them, either?

COMMENT OF SALLY CERNIE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:38 p.m.

City, State: Riverside, CA

Occupation: Therapist

Comment: Healthy Food Bill should replace farm bill. We want an Organic Farm Bill. We want farmers who care about the Earth and the people they provide healthy, nutritious food for.

It is your responsibility to protect "We the People."

COMMENT OF BARBARA CHAISSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:30 p.m.

City, State: Summerfield, FL

Occupation: Retired House Cleaner

Comment: As a consumer, I am more and more interested in purchasing organic foods for me and my family. I have major concerns about chemicals in my food . . . It is time to consider the health and safety of our citizens over the profits of big business. It shouldn't be about power and money, it should be about what is best for our country, and the soil that supplies us with our food.

COMMENT OF BEVERLY L. CHAMBERLAIN

Date Submitted: Tuesday, April 24, 2012, 4:55 p.m.

City, State: Natrona Heights, PA

Occupation: Food Manger, Dietitian, Cook for 60 people, Nursing Home

Comment: I being a person whom work with food. Also use the Food Bank when I had to quit my job and go on SSL. A lot of starches, fast food for Micro-wave can food; that leads **To** Diabetes 2 for all ages. There should be more farmers donating more fresh food, fruits and grains, eggs, meats for the Food Bank, and Meals on Wheels, Daily cook Meals for Seniors at the Centers.

COMMENT OF DONNA CHAMBERLAIN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:28 p.m.

City, State: Nevada City, CA

Occupation: Gardener

Comment: I think of myself as a producer, growing and feeding my family and friends in the best possible way I have learned in 82 years. The fact that we need to “fight”, band together legally to keep our foods from being contaminated with sugar or corn syrup, fungicides, or buy vegetables and other products from grower markets, or take great measures to get and drink raw milk, buy from our local independent meat or chicken growers after such extreme effort by these producers to work and avoid the practices of large commercial producers who have been using antibiotics, ignoring natural feeding habits, living habits, and slaughtering habits that all influence the food value of these products and by so doing contribute to the failing health of our citizens. The idea that the govt. officials would dump foods at a private organic growers food sharing event and pour bleach on these wonderful foods scares—**Scars**, our hearts and minds about what government **Is** and **What It Is Doing**. Certainly not protecting the multitude of people, particularly those most dedicated to health and creative work of our citizens and families.

COMMENT OF ERIKA CHAMBERLIN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:47 p.m.

City, State: Brooklyn, NY

Occupation: Wellness

Comment: Please get with the program and get in touch with the desires and wants of the American people. We want a truly America the Beautiful from the inside out . . . topsoil down. You are very much behind the times . . . like 40 years! Thank you!

COMMENT OF DAVE CHAMBERS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:40 p.m.

City, State: San Francisco, CA

Occupation: Wine Merchant and Educator

Comment: As the committee considers the 2012 Food and Farm Bill, I urge you to:

Fight Hunger

Maintain and beef-up (pun intended) nutrition programs. Please don't seek to balance the budget at the expense of our nation's most vulnerable—our children, the elderly, and the disabled.

Expand Farming Opportunities

Fully fund the programs that support:

1. New farmers
2. Socially disadvantaged farmers/ranchers,
3. Organic farming,
4. Regional farm and food economies, and
5. Rural development.

We need more farmers and ranchers, more sustainable food production, and more economic opportunity in our food system.

Support Family Farmers

Food diversity is not only sound strategy for a healthy food supply, it is wise economically. But competing with mega-farms who have benefited from decades of government support programs make it nearly impossible. **Please** support family farms, they really need our help. And please, stop supporting the continued monopolization of our food supply. We do not want to be held hostage to global food corporations who answer to share holders, not voters!

End subsidies (aka direct payments and countercyclical commodity programs), and replace them with loophole-free agriculture risk coverage. Additionally, implement a cap on crop insurance premium subsidies;

Become Conservation Minded

Ensure that limited conservation funding maximizes lasting environmental benefits: Limit funds to Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) for animal waste management infrastructure by eliminating the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) Livestock Set-aside and protect the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) from disproportionate cuts, and improve it by ranking applications solely on their conservation benefits.

Many thanks for reading this far.

COMMENT OF MARSHALEE CHAMPAGNE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:02 p.m.

City, State: Madrid, NY

Occupation: Museum Docent/Artist

Comment: Please agree on a farm bill that will help keep our country healthy. Support good land stewardship by supporting the small farmers who practice organic farming—it's good for the Earth that has to support us in times ahead, and it's good for the citizens of the land.

COMMENT OF CLAIRE CHANG

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:32 p.m.

City, State: Gill, MA

Occupation: Solar PV and SDHW Installations

Comment: We need to support **Small Family Farms** under \$1 million in receipts. **Cut** support to **Big** Agribusiness. **Cut** Support to BioFuels. Increase support for diversity, organic, under 200 acres farms.

COMMENT OF D. CHANG

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 7:02 p.m.

City, State: Honolulu, HI

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Fruits

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: You need to make the next farm bill fair to small producers, so they can afford to continue to feed their neighbors and local people. Too much government bureaucracy will cause them to go out of business.

COMMENT OF PATRICIA CHANG

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 10, 2012, 1:51 a.m.

City, State: Indianapolis, IN

Occupation: Retired Registered Nurse

Comment: If we refuse to help the elderly, who cannot afford adequate nutrition, we are an immoral, inhumane country, driven by greed and corruption. This is not the America I learned about as a youngster. This is a country that will fall into the abyss.

COMMENT OF LIZETTEA CHANG-ZAHN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:53 p.m.

City, State: Honolulu, HI

Occupation: Business Development

Comment: To say that I'm disappointed in my government is an understatement. When will politicians start doing their jobs and stop lining their own pockets. You're not there to scratch someone's back nor get your back scratched by someone. "We the people" have elected you to serve us and our best interest—**Not Yours**. How can you keep subsidizing farms and protecting the unhealthy Food and Beverage industries that are producing foods that are **Killing Us And Our Children**. Scientific studies can't be ignored nor results declared to have insufficient correlation between junk food and the health epidemic that we're currently under. Support whole, fresh foods that are grown in a healthier way that we need to become a wealthier and healthier nation. Subsidizing wheat, corn and dairy is fattening us

and only making us sick. You're only serving yourselves, Coca-Cola, McDonald's, Frito Lay, Nabisco, and General Mills.

When will you do the right thing for the United States of America?

COMMENT OF JOHN CHAPMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:42 p.m.

City, State: San Rafael, CA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Other

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: My understanding of natural systems, nature, is that congress and local municipalities must now promote and adopt and provide education and income with laws containing strict measures to move towards local organic sustainable permaculture based food and energy production methods.

Local sustainable organic agriculture, and horticulture, of perennial based, nut and fruit trees, with rotation holistic grazing plans of needed livestock, will be the **Only** way to live on a planet to maintain biodiversity of species including ours. In short, nature has exact requirements, and fractional reserve banking that considers **Only** shareholders and **Not** the impact of petrochemical based mono-culture based crops, are an end game to human health freedom and stabilizing any local resource's. The facts about of how mono-crops negatively affect culture, human happiness and health and the environment are well documented.

It's time we have health and sustainable-based empowering government policies that promote self-reliant citizens, that learn to work together to live locally to produce food and energy, **Not** laws that focus on growing the economy which produces passive hopeless consumers, who in essence are digging there own graves, by avoiding there inevitable responsibilities to provide healthy food and energy for their communities.

Please stop petrochemical based mono crop farming subsidies, and support perennial based organic agriculture and local food and energy production!

Also—citizens need laws that promote local cooperation **Not** competition now. This is a new era. We must about face from top down business models and learn what it means to work with nature in a bio-region to produce a healthy and abundant food and energy supply, in cooperatives, that are assisted by government **Not** attacked by government steered by giant monopoly corporations with unsustainable financial interests for their shareholders. This is **All** very doable, but the transition will be very challenging, and without true leadership, very messy.

If humans in the U.S. and around the globe do not choose to adopt local sustainable living economies producing most of their own food and energy, we will **All** continue to be slaves to debt, like human livestock on global feedlot. Most people will serve and live through monoculture-based agriculture, loss of culture community, and suffer elitist bankers, and fractional reserve banking requirement's based in inequity. Our species and most of the plants and animals that sustain a healthful diverse life will continue to decline rapidly, creating a poor living scenario for us all!

That would be Earth genocide! A direct attack on nature, and don't forget we are nature. So—what are you waiting for? There are millions of citizens with true ethics and values of stewardship for nature and culture waiting for your lead on these critical issues that will shape our human experience on this planet inevitably for future generation and **Now**.

Please ally yourself with the science and wisdom of sustainable organic agriculture and energy producers and permaculture communities. The days of factory farms and processed fast foods are coming to an end. Which side will you be on?

Create legislation that includes biology of a region in the local economies. Help citizens farm in ways that assists nature to provide continuous abundant with food and energy with the fewest outer inputs. Remember Science will never save us alone, and good Science when used wisely is still only a hammer, not a substitute for nature's ability to self regulate in a bio region or even ¼ acre to provides humans all species abundant food and energy to feed 8 billion people.

We transitions from to less debt based economies that won't be subservient to oil and **All** its systemic byproducts in debt, loss of human health, and natural life and diversity of species. Simple local solutions and simpler lives **Will** be necessary. Sell it, live it, be it! Let's **Not** destroy the web of life, of nature, that sustains us all. Nature is wise and will always self regulate.

Thank you for your leadership on creating laws that move the U.S. quickly toward local sustainable food and energy production that promotes ecological diversity, and healthful local community based living.

My question is how can elected officials in the U.S. government, encumbered by the weight of the pejorative top down business models that employ fractional reserve banking system, show real needed and timely courage and leadership toward organic sustainable local food and energy production? Or will government officials like you continue to put huge roadblocks in the way of proactive citizens who have solutions for local sustainable food and energy production?

My hope is that you're ALL finally ready to move forward on the most critical issues of human existence. Let's work together the way our constitution was designed.

We, the organic farmers, sustainable energy producers, educators and permaculturalists, and creative activists support you in these challenging times!

Thank you.

Sincerely,

JOHN CHAPMAN.

COMMENT OF HEIDI CHAPMAN-RENAUD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:00 p.m.

City, State: Richmond, VT

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Fruits, Poultry/poultry products, Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Please understand that you can make a difference. All the major problems facing our society today; energy consumption, climate change, habitat and species loss, and human health care relate integrally to how we produce our food and feed our selves.

Please support laws that allow small farmers to thrive and make just decisions for life on our planet.

COMMENT OF SALLY CHAPPELL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:59 p.m.

City, State: Bridgton, ME

Occupation: Homemaker

Comment: I am interested in eating healthful, organic, locally produced food. Naturally, I want to patronize farmers who are able to make a living at what they do. I shun genetically modified products, but it is hard to do when they aren't labeled. My diet is becoming more and more restricted based on information I receive about the safety of our food supply.

COMMENT OF BARBARA CHARIS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:13 p.m.

City, State: North Hollywood, CA

Occupation: Health Researcher—Author

Comment: There is nothing more important than health. 95% of sickness is caused by eating unhealthy food. Good health starts with the food we eat. It is crucial that our soils are vastly improved. Using 3 or 4 nutrients N-P-K-S is insufficient. There are 100 missing nutrients, which spells disaster . . . health-wise for Americans. The pesticides currently being used are contaminating the soils and the humans who are eating these toxin-rich, nutrient-poor crops. The pesticides being used are destroying the pests, but they are also wiping out beneficial bees, and the bats which feed upon these poisoned insects are dying en masse in the eastern United States. Pesticides are creating a major ecological disaster, which could cause very great food shortages in the near future. Unfortunately, those who are heading these agribusinesses are not thinking straight. Our government must take steps now to prevent serious future problems. Healthy soils create healthy people . . . converting to organic natural farming methods might cost the consumer more food-wise, but save big bucks health-wise. It is the only way to go.

COMMENT OF TAVIA CHARNET

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:08 p.m.

City, State: Vail, CO

Occupation: Librarian

Comment: I think it's big agriculture who's subsidies should be reconsidered as more & more people are interested in finding & buying organic and non GMO labeled produce. Please support the peoples demand. This is a choice for healthy living

and I don't think the government should be behind making that choice closer to obsolete.

COMMENT OF MARK CHASAN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:47 a.m.

City, State: Roosevelt, NJ

Occupation: Spiritual Aspirant

Comment: Earlier this year more than 30,000 Food Democracy Now! Members signed a letter calling for an Organic Farm Bill. The letter was an idealized version of what a growing number of Americans are beginning to realize: that U.S. food and agricultural policy must focus on adopting best agricultural practices that put the health of its citizens, the land and the livelihood of farmers and farm workers over the interests of industrial agriculture lobbyists.

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

COMMENT OF BARBARA CHASIN

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 6:41 p.m.

City, State: Ithaca, NY

Occupation: Professor (*emeriti*)

Comment: At a time of increased obesity, diabetes, and other diseases related to poor nutrition and environmental damage it is important to support legislation that protects the best practices in farming and to assist local farmers seeking alternatives to chemically produced food.

COMMENT OF MATTHEW CHATHAM

Date Submitted: Saturday, March 31, 2012, 3:01 p.m.

City, State: Albany, OR

Occupation: Student

Comment: Hello,

As an Oxfam supporter, I urge you to put the interests of hungry people and American taxpayers ahead of industry lobbyists and work to reform food aid's wasteful and ineffective regulations in this year's farm bill. With just two changes, we can ensure that aid actually reaches those who need it most and is one part of a long-term plan to help people lift themselves out of poverty.

First, reforms must allow food aid to be purchased locally and regionally within developing countries. The 2008 Farm Bill created a small pilot program for local and regional purchase of food to prove that it can be done. Rigorous evaluation of this program has demonstrated that it can. Local and regional purchasing is a cost-efficient and effective model to save lives and enable communities to build pathways out of poverty. The current pilot should become a regular program and receive funding as part of the core food aid program.

In addition, Congress must provide organizations delivering food aid with adequate funding so that they can deliver lifesaving programs without having to use food as a fundraising tool. Some organizations that deliver food aid sell it to raise cash to fund their programs. It's perfectly legal, but totally inappropriate. This process, known as "monetization," is extremely inefficient and can damage local markets, hurting farmers and undermining food security. Food aid must be used to save lives, not as an inefficient and wasteful way to generate funds for organizations providing food assistance. The U.S. must eliminate the "monetization" of food aid.

Please support these critical steps toward improving government food aid in this year's farm bill and helping fight hunger around the world.

Thank you,

MATTHEW CHATHAM.

COMMENT OF EUGENE CHATTELLE

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 10:53 p.m.

City, State: Perth Australia
Occupation: Counsellor/Art Therapist

Comment: It is vital that we protect our food for the future. Too much of our food is falling into the hands of multi corporations that are about making money and not about the quality and nutritional quality of our foods.

Not only that the GM situation is putting our lives and the life our planet at risk . . . we only have to look at the dilemma with our bees!

COMMENT OF BONNIE CHAUNCEY

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 10, 2012, 11:37 a.m.

City, State: Oak Park, IL

Occupation: College Professor, Retired

Comment: Please don't cut SNAP! Too many hungry Americans are relying on this food. Too many hungry children will go to bed with empty stomachs. Please support funding for SNAP.

COMMENT OF TIM CHECCA

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 13, 2012, 12:01 p.m.

City, State: McDonald, PA

Occupation: Self-Employed

Comment: Please do the right thing by passing a great farm bill. Money for new farming and organic farming . . . make sure chemicals are dealt with correctly if not organic. try to create new jobs by doing so. Let's **Make** America farm **Please**. **Thank You For Listening To Us.**

TIM.

COMMENT OF RHONDA CHEN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:18 a.m.

City, State: Victorville, CA

Occupation: Designer

Comment: Please make the next Food & Farm Bill good, clean, and fair.

COMMENT OF PETER CHENETTE

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 5:31 p.m.

City, State: Hartford, CT

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I have been doing SNAP screening/application sessions through Foodshare Greater Hartford and End Hunger CT. The need remains out there, and increases by the month. Please consider rejecting the SNAP cuts.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF TIM CHENG

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 16, 2012, 10:13 p.m.

City, State: Bodega, CA

Occupation: Inspector

Comment: I am an inspector with California Certified Organic Farmers and have been involved in organic agriculture for many years. I ask you to support monies for "sustainable" farming education, research and general support. Please do not support Genetically Modified Organisms. We need to curb the efforts of Monsanto Company and it's allied politicians to suppress seed producers right to save our collective inheritance of seeds. Thank you for your consideration.

COMMENT OF PHILIP CHERRY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:40 p.m.

City, State: Mandeville, LA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Field Crops

Size: 151-300 acres

Comment: I endorse the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286) in full. We need to fully fund conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and make sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.

We need to implement all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).

We need to maintain the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Keep the food stamp program fully funded. People are hurting out here in the real world.

We don't need a \$33 billion new entitlement program that guarantees the income of profitable farm businesses, on top of \$90 billion in subsidies for crop and revenue insurance policies.

We need more organic research funding and funding to support beginning farmers and ranchers—not less. Given high medical costs in this country, we need more health—not less.

COMMENT OF CAROL CHICHESTER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:55 a.m.

City, State: Enfield, NH

Occupation: Disabled

Comment: It is sad to say that I live in one of the most advanced, wealthiest nations on Earth and I am **Afraid** of the food I buy at the grocery store and wonder what the **Manufacturers** of it are doing to our bodies and our Earth.

COMMENTS OF CHICO COUNTRY DAY SCHOOL STUDENTS

COMMENT OF TROY CARDIN

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 1:27 a.m.

City, State: Chico, CA

Occupation: Student.

Comment: I don't want genetically modified foods, they are bad for me. We need to be careful about what goes into our bodies. I also think organic gardening should be widespread, in order to avoid poisonous pesticides getting into our bodies.

COMMENT OF MORGEN HOPSON

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 16, 2012, 8:12 p.m.

City, State: Chico, CA

Occupation: 6th Grader at Chico Country Day School.

Comment: Dear Congress,

I am a 6th grader and have been learning about our food and where it comes from. We have been discussing school lunches and would like to make a change. We would like:

- more non-processed food
- more vegetarian options
- food that is cooked NOT microwaved

Hope you put this in to consideration!

MORGEN HOPSON.

COMMENT OF EMILY HYDER

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 16, 2012, 8:43 p.m.

City, State: Chico, CA

Occupation: Student.

Comment: I would like to see stores selling more organic and local products. I would also like to see less foods being sold that aren't in season. It would be nice to see more farms around to.

COMMENT OF MOLLY LANE

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 16, 2012, 7:58 p.m.

City, State: Chico, CA

Occupation: 6th Grader.

Comment: For school lunches and cafeterias:

- to recognize kids dietary needs
- to have recycling bins and compost bins in the cafeteria
- to support local business by buying their produce
- to make most of the food right there in the cafeteria
- to have fresh fruits and veggies

COMMENT OF LUCAS LANTZ

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 16, 2012, 10:54 p.m.

City, State: Chico, CA

Comment: If you could please take the time to address these needs that would be awesome.

1. healthier choices for cafeteria food.
2. change some things that count as veggies in the cafeteria such as tomato sauce. Kids need fruits, veggies, and local foods to stay healthy that's why you should address these needs. Thank you for your time.

COMMENT OF REGAN MURRAY

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 16, 2012, 8:47 p.m.

City, State: Chico, CA

Occupation: 6th Grade Student at Chico Country Day School.

Comment: My sixth grade class and I think that the lunches at our school are disgusting, really processed, and unhealthy. We think that the kids here deserve better. We have come up with some ideas that we would like to be changed.

- Locally/seasonally bought
- Homemade
- Fresh fruits and vegetables
- Healthier and more nutritious

Thank you for reading this and please think about improving the school lunches.

COMMENT OF MIKAYLA NICHOLS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:41 a.m.

City, State: Chico, CA

Occupation: 6th Grade Student.

Comment: Let's make school lunches healthier by buying our food locally and using our resources here in Chico.

COMMENT OF TY POLOSKY

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 10:20 a.m.

City, State: Chico, CA

Occupation: 6th Grader at Chico Country Day School.

Comment: I believe that there should be healthy school lunches for the people who can't afford healthy food such as berries and nuts. Everyone is sitting wondering why are we having an obesity epidemic it all starts with the food children eat. This is why I believe we should have healthier lunches.

COMMENT OF ERIKA SCHROTH

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 16, 2012, 9:32 p.m.

City, State: Chico, CA

Occupation: 6th Grade Student.

Comment: I would love it if the food they serve at school could be grown local, we would be supporting local sustainable farmers. The food would be more fresh and healthier!

Thank you!

COMMENT OF RICHARD SCOTT

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 12:19 a.m.

City, State: Chico, CA

Occupation: 6th Grade Student.

Comment: The food in school cafeterias needs to be healthier because they have a lot of unhealthy choices with high fat and sugar.

COMMENT OF MADDIE SUNDERMAN

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 16, 2012, 8:50 p.m.

City, State: Chico, CA

Occupation: 6th Grader.

Comment: I think you should bring in more locally grown meals and not just food you put in the microwave. When I see the food we are being served in the cafeteria it makes me feel like the government doesn't care about us and our health. Thank you for reading, and I hope this changes over time.

COMMENT OF SOPHIA WINTER

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 12:20 p.m.

City, State: Chico, CA

Occupation: School.

Comment: I personally would like to see healthy and fresh food being served in school lunches. I would also like the foods to be prepared at the school it's being served at. Instead of being cooked in a huge microwave with the plastic wrappers still on. I am twelve years old and I know what students want, and right now the food being prepared at my school isn't what students want. Thank you and please consider this.

COMMENT OF ROBERT CHILD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:06 p.m.

City, State: Greenwood, VA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: The public need to be represented over the desires of Agribusiness. Laws and regulation should not put an undue burden on the small producer as this can eliminate them from competing when they need to be encouraged.

Rules regarding organic should not be weakened relative to GMOs or other amendments. While the organic standard is not friendly to the small producer, it needs to remain strong to protect the public.

COMMENT OF NAT CHILDS

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:54 p.m.

City, State: Miranda, CA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I want to encourage support for organic agriculture. Please make sure the next farm bill does this! Do not include anything that dilutes organic standards!

COMMENT OF CAROLINE CHIN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 2:02 a.m.

City, State: Albany, CA

Occupation: Business Manager

Comment: I would like to see a **Farm Bill** that supports organic family farming instead of **Big Agri** Farming that produces untested genetically engineered food. The health of our children is deteriorating at an alarming rate. The bees are vanishing. Yet no one is willing to point to the chemical laden genetically engineered food as the culprit. It is time to stand up to the Big Biotech bullies and the label GMOs. It is time to demand that all genetically modified food be tested for safety and for its' nutritional value. We need to stop making junk food. Support organic family farming and real whole food in our schools.

COMMENT OF MELISSA CHIOTIS

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 7:48 a.m.

City, State: New York, NY

Occupation: Con Edison Planner

Comment: There is nothing more important than getting back to our roots with food. We need to stop mass producing and genetically engineering food and get back to food that is healthy and natural. Organic food is currently too expensive for most working families and we need an organic farm bill to help make organic food more widespread and affordable.

COMMENT OF WILLIAM CHIRINOS

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 1:38 p.m.

City, State: Hillsborough, NJ

Occupation: Accountant

Comment: Please stop the subsidies to big farms and to the cheap corn that makes all the junk food so cheap. Please also stop the attacks Monsanto does on small farmers that try to grow with their own seeds. Most importantly support organic farming and small farmers across America. I do not have the power these big farms and Monsanto has, that is why it's critical that you stand up for us.

Respectfully,

WILLIAM CHIRINOS.

COMMENT OF ETSUYO CHOI

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:17 p.m.

City, State: Chapel Hill, NC

Occupation: Retired

Comment:

1. All farmers should be free to plant any seed from any source and not be subject to coercion or lawsuits from Big Ag/Chem companies like Monsanto as long as no contracts had been signed.
2. Preservation of non-GMO stock is essential, as they are tried and true, whereas GMO products may cause undesirable effects in the future, so we must always maintain safe, natural stock, both in agriculture and animal husbandry.
3. Organic farming should be expanded, as it returns waste matter to the soil to enrich it naturally, maintains and improves vitality of the soil and produces tastier and more nutritious food. Any lapse in regulations which would impinge on organic farming must be avoided.

COMMENT OF MELODY CHORD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:26 p.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Media/Artist/Writer

Comment: My health, as that of the children of America, depends on eating non-chemical foods. Help America make the change back to **Healthy Eating**. It saves on medical, and dental costs. Real people not corporations, is the appointed focus of your elected position. America is watching and hoping Congress will **Do The Right Health Thing**.

COMMENT OF EVELYN CHORUSH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:28 p.m.

City, State: Houston, TX

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Ever since Ronald Reagan the family farmer has been shoved aside by the Congress and President in favor of Big Ag—Big Ag is not interested in nutrition, apparently but in the bottom line.

Why else would we have estrogen hormones injected into farm animals and antibiotics fed to farm animals?

It's disgusting what factory farms do.

It's also not healthy.

I want a farm bill that protects farming methods that are proven for good human and animal health!

COMMENT OF KAREN CHRISTENSEN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 1:48 p.m.

City, State: Argyle, NY

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Livestock

Size: 151–300 acres

Comment: I agree with everything Food Democracy Now is advocating. My personal observation is that we clearly need a two-tier system. My small, grass-fed herd of beef is in no way like a large, commercial feedlot business. Time for that reality to be recognized. One size can not fit all.

Respectfully,

KAREN CHRISTENSEN.

COMMENT OF MARGARET CHRISTENSEN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:24 p.m.

City, State: Dallas, TX

Occupation: Physician

Comment: When are you Jeb, going to wake up and understand that the health of our children and grandchildren is tied to the health of our land and the quality of our food? Is your wife not learning anything about pesticides, herbicides and Genetic modification and the effects on our children's hormones and immune systems that are being passed on from one generation to the next? Or are you so short sighted and your pockets so lined by corporate profiteering that you are willing to sac-

rifice even your own family's health? And I suppose you don't actually know any small local farmers whose land and incomes have been decimated by the handouts to Big Agra. Stand up and do the moral thing—how about actually acting like a Christian for a change?

COMMENT OF ANDREA CHRISTIAN PARKS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:09 p.m.

City, State: Snellville, GA

Occupation: Physician

Comment: I do not support the industrial food supply that we have provided to the masses of consumers. Most do not know better options exist, and often government has been in the position of protecting big business instead of the consumer. Please support farm reform to assist smaller family owned farms and organic agriculture that will not only keep consumers healthier, but our Earth as well.

COMMENT OF DAVID CHRISTOPHER

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 15, 2012, 5:57 p.m.

City, State: Idalou, TX

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Dairy

Size: 301–500 acres

Comment: I believe this bill should be passed as written. Would it save my business? Yes. Am I a capitalist? Yes. I just know when an Industry grows, and number of producers shrink, higher prices for consumers will be end result, producers are shrinking as we speak, (example) fuel prices will not get any cheaper.

COMMENT OF CYNTHIA CHUN

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 12:25 p.m.

City, State: Honolulu, HI

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: support sustainable agriculture and do not support my tax dollars going to agribusiness. I vote accordingly. I ask that farm bills support healthy eating and stop the current practices.

COMMENT OF JANET CHURCH

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 10:24 p.m.

City, State: Oshkosh, WI

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Greenhouse/nursery

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: MI is very backward in many policies regarding organic agriculture but would probably follow a Federal lead. Giving priority to the chemical companies that are not only polluting the Earth, water and air but making this a nation on the verge of a health crisis due solely to the overuse and refusal to label Frankenfoods, taking away the freedom and **Right To Choose**. The money blinds many to their false claims of being “better than nature” when in fact they require more chemicals to kill the superweeds and superbugs they create! They crush those who would simply ask for FAIR field trials. Buying up companies to bury facts they don't like is almost as despicable as suing farmers who do not want the crap contaminating their good crops, thus drive them out of competition. **You Can Stop This So Do It!**

COMMENTS OF JANICE CHURCH

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 7:21 a.m.

City, State: Louisville, TN

Occupation: Retired Software Executive

Comment: Please especially give support to the organic farms and small family farmers who produce for local markets. The growing movement toward local farmer markets proves that people are “fed up” with obesity, cancer, heart disease caused by our “calorie dense chemically altered nutritionally lacking food supply”. Please support any bills that further our health and welfare which is the opposite of the goals of the large food and chemical agribusiness. It may be as simple as if they are for it, please vote against. If they are against it, please vote for it.

Thank you for considering “doing the right thing” for the health and welfare of our citizens, especially to improve the dire dietary and health issues we are handing to our children and grandchildren.

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012 7:33 a.m.

Comment: There is nothing more important that improving the food supply in our country. The foods we and our children eat impacts our health care costs, the ability of our children to be physically competent, our adult and youngsters ability to learn, our environment, our deficit, our morality, our standing in the world’s eyes. Please be upstanding and take the moral leadership position on this issue. Do not let the lobbyists from Monsanto, Tysons, Smithfield, Dow Chemical, DuPont continue to “rule the roost” at the USDA. Their job is to promote farm products. Your job includes protecting the health and welfare of the American people.

COMMENT OF REBECCA CHURCH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:15 p.m.

City, State: Saint Paul, MN

Occupation: Graduate Student

Comment: Agriculture is vital to our lives but it is controlled by a few large, multi-national corporations. These corporate interests have been able to engineer a farm policy that serves their interests, not the farmers’, not the consumers’, not the country’s. It is time to stop letting them drive us off a cliff with unsustainable practices that endanger our health, the farmers’ health, and the planet. Please rethink our agriculture policy to embrace sustainable, less harmful, more humane practices that will benefit all of us, even if some corporate bottom lines might suffer. It is for the greater good.

COMMENT OF JOE CHURCHILL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:57 p.m.

City, State: Topanga, CA

Occupation: Information Technology Worker

Comment: I would like to see a complete ban on GMO products, especially crops destined for feed like soy, corn and alfalfa. I’m OK with GMO for industrial uses, but I would be concerned about the industry’s ability to keep the two separated.

I would also like to see programs that support integrated farming operations (like Polyface Farms/Joel Salatin) for small producers.

COMMENT OF JESSICA CHVAL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:55 p.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Cashier at a Nursery/Garden Center

Comment: Organic research has ignited a passion in the American people, leading many to pursue organic and home grown produce with a new purpose and perspective. What we eat is **The Most Important** issue this country will face in the next 25 years. Steering away from conventionally grown, Genetically Modified foods which have been shipped long distances, will help us to decrease dependence on fossil fuels and in very significant ways, eating organic is proving to reduce our risk of cancer, diabetes, heart disease, strokes, depression, food allergies and food intolerances. Ultimately, reducing our incidence of disease saves the government much more down the road than you would save cutting the research budget right now, at the peak of so many interesting findings becoming public. I cannot trust a government that turns its back on the basic health and well-being of its citizens by cutting so much money from organic research. Please consider the larger impact of this decision, and its consequences for the next generations. Thank you for hearing my concerns, I look forward to reading your response.

COMMENT OF COLETTE CIPULLO

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:10 a.m.

City, State: Gloucester, MA

Occupation: Buyer/Manager & Therapist

Comment: It is time to take responsibility! We as a nation, as a planet need to start at the root of the problem . . . we are what we eat! How much longer are we going to eat chemicals and pharmaceuticals in our food and then wonder why we are so ill? And dying? And beholden to the big drug companies (*i.e.*, big business) . . . making them richer and us sicker? Speak for we little guys . . . and all the children growing up in this sick world! Do the right thing . . . no matter how difficult! Do the job you are elected to do . . . the right way . . . please?

COMMENT OF JANE CIRLONE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:57 p.m.

City, State: Branford, CT

Occupation: College Educator

Comment: The disgusting foods that we have let flood the market is out of hand now. For the sake of our children, elderly, and citizens, we need to get back to good food, not factory farmed, animal cruelty food.

COMMENT OF BONNIE CLANCY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:41 p.m.

City, State: Sanibel, FL

Occupation: Occupational Therapist

Comment: Time for a change! Protect our food supply and the taxpayer, too! End farm subsidies to huge AgriBiz companies, promote small farms and organic growing, for **Jobs** and for **Health!** Encourage labeling of GM food products.

COMMENT OF BERNADETTE CLARK

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 9:20 p.m.

City, State: Drexel Hill, PA

Occupation: Account Representative

Comment: A Fair Farming Bill should consider the smaller farmer who practices are sustainable, sane and reliable uses of land and natural resources Farming is a vital part of a thriving community and world for that matter. It is an urgent need for the farmers of this country and the world community to realize the importance of crops, feed and livestock to be free of pesticides, herbicides and other forms of mutated organisms. So, to this end I am in favor of an Organic Farm Bill supporting their rights and by the way my rights to eat organic foods.

COMMENT OF CATHERINE CLARK

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:05 p.m.

City, State: Chicago, IL

Occupation: A/R. Clerk

Comment: I no longer purchase factory food at all. They are out of touch with what consumers want and continue to water down organics to make more profit. So I refuse to purchase from them. We may be in the minority, but we are growing and we are tired of our "legislators" being bought by Big Ag, Big Biotech, *etc.* I garden and buy from trusted sources. **No** factory farmed vegetables or meats for us at all. I don't want Monsanto's crap—**No** GMO for me. Organics are the wave of the future, now it is time for politicians to get in touch with consumers, because most of you, from **Both** parties, are sadly out of touch. **Support Small Family Organic Farmers. They Are And Have Always Been, The Backbone Of This Country.** They will be there when the food system fails, as it surely will. I want foods with **No** antibiotics, hormones, pesticides, herbicides, GMO's, *etc.* Show **Your** support for consumers for once—and I speak not just to you, but to all our up-for-sale lawmakers. Start listening to U.S.

COMMENT OF DAVID CLARK

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:02 p.m.

City, State: Lewisburg, PA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Small farms are the back bone of the country, always has been. STOP making regs that stop people from growing their own foods, in this way you know what you are feeding your family and do **Not** have to worry about the wrong things in your food!

COMMENT OF KEVIN CLARK

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:10 p.m.

City, State: Los Angeles, CA

Occupation: Student

Comment: I have been having a hard time finding good and fresh produce at my local super market in my neighborhood. Please Help us get more community farmers markets in the area so that I can eat healthy, stay active, and do well in my studies. Health is the most important attribute to a productive person.

COMMENT OF MAXINE CLARK

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:20 p.m.

City, State: Carmichael, CA

Occupation: Food Issues Activist

Comment: We desperately need a government that supports real food for its citizens—not the corn and soy we subsidize which is then turned into corporate food-like substances that give us no nutrition and make us fat! The “food” we subsidize is the very stuff that puts us into the health care system.

COMMENT OF PAMELA CLARK

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 4:34 p.m.

City, State: Albuquerque, NM

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Every time, like now, I cry when I even think about anyone in our USA who is experiencing any food insecurity! Our agriculture needs to be sound to be able to help all of our human beings in our country!

COMMENT OF SHERI CLARK

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:19 p.m.

City, State: Laguna Woods, CA

Occupation: Literacy Volunteer

Comment: As a consumer of food grown locally and organically, I am concerned that big agricultural businesses are not allowed to take over what food I do and don't eat. I want my local farmers to be given subsidies, and I want them to be allowed to continue without interference from the government or big business interests. I have a chronic illness, and it is important for me not to eat pesticides, GMO produced foods, antibiotics and growth hormone fed dairy products. Please protect my freedom as an American who pays taxes and respects the laws of our land.

COMMENT OF THOMAS CLARK

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:27 p.m.

City, State: Little Egg Harbor, NJ

Occupation: U.S. Army (Retired)

Comment: It is way past the point where our government should stop selling out the taxpayer and the farm owner to agribusiness. I urge you to support family farms, and place the interests of family farmers ahead of any corporate farm interests, as you structure the nation's farm bills.

COMMENT OF TOM CLARK

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:50 a.m.

City, State: Evanston, IL

Occupation: Retired Financial Broker

Comment: Support organic farming and sustainable farming. End subsidies and limit funds to CAFOs and protect CSP. Support local organic food production.

COMMENT OF DAVID CLARKE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:43 p.m.

City, State: San Diego, CA

Occupation: Landscape Designer

Comment: I strongly urge our Representatives to consider strengthening incentives for organic agriculture. It is much less harmful to the environment, is safer, and tastes better! We, as a country, should be world leaders in organic, sustainable food.

COMMENT OF JEN CLARKE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:14 p.m.

City, State: Navarre, FL

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: I am just a regular consumer that is extremely concerned about where my food comes from. I spend my dollars responsibly and locally on farm-fresh produce as much as possible. I am very healthy and want to keep it that way by staying away from industrial agriculture. This is my choice for my family and I deserve to be able to make it without interference from lobbyists or government. Farmers in this country deserve a chance to make a living while providing fresh, healthy food to their communities.

I Strongly Support the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act and the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act. Put the money and effort where it works best—not in the pockets of big business and lobbyists—with those that care about the environment and growing the best food.

COMMENT OF MARCIA CLARKE

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 2:40 a.m.

City, State: Bothell, WA

Occupation: Semi-Retired, Organic Gardener

Comment: We need to support and increase our sustainable agriculture land before it is too late and it gets destroyed by Monsanto's GMO's and pesticides. This would assure that future generations will be nourished with healthy grains, fruits and vegetables. It would also keep our water pure.

COMMENT OF LISA CLARK-KAHN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:39 p.m.

City, State: Stony Point, NY

Occupation: Vet Tech

Comment: Please let's start supporting small farmers that grow fruits and veggies. Enough is enough already with supporting cruel unhealthy and environmentally immoral factory farms. We all live just once, let's get this started, for humans, animals and our environment. Thank you.

COMMENT OF KATELYN CLARY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:48 a.m.

City, State: New York, NY

Occupation: Finance

Comment: It's no secret that most of America's obesity and health problems come from the "food" that we are now eating. We need to support locally grown, organic foods that strengthen and support the body, not the over processed junk we have on supermarket shelves. Please help make this happen to keep our future generations safe.

COMMENT OF WANDA CLARY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:11 p.m.

City, State: Springfield, OH

Occupation: Healthcare

Comment: I don't want to live in a country where the government cannot even think for themselves and use just plain old common sense. For so long now the voices of the people have not been heard, and even when government hears they still do what the big guys want. There will come a day where many in government will have to face what they have done to the food, land, farmers, children, and to those of us who really care about our country and food supply. So before it is too late and you have many more regrets to deal with, let's make this farm bill the best one you have ever put in place. Let's work together as a people.

COMMENT OF GRACE CLAUS

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 7:57 a.m.

City, State: Holland, MI

Occupation: Graduate Student

Comment: I am disturbed by the direction that congress continues to take regarding the farm bill. I, along with many of my fellow graduate students, ask that you support the full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286); the full funding of conservation programs (such as the Conservation Stewardship Program), making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs; the implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236); and the maintenance of the EQIP Organic Initiative.

I hope that by the time my husband and I have children, we will be able to count on the state of agriculture and food in America and know that our children will enter a world where they can trust their food and their farmers.

Thank you,

GRACE CLAUS

COMMENT OF JULIA RUTH CLAUS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:10 p.m.

City, State: Taos, NM

Occupation: Licensed Massage Therapist/Artist

Comment: Dear House Committee on Agriculture,

I am appalled at our Legislature's disregard of the importance of clean agriculture and clean, wholesome food for all resulting in replenished agricultural lands that will continue to produce and nourish.

As a constituent, I strongly recommend that you consider the people of this country rather than the agribusiness corporations when making your decisions.

I support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Thank you for considering my health and that of the future generations.

JULIA RUTH CLAUS.

COMMENT OF SUZAN CLAUSEN

Date Submitted: Friday, March 16, 2012, 12:36 p.m.

City, State: San Diego, CA

Occupation: Retired Teacher

Comment: Food, water and shelter are basic requirements for life.

The people who provide others with food are performing a valuable service, but please, never forget that that service should meet the highest nutritional and ethical standards.

Nutritional requirements need to protect the consumer from harmful chemicals and untested GMO products. The very **Least** protection nutritionally would be to label foods that are grown with harmful chemicals and genetic modification so the consumer can make an informed decision about what to put into his own body.

Ethical requirements of food production should mirror the oath of medical practitioners: "First, do no harm." Eating high quality food is preventative medicine. Every food producer should be held to that requirement. Think of the savings in terms of medical costs to this country and the enormous boon to the quality of human life if food were thought of as preventative medicine and treated as such.

Small family farmers tend to use more traditional farming practices with fewer chemicals and GMO products. Those who use these safe practices should be rewarded by the government with tax incentives and other help, regardless of the size of their operation. Large corporate farms who use harmful chemicals and GMO seeds should receive no special treatment from the government, certainly no subsidies, and, in all fairness to the consumer, should be penalized for those practices.

Please act in the best interests of the citizens whom you were elected to serve. The wishes of large donors to your campaigns should receive no bigger consideration than the small child with no voice other than your own.

COMMENT OF GRETCHEN CLAY

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 10:42 p.m.

City, State: Bellingham, WA

Occupation: School District Employee

Comment: Funding would cut nutrition programs, conservation, and support for organic and sustainable agriculture, but would boost entitlement programs for agribusinesses. More of the same, stealing from the poor to give to the rich. Why do successful businesses need help from the government, I thought they were against entitlement programs? I'm proud my family supports small family farms in our area, and you should too. They are the real backbone of our country.

COMMENT OF LAURA CLAY

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 11:18 a.m.

City, State: Bradenton, FL

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Good Morning. I wanted to send an e-mail to you regarding:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

These and non-GMO foods are a high priority in my life, and they should be in yours, too. Nutrition and health are dying in our country. The national obesity rate is skyrocketing. We **Need** nutrition information and access to **Healthy** food that isn't full of pesticides and DNA that God didn't put there. Messing with our food system is a **Huge** mistake. Please make the right decision . . . don't side with the big money, but make the moral decision. We are killing our planet, our children and our future.

COMMENT OF STEPHENIE CLEMENT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:50 p.m.

City, State: Middletown, RI

Occupation: Retail Garden Shop Sales

Comment: We need to support farmers to grow organic Fruits and vegetables for the **Health** of our people. I don't want to eat produce sprayed with chemicals that add toxins to my body and can cause cancer!

COMMENT OF VALERIE CLEMENT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:36 p.m.

City, State: Albuquerque, NM

Occupation: Small Business Owner—Training and Organizational Development

Comment: Dear House Agriculture Committee,

It is your duty to represent U.S. citizens, not agribusiness interests. Future farm policy needs to reflect the public's concerns regarding GMOs, maltreatment of farm animals, and toxic chemicals used in agriculture that impacts the foods we eat and the groundwater we drink. I also believe that our government should support family owned farms and stop subsidizing agribusiness.

Thank you for updating farm policy to reflect current times. The health of all of us is at stake.

COMMENT OF WADE CLEMENT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:03 p.m.

City, State: Florence, MA

Occupation: Builder

Comment: As a consumer of food and understanding that we are what we eat I am appalled by the takeover of the food system by gigantic profit first corporations that clearly care more about control of food production and distribution than nutrition. It is time to reinvigorate small farming to preserve the healthy food that they painstakingly produce. I say no more subsidies for large corporate farms.

COMMENT OF CHARLES CLEMENTS

Date Submitted: Wednesday, April 11, 2012, 11:17 a.m.

City, State: Las Cruces, NM

Occupation: Retired

Comment: After working for 49 years I retired. During that period I saw an almost continuous deterioration in the economic condition of the regular working American. This was due to nearly continuous warfare and subsidizing large corporation executives. Now it is very hard to secure work at a wage that will provide the necessities. There is no excuse for not properly funding our social safety net programs to take care of people who've been damaged by our calloused political activity. This food program needs to be funded properly and you can take the money from the perpetual war spending.

COMMENT OF TEDDY CLEMONS

Date Submitted: Thursday, March 22, 2012, 3:26 p.m.

City, State: Fort Smith, AR

Occupation: Director of River Valley Regional Food Bank

Comment: I would like to put my thoughts into this battle over the farm bill as a director for the River Valley Regional Food Bank in Fort Smith Arkansas I can tell you this bill is at the front of our concerns. I understand that we must make cuts but this area must stay untouched. This will affect the basic needs (**Food**) of many in our community and across this country. Here at the food bank we receive donation all the time but most of these donations are snacks and food with little nutritional value as you know the TEFAP products are very nutritional and first run product. If we take these products away from those in need I can tell you the food banks across this country will not be able to fill this gap with nutritional food or at least the magnitude that the TEFAP program does. I know you have probably heard it a thousand times what kind effect this will have on those in need but you also must realize that this will play a big role in health care and education in our communities. Health care is obvious, without this nutritional food Adults, Children and our Seniors will be without the nutrients they need to live a healthy lifestyle which in return will result in more health problems which in return will stress our government health care programs. Education is also as important it has been proven that if a child doesn't get the nutritional food they need that it will cause learning problems which in return will put stress on our schools and eventually lead to poor grades or even worse increase the number of drop outs. I really believe that cuts in this program will have devastating effects on our communities. I ask that you please stand behind the farm bill and remember your neighbors and friends in our communities when making your decisions. Please step back today and step in these folks shoes for just a minute and feel the pain they will be in. Thank you for your time and have a wonderful day.

COMMENT OF DONNA CLIMER

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 6:06 p.m.

City, State: Mansfield, MO

Occupation: Retired—Volunteer at Food Pantry

Comment: As a volunteer who oversees paperwork for our local food pantry I have direct knowledge of the plight of our Senior Citizens as well as being a Senior Citizen myself. Probably 1/3 of our Seniors will not apply for Food Stamps because of the stigma attached to 'welfare'. However, they would accept the Senior Box but our pantry does not receive this program. Of the Seniors who receive Food Stamps only receive \$16 to \$20 worth. Barely enough for bread and milk. **If You Are Interested In Helping Senior Citizens**, more benefits are what is needed and make the process to get them more user friendly.

We have families of 2-4 members all 19-59 age group who receive \$150-\$200 or better each month in Food Stamps. These people are able to do some kind of work but do not and live on the system entirely.

Please think long and hard and perhaps say some prayers before you cut these programs out. Maybe you need to change how you figure what the Seniors will re-

ceive instead of dropping them from the rolls. When they receive \$600–\$800 per month Social Security and must pay rent, utilities, and medicine bills from this where can they find money for food. If they are fortunate enough to own a car they cannot afford insurance, license, taxes, or gasoline for it.

You want to help Seniors (and the unemployed—need jobs), look at what they receive and how they suffer in silence when they cannot afford the things they really need.

This tirade is from conversations with our Senior Citizens who come into pantry, unemployed who want to work but cannot find work, and from personal experience.

Thank you for listening.

DONNA.

COMMENT OF ALLISON CLOUGH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:46 p.m.

City, State: Flagstaff, AZ

Occupation: Physician

Comment: Small local farms are a critical component to food security: it would be easy for terrorists to interrupt or to contaminate centralized food production. Furthermore, it is critical to get our food off its hydrocarbon diet: pesticides are increasingly implicated in health problems, and, although because of subsidies industrially produced food is cheaper at the moment, it is unsustainable. We need to protect and preserve the soil in which our food grows: agribusiness turns soil into a chemical soup in which necessary, self replenishing microorganisms cannot grow.

COMMENT OF CARTER CLOUGH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:19 p.m.

City, State: Mission, KS

Occupation: Industrial Designer/Builder

Comment: Just did an interesting search about Bates County Missouri where my brother and his partner run the 5 Star Cattle LLC. They farm 1050 acres of corn and soybeans. Turns out 10% of farms in Bates County reaped over 70% of available funds amounting to \$80.3 million over 16 years. Is this what congress had in mind when consistently voting for farm subsidies? That's just one county in one state. The farm bill needs (demands) a much better balance for ALL producers large AND small. Personally, I don't understand the need to subsidize large and extremely profitable companies that call themselves farmers. I ask for your support for H.R. 3286 and H.R. 3236 as well as maintain the EQIP Organic Initiative as I'm a firm believer in the grass roots focus of food safety, strong nutrition and sustainable farm practices. Why make it harder for the new upstarts in this nascent food revolution while at the same time making it easier for the production/factory farms? I pray for the day when you and all congressmen and women have your come to Jesus moment and realize that you represent all your constituents and not just the ones who can afford lobbyists.

Thanks for your time,

CARTER CLOUGH.

COMMENT OF AMY CLOWERS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 4:12 p.m.

City, State: Luther, OK

Comment: It is my concern as I am a small producer that in the future we will be held to the same standards as large producers. This would be devastating to small farms and to our community as a whole. There is already far too much regulation on agriculture.

COMMENT OF CONNIE CLOYED

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:59 p.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Aesthetician

Comment: I would like to see the U.S. support family farmers rather than corporate farms. I would like to see the U.S. encourage heritage seed & livestock expansion over Monsanto seed control & industrial livestock production. I would like to see raw milk legalized, organic food sources protected & farmers paid what their crop is actually worth. I would like to see our agriculture industry lessen its depend-

ence on petroleum based & chemical inputs & school lunch programs nurtured by organic & local foods.

COMMENT OF DIANNE COBB

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:23 p.m.

City, State: Woodstock, GA

Occupation: Registered Nurse

Comment: As a cancer survivor, it is important to me & my family to be able to purchase organically grown (*i.e.*, chemical-free) foods. (We try to grow a few tomatoes @ our home each summer). There needs to be more control (or total absence) over harmful chemicals & additives in our foods such as the flavor enhancer, MSG. If food is grown organically, it has flavor & does not need MSG. It is one of the main reasons for the U.S. rampant obesity. It is an “excitotoxin” & sends a message to the brain to eat more (even though folks are full). Aren’t the growth hormones given baby chickens which most people eat causing our children to become developed before their biological time? Chemical companies have developed Bovine Growth Hormone & dairy farmers have been suckered into having “cows produce more milk”, thus more \$ for the farmer. No one mentions the cows will probably have a shorter life w/ BGH. Thus we have even more hormones &/or preservatives for the general public. Let’s get back to nature w less chemicals & hormones & have a healthier America! Think about it: Do any of us really have a deficiency of chemicals & hormones so that these things are really necessary to maintain health?

COMMENT OF ANDREW COBINE

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:55 p.m.

City, State: Bloomington, IN

Occupation: House Painter

Comment: Fund organic and sustainable garden and farming practices, and please redirect funds that go to major GMO producing companies like Monsanto, to more smaller sustainable garden and farming organizations and individuals in your district, and tell your fellow representatives to do the same where ever they are in the country and no matter who is giving them to much money for there “representation”! Thank you, for doing the right thing for yourself, the people and the future of your children and mine and the planet!

COMMENT OF BRENDA COCHRAN

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 11:50 p.m.

City, State: Westfield, PA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Dairy

Size: 500–999 acres

Comment: Concerning Dairy Farmer’ Needs in the New Farm Bill

May 20, 2012

I attended the House Agriculture Committee Hearing in Saranac Lake, NY, in March 2012, and heard the testimony from the three dairy farmers who were chosen to speak. All three dairy farmers voiced support for the *Dairy Security Act*, (DSA), which I strongly oppose. There was an obvious presumption at the hearing that just because National Milk Producers Federation (NMPF) supports Representative Collin Peterson’s DSA, a derivative of its *Foundation for the Future*, and because NMPF claims membership from the huge dairy cooperatives that it, therefore, can speak for the majority of American dairy farmers, many of whom have no choice but to ship their milk through those cooperatives or their umbrella associations, captive in their marketing options by the unchecked consolidation that has overtaken the dairy “industry” since the rule of “free trade” has arrived in the U.S.

NMPF does not speak for me.

I am submitting these comments to the House Agriculture Committee for inclusion in the official record of its proceedings as the Committee considers changes in Federal dairy policy that will directly impact dairy farmers including my family.

My husband and I have been dairy farming with our children since 1975. We know what it is like to be paid a fair raw milk price because we received reasonable raw milk prices up until the parity pricing system was altered in 1981. The change in parity pricing ushered in 31 years of Federal dairy policies that have effectively destroyed the balanced and profitable dairy farms that were the backbone of America’s dairy farming communities all across the country.

My family and I have been victims of these irresponsible and unconscionable government policies that destabilized hundreds of thousands of dairy farming families like ours, driving them into insolvency and forcing them out of business. We ourselves have suffered huge financial setbacks making it virtually impossible to run our dairy farm business with proper inputs and investments simply because the Federal government, by policy and law, gutted the original directive of the 1937 Agricultural Marketing Agreement Act (AMAA) provision 608(c) 18 that requires the Secretary of Agriculture to factor the dairy farmers' costs in the Federal minimum milk price.

Passage of Federal "Order Reform" in 2000, based farmers' milk checks on Chicago Mercantile Exchange (CME) "activities" that are notoriously flawed and unscrupulous by design, geared as they are to take advantage of dairy farmers at the capricious whim of the "traders." The government, at all levels, with the assistance of the dairy cooperatives' block voting, slam-dunked "Order Reform" in an abominable scheme to "globalize" the value of dairy farmers' milk, at the same time doing nothing about the flood of imports rushing into this country, particularly the untested for human consumption, industrialized glue "ingredient," milk protein concentrate (MPC) that is used with impunity in cheese and dairy products and thousands of other food items that used to use "real" milk, cream, and milk powder.

MPC displaces real milk in the dairy and food items that unsuspecting consumers buy without fully understanding how "innovation" has replaced traditional dairy ingredients in the dairy case, at the same time, skewing domestic milk production.

The subsequent losses from 31 years of devalued raw milk prices hit not only the dairy farmers themselves but also countless independent support businesses from the ensuing loss of the dairy communities' economic base. These were the people who provided local supplies and technical support that benefited the farmers in managing and operating their dairy farms. They also provided this country with some of the creative skills that gave America its reputation as an agricultural powerhouse.

At the same time, consumers were the beneficiaries of fresh, local milk and dairy products, which was an intended goal of the Federal order system.

The propaganda that pushed "get bigger or get out" and "get more efficient" originated off the farms from outside the farming communities and was directed at dairy farmers to implement the model of dairy farming represented by the controversial *Flanagan Report* released during the Nixon Administration, a plan that represents the "free trade" model of dairy policy that is afflicting American dairy farmers to this day.

All administrations since 1981 have embraced and advanced the same "free trade" agenda that has consistently and predictably brought low farm milk prices in a "race to the bottom" that, for dairy farmers, ends at "world" milk prices. "World" milk prices will not sustain dairy farms of any size in any region of the U.S. The dairy farmers' real cost to produce the raw milk must be included in what the farmer is paid for his cows' milk.

The Dairy Industry Advisory Committee (DIAC) report is readily available for anyone who may want to read it. Some clarity is evident regarding certain concerns that underscore the inequities facing dairy farmers in the present system, but past history makes it easy to believe that the presumption of lowball raw milk prices is operative in that document. It is a reasonable assumption that Congress will look to the DIAC report and pass a farm bill dairy provision to validate the "findings" that continue the same "global" "free trade" dairy policies that have already failed our dairy farmers, their families, their support businesses, the broader dairy farming communities, and consumers, all across the U.S.

The constant blather from all the "experts" in the dairy "industry" that their much touted "free trade" dairy model—with its attendant devalued raw milk prices and its never-ending mantra about the alleged glories of dairy "exports"—is somehow in the best interests of dairy farmers and consumers, in reality, is flagrant, self-serving propaganda that perpetuates the current farmer-abusing economic practices, and that misrepresentation must change.

The "free trade" model has so devalued farm milk prices that the dairy "industry" shamelessly tapped the taxpayers for "MILC" payments implemented to pay farmers when milk prices were crashed at the CME.

It is long overdue for dairy farmers to be treated as a unique class of people whose activities are separate and distinct from the "dairy industry." The functions, inputs, costs, and challenges facing dairy farmers are not the same as those of "the industry." Dairy farmers engage in natural, agrarian activities unique to the husbandry of cattle and the tilling of the soil to raise crops. We work with livestock, seeds, and the Earth's natural cycles to produce the milk we sell to the raw milk buyers: processors. The dairy farmer's functionality has significant value that is in-

herently present on the farm before one drop of raw milk is ever shipped off the farm.

Processors need to finally stand on their own financial feet to solve their own problems without constantly exerting unfair influence over Federal dairy policies that put all their economic burdens on dairy farmers, who appear to fit the description of the new serfs, enslaved to the whims of the dairy “industry’s” processing sector.

The dairy processors have everyone, including politicians and farmers, talking only about them and their “needs,” most of which they deftly peg onto farmers, saddling us with their costs including their processing “make allowances,” which give them their “cost of production” at the dairy farmers’ expense; the hauling fees with frequent “fuel surcharges,” which insane practice puts the cost to transport raw milk onto the farmers by allowing the “industry” to wheel milk to any destination that suits the processor-buyer on a hither and thither cycle that wastes expensive energy; the advertising and research fees, and so on. The processors must cover their own costs independently of dairy farmers.

The new farm bill should liberate dairy farmers from being the dairy “industry’s” cash cow. This farm bill can be the means by which the dairy farmer citizen is once again allowed to operate his dairy farm as all other businesses are by being able to cover his cost to produce the milk.

“The Federal Milk Marketing Improvement Act” (S. 1640) will rectify the current injustice brought in by “Order Reform” by including the dairy farmers’ national average cost of production as determined by the Economic Research Service (ERS) in the Federal minimum pricing formula. It includes a program to control oversupply of milk that is transparent and controlled by the dairy farmers themselves. Unlike DSA, this provision will not cost the taxpayers any additional funds to administer, and S. 1640 monitors imports and exports.

In view of all the consolidation and mergers among dairy cooperatives, the Capper-Volstead cooperatives need to be investigated by Federal authorities to assure all of us that they are being properly administered, fulfilling the intent of the original legislation that gave dairy farmers this exceptional tool to assist them in marketing their milk, in association with other farmers, by setting a reasonable milk price that is not “unduly enhanced,” which the processors would then pay to procure the milk.

If there is no desire to correct the current pricing inequities facing farmers, then dairy farmers must be granted the legal authority to price their own raw milk by directly billing the dairy processors for the milk they purchased at the farm.

Deputy Administrator of Dairy Programs at USDA’s Economic Research Service (ERS) Dana Coale’s report to the House Agriculture committee on September 8, 2011, should cause dairy farmers everywhere to ask if, in fact, as Ms. Coale declares: “The economic vitality and quality of life in rural America, as well as the U.S. economy at large, depend on a competitive, efficient, and productive agricultural system. To increase prosperity and sustainability in our Nation’s agricultural system and rural communities, a.m.S conducts oversight activities to protect producers from unfair business practices,” then when will the appropriate “oversight” be provided by the Federal authorities to finally administer the justice dairy farmers have been awaiting for over 31 years by fully investigating and executing necessary remedy from the myriad of ‘. . . unfair business practices . . .’ rampant throughout the ‘dairy industry?’”

COMMENT OF DASHA COCHRAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:38 p.m.

City, State: Dallas, TX

Occupation: Social Scientist

Comment: I would like to see more subsidies go to vegetable growers (other than corn). Vegetables are the healthiest food on Earth, yet many people are not able to afford fresh vegetables. So much of taxpayers’ dollars go to wheat, soy and corn, all of which have been linked to obesity and diabetes. Please, help to stop this epidemic for the sake of our children by providing them with low cost high quality local vegetables, grown by real farmers, not giant corporations. Thank you!

COMMENT OF JOYCE COCHRAN

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 2:20 a.m.

City, State: Beaver, OR

Occupation: Clinical Social Worker/Semi-Retired; Minister

Comment: We need a farm policy that supports small farmers and community-based agriculture, not big business. We need safer food standards, no GMOs, and fewer subsidies for the meat and dairy industries—give that money back to the people who grow organically and sustainably!

COMMENT OF MEG COCHRANE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:43 p.m.

City, State: Duvall, WA

Occupation: Library Assistant

Comment: It is time to stop the large Agribusinesses dominating the food politics of this country. Your constituents want healthy organic food grown on clean and thriving land without chemical fertilizers and pesticides that deplete the soil and the nature in and around it. Please support the small farmers who endeavor to grow our food and protect our farmland.

COMMENT OF JOYCE MARIE COCKERHA

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 12:17 p.m.

City, State: Troy, NY

Occupation: Musician

Comment: Do not give any money to factory farms or to any programs that would benefit Dow, Eli Lilly, Koch Industries, or Monsanto. Instead, fund the Value-Added Producer Grants Program, the Conservation Stewardship Program, the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program, and the Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative.

Thank you!

COMMENT OF CONNIE COCKRELL

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 10:35 a.m.

City, State: Payson, AZ

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Other

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: It's just beyond belief that giant agribiz controls our food, patents our seeds, sues innocent farmers when the agribiz lets thier genetically modified seeds contaminate surrounding farms. These are businesses, concerned only with making a profit and damn be all to the rest of us. We need reform NOW!

COMMENT OF R. RAY COFFMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:38 p.m.

City, State: Morrison, CO

Occupation: Handyman

Comment: We need to put health ahead of big AG making more money on (junk) non-organic foods. We need some law and help to increase the production of organic foods.

Thank you very much,

RAY.

COMMENT OF BRYNA COFRIN-SHAW

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 02, 2012, 4:49 p.m.

City, State: Amherst, MA

Occupation: Student

Comment: To whom it may concern,

As a citizen of MA and student of agriculture and environmental science, I would like to encourage my legislators to continue and expand cuts to direct payments. Direct payments are not beneficial to the dedicated farmers of this country, and instead provide too many loopholes for agribusiness interests to profit unfairly from these payments. The unnecessary subsidies provided by the farm bill are not healthy components for American agriculture, and will prevent our country from creating a national agricultural system that provides healthy, affordable, and accessible food to all persons. I urge you to continue adequately funding the McGovern-Dole International Food for Education and Child Nutrition Program, as this is a

critical means by which the many hungry people in this country can be adequately fed in these difficult economic times.

Thank you,

BRYNA COFRIN-SHAW.

COMMENT OF ELANA COHEN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:00 p.m.

City, State: Longmeadow, MA

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: Please think of how we are treating the very commodities that nourish us and the legacy we are leaving for our children and grandchildren. Would you want to work amongst and then consume known carcinogens? I thank you for your considerations and your promise to sustain that which is truly healthy! With appreciation.

COMMENT OF HOWARD COHEN

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 2:29 p.m.

City, State: Palo Alto, CA

Occupation: Consultant

Comment: I urge you to pass a strong farm bill that protects programs like SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP, which help provide food for millions of America's most vulnerable seniors. I urge you to pass a farm bill that requires labeling of all GMO foods, discourages GMO foods, limits agricultural subsidies (to promote small and organic farmers as opposed to lethal mega agribusinesses), and promotes conservation and alternative energies, as well as discontinues biofuel production, which both depletes food stocks and costs more energy than it produces.

COMMENT OF LOUISA COHEN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:25 p.m.

City, State: Las Vegas, NV

Occupation: Academic Counselor

Comment: As a mother and conscientious consumer, I strive to feed my family with as much certified organic, non-GMO food as I can find. While on the one hand organic food is becoming much easier to find and more affordable, on the other hand it seems to be coming increasingly under attack, as funding for organic farmers is cut and companies like Monsanto sue organic farmers for "stealing" their patented seeds when wind blows pollen into organic fields, contaminating their organic crops and threatening their organic certification!

I urge you to support the following:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Thank you for your consideration.

COMMENT OF MEGHAN COIL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:02 p.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Customer Service, Musician

Comment: Corporate agriculture is not sustainable. The sooner we move back to sustainable practices, the healthier we will be as individuals and as a country. Please help to stop stacking the deck in favor of irresponsible, extractive practices so that small ecological farms can compete and survive. It is in the best interest of everyone who eats. Thank you.

COMMENT OF DRAGAN COLAKOVIC

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:57 a.m.

City, State: Minneapolis, MN

Occupation: Sr. Business Analyst

Comment: Please stop wheat and corn subsidies along with mono culture farming and focus on sustainable farming. Food produced this way is simply substandard and it's slowly killing out nation.

COMMENT OF MILES COLAPRETE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:04 p.m.

City, State: New York, NY

Occupation: Chiropractor

Comment: As a health care provider, teaching people about proper nutrition and how to take care of their bodies is what I do. Without adequate funding, having healthy, organic options will not be as accessible to the general public. **This Is Important To Our Future Health.**

COMMENT OF LESLEY COLBERG

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 7:37 p.m.

City, State: Port Charlotte, FL

Occupation: Shop Clerk in Health Food Store

Comment: Please do the right thing by organic farmers of today and the future. Don't let their livelihood be swallowed by greed. Don't let the chance of having a healthy and therefore happy population be thrown away. Please remember that the USA can lead the way in this matter, thus making a huge statement to the rest of the world—do you care what other people say about this country? Do you care that people here are being poisoned by the chemicals that are put, often unnecessarily, on the produce grown here?

Please also make this bill an honest one. Don't let the term 'organic' become a mockery.

Thanks for reading this and acting in the right, honest, unselfish way that I know you can.

COMMENT OF KENDRA COLBURN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:30 p.m.

City, State: Northampton, MA

Occupation: Shipping Clerk

Comment: As your constituent, I request that you use your power to modify the Food Bill in ways that support the health of the American people and American farmland over the long term. Specifically, I ask that you support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Especially important is closing loopholes in the new insurance subsidies so that large-scale agribusiness gets no more preferential treatment than smaller scale, more sustainable farmers.

This is an extremely important issue and is key to lowering obesity, diabetes, heart disease and many other health epidemics facing Americans in increasing numbers. Please listen to your constituents and do what is best for all Americans.

Thank You!

COMMENT OF DEBBIE COLE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:31 p.m.

City, State: St. Louis, MO

Occupation: Occupational Therapist

Comment: I spent my childhood on a family farm and while I now live in an urban area, I remain very concerned about maintaining the viability of family farmers and maintaining the integrity of our nation's farmland.

As the House Agriculture Committee begins its work on their draft of the farm bill, I would urge you to restore the link between tax-supported subsidies for crop insurance and conservation compliance protections that protect the nation's water and land.

This action is especially important in light of the fact that this Congress is considering eliminating direct subsidies and redirecting these funds. Unless you reconnect these crop insurance payments with conservation practices, a farmers incentive to continue conservation practices will decrease significantly.

Missouri ranks high in the area of soil erosion and we currently are losing 5 tons of topsoil per acre per year. This is unacceptable. We as a nation are only as healthy as our family farms.

COMMENT OF FRANK COLEMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:28 p.m.

City, State: Venice, FL

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Please help the small farmer who is trying to produce local goods (hopefully organic). Take the subsidies from the large agricultural farmers and use the monies to support a healthy pesticide free and no growth hormone environment. Thank you.

COMMENT OF LAURA COLEMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:51 p.m.

City, State: Newmarket, NH

Occupation: Research Analyst

Comment: Eating organic foods lowers the pesticide levels in your body. Lower pesticide levels means increased energy and overall better feeling of well being and health. The U.S. cannot afford to have more people feeling ill and being plagued with diseases where the cause is unknown. Developing children and expectant mothers are especially at risk. Our country cannot afford to depend on other countries for our food! Encourage organic and sustainable farming right here in the U.S. Please do your best to encourage our country to be beautiful and healthy for people, plants, and animals. We will all be happier for it and this will naturally have everyone working harder because they feel better.

Thank you. Please consider this careful. It seems so obvious to me. It just makes sense.

COMMENT OF MARYALICE COLEMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:26 p.m.

City, State: Brighton, CO

Occupation: Life Coach for Women

Comment: I want **Healthy** food produced by farmers—No GMOs and for animals to be free range! **Stop** the cruelty to animals and make my family's and the this country's food organic like it should be! **No** ties to Monsanto!

COMMENT OF WIN COLEMAN

Date Submitted: Monday, March 26, 2012, 10:24 p.m.

City, State: Sulphur Rock, AR

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Field Crops

Size: 1,000+ acres

Comment: Ladies and gentlemen of the House Committee of Agriculture, my name is Win Coleman and I am a 32 year old rice and soybean farmer in Cord, AR. I farm with my father and have been doing so ever since I was big enough to hold a shovel. In 2001 I graduated from the University of Arkansas with a finance banking degree, but I decided to move home and begin farming full time. In those short 11 years I have witnessed a huge change in farming and what it takes to be profitable. In the past several years I have become involved in several organizations on the state and national levels to promote rice globally. I'm the only person that sits on the Arkansas state boards of both national rice organizations, the USA Rice Federation and U.S. Rice Producers and have learned a lot about rice and our markets. I feel that we are entering the biggest challenge to face the rice industry in this new farm bill. As a member of these two rice organizations I have stayed informed on the importance of the programs such as the Emerging Market Program. This very program has kept us viable to this point so I would hate to see this program cut any. The direct payments are the only safety net that work for rice, but I understand that they are a thing of the past and would applaud that with several extra steps to be implemented. First, U.S. rice is the least subsidized rice in the world

of exports which already put us at a disadvantage in both our export and domestic markets. How can our country submit to cotton sanctions by Brazil and not sanction Brazil, India, Vietnam, and others who on a yearly basis use their subsidies and government jargon to force down prices and put us at even a bigger disadvantage.

Second the U.S. government for years has used rice and other commodities as a political football stripping commodity groups of countless years of hard work and sacrifice in opening markets only to get them banned from our portfolios, take Cuba, Iraq, and Iran for example. I understand the stance that we don't want to feed communist or terrorists but at the end of the day they bought from our competitors and are still eating. Third, I believe in feeding and helping those that need the help, but we need to make these provisions more stringent not only because they will save money, but they are misused in a system full of holes. I don't know how many times I have been in line to pay for gas only to see a man or woman in front of me pay for a carton of cigarettes and a 12 pack of beer with food stamps or other government welfare. Why not have a system that allows for those without the needs to receive a staple food from each part of the food pyramid to keep them nourished properly but cut out the free for all. If you are on government assistance it shouldn't be something that you want to stay on with amenities you receive as a hard working tax payer. In closing I have always been ridiculed as a farmer for receiving payment only to explain to people that government intervention has kept us from reaching our potential and costs me money *versus* a fair playing field. That shows how disconnected the American people have become with the farm and where our food comes from. I hope that everyone feels my views in that food security is the most important national defense and would hate to see us rely on another country for our food. We have the means and the want to be great stewards of the land, wildlife, and feed the world, let's work together to figure this out in order to do so with fairness and common sense in our times of huge deficits. Untie our hands and we will survive but don't strip our only true safety net while increasing regulations from the EPA and others that hinder us uncompetitive.

Thank you for listening,

WIN COLEMAN.

COMMENT OF DIANE COLLAR

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:55 p.m.

City, State: Eastbrook, ME

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I know agribusiness feeds the world and spends millions lobbying to influence their financial bottom line, but please have some common sense to also protect the consumer, the environment, and the small food producers. Think about those last three items instead of your need to get reelected.

COMMENT OF MONICA COLLETT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:51 p.m.

City, State: Jackson, MI

Occupation: Marketing

Comment: I support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

It is disturbing to me that many in our Federal government value wealth over the health of our citizens and our land (and their own family members). Just look at the increasing amount of obesity and diet-related disease that is permeating every corner of the U.S. That isn't due to people being lazy and eating too many potato chips. It's due to the way our food is manufactured and processed (and filled with sugar). Promoting fresh, untainted foods is the best way to restore health to the citizens of our nation. The long-term benefit: fewer people will need expensive health care. Maybe we'll even reduce the incidence of cancer. When I was growing up in the 1960s, I knew of one person who had cancer. It wasn't something we worried about. Now, around one in four people I know has been affected by cancer—either personally or within the family. With all the sugar that's put into most of

our processed foods and the toxins introduced into our environment (especially herbicides and pesticides) that increase the amount of estrogen in our bodies, it's hard to escape poor health. Please heed the wake-up call!

COMMENT OF SARA COLLING

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:39 p.m.

City, State: Seattle, WA

Occupation: Public Health

Comment: As a consumer and public health practitioner, access to fresh food is extremely important to me. Cutting subsidies to unhealthy surplus crops like corn, wheat and soy and adding subsidies to healthy crops like fruits and vegetables would drastically improve our obesity epidemic and overall well being. Please consider the consumer's health when you write the Farm bill.

COMMENT OF ANN COLLINS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:35 a.m.

City, State: St. Louis, MO

Occupation: Assistant Reference Librarian

Comment: Please do not cut funding for Food Stamps. There are too many families during this hard economic times that need this help. It is a very successful program that not only helps children and families but also the elderly who are also a vulnerable group. This also helps new farmers, established farmers, organic farmers, we certainly need more of these people to feed all.

We need to support the smaller farmers rather than the huge agricultural commercial farms this keeps employed the smaller farmers and ranchers. And also very important we must ensure the land it used for the greatest good. Thank you.

COMMENT OF KRISTI COLLINS

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 12:55 p.m.

City, State: Stockbridge, GA

Occupation: Case Management

Comment: I think there needs to stricter stand on those that are **Abusing** food stamps. There are people out there that actually **Need** this food. Then there are people that get \$1,000's in food stamps and turn around and sell the stamps. Those people need more than just a smack on the hand.

COMMENT OF LINDA COLLINS

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 9:00 a.m.

City, State: Cape Coral, FL

Occupation: Retired Telecom CSR

Comment: The health of myself and my family along with the rest of the world depends on safety of agriculture, killing bees, use of Roundup and altering DNA of our food is not safe.

COMMENT OF PRESTON COLLINS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:27 p.m.

City, State: Yelm, WA

Occupation: Retired Electrical Engineer

Comment: Please do not promote Big Ag over small farmers and home based gardens and enterprises. What is happening to whole milk producers is criminal. Respect our constitutional rights and freedoms. Do no harm.

COMMENT OF J.D. COLLNER

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 08, 2012, 3:04 p.m.

City, State: Cocoa, FL

Occupation: Retired Church Volunteer

Comment: This is a contra-comment to what you are probably hearing from the "Feeding America" Advocacy and Public Policy group. My wife and I run the Food Pantry at FUMC Port St. John, which feeds hundreds of people each year in our depressed local economy. We do not participate in TEFAP, but purchase food at a discount from Second Harvest as well as local grocery stores. Our funds come from generous congregational gifts as well as community food drives. Our personal belief

is that taking additional “strings attached” money from the Federal Government and the already stretched tax payer is not what Christian Charity should be. Therefore, we ask that your committee develop policies which do not pander and make people going through tough time more dependent on government. Churches and communities have the rightful obligation to provide temporary aid to the hungry.

COMMENT OF JANIE COLLOMB

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 10:16 p.m.

City, State: Truckee, CA

Occupation: Retired Teacher

Comment: **Monostrous** Agrifarms are not **Farms**. They are mass producers of heavily laden pesticide product called “**FOOD**.” Stop subsidies to these industries and only help fund the small farms again.

COMMENT OF RICHARD E. COLSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:18 p.m.

City, State: So. Portland, ME

Occupation: Electronics Tech

Comment: Corporate farm giants have put a stranglehold on the daily health and well being of every American. The effects from pesticides and germ ridden feed lots are far reaching. Obesity is now commonplace. breast cancer and prostate can now be linked to chemicals in the food chain. the change needs to start now!

COMMENT OF REV. PAT COLWELL

Date Submitted: Friday, April 27, 2012, 9:18 a.m.

City, State: Martinsburg, WV

Occupation: Minister

Comment: If the farm bill and the food assistance bill could be combined, locally owned and operated farms (especially family operations) could be utilized to help feed the people. The USDA could help to coordinate neighborhood and community gardens in addition to the farm to school program, encouraging young people to learn and grow, whilst also feeding the people and encouraging good health.

COMMENT OF ANN COMANAR

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:52 a.m.

City, State: Brooklyn, NY

Occupation: Wardrobe Supervisor/Dresser Metropolitan Opera

Comment: With due respect I believe that clean food is a right and not a privilege. Food that is grown with clean healthy seed not GMO. Food that is produced without the use of questionable chemical fertilizers, herbicides and pesticides which not only pollute and mutate our bodies but seeping poison into our waterways as well. I ask you to invest in a taste test yourself. Eat organic staples for 1 month. That is butter, eggs, bread, milk and meats. I guarantee that you will taste the difference, you will feel the difference and will be loathe to revert to non-organic. Myself and my family are worth the price which is a bargain compared to the difference in safety, taste and nutritional value. I cannot in good consciousness feed any child anything less . . . how can you?

COMMENT OF MAUREEN COMBES

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:43 p.m.

City, State: Kapa’au, HI

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: To the honorable Congresswoman Hirono,

Please take a good, hard look at the state of agriculture in America today and ask yourself: Do we want to continue to subsidize those massive corporations that bring us cheap junk food, or do we want to support our smaller, more local farmers that bring us high quality, fresh food? Let’s put our money in the places that support a vibrant and **Healthy** country. Our current farm bill does **Not** do that. Let’s change the course!

Aloha,

MAUREEN COMBES.

COMMENT OF MARY COMFORT

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 1:05 p.m.

City, State: Coeur d'Alene, ID

Occupation: IT Specialist

Comment: It is time to realize that agribusiness is not in the best interest of the American people, nor the planet. In a capitalist society purchasing should be the driving force in deciding market strategies and business focus. Unfortunately, this has been usurped by a small number of highly overpaid corporate executives who either lack the business acumen or big picture education to make a truly capitalist business environment work. In its place we have millions of dollars being spent on lawyers and lobbyists, none of whom are concerned about, or working for the general good. Evidence of how this is not working is staring us in the face with an ever increasing rate of obesity, diabetes, auto-immune health issues, sky rocketing health costs, a rising Alzheimer's rate, *etc.* The bottom line what we as a nation have been doing is not working and we need to change the way we do things, beginning with providing people with accurate information about what they are eating, and making sure that good wholesome, unadulterated real food is available to them at a reasonable price. If you are not part of the solution you are adhering to old beliefs and behaviors, and hence are part of the problem. Change is due now! As one who is suffering and has spent the past 4 years healing my body severely damaged by agribusiness practices, and poor health care I believe Organic is in our best interest as a nation and a species. The farm bill must accurately protect organic labeling, be supportive of local and regional organic farms, and punish the corporations using sleazy practices and questionable science to put their modified seeds into fields and then going after the small farmer. They are the ones who should be punished and fined. As far as I am concerned agribusiness methods, policies and behaviors have no place in my future, unless significant changes are made in the crops they are growing, the methods they are using and the manner in which they treat small local farms.

COMMENT OF MARY COMFORT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:35 p.m.

City, State: Warren, MI

Occupation: Secretary

Comment: In a time when our nation is focusing on Health Care Reform, it is appropriate to also focus on Health **Food** Reform. Fresh, organic, non-GMO, sustainable agriculture is essential to our future. Please vote for **People** instead of greed at the expense of people. This is America the Beautiful—let's keep it that way! God bless you.

COMMENT OF JOHN COMMERFORD

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 12:19 p.m.

City, State: Phoenix, AZ

Occupation: Lawyer

Comment: I support legislation like Sodsaver and CSP. With corn and soy going through the roof, there has to be some inducement to leave land wild.

Thinking more selfishly, I support low interest loans for beginning farmers, especially those who eschew herbicides and pesticides. I expect to buy rural property to farm in the next twelve months and plan to farm as sustainably as possible. This type of funding is especially important to me.

COMMENT OF SAMANTHA COMO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:27 p.m.

City, State: Oak Lawn, IL

Occupation: Self-Employed

Comment: Stop killing all of us you murdering monsters, we will not tolerate any more of your abuse. You will be made to pay for your atrocities, count on it, so don't keep adding to your many offenses.

COMMENT OF MICHAEL COMPSTON

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 08, 2012, 4:12 p.m.

City, State: Smith, NV

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Field Crops, Livestock, Specialty Crops

Size: 500–999 acres

Comment: Concentrate support for conservation and nutrition. Reasonable crop insurance for catastrophic loss only and eliminate price supports. Markets will stabilize production.

COMMENT OF DAN CONINE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:04 p.m.

City, State: Belgium, WI

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Health reform (not health CARE reform: which is just changing who builds the hospitals for the sick people) begins with food and ends with knowledge of what our food does to us, whether we can obtain healthy food or just calories, and where the money that supports towns and villages stays in those towns and villages or is sent to central processors and offshore banks.

We don't need new government organizations: we just need the ones we have to do their actual jobs instead of the jobs of the corporations.

COMMENT OF PAUL CONKLIN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:41 p.m.

City, State: Solway, MN

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Livestock, Poultry/poultry products, Specialty Crops, Vegetables

Size: 50–150 acres

Comment: I think ag policy has been going in the wrong direction. I just read an article about the causes of our obesity epidemic, the main one being the oversupply of cheap, bad food. Why do we have this oversupply? Because the USDA is paying farmers to produce it. Why are we paying farmers to produce it, because the companies that make billions of dollars producing cheap, bad food need cheap raw materials, and because the mega farms that get most of the benefits have a lot of clout.

There have been some positive efforts to limit the amount that any farm can get in subsidies. Now apparently the subsidy payments are being scrapped and replaced with an "insurance" program that will again allow unlimited access to Federal dollars for big farms, with no ties to environmental performance.

Obviously I think this is wrong. What should we do?

- (1) Get the government out of farm subsidies altogether. The small and medium sized farms that are producing good, healthy food don't benefit much anyway; or
- (2) pay farmers to produce good, healthy food and distribute it to the people who need it!

Some current programs help with this.

- The Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act.
- The Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act
- The EQIP Organic Initiative
- The CSP
- Making sure that all government payments are tied to compliance with environmental and conservation laws and rules.

COMMENT OF SUSAN CONKLIN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 4:37 p.m.

City, State: Mosier, OR

Occupation: Chef

Comment: Oregon is a model for what can be a new way to look at Agriculture, well, actually, an old way revised. More than 75 new small farms have sprung up just in the Columbia Gorge in the past few years and schools, retail stores, individual farmers are benefitting from locally grown, often organic/pesticide-free, soil rich, produce, not to mention meat without hormones, antibiotics, ammonia and mad cow disease. All of us need you to do everything you can to pave the way for these farms to thrive and not be pushed out, bullied or otherwise put out of business by large corporate farms. All farms need to thrive and survive. For every decision you make, please keep these small farms in mind over the interests of the big guys who are, at times, trying to own all of the seed farmers plant, and putting obscenely

genetically modified food in our stores. This is a very serious concern to those of us who need a choice to stay healthy and eat food that has proper nutrition. Most of the food we see in grocery stores today, contains less than ½ the vitamins and minerals in it, it had in 1950. We are in your hands.

SUSAN CONKLIN.

COMMENT OF GAIL CONLEY

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 6:06 a.m.

City, State: Fairfax, VA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: This nation was built on the backs of the small farmers. Don't turn your backs on them at a time like this when they need your help. We are a nation in need, our people are obese and getting sicker as a group. Those who seek to help them with healthful foods are being squelched. It is your hands to do the right thing for the future generations of organic farming. Give us all a chance, **Please!**

COMMENT OF HILARY CONNAUGHTON

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 10:24 p.m.

City, State: McCloud, CA

Occupation: Nurse

Comment: I'm tired of feeling like our agriculture is just another greedy corporation and I want government that I feel wants what is best for me and mine.

COMMENT OF CASEY CONNELL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 12:49 p.m.

City, State: Belen, NM

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Dry Beans & Peas, Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: This country needs healthier food. We need to practice sustainable agriculture so that our future generations will have a planet they can continue to use for food. One that has not been poisoned by pesticides and herbicides which contains the vitamins and minerals we need to be healthy.

COMMENT OF JOANNA CONRARDY

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 02, 2012, 9:34 p.m.

City, State: Albuquerque, NM

Occupation: Educational Assistant

Comment:

1. Fairness for small farmers is essential.
2. Labeling Genetically Modified food products is essential.
3. Helping the poor and nearly poor adults and children in this country is essential.

Please act responsibly when voting on the farm bill. Thank You.

COMMENT OF PEGGY CONROY

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:12 a.m.

City, State: West Chazy, NY

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Field Crops, Livestock, Vegetables, Other

Size: 151-300 acres

Comment: We need support for small farmers who **Do Not Use Poisons On The Land Or Torture Their Animals By Restricting Them To Indoor, Cramped Housing 24/7.**

We need to **Stop "King Corn"**, and grow crops that take little from the land, rather, increases it's health and productivity, mostly grasses and legumes.

We know you are paid but big ag and soon you will be voted out of office. I saw your forestry questioning (by a GOP rep) allowing **Only** forestry people to preach last nite on C-SPAN, it was totally disgusting, just a platform for big lumber.

You people can't be gotten rid of soon enough.

COMMENT OF PAUL CONSTANTINE

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 9:34 a.m.
City, State: Hayesville, NC
Occupation: Musician—Entertainer
Comment: Please consider legislation that helps the small independent growers that provide organically grown food for local consumers. Support bio-diversity in agriculture and require labeling for genetically modified food crops.

COMMENTS OF PATTI CONSTANTINO-MARTIN

Date Submitted: Friday, April 27, 2012, 7:14 p.m.
City, State: Spring Hill, FL
Occupation: Education
Comment: End the corporate whore stance. You can't be Christians and corporate whores at the same time. It just doesn't fit.
Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 4:44 p.m.
Comment: Would you starve your own parents? There are plenty of elderly who never had kids and are alone and vulnerable. The **American** thing to do is protect them. Take from yourselves, take from Wall Street, and big banks. They are responsible, make them **Accountable**.

COMMENT OF GABRIELLA CONTESTABILE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:01 a.m.
City, State: New York, NY
Occupation: Writer and Business Owner
Comment: American food policy is shameful. Stop subsidizing the unhealthy processed foods (it's a stretch to call them food) that dominate every grocery store in America. **This Is Making People Sick!** Stop lining your pockets with money from Big Food while all of you in Congress can well afford to feed your families the healthy produce so many families in America cannot afford or have access to. Stop making us sick with antibiotics, corn fed cattle, and disgusting processed garbage in every store. I was born and lived in Europe and thankfully adopted those habits for my family. But it's expensive whereas it is far more affordable in countries outside the U.S. Stop subsidizing big corn. Support local farmers and growers. Help our local produce thrive. Finally, when are you going to figure out that your job is to legislate for the public good not for your private greed.
 Get over yourselves and do what's right. I'm not holding my breath. That said, I know where Jerold Nadler, my representative stands, on the side of what's right. But he, and a few others, are unfortunately the exception.

COMMENT OF EMMA CONTRERAS

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 11:36 a.m.
City, State: Boca Raton, FL
Occupation: MRO Sales
Comment: We must have a fair and healthy farm bill. As it is today we are blind and are not able to make wise decision on the food we feed our families and is making us sick.

COMMENT OF CHRISTOPHER COOK

Date Submitted: Friday, March 16, 2012, 9:47 a.m.
City, State: Hereford, AZ
Occupation: Construction, Draftsman/Engineer
Comment: Having gone through a starvation period in my youth, I urge you to include singles in your food assistance programs. I worked very hard to pay my rent and phone, but at \$2 to \$3 an hour, I could not afford much food. I went from 160 pounds to 130 pounds (bare bones) until I got emergency food stamps. After I got the food stamps I was able to find a good job. It gave me time to look instead of living day to day (1974). I got the food stamps only one time, but it got me on a path of never needing them again for my entire life (40 years since).

COMMENT OF DON COOK

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:50 a.m.
City, State: Waco, GA
Occupation: Physical Therapist

Comment: The U.S. food and agricultural policy must focus on adopting best agricultural practices that put the health of its citizens, the land and the livelihood of farmers and farm workers over the interests of industrial agriculture lobbyists.

Career politicians in Washington and across this nation are out of touch with the values of the American people. Corporate agribusiness has a stranglehold on our regulatory system and our political leaders.

Farmers and eaters across the U.S. benefit from a fair and healthy farm bill. **Do Not** cut funding to vital programs that promote conservation and support for organic and sustainable agriculture.

Instead, support the full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).

Fully fund conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and make sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.

Stop tax payer funded government giveaways to agribusiness and, instead, support initiatives that favor community supported agriculture. Eliminate farm subsidies that support agribusiness and shift support to local farming efforts.

Endorse and implement all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).

Maintain the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Tax payers **Do Not** support a \$33 billion new entitlement program that guarantees the income of profitable farm businesses and \$90 billion in subsidies for crop and revenue insurance policies.

Do Not cut \$4 million from organic research funding or cut funding to support Beginning Farmers.

Do Not support new subsidized insurance programs that leading sustainable agriculture advocates are calling rife with opportunities for fraud and abuse.

Get rid of direct payments to commodity farmers. Kill the proposed subsidized insurance program that will allow giant commodity farmers and insurance companies to walk away with billions in taxpayer dollars while putting the land, soil and environment at greater risk.

COMMENT OF LTC LENNY COOK

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:55 p.m.

City, State: San Antonio, TX

Occupation: U.S. Air Force

Comment: I took the oath of office as a U.S. Military Officer, to support and defend the Constitution of the U.S.—I expect those elected officials in our U.S. Government to do the same. Not to defend the interest of lobbyists. Thank you.

COMMENT OF MARGARET COOK

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:21 a.m.

City, State: Waco, GA

Occupation: Registered Nurse

Comment: I support sustainable community agriculture as a means to feed this nation healthy food. I object to continued government support and favoritism/money support for agribusiness. It is agribusiness/factory farming that has brought us bovine spongiform encephalopathy/mad cow disease and food recalls to numerous to mention.

I support the full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).

I endorse fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.

The request the implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236). And I want the EQIP Organic Initiatives Maintained.

I am angered by Big Government's support of Big Ag and will no longer support politicians who value lobbyists' contributions to their campaign coffers above the health of the American people!

COMMENT OF MICHAEL COOK

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:27 p.m.

City, State: Jamaica, NY

Occupation: Artist

Comment: I think you really need to listen to the voices of your constituents who realize the significance of providing healthy, organic food for everyone, not expensive subsidies to Agribusiness which does not need them, and is sending us down the drain with their non-ecological, non-conservation, unhealthy practices. The food these factory farms produce is causing huge increases in the cost of our healthcare system, not to mention our national mortality rates. If left to their own devices, these people will entirely ruin the quality of our land, and food supply in the United States. Do something about this now by reversing this trend.

COMMENT OF JOHN COOKE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:59 a.m.

City, State: Haverford, PA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: It's time for real farm reform. Stop subsidizing agribusinesses and start focusing on policies that promote healthy and organic farms and assure a healthy diet for all Americans.

COMMENT OF KATHERINE COOKE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:54 p.m.

City, State: Brooklyn, NY

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: We need appropriate safeguards for our food sources. Specifically I would like to see more done about sustainable agriculture, getting rid of GMO food and GE food, and working towards organic agriculture across the country. I cannot trust food that is produced with so many chemicals.

COMMENT OF MONICA COOLEY

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 6:49 a.m.

City, State: Lafayette Hill, PA

Occupation: IT Project Manager

Comment: I am a strong proponent of sustainably-farmed, local food. Our current agricultural policy does not allow this type of farm or farmer to thrive, but instead is skewed to ensure that large mass production farms offering excessive amounts of foods we do not need grown via methods that are harming our environment.

Let's make our policy even the playing field for the farmers that are growing foods we want and need in a way that benefits the people and the environment. Thank you.

COMMENT OF ANITA COOLIDGE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:09 p.m.

City, State: Cardiff, CA

Occupation: Semi-Retired: Energy Healer and Writer

Comment: As a citizen of the U.S. and very concerned about the quality of the food we eat, as well as the well-being of those who produce it, I never want to see bills passed that allow greed to take over for quality of food and quality of life. We all need to be protected from pesticides and GMOs.

COMMENT OF BARBARA COOPER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:21 p.m.

City, State: Barton, NY

Occupation: Retired Social Worker

Comment: I believe food production—because it is controlled by corporate \$ and agribusiness—is hurting our health, the environment, and the economy (with the exception of the few decision-making corporations). I do not feel current decision-making is based on principles of science and health which is what we need.

COMMENT OF CAROLINE COOPER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:21 a.m.

City, State: Las Vegas, NV

Occupation: Biosync Practitioner

Comment: To whom it may concern,

I find it an absolute disgrace that our food is full of chemicals and pesticides. I also find it a disgrace that it has to be so much more expensive to eat organic, hor-

mone free, antibiotic free, and chemical free food. We should all have access to healthy whole foods. I think it is imperative that we go back to basics as nature intended. With over 60% of our population being overweight and ridden with all kind of diseases that would easily disappear if only they had access to real, healthy and affordable food. So needless to say, our generation is in desperate need of change and together we can change that. We owe it to ourselves and this planet to make that change.

In high hopes of seeing that change happen, I thank you for your time.
CAROLINE COOPER.

COMMENT OF DEANNE COOPER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 6:07 p.m.

City, State: LaGrange, KY

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables, Other

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: As an individual majoring in biology, geology, and eventually a Ph.D. program for ecology, I have tremendous interest in sustaining the diversity of our ecosystems. We are at a critical time in our planet's history to slow down the impact of our continued actions for the greatest positive effect of long term consequences for the planet. Conservation and investment into a farm bill that sustains small farms with alternative farming practices like organic farming that return our land to producing quality food products that improves the health of the public and that sustains the environment without soil runoff and pesticides that infiltrate our water supply. I want my children to play in healthy ecosystems and have clean water that's o.k. to swim in. I want them to have a planet and a country that values it's resources and does not pillage without the thought of responsibility for restorative processes that continue to improve and lead the world. The responsibility party was given a planet to care for, not plunder until it is used up and not able to sustain life.

COMMENT OF DIANE COOPER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:02 p.m.

City, State: Highland, NY

Occupation: Grandmother

Comment: When our water is poisoned by fracking and waste disposal, and our soil is dead from chemicals, and our total food supply is poisoned by Monsanto and the rest . . . and our bodies are destroyed by the cancers all this causes, and all the animals and the fish will have been destroyed by being eaten, or hunted to extinction . . . **Then** will they be happy? What will it take to stop all the genetic modification, feeding farmed fish and animals chemical fake food? We are delicate animals ourselves, and we are driving ourselves to extinction with all this. Just my humble opinion.

DIANE (BONNIE) COOPER.

COMMENT OF JOHN COOPER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:47 p.m.

City, State: Naalehu, HI

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Field Crops

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: The whole idea of our life should not be simply to extract money from everything else your deadly products have no other function but to attempt to collect money and power to collect more money. Try doing something that actually benefits the whole world and that does not point directly to your folly of wealth accumulation as the only thing that you are.

COMMENT OF NANCY COOPER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:40 p.m.

City, State: Stanwood, WA

Occupation: Private Organic Gardener

Comment: This country is supposed to be by the people, for the people. In other words, the farm bill should only subsidize actual small farmers, when they are in need. It should not be a hand out to Monsanto, ADM, Cargill *etc.*

Also, rules should be to protect the people, not the corporations! (Monsanto suing because their seeds blew across the street, or requiring farmers to buy new seeds each year!) **Absolute Madness!**

COMMENT OF ORION COOPER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:12 a.m.

City, State: Portland, ME

Occupation: Direct Service Professional

Comment: I believe that small, local farms, sustainable agricultural practices, and organic food production are the best way to protect our health, environmental integrity, and our economy. I also believe that very large farms, monoculture food production, and government subsidies for very large farms and other very large food producers are damaging to our health, our environment, and our economy. With this in mind, I ask you to consider the following requests while working on the next farm bill:

1. Please endorse all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
2. Please grant full funding to the Conservation Stewardship Program and other conservation programs. Please ensure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies is tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
3. Please implement all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
4. Please maintain the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Thank you for your consideration.

COMMENT OF JESSICA CORAM

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:31 p.m.

City, State: Cambria, NY

Occupation: MIS Manager

Comment: I would like a farm bill that promotes healthy organic food. Organic options are important to me and my family and they are often difficult to find at the grocery store.

I also believe that agricultural subsidies should be capped so that larger Agri-business firms are not using incentives as corporate welfare.

COMMENT OF SHANNON CORAM

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:04 a.m.

City, State: Tampa, FL

Occupation: Financial Analyst

Comment: Having a young son now, I'm teaching him the importance of eating healthy food. Not only having access to natural, local fruit, vegetables and meat but having affordable access is an important step in the health of our children and fighting the battle of the bulge for all citizens. We are a very unhealthy country at the moment but making healthy food available and affordable to everyone is one step in fighting the obesity problem in America which in turn will also lighten the burden this epidemic has placed on our healthcare system. We need to lower the amount of diabetes, heart and liver disease in this country. Aside from the debt that our country is always dealing with, this is by far the biggest issue I see our country facing.

COMMENT OF MARY LOU CORBETT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 3:54 p.m.

City, State: Johnston, SC

Occupation: Retired Administrative Assistant

Comment: I recommend crop subsidies only to producers who eschew chemical fertilizers, pesticides, genetically modified root and seed stock, growth hormones, and non-therapeutic antibiotics. This would (1) increase agricultural employment, (2) increase product pricing, (3) level the playing field for organic producers, domestic and foreign, to compete with conventional USA factory farms, (4) allow consumers to obtain unpolluted produce at a reasonable price, reducing the incidence of chronic disease and mental decline, and (5) slow and possibly stop epidemic bee colony collapse.

COMMENT OF LINDA CORBIN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 7:26 p.m.

City, State: Laurel, MT

Occupation: Semi-Retired Union Worker/Hobby Farmer

Comment: I'm sick and tired of having companies like Monsanto dictating to the farmers and country how I'm going to eat. I don't want pesticides in my food. I don't believe they're safe and no one has tested this to prove otherwise, in fact, they have been found in the blood of some animals and children! Organic farmers are getting screwed by big ag and I'm sick of it. I hate this Congress, they do nothing for the people who put them in D.C.! They need to get off their overpaid asses and help the people instead of the games they're playing now! I am Democratic and proud of it.

COMMENT OF MARY CORCORAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:31 p.m.

City, State: New York, NY

Occupation: Self-Employed

Comment: Don't let Congress cut \$4 million from organic research funding and cut in half funding to support Beginning Farmers. Tell Congress to support organics.

Thank You!

COMMENT OF RUTH CORDELL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:21 p.m.

City, State: Manchester, TN

Occupation: Trainer, Teacher, Director

Comment: More and more, acquiring clean "original" food without the tampering of chemicals, chemical residue, modification is becoming an elusive to impossible expectation.

Good health is a birthright. The further we remove ourselves from the responsibility of keeping a pure food source, vegetable or animal, we travel further from the ownership of healthy and sound bodies and minds.

I respectfully request that this issue be carefully reviewed, and reviewed often, to protect our future, our children, our animals, indeed, all living creatures. Because the science of mass production is very much a increasing reality, we must realized that it most often should not be the norm.

Thank you for your time.

COMMENT OF LONNEY CORDER-AGNEW

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:29 p.m.

City, State: Oklahoma City, OK

Occupation: Teacher

Comment:

1. No animals should be cruelly confined or deprived of light and air.
2. No hormones or universal antibiotics should be used.
3. Pizza is **Not** a vegetable.
4. Most important: **Stop** Monsanto from designing genetically modified seeds that kill "pests" They're also killing bees, which is beyond stupid.

I **Do Not** care if business "leaders" don't like this. They can suck it up.

COMMENT OF FLOYD CORDOVA

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 4:12 p.m.

City, State: Albuquerque, NM

Occupation: Health and Wellness Advocate

Comment: Along with getting the funding for all the nutritional entities, we need to include that we need to set up a committee to get Industrial Hemp legal to grow in the USA.

COMMENT OF JANIE CORDRAY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:43 p.m.

City, State: Woodland, CA

Occupation: Retired/Government Regulatory Consultant

Comment: Please work to end subsidies for grains that are used for animal feed or sweeteners. It's time we subsidize real food, particularly non-GMO organic foods that promote health, not obesity and illness.

COMMENT OF RICK CORMIER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:40 p.m.

City, State: Yarmouth, ME

Occupation: Psychotherapist/Musician/Author

Comment: We are handing our health and the future of our children's health to the company who brought us Agent Orange so that members of Congress can line their pockets from stock purchases which they have kept exempt from insider trading laws. We have, in effect, legalized corruption in the U.S. Monsanto has waged an attack on their competitor, the organic farmer, and our legal system . . . our government . . . has become too corrupt to defend the farmer.

COMMENT OF LINDA CORNELL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:26 p.m.

City, State: Campbell, NY

Occupation: Retired—Banking

Comment: Ever wonder why there is so much cancer these days. What is really being put in our food? You don't have to look very far to see the toxins that we are eating every day. Please do not allow these deceptive practices to continue. Tell the FDA to do their jobs and protect us from all the toxins.

COMMENT OF SANDY CORNELL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 10:29 a.m.

City, State: Moab, UT

Occupation: Nanny

Comment: Please stop ruining our food and our planet at the same time. How much power and money is **Enough**. I will only eat certified organic forever . . . shame on the lot of you for bringing us to this point in our food system and Politics. Stop!

COMMENT OF GINA CORNIA

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 16, 2012, 4:55 p.m.

City, State: Salt Lake City, UT

Occupation: Anti-Hunger Advocate

Comment: Utahns Against Hunger urges you to craft a farm bill that will protect the integrity and current structure of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. Changing it to a block grant will prevent it from responding, as it has, to downturns in the economy and will increase hunger and food insecurity to those who can least afford it. The committee should also increase funding for TEFAP, emergency food providers continue to serve record numbers of people who often are not eligible for Federal nutrition programs but are still poor. Now is the time for bold leadership and to shore up programs that improve health, reduce poverty and put food on the table.

COMMENT OF SUSAN CORRADO

Date Submitted: Wednesday, April 18, 2012, 10:18 p.m.

City, State: Verona, WI

Occupation: Facilitator of an Agricultural Program

Comment: Please support the full funding of the Farm bill that is absolutely vital for giving small family farmers half a chance against conglomerate agriculture. This is the time when we need to, develop sustainable farming and local production. The socially disadvantaged farm grants help to build capacity of a strong farming workforce who fills an important void in the family farm demise. This has severe consequences on the general population.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF NICOLE CORZINE

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 3:34 p.m.

City, State: Spring, TX

Occupation: AFIS Support Technician

Comment: I do not support the ban of farmer's children or family being able to work on the farm as "chores." Kids need a strong work ethic now more than ever, and taking away an incredible experience for them will do no favors. I also do not support government subsidies to farmers to only grow certain amounts of food per season. This is a form of price control. Allow farmers to choose what they believe should be planted and stay out of their lives!

COMMENT OF JULES COSENZA

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 12:54 p.m.

City, State: Schwenksville, PA

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: Point out that feeding our neighbors is a public-private partnership, we do our part with fund raisers and food drives and volunteerism but if you approve cutting anti-hunger programs it will increase hunger in America, as well as the associated health care, educational, and economic costs of food insecurity and please remember the families who are struggling in our community. I urge you to protect and strengthen important anti-hunger programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP in the 2012 Farm Bill reauthorization.

COMMENT OF BRONA COSGRAVE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:21 a.m.

City, State: Brooklyn, NY

Occupation: Communications

Comment: Take back the farm bill from corporate ag and food processing companies. Creating a fairer farm bill that supports small diversified farms will not only stimulate the economy, but also improve the health of the nation thereby reducing health costs further adding to the country's bottom line. We deserve to be able to buy "clean" fresh nutritional food.

COMMENT OF CHARLES COSHOW, JR.

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:00 p.m.

City, State: Houston, TX

Occupation: Data Report Developer

Comment: We can either continue to pursue policies that are endangering the future of agriculture and our health, or we can make a change and promote crops **Besides** wheat and corn, we can create an environment that promotes best practices, promote food that makes us **Better** when we eat it, and ensures that America can feed, not just itself, but the world for generations to come.

COMMENT OF PAT COSIMANO

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 6:54 a.m.

City, State: Woodside, NY

Occupation: Homekeeper

Comment: I'm informed that Congress is considering cutting funding to vital programs such as nutrition, conservation and support for organic and sustainable agriculture.

I oppose any cuts to these programs and hope you oppose cuts as well.

COMMENT OF ANITA COST

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:24 a.m.

City, State: Fountain Valley, CA

Occupation: Unemployed

Comment: We need a better system. I want to be able to trust food producers to produce sustainable and healthy food with less chemicals and pollution. I want reliable honest food labels. I want independent testing of industry research. I and my family are depending on you to make honorable choices when it comes to our food.

COMMENT OF DEMELZA COSTA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:55 p.m.

City, State: Sweet Home, OR

Occupation: Counselor

Comment: I absolutely object to **Any** subsidy farm aid being given to corporations this is an **Ignorant** policy which only encourages their greed and fascist **Agenda**. Farm subsidies should absolutely be given to legit mate small and family farms who need this assistance. Priority should be given to authentic organically grown crops and seeds. Absolutely **None** should be given to Monsanto and bio-tech growers/marketers. The object of 'Farms' is to produce food and seeds fit for consumption **Not** sickening people and animals and destroying native plants and toxifying the ecology!

COMMENT OF CHRIS COSTANZO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:06 p.m.

City, State: Downingtown, PA

Occupation: Financial Analyst

Comment: The United States has one of the lowest levels of food standards in the developed world whether this is generally accepted or not. The food produced in factory farms is nutritionally insufficient at best. If you disagree then please explain to me why in the U.S. we have obese yet malnourished people. The attempted domination of the food system by the benefactors of biotech companies pushing GMOs is highly shameful as the heavy use of pesticides is implicated in various health concerns and is a major pollutant that we are all forced to live within the environment. The food system in the U.S. is unacceptable and has very significant negative ramifications ranging from poor school performance by our children to overall healthcare expenses that we cannot afford. Myself and an increasing number of people are fully aware of the corrupt nature of the U.S. food system and will continue to support local, responsible, organic food growers and producers while our politicians support chemical producers and factories that churn out product that has a direct negative impact on the performance and productivity of the people all the while amplifying our already unsustainable healthcare costs.

COMMENT OF SHAWNDEYA COSTELLO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:59 p.m.

City, State: Marcola, OR

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I have incorporated 3 chickens, 3 ducks and 2 geese into my backyard of 5 acres. I no longer need pesticides and I can eat eggs from chickens who are not living a tortured life. How would you like living in a cage? Do you want your grandchildren to inherit a poison filled Earth that creates birth defects?

COMMENT OF TISH COTTER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:37 p.m.

City, State: New York, NY

Occupation: VP of a Small Consultancy

Comment: Support family farms, organic farming and beyond organic farming—label GM foods, protect all small farmers and our soil from GMs and from big ag. Stop supporting diabetes and obesity with subsidies as they stand, make fresh local food available.

COMMENT OF LAWRENCE COTTLE

Date Submitted: Friday, April 27, 2012, 9:04 a.m.

City, State: Dallas, TX

Occupation: Chiropractor

Comment: We must NOT allow critical food programs to just "go away"! Try going hungry (fasting) for a day or two. You will soon realize the stark feelings of deprivation, depression, and desperation.

COMMENT OF ANDREW COTTON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:18 p.m.

City, State: Midway, FL

Occupation: Health Care

Comment: As more and more data is reported regarding the hazards both to the environment and to our bodies associated with the use of agricultural pesticides and inappropriate use of antibiotics to stimulate unnatural growth rates in meat we

need policies and political figures to support smaller more diversified farmers who are working to produce food without harmful chemicals. I don't think that extra money should be dumped into the farming sector, just spread it around fairly. That doesn't mean huge corporate agribusiness gets 90% of the subsidies just because they lobby harder with their money. It also means that growers associated with these big firms **Are Not** who I am advocating get the larger cut, they have chosen to offer up their products to a bigger source and are not operating independently. Support independently operated small organic and/or naturally grown farms fairly, and get non-biased oversight on the reevaluation of limiting regulations intended for large operations but cost prohibitive and unnecessary for the small farm. Furthermore it is sickening to hear news of the weakness and lack of accountability in the USDA and other regulatory agencies dropping the ball when it comes to enforcing basic standards for the big players who grow conventional and often genetically modified foods. And to whomever may be reading this (or not), count on the fact that if transparency and action are not show in the topics listed above you will get voted against until someone who can and will fixes our screwed up food system.

COMMENT OF NANCY COTTON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:01 p.m.

City, State: Lebanon, TN

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Other

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: I have a private farm and want to see farmers able to farm "the right way." Every time you pass another of your horrible bills, you make it harder for small farmers to stay in business. I don't want to eat factory farm, GMO food. Small farmers are the backbone of this country.

COMMENT OF STEPHEN COUCHE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:43 p.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Retired

Comment: It is critical to the health of this planet that we really stand up and support (even subsidize) the family farmer. The closer we can get the growers to their markets the fresher the produce and the better for the environment.

COMMENT OF CHRISTIAN COULON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:57 p.m.

City, State: Davis, CA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Specialty Crops

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Support small, local growers. Stop pesticides, end big ag subsidies. End factory farming. Require greenbelts. Create agricultural education requirement for ALL students in the USA—everyone needs to know where food comes from!

COMMENT OF NINA COUNCIL

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 12:13 a.m.

City, State: Ashland, OR

Occupation: Retired Artist and Admin. Person

Comment: Big agriculture is out of hand, small farmers having real trouble. Must produce organic, safe food, no GMO's used. Our food is becoming more and more unhealthy.

COMMENT OF GEORGE COURTER

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 10:32 p.m.

City, State: Galesburg, IL

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Field Crops

Size: 50–150 acres

Comment: Gentlemen:

I attended the committee hearing in Galesburg. This hearing was very well conducted and Chairman Lucas did an outstanding job of conducting it. I thought it

was also well attended. I agree with everything David Erickson spoke about. As a taxpayer, I want Congress to cut spending, and reduce taxes. The Federal budget must be balanced and debt reduced. The major portion of the Ag budget is food stamps and people must be put to work to reduce that program.

COMMENT OF DAVE COWEN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:21 p.m.

City, State: San Diego, CA

Occupation: Mortgage Broker

Comment: Please use the newest Ag Bill as an opportunity to promote nutrition, healthy eating, and an increase in organic farming. We have tried to oppose, and the damage to our country's health and citizens has been dramatic. Please do the right thing.

COMMENT OF ANN COWLES, PH.D.

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:42 p.m.

City, State: Davis, CA

Occupation: Supportive Living Services

Comment: I believe that healthy food makes healthy people, and unhealthy food makes unhealthy people. This country could save **Billions** in health care costs by promoting policies that support the production of organic foods and naturally-fed food animals. Even though the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286) has provisions I don't like, I still ask that you vote for it in order for conservation programs to be funded, and for enrollment in any new insurance subsidies to be tied to compliance with adherence to conservation programs. Also, I want implemented all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236). **No Farms, No Food.** Since it's only a matter of time before it is generally accepted that chemicals used in food production contribute to cancer and other illnesses, I also ask that you support the maintenance of the EQIP Organic Initiative. Thank you very much,
ANN COWLES, PH.D.

COMMENT OF JANET COWLING

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 7:26 a.m.

City, State: Saline, MI

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: I oppose the cuts proposed by the House. Please add these important items to the House version of the Farm Bill Community Food Projects Program—\$10 million per year to help communities build food self-reliance.

Farmers Market and Local Food Promotion Program—\$20 million per year to develop farmers market capacity and create food hubs to connect farmers with schools, hospitals, grocery stores and other markets.

Hunger-Free Community Incentive Grants—An average of \$20 million per year for a new SNAP local fruit and vegetable incentive grant program at farmers markets and other healthy food retailers.

COMMENT OF LESLIE COX

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 10:43 a.m.

City, State: Medford, OR

Occupation: Secretarial

Comment: I **Fully** and **Emphatically** support the following:

- (1) The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- (2) Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- (3) The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- (4) Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Thank you for listening. Please, think of your children's future and their children's future. Their best interest should not be placed in the hands of large corpora-

tions whose main object is making money for shareholders. Farming, small local farming, should always be a very important part of our country.

COMMENT OF LINDA COX

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 3:33 p.m.

City, State: Farmington, AR

Occupation: Inventory, Wal-Mart Optical Lab

Comment: I want healthy food and go to great lengths to buy organic. I buy local when I can. Farmers are important to me and our future health. Please do not take these things away from us. And please do not put hardship on our farmers.

LINDA COX.

COMMENT OF MAURY COX

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 13, 2012, 7:00 p.m.

City, State: Shelbyville, KY

Occupation: KY Dairy Producer/Allied Industry Ex. Dir.

Comment: The Dairy Security Act of 2011 proposed by Congressman Collin Peterson, (D-MN) is based on the framework of National Milk Producers Federation, *Foundation for the Future*. This program, if enacted does not consider the deficit milk production areas of the nation including the Northeast and Southeast milk sheds.

In the Southeast, milk is brought in to fill processors' needs every month of the year at the indirect expense of local producers. The Southeast has seen the largest percentage decrease in producer numbers over the last 10 years. The Dairy Security Act will exacerbate the problem unless the present Federal Milk Market Order rules are changed. It will more quickly remove the small family dairy farms from the area and set-up large CAFOs in their place.

Dairy economist, Drs. Mark Stephenson and Andy Novakovic have analyzed the DSA and the Senate version. Here is their conclusion:

“Conclusions

These calculations show what might have been from 2007 to 2012 had the Senate Act been in place and there were no changes in producer marketings or milk prices. Arguably, this presents the impacts of this policy under a favorable scenario. Earlier modeling of the DSA shows that participation rates make a significant difference.⁷ Low levels of participation would have generated margins very much like those calculated in this paper. However, the reductions in payments would have fallen on the few producers who did choose to participate. With 100% participation, earlier modeling shows a large reduction of margin volatility and little impact on long-run average prices. Under higher levels of participation, perhaps as much as 50% of production, the previous modeling suggests even more reduction in margin volatility but a lower average milk price as non-participants take more complete advantage of growth opportunities. Whether one judges new dairy policy as “good or bad” for the industry, it is unavoidably true that they will impact producers differently. Dairy farmers, processors and policy makers should thoughtfully consider expected outcomes and recognize that different farmers will have different experiences and that there will be both intended and unintended consequences.”

It is believed those dairy farmers that are highly leveraged will be required by their lenders to participate in the margin insurance therefore also participating in the supply management program. When considering the fact that over 50 percent of the nations supply of milk is produced by less than three percent of the producers, ultimately the small producers will be the ones “balancing” the nations supply until they are driven out of business. This is where this proposed legislation is headed.

Please vote **No** on this portion of the farm bill. There are other options and proposals available. Take a look. Consider options that will not more quickly run the small family farm out of business.

Thank you,

MAURY COX,
Shelbyville, KY,
[Redacted].

⁷*Nicholson and Stephenson.*

COMMENT OF D. SID COY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:25 p.m.

City, State: Wasilla, AK

Occupation: Construction

Comment: Mega farm corporations such as Monsanto have paid lobbyists to persuade lawmakers to vote favorably on bills that affect consumers. The lawmakers know nothing about the results or the actual harm being done by allowing the mega farm corporations to genetically modify foods, fish and plants. Ignorance is no excuse when voting for a harmful farm bill. Leave farming to farmers and not mega managers who are not interested in health, only the profit in the bottom line.

SID COY.

[Redacted].

COMMENT OF LOWELL CPORDAS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:27 p.m.

City, State: Lacey, WA

Occupation: Vendor and Inventor of Farm Hand Tools

Comment: Hon. Committee Members,

I am most concerned about food labeling:

1. Country of origin.
2. Listing all ingredients including sub ingredients.
3. Listing if the product contains GMO's.

I would also encourage you wherever possible to make it easier for small farmers and producers to compete with the large firms.

COMMENT OF DELIGHT CRAFT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:30 p.m.

City, State: Galax, VA

Occupation: Retired from Counseling/Human Services Profession

Comment: I am a retired woman who has championed local, sustainable agricultural methods since the 1970's. I am quite healthy and plan to continue to eat foods that are **Fresh, Local**, and produced in a sustainable and healthy manner . . . healthy for my body and the Earth. I am ashamed at the irresponsible way our country has allowed BIG agribusiness pervert the very basics of our food production and put farm families out of business, *etc.* I also believe that a number of subsidies **Need To Be** and **Must Be** eliminated, as they are either no longer necessary for particular crops, or they serve to continue the travesty of unsustainable practices by agribusiness interests that are not operating in ways that benefit our society.

COMMENT OF HELEN CRAFT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:45 p.m.

City, State: Rockville, MD

Occupation: Registered Nurse

Comment: As a certified pediatric nurse, I see firsthand the effects of overweight and obesity in a growing number of children. As a nation, our relationship with food is in bad shape. Many kids don't know what non-processed food looks like and their bodies, both inside and out, make that clear—pediatric type II diabetes is on the rise and these kids are set up for a myriad of other health problems related to obesity. Making healthy, whole foods more accessible and affordable to people begins with supporting sustainable (also read organic) local production of food. Support of this kind of food production also promotes better environmental stewardship. To this end, I support all provisions of the Local Food, Farms, and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286), full funding of conservation programs such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236), and maintenance of the EQIP Organic Initiative.

COMMENT OF JANICE CRAGNOLIN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:32 p.m.

City, State: Unadilla, NY

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: I'm a vegetable gardener not a farmer like my neighbors, but I know by reducing subsidies to small farms and enhancing them for mega farms, our local economy has taken one hit after another that has put many of my neighbors out of business. Health-issues related to increased use of pesticides and antibiotics as well as inhumane livestock management are more manifest than ever.

Want to revitalize our economy and reduce health costs in this country? Remove farm subsidies from mega factory farms and chemical companies, and re-energize the **Real** small farmer economy. Triple the benefit—farm organically and put 3 additional people back into the payroll as well as reduce health and veterinary costs that escalate due to chemical laden toxins and overused antibiotics.

Factory farming is ultimately more costly than local sustainable farming and is creating both an economic crisis and an emerging health crisis.

Our farm bill should set responsible policy toward sustainable, organic localized solutions that will guarantee our physical and economic survival, not jeopardize these essentials.

COMMENT OF GERALDENE CRAIG

Date Submitted: Friday, March 16, 2012, 11:26 a.m.

City, State: Greenville, SC

Comment: Please assist organic farmers and family farms so that more nutritious foods will be more available and affordable for struggling and poor families.

Locally grown and organic food are more likely to be picked **After** they are ripened, and ripened fruits and vegetables have the most nutritional content, the more nutrition in the foods we consume, the stronger our immune system, the stronger our immune system, the least like we are sick, or to be born with many ailments and disorders that are plaguing America's children today. Family farms are the likely sources of locally grown foods, locally grown foods have to travel less to get to the market, then to the table, the less the food has to travel, the more likely it is to be harvested **After** it is ripe, foods harvested **After** ripeness possesses the most nutrition.

Please include in this bill a provision for vouchers that poor people can use to buy organic food.

The entire country and the Federal budget will benefit in the long-run from people having easier and affordable access to organic and locally grown healthier food because, the more nutritious the food people consume, the healthier people will be, the healthier people are, the less money we have to spend on healthcare, to put it simple.

Please put provisions in this bill that require Public Schools to serve nutritious meals for breakfast and lunch, because even when parents are feeding their children healthy meals at home, if the public school they attend is feeding them pre-processed, chemical and additive laden foods, it defeats the purpose of the parents feeding their children healthy meals at home. Please require that soft-drink and unhealthy fast food vendors not be allowed to sell their products in public schools.

Please make the farm bill a healthier and wiser decision this time.

COMMENT OF JAN CRAIG

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:50 p.m.

City, State: Akron, OH

Occupation: Homemaker/Caregiver

Comment: Please do not cut funding for the only real health option available! Maintain funding for organic and sustainable agriculture.

If we want true health in this country, we would outlaw Monsanto and put all our efforts into real food production. Please quit soft killing the American public. Quit killing the innocent children!

COMMENT OF JASON CRAIG

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:29 a.m.

City, State: Columbia, SC

Occupation: Educator

Comment: Please vote to move us toward a sustainable agriculture system. It is becoming more and more clear that rising health-care costs, rising fuel costs, and increasing amounts of environmental and social problems need to be addressed in the way we fund food production. Please redirect Subsidy programs toward small,

sustainable family farms. Please also, continue support for low-income health and nutrition problems.

Thanks,

JASON.

COMMENT OF JEAN CRAIG

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:52 p.m.

City, State: Fort Worth, TX

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I am a senior citizen. My Social Security benefits are very low. I depend on the SNAP program to eat. Groceries are very expensive, so I can't afford to eat the "healthy" diet recommended by nutritionists. I can't afford meat, and, fresh fruits and vegetables and milk are a rare treat for me. Please don't let the amount of my SNAP benefit be cut again.

COMMENT OF KARL CRAIG

Date Submitted: Monday, March 19, 2012, 8:55 p.m.

City, State: Lubbock, TX

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Randy, U.S. Congress now is impotent! Congress chose this situation. The constitution and common sense says we now have a congress of fools. Use all influence to stop the latest Executive Order (national defense resources). Congress has the power to over-ride a veto. Use the tactic F.D.R. used. **Go To The People:** radio, TV, internet, written, *etc.* this is how you can secure enough votes to over-ride a veto. Make Congress work again! Get govt. out of my life. Was once a farmer. Out of my life. Let the free market work. Get out of my life. Agriculture can make it on our own!

COMMENT OF KATHY CRAIG

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 08, 2012, 5:43 p.m.

City, State: Palm Bay, FL

Occupation: Unemployed

Comment: There are a lot of people, who unfortunately are living on the street. Not by any fault of their own. No one should have to live on the streets in our country. They need food to live. By cutting back on money used to help these people live, you are basically saying that you do not care about them. How would you feel if you were in their place and lost your job and had no money to live and did not have a roof over your head. Jesus wants us to help everyone. So please do not cut the spending for this program, all of these people need your help. Thank you.

COMMENT OF MARGARET CRAIG

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:19 p.m.

City, State: Homer, AK

Occupation: Retired

Comment: The small farmer is an important part of the food chain and should be allowed to prosper as well as the giants. Organic and non-GMO crops are important to the health of the industry.

COMMENT OF KIMBERLY CRAIL

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 3:11 a.m.

City, State: Floral Park, NY

Occupation: Executive

Comment: The health of our people is the priority over the profits of chemical companies like Monsanto and Dow, who dominate our planted food supplies. And the factory farms who dominate and perpetrate horrendous suffering on the animals we then eat, feeding them poison and bits of other animals. Really? Real food, slow food. Cheetos are not real food.

COMMENT OF JANET CRAIN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 6:53 p.m.

City, State: Meadow Valley, CA

Occupation: Clinical Laboratory Scientist

Comment: I did my first term paper in High School (in ~1962) on the farm bill. I have always been amazed by the “pork” contained therein. It is time to resist Big Ag. and make a bill that truly helps farmers, consumers, the land and the farm workers. I support organic agriculture. I only buy organic produce and I grow at home whenever I can. Please break the stranglehold corporate agriculture enjoys on our food system! Please incorporate standards for Organic Agriculture, reduce or remove ridiculous subsidies that mainly profit Big Ag, and support existing laws that encourage conservation of the land for current and future generations. You are responsible!

COMMENT OF DANA CRAMER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 10:46 a.m.

City, State: Greenwood, MO

Occupation: Stay-at-Home Mom

Comment: I want good, clean food. Labeled food. If I'm to purchase a GMO product, I want to **Know** it's been modified. I do **Not** want to eat cloned food or irradiated food. If food is labeled then I can **Choose** what is right for my family. I am an adult and I deserve to know what I am putting in my body and I deserve to choose what is right for our family.

COMMENT OF LYNN CRANDALL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 10:46 a.m.

City, State: Cottonwood, AZ

Occupation: Retired

Comment: If you truly care about the people that you represent, and the country you live in, you will take a good look at the mess that is called our agriculture policy. I'm not a farmer, but I buy the “food” that is on the shelves. It's shameful that we have such poor policies that even other countries are banning our tainted imports!

Let's clean up this country's farmlands and get rid of the policies that encourage the current shameful state of our food supply.

COMMENT OF NEAL CRANDALL

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 13, 2012, 9:33 a.m.

City, State: Springfield, OH

Occupation: Drug Abuse Counselor

Comment: Protect and raise SNAP and school lunch allocations. Stop Monsanto from strong arming Organic Farmers and increase SNAP utilization programs @ farmer's markets.

COMMENT OF JOSHUA CRAVENS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:19 p.m.

City, State: Monticello, NM

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Fruits, Greenhouse/nursery, Livestock, Specialty Crops, Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: We need a Farm bill that focuses plenty of money on Organic, Low input, Sustainable Agriculture as it is the foundation for our future as Americans. Thank you for your support in this.

COMMENT OF JANA CRAWFORD O'BRIEN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:24 p.m.

City, State: Bradley Beach, NJ

Occupation: Certified Oncology Massage Therapist

Comment: Our current farming practices, with subsidies to giant Agribusinesses is NOT sustainable. Money and consideration need to be given to small/smaller famers who are producing good food in a chemical-free way that is safe for our bodies and the environment.

As with all the other large, subsidized businesses in this country, we are facing the prospect of a collapse of the system. This possible crisis needs to be address **Before** it's too late, not when we're in the middle of it.

COMMENT OF ROSALIND CREASY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:08 p.m.

City, State: Los Altos, CA

Occupation: Landscape Designer, Food Writer

Comment: I am greatly concerned that the farm bill strongly favors the large producers of corn and soybeans. The small organic producers of fruits and vegetables need help, not agribusiness—especially all their subsidies. Small growers need fewer restrictions and if any subsidies are needed for agriculture, most certainly they should be given to them. The obesity problem is terrible and fruits and vegetables are a big part of the answer.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF TSANDI CREW

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:27 p.m.

City, State: Lake Bluff, IL

Occupation: Illustrator and Writer

Comment: I have a list of 71 scientific papers that prove the tragic and disastrous results of genetically engineered seeds in our country and around the world. It is criminal to subsidize this practice. It drives up the cost of health care and it is destroying other healthy crops and plants, and it is killing bees. Subsidize truly organically grown food.

COMMENT OF RHONDA CRIDER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:00 p.m.

City, State: Calhoun, GA

Occupation: School Bus Driver

Comment: We need more help for the organic farmers. All the large companies are altering our food supply to the point it is no long fit for human consumption. You here every day on the news about the increase in diabetes and other illnesses and nobody seems to see that it is our food and water supply that could be triggering this. The organic farmers need support from the government. **Now!** Please support a bill that will allow the farmers to grow good, healthy food and also help to protect the environment and soil conservation!

COMMENT OF JUDY CRISCO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:51 p.m.

City, State: Alamosa, CO

Occupation: Webmaster

Comment: In the face of the obesity epidemic, the diabetes epidemic and the health care crises in this country it is imperative that you make the connection to Farm Policy.

It is time to break free of the control of agribusiness and do what is right for the health (both physical and fiscal) of this country.

I demand that you make your policy decisions based on what is good for the citizens and not the corporations!

COMMENT OF STEVEN CROCK

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 16, 2012, 9:37 p.m.

City, State: Manchester, MO

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: As stewards of the Earth, smart farming practices include conservation practices of soil and water. Please support and encourage this practice by restoring the link between taxpayer subsidies for crop insurance and conservation compliance protections. As Missouri is a top state for soil loss and borders the Mississippi River, it is essential to encourage and require responsible farming practices.

Sincerely,

STEVE CROCK.

COMMENT OF JOANNA CROCKER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:32 p.m.

City, State: Seattle, WA

Occupation: Manager in Environmental Nonprofit

Comment: I was raised on a family farm that has always used organic practices. In order to hand our farm down to the next generation in good condition and keep it that way, we need policies that protect the environment, organics, and family farms.

COMMENT OF STAN CROFT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:56 p.m.

City, State: Council Bluffs, IA

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: Please consider a farm bill that subsidizes food producers not producers of commodities. We have the opportunity to help build a farm economy based on the foods that we eat and are healthy with a farm bill that favors food. Corn and soybean producers can use the market to get a fair price, and right now a price that is more than fair. Please spend the money wisely.

COMMENT OF TERESE CRONIN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:20 p.m.

City, State: San Francisco, CA

Occupation: Sales & Marketing

Comment: I think it is so important to get this bill right. We need great clean food in our stores. Enough of the sprays and other chemicals in our food. It is dangerous to the people who pick our foods and to us and our children and myself. I really do not know what it take to make Wash D.C. understand this. You should pull the Congressional Districts Rep. and see how many use organic products? Maybe it would be a surprise that so many do use organic product?

TERESE CRONIN.

COMMENTS OF JAMES CROSBY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:56 p.m.

City, State: Eugene, OR

Occupation: Horticulture Student

Comment: I just wrote a moment ago regarding small farms and industrial hemp, but I also wanted to share that I think you should support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Date Submitted: May 18, 2012 4:55 p.m.

Comment: We need a fair farm bill. One that protects the small farmer over the big one, and that gives small farmers a chance to get ahead. Big farming operations are already "ahead", and now we need to give that opportunity to small farms. Also: Support legalized industrial hemp for farming. It has millions of uses, and can be made into fuel, fiber, food, and even plastic! It has many uses. Support small farming over big farming, and support industrial hemp agriculture!

COMMENT OF LYNN CROSS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:05 p.m.

City, State: El Dorado Hills, CA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I fully support Food Democracy's goals and ask you to give much more open-minded consideration to them. Cutting or eliminating food programs that benefit deserving people in order to provide subsidies to corporate farming is just shameful pandering to big money.

COMMENT OF SONDR A CROUCH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:17 p.m.

City, State: Lambertville, NJ

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I live in a farming community. I see the day to day problems while I drive to the grocery store. I listen to the problems. How hard it is to find the money to start up Organic Farming . . . how profitable it is if you do start up. How the AgriCorps are squeezing out the farmers and like all corporations in this country trying to squeeze out the little guys. Why do the Legislators not support this bill? Well, do they buy groceries? Do they farm? Who cooks for them, either wives, or housekeepers. They do not live like we do, on the edge of everything, ready to fall off for any false move we make. They get plenty of perks in their lives . . . it is time for the 99% to get what we need. (Not what we deserve, they wouldn't vote for that . . . we only ask for what we need!) That should not take too much away from the 1%.

COMMENT OF DAN CROWLEY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:25 p.m.

City, State: Gilbert, AZ

Occupation: Small Business Owner-Telecommunications

Comment: Too many times politicians don't bother to listen to the people. Instead they only hear the well funded lobbyist groups of corporate America. America belongs to the people **Not** the corporations.

COMMENT OF ERIN CRUMP

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 9:28 p.m.

City, State: Blue Bell, PA

Occupation: Hydrogeologist

Comment: I would, like your farm bill to be good to the local farmer. Let the farmers grow and sell good, healthy food from their farms. Let them save seeds and not have to purchase them from large companies that are more about chemical spray and control than about individuality and taste. Let them practice organic growing so they don't need to dump oil-based fertilizers on the land. Hey, how about you subsidize tomatoes, carrots, greens, *etc.*, instead of corn and soy. Thanks.

COMMENT OF RUTH CRUMP

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:12 p.m.

City, State: Silver Spring, MD

Occupation: Citizen

Comment: I think it is important to support small farm efforts rather than large agribusiness. Small farms will in the end provide food which requires less chemical management, less fossil fuel use, and less antibiotic use. They are also able to support more community development via interactions between producer and consumer, a healthy state for all.

COMMENT OF CONNIE CRUSHA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:41 p.m.

City, State: El Cajon, CA

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: I've been teaching organic gardening for 30 years. I am horrified at the chemicalization and industrialization of farming in this country, and the concomitant environmental degradation. In addition I am appalled at the human costs of pesticide laden food products and tainted meats which are the result of our existing system.

We need to stop subsidizing factory farms and chemical agriculture and start spending money on organic practices to produce healthy foods for our people and the people of the world.

COMMENT OF CHRISTINE CRUTCHFIELD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:08 p.m.

City, State: Easthampton, MA

Occupation: Professor

Comment: Obesity levels are at a new high, healthy food is out of many people's price ranges, and it's often difficult for the average consumer to know how food was processed or where it came from. This farm bill can help start a slow change. More and more people like myself are interested in sustainably-grown produce and meats from small farmers. I'm lucky to live in an area where this is easy to come by. Many

Americans aren't so lucky. Let's make it easier for the small farmer to be viable. Let's stop subsidizing corn and soy. Let's make it easier for the consumer to know how his/her food was grown. Eating should not be so complicated. Let's take the corporations out of it.

COMMENT OF JOHNNY CRUZ

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:59 p.m.

City, State: Hartford, CT

Comment: I feel that it will make my life harder than it already is because I live in Hartford where most residents are going through the SNAP for help. Imagine how this will affect everyone and their children. This will be catastrophic to everyone's well being! To whom this may concern!

COMMENT OF LILI CRYMES

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 10, 2012, 4:28 p.m.

City, State: Atlanta, GA

Occupation: Horticulture/Nonprofit

Comment: SNAP and WIC dollars are important both for the people who purchase food with them and for the grocery stores and farmers that are supported by them. While I applaud changes in the system that encourage better nutrition such as wholesome ware and the adjustments to WIC that allow greater flexibility in purchasing produce, cutting spending is not a healthy option. Further, I think it will cost the country more in future health care cost. Please don't bankrupt my future with poor choices about current spending.

COMMENT OF BRENDA CSENCISITS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:19 p.m.

City, State: Saint Augustine, FL

Occupation: Retired

Comment: It's very important to me to be able to buy locally grown food (vegetables, eggs, meat) where farmers do things "the old fashioned way" meaning fewer (or no) pesticides, herbicides, hormones, *etc.* Please provide more support for the people who are willing to do the work to provide fresh, nutritious locally grown food.

COMMENT OF HELEN CU

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 5:10 p.m.

City, State: Brooklyn, NY

Occupation: Retired Accountant

Comment: We need a strong Farm bill to protect our farmers in producing affordable organic food for the good of the citizen of the United States especially the poor and senior citizens of this country. The government should help these farmers in fair competition from big agricultural corporations.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF PILIANA CUENOD

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 4:46 a.m.

City, State: Kaunakakai, HI

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: We are growers following the permaculture principles and as such feel the need for a Bill that will honor the good, healthy, natural, nutritious ways of farming. That dogmatic, manic need to control the activities of farmers to suite the big businesses is so retarded and uncivilized. The big and strong undermining the freedom and activities of people should have been a thing passed with the dark ages.

Government should be honoring and helping all types of farming and that should be reelected in such a Bill.

COMMENT OF NANCY CUFFMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:48 p.m.

City, State: El Cerrito, CA

Comment: I believe that healthy food is the start for the health of the nation. Small farm rather than corporate agriculture, organic food free from harmful chemical substances. This is what makes for healthy food. Not mass produced food and animals.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF ANNETTE CULLIPHER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:37 p.m.

City, State: Balsam Grove, NC

Occupation: Citizen

Comment: I realize I am only one ordinary citizen. I am not a farmer, nor am I involved in the distribution of food products. I am just one person at the end of this production chain. I am not a lobbyist for the agriculture industry so I do not have the thousands/millions of dollars to line your coffers.

But I am the one who buys these products and feeds my family. I endeavor to support local sustainable farmers and I buy organic where possible. And I am very disturbed, and I am very angry that I cannot trust the products I buy because you and the others that make the decisions about our food production are in the pockets of the industry. An industry whose basic concern is not the health of the citizens who eat their products nor is there any concern for the health of this land nor is there any concern for the animals they are raising but only their bottom line. The corporate agribusiness has a stranglehold on our regulatory system and you, our political leaders.

U.S. food and agricultural policy must focus on adopting best agricultural practices that put the health of citizens, land and farmers' livelihoods and farm workers over the interests of industrial agriculture lobbyists. I would like to see:

- the full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

COMMENT OF VERNON CULLUM

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 2:13 a.m.

City, State: Prescott Valley, AZ

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Poultry/poultry products

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Corporations, especially agribusiness corporations have already proven themselves to be criminally irresponsible and untrustworthy in their practices from the pollution they produce to genetically modified mentality of playing God with our food stuffs—where profits trump all other concerns. Regardless of how food is produced, sustainability and the health of our soils and bodies must be priority one. Only practices which promote these priorities should be encapsulated in a farm bill. Technology has its place, but when it's use is corrupted by profits above all mentality, disaster is unavoidable, and those who suffer the most are many times those who are at the bottom of the economic food chain.

COMMENT OF MOLLY CULVER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:20 a.m.

City, State: Brooklyn, NY

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Fruits, Greenhouse/nursery, Specialty Crops, Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: As a member of the Board of Farm School NYC, a new school for urban agriculture that strives to nurture beginning farmers through training in horticulture and food justice, I wanted to share that it is vital that programs like the Beginning Farmers and Ranchers is not cut. It should remain a fully funded piece of this upcoming farm bill, and should receive even more funding. Cutting funds to grow new farmers is the last thing we should be doing when we're facing an environmental crisis with unknown results. We currently do not grow enough vegetables and fruits in this country to provide every citizen with their recommended daily

servings. With the average age of America's farmer being over 50, we are in dire need of more young and energetic farmers who will grow the nutritious fresh food we all need to continue happy healthy and productive lives.

COMMENT OF BRIAN CUMMINGS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:59 a.m.
City, State: Milwaukee, WI
Occupation: Computer Programmer
Comment: We deserve a farm bill that supports farmers that do not poison us with chemicals and GMOs. Please support organic farmers and small farmers.

COMMENT OF NANCY CUMMINGS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:52 p.m.
City, State: Lakewood, CO
Occupation: Housewife
Comment: I want healthy food . . . I'm tired of "GMOs" in the food I eat, I don't believe it is healthy for any one. When I was raising my children, they ate fresh fruits and vegetables, they were happy and healthy. They got very good grades in school, and became productive citizens when they grew up. Now, as I grew my own food, they now grow theirs, and feed their children wholesome and healthy food. We demand Organic food! It does the body good!

COMMENT OF THOMAS CUMMINGS

Date Submitted: Friday, April 27, 2012, 6:24 p.m.
City, State: Merritt Island, FL
Occupation: Retired
Comment: Jesus very specifically tells us that we are going to be judged on how we treat the poor. See Mt 25:31ff. I hope you will vote in favor of full support for food programs for the poor.

COMMENT OF CAROLYN CUNNINGHAM

Date Submitted: Saturday, April 28, 2012, 1:47 p.m.
City, State: Chagrin Falls, OH
Occupation: Retired Manager
Comment: I volunteer for a rapid rejoicing program in Cleveland. I see firsthand the need for your continuing support of feeding programs that support children and low income families. Supporting the needs of vulnerable seniors is also important to me, as well. Thank you.
 CAROLYN CUNNINGHAM.

COMMENT OF GARY CUNNINGHAM

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:32 p.m.
City, State: Strawn, TX
Occupation: Potter and Organic Gardener
Comment: The regulatory stranglehold developing in this country is on the wrong track. Corporations need more regs and farmers need less. The very nature of a corporation dictates this. Cheap food is exactly that, cheap. Corporations exist to make money, products are a means. Farmers grow food and love the land and the work. It's not just about money to a farmer.

COMMENT OF JAMES CUNNINGHAM

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 11:46 a.m.
City, State: San Francisco, CA
Occupation: Actor
Comment: U.S. Gov't support of farming must be revised to provide more support of organic, smaller farms and **Stop** subsidies to industrialized, GMO, and chemical-based farms.
 We are killing our soil! We are killing our future!
 How can anyone not see the devastating results of continuing in the present direction?
Please Support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding of conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

We Trust In The House Committee to create a farm bill which benefits the success of independent growers not the interests of **Big Ag**.

COMMENT OF PAUL CUNNINGHAM

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 3:34 p.m.

City, State: Galveston, TX

Occupation: Aviation

Comment: Protect Older Americans

Older Americans' struggles with hunger are often invisible. It's too easy for most people to overlook how many seniors have serious trouble accessing the food and nutrition they need to survive and thrive. Often, they are forced to make difficult decisions between food, medicine, or paying their utilities or rent.

As a nation, we owe a great deal to the generations that helped build this country—we simply cannot allow one of our most vulnerable populations to suffer in silence any longer.

I am urging Congress to pass a strong farm bill that protects programs like SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP, which help provide food for millions of America's most vulnerable seniors.

Congress must ensure hunger-relief programs remain protected so that seniors who worked their entire lives continue to have access to these vital programs.

COMMENT OF SARAH CUNNINGHAM

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 15, 2012, 1:34 p.m.

City, State: Corvallis, OR

Occupation: College Educator & Community Food Activist

Comment: I understand the need for fiscal responsibility, perhaps now more than ever, but as you consider the farm bill, please do not make cuts that would place the burden of fiscal responsibility upon the shoulders of the most vulnerable in our society, namely children and low-income people.

Thank you in advance for standing up for those who are least able to stand up for themselves.

COMMENT OF JERRY CUPP

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 7:48 p.m.

City, State: Colorado City, CO

Occupation: Real Estate Broker

Comment: We are against Monsanto taking over any more of our farm land. Please help the family farms. Help the Organic farmers and punish the petrol-chemical farmers that are poisoning our land. Also, please be against carbon tax. Global warming is a myth, *i.e.*, it snowed on my daughter at sea level in Kodiak, Alaska last week. Maybe global cooling, huh?

COMMENT OF DARCIÉ CURLEY, R.N., B.S.N.

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 5:49 p.m.

City, State: Golden, CO

Occupation: Nurse

Comment: Dear Sirs:

I and my family are passionate about healthy, naturally grown food that is grown sustainably, intelligently and with an eye toward non-damaging, organic and smart Earth practices. We enthusiastically support a small local organic farm as a delivery site, believing that local small farmers have the ability to sustain, nurture and benefit their surrounding communities. Small farmers should be at the heart of any farm bill written. I'd like to see support in all ways for them, and I'm tired of having tax bill money go to huge factory farms that are not sustaining local people.

I do not believe that tax subsidies should be going to vast concerns and giant companies, but rather to small farmers who enrich the lives of their communities, and

bring fresh, local, healthily and responsibly raised and grown food that does not have to be trucked across vast distances. Supporting local food revives local economies, real people, and the planet by reducing impact and carbon footprint.

Sincerely,

DARCIE CURLEY, R.N., B.S.N.

COMMENT OF BETH CURLIN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:03 p.m.

City, State: Berea, KY

Occupation: Administrator, Writer, Gardener, Small Farm Owner

Comment: I am a buyer at local farmer's market and Wal-Mart or Kroger. I feel extremely strongly that our Ag policy should reflect support of healthy food production. My concern is in both the production of food which affects the quality of health for both workers and consumers—anyone who breathes fresh air or drinks water. The end product of food should be good health and nourishment, food without harmful chemicals or other additives. Agencies need to regulate and curb any activities that do not contribute to that and support organic agriculture making it more prevalent and possible. More healthy, and humane growing and slaughtering polices also need to be strengthened. Profits for big corporations should not be the end.

COMMENT OF CONSTANCE CURRIER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:05 p.m.

City, State: Ithaca, NY

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Until the food supply in this country is healthy food the Health Care cost are going to increase to levels that cannot be met. Obesity, diabetes, heart problems, cancer, etc, etc will continue to increase as long as the representatives of the people pay more attention to corporate desires than they do to the welfare of the population. I think they think that their children, parents, spouses somehow are not part of the population and in this they are **Wrong**, their families will suffer along with all the rest of us.

COMMENT OF HARVEY CURRY

Date Submitted: Friday, April 27, 2012, 3:20 p.m.

City, State: Houston, TX

Occupation: Construction Project Mgr.

Comment: The SNAP program is needed during this recession and depressed unemployment. Kids are going without meals. You need to add appropriations for community based gardens.

COMMENT OF KATHY CURRY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:37 p.m.

City, State: Kingston, WA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Fruits, Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Most of the produce from our farm is tended by volunteers, and goes directly to food banks. We also have a demonstration crop in train to support donation to school cafeterias, but there are many detailed and expensive requirements to get that done.

In order to continue feeding the poor and working on providing healthy foods for our children, we need the support of organically-savvy programs. With additional land coming available, we need help for new farmers to bring it into production.

We have already made use of several of the programs in the following list (as provided by Seattle Tilth), and have rather depended on the others remaining available in our future planning:

- the Organic Research and Extension Initiative (OREI)
- the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- EQIP Organic Initiative
- Conservation Stewardship Program

Please continue these programs in their entirety. They are advantageous in the support of those in most need of help.

COMMENT OF LORI CURRY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:29 p.m.

City, State: Leesburg, VA

Occupation: Chiropractor

Comment: As an holistic healthcare practitioner, I implore Congress to pass laws that are favorable to local/organic/sustainable farmers and farming. It is **Essential** to the future health of human beings on this planet. Big interests such as "Big-Food" and Agribusiness **Must** change the way in which they profit from processed foods, and small, organic farmers need to be able to make a decent living. Please do what is **Right**, and realize that voting against the small farmer will ultimately be the downfall of our health and the ecosystem.

COMMENT OF MARGARET CUSHING

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:13 a.m.

City, State: New York, NY

Occupation: Travel Agent Slow Food Member

Comment: We must encourage our farmers to keep producing for us. Through recent initiatives we have a wonderful selection at local organic markets and supermarkets and with all the campaigns about eating healthy and again obesity, we cannot do this without these efforts.

COMMENT OF ROBERT CUSHMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:07 p.m.

City, State: Truckee, CA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Dear Sirs

Please act to pass real farm policy that protects the health of our citizens, protects the livelihood of our farmers and farm workers over the interests of industrial agriculture mega business. Also, we need strong legislation that protect and supports organic and sustainable agriculture. Don't cut stamps to the needy while we continue to give huge farm subsidies (entitlements).

COMMENT OF JUSTIN CUTTER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:08 p.m.

City, State: Fairfield, IA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Greenhouse/nursery

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Please support organic and sustainable farming programs. Right now our country's laws are made to support industrial ag giants who don't give a hoot about the livelihood of family farmers, the health of consumers, or the ability for the land to continue producing crops. They care only for short-term profits and pay lobbyists to protect that. Please support the American public and the American soil for generations to come by protecting, supporting, and expanding small-scale sustainable farming in the USA.

COMMENT OF KARIN CUTTER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:46 p.m.

City, State: Mesa, AZ

Occupation: Holistic Nutritionist

Comment: Please consider putting the American people first.

It has been said that by the year 2050, every person will have been touched by cancer.

I for one do not want to be a part of this statistic. Please take our nation's health out of the hands of Agribusiness. They care not for the health of our country, only the health of their pocket book. Thank you.

COMMENT OF JOE CUVIELLO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:19 p.m.

City, State: Solana Beach, CA

Occupation: Business Consulting

Comment: We need to do less monoculture, greater support for organic farms, smaller farm operations located in regional areas closer to the consumers of the

goods produced at those farms. We need to decrease the funding for ethanol from corn where is not a viably cost effective fuel to produce. In other words we spend as much energy making it as it generates. Therefore stop funding it and have farmers produce food and not fuel.

COMMENT OF TIM CYR

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:50 p.m.

City, State: Hayward, CA

Occupation: Electrical Engineer

Comment: Common sense needs to be applied to the regulation affecting our food chain. We are becoming more and more distant from our food source and are more and more dependent on our suppliers to do the right thing with regard to safety and quality and not let the almighty dollar make their decisions for us. Since they obviously cannot be left to the honor system I am counting on YOU to make those right decisions for **Them**, for Me, and for **You!** Would **You** eat ½ of the crap that passes as food today? Then don't expect me to either!

COMMENT OF LOUISE D'CARRONE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:17 a.m.

City, State: New Haven, CT

Occupation: Entrepreneur, Coffeehouse Owner

Comment: Please don't let the Mega agro Corporations taint our food supply further, with chemicals and other. Keep our small, organic and local farms healthy.

COMMENT OF RICHARD D'AURIA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:40 p.m.

City, State: Merrimack, NH

Occupation: Police Officer

Comment: I support the Federal farm bill. I am a supporter of Ducks Unlimited and Delta Waterfowl. I travel to North Dakota every year for a hunting trip. The farmers in Kulm have asked me to offer support on this valuable program.

COMMENT OF TERE DAANE

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 7:43 p.m.

City, State: Las Vegas, NV

Occupation: Retired

Comment: It is important for the future of this country to get away from all the chemicals and GMO's used in big ag. These chemicals and chemical fertilizers leech into the water we drink, cause cancer and bad health. The GMO's contaminate good healthy food that actually is sustainably, and locally grown. Please consider a good farm bill which supports local sustainably grown non-GMO food so families can support the food of America and eat healthy. Lets **Not** support big AG and continue to pollute the sky's, the water, the climate in general and the good organic food we have. Thanks so much.

COMMENT OF SARAH DAGG

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 11:18 a.m.

City, State: Crosslake, MN

Occupation: Self-Employed

Comment: The USDA must create a farm bill which supports best practices in farming today, including conservation and organic agriculture. Organics is the fastest growing segment of the food market in the last decade and insures better quality food, better soil management and support of smaller local farms. USDA must stop it's support of large agribusiness which poisons workers, air, water, and soil with pesticides and herbicides, wastes and ruins top soil, and is dependent upon large quantities of fossil fuels. Thanks for taking action to preserve the health of the nation through enactment of a farm bill which protects people and resources rather than just agribusiness.

COMMENT OF ABBIE DAIGLE

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 13, 2012, 7:11 p.m.

City, State: Oak Park, IL

Occupation: Social Worker

Comment: I work with people every day who work really hard to find employment so they do not have to rely on SNAP but without it they go hungry as there are not soup kitchens within walking distance and many have no home in which to store food. People are already going hungry. Please do not make cuts for some of the most vulnerable and struggling members of our society. Thank you.

COMMENT OF JIM DAILEY

Date Submitted: Friday, March 16, 2012, 10:04 a.m.

City, State: Woburn, MA

Occupation: Occupational Therapist, Retired

Comment: The importance of passing a farm bill that transfers subsidies now going to Big, Giant, Agriculture corporations to small, family, organic farms is paramount and essential to the restoration of healthy, sustainable soil and the foods it produces.

COMMENT OF BARBARA AND JIM DALE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:53 p.m.

City, State: Decorah, IA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Here in far northeast Iowa (Winneshiek County) we have many successful small farmers who produce quality food of all types. We feel so fortunate to be able to access healthful nutritious vegetables, meats, dairy products, *etc.* It is important to us that their work be valued and encouraged as much as their neighbors who raise huge fields of commodity crops. Please include in the farm bill incentives and appropriate supports that correspond to the ones provided for large-scale farmers.

COMMENT OF KATHRYN DALENBERG

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:00 p.m.

City, State: Valley Head, AL

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I am opposed to **All** subsidies and insurance of any kind for **ALL** agriculture. The reality of farming needs to be reflected in a reality cost. The national debt is partly due to too many hand-outs to too many companies who are greedy rather than needy. **Stop** the insanity.

COMMENT OF LETA DALLY

Date Submitted: Friday, April 27, 2012, 1:07 p.m.

City, State: Chicago, IL

Occupation: Retired

Comment: After being laid off in 2008 and being unable to find work despite education and experience, I was forced to take reduced early SSA payments. I barely make ends meet and although my rent and utilities are over 60% of my income I receive only \$75 in SNAP benefits. This is hardly very much and if it is decreased I will suffer. I don't have a life. My life is staying at home, going to the store and doing house work. I do not eat out, I do not go to movies, I do not do any real socializing. What more am I suppose to give up so that the rich can live well and make more money? I can't find part-time work so I would like someone such as Rep. Ryan to tell me exactly what I am suppose to do or see if he would like to change places with me for a month.

COMMENT OF CATHLEEN DALMEIDA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:20 p.m.

City, State: Coupeville, WA

Occupation: Energy and Carbon Manager

Comment: The food and Farm bill should focus on supporting food that improves the health of our people and our planet. Supporting a local food economy across the nation is important and all the components that go into it; support for small local farms, farmers who grow food people can eat/not animals, farmers markets, bringing this food into our schools, *etc.* Biodiversity is also critical. This comes with supporting local food economies.

COMMENT OF LYNN DALTON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:06 p.m.
City, State: Pittsburgh, PA
Occupation: Food Service Worker
Comment: Please support healthy, organic, farms! Corporate/industrial farms are destroying our land, honey bees (which are needed for all natural crops), wildlife . . . our personal and environmental health! Please Don't let corporate profits continue to destroy our country . . . resist Monsanto!

COMMENT OF JUDITH DALY

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 6:09 p.m.
City, State: Waterbury, VT
Occupation: Social Worker
Comment: Please do everything you can to support small scale farming that diversifies the landscape, keeps food closer to home, and gives small farms the chance to compete with and be economically viable with the big corporate farms. It is a great economy booster in small states and rural areas.

COMMENT OF KEVIN DAMIAN

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 13, 2012, 9:18 a.m.
City, State: Mechanicsville, VA
Producer/Non-producer: Producer
Type: Specialty Crops
Size: Less than 50 acres
Comment: Rep. Eric Cantor's campaign claims to want to help small business prosper. Family farms, not corporate farms, are small businesses. They supply better quality produce to consumers and are necessary to insure clean, healthy food for our families. The farm bill must help the family farms and small farms to compete with the larger corporate farms. Federal programs funded by the farm bill can do more to help the small farms if our leaders in Washington do what is necessary. The voters are tired of party politics you are there to serve us not the other way around. Big corporations are not people they cannot vote they only dump huge amounts of money into campaigns and for lobbyists to help them make even more money. America and the middle class are in trouble. The Tea Party members/supporters are out of touch, ignorant, racists and paranoid. They do not represent the majority of America. Congress and the Senate need to work with one another to solve the problems we are facing. Help us by passing a farm bill that will keep farms operating.

COMMENT OF LAUREN DAMMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:01 p.m.
City, State: Minneapolis, MN
Occupation: Mother, Photographer
Comment: Keep our food supply and the environment safe for present and future generations. Cancer and major disease is on the rise! You can't spend your money if you are dead.

COMMENT OF KAT DANCER SCHWARTZ

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:36 p.m.
City, State: Hot Springs, AR
Occupation: Retired
Comment: As a very healthy 66 yr. old, I am healthy because I eat healthy . . . local, organic food is one of the best ways to stay this way. Subsidies to agri-corp businesses are such a waste, because they are not only rendering unhealthy products, but they are ruining the sacred land they corrupt. Profit is their only motive for what they do. there is **No** commitment to healthy products, the animals they "grow" are sicklier and sicklier (just as so many citizens are), foods are refined and unhealthy (oh, but they are cheaper than "real food") there is little thought on their executives minds as to what they are contributing to the future, whereas a farmer who loves the land and assists Nature in producing "good food" has a stake in how the future will judge his work. so many healthy problems stem from the food that so many Americans now eat, high fructose corn syrup happily invades a multitude of products which never had it even 20 yrs. ago, medical \$\$\$ and issues are spiraling out of control . . . solutions abound, but it with those who keep a sacred

trust with the land and the animals we are here to steward. For those of you Bible thumpers, shame on you for forgetting the parts of “God’s wisdom” when speaking on health and **Real** wealth . . . pick and choose at your own demise. Pink slime is only one of the awful things you and yours are eating.

Get your subsidies straight . . . support those farmers and producers who support health, humane practices in raising animals, and respect and integrity for the Earth and Her treasures . . . drop subsidies for Monsanto, Cargill, Tyson, and other de-spoilers and start subsidizing those farmers whose food you probably prefer to eat, whether you say so or not.

COMMENT OF JESSICA DANIELS

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 02, 2012, 11:17 a.m.

City, State: Mystic, CT

Occupation: Student

Comment: Please protect the Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program. The number of people depending on SNAP has increased by 60% from 2007 to 2010. I know that you are committed to our community’s food security and hunger reduction through your support for No Kid Hungry summer lunch program, and I want to express my support and urge you to keep SNAP strong because it provides year-round vital support for our community. SNAP is 80% of the farm bill budget and as such must demand significant political value and consideration. Since the purpose of SNAP is to supplement nutrition, improving health through adequate and accessible food, the farm bill should expand Farmers Market Nutrition Programs and Community Food Programs that work toward this goal and support our local food economy, environment, and initiative. Many critics claim that SNAP is a government “handout,” but not only is it a crucial aid program, it generates \$1.73 in economic activity per \$1 spent. Imagine how this could spur and support our local farms and economy if SNAP could be used at farmers markets and toward community food projects! I would like to see a farm bill that recognizes this value and supports it in full. I think this goes hand-in-hand with increasing funding for New Farmer Programs because the average farmer age is drastically increasing while Connecticut agricultural land disappears toward development, as well as market support for small- and medium-scale farmers. How can farmers in New London county compete in a market dominated by corporate control? The farm bill has the power to limit such corporate reign and refine subsidy support, to ensure that our farmers can feed our community healthy, affordable food. Thank you.

COMMENT OF M.A. DANIELS

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 13, 2012, 9:41 p.m.

City, State: Oak Park, IL

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Please, please do not approve the bill to cut SNAP. It is crucial for the well being of too many of our citizens who are facing a very difficult time. If something really needs cutting, then I suggest it be foreign aid or even congress’ salary/benefits. We voted you in to office to look out for us, but it seems we are always the only ones to suffer. My parents taught us that we should take care of home “first”. Don’t sacrifice what your “home” needs in favor of someone else.

COMMENT OF AMY DANIELSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:35 p.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Student

Comment: Our food production system is the core of our nation. By bolstering sustainable practices now, we can invest in a prosperous and vital future for generations to come.

COMMENT OF TERI DANIELSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:54 a.m.

City, State: Gonvick, MN

Occupation: Nurse

Comment: Please continue to maintain and increase nutrition programs especially in the schools where most of the time that’s the only good meal they get during the day. Also continue to maintain the family farm—necessary part of the economy and society as a whole.

COMMENT OF L. RENEE DANKERLIN

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 12:50 p.m.

City, State: Cambridge, MA

Occupation: Local and Regional Development Policy Planner

Comment: Sustainable agriculture and support for small food producers could be significantly strengthened were this objective to be achieved by incorporating diversity and inclusion promoting African-American, Latino and Asian participation in economic development through supplier diversity initiatives across sectors (*e.g.*, transportation, housing). These suppliers, including small farmers, could be attracted through Federal, state and local procurement processes. The strategic approach I propose can promote job creation and job growth along with healthy eating and life-styles, all of which can foster viable and sustainable communities. It could also foster STEM education and learning from the natural world.

Sincerely,

L. RENEE DANKERLIN.

COMMENT OF DEB DANNEMAN

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 10, 2012, 2:44 a.m.

City, State: Tucson, AZ

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Having retired from my state's welfare program that administered food stamps, I can tell you that the need in Pima County is dire. Cutting the food stamp program, as this bill suggests, is an invitation to future adults without the brain power to achieve self-sufficiency. Cutting FS to the disabled, who include our former military is a disgrace to their service to our country. Please continue to support our country's farmers so they can continue to feed not just my community, but every community in these United States.

COMMENT OF JANIS DAPPERT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:32 p.m.

City, State: Winchester, IL

Occupation: Museum Coordinator

Comment: It's time to look at the process of growing food as the means to nourish not only ourselves but also our living planet. Each year tons of pesticides and herbicides are dumped on our farm fields to create a sterile barren ground on which to grow GE crops. Those crops are the basis of our food supply, and right now they are poison! The reason for so much cancer and other disease. It is time to come alive and reject the poisonous corporate agriculture, come back to the organic way of growing food that promotes real health and vitality for all of us on the planet.

COMMENT OF LINDA DARNALL

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 6:05 p.m.

City, State: Sebastopol, CA

Occupation: Seamstress

Comment: I'd like to voice my support for Hemp farming in America. Recently, House Bill 286, which was struck down, would have created a process through which farmers could apply to grow hemp and then be vetted by state officials. If applicants passed a background check, they would pay a fee to be registered to grow hemp.

Hemp is a wonderful source of vegetable protein, and would improve our land and water because it uses less chemicals to produce than cotton. Also, The USDA Bulletin #404 concluded that hemp produces four times as much pulp with at least 4 to 7 times less pollution. . . . Hemp can also produce biofuel and ethanol (better than corn).

Thank you for allowing me to comment on this forum,

LINDA DARNALL.

COMMENT OF DEBRA DARNER-REDBURN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 2:22 p.m.

City, State: Osawatomie, KS

Occupation: Accounting Clerk

Comment: I take care of many individuals with disabilities. Food Stamps are so important to these individuals who only receive SSI or SSDI incomes. After paying

all of their living expenses, personal care items, doctor dental and eye care costs, monthly obligations, targeted case management, transportation costs, haircuts, some activities, food stamps are considered income for all who receives assistance. If you take away their benefits they are less likely to be able to afford needed items, that we take for granite every day. We budget their money to the penny. The cost of groceries has went through the roof. But people with disabilities went without many cost of living raise for (4 years) the letters from SS stated there was not a cost of living increase, until this year. You have got to be kidding. Our government seems to be able to give help to countries and we are not taking care of our own people. I am at an outrage! Insurance Companies continue to sky rise where people in our country are insurance poor. Doctors will see you without insurance but the care is not as good as if they can bill for services. Americans are tired of receiving less and less. Disabled individuals are hurting the most and they are unseen people. Our Senator Brownback wants to pass managed care so the insurance companies can make a lot of money what does it do to our individuals care? I cannot see the top so called 3 insurance companies coming and taking care of them let alone a simple visit. They are like a guardian without having to complete their agreement of involvement with individuals. What more is our government and state representatives going to do to us? Let all government representatives live on 694.00 a month! Rent, utilities, groceries, transportation, personal care, doctor, dental, eye and pharmacy costs. This has to stop, **Stop Taking Away From Those Who Need It! Begin By Cutting Officials Making Changes To Their Incomes. Purchase Your Own Insurance, Groceries, Utilities, Medical, Do With A Car, Do Without Clothes, Go Without For Awhile, Step Into Our Shoes! See How Far You Get.** You will need a payee to manage your finances due to not being able to live within your means! Keep Food Stamps going for all who need them! Post this Print this get the word out!

COMMENT OF SUSAN DARROW

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:00 p.m.

City, State: Woodstock, NY

Occupation: Craftsman, Artist

Comment: By legislating against the small farmer in favor of giant agribusiness, you could endanger our whole food system. History has proven monoculture of any species can lead to extinction of that species. Common sense leads to the conclusion that small independent growers promote multiple strains and protect our food supply, not to mention improve our economy. The benefits of organic farming is also uncontested, keeping regulation simple to aid the small farmer will never touch the power and over reach of big agribusiness, but their greediness to control the world's food supply could be the downfall of us all.

COMMENT OF RANJNA DAS

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 15, 2012, 12:49 p.m.

City, State: Marlton, NJ

Occupation: Professional

Comment: Before you vote to eliminate funding which helps our poor obtain food, I'd like you to go a day without food. No one wants a handout but when it comes to food, it's a matter of survival.

COMMENT OF ALEGRA DASHIELLE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:03 p.m.

City, State: Oakland, CA

Occupation: Disabled

Comment: It is time to end subsidies to big agriculture. Instead, we should put our money in to supporting small sustainable farms, especially organic, and making healthy food affordable to everyone.

COMMENT OF RILEY DAVENPORT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:08 p.m.

City, State: San Diego, CA

Occupation: Publisher

Comment: The farm bill should support all food farmers, not just large industrial farms. More support should be available to small family farms including very small organic farms that produce high quality food for citizens all over the country. We

need it to support healthy food for our citizens and sustainable farming practices for our planet. We need to help feed the less fortunate with healthy, fresh food (fruits and vegetables).

COMMENT OF SONI DAVIDOW

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:22 p.m.

City, State: Huntington Station, NY

Occupation: Social Worker

Comment: Please support sustainable and organic farming practices. It's better for the Earth, the animals, small struggling farmers and the health of Americans. It's about time congress stopped supporting the corporate interests of agriculture and do what's right for the majority.

COMMENT OF KRISTINA DAVIDSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:14 a.m.

City, State: Bend, OR

Comment: his has nothing to do with my opinion. I'm a U.S. citizen and one who is concerned about clean, healthy food and how it affects both our health and the health of the entire planet.

Please . . . stop GMO's, support bio-diversity and organic farming. This is a critical issue. We are what we eat. Want to solve the health care crisis? Pay attention to who is controlling the food, in every aspect—from seed to marketing. Thank you. A healthy America is a strong America. We can again lead the world—ethically and with compassion.

COMMENT OF SHEILAH DAVIDSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:12 p.m.

City, State: New York, NY

Occupation: Policy Program Manager, School Food FOCUS

Comment: School Food FOCUS, a program of Public Health Solutions, is a national collaborative that leverages the knowledge and procurement power of large school districts to make school meals nationwide more healthful, regionally sourced, and sustainably produced. FOCUS aims to transform food systems to support students' academic achievement and lifelong health, while directly benefiting farmers, regional economies, and the environment. We work most directly with school food service professionals and their district partners (outside organizations), currently in 33 large districts, representing over 4 million children. In recent years, School Food FOCUS and its stakeholders and allies have played key roles in developing and supporting policies and programs at USDA and via the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act (CNR), that serve our mission. I fully understand that changes in supply chains serving large districts can benefit all districts.

The farm bill, like the CNR, provides a key opportunity to make changes that can transform school food systems. In fact, there is a history of changes in the farm bill leading to modifications in the CNR, and vice versa. For example, FOCUS allies introduced into farm bill debates the concept of allowing geographic preferences (GP) in school food procurement which was adopted in the 2002 Farm Bill. These groups also supported Farm to School programs in the 2004 CNR. The 2008 Farm Bill further supported GP, extending voluntary application by schools for GP to all child nutrition programs and included funds for fruit and vegetable snack programs, among other programs. Mandatory funding and improved language for Farm to School programs followed in the 2010 CNR bill.

The following policy recommendations were guided by and vetted with FOCUS stakeholders through many rounds of input and revision. The recommendations have been further refined through conversations with allies such as the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition, the Community Food Security Coalition, the National Farm to School Network and the Rural Coalition. In short, they support a farm bill that increases access to whole and minimally processed foods for schools, and support for regional food hubs that address the unique needs of school food service. FOCUS also supports advocacy efforts of allied organizations that are aligned with our mission. These include food access issues for low-income communities, such as protecting full funding for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), SNAP-Ed, the Community Food Programs (CFP) and the 2501 Outreach and Assistance Program for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers, all of which improve food access for low income communities.

Specific recommendations to support our priorities include:

- Amending Section 32 of the Act of August 24, 1935 to clarify that one purpose of the funds is to support local and regional agricultural market development.
- Reauthorizing programs, including those in Food and Nutrition Service, Rural Development, Agricultural Marketing Service, and National Institute for Food and Agriculture, that support local and regional school food supply chain improvement.
- Promoting collaboration, coordination and innovation among existing USDA programs, including those that provide technical and financial resources to farm to institution initiatives.
- Keeping the definition of “local” in the hands of local policy makers. Because living, integrated food and agricultural systems intersect with social, political and economic systems in many different ways, a Federal “one size fits all” definition of local is bound to be an uncomfortable, if not outright damaging, “fit” for many areas.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit these comments.

COMMENT OF MANNY DAVILA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:29 a.m.

City, State: San Antonio, TX

Occupation: Business Owner

Comment: I support the small farmer and am against big companies. I will not support big companies that cut corners all the time. Do what is right and not what is profitable.

COMMENT OF ADRIANNE DAVIS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:29 p.m.

City, State: Santa Barbara, CA

Occupation: Activist/Volunteer

Comment: Good Day,

Closely tied to urban farm (Fairview Gardens-Goleta) for 24 yrs. & on Brd. for 12. Family still farming since 1850 in Midwest.

Agriculture and its strong, ancillary partners in the U.S. are very largely in the wrong hands.

Rather than raising food for the good health of the nation and beyond these mega-companies are raising “food”, meats, produce and seeds that have little real food value and are in fact, harmful, causing sicknesses and putrefying the Earth and waters.

If we purchase their products, we are injecting hormones, antibiotics and toxins that have no business in our bodies or our environment.

And we give them money for it. That’s their simple goal.

Ethics has nothing to do with the dynamic.

We need to clean house and build trust with capable, honest and dedicated leaders, not with lobbyists doing the bidding for the food business cartels, poisoning the FDA and all those they touch, our public schools, for instance, supermarkets and restaurants for another.

We need to bring good, healthy food, raised sustainably to our tables on the broadest base.

We must stop raising sick people for the medical/pharmaceutical businesses to profit on in this chain of harm.

We must change our priorities here in this country and stop negatively affecting other countries with our malice of forethought. High profit has no healthy future for this planet but adds to the building syndromes of premature and agonizing death.

That is not the pretty picture I want everyone to enjoy but another where delicious and clean food is the best preventative medicine there is and one of the significant joys of life.

Thank you,

A.A. DAVIS,
California.

COMMENT OF ALICE DAVIS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:38 p.m.

City, State: Wilmington, DE

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: As a consumer and as a part-time farmer, I am very concerned that farm policy be fair to small farmers. Farm policy over the past few decades has been weighted in favor of very large industrial farms. We need a system in which consumers can get locally grown food, growers can get a fair price that doesn't depend on subsidies for a few favored crops, and we can improve our living environment by decreasing the amount of fossil fuels and toxic chemicals that we use. Also, please preserve nutrition assistance programs that are so necessary for families experiencing hard times.

COMMENT OF CAROLYN DAVIS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:59 p.m.

City, State: Chattanooga, TN

Occupation: Landscaper

Comment: Please quit subsidizing American Simulated Food Products. Our nation is over budget and overweight. Let farms deal with supply and demand like **Some** other businesses do. If the citizens weren't giving their dollars to subsidies they would have more to spend on real food.

COMMENT OF D.J. DAVIS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:14 p.m.

City, State: Cedar Falls, IA

Occupation: Retired Grant Writer

Comment: Connecting eligibility for crop insurance subsidies to conservation compliance is fiscally responsible and ensures public subsidies for farmers insurance premium payments align with the public's interest in basic conservation of our soil and water—and our wildlife and botanical diversity (which keeps our **Pollinators** alive and well).

COMMENT OF DIANA VERNE DAVIS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:12 p.m.

City, State: Novato, CA

Occupation: Retired School Worker (Computers)

Comment: Please support small independent farmers not giant agribusinesses; support the banning of GMO's; support the banning of Bayer's horrible bee killing pesticide and other harmful pesticides and practices that kill beneficial insects and animals.

COMMENT OF PASTOR DICK DAVIS

Date Submitted: Wednesday, April 11, 2012, 2:06 p.m.

City, State: Lordsburg, NM

Occupation: Pastor; Hunger Relief Provider

Comment: Please fund the farm bill to include an increase in funding for TEFAP, SNAP, *etc.* With the state of the economy, more and more families are dependent on subsidies to put food on the table. Hunger relief should be our top priority.

COMMENT OF KAREN K. DAVIS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:19 p.m.

City, State: Petersham, MA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Field Crops, Fruits, Livestock

Size: 151–300 acres

Comment: I run a farm that produces organic hay & lamb, grass fed beef, apples & cider & occasional vegetables. If we are going to change our destructive health and environmental habits and survive the economic downturn, we have to support small farms, local food supplies and community enterprises like small cooperatives. Please listen to the voices of small farmers.

Thank you,

KAREN K. DAVIS.

COMMENT OF KATHY DAVIS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:03 p.m.
City, State: Grand Junction, CO
Occupation: Natural Health Instructor/Consultant/Minister
Comment: More small farms growing clean organic food for people and animals is needed for future generations . . . look to the future many generations out before making a decision.

COMMENT OF KATRINA DAVIS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:13 p.m.
City, State: Montrose, CO
Occupation: Unemployed
Comment: I need to eat organic food for my health. Any Farm Aid bill should support Real **Organic** food on small farms, and urban agriculture. So we can start growing food in our own neighborhoods which is what needs to change and happen.

COMMENT OF LIORA DAVIS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:47 p.m.
City, State: Plantation, FL
Occupation: Artist/Art Teacher
Comment: Please support small farms and organic farming. We must become a more sustainable society in order to maintain life we know it on this planet. Thank you.

COMMENT OF MARILYN DAVIS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:49 p.m.
City, State: San Jose, CA
Occupation: Technical Trainer
Comment: Please support organic farms as much as possible. Please tax agribusiness as much as possible. Please place any barriers you can to genetic modifications.
 Please allow well-labeled raw dairy products.
 It's up to you to save the Earth for future generations.

COMMENT OF MARY DAVIS

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 10:28 a.m.
City, State: Bonham, TX
Occupation: Clergy person
Comment: Please pass a healthy farm bill; one that will address the needs of Texas consumers for a healthy, affordable diet. With the cuts in SNAP benefits low income Texans are left with a high starch low vegetable diet which contributes to obesity and diabetes. A single bell pepper costs a dollar. Other fresh fruits and vegetables are out of reach except as special treats, too. Lean meat has gone so high that we just use it as an occasional seasoning, not as an element of the meal. I urge you to make the nutritional needs of Texans a priority when you consider the next farm bill. Thank you.

COMMENT OF NANCY DAVIS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:52 p.m.
City, State: Virginia Beach, VA
Occupation: Self-Employed
Comment: Please, we need **Real Food** more available at lower prices. Processed foods are at the heart of obesity, therefore heart disease, diabetes, cancer and many other medical problems.

COMMENT OF PATRICIA DAVIS

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 10, 2012, 2:05 p.m.
City, State: Tucson, AZ
Occupation: Retired
Comment: Please do not forget the thousands of people who depend on food programs to help them survive day to day, even in our great country, people are going without daily food, we need a strong farm bill.

COMMENT OF RIAN DAVIS

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 4:14 p.m.

City, State: Evanston, IL

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: Food needs to be grown sustainably and in such a way that cares for the environment, the producers and the consumers. Giant agribusiness is not the way to go—it is not safe or healthy for the animals, crops or food producers, and it has had a devastating affect on our diet. We need to stay in balance with our health, our economy, and with the Earth, and that may be complicated but it is possible. The importance is too great and the cost is too high not to take better responsibility for producing safe, affordable, and healthy food that is available to all on a smaller scale.

COMMENT OF S.K. DAVIS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:08 p.m.

City, State: Britol, CT

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Stop subsidizing factory farming. Give preferential tax and no-interest loan treatment to family farms and criminalize GMO seeds, crops and foods.

COMMENT OF TERRY DAVIS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:13 p.m.

City, State: Albuquerque, NM

Occupation: Public Relations

Comment: Do **Not** take money out of the Food Stamp program while giving need-less subsidies to corporate farms. Keep organic crops truly organic and do **Not** give in to biologically engineered foods. Support people and their needs over corporations and their greed.

COMMENT OF RONALD G. DAVIS, PH.D.

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 4:46 p.m.

City, State: San Francisco, CA

Occupation: Writer, Ph.D. Ecological Aesthetics

Comment: Organic food is healthier and should also be called ecological food. In that the production of healthy food without synthetic chemicals. inputs pesticides and toxic chems is healthy not only for the workers, that is those underpaid farm workers but also for the environment the ecology and the rest of us.

Pesticide'd agriculture and chemically treated foods is a danger to health of those consumers you might represent.

COMMENT OF CATHERINE DAVOL

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 7:16 p.m.

City, State: Roseburg, OR

Occupation: Homemaker

Comment: Please continue to support organic farmers. Our health and future depend on it. Please do not cut funding from Organic farmers. When will the research be enough that conventional pesticides are destroying our planet, please stand up to Monsanto!

COMMENT OF SARAH DAVOL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:35 p.m.

City, State: Teaneck, NJ

Occupation: Musician

Comment: Please support small time farmers and those who farm organically and who don't grow genetically modified produce. We need to keep this country healthy. This is so very important for the future of our country's food supply.

COMMENT OF DAAIYAH DAWAN-NEWBORN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:19 a.m.

City, State: Little Rock, AR

Occupation: Business Owner

Comment: Health is the most important asset we can have. It's important to the survival of people to keep our food safe and free from the greed of some to line their pockets with money at the expense of present and future generations.

COMMENT OF HAZEL DAWKINS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:35 p.m.

City, State: Greenfield, MA

Occupation: Editor, Writer

Comment: It is vital that we consider in appropriate ways our small farms. Their work is vital & they need our support. Remember, no farms, no food. I value the small farms in my area—please help them.

COMMENT OF NANCY DAWLEY

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:09 p.m.

City, State: Cincinnati, OH

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Corporate hunger for “profits” should not take precedence in the farm bill over food for Americans. Subsidies should never be increased while food stamps are decreased. These subsidies are not being used to build jobs or food quality, rather the opposite.

I also support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding of conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Small farms create jobs, protect the land, provide more nutritious food. Provisions for helping these farmers' businesses should take precedence over money for large agribusinesses.

COMMENT OF SHELTON DAWN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 9:15 p.m.

City, State: Luther, OK

Occupation: Fledgling Farmer

Comment: Please listen to family farms who are real people trying to provide our neighbors with safe real food. The corporate interests have had control too long, and the health of Americans has suffered.

We demand a **Fair** farm bill that levels the playing field for small and family farmers.

Sustainability and environmental stewardship are important to small and family farms. We farm where we live, eat and make a living. Please use **Common Sense** . . . we don't have millions to give your campaign coffers, but we are watching and concerned, and want to help you. Please don't ignore us.

COMMENT OF LORENZO DAWSON

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 6:33 p.m.

City, State: Roanoke, VA

Occupation: Real Estate

Comment: I strongly oppose GMO's and all Monsanto strong-arm tactics to control our food supply. I oppose subsidies to grow certain crops like soybeans and all other Monsanto GMO crops. Please set our country free from the awful course of food production we are on now.

COMMENT OF HANNAH DAY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:37 a.m.

City, State: Petaluma, CA

Occupation: Student

Comment: Our planet, our health system, our people, can no longer support a food system that renders land-raping crops cheap to produce, and therefore cheap

to consume. The costs are hidden, but they are there, and will make themselves apparent soon enough, when our soils can no longer produce the cash crops, and when the current generation is laid to rest before its parents.

COMMENT OF KAREN DAY

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 16, 2012, 11:51 a.m.

City, State: Floyd, VA

Occupation: Community Organizer

Comment: I want a farm bill that makes healthy food widely available for all people. Please preserve food stamp benefits and availability. In our county more and more people need food stamps. Our non-profit group makes fresh food available to all our neighbors because there is a great need. If the farm bill is really helping small farmers more fresh food will be available locally. YES beginning farmer and rancher program, **No** Conservation Program **Cuts**. Let's make the farm bill good for **All** not just industrial farmers.

COMMENT OF LIZ DAYVIE

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 6:27 p.m.

City, State: Hicksville, NY

Occupation: Diagnostic Medical Sonographer

Comment: I have nothing to gain from the field of agriculture or agribusiness other than the effects it has on the human body and on the environment. The agricultural policy of this country has been terribly handled over the past century and needs to be reformed.

Not only are our politicians out of touch with the values of the American people, but corporate agribusiness has a stranglehold on our regulatory system and our political leaders.

While Congress is looking to get rid of direct payments to commodity farmers, the subsidized insurance program it proposes to replace it with will allow giant commodity farmers and insurance companies to walk away with billions in taxpayer dollars while putting the land, soil and environment at greater risk.

I support the full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).

I support fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.

I support the implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).

I support maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

I hope you do the right thing for my fellow citizens, the environment and generations to come. Change must start somewhere. Why not now?

COMMENT OF WILLIAM DAZEY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:20 a.m.

City, State: Houston, TX

Occupation: Busboy

Comment: I believe that organic is the only sustainable way of living. Synthetic chemicals and genetically modified organisms are detrimental to the ecosystem and the future of all beings here on Earth. If one ponders over the future it is obvious that organic is the only sustainable way to continue the human race.

COMMENT OF NATALIA DE CUBA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:33 p.m.

City, State: Massapequa Park, NY

Occupation: Lecturer and Writer

Comment: Dear Representatives,

As a voter, a consumer and parent, I would like to see real reform on the way we produce food for human and animal consumption. I buy organic and local when available and affordable and grow food in my garden. I would like to see a system in which real, healthy food is readily available for all American citizens and which nurtures and sustains our soil and environment, as well as small business (*i.e.*, the small farmer, the small market). Currently, we are subsidizing—at great cost—too few and too large farms which use too many chemicals to grow a set of crops that is too homogeneous. Let's get this right please!

I support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Thank you.

NATALIA DE CUBA.

COMMENT OF BEATRIX DE GREVE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:40 p.m.

City, State: Milford, OH

Occupation: Retired

Comment: We need **Real** reform, not cutting off funds for conservation and organic food. There's **No** need to "please" the Agribusiness. Because they don't give a hoot what happens to the people.

COMMENT OF HALEY DE KORNE

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 8:47 p.m.

City, State: Philadelphia, PA

Occupation: Education Consultant/Curriculum Developer

Comment: I am writing to express my concern that the farm bill needs to be amended to provide the greatest good to the greatest number—in other words it needs to stop subsidizing large industrial agribusinesses, and provide meaningful support to small and medium farms and operations, and new initiatives. Locally-produced food has numerous benefits for the economy, for consumers, and for the long-term well-being of our country through avoiding the environmental degradation (erosion, mineral depletion, pesticide build-up, *etc.*) and health risks (tainted products, hormone & pesticide infiltration of watersheds, *etc.*) that industrial agriculture inflicts. As a young professional in an un-related field (education), this issue is significant to me because I want to establish my home and career in a country where I can obtain quality food products and trust the food that is sold in our stores. At the moment, that is not always the case here. Please support the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286), as well as maintaining funding for conservation and organic initiatives. Food is an essential part of quality of life, and the U.S. is behind in this area. The U.S. needs to catch up to other OECD countries that have higher quality control and labeling standards, and that have maintained more functional local food economies through supporting small-scale farmers and preventing industrial agribusinesses from monopolizing the market.

Thank you for considering my concerns, and I hope that in the future the farm bill will help to build a more equitable and healthy America.

COMMENT OF CAROLYN DE LORENZO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:16 p.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Student

Comment: It is time to adopt agricultural policy that reflects the importance of putting the health of individuals, animals and our environment above the interests of big agriculture. I am one among many who is fed up with corrupt and abusive agricultural practices. Policy should reflect the will of the people, not big business.

COMMENT OF FRANCO DE NICOLA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:31 p.m.

City, State: Pittsford, NY

Comment: Subsidies for commercial farming and the chemical industry need to be cut with those funds going to and being granted to organic farmers to bring about a rebirth in local family farming with sustainable practices that also don't add to the costs of health insurance in this country from the billions of pounds of toxins and GMO nonsense that the commercial farming industry uses annually. It's time to stop the for profit nonsense no matter who it hurts in this country. Are you lis-

tening Congressman Reed, or are have you totally sold out to the lobbyists and Tea party. I think, Mr. Reed, you are confused about who you are supposed to be representing!

COMMENT OF ELIZABETH DE SA

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 4:55 p.m.

City, State: Nevada City, CA

Occupation: Teacher

Comment:

- label food containing GMOs
- stop subsidizing agro-businesses
- subsidize organic and local farmers

COMMENT OF MARGARET DE WYS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:49 a.m.

City, State: Rhinecliff, NY

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: I'm all for family, local, and organic farmers. I want my government to support them. Do not keep funding big Ag. The food they bring to the American people is poisonous.

Sincerely,

MARGARET DE WYS.

COMMENT OF LINDA DEACON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:02 a.m.

City, State: Los Angeles, CA

Occupation: Statistician

Comment: We need all the support possible for sustainable, meaning organic, farming practices and for small scale family farms. We must move away from non-sustainable agribusiness practices which are destroying our precious resources.

COMMENT OF JEFF DEAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:01 p.m.

City, State: Homer, AK

Comment: End subsidies and support for polluting, factory based, GMO and chemical farming. There is no place in goodness for these. Shift all support to small local organic food production. Do this immediately with no remorse or bowing to political and money pressure from big business interests. Absolutely!

COMMENT OF JOANNE DEAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:31 a.m.

City, State: Fremont, CA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: The next farm bill needs to quit subsidizing the big producers who are making us sick with their GMOs and factory farm animals. This is so wrong on so many levels, unhealthy produce and animals, environmental problems, contamination of our water, the list could go on and on.

If any is to be done then support our small farms that are trying to produce the food that is good for us instead of trying to get rid of them with your over regulations.

COMMENT OF JEFFREY DEARBORN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:28 p.m.

City, State: The Dalles, OR

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Specialty Crops, Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: I believe your/our 2012 Farm Bill needs strict accountability. The waste I've seen in the past is appalling. Make sure the farm bill makes sense to an educated High School Senior. If it doesn't make financial sense to them, change it. These programs that read like a mission to the moon end up making work for government workers without any benefit to the small farmer. If you keep it simple,

it will work. If you make it complex and it takes me 2 weeks to figure out if my farm qualifies then you have failed. I'd like to see Congress succeed. Please.

COMMENT OF ELISA DEBOER

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 2:29 p.m.

City, State: Ballwin, MO

Occupation: Homemaker

Comment: Any farm bill must serve the interests of consumers, family farms and sustainable agriculture over the interests of corporate agribusiness and their profits. In addition, we should not be subsidizing unhealthy foods like high fructose corn syrup, which have been shown to be devastating to our national health.

COMMENT OF MARIA DECABOOTER

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 15, 2012, 1:00 p.m.

City, State: Tucson, AZ

Occupation: Advocacy Specialist at Girl Scouts of Southern Arizona

Comment: A \$36 million cut to SNAP is not the way to go. The Committee should focus on writing a farm bill that creates economic opportunity and improves access to healthy, affordable food for all Americans.

CFSC members had important wins in the Senate's Agriculture Reform, Food and Jobs Act and the

House Agriculture Committee should include them in their bill.

- Community Food Projects Program—\$10 million per year to help communities build food self-reliance.
- Farmers Market and Local Food Promotion Program—\$20 million per year to develop farmers market capacity and create food hubs to connect farmers with schools, hospitals, grocery stores and other markets.
- Hunger-Free Community Incentive Grants—An average of \$20 million per year for a new SNAP local fruit and vegetable incentive grant program at farmers markets and other healthy food retailers.
- Outreach and Technical Assistance for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers Program (Section 2501)—The Senate bill includes only \$5 million per year for this program, less than ½ the funding level in the 2008 Farm Bill.

COMMENT OF DIANA DECASTRO

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 6:52 a.m.

City, State: San Jose, CA

Occupation: Homemaker

Comment: I am sick of big corporations like Monsanto influencing agricultural policies.

Please stop allowing Monsanto, Kraft, Archer Daniel Mills, and Nestlé from expanding and getting a tighter control on our food supply.

I want organic food that contains zero GMO and additives in my food.

I want accountability when I buy beef. Stop allowing beef to be a mix from different countries. If beef/meat is tainted we need to be able to trace its place of origin.

I am also appalled at what "food" is given to the Native American Indian reservations. If you would never dream of serving it for a luncheon for congress members then why are you dumping that chemical crap on them?

We the people need real 100% food.

I don't want scientific modifications.

I want real produce that has seeds that people can utilize freely.

COMMENT OF VALDA DEDIEU

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:55 p.m.

City, State: Miami Beach, FL

Occupation: Author, Poet, Inventor

Comment: A strong America is only as healthy as its people. Health is wealth. Health affects us in every way, materially, physically, spiritually, and begins with what we put in our bodies. Let's take a step forward with the Healthy Farm Bill and keep up with other developed nations, instead of becoming last in the world in health, education, and ergo, wealth.

COMMENT OF DARLA DEEDS

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 10:04 p.m.

City, State: Bird City, KS

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Field Crops

Size: 1,000+ acres

Comment: Please support organic farming and its organizations. This is healthy and what the consumers are demanding. This is the future of farming, because the population is not going to buy any GMO or chemically treated produce or grains. This is taking off and it will be much easier to get behind this move.

COMMENT OF ELANORA DEEMS

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 01, 2012, 4:07 p.m.

City, State: Winterville, NC

Occupation: Dir. of the Ministries of the Bread of Life

Comment: It is of the utmost urgency that the Food Stamp program for the elderly & needy not be cut. **NC Is Experiencing A Very Difficult Time & This Cut Back Would Cause A Hardship On These Beyond Belief!**

ELANORA (BETTY) DEEMS.

COMMENT OF KARA DEEN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:12 p.m.

City, State: Citrus Heights, CA

Occupation: Shop Manager

Comment: Consumers like me want food that is healthy for our families, the environment, and the economy. That means I support organic and sustainable agriculture, **Not** corporate agribusiness.

It's time to stop catering to what factory "farms" and companies like Monsanto want, and listen to the people who are suffering while agribusiness gets rich.

I support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

I urge you to implement a **Healthy** farm bill now!

COMMENT OF ANGELA DEFELICE

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 11:03 p.m.

City, State: Hopewell Junction, NY

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Dear Chairman Lucas,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony to the House Committee on Agriculture on the next farm bill. I am 30 years old and am the first in my generation to return to agriculture, after my grandparents' dairy closed in the 1950's. I currently manage 8 acres of mixed vegetables, serving a 200 member CSA. We have 3 hoop houses, an energy efficient greenhouse, and are looking to expand the operation. The land that I farm on is not my own. It was recently purchased (by a non-farmer) for an astronomical price that no farmer, young or old, could afford. While I am grateful for the opportunity to make a living while farming, I (and many young farmers in my position) are not able to afford land and are unable to build equity in the land that we work. Land prices are rising every year, and every year owning my own farm is more out of reach for me.

Conservation easements are needed in order to make land more affordable, and allow farmers a secure future for their business and their families. Individual Development Accounts and more accessible loans for new farmers will also be critical for me as I look to start my own farm. As a young farmer ATTRA and SARE have been an invaluable resource. They are the first two sites that I search with questions

about fertility, greenhouse production, post harvest handling . . . really anything. I ask that the Committee endorse all of the provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236), including:

- Mandatory funding for Individual Development Accounts at \$5 million per year. This program helps new farmers raise capital to start farm businesses and is tested and proven by organizations like Practical Farmers of Iowa and the California Farmlink.
- Mandatory funding for the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program at \$25 million a year. This program funds essential education for new farmers around the country.
- Authorize a new microloan program, to enable young and beginning farmers to better access FSA loan programs.
- Revise FSA rules to make loan programs more accessible to more young and beginning farmers.
- Reaffirm the existing cost share differential for BFRs within EQIP. Also, reaffirm the advance payment option allowing beginning and socially disadvantaged producers to receive an advance payment for the project's costs for purchasing materials or contracting services, but increase the limit on the advance payment from 30 percent to 50 percent of costs.
- Amend the Farm and Ranch Land Protection Program (FRPP) to make farm viability part of the purpose of the program and to give discretionary authority to the eligible entities that implement the program to give priority to easements with an option to purchase at the agricultural use value, deals that transfer the land to beginning and farmers and ranchers, applicants with farm succession plans, and other similar mechanisms to maintain the affordability of protected land.

These and other provisions within the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act will help new growers succeed and I urge you to include them in the next farm bill. Please, support me and other young farmers as we work towards a more sustainable agriculture.

Sincerely,

ANGELA DEFELICE.

COMMENT OF CARLY DEFILIPPO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:00 a.m.

City, State: New York, NY

Occupation: Writing/Editing

Comment: End the subsidies that support junk food and big agriculture over local family farms. These subsidies are the funds that contribute to obesity and illness—and will lead to future, insurmountable deficits in healthcare.

COMMENT OF NADINE DEIF

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:54 p.m.

City, State: Isle of Palms, SC

Occupation: Unemployed

Comment: Should end all farm subsidies as they only benefit large corporate agri-producers. The farm bill works against small SC farmers and should end. Plus, why should tax payers subsidize large agricultural corporations, especially at the expense of small local farmers or smaller organic farmers?

SUBMITTED STATEMENT BY JOE DEL BOSQUE, PRODUCER, FIREBAUGH, CA

Congressman Costa and Congressman Cardoza, thank you for inviting me to participate on this forum.

Good morning, my name is Joe Del Bosque. I'm a farmer from Firebaugh, California. My farm is a medium-sized, but fairly representative of San Joaquin Valley agriculture. We grow cantaloupes, organic cantaloupes, almonds, asparagus, cherries, and processing tomatoes. My farm is irrigated with water from the Central Valley Project. Our products are sold across the country and around the world. We contribute to the economy of our state and country, create jobs, and help balance our trade deficit.

The biggest issue facing our Valley is arguably water reliability, or rather lack of. While most farmers such as myself attempt to ensure water for our permanent crops, our annual crops such as melons need to be protected as well. We cannot cut back on our melon program because we stand to lose market share and our labor.

Like the hundreds of other specialty crops that make up California agriculture, melons have specific environmental preferences. There is no place like the Westside for melons. Water reliability is crucial to the survival of the specialty crops that drive our agricultural economic engine.

Labor is as important to the fresh fruit and vegetable industry as land and water. Without labor we cannot harvest most of these crops. We have been fortunate to have a supply of labor, but that source is dwindling, and immigration policies are impacting our availability. Because of the seasonality of our labor demands, we need to structure programs that would benefit our farms, our workers, and our country. Funds and programs to help improve farmworker health and safety.

Food safety is an issue that has become of monumental importance for the fresh fruit and vegetable industry. Our industry has long practiced good food safety policies, but even though California has never experienced a foodborne illness outbreak, we have seen that what happens in another part of the country can devastate our industry. California melon growers and other produce growers have taken a leadership role in improving science-based food safety policies and good agricultural practices. We need government to work with us as a partner.

The Center for Produce Safety is one of those programs where farmers are being proactive.

COMMENT OF MICHAEL DEL GROSSO

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 8:13 a.m.

City, State: Pittsburgh, PA

Occupation: Mechanic

Comment: While I am not a farmer I whole heartedly wish that something be done to keep local, small, and family operated farms and orchards from collapsing into the past. My government should be watching as these owners are selling, or leasing parts of their land to oil and gas companies just to maintain some of their crops. This can possibly lead to contamination of the food and land. With the human disease side effects and sicknesses that have yet to rear their heads in the early stages of the farmer "compromise" for the use of the land. Please keep the bill as it was meant to be.

COMMENT OF ISAAC DELAMATRE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:50 a.m.

City, State: Yellow Springs, OH

Occupation: Chef

Comment: I would rather we had no farm bill and let fair be fair, but if you must, please support small growers as well as large to boost small local economies, create community food independence and encourage small scale entrepreneurship.

COMMENT OF MAUREEN DELANEY

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 10, 2012, 9:09 p.m.

City, State: Oak Park, IL

Occupation: Stay-at-Home Mom

Comment: I volunteer at our local food pantry 2x a month, and have witnessed firsthand how many people are hungry. Receiving SNAP funds at the current level of funding is insufficient for most families. They end up coming to the food pantry, too, because their SNAP dollars don't stretch too far. Please do not cut SNAP funding.

COMMENT OF VALERIE DELAR

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:20 p.m.

City, State: Tucson, AZ

Occupation: Speech-Language Therapist and EEG Neurotherapist

Comment: The children I work with increasingly have allergies and sensitivities to foods and or chemical substances. We need to strengthen our support of truly organic producers and small farms who are focusing on sustainable practices for the health of future generations.

COMMENT OF STEVE DELGADILLO

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 4:30 p.m.

City, State: Santa Ana, CA

Occupation: Community Advocate

Comment: Please continue to support the needs of older populations with this bill. By Protecting Older Americans you help maintain the safety net needed for their well being. Thank you.

STEVE DELGADILLO.

COMMENT OF DRU ANN DELGADO

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 12:09 p.m.

City, State: Munhall, PA

Occupation: Administrator

Comment: We need to do all we can to protect American farmers—they are a vital part of our national system. The U.S. needs to be more self-sufficient and rely less on products from overseas.

COMMENT OF VICTOR DELGADO, JR.

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 12:09 p.m.

City, State: El Paso, TX

Occupation: Retired

Comment: For the economic and health reasons, it is extremely important that we get a handle in our farm policies which impact an array of vital issues for the well being of all of the our citizens.

COMMENT OF E. DELL

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 10:25 a.m.

City, State: Stevensville, MD

Occupation: Self-Employed Caregiver

Comment: Statistics indicate that our senior population will increase dramatically. While I do not wish to see another entitlement program, I see a need to consider the senior population when identifying food bank needs.

COMMENT OF KENNETH DELONG

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 7:36 p.m.

City, State: Pleasanton, CA

Occupation: Software Engineer

Comment: Consumers and constituents are increasing nervous about the large, centralized and industrialized food system. More and more are opting out with their wallets and their votes.

The new farm bill must recognize this. Instead of subsidizing corn and soy, which has led to an epidemic of obesity, diabetes, and allergy, we need to shift the focus to supporting small, local, community-oriented artisanal producers. The bill must realize the unique challenges these producers face. It must also realize that they do not pose wide-scale health risks (a farm that sells to 30 people cannot poison millions, unlike our CAFO-based system).

A food system augmented by a dense network of local, small-scale, organic, artisanal producers would be good for our health, our economy, our communities, our children, and our nation. The new farm bill should support the expansion of this system.

COMMENT OF KATHLEEN DELOREY

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 11:32 p.m.

City, State: Whitmore Lake, MI

Occupation: Retired Ironworker

Comment: What a shame it is to have worked so hard all your life only to realize in your retirement yrs. such basic things as food medicine and shelter has to be decided about each month, what can I pay this month, do I eat or pay bills? We **Need A Strong Farm Bill** that will protect our needy Americans, from our babies to our seniors. It's time to help feed our own country and keep it strong for our future and for our children. What a disgrace to our country that we can feed and clothe other foreign lands and not our own people, we need our food programs like SNAP, TEFAP & CSFP saved or a new program started, we are very capable of growing enough food for our country so I really don't see why we should be having this problem at all, unless some large farms were paid not to grow corn, soybeans, wheat, etc. there needs to be a fair farm policy bill brought to the table that can actually

help our vulnerable seniors and other struggling Americans in this terrible economic time to have access to healthy, nutritious food and not wonder where their next meal is coming from.

Thank You.

COMMENT OF ANN DELORGE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:48 p.m.

City, State: Augusta, GA

Occupation: Self-Employed

Comment: I believe we need to encourage many neighborhood organic gardens to provide healthy, affordable food for neighborhoods of all types. Monsanto and Bayer and whoever they are paying off in Congress are killing necessary insects and disrupting Nature's balance with their greed. This will go up the food chain to eventually destroy the only planet we happen to live on. (Contrary to my opinion, I hear that congressmen are humans, too) and are also eating poison.

COMMENT OF CAROL DELROSSO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:26 p.m.

City, State: Mannington, WV

Occupation: Florist and Home Gardener

Comment: Dear Sirs:

I am very concerned about the health of this nation and its people. We must change the whole structure of the way we produce food. The model is extremely flawed and is choking the life out of every living thing on this planet. We must get back to organic farming practices and encourage polyculture instead of monoculture. It can be done. The perfect model is Polyface Farm in Swoope, Va. Please investigate this farm and the ingenious way he makes the animals work for him. We must encourage farmers to let the animals back on the land to graze and replenish the soils. We must encourage each individual to do his part to keep this Earth nourished and healthy. Our lives literally depend on revamping farming into the organic model instead of the industrialized model.

Thank you,

CAROL DELROSSO.

COMMENT OF JULIE DEMAGGIO

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 16, 2012, 1:19 a.m.

City, State: Chico, CA

Occupation: Butte College Instructor

Comment:

1. I want the food I consume sustainable grown—meaning **No** GMO seeds, **No** pesticides, and soil conservation farming methods.
2. I demand healthy (organically grown, minimally processed) food available in my children's school.
3. I want small, sustainable producers protected and allowed to produce—*i.e.*, raw milk dairy farmers, and local farmer's market growers.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF DARLENE DEMETRI

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:15 p.m.

City, State: Goshen, CT

Occupation: Writer

Comment: It is my belief that Congress, the Executive Branch and Supreme Court are making themselves obsolete in terms of working for the general welfare of the **People** who pay the taxes. The horrific **Farm Bill** is no longer useful and no longer responsive to our needs. I'm sick of agribusiness getting everything and am disgusted at the Obama Administration's support of GMOs and Monsanto that is out to poison us and destroy our natural resources. Enough is enough. For once, radically overhaul the farm bill to truly serve the people and have the best interests of the planet in mind.

Therefore, I support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).

- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.
- The Food Stamp Program.

What Congress does on this will either further seal its fate as being the most radical, ridiculous and **Useless** institution we have in the government or it could improve its image in the people's eyes. Considering that the Radical Republicans and fascist corporations seem to be in control of this issue and pretty much everything of late, I do not harbor much hope that there will be progressive change and solutions.

But, that will only continue to reinforce in people's minds here in the U.S. and worldwide—that the current system that we have been brainwashed into believing is the only way (plutocracy, capitalism, government control based on money, **Faux** democracy, *etc.*)—is no longer working.

Although I am pleased with what my Democratic congressman in the House is doing, there are such few good one like him in the Congress to make a real difference.

JOINT COMMENT OF CAROL DEMI AND LAURA LUPOVITZ

Date Submitted: Thursday, April 19, 2012, 10:18 a.m.

Names: Carol Demi and Laura Lupovitz

City, State: Salisbury, NC; Greensburg, PA.

Occupations: Corporate Relations Manager United Way of Allegheny County; Research

Comment: Feeding our neighbors is a public-private partnership. I am doing my part by supporting my local food bank, and I want our government to do its part.

Cutting anti-hunger programs will increase hunger in America, as well as the associated health care, educational, and economic costs of food insecurity and poor nutrition. To put it simply, hungry people cannot be productive.

Please remember the families who are struggling in our community, and protect and strengthen important anti-hunger programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP in the 2012 Farm Bill reauthorization.

COMMENT OF LINDA DEMING

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 7:58 a.m.

City, State: Jacksonville, FL

Comment: Please Do not let Organic Food growers down. I struggle to purchase foods not contaminated with GMO and pesticides and more. Being chronically ill and in a wheelchair makes money very tight. All we can do, to support farmers trying to provide "clean" food for people who suffer from illness disease and allergies, needs to be done now. Small farmers need to be supported by all the people and you.

COMMENT OF CHARLE DEMO

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 4:34 p.m.

City, State: Prineville, OR

Occupation: Sustainable Building Advisor

Comment: Growing and producing Hemp to manufacture over 1,000 products including food, building material, biodegradable plastics and sustainable fuel. End subsidies for ethanol corn since it is carbon positive.

COMMENT OF GARY DEMURIA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:49 p.m.

City, State: Oneco, CT

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Poultry/poultry products, Specialty Crops, Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Please end this monopoly of government and big agricultural businesses such as Monsanto and other. We need to have change in the way we are feeding ourselves and most important labeling of our foods because there are many among us who feel that genetically modified foods are not good for us and we should

have a choice of deciding what goes into our bodies not wondering what choice we are making. Also we must support our local farmers better as they are the backbone to our food system. Please consider these things from a concerned citizen

Thank you

GARY DEMURIA.

COMMENT OF HAROLD DENENBERG

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:20 p.m.

City, State: Langhorne, PA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Stop subsidizing giant farm businesses. Start supporting local, preferably organic farmers. Increase availability to most Americans healthy fruits and vegetables.

COMMENT OF WILLIAM DENGEL

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 5:48 p.m.

City, State: Campbellsville, KY

Occupation: Nursing

Comment: Please support more organic farming and small farmers. I would also like to see more support for farmers markets and less big agriculture. As a future small farmer I feel that too many subsidies are given to big farms that poison our environment with pesticides and herbicides. There are more sustainable ways that don't kill the life in the soil. Thank you for considering my input.

COMMENT OF ISABEL DENHAM

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:57 p.m.

City, State: Falmouth, ME

Occupation: Retired Teacher

Comment: Subsidies to big agra-industries must stop. Subsidies should go to small farmers, organic farmers, and co-ops. The use of dangerous chemicals must be curtailed and the use of hormones in animals. We must go back to the wisdom of earlier sustainable agriculture.

COMMENT OF SARAH DENIS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:52 p.m.

City, State: Wakefield, RI

Occupation: Homemaker

Comment: Small independent organic farmers need your support. Supporting mixed farming, and locally grown and raised produce and meat is sustainable for the environment and for the economy. Monoculture is not.

COMMENT OF SARA DENMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:27 p.m.

City, State: Maple Valley, WA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: In a country that believes in being fair, how do you consider it fair to subsidize big agribusiness and not organic farms? I encourage you to make the playing field even.

COMMENT OF MARIANNE DENNIS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:53 p.m.

City, State: Houston, TX

Occupation: Accountant/Director of Food Pantry

Comment: Please don't stop the stop hunger programs like SNAP. I already have a lot of clients for the food pantry and the need will grow even with those that have assistance in these programs. Can you imagine what would happen if they didn't have that assistance. It would look like Russia during the bread lines. Are we ready for that.

COMMENT OF JANE DENNISON

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 6:56 a.m.

City, State: Granville, OH
Producer/Non-producer: Producer
Type: Field Crops
Size: Less than 50 acres
Comment: Please do not fall prey to big agriculture lobbyists! Protect the small farmer, organic farming, and conservation issues above all else! My health and that of the country depends on this.

COMMENT OF JERRY DEPEW

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 12:09 a.m.
City, State: Laurens, IA
Producer/Non-producer: Producer
Type: Field Crops
Size: 151–300 acres
Comment: Don't kill conservation funding just as the weather is turning more extreme. Iowa floods have high costs, not just in lost soil.
 Don't subsidize crop insurance so that one farmer can grow endlessly. I'd say no more acres can be insured than were insured by the same farmer in the past. That will stop consolidation on the public dime!

COMMENT OF STACIE DEPNER

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 2:41 p.m.
City, State: Lakeland, MN
Occupation: Business Management Consultant
Comment: Corporate agriculture has proven to be a detriment to our land, livestock, and health. Please stand behind sustainable organic family farming to produce food that has vitamins and minerals and preserves the soil's nutrients as well without chemical contamination to our land, livestock, and loved ones.

COMMENT OF GLORIA DERKSEN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:41 p.m.
City, State: Ferryville, WI
Occupation: Newspaper Office Worker
Comment: I would like to see the farm bill adjusted so that those receiving aid are doing something sustainable. I've read enough articles and books and listened to enough programs to see who's getting the money—corn & soy to feed cows & pigs on CAFOs (also getting money) to turn the ag economy into a Monsanto and big ag single supply system. These corporations and factories kill land, destroy family farms and ruin lives. It's not cheap food if our tax dollars are going to supplant the giants. If we want real change we will support the small farmer, suffering to keep afloat and be entrepreneurial and the burgeoning organic industries. This is what people want. Let's give them what they want. They don't want to be sued by Monsanto—why are they given so much consideration in the supreme courts? It's unfathomable how everything feels upside down. I'd prefer **No** money for any **Farm** if things keep going the way they are. Let the market prevail. Am I then worried about the small farmer? No, they aren't getting anything anyway.

COMMENT OF RENEE DEROKO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:58 p.m.
City, State: Grantville, GA
Occupation: HR Technology and Integration
Comment: Hello, I am a 42 year old FT working Mom of three small children. I am taking the time to educate myself on these proceedings and to provide feedback because this topic is paramount to what is produced in the U.S., and therefore what food is readily available for consumption by its citizens. Feeding my children natural, organic and affordable food to enable them to grow up healthy and strong is one of my highest priorities as a Mom and I need your help. That the current version of this bill subsidizes the production of food that is making our children and our planet sick is reprehensible and must be a call to action by those who have the power to change things and put the focus back on families battling hunger, regional farm and food economies, and more sustainable food production. It is the family farms that need support, not the big farms. We need to end subsidies (direct payments and countercyclical commodity programs) and ensure that CAFOs receive limited funding. I urge you to put aside pressure from the powerful lobbyist groups

solely interested in profit, and instead focus on what is right for our country, our children, and our environment. There has never been a more critical time and the power is in your hands. Please do the right thing and support changes that will ensure a good, clean, and fair Food and Farm Bill.

Sincerely,

RENEE DEROKO.

COMMENT OF KERSTIN DEROLF

Date Submitted: Thursday, April 19, 2012, 4:51 p.m.

City, State: Cynthiana, KY

Occupation: Homemaker

Comment: I would like to see regulations for the small farmer and rancher eased so that they do not drown in the same paperwork that is required for the big conglomerates. I like being able to support the local farmer and rancher and their products (I don't want Wal-Mart or grocery stores to be my only choice for food). I like that I can talk with them and find out how they produce their food (organic produce, pastured chickens, grass-fed and -finished beef, and properly-raised pork)—just because Big Ag and the big conglomerates have determined how to grow everything in massive amounts, does not mean that should be the only way to produce it and the only way I can get it.

Please keep that in mind when you write the new bills, and take consideration of the smaller farms and ranchers that may be driven out of business or never even start in business because of the bureaucracy determined to be necessary for the big corporations.

Thanks,

KERSTIN DEROLF.

COMMENT OF JAMES DESHOTELS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 5:05 p.m.

City, State: Robertsville, MO

Occupation: Nurse Practitioner

Comment: Current farm bill contains unacceptable cuts to SNAP (food stamps) & seriously injures the common good (*i.e.*, maximal life, liberty & ability to pursue happiness of ALL U.S. citizens & those living with us). USCCB has condemned it with good reason.

COMMENT OF DAVID DESSLER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:08 p.m.

City, State: Richmond, VA

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: I am not a farmer but I am well of my dependence on American farmers. In the farm bill you are considering, please include measures to reduce unnecessary regulations on farmers, increase funds for farmer education, and protect America's farmland. In particular, more money needs to be spent funding SARE, Cooperative Extension services, and general education. In addition, The Local Farms, Food, and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286) should be fully funded. Please do not cut these programs! Thank you very much for considering my views.

COMMENT OF RANDY DESUTTER

Date Submitted: Monday, May 07, 2012, 9:57 a.m.

City, State: Woodhull, IL

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Field Crops

Size: 1,000+ acres

Comment: I am unable to participate in the farm program on one of my farms because the previous owner did not participate and the farm does not have a base. The next farm bill needs a provision that allows farms like this a chance to establish a base and enroll in the program. Another option is to have a program based on actual planted acres. The people owning and farming the land today should be the one's making the decisions on the farm program, not someone who passed away almost 10 years ago.

COMMENT OF PEGGY DETMERS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:14 p.m.

City, State: Rapid City, SD

Occupation: Biologist

Comment: My family who has been diagnosed with extreme grain intolerances sees that what Big Ag is doing to our food supply as downright criminal. A doctor at the Rapid City Medical Center says they are seeing an explosion of celiac and related grain induced autoimmune syndromes and ask me why. The doctors asked me, a biologist, who got rid of very serious health problems by eliminating grains from my diet, why this was happening. It's because grains now are modified with toxins!

We need the full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).

Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.

The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).

And MOST importantly . . . in order that we induce more clean healthy foods back into our food supply we **Need** to maintain and build the EQIP Organic Initiative.

COMMENT OF MALISA DETTLINGER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:01 p.m.

City, State: Longmont, CO

Occupation: Mother, Homemaker

Comment: Dear Rep. Polis,

My family and I plea you to vote yes to labeling GMO food. Please maintain the integrity of our organic food standards by not letting GMO foods, which cannot be controlled, taint organic food. Keep crops separate and at a great distance from one another. Also, we ask for fully funded conservation programs that make sure enrollment in new insurance subsidies are tied to compliance with conservation programs. Please maintain the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Thank you,

MALISA DETTLINGER.

COMMENT OF LAUREN DEUTSCH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:25 p.m.

City, State: Los Angeles, CA

Occupation: Nonprofit Organization Staff

Comment: I support the farm bill and am urging others to do so. It is critical that human beings, not corporations, manage the sources of our food, including the way it is produced, the quality of the food material, the way the land is cared for and the accessibility to high quality nutrition. We can go nowhere else but Earth. Sustainability, not profit, is the point of life.

COMMENT OF CAROLE DEVINE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:51 p.m.

City, State: Portsmouth, VA

Occupation: Consultant

Comment: It has now been proven that GMO seeds cannot reproduce and are causing reproduction problems in third generation rats. High fructose corn syrup has proven health dangers, as well. There is **Much** more wrong with agriculture including Monsanto's lawsuits against organic farmers whose land receives windblown seeds onto their land. It is a travesty that our government is not doing something about this.

COMMENT OF ANDREA DEZENDORF

Date Submitted: Friday, April 27, 2012, 1:52 p.m.

City, State: Lakewood, CO

Occupation: Interior Landscaping

Comment: As a supporter of local and national food banks, I urge you to pass a bill that helps the hungry. With the down turn in the economy over the last dec-

ade, more and more people rely on food programs. please make sure that funding for these programs stays in the farm bill. We can't let our kids and our seniors go hungry. Thank you.

COMMENT OF CAROLE DI TOSTI

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:02 p.m.

City, State: Kew Gardens, NY

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: In the last 4 years, I lost 120 pounds. Why? I didn't eat the processed foods in the food supply produced by agra business. I didn't shot at industrialized food stores like Stop and Shop, Walmarts, Pathmark, Safeway. I will not eat the foods marketed there because they made me **Fat And Unhealthy**. I'm lucky my fatty liver and heart and organ fat didn't give me worse problems. As it is my body flab is apparent, though I look and feel 1,000% better. I eat organic, free range, raw milk cheese, organic or locally sourced greens and produce and fruits, *etc.* I blog about this extensively and I am a Technorati journalist. And I am writing a book about weight loss and obesity. Corn oil? Ha, ha, ha, GM Wheat and flour produced from such wheat? Ha, ha, ha. I eat no flour products produced in the U.S. I am allergic and it makes me sick and makes me have arthritis and it made me incredibly **Fat**.

So, you know I am for:

- the full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

I don't care! **I Would Rather Starve Than Eat The Food That Industrial Farms And Industrial Food Companies Produce And Create. I Have Learned, It Is Not What You Don't Put In Your Mouth That Kills You It Is What You Do.** In a nation of obese, sickly, overweight and unhappy people, I am thin, look 20–25 years younger than my old, overweight counterparts in their 60s. And I am active. I looked just like they did 10 years ago when I weight 240 pounds. I hope you get the message.

COMMENT OF BARBARA DIAZ

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 7:05 p.m.

City, State: La Puente, CA

Occupation: Unemployed

Comment: Please provide healthy programs including organic and communal gardening for seniors and families to encourage production and consummation of fruits and vegetables, and legumes. The beef, poultry, fish and various other meat industries need to improve their standards of animal husbandry and practice humane, healthy, and sanitary practices. The farms, whether organic, small & independent, or factory and industrial need to meet higher standards and make the focus of production secondary. This will help animals, farmers, the middlemen, the consumers and our wonderful land and water systems, and do so much more positive. Please read Temple Grandin's work on farm animals. We need to rotate our crops and allow the land to heal, and part of this process is to let animals roam about and fertilize the Earth in a natural way.

COMMENT OF DAILY DIAZ

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:57 p.m.

City, State: West Palm Beach, FL

Occupation: Construction Contractor

Comment: I only buy organic food for my family. My mother had been very ill in 2008. As soon as we changed her diet to organic including all dairy, she improved and was able to drink milk for the first time in 10 years where it did not upset her stomach.

COMMENT OF MARGARITA DIAZ

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 2:46 p.m.

City, State: Miami, FL
Occupation: Unemployed
Comment: To: House Agriculture.

Those Hunger People than they don't have enough money to cover for food they need Your help, Approved their agriculture Jobs will Help them in the future with Food. They need to make a line to pick up their food. Every week.

MARGARITA, Miami, Florida.

SUBMITTED LETTER BY KENNETH DIBBELL, SOUTH NEW BERLIN, NY

March 9, 2012

House Committee on Agriculture,
 United States Congress,
 Washington, D.C.

Dear Members of House Agriculture Committee:



Are You Listening?

Gentleman and Ladies:

It is past time for realistic legislation concerning farm gate milk price. It is time to stop bowing to the Washington lobbyist (IDFA-NMPF) neither one of which represent the people, in this case dairy producers, and the rural economy that they support.

Be aware that the current and past price discovery system has put 200,000 producers out of business since 1980 and the loss of parity. Only 50,000 producers remain in production at present and they are starving for funds to pay high feed costs, high energy costs, high taxes and high costs for anything made with steel. Seed prices are also through the roof!

It is time to pay producers cost of production as calculated by Economic Research Service. They are paid and staffed to do the work and their work is ignored!

Sincerely,

KENNETH DIBBELL.

ATTACHMENT 1

March 31, 2011

United States Congress,
 Washington, D.C.

Dear Members of the United States Congress:

What happened?!

The question is: what happened to the home of the brave land of the free with liberty and justice for all? What happened to the Government for the People?

The Unites States Congress has been directed not by the people but by the Lobbyist for special interest in the quest to feather their own nest with no concern for the lives they destroy along the way.

Corporate America with the blessing of the U.S. Government has moved millions of jobs out of this nation presumably to maintain or even improve their margins. The Free Trade Parade! All across this industrial nation, poor managers let the unions get too much power in the quest for a higher standard of living; never setting them down and explaining the Facts of Life to them. Then those managers (many of whom packed up and left the scene with their umbrella full of cash in the form of millions of dollars—the reward for failure).

Now let's look at the dairy industry in particular; when I came to this county 35 years ago there were 733 farms shipping milk to the commercial market. Now, there are less than 200. Why, because the Congress and the last four Administrations were not governing for the people. Government cannot run a business with any degree of success as illustrated by the FANNY MAE, FREDDY MACK and the U.S. Postal Service with its \$8 Billion shortfall in 2010.

The current and past raw milk pricing as administered has driven 400,000 dairy producers out of business since 1981. The local economy supported by those producers is a shambles and, in effect, no longer exists. Businesses closed, employees laid off.

There are fewer than 53,000 dairy producers left in the nation and most of them are at risk of failure and are leveraged to the point where many cannot borrow for spring planting in 2011. The cost of everything is rising everyday—gasoline, diesel fuel, fertilizer, seed and anything made of steel.

I suggest that if this Congress has a conscience of any consequence that they get busy and fix this problem. **Now**, not in 2012. You have ignored the dairy price crisis since it happened in 2009.

We do not need another Band Aid, we need to cover our cost as published by the ERS, a division of the USDA, calculated every month for all 23 dairy producing states.

The MILC payment program has been a hoax from day one. It did not include a course in government math to teach you how to pay \$5 of expense with 15¢. National Milk Producers (processors) Federation's Foundation for the Future (FFTF) is far from being a solution to farm gate pricing. It is another system subject to manipulation like the current system of pricing milk based on the products traded on the CME.

This system has destroyed the lives and livelihoods of 400,000 dairy producers since 1981, leaving only less than 53,000 in production.

Is this the United States of America? Certainly not the same one that I was born into in 1934, where everyone worked! There were no special education classes. Everyone conformed or else!

Ladies and Gentlemen of the Congress, dairy producers need cost of production, **now**, not in 2012. The Casey Specter Bill has been there since 2007 as the answer to this problem, with a supply management feature financed by producers, not tax payers. It is past time for the Congress to gather up some courage to address the problem.

You do not have to open the entire farm bill to fix what needs fixing in the dairy sector. Common Sense tells me that. Common sense does not appear to be abundant in the U.S. Congress or at the USDA as well.

You all need to get familiar with the "Agriculture Marketing Act" still on the law books and it is **the Law!** Dairy producers need cost of production to survive and stimulate the local economy that relies on dairy dollars. **They need it now!**

If consumers can pay \$4 per gallon for gasoline, they can certainly pay \$4 per gallons for milk, the world's most nutritious beverage.

It doesn't cost any more to process \$25 milk than it does for \$15 milk.

The current price discovery system borders on insanity as evidenced by the number of producers who have suffered economic strangulation. The tail has been wagging the dog for far too long.

In Desperation,


KENNETH DIBBELL.

ATTACHMENT 2

March 4, 2010

Members of Congress,

Ongoing Dairy Crisis:

We are entering our 15th month of absolutely outrageous farm gate milk prices and no one seems to care. Spring is coming and far too many of our farms are out of cash and out of credit and spring cropping is just around the corner.

Senate bill 1645 referred to as the Casey-Specter bill is sitting stagnant in the Senate. It provides for pricing based on cost of production with a supply Management system which should stop some of the unnecessary growth. You cannot grow your way out of this mess at these currently low prices and without supply management the smaller farms will continue to fail due to economic strangulation.

We have had 30 years of below cost payment resulting in the loss of 4/5 of the operating dairy farms of 1980. We are down to less than 50,000 left in the nation. Is this the America I was born into quite a number of years ago, I don't think so!

The milk payment program is an absolute farce and raising the payment limit to 6 million pounds cut the payment to small farms in 1/2, an absolute disgrace to common sense.

Federal Order I (11 Northeast States) revenue was down 33% from previous year and only down 616 million pounds. New York was down \$.6 billion and if spent a

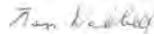
modest five times in the local economy that was \$30 billion not available to stimulate the rural economy. In all of Order I that number is \$70 billion. Nationwide that number is hundreds of billions. Where is the sense? It is well past time for Washington to wake up and fix this mess as it is your fault for not being in touch with reality!

There is not a valid argument for not pricing milk on the cost of production as published by Economic Research a division of USDA. The money needs to come from the marketplace with a reasonable explanation to consumers. Sustain our dairy farm community to provide a fresh high quality product. Milk is good!

National Milk Producers Federation should have a name change to: National Milk Processors Federation. Co-ops should go back and review their mission statement and truly represent their farmer members interest.

It Is Past Time To Act!

In total disgust



KENNETH DIBBELL.

ATTACHMENT 3

Estimated Pay Price to Dairy Farmers Under the Federal Milk Marketing Improvement Act of 2009 (S. 1645)

Federal Order	Class II Basic Formula	Class I Differential	Class I	Price Paid to Dairymen	Class I Utilization
1—Boston	\$22.00	\$3.25	\$25.25	\$23.51	46.5%
5—Appalachian	\$22.00	\$3.10	\$25.10	\$24.05	66.3%
6—Florida	\$22.00	\$4.00	\$26.00	\$25.36	84.0%
7—Southeast/Atlanta	\$22.00	\$3.10	\$25.10	\$23.83	59.3%
30—Midwest/Chicago	\$22.00	\$1.80	\$23.80	\$22.28	16.0%
32—Central/Kansas City	\$22.00	\$2.00	\$24.00	\$22.63	31.4%
33—Mideast/Cleveland	\$22.00	\$2.00	\$24.00	\$22.77	38.4%
124—Pacific NW/Seattle	\$22.00	\$1.90	\$23.90	\$22.56	29.5%
126—Southwest/Dallas	\$22.00	\$3.00	\$25.00	\$23.09	36.4%
131—Arizona	\$22.00	\$2.35	\$24.35	\$22.88	37.5%
California	\$22.00	\$1.90	\$23.90	\$22.34	18.0%

*This revised formula was compiled by Arden Tewksbury, Manager, Progressive Agriculture Organization to more effectively equalize the prices paid to dairy farmers in the United States. Figures used are 2009 figures

ATTACHMENT 4

2009 Mailbox Milk Prices For Selected Reporting Areas in Federal Milk Orders & California 1

Reporting Area 2	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	Average 3
New England States 4	\$14.95	\$12.46	\$12.25	\$12.66	\$12.65	\$12.27	\$12.27	\$12.57	\$13.45				\$12.83
New York	\$13.94	\$11.72	\$11.52	\$11.93	\$11.96	\$11.61	\$11.47	\$11.81	\$12.64				\$12.07
Eastern Pennsylvania 5	\$14.45	\$11.98	\$11.76	\$12.16	\$12.14	\$11.73	\$11.80	\$12.12	\$12.69				\$12.35
Appalachian States 6	\$16.55	\$13.20	\$12.25	\$12.78	\$12.78	\$12.36	\$12.74	\$13.04	\$13.94				\$13.28
Southeast States 7	\$17.05	\$13.76	\$12.47	\$13.08	\$13.15	\$12.85	\$13.38	\$13.88	\$14.77				\$13.82
Southern Missouri 8	\$14.98	\$11.69	\$10.78	\$11.09	\$10.77	\$10.77	\$11.08	\$11.51	\$12.55				\$11.69
Florida	\$18.39	\$14.97	\$13.61	\$14.34	\$14.70	\$14.07	\$14.81	\$15.37	\$16.20				\$15.16
Western Pennsylvania 9	\$14.87	\$11.89	\$11.61	\$12.07	\$11.86	\$11.53	\$11.53	\$11.97	\$12.97				\$12.50
Ohio	\$14.83	\$12.28	\$11.97	\$12.43	\$12.32	\$11.87	\$11.90	\$12.45	\$13.28				\$12.17
Indiana	\$14.86	\$12.00	\$11.34	\$11.76	\$12.00	\$11.37	\$11.51	\$11.90	\$12.81				\$12.17
Michigan	\$13.76	\$11.51	\$11.29	\$11.74	\$11.55	\$11.16	\$11.16	\$11.69	\$12.61				\$11.83
Wisconsin	\$12.94	\$11.24	\$11.87	\$12.17	\$11.40	\$11.24	\$11.15	\$12.25	\$13.30				\$11.95
Minnesota	\$12.77	\$11.82	\$12.27	\$12.26	\$11.49	\$11.26	\$11.27	\$12.57	\$13.48				\$12.13
Iowa	\$13.60	\$11.73	\$11.84	\$12.23	\$11.84	\$11.48	\$11.33	\$12.22	\$13.23				\$12.17
Illinois	\$13.38	\$11.62	\$11.84	\$12.06	\$11.80	\$11.44	\$10.91	\$12.44	\$13.29				\$12.09
Corn Belt States 10	\$13.61	\$11.33	\$11.43	\$11.62	\$11.33	\$10.96	\$10.82	\$11.69	\$12.82				\$11.73
Western Texas 11	\$12.98	\$10.73	\$10.73	\$11.07	\$10.59	\$10.20	\$10.43	\$11.30	\$12.22				\$11.14
New Mexico	\$12.25	\$10.03	\$9.92	\$10.26	\$9.77	\$9.37	\$9.66	\$10.51	\$11.39				\$10.35
Northwest States 12	\$12.75	\$10.66	\$10.95	\$11.29	\$10.87	\$10.55	\$10.57	\$11.17	\$12.17				\$11.22
All Federal Order Areas 13	\$13.77	\$11.61	\$11.60	\$11.96	\$11.61	\$11.27	\$11.30	\$12.04	\$12.98				\$12.02
California 14	\$10.57	\$9.80	\$9.92	\$9.88	\$9.70	\$9.63	\$9.60	\$10.51	\$11.20				\$10.09

Notes:
 1 Net pay price received by dairy farmers for milk. Includes all payments received for milk sold and all costs associated with marketing the milk. Price is a weighted average for the reporting area and is reported at the average butterfat test.
 2 Information is shown for those areas for which prices are reported for at least 75% of the milk marketed under Federal Milk Orders. The price shown is the weighted average of the prices reported for all Orders that received milk from the area.
 3 Figures are annual averages—the weighted average of the monthly figures; except California, which is the simple average.
 4 Includes Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont.
 5 All the counties to the east of those listed in n. 9.
 6 Includes Kentucky, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia.
 7 Includes Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Louisiana, and Mississippi.
 8 All counties of Vernon, Cedar, Polk, Dallas, Laclede, Texas, Dent, Crawford, Washington, St. Francois, and Perry and all those to the south of these.
 9 The counties of Warren, Elk, Clearfield, Indiana, Westmoreland, and Fayette, and all those to the west of these.
 10 Includes Kansas, Nebraska and the Missouri counties to the north of those listed in n. 8.
 11 All counties to the east of Fernin, Hunt, Van Zandt, Henderson, Anderson, Houston, Cherokee, Nacogdoches, and Shelby.
 12 Includes Oregon and Washington.
 13 Weighted average of the information for all selected reporting areas in Federal Milk Orders. Previous year figures have not been revised for new reporting areas.
 14 Calculated by the California Department of Food and Agriculture, and published in the "California Dairy Information Bulletin".
 Prepared by: Midwest Market Administrator's Office. Last updated on: December 21, 2009.

New York, monthly dairy costs of production per hundredweight (cwt) of milk sold, 2009 (dollars per cwt)

Item ¹	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Operating costs:												
Total feed costs	11.91	11.25	11.12	11.03	10.85	11.38	10.70	10.61	10.25	10.43	10.41	10.21
Purchased feed	6.32	5.96	5.84	5.92	5.86	6.54	6.05	6.11	5.74	5.89	5.86	5.73
Homegrown harvested feed	5.50	5.21	5.19	5.02	4.91	4.76	4.58	4.42	4.43	4.46	4.48	4.40
Grazed feed	0.09	0.09	0.09	0.09	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.07	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.07
Veterinary and medicine	1.00	0.98	0.98	0.96	0.91	0.96	0.96	0.98	1.00	1.01	1.00	0.99
Bedding and litter	0.52	0.50	0.50	0.49	0.47	0.48	0.49	0.50	0.51	0.51	0.51	0.50
Marketing	0.28	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.25	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28
Custom services	0.56	0.55	0.55	0.54	0.51	0.53	0.54	0.55	0.56	0.57	0.56	0.56
Fuel, lube, and electricity	0.90	0.88	0.88	0.86	0.85	0.87	0.76	0.82	0.84	0.88	0.92	0.91
Repairs	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Other operating costs	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Interest on operating capital	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.13	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.15	0.14	0.14
Total operating costs	16.01	15.25	15.10	14.98	14.60	15.38	14.73	14.77	14.48	14.75	14.74	14.50
Allocated overhead:												
Hired labor	2.25	2.21	2.21	2.16	2.05	2.12	2.11	2.17	2.19	2.28	2.26	2.23
Hired labor cost of unpaid labor	3.61	3.53	3.55	3.46	3.28	3.29	3.38	3.47	3.51	3.66	3.61	3.58
Capital cost of machinery and equipment	4.33	4.34	4.38	4.31	4.09	4.23	4.40	4.52	4.50	4.66	4.61	4.58
Opportunity cost of land (rental rate)	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02
Taxes and Insurance	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.32	0.31	0.32	0.32	0.33	0.33	0.34	0.34	0.33
General farm overhead	0.79	0.77	0.78	0.77	0.73	0.75	0.75	0.77	0.77	0.79	0.79	0.78
Total allocated overhead	11.34	11.20	11.26	11.04	10.47	10.84	10.99	11.28	11.41	11.75	11.63	11.53
Total All costs listed	27.36	26.45	26.37	26.01	25.07	26.22	25.72	26.05	25.88	26.50	26.36	26.03

How can farms survive with these numbers?

¹ Estimates may be adjusted based on revisions in monthly agricultural price indices and milk production estimates.

Source: Based on USDA's 2005 Agricultural Resource Management Survey of milk producers and updated using current USDA milk production per cow and production input indexes. See <http://www.ers.usda.gov/Data/CostsAndReturns/monthlymilkcosts.htm> for methodology.

2009 Mailbox Milk Prices For Selected Reporting Areas in Federal Milk Orders & California¹

Reporting Area ²	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	Average ³
New England States ⁴	\$14.95	\$12.46	\$12.25	\$12.66	\$12.65	\$12.27	\$12.22	\$12.57	\$13.45	\$14.84	\$15.90	\$17.06	\$13.59
New York	\$13.94	\$11.72	\$11.52	\$11.93	\$11.96	\$11.61	\$11.47	\$11.81	\$12.64	\$14.84	\$16.01	\$16.84	\$12.75
Eastern Pennsylvania ⁵	\$14.45	\$11.98	\$11.76	\$12.16	\$12.14	\$11.73	\$11.80	\$12.12	\$12.99	\$14.43	\$15.52	\$16.68	\$13.07
Appalachian States ⁶	\$16.55	\$13.20	\$12.25	\$12.70	\$12.78	\$12.36	\$12.74	\$13.04	\$14.77	\$15.30	\$16.33	\$17.38	\$13.97
Southeast States ⁷	\$17.05	\$13.76	\$12.47	\$13.08	\$13.15	\$12.85	\$13.38	\$13.88	\$14.77	\$16.41	\$17.75	\$18.64	\$14.52
Southern Missouri ⁸	\$14.98	\$11.69	\$10.78	\$11.09	\$10.77	\$10.77	\$11.08	\$11.51	\$12.55	\$14.23	\$15.01	\$15.85	\$12.39
Florida	\$18.39	\$14.97	\$13.61	\$14.34	\$14.70	\$14.07	\$14.81	\$15.37	\$16.20	\$17.76	\$17.86	\$18.64	\$15.79
Western Pennsylvania ⁹	\$14.37	\$11.69	\$11.61	\$12.07	\$11.86	\$11.53	\$11.53	\$11.97	\$12.97	\$14.60	\$15.69	\$16.63	\$13.00
Ohio	\$14.63	\$12.28	\$11.97	\$12.43	\$12.32	\$11.90	\$11.90	\$12.45	\$13.28	\$14.88	\$15.85	\$16.84	\$13.59
Indiana	\$14.66	\$12.00	\$11.34	\$11.76	\$12.00	\$11.37	\$11.51	\$11.90	\$12.81	\$14.57	\$15.34	\$16.35	\$12.94
Michigan	\$13.76	\$11.51	\$11.29	\$11.74	\$11.55	\$11.16	\$11.16	\$11.69	\$12.61	\$14.02	\$15.05	\$16.10	\$12.63
Wisconsin	\$12.94	\$11.24	\$11.87	\$12.17	\$11.40	\$11.24	\$11.15	\$12.25	\$13.30	\$14.54	\$15.69	\$16.61	\$12.63

2009 Mailbox Milk Prices For Selected Reporting Areas in Federal Milk Orders & California 1—Continued

Reporting Area ²	January	February	March	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	Average ³
Minnesota	\$12.77	\$11.82	\$12.27	\$12.26	\$11.49	\$11.26	\$11.27	\$12.57	\$13.48	\$14.83	\$15.77	\$16.58	\$12.90
Iowa	\$13.60	\$11.73	\$11.84	\$12.23	\$11.84	\$11.48	\$11.33	\$12.22	\$13.23	\$14.60	\$15.66	\$16.70	\$13.03
Illinois	\$13.38	\$11.62	\$11.84	\$12.06	\$11.80	\$11.44	\$10.91	\$12.44	\$13.29	\$14.71	\$15.69	\$16.72	\$12.95
Corn Belt States ¹⁰	\$13.61	\$11.33	\$11.43	\$11.62	\$11.33	\$10.96	\$10.82	\$11.69	\$12.52	\$14.12	\$14.99	\$16.01	\$12.52
Western Texas ¹¹	\$12.98	\$10.73	\$10.73	\$11.07	\$10.59	\$10.20	\$10.43	\$11.30	\$12.22	\$13.37	\$14.65	\$15.49	\$11.96
New Mexico	\$12.25	\$10.03	\$9.92	\$10.26	\$9.77	\$9.37	\$9.66	\$10.51	\$11.39	\$12.52	\$13.86	\$14.53	\$11.13
Northwest States ¹²	\$12.75	\$10.66	\$10.95	\$11.29	\$10.87	\$10.55	\$10.57	\$11.17	\$12.17	\$13.52	\$14.84	\$16.00	\$12.10
All Federal Order Areas ¹³	\$13.77	\$11.61	\$11.60	\$11.96	\$11.61	\$11.27	\$11.30	\$12.04	\$12.98	\$14.29	\$15.37	\$16.37	\$12.82
California ¹⁴	\$10.57	\$9.80	\$9.92	\$9.88	\$9.70	\$9.63	\$9.60	\$10.51	\$11.20	\$12.30	\$13.78	\$15.33	\$11.02

Notes:

¹ Net pay price received by dairy farmers for milk. Includes all payments received for milk sold and all costs associated with marketing the milk. Price is a weighted average for the reporting area and is reported at the average butterfat test. Mailbox price does not include Milk Income Loss Contract (MILC) payments. Mailbox price does include, for the most part, the assessment under the Cooperatives Working Together (CWT) program.

² Information is shown for those areas for which prices are reported for at least 75% of the milk marketed under Federal Milk Orders. The price shown is the weighted average of the prices reported for all Orders that received milk from the area.

³ Figures are annual averages—the weighted average of the monthly figures, except California, which is the simple average.

⁴ Includes Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, and Vermont.

⁵ All the counties to the east of those listed in n. 9.

⁶ Includes Kentucky, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia.

⁷ Includes Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Louisiana, and Mississippi.

⁸ All counties of Vernon, Cedar, Polk, Dallas, Laclede, Texas, Dent, Crawford, Washington, St. Francois, and Perry and all those to the south of these.

⁹ The counties of Warren, Elk, Clearfield, Indiana, Westmoreland, and Fayette, and all those to the west of these.

¹⁰ Includes Kansas, Nebraska and the Missouri counties to the north of those listed in n. 8.

¹¹ All counties to the west of Fannin, Hunt, Van Zandt, Henderson, Houston, Cherokee, Nacogdoches, and Shelby.

¹² Includes Oregon and Washington.

¹³ Weighted average of the information for all selected reporting areas in Federal Milk Orders.

¹⁴ Calculated by the California Department of Food and Agriculture, and published in "California Dairy Information Bulletin".

January 30, 2010

Washington, D.C.—The National Family Farm Coalition (NFFC) today expressed its concern over the American Farm Bureau Federation's (AFBF) rejection of supply management for the dairy industry at the recent AFBF annual meeting in Seattle, Washington. In an article printed January 20, 2010 in the *Wisconsin State Farmer*, Bill Bruins a Waupun, Wisconsin, dairy farmer and President of Wisconsin Farm Bureau, said that the national discussion mirrored the policy discussion Wisconsin Farm Bureau had last month.

Mr. Bruins made a lot of assumptions for himself on behalf of the AFBF that may or may not be in sync with the majority of dairy farmers in Wisconsin or the United States. He does talk of consensus of farmers at the recent AFBF annual meeting in Seattle, Washington. The American Farm Bureau Federation has never been a leader in dairy policy because their membership does not represent a majority of dairy farmers. However a majority of AFBF dairy members are suffering financially today from the current dairy policy that Mr. Bruins endorses. The leadership appears to be boasting dairy policy based on past AFBF total agriculture policy and how it fits the mold.

Dairy farmer Gerald Carlin from Meshoppen, Pennsylvania said "According to Bill Bruins the consensus of Farm Bureau is in opposition to supply management. I wonder how many convention goers were swayed by bad information and fear-mongering over supply management stifling farmer's ability to compete in a free market. I am sure many who support supply management were intimidated by so called experts whose goal was to make support of supply management look foolish and uninformed."

The fear that southern farmers reportedly had that supply management may prohibit them from ever producing enough milk to meet the needs of the region seems quite ironic since milk production in the South has been in steep decline under the so-called free market system. Supply management with a cost of production would have allowed them to hold their own and they would not be in the shape that they are in now.

Mr. Bruin talks about several groups including the Holstein Association pushing for programs that would help the industry avoid a severe downturn in dairy prices like we experienced in 2009, which created huge losses for dairy farmers. We need to applaud him for his analogy. But he falls short on solutions, when he points out the down turn in prices due to losing 50 percent of our export market. He fails to identify that we cannot rely on the export markets to sustain a dairy industry in the United States and what we have is broken and it is imperative that we have a new pricing mechanism.

Loren Lopes, dairy farmer, Turlock, California and member of the NFFC Dairy Subcommittee said, "What we need is stability above the cost of production for a long period of time to get back on track. At the Wisconsin convention they had a discussion on the delegate floor that concluded controlling supply was not going to help them. I have to agree somewhat with them because I saw it in California. Without changing the price discovery, without addressing the make allowance, without addressing imports of Milk Protein Concentrates (MPC) and balancing imports and exports, and then finally national supply management, the prices will continue below the cost of production. The Federal Milk Marketing Improvement Act of 2009 (S. 1645) addresses all of this. We are entitled to a domestic price for the milk that goes to market every day and not be affected by exports or imports as we are now. The New Price Discovery must be based on the national average cost of production and Return on Investment, according to USDA/ERS."

Bruins made no indication that Farm Bureau is concerned about corruption in the current system costing farmers billions of dollars in lost income. Nor does Farm Bureau seem to be concerned about the fact that the dairy industry beyond the farm level has made inappropriate profits at the farmer's expense. Even so, declining demand, real or contrived, is always blamed on farmers getting paid too much for milk.

Mr. Bruin revealed the agenda of the AFBF leadership. Farm Bureau believes that deregulating the industry and opening new markets are what the industry needs. "We are in competition with the world." Bruins said. This is the same policy as International Dairy Foods Association (IDFA) and National Milk Producers Federation (NMPF). Deregulation would be the means to the end for the independent family dairy farm.

AFBF has long been a strong backer of free trade policies which have continually put downward pressure on farm gate prices as we compete with the rest of the world in the race to the bottom. AFBF supports the use of Milk Protein Concentrate

(MPC). Imported MPC would continue to “run our supply cup over,” and, if ever a subsidized domestic MPC industry is established, as AFBF has advocated, it would mean MPC users would simply have the cheapest source of MPC, whether imported or domestic, and all dairy farmers would be forced to take bottom dollars for this untested, undefined, unapproved and possibly unsafe manufactured powdered ingredient!

Mr. Bruins said there was nearly an hour of debate about dairy at the AFBF convention. He said the delegation eventually passed a resolution to make national dairy policy a priority issue.

A member of Farm Bureau that wishes to remain anonymous, asked, “How many of the delegates who determine final dairy policy are ‘actually dairy farmers?’ Whose ‘voices’ are really being spoken for by AFBF?” The member went on to say, “Bill Bruin, Wisconsin Farm Bureau’s nominee to the new National Dairy Industry Advisory Committee complained that Farm Bureau was ‘snubbed’ by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and that a lack of appointees from the American Farm Bureau Federation and National Milk Producers Federation (NMPF) and the United States Dairy Export Council ‘alienated’ the mainstream dairy industry. Perhaps part of the reason Mr. Bruin and others were ‘snubbed’ or ‘alienated’ is, after years of claiming they are the ‘voices’ who speak for farmers, our rapidly disappearing dairy farmers continue to experience the worst financial dairy collapse ever!”

National Family Farm Coalition has long advocated national food sovereignty without restraints of or from the World Trade Organization (WTO). Cost of Production for farmers, strategic food reserves, and sensible supply management, many of these objectives would be carried out in dairy by the passage of the Federal Milk Marketing Improvement Act of 2009 (S. 1645).

ATTACHMENT 6

Feb. 4. 2010

Hon. THOMAS “TOM” J. VILSACK,
Secretary,
U.S. Department of Agriculture,
Washington, D.C.

February (TBD), 2010

Dear Secretary Vilsack,

The present low milk prices are destroying dairy farmers. We urge you to use your authority to establish an emergency floor price to immediately raise farmer milk prices to cost of production.

Dairy Development Manifesto:

Dairy farming is too important to just leave to market forces. Its multifunctional character connects dairy to many non-economic concerns of society. The labor intensity of milk production provides for a strong employment impact. The intensive care needed for dairy animals favors family and smallholder farmers. Dairy farming has a high potential for poverty reduction in rural areas. Many synergies exist through the integration of cattle husbandry and crop farming for the benefit of agro-ecology. Pasture-based dairy production has a high potential for carbon sequestering. Milk is a valuable protein-rich food which is able to improve poor people’s diets enormously and allow them to live in dignity.

We note that dairy development has been damaged in most developing countries by liberalization policies and national governments’ neglect. Also, in developing countries the deregulation of milk markets has destructive effects on their dairy farmers and for the international trade of milk products.

Smallholder dairy farmers and their access to markets should be high in the agendas of national development policies. Governments should recognize, support, and protect the vital role of milk production, processing, and distribution.

International flows of distorted trade in milk contradict the logic of optimal allocation. The biggest exporters are the high cost producers of developed countries, while many developing countries, who are most in need of dairy development and where their farmers are among low cost producers, suffer under the cut throat competition of import surges. Trade with dairy products has to become fair and conducive to the U.N. Millennium Development Goals. We need to reform trade and agricultural policies to achieve food sovereignty, eradicate hunger, combat climate change, and protect the environment.

Organizations of dairy farmers and other stakeholders from around the world are appealing to the leaders of the developed countries to use the opportunity of their

debates on farming policy reform to include the following aspects into revision of their policies concerning dairy:

- Stop any form of exporting dairy product into foreign markets that undercuts local farmer prices.
- Avoid harm to dairy farmers in developing countries. This responsibility has to go even beyond the present trade rules. It should be done by a sustainability impact assessment of dairy trade flows and trade agreements.
- Do not get in the way of developing countries that choose to defend their infant dairy economies against outside competition.
- Support national dairy development programs.

Endorsers of this manifesto include:

American Raw Milk Producers Pricing Association (USA)

Family Farm Defenders (USA)

National Family Farm Coalition (USA)

ATTACHMENT 7

May 6, 2010

BRANDON WILLIS,
Deputy Adm. Farm Programs,
U.S. Department of Agriculture,
Washington, D.C.

Brandon:

Thank you for your letter of April 30th regarding Farm Gate Milk Prices.

Agreed lots of cows have been added except for New York and Minnesota.

Everyone who still has credit is trying to fill last year's void without consideration of price and cost of production. I think we could raise the support price to \$1.65 and pay only the amount of 2009 lbs of production. At least 20% or more of our third, fourth, and fifth generation farms will die without proper payment.

USDA is aiding in the self destruction of the dairy industry as we knew it in the 20th Century.

The big farm virus model dairy complex is destroying rural America. With over production and environmental issues, the blood of this new crop of failed farms (economically strangled) by current policy will stain the hands of USDA and the Congress for a long, long time.

Section 608C states that milk price shall be determined by food cost and other economic conditions. Well taxes, insurance and energy are for sure other economic factors!

Six years ago I could buy farm diesel for 69.9¢ in August of 2004. Now it is \$3.00 or more. These farms have improved efficiency to no avail and can no longer survive in this environment. Feed, machinery, and dairy supply businesses supported by the small farm community are also victims of this self destruction going on in this industry.

ERS calculates the cost in New York at \$26.15/CWT minus \$3.00 of unpaid labor leaving a cast cost of \$23.00/CWT and a pay price of \$15.00 does not hack it.

Painfully Yours,

KEN DIBBELL.

ATTACHMENT 8

April 13, 2010

To: All Members of Congress

Immediate Emergency Action Must Be Taken To Prevent A Complete Meltdown On The Majority Of Us Dairy Farms

(1.) Either Congress or USDA Must Immediately Raise The Support Price on All Manufactured Dairy Products to a Level of at Least \$18.00 Per cwt; or

(2.) Either Congress or USDA Must Place a Floor Price of at Least \$18.00 to \$20.00 per cwt Under All Classes of Milk Used for Manufacturing Purposes. The Existing Class I Differentials Must Be Added to the Floor Price To Determine the Value of Class I Milk.

ATTACHMENT 9

April 27, 2010

Dear Leaders:

President Obama, Blanche Lincoln (Chair), Patrick Leahy (Member Senate Ag. Committee), Secretary Vilsack USDA, Collin Peterson (Chair), Tim Holden (Vice Chair) House Ag. Committee.

This Nations Dairy Farm Community is about to finish the sixteenth month of Farm Gate milk price at $\frac{2}{3}$ or less of cost as published by Economic Research Service (ERS), while a.m.S continues to administer a failed, flawed and manipulated Farm Gate milk price, based on less than 2% of dairy traded on the CME.

Now we are faced with the TPP which will put another nail in the coffin of American dairy farmers. Our consumers do not want any of their dairy products coming from the Pacific Rim. They want their farmers to be paid a living wage.

We have been tip toeing around this crisis and ignoring the impact on the farms and the rural economy supported by dairy dollars for too long! Let's remember that Dairy America forward contracted our milk powder at 80¢ per pound when the domestic price was \$2.50 per pound and world price was \$2.40. Outrageous!

It is time for you "Leaders" to step up to the plate and face reality. Raise the support price, immediately and give those farms near collapse a chance to survive until we can fix this issue once and for all.

I have reviewed the testimony of the DIAC. I see nothing there but more maneuvering on behalf of corporate and cooperative milk. Insurance is out of the question in practical terms, just more jobs to administer. If we would just price the milk on cost of production, as outlined in SEN Bill 1645 with a production control feature, problem solved!

Corporate Milk has to back off the record profit train. Anti-Trust and monopoly issues are killing American dairy farms and abusing consumers.

Looks like a clean cut case of discrimination cost *vs.* pay price.

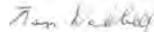
It is not necessary to open the farm bill to fix this crisis.

Some competent and responsible decisions made by you people need to take place on the farms that fed this nation during the 20th century and doomed to fail due to Congress failing to recognize how very serious this crisis is and to do something.

Move Senate Bill 1645 Now!

Do It Now!

Sincerely,



KEN DIBBELL.

ATTACHMENT 10

August 27, 2010

Unbelievable!

It amazes me that Washington has stonewalled the Farm Gate pricing of milk for Twenty consecutive months now, on the other hand should we expect a competent and rational decision on this issue. Has common sense left Washington, D.C. completely? It would certainly seem so.

Hiding behind the fact that we would have to open up the entire farm bill to address this issue is outrageous, again demonstrating the lack of rational decision making from Government. When something is broken, you fix it; not ignore it assuming it will fix itself. Yes, the price has risen but it still has not reached the cost of producing it.

These farms operated all of 2009 at about a \$10 loss per cut. We are still well below cost at \$18/CWT. This problem could have been addressed back at the beginning with a floor price set by the Secretary.

Over production would not have been an issue if payment had been limited to 2009 production.

I challenge government through USDA to do the right thing and generate a pay-price equal to better than the cost of production published by ERS.

This would make a lot of farms taxpaying enterprises and would certainly stimulate the local economy that operates on dairy dollars.

For a lot of years I thought government of the people, by the people and for the people was responsible for protecting the people. Family Farmers are people.

The present situation reeks of treason by the sovereign against its people.

The days of cheap food are over my friends and if not it will be soon.

If we don't start collecting Social Security payments on all those imports from China that system is doomed to fail and we will have obtained Third World Status.

God Bless America.

KEN DIBBELL.

Friday, April 09, 2010

***Dairy groups push legislation
Written By Michelle Monroe
Congress to take up crucial discussions***

ST. ALBANS—As dairy farmers remain stuck in a second year of low prices, grassroots farm organizations have increased pressure on Congress for action to save struggling farms.

Locally, Dairy Farmers Working Together (DFWT) has posted draft legislation (at www.dfwt.org) that will be sponsored by Rep. Jim Costa, D-Cal., in the U.S. House.

The proposed legislation is a formalized version of the now familiar dairy price stabilization plan, previously referred to as the Holstein plan.

However, representatives from another grassroots group, the Progressive Agriculture Organization (PRO AG), will be traveling to Washington next week to speak with legislators about a different bill, the Federal Milk Marketing Order Modernization Act of 2009, commonly referred to as the Specter-Casey bill, which has been introduced in the Senate.

The Specter-Casey bill would eliminate Class III and IV milk prices, leaving just two classes: milk for drinking, Class I, and milk for manufacturing, Class II. The price for Class II would be the average cost of production for milk across the United States, as determined by the USDA. The Class I price would be determined by adding the Class I differential to the Class II price. Prices would be adjusted quarterly.

The existing Milk Orders would remain as they are, but the Class II price would become uniform across the country.

The Class I differential vary by region. Generally the areas with lower costs of production such as California and the Upper Midwest have lower Class I differentials and lower Class I utilization. Conversely, areas that have higher costs of production such as the Northeast and the Southeast also tend to have higher differentials and higher Class I utilization.

Thus, farmers in areas with lower costs of production would receive a lower blend price for their milk than farmers in higher cost areas. In the Northeast, for example, roughly 45 percent of the milk produced has traditionally been Class I, so 55 percent of the price received by farmers would be based on the lower price and 45 percent on the higher price.

In the Upper Midwest, less than 20 percent of the milk has traditionally been used for drinking. Their price would be based almost entirely on the lower Class II price.

"Farmers want to be paid what it costs them to produce their milk, no more and no less," said Floyd Hall, a retired dairy farmer from Lefargeville, N.Y., who supports the bill.

"We're losing so many farmers," Arden Tewksbury, a leader of PRO AG from Pennsylvania told the *Messenger*. "Not only do we lose farmers, we lose infrastructure and rural America"

The bill contains a supply management component. When there is an excess supply of milk, the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture is empowered to reduce payments to farmers on up to five percent of their production to ½ of the Class II price. If the oversupply continues, the Secretary could reduce payments to farmers on any production over their previous year. There is an appeals process for farmers whose previous production was unusually low the previous year because of disease or natural disaster.

The money saved on the reduced price would be given to the USDA to purchase milk products through the Commodity Credit Corporation. Those products are then distributed to needy families and children through school lunch programs and food banks.

No price reductions could be made if imports of dairy products from other countries into the United States exceeded exports.

The bill also eliminates the make allowance, a payment farmers make to cheese, yogurt and other manufacturers to support those businesses. Supporters of the make allowance argue that because of the seasonal nature of the milk supply—it is greater at some times of the year than others—farmers should help to maintain adequate manufacturing capacity to deal with the excess during those times when the market is flush with milk.

Staff for Sen. Bernie Sanders, I-Vt., told the *Messenger* he strongly supports the bill. Sen. Patrick Leahy, D-Vt., has not taken a position on the bill, and a version has not yet been introduced in the House.

Asked why DFWT has not supported the Specter-Casey bill, DFWT president Amanda St. Pierre replied via e-mail, "We are very supportive of the individual ele-

ments in the Specter Bill and early on in the process we vetted that plan to our folks and others around D.C. and the industry. Unfortunately, we kept hearing the same thing—that it would not get out of the starting gate because it was trying to tackle too much at the same time.”

St. Pierre said she felt portions of the bill could be accomplished in stages.

Hall challenged the idea that the dairy industry will be able to get changes to the pricing system, supply management and other improvements to the industry one piece at a time. Instead, he said, any bill the industry puts forth needs to address all of the needed changes, because once a bill is passed legislators will take the attitude that they’ve already addressed the problem.

In the past year, PRO AG has met with nearly 2,000 farmers in New York, Pennsylvania and Iowa, according to Tewksbury. The farmers they’ve spoken with almost always support the bill.

“We’re not going to get it passed if we don’t throw our weight behind it,” Tewksbury said.

“The co-ops don’t like it at all,” Tewksbury said.

“You’re fighting IDFA (International Dairy Foods Association) and National Milk and all these people who don’t milk cows,” said Hall, who joined the chorus against the National Milk proposals for replacing price supports and the Milk Income Loss Contract with insurance.

Dairy Farmers of America (DFA) spokesperson Kristi Bell told the *Messenger* via e-mail that DFA does not believe the bill “will fully address our problems.”

“Any future policy must incorporate a growth management plan that is reactive to market conditions,” Bell wrote, suggesting the bill might lead to an increase in imports. “Further, the Specter-Casey Bill guarantees that the Federal milk price will never fall below the cost of production, but fails to acknowledge that production costs vary greatly across the United States,” Bell wrote.

The cost of production as determined by the USDA varies, but not very much. USDA’s January 2010 cost of production figures for 23 dairy states show 13 states having a cost of production between \$19 and \$25. Another four have costs between \$25 and \$27. Only one has a cost of production below \$19.

The full text of the bill appears on the PRO AG website (<http://proagorg.webs.com>).

COMMENT OF BABETTE DICKERSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:26 a.m.

City, State: Los Angeles, CA

Occupation: Graduate Student

Comment: Our food is important to our existence, literally. Our citizens are dying of cancer because of the processed, laboratory-produced, artificial, non-food they eat. Stop selling this carcinogenic non-food. Make more local, organic, sustainable, bio-dynamic, fresh food. That’s the only way to feed our nation. Large factory farms kill our citizens.

COMMENT OF SARA DICKERSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:14 a.m.

City, State: Sarasota, FL

Occupation: Website Administrator

Comment: We must change our subsidies to agriculture to encourage and support sustainable organic farms instead of large corporate agriculture. The health of our population and the future of our country depend on it. Our national focus needs to move to healthy food for our children. There is nothing more important to any nation than the health and education of its children.

COMMENT OF NANCY DICKINSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:08 p.m.

City, State: University City, MO

Occupation: Retired

Comment: It is time for reform. The large farm corporations do not need hand-outs from the government. Small farmers and organic farmers are the ones who need support. We need better supervision of the pesticides used and the impact on the water supply. The best agricultural practices need to be used, not the cheapest and probably most harmful to the land and water. We did not get recalls of our produce in the past as we are having been getting in recent years. The same crop

year after year wears out the land so crops need to be rotated. The people who harvest crops need to be paid decent wages.

COMMENT OF MARIA DICKMANN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:47 p.m.

City, State: Davenport, IA

Occupation: Nanny

Comment: We need to stop the overproduction of corn, it is unhealthy for humans to eat so much processed corn. It's causing health care costs to skyrocket so any savings for the consumer to buy cheap processed corn foods is really a cost in the long run.

COMMENT OF SUSAN DIDRICHSEN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:14 a.m.

City, State: New York, NY

Occupation: Professional Musician

Comment: Please understand that more and more Americans are aware of the unbelievably corrupt power of Monsanto and its power over our choices in not only the country but the world. We want organic produce, we want fairness, we want real farmers with access to their own seeds. Do the right thing!

COMMENT OF CATHY M. DIEHL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 11:29 a.m.

City, State: Winter Park, FL

Occupation: Retired/Disabled

Comment: I help out at a food pantry every week and find more very young mother with children and older seniors in such need that it breaks my heart. I'm also one of them. I am raising two of my grandchildren that the state placed into my home. I'm on disability and only \$100 in food stamps. How can any family eat what they should when more than ¾ is to pay living expenses? How are the children to grow up and study when there isn't enough food on the table? How is a senior to live when they don't eat so they can pay the electric bill? PLEASE don't vote to cut any more than what has already TAKEN from the people that need it the most.

CATHY M. DIEHL, Disabled Grandmother Raising Grandchildren this is who I am. And there are so many more doing the same thing I am. **Please Let Us Eat!**

COMMENT OF MARK DIGIACOMO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:08 p.m.

City, State: Lebanon, PA

Occupation: Golf Professional

Comment: I think the road we are on in terms of agricultural practices in this country is the wrong road. I think our reliance on chemicals and genetically modified seeds to produce food is an unsustainable practice. I also feel we are damaging our health as a nation by consuming food grown on poor soils that is lacking in nutrients but full of chemical residues from pesticides. I think organic farming should be supported because as more people learn about the food they are eating the more demand there will be for organic options. The current system is unsustainable for so many reasons. We shouldn't leave our food supply in the hands of a few major agribusinesses, but promote smaller, more sustainable, farming practices that protect the quality of the food we eat as well as the environment in which we live.

COMMENT OF JERRY DILLARD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:38 p.m.

City, State: Bend, OR

Occupation: Consultant; Environmental Technologies Assoc. LLC

Comment: We are eating ourselves out of existence . . .

We are polluting our ground water, air, Oceans & filling our atmosphere with reactive nitrogen, that last 126 years & is 310 worse on the environment than Carbon dioxide . . . Nitrous oxide is creating our

Ocean Dead Zones, now over 475 different locations around the world . . . all this result from the over use of NPK fertilizers . . .

Since 1985 Agribusiness has promoted and doubled the use of pesticides, herbicides and yes NPK fertilizers . . .

All In the name of “we need more food,” false, we can make more money is the truth of the motivation, otherwise Nutrition & reduction of environmental impacts would be the focus . . . thus once again the opposite direction of our founding integrity . . .

We need to grow food with Nutrition that the process does not damage the mineral resource in our soil by destroying the microorganisms, increasing the Agriculture demand for water, which in the USA is now 80% of our available water . . . This is caused by the negative impact of NPK fertilizers on our soil, due to this over use, salinity in soil leads to compaction and the demand for more water . . . NPK is like a drug . . . every year you have to use more . . . to get the same high yield for the farmer . . . as a result our Nutrition & Environment is suffering . . . plus the food grown for livestock is without adequate nutrition.

By replacing the mineral loss in our soil, Nature has provided a way we can easily overcome every negative of Agriculture . . .

But because minerals cannot be patented there is no financial support for something so simple and so right . . . visit www.us-rem.com if you would like to increase your awareness & see the result of others using Excelerite Minerals, 100% from Nature . . .

This continued non action on the part of the government is destroying the health of soil that leads to the health of individuals . . .

Big Pharma does not care, more disease just means a bigger demand drugs, Big Oil does not care since they use more Oil, since our food source is made to be dependent on Oil, coal & Natural gas . . . all of which can be converted into NPK fertilizers . . . Look what is being allowed to continue, in the name of “we need jobs” . . .

Declining Nutrition in our Food, as a result of this lack of Fiduciary Responsibility on the part of our Government . . . Not only has this lowered individual energy, due to the lack of minerals in our body’s, most know this is a contrived manipulation for the continued dumbing down of America & control by the Big 5 . . . We now have more people obese & overweight than the entire population of the country I was born into in 1945?

Freedom means more than religion & speech . . .

It also means Free Seed for farmers, the right to safe air to breathe, nutritional water & food. The continued removal of minerals from our drinking Water & Food will be the decline of the most Powerful, Intelligent & Democratic society in the world . . .

We are now doing most everything the opposite of what this country was founded on . . .

We has become Me, the Big 5 . . . citizens are expendable.

I urge you . . .

Support the “We once again” and let go of this Special Interest Corp. “Me society,” we have become that is now running our Government . . . Result is, Countries thru out the world find our society lacking in our previous values of “Compassion and Empathy,” for ourselves & others around the world . . . today Everything is judged, the highest good for all concerned is no longer a value.

The least you can do . . . show Compassion for the people in the USA asking for Nutrition in our Drinking water & food once again without ongoing pollution to our environment . . .

Please Support Nutrition once again and the reduction of the pollution to our environments caused by Agribusiness & NPK fertilizers.

Thank you if you have read this far . . .

JERRY.

COMMENT OF CHRISTOPHER DILLEY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:18 p.m.

City, State: Kalamazoo, MI

Occupation: Retail Grocery Manager

Comment: I am writing in support of much stronger sustainability and small scale, local farming supports than are currently proposed in the draft farm bill.

I manage a growing and thriving natural foods store in Kalamazoo, Michigan, and we are very much dependent on strong legislative support for local farmers (especially young and beginning farmers), local food production, environmental conservation, and organics. Due to that, I am writing to advocate for the following in the upcoming farm bill:

- (1) The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- (2) Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- (3) The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- (4) Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Thank you very much for your consideration!
Yours,

CHRIS DILLEY, *General Manager*,
People's Food Co-op of Kalamazoo.

COMMENT OF ELIZABETH DILLON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:07 p.m.

City, State: Seattle, WA

Occupation: Gardener/Beginning Farmer

Comment: As a beginning farmer myself, I'm very concerned about the proposed cut in funding Beginning Farmer programs will receive should this bill pass. Having not grown up in a farming family, I've had to invest time and money learning how to farm and I've taken advantage of State and Federal programs aimed at encouraging new young farmers into agriculture. Without these programs, I would not be in the position I am today to enter the agricultural industry and help our aging farmer population transition, keeping agricultural lands productive. And not only that, it's very difficult to find lenders willing to provide loans to beginning farmers so that they may purchase land to actually start farming. Therefore, I strongly encourage the members of the House Committee on Agriculture to rethink their positions and leave the Beginning Farmer programs budget alone. Surely we could take more cuts from subsidies/direct payments/crop insurance—especially since big agricultural farms turning huge profits should be able to stand on their own feet without getting taxpayer money in their back pockets. Small farmers are the ones who need the most help and are mostly ignored by helpful policies and increased budgetary spending. It's time the small (*i.e.*, less than \$250,000 earnings/year), family-owned and young farmer-started farms reap some of the rewards. Thank you for your time.

COMMENT OF SHERRY DILLON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:54 a.m.

City, State: Mardela Springs, MD

Occupation: Animal Rescue

Comment: As a vegan I'm very concerned about where my food comes from. We need protection for organic and family farmers. With factory farming things have gone out of control on the quality and safety of our food supply.

COMMENT OF ALEXANDRA DILWORTH

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 11:25 a.m.

City, State: Ashland, OR

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Forestry, Poultry/poultry products

Size: 50–150 acres

Comment: **Insure The Survival Of Small Family Farms, Ranches And Woodlands. Safeguard Survival Through By Not Allowing Monsanto And Other Giant Corporations To Control Crop Seed Ownership & Production!**
Please support:

- the full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully fund conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- Insist on implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

COMMENT OF JUDITH DiNARDO

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 12, 2012, 5:19 p.m.

City, State: Stow, OH

Occupation: Tax Return Preparer

Comment: May is Older Americans Month, so it's a good time to raise your awareness and fight senior hunger. I want SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP protected. Please protect and strengthen programs that put food on the table for Ohio's hungry seniors and other Americans!

Feeding America's *Hunger in America 2010* study unearthed some startling facts about senior hunger that you should know:

- In 2010, 7.9 percent of households with seniors (2.3 million households) were at risk; 30 percent of client households with seniors indicated that they have had to choose between food and medical care and 35 percent have had to choose between food and paying for heat/utilities;
- In 2009, nearly 9 million people over the age of 50 and nearly 4 million people over the age of 60 lived in at-risk households.

We must ensure hunger-relief programs remain protected so that seniors who worked their entire lives continue to have access to these vital programs. Protect SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP.

COMMENT OF SUSAN DiPUMA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:18 p.m.

City, State: Duluth, GA

Comment: Cutting food stamp programs to increase the bottom lines of giant commodity farmers and insurance companies is not reform! The American people need and deserve true reform that leads to sustainable agriculture and our land, water, and small family farms. Please stand up for the people, and not giant corporations.

COMMENT OF BORIS DIRNBACH

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 9:09 a.m.

City, State: Philadelphia, PA

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: I support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

I don't support a program steals food from the mouths of the hungry to create a "\$33 billion new entitlement program that guarantees the income of profitable farm businesses. That's on top of \$90 billion in subsidies for crop and revenue insurance policies."

JOINT COMMENT OF ANN AND WALT DISNEY

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 6:42 p.m.

City, State: Virginia Beach, VA

Occupation: Government Worker

Comment: Please do everything you can to see that farmers can produce crops they can sell locally without being terrorized or put out of business. Also see that they get government support just as the big corporate farmers are getting. This is America . . . where everyone has a chance. As you know, Monsanto and people like Bill Gates with a huge amount of wealth are causing many small farmers to sell their farms. These people who are like you and I are being destroyed by the influence and agitation of huge corporations with destructive power. Do not stop supporting the small farmer. Do everything you can to support them. And do what you can to stop the illegal, abusive human tactics, chemical abuses to our air, water, farms, animals, produce, and fish. Pay day is someday . . . if you as legislators do not fight for what is right, you who are representing the citizens of this great country might see it all go down the drain as big business wants and is paying big bucks

for. However, each person, in the end is responsible for their own doings and each person will either suffer grave consequences for the evil they perpetrated or rejoice in doing what he could to be honest, fair, and loving in each of his speech and actions. Each person will either go to be with God, who created each one of us, or go to be with the adversary Satan . . . And we shall see him coming in the clouds . . . Revelations

Make sure you stop all genetically altered seeds and foods because eating altered produce and foods are dangerous and disease causing for the senators and representatives too. Please allow things to be produced naturally without pasteurization and homogenization and stop the feeding of animals and farm raised fish to be fed corn, antibiotics, hormones. They are to eat the food they were designed to eat. Therefore, enact:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

COMMENT OF ROSEANN DIVICINO

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:29 a.m.

City, State: Port Richey, FL

Occupation: Caterer

Comment: I fully support organic and sustainable agriculture. The labeling of all GMO products needs to also be addressed. Stop siding with the Agri-Giants such as Monsanto *etc.* Their policies are destroying the water, land, organics and even the bees. Stop whoring for cash and protect the people.

COMMENT OF MEGHAN DIXON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:14 p.m.

City, State: Green Ridge, MO

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Field Crops

Size: 151–300 acres

Comment: “Food is medicine.” “You are what you eat.” Americans are beginning to realize the truth in these sayings. Genetically modified foods and produce sprayed with chemicals are not part of a “healthy” diet nor is it what’s good for our planet or our children. It seems to be making our population and our soil sick. If you can’t find a ladybug nor an earthworm in the ground where the food is being raised you may reconsider whether or not this food is healthy. If it takes loads of antibiotics to keep the chicken or hog alive until it makes it to the processing plant you may reconsider whether or not that hog or chicken was really healthy.

If you really care about what is best for Americans, please stand up for America and not the Big Money of AgriBusiness. Please make room in the farm bill for continuing to improve the opportunities for Americans to farm organically for the health of our planet and our people. Our lives depend on it.

Regards,

MEGHAN DIXON.

COMMENT OF TAMI DJERNES

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:47 p.m.

City, State: Nampa, ID

Occupation: Registered Nurse/Food Coach

Comment: I would like to stop the subsidies that help animal food industries—especially those involved in factory farming. We need to stop giving money to industries that damage the environment, worsen our health, and cause animals to suffer. I am in favor of helping small farmers that grow plant foods for people—and especially those that are organic and non-GMO. Food stamp programs should only pay for healthy foods such as whole grains, legumes, vegetables, fruits, nuts, and seeds. When food stamps are used to buy processed foods that are high in saturated fats, cholesterol, and sugars, this only worsens obesity and leads to more diabetes and cardiovascular disease. We need to stop subsidizing the foods that contribute to

America's health crisis and start promoting sustainable agriculture and a greater emphasis on unprocessed plant-based foods.

COMMENT OF MELBA DLUGONSKI

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 3:14 p.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Botanist

Comment: Don't let BigAg make the rules. Transparency. Right to know what's in food. Level the playing field for small, local producers. Don't privatize inspection services, or any function that leads to corruption. Reduce use of toxics in agriculture. Run every decision by the obligation to be good for the Earth and its inhabitants, not by the current profit-first yardstick. People have a right to informed choice.

COMMENT OF MICHAEL DOBBS

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 10:20 a.m.

City, State: Austin, TX

Occupation: Government

Comment: Farmers feed both our country and the entire world. The best examples of farmers are those that grow for their local communities since the community can actually see their efforts. I recommend the full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).

We need to prevent the degradation of our soils and plant life and prevent any kind of 1930s Dust Bowl-like environmental event. Please fully fund all conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.

We need to help develop the future of farming and ranching industries via the implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).

Everyone deserves to have access to products grown in a manner that is sustaining to the environment and their communities. Please maintain the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Thank you for your time and please consider these important programs when developing any bills. Think about both the present and the future of this country.

COMMENT OF JOAN DOBKIN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 4:58 p.m.

City, State: Milwaukee, WI

Occupation: Artist

Comment: I want small farmers to have a fair shake. I want to see organic farming supported. I want companies like Monsanto that pollute and destroy our absolutely essential bee colonies to fess up pay fines and stop using these harmful, deadly poisons.

COMMENT OF ANGEL DOBROW

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:01 p.m.

City, State: Northfield, MN

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Other

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: As a local food activist, and farm hand on a 20 organic farm that produces a wide variety of food, sold through numerous venues I feel strongly that our safe food future must include all willing and able to grow real food, non-commodity farming. I was pleasantly surprised to hear yesterday that the Dept of Ag is revising their previously held ideas about nutrition and will start considering portion size *versus* calories when calculating food value. The report I heard said this will lead to conclusions that non-fast food IS cheaper as well as better for you. In addition I support the following actions on the national level:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.

- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Let's agree, you do your job of representing the people of your district, and I will continue to do my job of growing and selling real food.
Thanks so much.

COMMENT OF TINA DOBSEVAGE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:38 p.m.

City, State: New York, NY

Occupation: Physician

Comment: As a physician, mother, daughter, wife and friend, I care about what I and my family and friends eat. We need farm policy that encourages family and organic farming and seed diversity. We need to end corn subsidies and support sustainable agriculture and animal husbandry for the sake of the health of all citizens.

COMMENT OF KIM DOBSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:50 p.m.

City, State: Olympia, WA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Forestry

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Don't let Congress cut \$4 million from organic research funding and cut in half funding to support Beginning Farmers. Organic farming and Sustainable Agriculture are very important to the health of the agricultural land and health of the nation. Don't let Monsanto lobbyists walk all over informed intelligent choices. We know what is right for the health of our children and grandchildren.

COMMENT OF SEAN DOCKERY

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 11:02 a.m.

City, State: Berkeley, CA

Occupation: Cook

Comment: Please change the way we support farmers in America. Current subsidies (especially on corn and soy) hurt farmers and help big corporations such as Cargill and General Mills who don't need our help for their profits!

COMMENT OF SARA DODSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:16 p.m.

City, State: Chester, CT

Occupation: Architect

Comment: Corn is not the answer, nor are corn subsidies. Diversity of food is. Support more small farmers so we can be a more healthy and food independent nation.

COMMENT OF LAURA DOELL

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 9:22 a.m.

City, State: Townsend, MA

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: Please do what is right for the American citizens by promoting small farms, organic methods, and complete disclosure in labeling what we buy. Please ban GMOs from our food supply.

COMMENT OF AMY DOERING

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:29 p.m.

City, State: Venice, CA

Occupation: Media Producer

Comment: They health and purity of our food, water and air are of the most fundamental human rights. Please allow consumers the voice and process to securing healthy food and agricultural choices. The big companies should no longer dominate and control this process.

Thanks,

AMY DOERING.

COMMENT OF MARY DOINO

Date Submitted: Friday, April 27, 2012, 11:51 p.m.

City, State: Santa Fe, NM

Occupation: Disabled Unemployed

Comment: Hello,

I live in public housing, along with a bunch of poor disabled and elderly people. Recently a food truck has shown up once a week. The elderly residents line up hours before the truck comes for food! They wait all morning and into the afternoon. There have been fights, there have been people taking food for their families it is crazy. These people rarely can afford fresh produce, most of them eat out of cans. Most are very unhealthy.

Previously another do-gooder organization would bring a bag each containing expired eggs, not always though, a few old potatoes and sometimes a bag of commodities beans. The beans usually contained insects. These insects have infested many of the apartments here.

Apparently you people in Congress having never missed a meal in your lives have no clue what goes on in America!

Apparently potatoes rice and white bread are good for the poor, ½ of the food given out at these pantries is rotten! I actually received a box of 3 week old donuts! You probably think the poor should be grateful for such a handout! If one were to eat most of this garbage, they would get Diabetes, which is rampant here!

Some of the senior get meals on wheels, another mess, No Nutritional value, occasionally mixed canned items, no protein, unless you count what is in one slice of cheap cold cut. The often serve rice and potatoes in the same meal, along with a slice of white bread. This is what they are giving seniors, I guess they are trying to kill them quicker. These meals add to the lack of nutrition of the poor! They add to the diabetes and other obesity related issues. The poor are eating the cheap garbage which will ensure that they will have more medical problems. It is disgusting. It is so sad to see elderly disabled people, who as I write this are waiting for the food truck! These people have to lose any shred of dignity, stand in line and fight over the food that may or may not be delivered!

I have a spinal cord injury so I can't really wait in line, for an indefinite amount of time. I also do not like taking their handouts when some of these people need it so desperately they are willing to fight!

I saw on the Internet that they are trying to pass another big farm bill that includes Billions to subsidize huge Companies, that are already profiting at our expense. Instead of subsidizing Healthy food, **Big Agribusiness** will get billions to force more garbage on the American People! Thanks to them we have an epidemic of obesity, Diabetes and other health issues! It is difficult to find descent food anymore unless you have transportation and the ability to pay! These diseases are costing this nation billions in Health Care alone, yet they continue to subsidize **Big Agribusiness!**

COMMENT OF ELAINE DOLAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:30 p.m.

City, State: Shoreline, WA

Occupation: LMT, Sole Proprietor

Comment: Organic, clean (non-chemically treated), local (whenever possible) and Non-GMO foods are what are healthiest for our population. I urge you, as a constituent, to represent these preferences of mine.

COMMENT OF JULIA DOLAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:46 p.m.

City, State: Minneapolis, MN

Occupation: Work Order Coordinator

Comment: The biggest need of the world right now is to be leaning ever more and more **To/Towards** organic farming and smaller, family owned farms—not **Away** from it. Please do not pass bills ending advocacy/funding and research for the best thing that could happen to the human race (*i.e.*, organic farming).

COMMENT OF REBECCA DOLL

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 10:48 a.m.

City, State: Wimberley, TX

Occupation: Writer

Comment: I request that you support farm policy that sustains life biodiversity and next seven generations of Earthlings. Clearly, the biggest agricultural producers are only concerned with profit and not responsible land management. Please put your constituents before your own personal interest by refusing to support the farm bills presented by agribusiness and all the perks that go with doing their bidding.

COMMENT OF BETTY J. DOMBEK

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 10, 2012, 7:39 a.m.

City, State: Belmont, NY

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I truly believe these programs are vitally important to help feed families who are elderly, disabled, mothers w/children, people who cannot make it farming and living on farm. I feel the farmers work very hard to grow crops and their livestock. With the economy today and no jobs, unemployment, utilities raising costs; all these programs need to be in effect for our peoples of America.

God Bless.

COMMENT OF SARAH DOMENICK

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 02, 2012, 2:49 p.m.

City, State: Philadelphia, PA

Occupation: Student

Comment: I would like to see this new farm bill shift more subsidies to organic, local, and small scale agriculture. The path we're on now, supporting only large scale commodity crops farms is unsustainable. We need to shift the focus to a more regional focus, allowing smaller farmers to grow produce that people can actually eat. The problem of hunger is not a problem of not having enough land or high enough productivity. It is a problem of poverty and inefficient use of land. To build a truly sustainable food system, this farm bill needs to make small scale, sustainable, organic agriculture economically feasible. Furthermore, I find it somewhat useless that a Federal bill controls agriculture for the entire country, one that has vastly different climates, topography, soil, *etc.* Perhaps more control should be relegated to states and counties in order to be more place-appropriate.

COMMENT OF BLAKE DONLEY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:05 p.m.

City, State: Golden Valley, MN

Occupation: Systems Analyst

Comment: **Do Not** cut \$4 million from organic research funding and cut in half funding to support Beginning Farmers. Support organic food. No one wants to continue to eat the poison that gigantic industrial farms are pouring onto supermarket shelves. The food system in the U.S. is a disgrace and the rest of the world knows it. It is absolutely pathetic what special interest has done to our food supply. The food is making U.S. citizens sick, big Pharma is creating drugs to "treat" all of these new chronic diseases, and the tax payer is picking up the tab while the U.S. Govt. plunges us further into debt to deal with the health care crises. Well done congressmen and women, well done.

COMMENT OF MICHAEL DONNELLY

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 8:27 a.m.

City, State: Lincoln, AL

Occupation: Maintenance Electrician

Comment: I think it is essential that consumers are given the option to choose to support their local farms. I feel that mandating Country of Origin Labeling is something we need to continue. Local sources of healthy food is an essential part of keeping communities strong.

COMMENT OF ROBERT DONNELLY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:14 p.m.

City, State: Silver City, NM

Occupation: Wool Milling Consultant

Comment: Committee members;

I write you today as a consumer of agricultural products and a former worker in the field of milling agriculturally produced fibers (mainly wool). I am wanting to make sure that you as representatives of me (the people).

I ask you to act to see that U.S. food and agricultural policy must focus on adopting best agricultural practices that put the health of its citizens, the land and the livelihood of farmers and farm workers over the interests of industrial agriculture lobbyists.

I Endorse (and ask that you do the same):

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative

In general, there's no need to kowtow to your international agribusiness corporations, even though you believe you have to to get re-elected. Corporations are **Not** people.

We are the people, and I vote.

COMMENT OF JEAN DONOHUE

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 03, 2012, 2:03 p.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Social Media Producer

Comment: We need to support small-scale sustainable farming, local food infrastructures, farmland preservation, soil and water conservation.

Subsidies should go to farms that are food for local and regional consumption. Price supports are needed for vegetables and fruit grown for local markets.

COMMENT OF ELAINE DONOVAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:32 p.m.

City, State: Hemlock, NY

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: I run a small vegetable farm which adheres to organic and sustainable practices. I am not alone as there are many small family farms in my area. Please do not cut funding for programs vital to our citizens health such as nutrition, conservation and support for organic and sustainable farming.

It is morally reprehensible to allow Agribusiness to buy their way into writing the rules. We need a fair and healthy farm bill.

COMMENT OF S. "MARGUERITE" E . DONOVAN, C.S.J.

Date Submitted: Friday, April 27, 2012, 11:05 a.m.

City, State: Cohoes, NY

Occupation: Retired Teacher

Comment: The country was built on the back of small farmers. The U.S. Gov't. does not need to subsidize mega-agricultural enterprises, but **Does** need to support the small, family-run farms.

COMMENT OF SHELLEY DOONAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:40 p.m.

City, State: Covina, CA

Occupation: Culinary Instructor Cal Poly Pomona

Comment: It is my belief that everyone should have the ability to eat clean wholesome farm fresh foods. We should support family farmers and varied crops. So that we are as sustainable as possible, and able to provide for generations to come.

COMMENT OF TERRI DORAIS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:40 p.m.

City, State: Kingston, AR

Occupation: Buyer

Comment: It is very important to me that my family eats non-GMO & organic food, preferably by local farmers and that we quit polluting our land and water. I am really tired of industrial agro-businesses polluting our food & environment with toxic chemicals in the name of money. Farming with chemicals is not sustainable agriculture. I am hopeful that you will listen to the voice of the people and create a farm bill geared towards the health of people and the planet. Please support all provisions of the Local, Farms & Jobs Act (H.R. 3286), offer full funding to conservation programs like the Conservation Stewardship Program. Maintain the EQIP Organic Initiative and implement all the provisions of the Beginning Farmer & Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236). We need to move away from industrial farming and offer more opportunities to small organic farmers.

COMMENT OF TOM DORAIS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:05 p.m.

City, State: Kingston, AR

Occupation: Account Manager

Comment: It is crucial to emphasize the nutritional values of sustainable organic production and shift from the high fructose corn syrup dominated food stream which is a main contributor to the obesity epidemic.

COMMENT OF NAOMA DORETY

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 10:45 a.m.

City, State: Hopewell, NJ

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I raised three sons under 16 when my husband died and I was able to house and feed them since I had a steady job. It is incredible that a country with so much wealth and farms that we have people starving daily. I am retired, living on \$25K. I support the food banks in my state, sponsor a child in South America one in Arkansas, USA, along with world hunger and USA food programs. What is wrong with our Congress that they don't support programs that allow our children and elder citizens to be cared for. I am ashamed that belly full Americans that try to save the world can't save America.

Stressed,

N. DORETY.

COMMENTS OF ELLEN DORFMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 1:59 p.m.

City, State: Olympia, WA

Occupation: Single Mom

Comment: Stop supporting huge agribusiness that grows one crop and uses tons of toxic pesticides and herbicides and kills everything from bees to you name it. Support small, sustainable and **Organic** farmers, **Not** GMO and Monsanto! Support local sustainable **Healthy** fresh foods, grown with less water and not toxic residues that **Are** killing everything from honey bees to the planet and people!

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:33 p.m.

Comment: We wanted to make sure that you knew about a new proposed rule that the USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) announced this week and about an opportunity for you to weigh in. USDA is proposing to revise its definition of *retail pet store* to close a loophole that has threatened the health and humane treatment of pets sold sight unseen over the Internet and via phone- and mail-based businesses.

COMMENT OF DON DOTTER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:05 p.m.

City, State: Moss Beach, CA

Occupation: Founder Farm Organics

Comment: Balance as in the scales of justice should be the realized model for our food system. Good nutritional food comes from healthy seeds. People benefit when they realize that food is actually medicinal in its foundation. Organic fruits and vegetables would be and should be the foundation of our food system. Keep the GE's and the GMO's away from our citizens and seek the balance we need for a healthier citizenry and a healthier economy. Yes this is a national security issue, I believe.

COMMENT OF J. KELLY DOUGHERTY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:12 p.m.

City, State: Kansas City, KS

Occupation: Facilities

Comment: You want a healthy county, out large agriculture business threaten that on a daily basis. You are against coverage for the poor and middle class, well if our farm and food standards were strong, we wouldn't have some of them medical issue that we have today. We as consumers have a right to be protected from corporations whose only concern is the bottom dollar and not the health of the people they sell too. Please, if you are for your constituents, it is important that to do what is right for the consumer and the small farmers, the ones who work very hard and help to make this country not with **Big Business!**

COMMENT OF JOYCE DOUGHTY

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 2:05 p.m.

City, State: Greeneville, TN

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I chair a local non-profit dedicated to conserving family farms and eating local products. We are deeply concerned about the Conservation Stewardship Program and its proper implementation, the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act and all things organic and local.

Please make sure the farm bill protects our local farms and farmers—not mega-corporate agribusiness.

Thank you for considering my views.

COMMENT OF CAROL DOUGLAS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:57 p.m.

City, State: Phoenix, AZ

Occupation: Retired Social Worker

Comment: Please break the stranglehold that agribusiness has on our food supply. Please support our family farms especially those producing organically grown crops!

COMMENTS OF DIANNE DOUGLAS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012 11:48 a.m.

City, State: Phoenix, AZ

Occupation: Code Compliance

Comment: We need a bill that will put our small individual farmers back to work. We need organic healthy food from these farms. No more factory farms that steals from the poor small farmers and that produce unhealthy food. Stop stealing from the poor and giving to the rich.

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:02 p.m.

Comment: Bring back the small family farms and organic farming. The factory farms are making the American people sick. They are polluting our air, water and land.

COMMENT OF DORETHA DOUGLAS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:35 a.m.

City, State: Lithonia, GA

Occupation: Student

Comment: It is important to the existence of the population to have access to food that is, nourishing, affordable, ungenetically modified, treated humanely and untainted and have this idea backed by the Federal government. I would think you would only want to serve family and friends the best food afforded by you, and that is all we want for ourselves. I would appreciate your understanding on this important matter.

COMMENT OF THERESE DOWD

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:59 a.m.

City, State: Akron, OH

Occupation: Retired Nursing Faculty

Comment: Support for local food systems (not the mega control agribusinesses) is necessary for continued growth of the local farm scene. This approach supports

the economy of local communities, reduces costs for transportation, and enhances quality of life in this country of ours by vitalizing the areas in which we live. Businesses that are currently thriving should be able to function with reduced levels of support and businesses that are starting up should receive the help. We count on your leadership to ensure that sustainable, local, safe, and clean food is available in our local regions. Thank you for your ongoing commitment to the well being of your constituents.

COMMENT OF PERRY DOWDY

Date Submitted: Thursday, March 22, 2012, 8:33 p.m.

City, State: Pulaski, VA

Occupation: Disabled Veteran

Comment: I am the Director of a food bank in Radford VA, I need all the food that the USDA can give Feeding America Southwest Virginia. I have people needing food for their Families. We have so many people out of work and a lot that is not counted in the unemployed ranks. This country is going down faster that a feather falling. This government is not thinking of the jobless people.

So please write a farm bill that gives more money than before. **Keep The Money At Home.**

Thank you . . .

COMMENT OF MARIA DOWELL

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 7:25 a.m.

City, State: Longwoog, FL

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Don't cut any founds to those who need food, many farmers donate food to local food pantry to help feed the homeless and the hungry. Seminole County is in need of this local farmers to supply fresh produces to the families in need.

COMMENT OF KEVIN W. DOWNER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:30 p.m.

City, State: Farmington, PA

Occupation: College Professor

Comment: Please explain to me when common sense and the needs and wants of everyday Americans are going to start taking precedence over money, lobbyist and corporate greed. Stand up, make a statement, say no to this crap and vote for this farm bill. Do what is right for a change and not what most benefits you and the rich and powerful. Remember why you were voted into office for which is to represent the interests of the American people and the people and farmers of western PA. Thank you for your time and hopefully grave concern regarding the food supply of this nation.

Sincerely,

KEVIN W. DOWNER.

COMMENT OF JOHN DOWNEY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:41 a.m.

City, State: Margaretville, NY

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Field Crops

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: We need a strong farm bill that supports and encourages farming to continue and to grow in the USA. My wife and I are new to farming and are struggling to make it a viable business. Attempts to grow using USDA grants is not happening as the funding is usually provided to larger established farms. That system is not helping the new farmer the way it should.

COMMENT OF MARGARET DOYLE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:00 p.m.

City, State: Norwood, MA

Occupation: Healthcare

Comment: The subsidized insurance program Congress proposes to replace direct payments to commodity farms will allow giant commodity farmers and insurance companies to walk away with billions in taxpayer dollars while putting the land, soil and environment at greater risk. We need real subsidies to vegetable and fruit farmers who grow organic and/or use less harmful pesticides on the land. Presently only .37% of total farm subsidies go to vegetable farmers while 73.8% go to meat and dairy farms. If government is serious about eliminating obesity in the country, it must redirect allocations to help produce a healthier food supply for all of us. Commodity farmers are not the answer for a healthy America.

COMMENT OF GILLIAN DRAKE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:03 p.m.

City, State: North Eastham, MA

Occupation: Publisher

Comment: We need a farm bill that supports smaller producers and those who grow REAL FOOD, not wheat, corn and soy, and animals raised in CAFOs—which are largely responsible for the obesity and ill-health of America’s people. If we cut refined foods out of our diets, we will all be healthy people, and will save billions of dollars on health care. By voting for a **Sane** farm bill that supports quality food, organic food, locally-produced food, you will be doing what you have been elected to do: protect and nurture the citizens of this great country, not the corporations that profit from processed foods made with the cheapest ingredients, thanks to subsidies, drenched in pesticides and then refined so that there is no nutrition left in them.

A **Sane** farm bill will help lower health care costs in America and ensure that our next generation grows up to be healthy, strong and can carry America forward. Otherwise, it will be the end of America. It’s that simple. Thank you for doing the right thing for America.

COMMENT OF CHRISTIANE DRAPKIN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:27 p.m.

City, State: Rockville, MD

Occupation: Musician

Comment: I’ve supported local small growers and organic farm for the past 30 years. We need true support for small, independent farmers to grow healthy food. We want to feed our families right.

COMMENT OF ANNA DRECHSLER

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 12:23 p.m.

City, State: Des Plaines, IL

Occupation: Retired Teacher and Urban Organic Gardener

Comment: 2012 Farm Bill has to reflect what America needs today. It must contain support structure for family owned farms, which will produce healthy, wholesome food (vegetables, fruit, meat and dairy) extremely important to stop epidemic of obesity in U.S., will produce sustainably to preserve healthy soil, water and quality of air. Prosperous family farms will grow jobs and well being in their communities and provide better future for next generation of farmers and rural workers.

COMMENT OF ANNE DREHFAL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:38 p.m.

City, State: Whitewater, WI

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Fruits, Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: I am a beginning organic produce farmer starting up a Community-Supported Agriculture (CSA) farm in Whitewater, WI, called Regenerative Roots. We will sell our produce directly to our farm members through a produce subscription process and at a local Farmers’ Market. Even though we are new to this community, we have sold out mid-April of our CSA shares for the season; there is a need for fresh organic produce in this community and our members find it important to be connected to where their food is coming from for food safety, community-building, economic, and environmental reasons. We are committed to a highly diverse ecology for producing food which encompasses perennials, livestock, and fungi alongside annual vegetable production. We envision the farm as an educational

space for ourselves and the community. We would like to keep the farm at a manageable size, where we can observe and participate in all of its aspects. We believe all of these values will help produce high quality food to nourish the land, ourselves and our neighbors in an ecologically regenerative and economically sustainable way.

At Regenerative Roots our primary mission is to be a responsible steward of the soil, because healthy soil is what brings forth healthy life. Our topsoil is this nation's #1 export (in tonnage) and if we don't strive to change our farming practices to focus on soil health and retention, this country will have major food security issues in the future. In 1997, 1.9 billion tons of soil eroded from U.S. land, reports the National Resources Inventory of the USDA (<http://css.snre.umich.edu/css—doc/CSS00-04.pdf>).*

This equals a truckload of topsoil, escaping via the Mississippi River every 3–10 seconds, depending on the time of year. I think this is fact that is rarely discussed amongst farm bill conversations. We should change that with the 2012 Farm Bill.

Long-term planning for our country's fertile soil needs to be a priority over profit, although with sustainable agriculture they can be realized together. For this reason, I am incredibly supportive of the conservation measures and resources that the USDA has made accessible to farmers through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program, Conservation Stewardship Program, and Cooperative Conservation Partnerships Initiative. These programs work together to assist farmers protect and rebuild soil, provide clean water and wildlife habitat, and supply other environmental benefits, while maintaining vibrant and productive farms and ranches.

As a Young Farmer, entering the world of agriculture as most of our nation's farmers are retiring, I urge members of Congress to support both the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act and the Local Farms, Food, and Jobs Act.

The Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act will invest in the next generation of American producers by:

- Enabling access to land, credit, and crop insurance for new producers
- Assisting new producers to launch and strengthen new farm and value-added businesses
- Helping new producers become good land stewards
- Providing training, mentoring, and research that beginning farmers and ranchers need to be successful
- Conducting outreach on agricultural job opportunities for military veterans

In my experience, the biggest hurdle to starting our own farm was access to land—a search that took over 2 years. This first season we are renting land, but as we invest in sustainable perennial crops it is important to us to have a solid long-term lease or access to FSA loans. In southern Wisconsin, we are blessed to have many organic farming mentors and organizations that strive to share knowledge and resources about sustainable methods. This Act could help to provide a similar support system for Beginning Farmers across the nation.

The Local Farms, Food, and Jobs Act will drive economic growth by:

- Creating economic opportunities for farmers and ranchers through local and regional markets
- Improving processing and distribution infrastructure for local and regional agriculture
- Expanding access to healthy food for consumers, including underserved communities
- Providing research, training, and information that farm entrepreneurs need to be successful

Our country needs strong resilient communities to survive the uncertainties of the future. Strong local food systems, healthy Main Streets, community gathering places, and dynamic neighborhoods are all components of resiliency. Local and regional agriculture is a major economic driver in the farm economy. There are now more than 7,000 farmers markets throughout the United States—a 150 percent increase since 2000, direct to consumer sales have accounted for more than \$1.2 billion in annual revenues. Now, on the heels of that expansion, we are witnessing the rapid growth of local and regional food markets that have scaled up beyond direct marketing. Together these markets represent important new job growth and economic development.

I urge you to join your colleagues and support both the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act and the Local Farms, Food, and Jobs Act, as well as the Environmental Quality Incentives Program, Conservation Stewardship Program, and Cooperative Conservation Partnerships Initiative in the writing of the 2012

*The document referred to is retained in Committee file.

Farm Bill. These programs are incredibly important to the survival of young and sustainable farmers across Wisconsin and the agricultural heritage of our incredible state. They also account for such a small portion of the farm bill budget overall, but will help to guarantee healthy food, water, and soil for years to come.

Thank you for providing an opportunity to share my views on the upcoming farm bill,

ANNE DREHFAL.

COMMENT OF CAROL DREIBELBIS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 11:20 a.m.

City, State: Arlington, VA

Occupation: Nonprofit

Comment: We need a farm bill that makes healthy food widely available to all Americans—including schoolchildren—to combat the growing obesity epidemic! We must provide flexibility for states to use existing food procurement programs to purchase fresh, healthy food from local farmers and ranchers.

We also need a farm bill that protects our natural resources—protect the Conservation Stewardship Program from unfair funding cuts, and improve it by ranking applications solely on their conservation benefits. Farmers count on CSP and other conservation programs to conserve soil for future generations, keep water and air clean, and create habitat for wildlife—all while farming profitably.

COMMENT OF MERLIN DRESHER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:55 a.m.

City, State: Canton, KS

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Fruits, Greenhouse/nursery, Specialty Crops, Vegetables, Other

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Consumers are demanding more locally grown organic fruits and vegetables. It is not easy for young farmers to get started without some assistance. The farm bill needs to provide for this, including helping families have access to healthy whole foods. Processed foods have victimized our society to a couple generations of obesity and diabetes, through ill advised USDA catering to large food processing corporations.

COMMENT OF RANDI DRESNER

Date Submitted: Tuesday, March 20, 2012, 11:24 a.m.

City, State: Hauppauge, NY

Occupation: President & CEO, Island Harvest

Comment: Public Comments to the House Agriculture Committee

Farm Bill 2012

Island Harvest

Please consider the following comments on behalf of the over 283,000 Long Islanders who rely on the Island Harvest network for food assistance.

As the Committee continues to engage in debate on the 2012 Farm Bill, I urge Members to enhance support for Federal nutrition programs like the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), and the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP). On Long Island alone, 85.1% of pantries, 59.7% of kitchens, and 71.0% of shelters receive food from TEFAP, approximately 11,000 Long Island seniors receive food packages through CSFP each month, and over 100,000 Long Islanders help feed their families with SNAP benefits.

SNAP alone has extraordinary strengths:

- SNAP's accuracy rate of over 96% is at an all-time high and is considerably higher than many other Federal benefit programs. SNAP error rates declined by ⅓ from FY 1999 to FY 2010.
- SNAP's responsiveness to unemployment proved it to be one of the most effective safety net programs during the recent recession, providing families with a stable source of food. As the number of unemployed people increased by 94% from 2007 to 2011, SNAP responded with a 70% increase in participation over the same period.
- SNAP benefits are spent quickly—97 percent of benefits are redeemed by the end of the month of issuance—thereby bolstering local economies. Moody's Ana-

lytics and USDA estimate that the economic growth impact of SNAP ranges from \$1.73 to \$1.79 per \$1 of SNAP benefits.

- SNAP is targeted to go to the neediest and most vulnerable people in our country. The average household has an income of only 57% of the Federal poverty guideline and 84% of all benefits go to households with a child, senior, or disabled person.
- SNAP lifted 3.9 million Americans above the poverty line in 2010, including 1.7 million children and 280,000 seniors.
- SNAP relieves pressure on overwhelmed food banks, pantries, religious congregations and other emergency food providers across the country who could not begin to meet the need for food assistance if SNAP eligibility or benefits were reduced.

For the growing number of Long Islanders at risk of hunger, food banks are truly the first line of defense and many times the only resource standing between them being able to put food on the table or going to bed with an empty stomach. However, the charitable food assistance network cannot meet the needs of these families alone. It is only through our public-private partnership with effective programs like SNAP and other programs in the nutrition safety net that we can truly end hunger on Long Island.

COMMENTS OF GAIL DRESSEL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012 12:58 p.m.

City, State: Pine Grove, PA

Occupation: Advocate

Comment: We need more and better farming not factory farms who are destroying the environment our health and all the pain and suffer by them practicing and getting away with animal abuse because someone thinks farm animals feel no pain and aren't worthy of help . We need better humane methods to raise farm animals in and you need to step it up. Other countries are so far ahead of us and give the animals room and better care because they know they are animals at their mercy why don't we do it.

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:14 a.m.

Comment: We need more farmers and get rid of factory farms its destroying our health and hurting animals and environment time for a change. No

COMMENT OF LINDA DREW

Date Submitted: Monday, May 14, 2012, 12:46 p.m.

City, State: Cedar Lake, IN

Occupation: Self-Employed Auto Repair Business

Comment: I would like to encourage you to support a 2012 Farm Bill that expands opportunities for family farmers to produce good food for our communities. A bill that makes healthy food widely available to all Americans! We must provide flexibility for states to use existing food procurement programs to purchase fresh, healthy food from local farmers & ranchers. Thank you for your careful consideration of this matter.

COMMENT OF KELLY DRISCOLL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:55 a.m.

City, State: Norman, OK

Occupation: Marketing/Planning

Comment: I am currently attending a beginning farmers program run by the Kerr Center for Sustainable Agriculture. My husband and I hope to start a small scale farm in the next 3 to 5 years. I ask you to consider the needs of the small, sustainable producer and end commodity subsidies. Please create real agricultural risk coverage for the small-scale producers of diverse vegetable crops, and continue to support beginning farmer training and grant programs.

COMMENT OF THETA DRIVON

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 2:31 p.m.

City, State: Asheville, NC

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: I believe our country needs true Food Security through support for organic (pesticide-, herbicide-, hormone-, and GMO-free) agriculture, small farms, nu-

trition education based on science and tradition not corporate interest, and conservation of wild places.

COMMENT OF BEN DROZ

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:10 p.m.

City, State: Pittsburgh, PA

Occupation: Photographer

Comment: Agriculture subsidies are far too high in our economy. The farm bill should subsidize struggling farms, sustainable agriculture, things that science says we should work towards and things that are already too expensive. It is offensive that taxpayer dollars subsidize a corn surplus which changes our food supply. Doctors and scientist agree, this is wrong. Change the subsidy structure to help family farms, not mega farms.

COMMENT OF JULIE DU BOIS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:28 p.m.

City, State: West Hills, CA

Occupation: Mortgage Workout

Comment: I am disgusted that Congress has voted to slash \$33 billion from the food stamp program while leaving farm subsidies unscathed.

I do not believe in agribusiness. They are poisoning our natural resources and they are harming animals. I believe the assistance should go to **Family Farms** and organic research funding to support Beginning Farmers.

The Senate Ag Committee has voted to get rid of wasteful subsidy payments. It has proposed to replace it with a new subsidized insurance program that leading sustainable agriculture advocates are calling rife with opportunities for fraud and abuse.

Please support the family farms, not agribusiness. We need healthy, meaningful assistance to those whose lives are entrenched in their family farms. They are our American Heroes—along with our teachers, firefighters and nurses!

COMMENT OF FEDERICO DUAY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:00 p.m.

City, State: Rye, NY

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: Please end subsidies to large corporations, they already have enough money to do their job. Instead please support lox cal farmers, who employ American people. Thank you!

COMMENT OF THOMAS DUBS

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 16, 2012, 10:19 a.m.

City, State: Finleyville, PA

Occupation: Associate Director

Comment: Feeding our neighbors is a public-private partnership many private organizations are doing their part but they cannot fight this battle against hunger without our government's help. Cutting anti-hunger programs will increase hunger in America, as well as the associated health care, educational, and economic costs of food insecurity and poor nutrition. Please remember the families who are struggling in our community and protect and strengthen important anti-hunger programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP in the 2012 Farm Bill reauthorization.

COMMENT OF ROSEMARY DUDLEY

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 5:15 p.m.

City, State: Oakland, CA

Occupation: Jeweler

Comment: My family has owned a small farm in Missouri for four generations. We would like the farm bill to focus on programs that aid small farmers, organic and sustainable farm practices, nutrition, and the Conservation Resource Program, in particular.

COMMENT OF CONNOR DUFFY

Date Submitted: Sunday, March 25, 2012, 8:14 p.m.

City, State: Norwood, PA

Occupation: Student, Box Office Clerk

Comment: You must eliminate subsidies that unfairly aid agribusiness farmers over small, family, and subsistence farmers. More importantly, stop subsidizing crops that are financially unsustainable. There are many cash crops that can be grown cheaper elsewhere in the world. Millions of dollars of subsidies wastes taxpayer dollars while disadvantaging those in developing countries.

We are a country built on the back of powerful agriculture—a financially unsustainable cotton industry which relied upon slave labor. The subsidies, as well as looser wage restrictions for farm workers, has replaced that system. But it must stop.

Use the money for subsidies to buy seeds and tools for more financially sustainable crops. The billions of dollars of subsidies could instead go to re-training farmers into more sustainable practices.

COMMENT OF MERCI DUFFY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:39 p.m.

City, State: Milwaukee, WI

Occupation: Self-Employed

Comment: A farm bill that stresses organic, local and sustainable farming over corporate interests benefits not only the health of our bodies, but the health of our country and economy. I urge you to help us reach our forward thinking goals!

COMMENT OF MICHELLE DUGAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 10:50 p.m.

City, State: Upper Darby, PA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Industrial agriculture is destroying our health and our children's future. The farm bill must preserve the Earth to sustain life. Development aid to the poor must be preserved as well.

COMMENT OF ALICE DUGAR

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 12:04 p.m.

City, State: Independence, OH

Occupation: Educator

Comment: I rely on healthy, pesticide-free, GMO-free, organically-grown food that is sustainably produced with great respect for the land, water and air that creates that food and with the assistance and dedication of farmers who take pride in their farms and work beyond the solitary goal of profit. Create a farm bill that has this goal at the core of its content.

COMMENT OF ERIC DUGGAN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 3:02 a.m.

City, State: West Sacramento, CA

Occupation: Govt.

Comment: Rep. Thompson, your constituents are watching closely especially to see if the subsidies for millionaire farmers are continued. Also, the cat is out of the bag, so give up the cozy relationship with Monsanto. It really is quite disgusting.

COMMENT OF PHYLLIS DUJON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:21 p.m.

City, State: Newnan, GA

Occupation: Retired Nurse

Comment: It is time to stop giving huge subsidies to the corporate farms. They are putting our food at risk with the addition of antibiotics in animal feed and the huge amount of pesticides that are used plus the addition of growth hormones that are added. Our nation is not a healthy nation and it has nothing to do with fast food. We need to be able to eat pure wholesome food.

COMMENT OF KIMBERLY DUKE

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 6:43 a.m.

City, State: Millburn, NJ

Occupation: Statistician

Comment: Good quality food for everyone in the USA is possible. I believe the food we eat has more impact on our health than any other lifestyle choice.

We're depending on you to make the right choice for all of us. Thanks.

COMMENT OF MICHELE DUNAJ

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:35 p.m.

City, State: Old Lyme, CT

Occupation: Freelance Editor

Comment: Americans are suffering because of factory farms and agribusinesses who put the almighty dollar before our health. We need to support organic farming practices and small farmers—**Not** big business.

COMMENT OF VICKI DUNAWAY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:56 p.m.

City, State: Lincoln City, OR

Occupation: Postal Worker/Formal Farmer

Comment: My husband and I have retired from small-scale farming, but we certainly did not feel we got much support from the government while we were farming, other than some help from Extension personnel (once they finally figured out organics were not a fad). How about some real change? Instead of supporting a farm bill that gives Big Ag lots of cash to produce stuff that is already produced in massive surplus, why not support folks who are growing things that are healthier and more labor-intensive? Make it easier for small farmers to bring healthy foods into inner cities and other food deserts! Link food stamps and unprocessed foods, with voluntary food preparation classes for those receiving food stamps. Label GMO products so people can have enough information to make decisions about them.

Finally, stop harassing raw milk producers. What is the point of that? There are far fewer people made ill every year by raw milk than by dog bites, but I don't see anyone calling for abolition of pet dogs.

COMMENT OF KATHY DUNDEE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:24 a.m.

City, State: Austin, TX

Occupation: Assistant Division Director, Education Association

Comment: Food, pretty much an essential for living. Healthy living is directly influenced by the kinds of food one eats, so the healthier, better the food, the better health for the person. Over-use of chemicals, pesticides, *etc.* directly links to increases in cancer, *etc.* It's a no-brainer that we, as a nation, should be doing everything we can to maintain a healthy, chemical-free food supply.

COMMENT OF ALLISON DUNGAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:29 a.m.

City, State: Madison, WI

Occupation: Researcher

Comment: The agricultural track that we are on is not one that is reasonable in the long run. Instead of encouraging our farms to be natural treasures and a source of food that nourishes our nation (including our soils, water, and air) the farm bill supports policies that are currently seeing massive amounts of conservation land tilled under in place of more rows of corn. Please make changes to the subsidy structure, and for goodness sake let's get some more support for organic agriculture. I would also suggest that less focus be put on crop insurance—that policy is encouraging people to farm on marginal lands that should not be tilled. If we don't make a change this farm bill will be supporting a form of stealing—we are stealing the resources of fertile soil, and clean water from our future farmers.

COMMENT OF PATRICIA DUNHAM

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 2:42 p.m.

City, State: Eugene, OR

Occupation: Retired Librarian

Comment: Corporations are **Not** people, or farmers! The farm bill should support organic & family farmers—operations that produce safe, low carbon food; **Not** factory meat operations and corn and soy monocultures that destroy our soil, waste our

precious, increasingly scarce water, and poison us with fertilizer, insecticides, pesticides, *etc.*! **Not** untested GMO organisms—USDA is **Fools** for taking manufacturer testing results!

COMMENT OF GINGER DUNLAP

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 9:43 a.m.

City, State: Bakers Mills, NY

Occupation: Retired Teacher

Comment: My representative is not likely to listen to, or be swayed by, any plea of this sort. Whenever I've addressed him to similar problems, his answers have always skirted around it with a smooth political statement.

COMMENT OF TIMOTHY DUNLEAVY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:31 p.m.

City, State: State College, PA

Occupation: Retail Management and Home Gardener

Comment: I am distressed that Federal Programs effecting my community may be cut. I have witnessed an explosion in small scale food production that has brought jobs and revenue into my county. I know many small farmers who would benefit from H.R. 3286 and H.R. 3236 as well as the Conservation Stewardship and EQIP Organic Initiatives.

It is disappointing to realize that billions will be cut from actual food production to bump up the subsidies for Industrial Agriculture to nearly \$123 billion. Americans eat too much industrial food and have the health problems to prove it.

The small amounts being asked to promote smaller scale sustainable and organic growers are an investment in the future of Agriculture, and key to getting new blood onto the farms. The old system is dying with the elderly farmers who make up the bulk of today's producers. It is imperative we continue the programs that support the new generation of food producers that we so desperately need.

COMMENT OF HOLLIS DUNLOP

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:12 a.m.

City, State: Marion, MA

Occupation: College Student

Comment: More than a handful of Congress members need to have input about this bill. It is one of the most important yet least citizen involved decisions made in the U.S. every 5 years. Please make changes that support local farms and communities and reduce the amount of subsidies to agribusiness giants.

COMMENT OF CHERYL DUNN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:53 p.m.

City, State: Austin, TX

Occupation: Finance & Accounting

Comment: As a supporter of my local food bank, I am writing to share my concern about hunger in Texas. With unemployment still high and many Americans still struggling to make ends meet, anti-hunger programs are helping many of our neighbors just put food on the table.

Nearly 50 million Americans are living in food insecurity. While food banks, churches, and pantries are doing great work in our community, charity alone cannot meet the need for food assistance.

Congress should do its part by continuing to support anti-hunger programs like the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), and the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP), all of which are authorized in the farm bill.

Cutting anti-hunger programs will increase hunger in America. Given the associated health care and educational costs of hunger and poor nutrition, cuts to anti-hunger programs are short-sighted.

I ask you to please remember the families who are struggling in our country, and urge you to protect and strengthen important anti-hunger programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP in the 2012 Farm Bill reauthorization.

Hunger is unacceptable.

Thank you for your action!

COMMENT OF WESLEY DUNN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:11 a.m.

City, State: Gloucester, MA

Occupation: Student

Comment: As a soon-to-be student of ecological agriculture at the University of Vermont and a worker on a biodynamic farm in New York in the summer, I implore you to take steps in this latest edition of the farm bill to lead our country from industrial-based agriculture to the more financially, environmentally and socially sustainable option of local food production. When I work in the summer and when I study in school, I intend to be doing this personally. I urge you to do the same at your level. When I leave school, I want to be a farmer. Not a monocrop producer enslaved to a contract; a farmer, overseeing a diverse crop, feeding and supporting my local community, respected and admired for the skill and expertise I will have built, that the work will require. I know I'm not the only 18 year old in this country with such a dream. Please, help make our futures, and that of our country brighter.

COMMENT OF SHAWN DUNNAGAN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 2:45 p.m.

City, State: Boise, ID

Occupation: Registered Dietitian and Professor

Comment: Please take the time to better understand the connection between the health of American citizens, our environment and our food system. We need to reconsider the negative effects of the large agribusinesses on food and health and help smaller, organic farmers rebuild local, sustainable economies. Everyone wins in this restructuring!

SHAWN DUNNAGAN.

COMMENT OF JENNIFER DUSTER

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 5:53 p.m.

City, State: Solon, IA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Fruits, Greenhouse/nursery, Poultry/poultry products, Specialty Crops, Vegetables, Other

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: This country (and especially Iowa) needs a farm bill that addresses the shift in the food culture. More and more people want to know where their food is coming from and who grows it, but the large corporate farms are resistant to this change and obstruct it any way they can. Iowa used to be a state made up of proud family farmers, now there is homestead after homestead standing empty or being torn down to make way for more "mega farms" that pollute our countryside and ruin the communities. Help form a food bill that will apply to and help small farmers succeed and grow. We don't need corn and soybean subsidies . . . we need grants for new farmers to get started building their farms and helping to market their produce to customers. The food pyramid has changed and will continue to change. We need legislation that reflects what the people want . . . not what corporate interests want.

COMMENT OF MARY DUVAL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:14 p.m.

City, State: Clatskanie, OR

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I want organic foods. I want no GMO food. I want no pesticides in my food. I want 2,4-D off the market, as well as roundup and all other crap that kills and pollutes our environment permanently.

I want industrial forests not to use pesticides and herbicides when there are people living within breathing distance of those forests. I want open burning of forest clear cuts banned permanently. I want practices that provide clean air, unpolluted waters/air/soil. I want the wholesale destruction of our planet to stop. I want you to take the responsibility given to you by the people of this country to take care of the shared blessings of air, water, soil, plants and animals.

I want you to stop supporting Monsanto, Dow and other chemical companies, not allowing employees or former employees of these companies to decide policy. I want policy decided on the basis of the best science but not science created by these chemical companies, or those funded by these chemical companies.

Further I support the goals of Food Democracy Now! as follows:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

COMMENT OF CLARA DUX

Date Submitted: Wednesday, April 11, 2012, 5:37 p.m.

City, State: Winona, MN

Occupation: Americorp VISTA

Comment: Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act and our Local Farms, Food, and Jobs Act

I support a farm bill that will create jobs and spur economic growth through food and farms. I want the farm bill to invest in the future of American agriculture and enhance our natural resources and improve agricultural productivity. The farm bill especially needs to drive innovation for tomorrow's farmers and food entrepreneurs. An investment in our young people and encourage a farm to school connecting children with food and the world around them.

COMMENT OF SANDY DVORSKY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:01 p.m.

City, State: St. Paul, MN

Occupation: Housewife

Comment: I grew up in a small farming community in northwest Iowa in the 1950s & 1960s when there were almost zero overweight kids. Since the 1970s, I've lived in the urban Twin Cities and am the mother of two 20-something daughters. The rates of obesity in their generation is **Catastrophic!** There are multiple causes to this . . . but cheap, processed food is one of the biggest! And the "cheap" part links back to what we subsidize in the farm bills. **Stop This.** Be wise . . . for the health of everyone (not the health of the corporate pocketbooks which is killing us physically **And** financially in health care costs).

I support, completely, all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms & Jobs Act (H.R. 3286). America desperately needs FULL funding of conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, plus making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs. I support the implementation of all provisions of H.R. 3236 (the Beginning Farmer & Rancher Opportunity Act). And I especially support maintenance of the EQIP Organic Initiative.

You, on the Agriculture Committee, have a direct responsibility for wise decisions here and these provisions that I support are supportive of my kids **And Your Kids'** future. Please rank them higher than corporate lobbyists. Thank you.

COMMENT OF RYAN DYBDAHL

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 7:52 p.m.

City, State: Ann Arbor, MI

Occupation: Social Work

Comment: Small farms are critical in fostering locally grown and locally consumed fresh foods. They also have become a growing area of job creation. They build our communities and ensure we get the best foods, picked at their prime. Please protect and promote small farms and especially organic farms in the upcoming farm bill.

COMMENT OF DONNA DYER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:38 p.m.

City, State: Huntington Beach, CA

Occupation: Mom

Comment: I urge you to please consider the safety of our children and our families as you craft the Farm bill and not assume that big agriculture can meet our needs.

Some of the decisions we're making now around technology, around GMOs, around organic farming have long-range implications. DNA integrity in particular concerns me since there is so little we know and changes in DNA may be irreversible. At minimum, I want disclosure if I am subjecting my family to that.

I support organic farmers and want to be aware of the food I am eating. I hope regulations will support small organic farmers, as the research shows that is the direction we need to move. If I could grow my own food, I would, but that is not practical as a single mom.

Thank you.

JOINT COMMENT OF DOUG DYER AND SUSANNE HESSE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 5:46 p.m.

Names: Doug Dyer and Susanne Hesse

City, State: Alachua, FL.

Occupation: Massage Therapist.

Comment: We shop almost exclusively at farmers markets and local small family farmers outlets. This is the way farms need to be run, producing varieties of produce and grass-fed animals that create healthy options.

COMMENT OF ROBERT W. DYKE

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 10, 2012, 5:51 p.m.

City, State: Cumberland, ME

Occupation: Retired Farmer and Lumberman

Comment: How are you ever going to create more jobs with farming? You can't even get unemployed to work in the fields or farm, you would rather pay them unemployment money and let the immigrants flood into the country for those jobs, how dare you say you're going to make more job thru farming, I was in a area a while back where there was thousands of 55 gallon drums with apple juice from South Africa! Even said organic on it, what a joke. Going to a American plant for bottling, I watched a young fellow at Hannaford's in Warmouth shopping and his basket was overflowing with all organic stamps. I never knew before that we could grow bananas and fresh strawberries in Feb. in Maine. 95 percent of the people don't have a meaning for organic, do you without having an aide looking it up? Bet you don't. I have written before on this subject without a respond, I suspect I won't hear from this also.

ROBERT W. DYKE.

COMMENT OF DR. WILLIAM "SKIP" DYKOSKI

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 4:46 p.m.

City, State: New Brighton, MN

Occupation: Engineer

Comment: Large industrial farms do not need subsidies. We need to move away from the petro-chemical pesticide herbicide mentality. Please support local small organic farms that keep us healthy.

COMMENT OF PAMELA DYKSTRA

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:17 a.m.

City, State: Grand Rapids, MI

Occupation: School Employee

Comment: Leave our food alone! Give our small farmers a chance to produce a healthy product. Quit pushing them out and giving subsidies to big ag who produce unhealthy GMO's laden with pesticides.

COMMENT OF PADMA DYVINE

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 9:45 a.m.

City, State: Hurleyville, NY

Occupation: Registered Nurse

Comment: Earlier this year more than 30,000 people signed a letter calling for an Organic Farm Bill that was an idealized version of what a growing number of Americans are beginning to realize: that U.S. food and agricultural policy must focus on adopting best agricultural practices that put the health of its citizens, the land and the livelihood of farmers and farm workers over the interests of industrial agriculture lobbyists.

Unfortunately, we as a nation are not there yet. Not only are our politicians out of touch with the values of the American people, but corporate agribusiness has a stranglehold on our regulatory system and our political leaders.

But with your help, we can change that.

Farmers and eaters across the U.S. benefit from a fair and healthy farm bill. We need your help today.

As usual, there are a lot of bad ideas that Congress is considering, including cutting funding to vital programs such as nutrition, conservation and support for organic and sustainable agriculture.

We can't let that happen!

It's time for real reform.

I support:

- full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Reports from Washington, D.C. about the farm bill negotiations have not been pretty. According to an editorial in the *San Francisco Chronicle* by Environmental Working Group's Ken Cook and Kari Hamerschlag, Republicans in the House Agricultural Committee have already "voted to slash \$33 billion from the food stamp program while leaving farm subsidies unscathed."

The editorial goes on to report on the latest agribusiness boondoggle that gladly steals food from the mouths of the hungry to create a "\$33 billion new entitlement program that guarantees the income of profitable farm businesses. That's on top of \$90 billion in subsidies for crop and revenue insurance policies."

If this weren't bad enough, the Senate Agricultural Committee has already voted to cut \$4 million from organic research funding and cut funding to support Beginning Farmers in half. We cannot let this stand!

At the same time, the Senate Ag Committee has voted to get rid of wasteful subsidy payments. It has proposed to replace it with a new subsidized insurance program that leading sustainable agriculture advocates are calling rife with opportunities for fraud and abuse.

While Congress is looking to get rid of direct payments to commodity farmers, the subsidized insurance program it proposes to replace it with will allow giant commodity farmers and insurance companies to walk away with billions in taxpayer dollars while putting the land, soil and environment at greater risk.

According to the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition's Ferd Hoefner, "By failing to place limitations on crop insurance subsidies and to re-attach soil erosion and wetland conservation requirements to crop insurance programs, the Committee has failed to do the full reform that is needed."

We can't allow this to happen!

Thank you for taking my concerns into consideration.

Sincerely,

PADMA DYVINE, R.N., C.H.P.N.

COMMENT OF IWONA DZIALEK

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:43 p.m.

City, State: Chicago, IL

Occupation: Office Clerk

Comment: We have right to choose what we put into our mouths. People who were chosen by others to represent them have responsibilities and have to have courage to go against corporation greed. So stop seeing Americans as sheep and start to treat with respect and as humans. We need **Organic Food**.

COMMENTS OF CLAUDIA EADS

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 2:42 p.m.

City, State: Fawnskin, CA

Occupation: Retired Physician

Comment: Please protect moneys for food supplementation for seniors and kids (e.g., food stamps). How about limitations on what foods can be purchased with food stamps to healthy ones?

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 7:28 p.m.
Comment: Farm bill needs vast overhaul, favoring small, also organic, farmers, all GMO should be labeled. How about canceling subsidies for corn/ethanol?

COMMENT OF JOHN EARNST

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:38 p.m.
City, State: Longmont, CO
Occupation: Retired
Comment: I support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

I am completely against the actions of the committee to cut the food stamp program while leaving intact agricultural subsidies for wealthy and profitable agribusinesses. This is morally wrong and a shame on the Congress.

A “\$33 billion new entitlement program that guarantees the income of profitable farm businesses, and that’s on top of \$90 billion in subsidies for crop and revenue insurance policies.” How can the Congress be so callous as to take food from the mouths of the poor and lard on these billions of dollars to well off farming enterprises. The answer is that the poor have no lobbyists or the ability to contribute to your reelection campaigns while agribusiness has plenty of lobbyists and money to represent their interests. Its a disgrace and you should be ashamed of your actions.

JOHN EARNST.

COMMENT OF FAYE EASLEY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:36 p.m.
City, State: Burbank, CA
Occupation: Sales

Comment: The FDA & USDA and our gov’t have supported Monsanto & Dow in their attacks against farmers (who feed this nation & continue to do so without poisoning us!) Our gov’t needs to support the farmers **Now** and get rid of all the GMO crops that are ruining our soil & foods with poisonous pesticides! Perhaps the gov’t & Monsanto will get the hint when CA votes to Label GMOs in November—nobody wants to eat that poison. Support our farmers that grow real, healthy food and quit backing monster Monsanto!

COMMENT OF ANNE EASTER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 3:13 p.m.
City, State: Prescott, AZ
Occupation: Office Worker
Comment: I want you to support healthy agriculture, and stop subsidies to giant food conglomerates. Create a farm bill that really supports all farmers/growers, not just the few that put money in your pockets. Thank you.

COMMENT OF CYNTHIA EASTERDAY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:37 p.m.
City, State: Birmingham, AL
Occupation: Retired
Comment: I support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

I believe our direction is skewed and that we need to move away from subsidizing large farm industry, supporting agribusiness development and any legislation that is influenced by their lobbyists that allow loopholes to further develop big business while undermining small farmers and conservation minded citizens.

Thank you, Congresswoman Sewell, for your support.

COMMENT OF DARLA EATON

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 9:52 a.m.

City, State: Spokane, WA

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: Please reconsider business as usual in the upcoming farm bill. The CFO subsidy is not responsive to real conservation and stewardship. It is with sadness that I see obesity in children—and it is with sadness that I watch us subsidizing it as if the two are unrelated. We need subsidies to farmers, not Big Ag. Thanks.

COMMENT OF EDNA EATON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:49 a.m.

City, State: Sidney, IA

Occupation: Nurse

Comment: The farmers are making more money on their crops that entitlements should be removed. Farmers are selling most of their corn to Ethanol plants that are still being subsidized. Groceries are going up because of lack of selling of crops on the market.

COMMENT OF KATHLEEN EATON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:43 p.m.

City, State: Middletown, DE

Occupation: Homemaker

Comment: Take all the Federal money away from the huge commercial farms and use it to subsidize family farms. The huge agro-businesses don't need it and the family farmers are having to sell of their farms because they can't provide for their families.

COMMENT OF TYLER EATON

Date Submitted: Tuesday, March 20, 2012, 11:46 a.m.

City, State: Jay, NY

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Livestock, Poultry/poultry products, Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: I would have liked to see the meeting address some small scale farming—farms where the owners are the farmers that spend time in close proximity to their soil, their animals and their customers and community to create a healthy community. The farm bill remains the workhorse for big business. I'd like to see it help create health and community viability. Streamline agency regulation, ban damaging practices—petro-chemical inputs, improper management of waste, erosion, all GMO products, or at least make them internalize the costs of pollution. Educate folks that you do not need factories to feed our population, you need good health land that is well tended and in good shape.

Respectfully,

TYLER EATON,
Blue Pepper Farm.

COMMENTS OF CHRISTIAN T. EATON, M.D.

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:00 p.m.

City, State: Seattle, WA

Occupation: Doctor

Comment: Dear Ag Committee,

I am a doctor, and I see firsthand the effects that nutrition has on our health. We, as a country, are going to go bankrupt paying for the effects of our diet: obesity, diabetes, heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, and many, many more conditions are directly affected by what we eat.

And what we eat is profoundly influenced by Federal agricultural policy.

The priority for the farm bill should be the **Health** of the nation, followed by the wellbeing of small farmers. Big Ag Business should **Not** have any influence over the farm bill and I urge you all to **Ignore** all the high paid lobbyists who are trying to influence you. The only concern for Big Ag is to make money, **Your** only concern should be the Health of the Nation.

Please, scrap subsidies to corn and soy and to **All** big ag companies in general. Subsidize small, local, organic farms that are committed to sustainability and production of healthy food. And please focus on the nutrition of our children, through education and healthy school lunches . . . and more education.

We have an obesity epidemic that is killing millions and costing the country billions, and it starts in childhood. We must educate and provide healthy choices to our children if there is any hope for their future.

This is an imperative if we are going to escape economic and health disaster in the coming years.

Sincerely,

CHRISTIAN T EATON, M.D.

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:05 p.m.

Comment: All congressmen who fail to push for a **Health** focused farm bill will be targeted for removal from office.

Sincerely,

CHRISTIAN T EATON, M.D.

COMMENT OF KENNETH EBEL

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 10:01 a.m.

City, State: Irvine, CA

Occupation: Professor of Biology

Comment: I do not understand all the issues involved, but I do support organic foods and non-genetically modified foods. I would like to see labeled on food packages whether the food is genetically modified.

I would also like to see the small farm interest help in any way possible. I would also like to see the public informed on this topic of farm subsidies and genetically modified foods so that there can be informed decision making by the common voter not just our Representatives.

COMMENTS OF MARTHA EBERLE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:06 p.m.

City, State: Dripping Springs, TX

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I support local farmers and our local food banks that rely on them to help. Do not give the majority to Big Ag. Help local farmers.

Date Submitted: May 18, 2012, 6:47 p.m.

Comment: One very important thing that must be preserved in the farm bill, is SNAP. This is an urgent program that benefits those who cannot afford good food. We must continue to care for our neighbors, as Americans have always done—it's one thing that sets America apart, that we care and put that caring into action.

COMMENT OF MATTHEW EBRIGHT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:27 p.m.

City, State: Cupertino, CA

Occupation: Consultant

Comment: Please divert agricultural subsidies to programs creating the highest good for the American population. Let's reward farmers for the highest quality goods, not the highest amount of production. Let's support local organic food created with environmentally sustainable techniques focusing on conservative water use to support our water. resources.

COMMENT OF ALISE ECHELE

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 15, 2012, 12:26 p.m.

City, State: Oxnard, CA

Occupation: Registered Dietitian

Comment: Greetings,

Please vote to fund nutrition programs. Maintaining sources of nutrition funding is essential in order to combat food insecurity and keep our nation healthy.

Regards,

ALISE.

COMMENT OF REBECCA ECHEVARRIA

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 10:58 p.m.

City, State: Pleasantville, NY

Occupation: Student

Comment: Dear Chairman Lucas,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony to the House Committee on Agriculture on the next farm bill. My district representative is being copied on this testimony. I am a student in the CUNY Baccalaureate Program for Unique and Interdisciplinary Studies in New York City studying Environmental Sustainability and Social Justice. I began my academic career in sustainable fashion yet after traveling and working on several farms and sustainable communities I realized the importance of organic food systems and sustainable agriculture methods. I have worked on a rooftop farm in Queens where I was able to weed crop beds while looking out over the New York City skyline. Sustainable agriculture is so important for our society to adopt and encourage. Without these food systems, without local farmers, our communities suffer. As an aspiring young farmer, I would like to share my support for programs that help the next generation of growers build strong farm businesses. Since 125,000 farmers will retire in the next 5 years, it is imperative that farm bill develop programs to help aspiring young farmers, such as myself. I have used Federal programs such as ATTRA to find apprenticeships in sustainable agriculture. ATTRA, and resources alike, are imperative to farm educators, farm workers, and aspiring farmers to connect and share resources. I ask that the Committee endorse all of the provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236), including:

- Mandatory funding for Individual Development Accounts at \$5 million per year. This program helps new farmers raise capital to start farm businesses and is tested and proven by organizations like Practical Farmers of Iowa and the California Farmlink.
- Mandatory funding for the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program at \$25 million a year. This program funds essential education for new farmers around the country.
- Authorize a new microloan program, to enable young and beginning farmers to better access FSA loan programs.
- Revise FSA rules to make loan programs more accessible to more young and beginning farmers.
- Reaffirm the existing cost share differential for BFRs within EQIP. Also, reaffirm the advance payment option allowing beginning and socially disadvantaged producers to receive an advance payment for the project's costs for purchasing materials or contracting services, but increase the limit on the advance payment from 30 percent to 50 percent of costs.
- Amend the Farm and Ranch Land Protection Program (FRPP) to make farm viability part of the purpose of the program and to give discretionary authority to the eligible entities that implement the program to give priority to easements with an option to purchase at the agricultural use value, deals that transfer the land to beginning and farmers and ranchers, applicants with farm succession plans, and other similar mechanisms to maintain the affordability of protected land.

These and other provisions within the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act will help new growers succeed and I urge you to include them in the next farm bill.

Sincerely,

REBECCA ECHEVARRIA,

[Redacted],

Pleasantville, NY.

COMMENT OF CYNTHIA ECKROTH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:51 p.m.

City, State: Los Lunas, NM

Occupation: Retired Social Worker

Comment: Dear Members of the House Committee on Agriculture:

I support the full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286) and the implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236); maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

I also support the full funding of conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and that all enrollments in any new insurance subsidies are directly tied to compliance with conservation programs.

For too long my government and yours has supplied tax funds to the huge farms that use pesticides to grow our food. Congress and other government officials say that you want to create jobs and put our economy in a situation that is good for the majority of the citizens of the U.S. We can do this by giving subsidies to small farmers who grow food that does not need to be transported across the country using our resources that could be used for other opportunities. People and communities do support local farmers and ranchers who grow healthy food which is supported in fact by how much the organic and farmers' markets have grown in the U.S.

Please explain to me how each of you can vote to slash \$33 billion from the food stamp program while not touching the farm subsidies? And how can you vote to cut \$4 million from the organic research funding and cut funding to support Beginning Farmers in 1/2? What is your reasoning for taking money that supports people who are struggling to give to people who are getting empowered from my and others' taxes who don't care about the public's welfare or health.

I am a farmer's daughter who grows a garden. Please support our small farmers and our organic food industry. Please do not vote just to support those individuals and corporations who donate large amounts to you individually and to your political party. Please vote as if you were concerned for each and every tax payer and voter in your districts.

COMMENT OF MARIANNE EDAIN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:37 p.m.

City, State: Langley, WA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Other

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Farm bills until now have more and more benefited enormous agribusiness companies which are the antithesis of family farming. The corporations abuse the land and the people who work for sub-minimal wages on these oversized, toxic chemical dependent operations. And congress has rewarded this antisocial behavior by crafting farm bills year after year to subsidize them.

What congress has not done is to support genuine family farms. These are small operations, generally with a number of crops, many of them using organic and sustainable methods of production. Somehow these farms do not qualify for our tax-supported subsidies.

There is something very wrong with this picture. Giant agribiz corporations are a part of the problem. Small family farms are very much a part of the solution. Please shift the farm bill to remove unnecessary support from already wealthy agribiz corporations and move that support to favor small, sustainable family farms.

A part of that support is ag research at the land grant colleges. At present much of that publicly supported research is focused on how to increase profits for agribiz. That focus needs to shift to support for organic methods of agriculture, to sustainable land use practices, and to educational support for young people wanting to get into farming.

It's our taxes you're allocating. Please do so in a way that benefits all of us.

COMMENT OF ANNA CLAIRE EDDINGTON

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 15, 2012, 3:15 p.m.

City, State: Little Rock, AR

Occupation: Writer

Comment: America needs a farm bill that drives innovation for tomorrow's farmers and food entrepreneurs—with our growing population, we cannot keep creating unhealthy lifestyles and should instead fund sustainable agriculture—agriculture that is created by food entrepreneurs. Investment in agricultural research is vital to continued productivity and innovation in growing and diverse sectors of American agriculture, such as organic agriculture.

COMMENT OF AMY EDELSTEIN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:36 p.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Cook/HR Specialist

Comment: I am disappointed to hear about some of the proposed cuts to beneficial farm bill programs. It seems that every time this bill is up for debate, the nutrition, conservation, and sustainability programs are threatened, while the industrial farming subsidies remain untouched. To me, this indicates a greater concern for the Big Agriculture corporations and lobbyists than for the health and well-being of the people.

I support the following, and I hope that the next farm bill will continue to fund them:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

COMMENT OF LYN ERIC EDGEL

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:23 a.m.

City, State: Republic, WA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Forestry, Fruits, Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Honorable Members of the House Committee on Agriculture,

The family farm is disappearing because USDA policies and procedures are skewed toward agribusiness. Especially vulnerable are organic farms. Please consider the health and well-being of our people and those who provide wholesome food to us.

Also, people have a right to know what they are putting in their bodies. Please pass legislation requiring the labeling of food as GMO or non-GMO.

Respectfully,

LYN ERIC EDGEL.

COMMENT OF KARIN EDGETT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:27 p.m.

City, State: Washington, D.C.

Occupation: Small Business Development

Comment: The house bill is killing off the last of our small farms. Small farms are sustainable food supplies, sustainable economic contributors. By making it impossible to maintain small farms (high fees and over regulation), you are forcing Americans into a slow decline of factory food that makes us sick, rising healthcare needs, and economic failure. Stop the bill or starve the people!

COMMENT OF EVELYN EDIGER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:40 p.m.

City, State: Omaha, NE

Occupation: Counselor

Comment: Healthy food is critical for good health, physically and mentally. Chemicals, pesticides, genetically modified seeds/foods all create many physical problems. Growing healthy food takes extra care and money. I encourage you to give help to these health conscious farmers who use methods that don't contaminate our food.

COMMENT OF MICHELLE EDMONSON

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 6:31 a.m.

City, State: Alexandria, VA

Occupation: Events Coordinator

Comment: I feel very strongly that organic products are essential. They keep my family healthy and I don't have to worry about poisoning my children. Taking away funds for research would be detrimental to our already unhealthy society.

COMMENT OF STEVE EDMUNDS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:41 p.m.

City, State: Berkeley, CA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Other

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Agribusiness is destroying small family farming, and threatening the safety of this planet. Farm policy should encourage small local farming operations that protect the environment.

COMMENT OF ANN EDWARDS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:17 a.m.

City, State: Muncie, IN

Occupation: IT Consultant

Comment: I would prefer to be a farmer but can't because the barriers to entry are too high. There are many like me that also can't break into farming because the cost and other barriers are too high. I also live in an area where good, clean food is very hard to find. I have an auto-immune disorder that is food-based so good, clean food is critical for my well-being yet scarce and limited where I live. Isn't it absurd that in this country, where freedom of choice is an oft touted right for all citizens, that we cannot grow what we want the way we want by whoever wants to grow?

Please help change this by supporting small farming operations, access to healthier foods, and sustainable farming practices.

COMMENT OF KAREN EDWARDS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:21 p.m.

City, State: Charlotte, NC

Occupation: Self-Employed

Comment: The farm bill has been in need of serious reform for some time. Organic farming & the access of **Healthy** food for **All** people needs to become a priority. I believe in helping small farmers & those who need it most, not just those who know how to work the system. I have an auto immune disease, & find it hard to ignore the mounting evidence that genetically modified foods & pesticides have been boldly linked to the cause & worsening of my condition. I am NOT on government assistance only because I have been blessed with a supportive family. I work when & as much as I am able, but it is rarely enough to afford to eat organic. If sustainable & organic farming can be further subsidized, it will become more affordable not only for the American consumers, but also for the farmers to invest in the infrastructure of sustainable, organic agriculture. For our health as a society, something must be done!

COMMENT OF MARK V. EDWARDS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:09 p.m.

City, State: Brunswick, GA

Occupation: Retired RN and PA

Comment: I have been able to turn my Diabetes around by searching out and consuming Free-range chickens and their eggs, Grass-fed Beef, and Bison, along with organic vegetables and fruits. Not to leave out, No More Sugar or Artificial Sweeteners. This country's health issues are a direct result of poor management of our resources and practices, and if not resolved will lead to all our demise by way of increased health issues overall. Please act responsibly and for the good of the public not the corporation. Thank you.

COMMENT OF BARBARA EFRAIMSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:19 p.m.

City, State: Waterloo, NY

Occupation: Telecommunications (Retired)

Comment: Please back agricultural programs that help elderly, children and families who are food insecure, such as SNAP and similar programs. Thank you.

COMMENT OF CAROL EICHELBERGER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 3:22 p.m.

City, State: Coker, AL

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Greenhouse/nursery, Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Please don't gut the beginning farmer and organic programs. Environmentally sound farming must be in our future. Farm subsidies take us back to a model that has failed to give us sustainable, local producers.

CAROL EICHELBERGER.

COMMENT OF DAVID EISBACH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:27 p.m.

City, State: San Jose, CA

Occupation: Realtor

Comment: The influence of big agribusiness is ruinous to the health interest of the Citizenry. We should be encouraging the growing of non-genetically altered crops. Crops organically grown and not imported from outside the U.S. We should give support to those growing vegetables, pesticide free and ripen naturally. School districts should be receiving locally grown produce and we should support that. We need to change this system.

COMMENT OF MIRA EL

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 1:02 a.m.

City, State: Mt. Shasta, CA

Occupation: Educator

Comment: We need to support small farmers and organic producers of all kinds. We need to make it easy for small dairy farmers to legally produce and sell their milk and milk products. Same goes for small meat producers. Small and local are the way to go, way more efficient than huge operations, and easier on the environment. get with the program!

COMMENT OF VIRGINIA ELANDT

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 1:16 p.m.

City, State: Roseburg, OR

Occupation: Community Organizer

Comment: Small farms and value-added food enterprise creates jobs and feeds rural communities. I urge you to support the food & farm bill and provide technical assistance and resources to food producers in our nation. The average age of today's farmer is 62, we need to support a new generation of farmers and ranchers!

Thank you,

VIRGINIA.

COMMENT OF SARA ELDRIDGE

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 12:10 p.m.

City, State: Seattle, WA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Field Crops

Size: 151-300 acres

Comment: Please make sure we have rights to seeds. Please ensure water rights for all people. Please forward green energy development. Please support soil conservation projects. Please support education for farmers. Please support organic farming development. Please do not promote genetically altered seeds and crops. Please help promote local, family farm development and co-op programs. Crop insurance with global warming is critical to farm family survival. Speed up studies of global weather patterns and plans for water rights and protection. Thank you.

SARA ELDRIDGE.

COMMENT OF MARLENE ELFERING

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:10 p.m.

City, State: Antioch, IL

Occupation: Accounting

Comment: I am in full support of family farmers and organic foods. I do believe that we are hurting our own bodies by polluting them with GMO's. Do you want your kids and grandkids to live a healthy lifestyle or do you want them to have unknown pollutants becoming toxic in their bodies. I understand that companies like Monsanto want to make money and enjoy a level of greed but this greed is at the expense of our health and our lives. Once again, I am in full support of family farmers and organic foods. Let's promote a healthy lifestyle in this county.

COMMENT OF ANDREA ELLIOTT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:01 p.m.

City, State: Copake, NY

Occupation: Acupuncturist

Comment: I want to eat organic and biodynamic food—that is not contaminated with GMO crops and Monsanto's chemicals. This is very important to me, and I want this choice. Please consider this. I believe it is a right.

COMMENT OF ANGELE ELLIS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:31 p.m.

City, State: Pittsburgh, PA

Occupation: Writer/Editor

Comment: As a super voter citizen and a consumer who prefers organic fruits and vegetables, I support America's farmers and farmworkers, and ask you to produce a fair farm bill with provisions for conservation and sustainable agriculture.

COMMENT OF CATHY ELLIS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:20 p.m.

City, State: West Chazy, NY

Occupation: Recreation Therapist

Comment: Stop supporting big ag and help the farmers who really need it—local, organic and sustainable farming. Get tougher on regulating growth hormones and genetically modified food and insist that food is labeled so that consumers know what they are getting. Our government supports big agriculture, which doesn't need the money, drives out smaller farmers and cares little for the environment or the health of the people buying their food. This is completely wrong.

COMMENT OF KATHRYN ELLIS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:55 a.m.

City, State: Otis Orchards, WA

Occupation: Disabled Grocery Clerk

Comment: Stop subsidies for big agribusiness that creates food with mountains of waste, tons of pesticides, destroying our land & water. Support family farms, regional, organic & sustainable practices. Cap crop insurance subsidies. We need more farmers & ranchers less giant corporations creating problems.

COMMENT OF MOLLY ELLIS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:06 a.m.

City, State: Lake Oswego, OR

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Fruits

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Please eliminate the subsidies to corn and soy in favor of supporting small local sustainable agriculture, those small farms on the edge that are the food security for our cities. Please label and discourage GMO modified crops.

COMMENT OF ZANDRA ELLIS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:29 p.m.

City, State: Desoto, TX

Occupation: Licensed Chemical Dependency Counselor—Intern

Comment: Eating healthy, well grown organic food is very important to me and my family. The power of the farm and being able to have a sustainable farm created a legacy in my family for generations to not only be educated, but gave us a connection to the land to truly care how our food is grown. Please pass tighter laws to

help return the power of farming back into the farmers hands and please pass laws that will allow individual farms be able to compete with large industrial farms.

COMMENT OF JAMES ELMORE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:30 p.m.

City, State: Riverside, CA

Occupation: Website Developer

Comment: What I love is going to the farmers' market or Trader Joe's and buying good, wholesome food. I care about organic, I eat vegetarian, I get excited making a raw meal. I love gardening, volunteer at community gardens, love seed catalogues, grow tomatoes in the backyard. Thank you for all your best efforts to ensure that the American citizen has access to real, healthy, affordable food regardless of where they are in the nation, that they know what they are eating. Thank you for farm diversity. I know it must be challenging with the monopoly mindset of big business to stick to your desire to be of service, but you know what happens at the end of monopoly—one guy wins, everyone else loses and the game is then over. Sustainability is all about keeping everyone in the game. Thank you.

Every blessing,

JAMES ELMORE.

COMMENT OF OBIORA EMBRY

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 12, 2012, 5:16 p.m.

City, State: Lexington, KY

Comment: I would like to see in the 2012 Farm Bill more support and financial funding (grants, subsidies, *etc.*) for small family farmers that grow diverse crops that feed people in their bioregion.

It should also be used to help keep family farms from being used for commercial development and should allow for interested small producers to acquire the farm to keep growing food on it.

COMMENT OF KAREN EMERSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:08 p.m.

City, State: Brandon, VT

Occupation: Homemaker, Gardener, Beekeeper

Comment: My husband and I have been gardeners since we were engaged 40 years ago. We have supported organic and biodynamic agriculture and been successful with those methods. The family farmers and small organic growers aren't destroying the environment, and they are building community with their customers. This model is not fueled by big business. The government should move away from funding big special interest agricultural companies that pollute and poison the Earth. We need to cherish our Earth rather than destroy it and the creatures that live on it.

COMMENT OF HEATHER EMERY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:05 p.m.

City, State: Bellingham, WA

Occupation: Teacher, Educational Program Director

Comment: I write to you in full support the full endorsement of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286). I urge you to act on behalf of your constituency of food producers and food consumers by endorsing this urgently needed piece of legislation.

It is imperative that Congress take immediate action to address the crisis of a shortage of opportunities for new farmers who face unreasonable hurdles in their quest to become part of the solution rather than sit idly by and watch the food system implode. You can do so by implementing all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236)

I also support the full funding of conservation programs such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and ask that Congress makes sure enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.

And last, but no means least, I support maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Please heed this request and the hundreds of thousands like it by standing up against the corporate interests of AgriBusiness and standing up FOR the community of individuals, families, neighbors, **People** who demand real reform. The people you represent demand a fair and healthy farm bill.

Thank you for your time.
Sincerely,
Heather Emery.

COMMENT OF JASON EMERY

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 2:37 p.m.
City, State: Punalu'u, HI
Comment: Farm lands are used by private, and/or business. The public eye or hand will rarely (if not never) benefit from land that of our state leases. Will the taxes that are paid ever seize the day where the vast lands that are leased be equal to the benefits of it being leased!

COMMENT OF WENDY EMLINGER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 1:58 a.m.
City, State: El Paso, TX
Occupation: Librarian
Comment: Please support organic farms that provide good healthful food. I'm extremely sensitive to chemical contaminants and really need a safe source of non-petroleum fertilized, pesticide-free foods. Perhaps in time we can encourage more farms to go organic and supply healthy food at reasonable prices for everyone. Currently I pay more for organic because I have to, but the selection is painfully limited.

Also, I hate to see what's being served for breakfast and lunch in our schools. No wonder the kids are plumping up. Don't you know that human growth hormone injected into cows so they'll make more milk, eventually makes it into the kids? Why do you think girls as young as 9 are starting their periods prematurely? Evil hormone fairies? Organic cattle and milk cows can't be given hormones so none is passed on to kids.

Please, protect our food chain, we're all dependent on it, even you.

COMMENT OF DAVID EMRICH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:07 p.m.
City, State: Talent, OR
Occupation: Graphic Designer
Comment: Would you eat the chemicals used in the production of non-organic food if they were extracted and put on a plate in front of you with a nice bottle of wine? I doubt you would, so why are we even wasting time arguing about this? Money's one thing, common sense is another; sometimes they go together but not in this case.

COMMENT OF SUSAN ENFIELD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:21 p.m.
City, State: Boulder, CO
Occupation: Editor
Comment: Check out this info graphic. *Plant the Plate* http://www.ucsusa.org/food_and_agriculture/solutions/big_picture_solutions/plant-the-plate.html*
The irony makes one gag. We are selling the health of our people to the highest bidders, and we end up paying again for all the health consequences of obesity and illness.

It's inexcusable, given government's supposed role as a caretaker/protector of its citizens, at the very least our national finances, which are going down the tubes largely due to ballooning health care costs.

Where is our quality of life? In the TV? In a fast food drive through or at Wal-Mart?

Re-learning the joys of fresh foods—and the health one's family experiences when they eat that way—is a simple. Low cost, high benefit quality of life measure. Americans deserve that much—not to be force-fed unhealthy foods that are killing us.

COMMENT OF ERICA ENG

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 13, 2012, 1:44 a.m.
City, State: Reno, NV

* The information referred to is retained in Committee file.

Occupation: Budget Analyst

Comment: I want to submit my opinion that you do **Not** cut funding for the SNAP program as part of the final farm bill. Also, I do not agree overall with the House's budget reconciliation efforts. The Budget Control Act was passed for a reason, and I support continuing those cuts, not the House coming up with a different plan. I think that is **Exactly** the kind of unnecessary government duplication and lack of bipartisan consensus that have many Americans frustrated with Congress. And I will remember your decision on this issue prior to your re-election Mr. Amodei.

Below is why the message I support from the Food Bank—it is also important to note that ½ of all NV gets from SNAP goes to children:

I am a supporter of the Food Bank of Northern Nevada. Right now, many families in our community are struggling. With increased demand for emergency food assistance, high food and gas prices, and declines in TEFAP commodities—a major source of the food we distribute—our food bank is having difficulty meeting the needs of our community. We need a strong farm bill to make sure that struggling families can put food on the table. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP. Our community cannot afford cuts to these programs.

COMMENT OF ANNA ENGDAHL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 4:54 p.m.

City, State: Hankins, NY

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Farms shouldn't be factories. We need to give more support to Family Farms not factory farms. Local sustainable farming is what I would like to see. Humane treatment of farm animals produces healthier meat, no antibiotics in feed that causes resistant strains of bacteria.

COMMENT OF LISA ENGELS

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 6:11 a.m.

City, State: Temecula, CA

Occupation: Homemaker

Comment: Please quit subsidizing GMO farming & CAFO's. Our family only eats organic produce & proteins. Yes, we eat less due to the expense but we are healthier than the average American. Stop wasting our tax dollars on bad farming methods. We support organic farming.

COMMENT OF GAIL ENGLAND

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:54 p.m.

City, State: Phoenix, AZ

Occupation: Medical Secretary, Homemaker, Care Giver

Comment: In order for our farmers and eaters to survive and thrive, we must have an "organic farm bill". Please consider this when voting Representative Gosar. Please take into consideration we the people who voted you in, live here and must maintain our food crops so we can be healthy and thrive.

Please,

Sincerely,

GAIL ENGLAND AND FAMILY.

COMMENT OF KATHLEEN ENGLAND

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 3:59 p.m.

City, State: Elkhorn, NE

Occupation: Retired RN/Teacher

Comment: We are such a generous nation—supporting countries and people abroad like no other nation in history but while this is remarkable, we cannot forget those at home who are less fortunate—our children and our seniors. Millions of households, often multigenerational, are having to make difficult choices every day about how they spend their meager incomes—do they eat or do they buy medications? There are many places for low income families to live, not always places we would take our families, many places to shop for hand-me down or used clothes, but very few places where they can get help with such necessities as food and medications. Community foodbanks may provide some help, but often restrict the amount and choices of commodities as they try to serve all who are in need. Are these folks

any less deserving of our help than the peoples of the world? You and I cannot judge why there is need in our state or nation, but we can do our best to help by continuing our programs at home to be certain that our children, our veterans on the street, and our seniors remain on the top of the list of those we help with basic necessities like food, medicines, clothing and basic supplies for living. We have the ability to do it, we must find the will to do it well and in such a manner that they can keep their pride and dignity.

COMMENT OF THOMAS ENGLAND, C.E.C., C.F.S.E.

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:24 p.m.

City, State: Zionsville, IN

Occupation: Chef Instructor/Local Foods Activist

Comment: Mr. Burton,

I have worked with farmers, chefs and consumers over the past 7 years in Indiana to develop a common language on Indiana produced foods. I have been shocked to hear so many row crop farmers talk about how they do not have a choice in what they grow. They would love to grow more non-traditional crops, but, the government has made that impossible with the subsidies. I would love to speak with you further about my experiences. Below is information about the farm bill that I stand behind:

As the committee considers the 2012 Food and Farm Bill, I urge you to:

- Support our fight against hunger by maintaining and strengthening critical nutrition programs in this time of unprecedented need. We must not solve our budget problems on the backs of those experiencing food insecurity, including our most vulnerable—our children, the elderly, and the disabled;
- Provide an even “plowing” field by fully funding programs that support beginning and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, organic farming, regional farm and food economies, and rural development. We need more farmers and ranchers, more sustainable food production, and more economic opportunity in our food system;
- Support family farmers that really need help, not the biggest farms that don’t: End subsidies (aka direct payments and countercyclical commodity programs), and replace them with loophole-free agriculture risk coverage. Additionally, implement a cap on crop insurance premium subsidies;
- Ensure that limited conservation funding maximizes lasting environmental benefits: Limit funds to Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) for animal waste management infrastructure by eliminating the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) Livestock Set-aside and protect the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) from disproportionate cuts, and improve it by ranking applications solely on their conservation benefits.

Chef THOMAS ENGLAND, C.E.C., C.F.S.E.
Ivy Tech Community College.

COMMENT OF RICHARD ENGLE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:48 p.m.

City, State: Berkeley, CA

Occupation: Business Owner

Comment: We have had decades of taxpayer subsidy for crops and foods that often poison us and our children or destroy the health of our natural world. We need to shift our power and money (both tiny compared to Big Ag in the current political system) toward a crop and food system that centers on people’s health and well being. This can be done with your firm stand against vested interests, and with loving concern for the people of this district, CA, and the U.S.

Thank you,

RICHARD ENGLE

COMMENT OF CARROLL ENGLISH

Date Submitted: Thursday, March 22, 2012, 4:53 p.m.

City, State: Cabery, IL

Occupation: Retired Teacher

Comment: To the House Committee on Agriculture:

I urge you to press for funding of these two Acts? **Local Farms, Food, And Jobs Act And Beginning Farmer And Rancer Opportunity Act.** To not re-fund and amplify funding for these two acts is to condemn our country to increased disaster! What future could there be in farming if these aren’t re-energized!

These acts are so needed to further protect our air, water, and soil, while at the same time, keeping local farmers operational. Agribiz has demonstrated how dangerous those operations are to public health. (The big infections start in agribiz operations—not in local food production!) Please find some will within yourselves to do **Something** valuable for the nation at large! Thanks you!

Why do you demand to know our total address, *etc.*? The days have come when it is intimidating to reveal all of our personal information before the government! CE.

COMMENT OF DORIS ENGSTROM

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 9:33 a.m.

City, State: Orlando, FL

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Our church is trying to meet the needs of the hungry in our area but the numbers continue to escalate. We count on the TEFAP foods to help fill the bags we pack. Without them, there would be a goodly number of elderly and children who would not have food.

May I respectfully suggest that you hold the line in your Committee. You are directly dealing with peoples' basic needs. I would further suggest that instead of continuing to look for cuts from those who desperately need our help, that you seriously ask those who have so much to share. Do we need to balance the budget and bring down the deficit, yes, but search your souls and consider what is really right. I really must ask . . . why, since the tax cuts are in place, do we have a jobs issue? Aren't the tax cuts hyped as going to correct all that? Since we have the tax cuts in place, why haven't they created jobs and why would the next round work any better.

Please do not short change TEFAP.

DORIS ENGSTROM.

COMMENT OF SUZANNE ENSER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:42 p.m.

City, State: Braintree, VT

Occupation: Conservation Biologist/Mother

Comment: Farm bill actions should support local farmers, honest conservation in action and real healthy food production.

Govt. dollars should not support big ag/big money; nor should it support Monsanto.

The farm bill should be about providing real food to real people.

COMMENT OF DIANE ENSIGN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:48 p.m.

City, State: Tucson, AZ

Occupation: Disabled Pro Photographer

Comment: It is essential that we protect our small farmers & our organic farmers. We need their diversity. I am outraged at the huge factory farms getting the subsidies when they torture the animals in horrid cages & totally unnatural conditions. It's so shameful. And such crowded conditions produce filth, stress, and disease all for profit only. Smaller farmers are much better caretakers of our health, their livestock & plants, & the Earth used for their product. They need help & we citizens (who have any cares about our own health & that of the livestock need them).

DIANE ENSIGN.

COMMENT OF NARCISSA ENZMANN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:13 p.m.

City, State: Whittier, CA

Occupation: Registered Dietitian

Comment: We need to reform the farm subsidy program, allow farmers to grow real food such as fruits and vegetable with the infrastructure to produce those foods. We need to put the health of our country ahead of corporate profits and say no more to Genetically Modified Organisms (GMO's) with have built-in chelating agents (that do not allow for vitamin and mineral absorption) and pesticides(Scott's Round-Up).

COMMENT OF SVETLANA EPSHTEYN

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 1:19 a.m.

City, State: Palmdale, CA

Occupation: Music Teacher

Comment: The consumers would like to have food that has all ingredients listed, that is organic and that supports soil conservation and not soil destruction. We want to have more small family farms, which we could trust and not some huge agricultural company which only has interest in their profits. Please, consider the best from other countries and not make this nation weaker because it consumes chemically poisonous food.

COMMENT OF NADIA ERAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:41 a.m.

City, State: Richmond, VA

Occupation: Clinical Research Associate

Comment: Please stop supporting factory farming and obesity in this country by subsidizing corn and soy. It makes junk food cheaper than real food and promotes factory farming by creating a cheap food product to feed animals. Please support small farms, reward organic local farm to family plans, and take a stand against the lobbyist and investment interests of the dairy and meat and factory farming groups because even though it generates cheap money, it is diluting the quality of life in this country. Healthcare is going up, health is declining, and Americans are looking worse than ever; $\frac{2}{3}$ of adults are obese and $\frac{1}{3}$ of children are obese—these are dangerous statistics and you have an obligation and a responsibility to do what's right, and not fold to money and politically generated interests. Thank you.

COMMENT OF JULIAN ERCEG

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:57 p.m.

City, State: Spring, TX

Occupation: Train Dispatcher

Comment: It is time to change agricultural policy in this country. Rather than the select few profiting at the overall expense of most, we can redesign our agricultural industry to raise the standard of living for most people and improve the health and environment of the country. The health epidemics in this country of obesity and diabetes and the decline of real rural America is enough evidence that we need a new and better way under which all will benefit.

COMMENT OF DAVE ERGO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:19 p.m.

City, State: Cotati, CA

Occupation: Financial Manager

Comment: For too long the farm bill has been unduly influenced by Big Ag, and we end up subsidizing food that in the long run is unhealthy for our population. Please reform the policies of our farm bill so that it serves the interests of the population, not the interests of corporations.

COMMENT OF CHRISTINE ERICKSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:20 p.m.

City, State: Ann Arbor, MI

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I would like a new farm bill to concentrate on helping the small family farm, instead of the "factory farm". Factory farming practices are ruining the small farmer, ruining the environment and producing a low-quality end product. **Save The Small Farms Please!**

COMMENT OF SARA ERICKSON

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 8:45 p.m.

City, State: Corona Del Mar, CA

Occupation: Researcher

Comment: Dear Committee,

I would like you to please consider the following items: Please support family farmers and limit subsidies to commodities. Please keep the nutrition of our children

as a top priority as this is where we will see the greatest return on our investment. No child in America should be hungry. Children need “real”, nutritious food including fruits and vegetables for their development.

Please limit funds to CAFOs and institutions that are damaging our health through environmental pollution.

Thank you,
SARA ERICKSON.

COMMENT OF JOAN ERLANGER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 10:51 a.m.

City, State: Lincoln City, OR

Occupation: Retired Physical Therapist

Comment: Please consider maintaining support for organic certification and education. Funding for megafarms should be balanced by funding for small family farms particularly those engaged in sustainable agricultural practices.

COMMENT OF TERRI ERNISSEE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:27 p.m.

City, State: Elkton, FL

Occupation: Graphic Designer

Comment: I am speaking for many local Floridians as well as Americans asking you to please work to turn our food supply around to local grown, sustainably harvested as available in all stores to all classes of people. The quality of food in America has changed over the last 15 years to have no nutritional value and is basically fake. Most of everything available actually makes us sick. In addition, so many people are unemployed because of the failing economy. I see a win-win resolve if there was incentive for locals everywhere to return to local farming. This would provide us all with healthier food and solve many employment problems. I am asking you to fight to change this so that local grown can become common-place and so we can all get back to basics again.

COMMENT OF IVY ERO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:18 a.m.

City, State: White Oak, PA

Occupation: Education Director

Comment: I ask that you pass the farm bill and do so with an increase in funds. Providing food for our families in need cannot be done effectively without the help of the Federal, state and local government.

Remember our children who go without the quantity of food they need on a daily basis to grow healthy and strong.

COMMENT OF ARTHUR ESCHENLAUER

Date Submitted: Sunday, April 29, 2012, 8:07 p.m.

City, State: Circle Pines, MN

Occupation: Software Developer

Comment: Congress should continually strive to streamline and strengthen the SNAP and TEFAP programs so that all eligible households can receive help without undue administrative red tape. 2010 census data show that 150 million of our people are poor or in poverty^{1*} because of unemployment, underemployment, or minimal compensation. From personal experience (past experience, thankfully), I know what it is like to be willing and able to work, with great skills, but to be looking for work month after month; the issue for the poor is not laziness or lack of accountability, it is lack of opportunity, lack of income, and sometimes bad luck.

It is a popular misconception that higher taxes discourage growth and, hence, investment and job creation. However, what discourages investment is the impression that it won't give good returns. People expect good returns and will invest when

*The information referred to is retained in Committee file.

¹Yen, Hope, *Census shows 1 in 2 people are poor or low-income*, <http://finance.yahoo.com/news/census-shows-1-2-people-103940568.html>

“Squeezed by rising living costs, a record number of Americans—nearly 1 in 2—have fallen into poverty or are scraping by on earnings that classify them as low income. . . . Many formerly middle-class Americans are dropping below the low-income threshold—roughly \$45,000 for a family of four—because of pay cuts, a forced reduction of work hours or a spouse losing a job.”

growth is high; since World War II, periods of growth in fact were higher when taxes were high.^{2-3*} When people are healthy and can buy what they need to survive, their spending drives growth, which in turn gives investors the impression that they can profit, driving them to invest. Thus, wisely spent taxes actually encourage (albeit indirectly) investment and job creation.

It is unconscionable that we would let adults or children suffer inadequate nutrition as a result of budget cuts; please recall that malnutrition has life-lasting physiological effects on a developing child's brain and body. The root cause of our debt problem is not that we have spent too much on so-called "entitlement programs"; rather, our recent trillion-dollar wars in Afghanistan and Iraq were paid for by borrowing instead of taxes.^{4*} It is very unfair to ask those who literally do not have enough to eat to make sacrifices to reduce or service this debt that we chose to incur by choosing not to raise taxes to pay for armed conflict.

If budget cuts must be made, they should not be made on the backs of the poor. Indeed, it is more likely that improving the lot of the poor will bring us out of economic stagnation sooner. But a better reason for helping the poor is that our nation and its government is bound to put Micah 6:8 into practice, "And, what does the Lord require of you? To act justly, and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God."

COMMENT OF RONALD ESQUERRA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:46 p.m.

City, State: Munising, MI

Occupation: Gaming Dealer

Comment: We desperately need a farm policy that focuses on the health of the American people. Have the courage to stand against the agri-industry leeches like Monsanto and support an organic farm bill.

SUBMITTED STATEMENT BY ESSEX COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

New Farm Needs Essex County, New York

1. Funding for Conservation Technical Assistance—There is a critical need for funding for staffing especially engineering to address a back log of engineering on farm bill funded projects from the 2008 Farm Bill. Additional resources are needed to get the projects on the ground in a timely manner.
2. Funding for High Tunnels, Irrigation management and grazing system management to assist new farmers in protecting the Lake Champlain Basin and meet the demands of the local foods market in northern New York.
3. Funding for forestry practices to keep forestry as a resource management tool and still protect our Lake Champlain watershed. We need to fund additional forestry practices to better manage the vast forestry resource in the Adirondack region and provide economic benefit to the region.
4. Additional resources for Green Energy to assist in making our energy resources local and protect the Adirondacks from further damage through acid rain by reducing the use of fossil fuels.

²Linden, Michael, *The Myth of the Lower Marginal Tax Rates*, <http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/2011/06/marginal-tax-charticle.html>

"The central tenet of modern conservative economics is that a lower top marginal tax rate will result in more growth, and these numbers do show conclusively that history has not been kind to that theory."

³Reich, Robert, *Why we would benefit from higher taxes on the rich*, <http://www.kansascity.com/2012/04/17/3560804/robert-reich-why-wed-benefit-from.html>

"Taxes were far higher on top incomes in the 3 decades after World War II than they've been since. The top marginal rate was over 70 percent. Even after deductions and credits, rich Americans paid an effective tax rate of over 50 percent. And the distribution of income was far more equal than it has been since. Yet the American economy grew faster in those years than it's grown since Ronald Reagan slashed tax rates on top earners in 1981. This wasn't a post-war aberration. Bill Clinton raised taxes on the wealthy in the 1990s, and the economy produced faster job growth and higher wages than it did after George W. Bush cut taxes on the rich in his first term."

Editor's note: the above referenced link is no longer available.

⁴Bartlett, Bruce, *The Cost of War*, <http://www.forbes.com/2009/11/25/shared-sacrifice-war-taxes-opinions-columnists-bruce-bartlett.html>

"George W. Bush initiated two major wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, but adamantly refused to pay for either of them by cutting non-military spending or raising taxes. . . . In 1950 and 1951 Congress increased taxes by close to 4% of GDP to pay for the Korean War, even though the high World War II tax rates were still largely in effect. In 1968, a 10% surtax was imposed to pay for the Vietnam War, which raised revenue by about 1% of GDP."

COMMENT OF SUSAN ESTRELLA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:28 p.m.

City, State: San Diego, CA

Occupation: Writer

Comment: Support organics and more humane farming. Please focus on creating a healthier, cleaner and more sustainable environment using LESS chemicals and MORE respect for nature. We have all suffered enough from dangerous pesticides and fertilizers. They may be profitable, but the health costs in the long run are sky high! Mistreating animals in the name of profits is also very costly in terms of health and other negative repercussions. Thank you for changing the focus to benefit humans instead of only making profits for the wealthy corporations.

COMMENT OF ANGELA ESTRELLO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:42 p.m.

City, State: Converse, TX

Occupation: Oil and Gas Data Analyst

Comment: Concerns for the next farm bill:

A couple things I can specifically say I want to see are:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

I would like the next farm bill to truly protect family and small farms and not cater to large business/agriculture. Help the local farmers keep their businesses and be able to prosper. Truly look out for their well being and assist them.

I would like to know that organic and/or sustainable farming and **Non-GMO** farming is going to be a priority in being protected and made more cost effective for both farmers and consumers. Whole foods are the key to good health and genetically modified foods are not helping our country's health at all.

I would like to know that funding is not going to be cut for nutritional programs, conservation programs, organic farming and small/family farms.

I would also like to know that Monsanto (or any other corporate/agricultural giant holds no sway on any decisions made regarding the new farm bill. The good of the **People** needs to be the full focal point and not how many pockets are going to be lined from legislation driven by self gain from share holders or any other financial beneficiary.

I want to know that small farms and family farms will not be allowed to be bullied by **Any** government entity or corporate giant.

I want to know that family owned and small farms will be protected from hasty search and seizure actions and will be afforded their true rights . . . no more going in and confiscating live stock and/or crops without warning or warrant.

I want **Raw** food protected. It is my decision how I want to prepare my food. I do not want protectants applied nor do I want anything "blanched" . . . allow me, the consumer, to be responsible for the proper preparation of my food. Stop taking away my options for **Real, Raw** food (including all meats, fruits, veggies, nuts, seeds, dairy, eggs, *etc.*). Stop encouraging the production of "super foods" with genetic modification . . . and allow me to decide if I want GMO, standard or organic products by requiring them to ALL be labeled appropriately (especially GMOs . . . this needs to be **Clearly** displayed on **All** GMO foods).

Please, do what is right for the **People** not corporate pockets. Protect the little people from the giants who truly do not have their best interest in mind. Put yourself in the position of a farmer and truly think of what would help you the most . . . what would help your family most . . . what would ensure the future of your farm . . . and what would be most beneficial to any who would consume your product. I do not want Frankenfood and I do not want any farm to have to sell out in order to stay in business. Stop taking Monsanto's side . . . this company is slowly killing our health and our way of life.

COMMENT OF LEILANI ETTER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 9:03 a.m.

City, State: Kalispell, MT
Producer/Non-producer: Producer
Type: Specialty Crops
Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Please stop the continuing support of huge industrial agribusiness, instead approve continued support of organic research, small farms and community gardens.

COMMENT OF STEPHANIE ETTINGER DE CUBA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:03 p.m.

City, State: Boston, MA

Occupation: Researcher: Health and Nutrition, Children's HealthWatch

Comment: Dear Members of the House Committee on Agriculture,

In response to the opportunity to submit feedback on the farm bill via the House Committee on Agriculture's website, we, as pediatricians and public health researchers with Children's HealthWatch, are writing to express our deep concern about the cuts to SNAP passed in the recent House budget bill, their impact on the farm bill and ultimately the implications for the health of children and families across the nation. Children cannot eat retroactively—if we do not nourish them in the right biological timeframe, opportunities for the full potential of brain and body development are lost. SNAP is an essential public health program and must be strengthened and protected so that it can ensure that families in need have enough to eat.

The SNAP Vaccine: Boosting Children's Health

In February of this year Children's HealthWatch published a report called *The SNAP Vaccine: Boosting Children's Health** in which we demonstrated the positive impact that the receipt of SNAP has on children's health and development.

The report can be found at: http://www.childrenshealthwatch.org/upload/resource/snapvaccine_report_feb12.jpg.pdf.

Specifically we found that, compared to children whose families were likely eligible for but did not receive SNAP, children whose families received SNAP were significantly less likely to be at risk of developmental delays and less likely to be underweight (a sign of under-nutrition). Children whose families receive SNAP were also more likely to live in food secure households and to be child food secure. In other words, their families were more likely to be able to afford enough food for the whole household.

Food insecurity's harmful effects on young children's health have been well documented—compared to similar children in food-secure households, food insecure children are: 90% more likely of having their health reported as "fair/poor", 31% more likely to have been hospitalized since birth, 140% more likely to experience iron deficiency anemia and 66% more likely to be at developmental risk. Given this, Children's HealthWatch research results demonstrate SNAP's protective effect and important role as a health program.

While Children's HealthWatch focuses our research on young children, food insecurity's effect is felt by children of all ages. Food security has negative influence on school-age children's physical and mental health and academic achievement. As doctors, we know that treating vulnerable children with a preventative food "vaccine", protects families and is a common-sense, cost-effective intervention. The economic cost of ill health is large, for example, pediatric hospitalizations cost an average of \$6,000 per visit. Kids with developmental delays are more likely to need special education; special education costs twice what taxpayers pay for regular public education. Using a conservative estimate of costs from FY 2001, special education can cost an additional \$72,000 per child over the course of twelve years of schooling.

SNAP Is a Good Vaccine—Dose Is Too Low

SNAP is a good vaccine for protecting children's health, but the dose is too low to buy the nutrient-rich foods that help children and families stay healthy. In 2009 the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) increased SNAP benefits by a minimum of 13.6 percent, the equivalent of \$80 per month for a family of four. Children's HealthWatch research showed that after the ARRA increase, children in families receiving SNAP were more likely to be classified as 'well' than those children whose families were likely eligible for but not receiving SNAP.

The importance of the benefit level is supported by other research. For instance, a recent study by Jilcott and colleagues demonstrated that women whose families received more than \$150 in SNAP benefits per household member had lower BMIs

*The information referred to is retained in Committee file.

than those who received less than \$150 per household member. This indicates that individuals with higher benefit levels are more able to purchase healthy food throughout the month—thus buffering women from food insecurity’s negative health effects.

Moreover, as one of the four national food plans set forth by the USDA, the Thrifty Food Plan serves as the basis for the maximum SNAP allotment, although it never was intended to be used as a plan for long-term consumption. In 2008, Children’s HealthWatch examined the affordability and accessibility of items on the Thrifty Food Plan in four low-income Boston and Philadelphia neighborhoods. While SNAP is intended to be a supplemental nutrition program, for those families receiving the maximum benefit, SNAP is acknowledged to be the primary source of money for food. Therefore we used the maximum benefit as the basis for our cost assessment.

On average, the maximum SNAP benefit for a family of four fell short by \$196 per month, or \$2,352 per year—an amount no family receiving the maximum benefit (by definition, these are the families with the fewest resources) could ever hope to afford. The ARRA benefit increase took a significant positive step, narrowing this gap by \$67 per month in Philadelphia; however, a substantial gap of \$129 per month remains.

Current Proposals Put the Health, Development and Future Potential of Children in Jeopardy

We wrote to you in February 2012 to inform you of our research findings and warn of the severe harm that will come to SNAP participants, especially families with young children, if cuts and changes go into effect. That letter can be accessed at: http://www.childrenshealthwatch.org/upload/resource/houseagcommltr_heateat_feb12.pdf.*

As health researchers and professionals, we feel it is crucial that the basic needs of America’s next generation of leaders are met so they can develop to their full potential and contribute to the workforce of tomorrow. We must act now to ensure that we invest in our most precious natural resource: our children.

1. SNAP’s structure, which causes it automatically to expand with rising need and shrink as the economy improves and families’ earnings increase, must remain in place.
2. Connections with other programs that streamline processes and reach those most in need, such as Heat and Eat, are essential and must be preserved
3. SNAP benefits must match the cost of healthy food.
 - a. The ARRA benefit level improvements must be maintained.
 - b. It is time to replace the Thrifty Food Plan with the Low-Cost Food Plan as the basis for the maximum SNAP benefit because the Low-Cost Food Plan is a more accurate reflection of food pricing in struggling urban and rural communities

Thank you very much for your time and consideration.
Sincerely,

JUSTIN PASQUARIELLO,
Executive Director, Children’s HealthWatch.

Please contact Stephanie Ettinger de Cuba, Research and Policy Director, for further information. [Redacted]

Children’s HealthWatch is a pediatric research center that monitors the health and well-being of young children living in low-income households. Since 1998, more than 45,000 caregivers of young children have been interviewed in primary care clinics and emergency departments throughout the country as part of our research. Our research sites are in Baltimore, Boston, Little Rock, Minneapolis, and Philadelphia.

COMMENT OF ALVIN EVANS

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 15, 2012, 12:03 p.m.

City, State: Mantua, NJ

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Farm subsidies need to be offered only to small farms, not large corporate farms which don’t need it and only add to the deficit. SNAP must not be cut. The poor and disadvantaged need more help not less.

*The information referred to is retained in Committee file.

COMMENT OF DIANNE EVANS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:56 p.m.
City, State: Honokaa, HI
Occupation: Business Owner
Comment: I am worried about the future of food for my children and my grandchildren. No GMOs! No Chemicals including hormones and antibiotics should be allowed in our food! Organic—what our grandparents called food!

COMMENT OF JESSICA EVANS

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 7:16 p.m.
City, State: Santa Cruz, CA
Occupation: Homemaker
Comment: I am a married mother of two young boys. Our family lives in Santa Cruz, CA, where we are blessed to be surrounded by agriculture. We see firsthand how the use of pesticides damages the health of farmworkers, and we also see firsthand that organic agriculture does work and can be cost effective.

I am writing to tell you that I support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

It is time for a farm bill that will really help America, not just the pocketbooks of corporate agriculture companies. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

JESSICA EVANS.

COMMENT OF JOY EVANS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:33 p.m.
City, State: Birmingham, AL
Occupation: Registered Nurse
Comment: Keep it clean and get rid of these pesticides and antibiotics that are **Killing Us** and our **Children**. I am a nurse at a Children's Hospital and a health freak. Children's brain tumors are at a astronomical high. Almost always you can trace these poor kids to some chemical exposure with most living near farms, cotton fields and our absolutely disgusting poisoned food supply . . . The parents are the ones also who made me aware of this, they are convinced that these chemicals caused the tumors and I am too. You know it too. It is called **Greed** from the FDA on down to our government. How any of the guilty can sleep at night is beyond me. Knowing you are harming people all in the name of Capital Greed and money!

COMMENT OF MORGAN EVANS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:31 p.m.
City, State: Newville, PA
Occupation: Webmaster
Comment: We need to help our family farms, particularly those engaged in organic production practices. Too often the large government subsidies end up in the hands of the large factory farms, whose primary motivation is profit rather than quality healthful food products. Please do what's right for my neighbors and other small farmers across the country. Thank you.

COMMENT OF JOSEPHINE EVATT

Date Submitted: Thursday, March 22, 2012, 6:48 p.m.
City, State: Mount Vernon, MO
Occupation: Retired Nurse
Comment: How can the Congress blame the poor for losing jobs and needing to get food during the recession by cutting food safety programs like SNAP and TEFAP. These are in place for a reason and when they had to be used during the recession by many people who are not normally in need the Congress decides to cut money to the programs? How does that make sense. Our food pantry numbers dou-

bled during the recession and are just now starting to drop a little. Our small church and community cannot pick up the slack without help. Please don't leave families without the protection and support these programs provide to families.

The children and elderly that suffer. Keep these programs strong.

COMMENT OF MARILYN EVENSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:55 p.m.

City, State: Tacoma, WA

Occupation: Retired Nurse

Comment: The farm industry needs to be reformed. Independent farmers need help. The huge agribusiness with its factory farms should not receive big subsidies. It is animal cruelty at its worst & produces unsafe food for people. Non-animal farms should be encouraged. Fruits & vegetables & whole grains are the best nutrition for people, not animal products. Vast factory farms pollute our already stressed Earth.

Please help the small farms & not big agribusiness.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF BETH EVERETT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:24 p.m.

City, State: Scottsbluff, NE

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Field Crops, Greenhouse/nursery, Livestock, Specialty Crops

Size: 301–500 acres

Comment: From a Nebraska farm, 492 acres. That is small. We are certified organic. We are very careful with our produce. Please do not make small farms use the regs as the large ones.

COMMENT OF ED EVERETT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:33 a.m.

City, State: Somerville, MA

Occupation: Assistant Manager

Comment: Instead of subsidizing things like corn, can we offer subsidies for healthy foods (leafy greens, *etc.*)? Also, shouldn't the government be more concerned about factory farming, and the conditions of these types of establishments? I'd like to know where the food (that is most likely) ending up in restaurants and on my plate comes from.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF KEITH FABING

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 2:40 p.m.

City, State: Seattle, WA

Occupation: Senior Citizen

Comment: Older American's struggles with hunger are often invisible. It's too easy for members of Congress to direct expenditure of their Political Capital away from addressing how many seniors have serious trouble accessing the food and nutrition they need to survive and thrive. Often, they are forced to make difficult decisions between food, paying for the obscene cost of high profit margin medicines and their supplemental health insurance premiums/deductibles/copays, or paying their utilities or rent. Don't ever forget—**Seniors Vote!** And they **Pay Attention** if their congressional representatives safeguard this most basic of safety nets or choose to toss seniors under the bus hoping that they die early and reduce entitlement costs.

We Are Watching Very Closely!

As a nation, we owe a great deal to the generations that helped build this country—we simply cannot allow one of our most vulnerable populations to suffer in silence any longer.

Cuts to SNAP (food stamps) would further limit access to the food and nutrition programs that millions of older Americans rely on. Meanwhile, the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP), which provides monthly boxes of food to low-income seniors, faces its own funding threats. These issues matter. What will seniors do if they no longer have access to these vital programs? **Please Support These Vital Safety Net Programs Before Casting Yet Another Vote On Yet Another Wasteful And Corrupt White Elephant Military Program That Largely**

Serves To Line The Pockets Of The Usual Cast Of Old Boy Military Contractors And Their K Street Lobbyists.

COMMENT OF LAUREL FACEY

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 7:49 a.m.

City, State: Millers Falls, MA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Specialty Crops

Size: 50–150 acres

Comment: The issue that is of primary importance is food for good health. It is not to make farmers or corporations rich. We must have clean water and healthy soil, which will depend on getting away from toxics of all kinds. Bees in particular need a healthy environment, and this should always be the focus. We share this planet with other living organisms and we are all interdependent. Poisoning one species invariably leading to the demise of others. We must learn to legislate for sustainability.

COMMENT OF BRAD FAHSEL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 11:37 a.m.

City, State: Schenectady, NY

Occupation: Librarian

Comment: America needs a farm bill that makes healthy food widely available to all Americans—including schoolchildren! We must provide flexibility for states to use existing food procurement programs to purchase fresh, healthy food from local farmers and ranchers. And support small family farms that care about the quality of food that ends up on our tables!

COMMENTS OF KATHY FAIRCHILD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012 10:35 a.m.

City, State: Westby, WI

Occupation: Conservationist/Clerical Worker

Comment: We must turn the tide with Ag policy. The fact that Federal subsidies of commodity crops have our children obese and ill while consuming very little “real” food should be enough to teach the government something. The fat cats at ADM and other corporations must be cut off so that resource conservation and healthy agriculture can be implemented & expanded.

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:59 a.m.

Comment: The farm bill has got to take a turn for the better or we are all going to suffer. Please act responsibly and step away from the Big Ag driven *status quo*. We need a new future. Thank you.

JOINT COMMENT OF ERIN FAIRWEATHER AND TIMMY SPERLING

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 9:15 p.m.

Names: Erin Fairweather and Timmy Sperling

City, State: Colorado Springs, CO.

Occupations: Massage Therapist, Coffee Roaster.

Comment: Our land is our life. We want our tax dollars to be invested in healthy eating & a cleaner environment. Let's be a self-sustaining country & give the jobs back to the farmers! Let's build our country back up **From Within** beginning with our own sacred agricultural land, by using Organic and Non-GMO farming systems, & by putting good farmers into a place of high value. Let's feed ourselves & even export our goods again! There's no reason everyone in the USA should not be eating and have food on their plates.

“We the people” are for eradicating all GMO's completely from our food system. GMO's in our crops/foods are an absolute crime against humanity and nature. It must be implemented ASAP that all GMO foods be labeled as so; it is our right. Let's stop filling our grocery stores with hybrids and irradiated vegetation. Let's focus on growing heirloom varieties, instilling organic farming practices & replenishing our soil. Please clean up our land of that is wrought with pesticide & GMO contamination. It is beyond obvious that soil and river contaminations have led to rising rates in cancer & disease. It is an element which our country was founded on to cherish the land of this incredible North America. Please don't make decisions without regarding your very own seeds' future—that of your children and grandchildren tenfold.

Please do not dare limit funding to any farmer who is growing **Your** very food. Please we urge you to represent your people with vigor & viability in this matter. Also there is no excuse for there to be any delay in changing our system immediately. Push this so that it doesn't get stuck in any inexcusable bureaucratic delay.

"We the people" are for an Organic Farm Bill:*

<http://www.nytimes.com/roomfordebate/2012/02/21/the-farm-bill-beyond-the-farm/we-need-an-organic-farm-bill>

<http://fooddemocracynow.org/blog/2012/feb/25/tell-congress-i-want-an-organic-farm-bill/?akid=556.381381.ih0dtO&rd=1&t=9>

"We the people" are for a Healthy Food Bill:

<http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2012/04/27/IN8C108LBD.DTL>

COMMENT OF ROBERT FARACE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:26 p.m.

City, State: Clinton, CT

Occupation: Editor

Comment: No doubt you're hearing comments regarding the importance of organic and healthy foods, and I agree with those needs and the needs to protect our food supply from corporate profit-driven manipulation.

However, I would also like you to consider that healthy, wholesome food is truly a part of our healthcare as well. If we stop eating so many chemicals and genetically modified foods, maybe we won't have to take so many pharmaceuticals and burden the healthcare system in order to remedy the results.

Thanks you.

COMMENT OF CANDACE FARLEY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:43 a.m.

City, State: Napa, CA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: We need small farms to keep families and communities better fed with less environmental impact. Please support **Healthy** farming practices and ensure that mass producers do not destroy the land OR provide un safe foods by using pesticides that hurt our environment and those who consume them. This affects all of us—including you and your family.

COMMENT OF EUGENE S. FARLEY

Date Submitted: Wednesday, April 18, 2012, 5:06 p.m.

City, State: Verona, WI

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables, Other

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Thanks to the USDA support for the training of **Disadvantaged And Minority Farmers** the Farley Center (www.farleycenter.org) in partnership with Community Groundworks has developed and implemented a very successful Farm Incubator for disadvantaged and minority farmers. This program provides these individuals onsite education, training and hands on practical experience for success in farming. The program prepares new farmers in sustainable agricultural practices needed for the production of locally grown fresh vegetables for the local market.

We urge you to continue to fund the very successful programs for encouraging, preparing and developing new farmers from population groups that usually do not have access to such training and the development of the business skills needed to facilitate their continued success.

Thanks for considering continued support of a very successful bill.

My best to you,

EUGENE S. FARLEY,
Exec. Dir.,
 The Farley Center,
 [Redacted],
 Verona WI,
 [Redacted].

*The information referred to is retained in Committee file.

COMMENT OF FRAN FARMER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:07 p.m.

City, State: Ira, TX

Occupation: Banker

Comment: I cannot tell you how important it is for our government to encourage farmers across the country to produce foods that are organic and to control the chemicals that are being used on the foods we consume. The health of this country depends on the actions you take. Please be responsible as you consider the decisions you make.

COMMENT OF STU FARNSWORTH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:40 p.m.

City, State: Eagan, MN

Occupation: Retired

Comment: **Stop** the \$\$\$ giveaways to Corporate farms and agribusiness! They are poisoning Our World. When we only had family farms there were never outbreaks of *E. coli* and other dangerous farm produced diseases. We were able to eat raw eggs and drink milk right from the cow. We didn't have overuse of antibiotics or growth hormones. **Now** is the time to **Stop** the **Greed** and get back to the grass and nature.

COMMENT OF ALONNA FARRAR

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 4:55 a.m.

City, State: Vista, CA

Occupation: Graphic Specialist

Comment: My husband produces organic mushrooms, not button. We have a large garden—organic. We buy what we can't grow from organic suppliers. Anything else is poison and will get worse if you let Monsanto, Dow, Bayer and any of the other chemical poison producers have their way. The American public and animals everywhere are slowly and not so slowly being poisoned. GMO crops are failing. We must support organic agriculture.

COMMENT OF JAMES FARRELLY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:48 a.m.

City, State: Hanover, PA

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: If we can't count on agribusiness which is both successful and healthy for farmers and the nation they feed, we are cooked. Safe, green, sustainable applies not only to our energy policy **But Also** our food production from seed to feed to table. Got it?

COMMENT OF CARL FARRINGTON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:46 p.m.

City, State: Dublin, CA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: The welfare of all Americans and of peoples in other lands will be highly dependent on a farm bill that supports good nutrition particularly of school children and the indigent, supports soil conservation, aids agriculture in Third World countries, and drastically reduces subsidies for ethanol, corn, cotton and dairy products.

COMMENT OF PATTI FARRIS

Date Submitted: Thursday, April 19, 2012, 10:46 p.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Homemaker

Comment: I am very concerned about plans to reduce the amount of land protected by the Conservation Reserve Program. We don't need more GMO's, we don't need more Monsanto dominated, pesticide laden, unsustainable agriculture. We need more habitat, more small family farms, more pollinators and other wildlife.

COMMENT OF JULIE G. FARRIS, S.N.S.

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 16, 2012, 11:53 a.m.

City, State: Rockwall, TX

Occupation: School Nutrition Director

Comment: The farm bill must support the production of healthy foods, and their transport to local hubs. Identify and fund ways for fresh foods to get to more people. A healthy nation requires healthy food.

The Bill needs to provide funding to support the people of our nation most in need of nutritional support—children and elderly—through continuation of the SNAP and TANF programs, as well as school meal programs and Meals on Wheels type of programs.

And if at all possible, provide guidance for USDA to modify the current meal pattern to provide for clarity and efficiency.

Thank you for this consideration.

JULIE G. FARRIS, S.N.S.

COMMENT OF PATRICIA FARROW-BOWEN

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 7:57 p.m.

City, State: Stanwood, WA

Occupation: Retired on SSA Disability

Comment: We all remember the debacle of the finally passed last farm bill. Let's hope to be on the top of the mountain this time around. Hunger in America has not been so great in my lifetime and Sr. Citizens such as myself and children are so in need. Please do all you can to see that the programs that we as well as those who are trying to keep food on our tables are well funded.

COMMENT OF HARRIET FASENFEST

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 11:08 p.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Dear Chairman Lucas, The very plain fact is . . . access to land (good, affordable, unencumbered land) has always challenged the small farmer. Those challenges are written in our agricultural history and I doubt anyone involved in crafting the new farm bill is unaware of them. Today we have an opportunity to rewrite a bit of that history. We can turn back the systems that have favored big commodity farmers and “middlemen” given to exports, and who, along with lobbyist efforts, have long directed policy in this country. My hope is that those interested in helping the small farmer today will not only offer low interest loans for land (or a modern homesteading act), but assist in all aspects of production, distribution and market access. Being “small” in an agricultural system designed for “big” is more than an ideological position. It has very challenging economies of scale. Continuing to favor the status quo might win the support and approval of the status quo but **It Will Not** allow for a small farming renaissance in this country. You know that, I know that, and anyone who is involved in agriculture knows that. So please act as if you really want them to succeed. I'm quite sure it is not a matter of not knowing what needs to be done but having the grit to do it. So please **Grit Up!**

Sincerely,

HARRIET FASENFEST—Householder.

COMMENT OF JIM FASSANELLA

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:29 a.m.

City, State: Middletown, MD

Occupation: Liquor Store Mang. Montgomery County Gov.

Comment: Our government cannot let the big buss. of ag. run ruff shod over our rights to have a safe and healthy source of food ava. to all citizens. I am an avid gardener and I am appalled at the way that the large ag. company's have monopoly. What and variety of plants and seeds that are available to purchase. and the way they act like these products belong only to them when in reality the belong to our planet and we just happen to be living on it. We need to remember that when we are busy cow towing to these large ag. buss.

COMMENT OF BARBARA FATH

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 3:39 p.m.

City, State: Pleasant Plain, OH

Producer/Non-producer: Producer
Type: Specialty Crops
Size: Less than 50 acres
Comment: The U.S. Congress should support local, sustainable and organic agriculture. American consumers have a strong preference for this type of product and deserve your support. Thank you.

COMMENT OF JENNIFER FAUROTE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:18 p.m.
City, State: High Point, NC
Occupation: Stay-at-Home-Mom & Green MBA Student
Comment: It's time to end subsidies for Big Ag, and start investing the money into new projects, technologies, and producers that will result in healthy and sustainable food and food production. Monsanto, Perdue, Con Agra, et al., are only concerned with making money: as our elected representatives it is your job to take care of us, the people. Helping to ensure that sustainable agriculture practices (organic, aquaculture, multi-crop, *etc.*) become the norm instead of the exception will go a long way towards guaranteeing that our future generations have healthy, nutritious food and clean water.

COMMENT OF TERESA FAUVELL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:22 p.m.
City, State: Little Neck, NY
Occupation: Teacher
Comment: When will this country stop supporting Big Ag and the production of unhealthy food? Can't you see we are killing our planet? Can't you further see we are killing our children? I teach in NYC; children are overfed and undernourished. Can't you see what's happening to our country as a result of bad agricultural policies? Why don't we subsidize organic leafy greens and cruciferous vegetables instead of genetically modified corn and soy? **Wake Up!**

COMMENT OF TRACY FAVRE

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 11:48 p.m.
City, State: Granbury, TX
Occupation: COO
Comment: Dear Chairman Lucas,
 I am Chief Operating Officer for a nonprofit whose mission is "to educate people to manage land for a sustainable future". An important part of that future is the **Beginning Farmers** that are desperately needed to replace the current generation of aging farmers! We are currently engaged in a multi-state program to train beginning women farmers as part of a USDA BFRDP grant. Without the financial support of that program, over 300 beginning women farmers in 7 states would not have received this vital training in Whole Farm Planning, which has a proven track record of helping ensure the success for new farmers. I ask that the Committee endorse all of the provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236), including:

- Mandatory funding for Individual Development Accounts at \$5 million per year. This program helps new farmers raise capital to start farm businesses and is tested and proven by organizations like Practical Farmers of Iowa and the California Farmlink.
- Mandatory funding for the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program at \$25 million a year. This program funds essential education for new farmers around the country. Authorize a new microloan program, to enable young and beginning farmers to better access FSA loan programs.
- Revise FSA rules to make loan programs more accessible to more young and beginning farmers.
- Reaffirm the existing cost share differential for BFRs within EQIP. Also, reaffirm the advance payment option allowing beginning and socially disadvantaged producers to receive an advance payment for the project's costs for purchasing materials or contracting services, but increase the limit on the advance payment from 30 percent to 50 percent of costs.
- Amend the Farm and Ranch Land Protection Program (FRPP) to make farm viability part of the purpose of the program and to give discretionary authority to the eligible entities that implement the program to give priority to easements

with an option to purchase at the agricultural use value, deals that transfer the land to beginning and farmers and ranchers, applicants with farm succession plans, and other similar mechanisms to maintain the affordability of protected land.

These and other provisions within the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act will help new growers succeed and I urge you to include them in the next farm bill. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony to the House Committee on Agriculture on the next farm bill. My district representative is being copied on this testimony.

Sincerely,

TRACY FAVRE,
COO,
Holistic Management International.

COMMENT OF BOB FAY

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 2:38 p.m.

City, State: St. Petersburg, FL

Occupation: Educator

Comment:

- In 2010, 7.9 percent of households with seniors (2.3 million households) were at risk of starvation;
- 30 percent of Feeding America's client households with seniors indicated that they have had to choose between food and medical care and 35 percent have had to choose between food and paying for heat/utilities;
- In 2009, nearly 9 million people over the age of 50 and nearly 4 million people over the age of 60 lived in at-risk households.

We must ensure hunger-relief programs remain protected so that seniors who worked their entire lives continue to have access to these vital programs.

COMMENT OF MICHAEL FAZZI

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 16, 2012, 9:55 a.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Sales Representative

Comment: Please continue to support the SNAP and TEFAP program funding. These programs offer food to the needy. In these tough times we are only one paycheck from homelessness and funding for SNAP and TEFAP may be the only way we can have enough food to feed our families. Your support is that important.

COMMENT OF PENNY FEE

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:51 p.m.

City, State: Sioux City, IA

Occupation: Retired Teacher

Comment: It is high time that we passed a farm bill that is not supportive of big ag! There needs to be real encouragement for young families to go into sustainable, healthy, humane production of livestock and crops. Perhaps there is an opportunity to offer some start-up incentives for returning military personnel who would like a chance to farm in a healthy family environment, with learning assistance on ag basics. Not working in confinement or big ag corporations, but a positive "back to the land" kind of environment that would help returning vets with stress and health issues. There is so much good land available for those who are willing to learn to work with animals and environment and to make a difference in America's food quality.

COMMENT OF THEODOR FEIBEL

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 1:38 a.m.

City, State: New York, NY

Occupation: Artist/Commercial Photographer

Comment: Industrial Agricultural Lobbyists do not have as a primary concern the optimal mental and physical efficiency of the society's human capital. Our 'human capital' is all. Without it we have not the wit to defend ourselves nor to compete in the economic arena. Being carbon based life-forms we depend on our nutrition and freedom of toxicity in the environment for our health (mental and physical) as well as optimal function. Concerns regarding agricultural processes that in evolu-

tionary time scales are very new indeed when compared to the age of our biological structure and DNA; is therefore not some 'new age fad' but a very real National Security concern.

COMMENT OF JOHN FEINBERG

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:55 a.m.

City, State: Boulder, CO

Occupation: Designer/Planner/Architectural Conservator

Comment: If one knows what is causing the premature death of millions of your countrymen, have the power to stop the cause, and do nothing about it, Are you not guilty of homicide?

Stop the plague of type II diabetes, do our utmost for everyone to have the knowledge and opportunity to eat right by crafting a best practices based farm bill. Thank you.

COMMENT OF JOHN FEISSEL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:04 p.m.

City, State: Philadelphia, PA

Occupation: Stable Hand

Comment: With too many reasons to submit, I will simply say it is vital that we support small family farms, and organic and sustainable methods. These are the best way to ensure the health of our citizens, communities, and economy.

COMMENT OF SHELA FELDT

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 5:52 p.m.

City, State: Olathe, CO

Occupation: Retired Self Sustaining Life Stylist

Comment: We the people need your help in this matter. Do **Not** allow giant commodity farmers and insurance companies to walk away with billions in taxpayer dollars!

COMMENT OF ANDREW FELGER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:31 p.m.

City, State: Penobscot, ME

Occupation: Produce Manager

Comment: My job is to sell organic produce. My customers want organic LOCAL produce. Currently state and Federal rules favor only large scale producers. This is not good for my customers, my growers or our local food system and economy. Our opinion is that these laws are neither fair nor necessary. Local food systems can be sustainable and safe. Let us work.

COMMENT OF LINDY FELIX

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 3:32 p.m.

City, State: Vesuvius, VA

Occupation: Holistic Health/Organic Gardner

Comment: I am hoping for politicians to rise in support of health. Real Health, not Monsanto's propagandized bull . . . Please be the ones to act with wisdom and fairness and responsibility to your constituents.

COMMENT OF BRIAN FELT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:48 p.m.

City, State: Chicago, IL

Occupation: Sales/Home Design

Comment: Please fund organic farming and research as much as possible! NOT in support of GMOs and Monsanto (aka health and agriculture destruction).

COMMENT OF LINDA FELTER

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 7:21 p.m.

City, State: Tucson, AZ

Occupation: Accountant

Comment: We must balance the budget and quit spending money we do not have! If cutting the SNAP program is the only way, then do **It** to cut **\$36 Billion**

from our deficit. Open Federal lands and let these **Legal** citizens start farming Federal lands and grow food! Supply them seeds and water. I'm tired of **Giving** the farm away . . . people need to have some responsibility for themselves. And get **Rid** of the **Free** cell phones and the child credit to illegals!

COMMENT OF SUSAN FELTON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:18 p.m.

City, State: El Dorado, CA

Occupation: Registered Nurse

Comment: I am concerned about government and big agribusiness forcing out small family farms, I am opposed to genetically modified food and seeds. We should be using our dollars to provide natural, safe, local food to all. I don't mean free food, but affordable natural foods including humanely raised meat.

COMMENT OF SUZANNE FENN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 6:21 a.m.

City, State: West Tisbury, MA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: We are in our seventies, we have striven to lead healthy lives. Fortunately we live in a community where others young and old work towards the same goal for themselves and their children, our local farmers and growers work hard against great odds. Agribusiness is stacked. Against them. We want fresh local food. Government must open their eyes to the movement in this country. People who see the health of our people getting worse and worse. Senator Keating. I'm sure you have been to Europe . . . have you eaten in France . . . Have you noticed the flavor in the vegetables and meat? Did you see many enormous people? Please take time to read about the local/slow food movement in this country and all over the world. If we want to spend less on health care we need to support good food not factory food that is making us sick and fat. Help the small farmer that needs help not the conglomerates that don't. We Don't need corn syrup! And we shouldn't be using land to produce stuff to run our automobiles! Sometimes I think we have gone mad!

COMMENT OF CHRIS FERGUSON

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 10, 2012, 9:45 a.m.

City, State: Atlanta, GA

Occupation: Work at Nonprofit Organization

Comment: I do not support any cuts to the SNAP program. SNAP has grown in response to the ongoing tough economy, which is what it is designed to do. As the economy improves and more people are employed, SNAP participants will naturally decrease. In the meantime, SNAP benefits are helping to sustain households. 75% of SNAP households include a child, elderly person, or disabled person. While there are numerous news stories about SNAP fraud and abuse, the actual rate of abuse and fraud is extremely low—just ask the Department of Agriculture.

Thanks,

CHRIS.

COMMENT OF JIM FERGUSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:27 p.m.

City, State: Cedar Park, TX

Occupation: Retired

Comment: As a supporter of my local food bank, I am writing to share my concern about hunger in Texas. With unemployment still high and many Americans still struggling to make ends meet, anti-hunger programs are helping many of our neighbors just put food on the table.

Nearly 50 million Americans are living in food insecurity. While food banks, churches, and pantries are doing great work in our community, charity alone cannot meet the need for food assistance.

Congress should do its part by continuing to support anti-hunger programs like the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), and the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP), all of which are authorized in the farm bill.

Cutting anti-hunger programs will increase hunger in America. Given the associated health care and educational costs of hunger and poor nutrition, cuts to anti-hunger programs are short-sighted.

I ask you to please remember the families who are struggling in our country, and urge you to protect and strengthen important anti-hunger programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP in the 2012 farm bill reauthorization.

Hunger is unacceptable.

Thank you for your action!

COMMENT OF GERARD FERRARI

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:03 p.m.

City, State: La Crescent, MN

Comment:

1. More subsidization for organic farmers.
2. Less subsidize for conventional farming.
3. More regulation of genetically modified farming.
4. End patents on genetically engineered organisms.
5. More regulations and conventional farm water runoff, and pollution.
6. Regulate Monsanto.

COMMENT OF DAVID FERRELL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:13 p.m.

City, State: Media, PA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Dry Beans & Peas, Fruits, Poultry/poultry products, Specialty Crops, Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: I have failed and gone into bankruptcy due to un-ethical FSA lending policies. Young farmers like me, particularly practicing peri-urban agriculture, or farming on a commercial scale within near vicinity of a urban population center, can have a challenging time getting long term leases. My land owner, be it a government body—Middletown township, would not give me a long term lease on the farm until I could prove what I could do with it. I couldn't do that without financing. All I needed was \$5,000 to float the bills and equipment rental for field prep before produce was coming in, second season on this particular farm. FSA wouldn't lend because I didn't have long term lease, and because I had no equity other than my truck and small cultivating tractor. I couldn't get long term lease unless I proved my production capabilities.

This chicken and egg scenario will keep crippling Americas new young farmers who have no real land or equipment equity. We as a nation cannot afford to lose this already narrow sector of people who have the skills, knowledge, ability, and desire to feed our communities.

In my opinion agriculture is the backbone to a prosperous society. The Federal government should be throwing buckets of money (loans that is) at any lad or lass under 25, regardless of the circumstances, who have a serious commitment to agriculture and the well being of Americas food supply. You fuckers (please pardon, but no other word will suffice here) in Washington cannot afford to screw this up for us.

We need fair FSA lending policies! If a proposal under \$50,000 and the farmer is under 25 it should be streamlined approved. Cut down on wasteful loans to the top tier corporate entities, whose dollars will leave our shores and windup invested in foreign resources.

Consider this message a re-incarnated mandate from TJ and all our other yeoman founding fathers. Put America on the right track . . . the only real way to do this is by putting young people back to work, back on the land. We need the financing to do this as private banks no longer can serve this niche.

Thank You For Listening.

DAVID FERRELL.

COMMENT OF DONNA FERRIER-JOHNSON

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 10:53 a.m.

City, State: Garland, TX

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: Farm subsidies should be discontinued for the very large corporate producers who have a monopoly in agribusiness. These corporations do not need my tax dollars, but need to have their monopolies disrupted. "Factory farms" treat ani-

mals horribly and perpetrate genetically-engineered foods for government funds! I object to this egregious use of my hard-earned taxes!

COMMENT OF KATHY FERRO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:08 p.m.

City, State: Bricktown, NJ

Occupation: Housewife/Mother

Comment: Dear Sir,

I do not believe in GMO's and I do not want to eat them. If you will not stop the production of GMO's then I must request it to be labeled on all foods so I the consumer have a right to choose to buy it for my family and eat it or not! I feel this is my right for control what I eat and what I feed my family!

Thank you,

KATHY FERRO.

COMMENT OF SUZANNE FERROGGIARO

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 11:01 a.m.

City, State: Grass Valley, CA

Comment: I am writing on behalf of our 12 family voters and 4 children. We all urge you to insure that U.S. food and agricultural policy must focus on adopting best agricultural practices that put the health of its citizens, the land and the livelihood of farmers and farm workers over the interests of industrial agriculture lobbyists.

We all support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

COMMENT OF RITA FERRY

Date Submitted: Friday, April 27, 2012, 12:52 p.m.

City, State: Annapolis, MD

Occupation: Retired Appraiser

Comment: I volunteer at our community food bank where we gather non perishables from the community for over 100 families each month.

Please do not cut programs which aid poor families as we depend upon subsidies to help these families make it and keep their children in school and in good health.

COMMENT OF ROBIN FEUSNER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:28 p.m.

City, State: Jones, OK

Occupation: Ex-Farm Wife

Comment: We need get away from all the very toxic chemicals our futures depend on it.

Many of our present ills are because of all the chemicals in our food and WATER. I know the dirty little secrets the chemical co don't tell the country.

I know how the fertilizers are polluting our water resources.

I know about the steroids in the meat and milk.

I know about the toxic chemicals used to force crops to produce more.

We need to go back to back yard and small hobby farms for the smaller markets. Give people the choice the organics are very expensive to produce and that is passed on but with gov't help those expenses could be managed better.

COMMENT OF ALICIA FIEDLER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:54 p.m.

City, State: Austin, TX

Occupation: Stay-at-Home Mother

Comment: As a mother, and a person who believes strongly that the health of our foods effects the health of our environment and the overall health of our nation, I would like to see a strong and clear-headed farm bill that aids the production of organic food, and ends subsidies for large agribusinesses. To that end, please fully endorse all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms, and Jobs Act. The EQIP Organic Initiative should be maintained and all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act should be implemented. There shouldn't be any reduction in funding of food stamp programs until all subsidies to massive agribusiness operations have been ended. Then you can take food from the mouths of hungry Americans if you must. There should be no insurance subsidies that are not tied to compliance with conservation and sustainability programs like the Conservation Stewardship Program. Our readiness as a nation to face future social and environmental disasters will be based on our food security. We need to treat this land and soil with great care if we intend to keep producing our own food. Otherwise we will find ourselves reliant on food hand outs from foreign nations, and our country will no longer be free. We will be in the pocket of whomever has the food. Please keep the farm bill strong, and free of back room dealings.

COMMENT OF CATHERINE FIELD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:00 p.m.

City, State: Portland, ME

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Fruits

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: We raise organic low bush blueberries for commercial sale; we carry out and support sustainable farming practices which safeguard the future of food quality and the health of our communities. We support family farms, local small farms, farmland prices affordable to young people who want to be farmers, protection of farmland—where else will we grow food for this nation?—and the healthy quality of land and water for all.

COMMENT OF ROBERT FIES, M.D.

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:34 p.m.

City, State: Arroyo Hondo, NM

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Poultry/poultry products, Specialty Crops, Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Agricultural policy has been controlled by and for large agribusiness. As a very small early producer, I ask you to consider that our food future lies in returning to small farms who can operate within the balance and immense productivity of nature itself. The days of massive chemical monoculture with pollution of soil and water are numbered. Likewise, powerful chemical herbicides and pesticides are producing megaweeds and superpests just as GMO crops of all varieties, most poorly or never tested for harmful effects to the environment and to human health, are spreading their germplasm to necessary healthy organic crops. Please stop protecting big ag whose productivity is diminishing and whose harm is rampantly growing. And please stop regulating and restricting small farmers. We shall rise again, but only if you get off our backs!

COMMENT OF NANCY FIFER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:58 a.m.

City, State: Lewes, DE

Occupation: Unemployed

Comment: One of my bumper stickers reads **No Farms No Food** and at the rate things are going, that could happen sooner than we think! I only know that if the current rate of farms disappearing continues we will be in trouble. If common sense instead of greed is in play, then we have a chance! Think of the future!

COMMENT OF PENELOPE FINK

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 12:28 p.m.

City, State: Truckee, CA

Occupation: Retired Information Technology Manager

Comment: The new farm bill needs to address the future of sustainable farming to provide healthy foods by supporting research into sustainable, environmentally

sound agriculture, supporting small farms, and supporting new and would-be farmers.

COMMENT OF RICHARD FINK

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:21 a.m.

City, State: Brookfield, VT

Occupation: Restaurateur

Comment: Please do something to limit lawsuits initiated by large agribusiness regarding patent infringement on small family farms. The rights of corporations end where a family farms nose begins.

COMMENT OF MARY MIHO FINLEY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:19 p.m.

City, State: Volcano, HI

Occupation: Nonprofit Administrator

Comment: We are so vulnerable here in the middle of the Pacific Ocean. Imports make up some 90% of what we eat. Please support farms programs to support new, small farmers and family farms. These are the types of farms we need to encourage. These are the folks/types of producers that will make us safer, make Hawaii more sustainable.

COMMENTS OF BARBARA FINLEY-SHEA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 1:21 p.m.

City, State: Lyle, MN

Occupation: Lutheran Pastor

Comment: The farm bill needs to include adequate funding for food assistance programs, food stamps and generous funding for sustainable agriculture and conservation programs.

Subsidies for factory farms, corporate backed agriculture operations and subsidies to millionaires need to be stopped completely.

The U.S. Farm Program needs to support sustainable agriculture, conservation and food programs that help needy citizens, especially our children.

Corporations Should Not Be Allowed At The Table When The Farm Bill Is Being Discussed And Decided! Get Corporate Interests Out Of The Farm Bill!

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 13, 2012, 1:16 p.m.

Comment: With the debacle of pink slime fresh in our minds, we want and expect a farm bill that:

- (1) will call for truthful, straightforward labeling of what's in our food!
- (2) will provide generous support for conservation programs!
- (3) will provide generous support for sustainable agriculture programs!
- (4) will **Stop** providing support and tax breaks for industrial factory farm operations!
- (5) eliminate commodity payments to millionaires and non-farmer investors!
- (6) Get Corporate interests out of the room when decisions on the farm bill are being made. Monsanto, Pfizer, Cargill, and other large corporations **Do Not Belong At The Table When The Bill Is Being Written!**

COMMENT OF TOM FINNERAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:02 p.m.

City, State: Boulder, CO

Occupation: Lapidary

Comment: I am extremely concerned about the proliferation of GMO's, and the use of glyphosphates both of which are becoming more and more attributable to health and environmental destruction.

Although scientific studies confirming this are often suppressed or ignored the information is getting out, indeed is already available for anyone interested to find.

COMMENT OF VANESSA FINNEY

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 8:35 p.m.

City, State: Fawnskin, CA

Occupation: Writer

Comment: Millions of us want the U.S. to ban GM crops or at least require the labeling of foods containing their ingredients. Other countries have done so. The American public is waking up to the shameful practices of those who produce and market genetically modified foods. We have also noted the conflicts of interest in Washington—for example, see this chart noting the individuals with ties to Monsanto AND influence in the government. <http://redgreenandblue.org/2012/02/02/monsanto-employees-in-the-halls-of-government-part-2/>.*

COMMENT OF MARYA FISCHER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:54 a.m.

City, State: Creswell, OR

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Please consider your motives when voting on the health of all the citizens. Wouldn't you want the Best for your children and grandchildren. Why Poison your body and our bodies all in the name of corporate profit, greed! Fill your heart and mind with contentment. **Know** that you are making profound wise choices when you vote on these Very Important Food Issues. I thank you.

Love, Peace, Harmony.

COMMENT OF ELIZABETH FISCHER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:57 p.m.

City, State: Ruleville, MS

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: It is so hard to get affordable, **Fresh** produce in Ruleville. The grocery store there seems to only get the veggies and fruit that fall off the back of the truck. Please make provisions in the farm bill that reallocate subsidies from commodity crops to crops that are actually consumed by humans!

Thank you!

COMMENT OF HEATHER FISCHER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:47 p.m.

City, State: Mechanicville, NY

Occupation: Stay-at-Home Mom

Comment: Please support local jobs for Saratoga county and beyond with the farms bill. Farmers need our help. Consumers need safe, organic, local, sustainable food.

COMMENT OF BARBARA FISHER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:45 a.m.

City, State: Athens, OH

Occupation: Documentary Filmmaker, Chef, Food Writer

Comment: In the 2012 Food and Farm Bill, I would like to see continued support for supplemental food programs like SNAP, which enables the impoverished elderly, families with children, and the disabled access not only to food in grocery stores, but fresh food from farmer's markets. This is important not only because everyone needs food, but fresh produce will help boost the health of the recipients, which lowers health care costs, **And** it helps local economies and local farmers pay their bills.

Please fund programs that help beginning farmers and small farmers get started. We need a more sustainable food system that has room for both big corporate agriculture and small family farms. Both types of agriculture fill a needed niche in our food system, so, please do not prefer corporations in agriculture over smaller farmers and beginning farmers.

To this end, please end subsidies (aka direct payments and countercyclical commodity programs), and replace them with loophole-free agriculture risk coverage. Additionally, implement a cap on crop insurance premium subsidies.

Please continue to support environmental and conservation efforts in agriculture:

Limit funds to Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) for animal waste management infrastructure by eliminating the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) Livestock Set-aside and protect the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) from disproportionate cuts, and improve it by ranking applications solely on their conservation benefits.

Thank you.

*The information referred to is retained in Committee file.

BARBARA FISHER.

COMMENT OF DAVID FISHER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:19 p.m.

City, State: Fairfield, IA

Occupation: Botany Professor

Comment: Please stop letting agri-corporations impose their profits-first agenda on the new farm bill. Instead, maintain and increase funding for healthy food, sustainable and organic agriculture, conservation, and a reasonable and safe life for farmers. Healthy food does not include the aspects of our present food system that have resulted in an obesity epidemic, which Big Ag would like only too much to see continued.

COMMENT OF KAREN FISHER

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 10:45 p.m.

City, State: Oskaloosa, IA

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: I believe that the first step toward sustainable agriculture is stop the farmer subsidies of corn and soybeans. Moving away from industrialized farming practices and using those subsidies for farmers that are producing local organic and using sustainable farming practices. I live within a few miles of 3 factory farms. My family and I cannot enjoy a beautiful summer evening without the stench of these factory farmers. The hogs in these confinements live miserable lives. It takes only common sense to know that this is a unnatural state for an animal and the consequences of eating these pigs has begun to take it's toll on humans. On our physical health, our mental health, and our spiritual health. This is the real price of a cheap pork chop.

COMMENT OF MELODY FISHER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:09 p.m.

City, State: Prescott, AZ

Occupation: Licensed Midwife

Comment: People have to be able to have the freedom to buy good and natural food from their neighbors and friends without restrictions and fines! This is one of the backbones of how our country began and families met their own needs as well as bartering and getting from others what they themselves could not grow.

Big Corporations have the freedom for too long in processing and adding chemicals and artificial ingredients to our food.

We want to take back our God given right to eat natural, whole foods.

COMMENT OF STEPHANIE FISHER

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 11:40 p.m.

City, State: New York, NY

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: 50-150 acres

Comment: Dear Chairman Lucas,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony to the House Committee on Agriculture on the next farm bill. My district representative is being copied on this testimony. I am a young farmer currently engaged in apprenticeships with my partner, Noah Meyer. We're learning from farmers across the country so that we can someday return to New York State and begin our own farm and dairy. One of the biggest challenges for us is securing funding for our future farm, which we intend to use as a community building force. We support local farms as a way to keep the local economy strong and our food system diverse. I'd like to share my support for programs that help the next generation of growers build strong farm businesses. As it's estimated that 125,000 farmers will retire in the next 5 years, it's absolutely critical that farm bill programs help citizens get started in this challenging field. I ask that the Committee endorse all of the provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236), including:

- Mandatory funding for Individual Development Accounts at \$5 million per year. This program helps new farmers raise capital to start farm businesses and is tested and proven by organizations like Practical Farmers of Iowa and the California Farmlink.

- Mandatory funding for the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program at \$25 million a year. This program funds essential education for new farmers around the country. Authorize a new microloan program, to enable young and beginning farmers to better access FSA loan programs.
- Revise FSA rules to make loan programs more accessible to more young and beginning farmers.
- Reaffirm the existing cost share differential for BFRs within EQIP. Also, reaffirm the advance payment option allowing beginning and socially disadvantaged producers to receive an advance payment for the project's costs for purchasing materials or contracting services, but increase the limit on the advance payment from 30 percent to 50 percent of costs.
- Amend the Farm and Ranch Land Protection Program (FRPP) to make farm viability part of the purpose of the program and to give discretionary authority to the eligible entities that implement the program to give priority to easements with an option to purchase at the agricultural use value, deals that transfer the land to beginning and farmers and ranchers, applicants with farm succession plans, and other similar mechanisms to maintain the affordability of protected land.

These and other provisions within the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act will help new growers succeed and I urge you to include them in the next farm bill.

Sincerely,

STEPHANIE FISHER.

COMMENT OF MADELEINE FISHER KERN

Date Submitted: Friday, March 16, 2012, 3:04 p.m.

City, State: Los Angeles, CA

Occupation: Writer

Comment: That our country can't find a way to pass a comprehensive farm bill shows just how dysfunctional it is. Maybe the Congress ought to start doing its job.

COMMENT OF COLIN FISKE

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 10:27 p.m.

City, State: McKinleyville, CA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Other

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Support for monocultured, chemical-intensive commodity crops (and the livestock and processed foods into which they are transformed) must end. The Federal government must instead use its farm bill to support a mix of crops representative of a healthy diet (much heavier on the fruits and vegetables, lighter on the grains and meats, with a focus on varieties that are intended to be eaten as whole foods). The farm bill must also shift its historical priorities dramatically and begin to provide financial, educational, and other structural support to small farmers who practice sustainable polycultures and who are do not rely on economically unstable, finite, and biologically and environmentally damaging fossil-fuel based inputs.

COMMENT OF MICHAEL FITCH, JR.

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:57 p.m.

City, State: Hartford, CT

Comment: SNAP benefits are so important in my community because they help people with a lot of kids get enough food for the house. There are people in my community with 5 to 8 kids in one house and if you cut them low the parents will not have enough money in the house to feed their kids.

COMMENT OF MACLEOD FITZGERALD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:28 p.m.

City, State: Pfafftown, NC

Occupation: Retired Acupuncturist

Comment: I do not like agribusiness altering the natural wholesomeness of organic produce and meats. I buy 90% of my food from local producers and do not trust the general grocery stores to meet my needs. All GMO and irradiated food must be label as such!

Stop farm subsistence to all growers and allow people to bear the costs of consumption.

No patents for food items!

Raw certified milk should be allowed in the market!

Thank you,

MACLEOD FITZGERALD.

COMMENT OF ERIN FITZNER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:00 p.m.

City, State: Downingtown, PA

Occupation: Software Analyst

Comment: I have lived in the U.S. my entire life with the exception for 2½ years when I lived in Europe (as an adult). I find it extremely hard to believe that here in the U.S. the basic right of knowing what is in the food we eat is not fulfilled. How can we, as a country, expect to control the obesity problem in this country when an individual has no idea of what they are feeding their bodies as well as those of their families. I work in the healthcare industry and have read numerous articles on the rise of childhood obesity (not just a 30lb or less weight issue), diabetes, the fact that 25% of kidney transplant donors are ineligible due to issues with their weight. Obesity is crippling our health as well as many aspects of our economy and yet our Congress and House, the folks that are supposed to represent the American people, not American corporations, still have to be convinced to let the

American people know what their food contains. Provide the American people detailed information as to what their food contains, and allow them to make an informed choice as to what they feed their families.

COMMENT OF GWENDOLYN FLAGG

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:22 p.m.

City, State: Tinley Park, IL

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Other

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Are you kidding me? With the people starving in this country and the rest of the world, we need to be growing food on every lawn, back yard, vacant lot, piece of farm land we can find. What is wrong with humans today? Don't you understand that what happens to me happens to you. Haven't you figured this out yet. Keep this up and we will all suffer!

COMMENT OF MARIANNE FLANAGAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:09 p.m.

City, State: Des Plaines, IL

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: I believe a fair farm bill would take a closer look at sugar subsidies—they are being abused. I do not believe SNAP should be taken out. As a Head Start teacher I see the benefits of this program every day. For some of my kids this is their only nutritious food for the day. It is also teaching them healthy eating habits—they want their parents to buy fruits, vegetables, and healthy cereals. To end this with the amount of poverty in this country is unconscionable. This committee needs to pay attention to the faces of hunger in our country—take a road trip to a food bank, or low income school.

COMMENT OF DAVID FLATE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:42 p.m.

City, State: Los Angeles, CA

Occupation: Real Estate Agent

Comment: I am not in agreement with the farm bill cutting education about nutrition and cutting funds and support for organic farming. Big agriculture can no longer run our food supply and GMO's should be banned.

COMMENTS OF JUDY FLEMING

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:04 p.m.

City, State: Imboden, AR

Occupation: Registered Nurse

Comment: Mr. Crawford,

I hope your familiar with this issue, we are not a country who wants sick food to eat.

Frankenfoods as they are called after Frankenstein because it's playing god with life. Mixing seeds with Cancer, diseases, and human Di nucleic acid/DNA is not natural. Literally these foods are a nightmare for our bodies metabolism and health. These seeds from Monsanto are nothing more than a corporation instrument for money and genocide. What does corporate and food have in Common? NOTHING that's my point. It's not for the people of this land of America. Let the Maritime take care of their seas and leave the land alone. These Admiralty Statutory corporations are purely evil for life. They destroy the food, land and sea. Don't let them harm us anymore.

This is a different concern;

I have a big problem with the chemtrails in our skies these plane trails that don't dissipate after being sprayed out of the cans on the jets and military planes are poisoning us with barium, aluminum, and nitrous oxide/laughing gas. That is destroying our land, water, and health maybe you can influence someone to stop this fraud and deception. It's a lot to work, with taking on these corporations, but I hope you're the man for the job. Don't let them conquer and destroy us. Please! believe what I am telling you, I'm not a hysterical nut

With Much concern and seriousness,

JUDY FLEMING

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:16 p.m.

Comment: I just e-mailed you I know But I found a report to validate my case, When I was trying to explain how important this is. Please see link: http://www.naturalnews.com/035904_economy_jobs_zombies.html.*

J. FLEMING.

COMMENT OF S.F. FLEMING

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:25 p.m.

City, State: Salt Lake City, UT

Occupation: Business Sector

Comment: I want to have sustainable agriculture, no GMO foods, and organic produce available in all towns in the USA. Farm policy must include resources for young organic farmers to get loans to stay on small and middle sized farms. Our country is in danger of spoiling our soils with the big agriculture way of planting and harvesting.

COMMENT OF CHRISTINE FLETCHER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:40 p.m.

City, State: Santa Barbara, CA

Occupation: Housewife

Comment: It is astounding to think that intelligent people, if they are guided by any sense of integrity, could be voting the way they have been doing on this Committee. My conclusion, therefore, is that the disservice done by these Committee members to their own country and its people, is purely self serving. They have apparently been bought by the profit mongers, who also act only in the interest of themselves. Shame on both sets—gambling the future health of generations out of greed. For money and power. Resisting common sense laws and requirements is an indicator of serious misuse of the trust which was accorded to you. The Agriculture Department and it's disgraceful Secretary, along with this Committee, are a blot on President Obama's promises to this country. I wish he could pay more attention to the abomination you are causing to our nation's and the world's food supplies. Your disloyalty to everything but your own misplaced profit garnering is Staggering.

COMMENT OF ERIN FLETCHER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 5:34 p.m.

City, State: Cedar City, UT

Occupation: Mother

Comment: I spend **At Least 70%** of my expendable income on Organic Food and Healthcare products for my family.

*The information referred to is retained in Committee file.

Organic and Sustainable agriculture is Essential to our lives. My freedoms to access real, clean, and sustainable food and healthcare Must be Respected, and Must be Protected!

I live in a Rural community, and county, and State, and I know all around me that farmers are struggling. Farmers are suffering. The land is degraded and water is not abundant. Conventional & Industrial Methods are Poisoning my children's futures. They are poisoning Organic Farms, farmers, livelihoods with contamination, and Monopoly.

Give Organic Food and products **Equal** consideration, consumers Equal rights and access, and protect our Rights to Liberty. Nothing less will do.

COMMENT OF IAN FLETCHER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:04 p.m.

City, State: Elmhurst, IL

Occupation: Public Health Professional

Comment: It is imperative for the future of our nation that we change an archaic program, designed in the Great Depression, to benefit real food like fruits and vegetables, rather than subsidize non-food like corn-feed, high-fructose corn syrup, and the like. The only way we are going to get a grip on the health challenges facing our nation, especially obesity and diabetes, is by creating a food system that supports healthier eating, not larger consumption.

COMMENT OF NATHAN FLICKINGER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 10:39 a.m.

City, State: Eggleston, VA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Specialty Crops

Size: 500-999 acres

Comment: Beginning Farmers being cut in half!

New farmers are our future! There are so many aging farmers, what will happen when they pass on? Who will take over their fields and will they know what they're doing? I am for the implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).

Organic research cut by \$4 million? Organic agriculture, though not the best, is a great form of agriculture. Far superior in its sustainability than your conventional ag. Look at the majority of the soil of this nation! Depleted, lifeless, over worked. Chemical fertilizer is a joke. To say that artificial fertilizer will nourish the food that is supposed to nourish our nation? We need to maintain the EQIP Organic Initiative. Big ag needs to be swiftly removed from the decision making process. Consumers need to be informed of what is going on with their food.

I fully endorse of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).

We need conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and make sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.

Please let us make wise choices that are not swayed by money. That is so short sighted. We are smarter than that.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF DANIELLE FLITTER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 4:02 p.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Unemployed/Volunteer

Comment: Quality, local, fresh produce is the cornerstone to a healthy life. With levels of obesity amazingly high in children **And** adults changing our food environment to a healthy standard is essential for the future health of our nation. Supporting local farmers to produce their best crops will not only stimulate the local and national economy but bring a healthy standard back to the American life.

COMMENT OF JANYSE FLOREK

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:03 p.m.

City, State: Sedona, AZ

Occupation: Self-Employed, Artist

Comment: Locally grown food from small organic farms must be revived and protected in order for Americans to regain their health through everyday living. This is a cornerstone for healthy bodies, minds, spirits and **Economies**. They are all linked. Large, chemically based agriculture is killing us, physically and economically. Please, research this thoroughly. Go no further than to examine your own health and your family's health critically and honestly to gain ground level perspective. That will take you on a journey of further investigation that will change your lives.

Thank you,

J.F.

COMMENT OF MARGARET FLORES

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:30 p.m.

City, State: Dinuba, CA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Fruits

Size: 50-150 acres

Comment: Hello,

I strongly urge you to provide more funding for small family farms like my own and others that are at the forefront of organic food production. Without prioritizing this we cannot strive to provide affordable and healthy produce to communities in need.

Sincerely,

MARGARET FLORES,
Dinuba, CA.

COMMENTS OF SHARON FLORES

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:50 p.m.

City, State: Ventura, CA

Occupation: Gourmet Internet Food Company

Comment: Our nation's farm bill needs to be updated to encourage small farmers, especially organic farmers, and to discourage big agriculture which has made food inferior and laden with health issues. Big agriculture has been given financial perks that bring inferior food products to market while organic farmers must pay high licensing fees to bring good healthy food to market. You have the chance to turn the tide from America being represented by obese and ill citizens to a nation of healthy Americans eating **Real** food.

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 1:14 p.m.

Comment: The current farm bill encourages bad and dangerous farming practices and does not encourage small farmers and organic farmers. For the future health of our nation the farm bill needs to change from large factory farms getting subsidies to smaller, sustainable farms receiving government assistance.

COMMENT OF YOMEI FLORES

Date Submitted: Friday, April 20, 2012, 12:25 p.m.

City, State: San Antonio, TX

Occupation: SAFB/Senior Program Coordinator

Comment: We need the farm bill to protect programs like CSFP, SNAP, and TEFAP. I see the faces of relieve when these households get the assistance from these programs every day. Many seniors are low income and many families cannot find jobs.

COMMENT OF RUTH FLOURNOY

Date Submitted: Monday, April 23, 2012, 7:04 p.m.

City, State: Houston, TX

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Other

Size: 1,000+ acres

Comment: I support the conservation programs in the proposed Farm bill and ask that conservation easements be reinstated and made permanent. I support the cost-share programs such as CRP, EQIP, WHIP, and CSP.

COMMENT OF RUTHIE FLYNN

Date Submitted: Friday, March 16, 2012, 2:56 p.m.

City, State: Sonora, CA

Occupation: Retired Registered Nurse

Comment: I understand the farm bill includes provision for food pantries across the U.S. who provide food for needy families. I hope the upcoming farm bill will continue this provision in food pantries as they seek to provide food for families in need across our nation.

COMMENT OF SARAH FLYNN

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 15, 2012, 7:26 p.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Nonprofit

Comment: I was deeply upset by the cuts to the SNAP program in the Senate agriculture committee's version of the farm bill. These cuts would have a devastating impact on the health and economic security of families that are already on the brink. If parents can't afford to feed their children a nutritious diet, it puts the future of our country in jeopardy. The impact of food insecurity is much broader than some people realize. When children don't get enough food, it can have a life-long impact. They might not do well in school, they might develop much more expensive health problems, and the memory of hunger can have a long lasting impact. I know people who didn't have enough to eat at some point during their lives, and that experience haunts each of them in different ways. One man I know overeats now because of a strong emotional attachment to food that developed when he went hungry earlier in his life. He has become obese and developed expensive medical conditions that might have been prevented at a much lower cost if he had access to adequate nutrition earlier in his life. He suffers because of his poor health, but he suffers much more profoundly because of his belief in his own personal responsibility for all of his actions. He blames no one else, only himself, and that self-blame only makes it harder for him to turn his life around. As individuals, we need to live with the consequences of our actions. But we also need to understand that as citizens of the United States we have to take collective responsibility for our society's actions, past and present. We need to protect the public programs that comprise our nation's safety net, because the safety net is one of the most important ways our society accepts responsibility for our collective failures and sins. Please support all of the food assistance programs within the farm bill, especially SNAP and TEFAP, not only because helping people is the good thing to do, but also because it's the responsible thing for our government to do.

COMMENT OF JOSEPH FOEGEN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 7:03 a.m.

City, State: Hamburg, NY

Occupation: Grocery Retail

Comment: Dear Mr. Higgins,

Americans have been voting with their wallets as is evident by the upsurge in organic food sales. Furthermore, recent polls have found that consumers want to know if the foods they are buying contain GMOs. Cutting any spending that would hinder the growth of organic, sustainable agriculture would go against consumer trends and desires. My questions to you are simple:

- (1) Do you eat?
- (2) Do you care about what you eat, including its impact on your health?
- (3) Do you feel everyone has the right to both pursue the growing of healthy, sustainable food, as well as consuming healthy, sustainable food?

If you answered yes to any or all of these questions it's time for you to support the farm bill as it was introduced.

COMMENT OF DAN FOGARTY

Date Submitted: Saturday, April 28, 2012, 5:08 p.m.

City, State: Santa Rosa, CA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: A strong farm bill is always mandatory, but particularly in these times. Please support such a bill by continuing the TEFAP, SNAP and CSFP programs. They are essential to maintain adequate access to food for hungry Americans.

Thank you for your time.

COMMENT OF JEAN FOGEL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:23 p.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: The people that consider food a personal choice deserve to be represented. We want our food protected, labeled and free of pesticides. Organics meet these standards and deserve to be supported in their efforts. It has been proven that big Agra co-opts the marketing strategy of organics, but does not produce in the same manner. **Protect Our Local Farmers And Families That Demand Clean Food.**

COMMENT OF KEN FOGEL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 4:39 p.m.

City, State: Stone Mtn., GA

Occupation: Massage Therapist

Comment: The large scale industrial farming in existence today is focused on quantity and how much money can be made, but the average citizen is made to pay the price in the long run in terms of health.

The food is loaded with chemicals, pesticides, antibiotics, growth hormones, GMO's, and we wonder why diabetes is now an epidemic.

Mad cow disease, as was recently in the news does not happen if cows are grazing on grass as nature intended. Feeding cows animals by-products should be illegal.

Local and organic farming needs to be supported for the health of the people and for supporting local economies and conservation of energy resources.

COMMENT OF KYLE FOLEY

Date Submitted: Monday, May 14, 2012, 5:45 p.m.

City, State: Wakefield, MA

Occupation: Graduate Student

Comment: Please do not allow cuts to conservation programs—and please fully fund them. Crop insurance should be re-linked to conservation compliance—we need to stop the degradation of our farmland and waterways before it's too late. Also, please support the lending and granting programs for beginning farmer and rancher development—a generation of farmers is going to retire in the next 10 years, and we're going to be in a lot of trouble if we don't support young & beginning producers. Mandatory funding is required. Additionally, please support funding for research (on organics, specialty crops, conservation practices, *etc.*)—public money is needed for these issues that are so important to our future food security, health, and our environment. Thank you!

COMMENT OF THERESE FOLSOM

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:35 p.m.

City, State: Columbia, MO

Occupation: Massage Therapist

Comment: Please pass a farm bill that protects us from corporate agriculture and helps provide Americans with the safe food they deserve. It doesn't have to be big to work.

COMMENT OF TED FONK

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:49 a.m.

City, State: Union Grove, WI

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Bioenergy, Field Crops, Livestock, Poultry/poultry products, Vegetables

Size: 151–300 acres

Comment: It is time to start doing what is right/best for the planet and everyone living on it and not what is financially beneficial to a few. Corporate interests are leading us down a dangerous path. You need to look no further than the sharp decrease in bee population to see this. Think with your hearts and your heads and turn a blind eye to hazardous corporate interests.

COMMENT OF CANDIS FONONNI

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:28 p.m.
City, State: Atlanta, GA
Occupation: Student/Nanny
Comment: Please **Do Not** cut funding for nutrition and the overseeing of healthy, organic, **Real** food. GMO's **Must** be labeled, as the consumer has a right to know what they are putting into their bodies and their family's bodies. You Are What You Eat. Let's regulate this farm bill so that **Every** American can have a healthy plant based diet. Pesticides have no room in our diets!

COMMENT OF THEESA FONTI

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 16, 2012, 10:08 a.m.
City, State: Hartford, CT
Occupation: Social Service Program
Comment: The existing SNAP and food programs to help the needy are vital to many individuals who live in poverty. Please keep the present funding in place.

COMMENT OF TORIE FOOTE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:32 p.m.
City, State: Spokane, WA
Occupation: Starting Organic Farm
Comment: As someone struggling to start a local organic farm, sitting between large heavily subsidized, overly pesticide land, I think it is important to the future of food production to grow locally and "cleanly". Don't kill our efforts! We should be supported **At Least** as much as those that are doing more harm than good.

COMMENT OF REESE FORBES

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 16, 2012, 7:23 p.m.
City, State: Saint Louis, MO
Occupation: Retired
Comment: We need more research into organic farming methods and need to insure that no GMO farming is subsidized. Farm need to get back to local and small—provide money to make that happen.

COMMENT OF LEEANN FORD

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 12:19 p.m.
City, State: Eugene, OR
Occupation: Accountant
Comment: The farm bill needs to support the needs of family farmers and rural communities, not just big agribusiness. We need to support food and economic security by protecting the quality of farmland and developing the next generation of farmers.

COMMENT OF STEVE FORD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:08 a.m.
City, State: Casper, WY
Producer/Non-producer: Producer
Type: Vegetables
Size: Less than 50 acres
Comment: I would like to see more funding for Organic research as well as helping conventional farmers transition to organic, also critical is funding to support new young farmers and help younger farmers be involved with apprentice programs with older ready to retire framers, especially in the organic sector.
 Stop subsidizing the huge farms, put some of that money to use helping sustainable AG programs and local food production.

COMMENT OF NANCY FOREHAND

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:25 p.m.
City, State: Green Cove Springs, FL
Occupation: Programmer
Comment: It is time to put you vote where your mouth is—protect our small farms and develop new organic operations. Every year the bad news from pesticide

overuse increases. We are killing ourselves and our children along with the bugs. As a taxpayer and consumer, I do not want to fund these destructive practices.

COMMENT OF CHRISTINA FORINO

Date Submitted: Friday, April 27, 2012, 2:30 p.m.

City, State: Oxnard, CA

Occupation: Program Coordinator for Seniors and Children

Comment: Dear Members of the House Committee on Agriculture,

Cutting programs that put food on the table for hungry Americans is unacceptable. Most are the working poor who need help getting food on their tables.

COMMENT OF KAI MIKKEL FORLIE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:23 p.m.

City, State: Burlington, VT

Occupation: Landlord

Comment: I am writing to urge your committee to prioritize organic, biodynamic, and permaculture farming methods over the unsustainable, destructive and expensive conventional form of agriculture currently emphasized. We need to adapt now to our looming low-energy future! Peak energy and climate change are the effects of our unsustainable way of life. We need to align our agricultural system with our need for continued life on Earth! Stop subsidizing ethanol production. Stop subsidizing conventional farming practices. Stop the use of synthetic fertilizers, synthetic insecticides, synthetic herbicides, *etc.* Stop GMO crops. Support small and medium sized farms. Support CSA's. Support farmers markets. Support nutrition programs. Support education programs. Support young farmers programs (for organic farming).

Thank you.

COMMENT OF AIMEE FORMO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:47 p.m.

City, State: Indianapolis, IN

Occupation: Public Servant (State Government)

Comment: Legislation absolutely must support and grow sustainable and organic agricultural practices. As a working mother, I am faced with an ever-increasing number of unhealthy food choices for my family and difficulty sourcing responsibly-grown, healthy produce and meats. I will not purchase GMO, non-organic produce or proteins from an intensive farming operation, as the nutritional profile and potential side effects are too risky. As a consumer and parent, it is very important to me that healthy agricultural products that haven't been tampered with by big business and chemical corporations be available even in food deserts in urban areas of my city, and not just to middle class people like me. That will necessitate a very strong farm bill that supports responsible agriculture.

COMMENT OF MICHAEL FORSTER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:11 p.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Computer Scientist

Comment: It is vital that farm subsidies be realigned with what our health needs are. We need to eliminate artificial support for fuel, corn, soy and instead support fresh fruits and vegetables, natural non-grain fed livestock and fowl. The increasingly toxic waste support for sprays and livestock and subsidies supporting highly processed foods is killing us.

COMMENT OF HELEN FOSDICK

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:34 p.m.

City, State: Houston, TX

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Do not allow any GMOs into our agriculture. Nor harmful chemicals or polluted waters. Support local farmers and all those who use sustainable methods of growing our food. Do not let Corporations rule. You represent **We The People**, not the Corporations. The well-being of lands and people should be your first concern. Thank you.

COMMENT OF PAULINE FOSS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:25 p.m.

City, State: Colorado Springs, CO

Occupation: Professor

Comment: When you are considering which way to vote please consider that people and the planet will benefit from the increase and support of organic farmers and small family farms. Big agribusiness complexes have wreaked havoc on the environment, practice inhumane methods in their treatment of livestock, and put small family farms out of business.

Thank you,

PAULINE FOSS.

COMMENT OF LEE FOSSETT

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 9:26 p.m.

City, State: Berea, KY

Occupation: Full-Time Student

Comment: Please support farmers; they need a voice. Who knows, maybe someday our lives will be in their hands again (like the old days). Especially if we change our dependence on oil and have to buy local again. Please be an advocate for the farmer whenever possible. They need us. They do more than anyone with less than anyone. Thanks.

COMMENT OF ELAINE FOSTER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:13 p.m.

City, State: Huntersville, NC

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I am outraged that the government which is put in power by the people have been taken over by big industrial agricultural business interest. How dare the Federal/state govt. attack the small farmers who try to provide the food the public wants (Whole Milk, grass fed meat and products) What happened to our freedom of choosing healthy whole foods from a small farm, The U.S. Govt. would rather force feed us chemical laced Doritos and Twinkies . . . that have no nutritional value? I am saddened by the state of our govt. agencies (FDA, USDA/Dept of Agriculture to name a few) attack on the small family farm and Organic farms of this country. It seems that big industry has been running Gov't. agencies in their favor. I want the freedom to choose my own food without the Govt. interfering!

COMMENT OF KAREN FOSTER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:07 p.m.

City, State: Virginia Beach, VA

Occupation: Retail

Comment: Our food is getting worse because big agriculture is making it that way. You do not label **GMO's, Pink Slime Ect.** . . . we can only afford cheap unhealthy food that large corporations are churning out for their profit. We need to stop the profit of our politicians for letting them do this to us. We need change, but big ag won't allow this to happen!

COMMENT OF MICHAEL FOSTER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:50 p.m.

City, State: Seattle, WA

Occupation: Counselor

Comment: The big picture shows a system that is eating itself not nourishing the land, not nourishing the people. Please give your thought to the most sustainable agricultural policies.

COMMENT OF LESLIE FOUMBERG

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:57 p.m.

City, State: Calabasas, CA

Occupation: Computer Parts Reseller

Comment: As a tax-paying citizen of the United States, I demand that consumers have the ability to know when foods contain GMOs and that they be labeled as such. We also have the right to ingest raw and unprocessed foods whether FDA ap-

proved or not as the FDA approves all kinds of things I wouldn't knowingly consume like antibiotics in milk and meats. Allow for raw and natural farming.

COMMENT OF SESAME FOWLER

Date Submitted: Friday, April 27, 2012, 9:22 p.m.

City, State: Gardner, CO

Occupation: Retired

Comment: These programs—TEFAP and SNAP and others are of utmost importance—especially **Now!** Our economy is in shambles and good quality food is not available to seniors, children and low income families. More than ever we need your help to keep these programs available. Please help—please feed the hungry.

Thank you so much.

COMMENT OF AGNES FOX

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 1:17 p.m.

City, State: Knoxville, TN

Occupation: Speech-Language Pathologist

Comment: As a consumer, I have educated myself on the effects the food I eat has on my body. As a caring citizen, I have researched the effects that supporting local *versus* large-scale commodity farmers has on my neighbors and our country as a whole. Therefore, I support local agriculture that produces non-GMO products.

I respectfully request that the House Agriculture Committee support the following:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

COMMENT OF MASHA FOY, M.A., R.D., C.D.E.

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 7:24 a.m.

City, State: Scott Township, PA

Occupation: Nutritionist

Comment: Monsanto a disgrace to our country. To patent seeds is wrong. It is unhealthy to have GMO in food and FDA pays this no attention. The small farmer has been hurt so Americans can have cheap unhealthy food.

Please do your home work on this, our children are at stake and our future.

MASHA FOY, M.A., R.D., C.D.E.

COMMENT OF KRISTEN FRAME

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:27 p.m.

City, State: Fairfield, CT

Occupation: Manager—Financial Services

Comment: I am concerned with the methods being used in our food production. We have adopted an attitude that “there are no proven concerns yet, so we'll use until we know otherwise”, whereas many other countries are refusing to adopt these methods/pesticides/byproducts until they are deemed SAFE. The cancer and allergy rates in the U.S. are alarming, and it's hard to think that our food supply has no involvement. We need to be more prudent in how we are producing food. Health care and other costs in the end are the price we will pay—which should be of concern to Congress. Thanks!

COMMENT OF LELIA ANN FRANCIS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:57 a.m.

City, State: Horseshoe Bay, TX

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I have a great concern about what citizens of this great country are being forced to buy and eat. Please carefully consider the health issues involved in the growth and production of our produce and cattle and dairy goods.

COMMENT OF FAITH FRANCK

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 1:08 p.m.

City, State: Las Vegas, NV

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I am convinced that the pesticide, fungicide and herbicide laden food grown industrially in what has become nutrition poor soil in this country is the culprit in our health & obesity problems. These foods do not provide adequate or good nutrition unlike sustainable and organically grown foods and edible animals. I grew up in an era when sustainable agriculture was the norm which may be why my generation lives longer—our children will not have that option due to the poor food they have eaten in their lifetimes.

COMMENT OF AMY FRANCO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:54 a.m.

City, State: Chicago, IL

Occupation: Project Coordinator and Grad Student

Comment: Please continue to support beginning farmers and ranchers, local food and organic initiatives, and the Conservation Stewardship Program. Such programs are vital to economic growth and the health of our land in the long-term.

COMMENT OF LEROY FRANKEL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:31 p.m.

City, State: Longmont, CO

Occupation: Retired Home Grower

Comment: I support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Stop the latest agribusiness boondoggle that gladly steals food from the mouths of the hungry to create a “\$33 billion new entitlement program that guarantees the income of profitable farm businesses.” That’s on top of \$90 billion in subsidies for crop and revenue insurance policies.

By failing to place limitations on crop insurance subsidies and to re-attach soil erosion and wetland conservation requirements to crop insurance programs, the Committee has failed to do the full reform that is needed.

It’s time for real reform.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF JEAN FRANKENSTEIN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:26 p.m.

City, State: Telluride, CO

Occupation: Associate

Comment: I do not want to feed my children food that is genetically modified to the point where bees and butterflies won’t even go near it. I want to eat good, wholesome foods that are **Safe, Healthy** and good for both my children and the environment. It’s disgraceful that you’ve let large corporations take over and create a disaster and mockery of our food. Greed should not replace common sense and decency. I fear it’s too late . . .

COMMENT OF BARBARA FRANKLIN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:06 a.m.

City, State: Honokaa, HI

Occupation: Bankruptcy Attorney

Comment: I have talked to a number of farmers to advise them in this current economy; it is critical that you support the farm bill. We must have sustainable agricultural on this island and we must have vibrant farms to do that.

COMMENT OF CHERYL FRANKLIN

Date Submitted: Wednesday, March 21, 2012, 7:13 a.m.

City, State: Calera, AL

Comment: Please create a strong farm bill, which protects programs such as SNAP, so that struggling seniors, children, and families can have their increasingly urgent nutritional needs met.

COMMENT OF ALLAN FRANKS

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 2:50 p.m.

City, State: Vallejo, CA

Occupation: Ordained Minister

Comment: As a Pastor in Vallejo, CA I see the effects of the recent recession still affecting the people of our city. Our church has a food box ministry and we see a continual stream of people who need food to survive. Please vote to support SNAP, TEFAP and CSFP. Your vote will help us to be able to keep giving much needed food to hungry people in our city.

COMMENT OF JEANNE FRANKS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:45 p.m.

City, State: Oceanside, NY

Occupation: Physician

Comment: I am increasingly alarmed at the "progress" and infiltration of our food supply by GMO crops. The consequences of this are devastating. We MUST return to more organic and natural methods and protect farmers and their traditional crops from this menace.

COMMENT OF JAMES FRASER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:41 p.m.

City, State: Rome, GA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: As someone who works on a small organic farm in Georgia I don't want any special treatment. I would just like to know that the huge agribusiness companies are not given subsidies and tax breaks that make it unfair for us to compete in the free market. Thanks for your help looking out for small farmers.

COMMENT OF CHRISTA FRAZEE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:54 p.m.

City, State: Ventura, CA

Occupation: Homemaker/Mother

Comment: Please support organic foods and research . . . it is necessary for our children's health and longevity . . . It saddens me that our country is being poisoned by pesticides and GMO's . . . nature is being destroyed . . .

COMMENT OF PATTY AND BOB FRAZER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:57 p.m.

City, State: Orinda, CA

Occupation: Retired Marketing

Comment: By caving to agribusiness, you prohibit the real conversation about obesity that needs to take place. The role of processed food in the obesity! And the terrible nutritional quality of all processed food. When will you as elected officials make decisions for the welfare of the people and not for business?

COMMENT OF CAROL FRAZIER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:35 p.m.

City, State: Nashville, TN

Occupation: Small Business Owner

Comment: Farmers and eaters across the U.S. need a fair and healthy farm bill! We should not be cutting funding to vital programs such as nutrition, conservation and support for organic and sustainable agriculture.

The proposed subsidized insurance program will allow giant commodity farmers and insurance companies to walk away with billions in taxpayer dollars while putting the land, soil and environment at greater risk. The Senate Agricultural Committee has already voted to cut \$4 million from organic research funding and cut funding to support Beginning Farmers in half. This is absolutely ridiculous! We know that the health and survival of a nation depends on it's people being able to grow and sustain healthy crops and soil, the main way to do this is thru organic and sustainable farming methods. Also we have more and more young people who are choosing to become farmers, a giant shift in priorities, and we need to support this move! The public is talking with their pocket books in seeking out local farmers and organic produce and meat. Congress is not listening and is instead following the lead of huge farming corporations and Monsanto, with their increasingly troubling GMO seed—I hope you have been educating yourself about this catastrophe-in-the-making. Please support:

- (1) The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- (2) Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- (3) The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- (4) Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Thank you!

COMMENT OF KIMBERLY FRAZIER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:14 p.m.

City, State: East Bethel, MN

Occupation:

Comment: Dear Congress-people, Please **Learn** about what you are voting on and why people like us have to remind you why we need to do this. Cancer is a problem that won't go away if you don't have food that is grown without Chemicals. Chemicals kill more than the bugs or the nuisance plants that invade our fields and gardens. It kills important nutrients and vitamins in soils that go into our foods that helps our bodies grow and fight off sicknesses and disease. You know someone with cancer and you want to help them the best thing you can do for them is to Vote for Organic Farming and learn about the Gerson Therapy Cancer Cures so When possibly you face Cancer you will have a Cure! I hope you will take this seriously like you do your paychecks.

COMMENT OF RUTH FRAZIER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:14 p.m.

City, State: Charlotte, NC

Occupation: Homemaker

Comment: Please hear! Growing up on an organic farm before organic became a household word, it is a challenge to find food that babies, as well as adults can eat without developing allergies, *etc.* The U.S. food and agricultural policy must focus on adopting best agricultural practices that put the health of its citizens, the land and the livelihood of farmers and farm workers over the interests of industrial agriculture lobbyists.

Unfortunately, we as a nation are not there yet. Not only are our politicians out of touch with the values of the American people, but corporate agribusiness has a stranglehold on our regulatory system and our political leaders. How will we survive as a nation and a people if we die before our time because of food conditions in our land? Please take heed. Thank you!

COMMENT OF CHAD FRECKMANN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:13 p.m.

City, State: Charlottesville, VA

Occupation: Energy Consultant

Comment: I urge you to include:

- Packer Ban: Allowing meatpackers to own the animals they slaughter reduces competition for livestock raised by independent farmers and ranchers. A ban on the ownership of livestock by meatpackers would afford family farmers the opportunity to remain independent and retain control over their operations.

- **Protect Organic Agriculture:** I urge you to protect the organic cost-share program, amend the AFRI program to require 5 percent of funding to go to the development of locally adapted, publicly available seeds and breeds, and to keep language from the last farm bill that would assure organic producers that they are not required to pay unfair surcharges to access crop insurance.
- **Protect Country of Origin Labeling:** Consumers started to get this basic information about their food just a few years ago. We need more information about where our food comes from, not less, and this farm bill should not weaken the current requirement for mandatory country of origin labeling for meat, poultry, fruits and vegetables, seafood and nuts.
- **Change language identifying Fruits and Vegetables as “Specialty Crops”** and call them what they are. Then focus more program resources to Fruits and Vegetables that will encourage more local production.

COMMENT OF RUTH ANN FREDENTHAL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:00 p.m.

City, State: New York, NY

Occupation: Artist

Comment: Healthy food is essential for all humans and the environment. It is also more economically sound both for farmers and consumers. If people ate healthy food, our medical burdens would be substantially less as we all know you are what you eat and an unhealthy diet full of pesticides and GMO foods makes people ill. And drives them to the doctor. The government should support organic food and sustainable practices by local small farmers. Giant farms are polluters who ruin the environment and make people ill costing the country billions of unnecessary dollars. They do not need subsidies but small farmers do. Nature knows better than the U.S. government.

COMMENT OF LUIS FREEDMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:07 p.m.

City, State: Rockville, MD

Occupation: Physiologist

Comment: The destruction of America’s food supply is the number one concern I have for the future of this country. We are now seeing the health of the American people deteriorate, in general, as a direct result of the poor quality of food we must eat. The concept of turning over this most important part of our lives and our health, to corporate greed and chemical intensive farming, and use of inadequately tested GMO foods is unconscionable. The health of the American people and protection of the environment should be the factors that guide our food production decisions, NOT corporate greed/profit and politics. Additionally, we **Must** have full disclosure of GMO food **And** chemicals used on our food. It is our right to know what we are eating, and it is wrong for government to keep this knowledge from us.

COMMENT OF SUSAN FREEL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:15 p.m.

City, State: New York, NY

Occupation: Filmmaker

Comment: I buy organic products, locally grown and nationally provided, almost exclusively—milk, fruit, vegetables, fish, poultry, bread, *etc.* I live in a highly concentrated urban area with farmer’s markets in our parks from one end to the other. These organic farmers are my neighbors. They produce their food just outside my city. They need their livelihood protected. Do it! Protect these small farms in the counties just outside NYC. I eat their food and we all know organic is better for our health and our environment. In your plans for future farm policy, please put an emphasis on encouraging smaller, organic farm production. Thank you.

COMMENT OF GERI FREEMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:35 p.m.

City, State: Dudley, MA

Occupation: Student

Comment: I don’t like the GMO of corn or anything else. What happened to regular farming. The use of good organic soil, and planting crops in the USA. Put Americans back to work, instead of trying to come up with new ways to mess with

nature. By growing organic, the food actually has good nutrition, instead of it being added or have no taste at all.

Whatever is being done to **Our Food, We The American People Have A Right To Know What And Which Products Have Been Tampered With Or Grown GMO.**

COMMENT OF JACQUELINE FREEMAN

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 12:56 p.m.

City, State: Battle Ground, WA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Dairy, Livestock, Poultry/poultry products, Specialty Crops, Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Subsidies no longer work as a reasonable method of funding corporations. Please reapportion funds to sustainable farmers who use less or no chemicals (thus preserving the health of our environment) and who produce multiple diverse products rather than monocultures.

COMMENT OF JOSEPH FREEMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:25 p.m.

City, State: Paradise Valley, AZ

Occupation: Homemaker

Comment: I believe we need to take American farm policy out of the hands of agribusiness, and reorient it to small farmers, specifically organic producers and producers serving local markets. In addition, we need to do more to protect the welfare of the animals we raise for food. Overly-large-scale operations are inherently predisposed to the abuse of their livestock. I buy only cruelty-free products, and local when and where I can. There are more consumers like me every day, and we would like to see our concerns addressed in the farm bill. Thank you.

COMMENT OF MARY FREEMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:24 p.m.

City, State: San Luis Obispo, CA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Specialty Crops

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Having watched the continued subsidization of large corporate farms to the disadvantage of small, organic producers, I urge you to vote to change the way we spend our agricultural funds and encourage a promising trend toward sustainable farming.

COMMENT OF SANDY FREEMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:04 p.m.

City, State: Virginia Beach, VA

Occupation: Counselor

Comment: Americans need more organic and sustainable farms, particularly robust local farms. Supporting a healthy farm bill that addresses this need is a vote for better health and a higher quality of life.

Cast your vote for organic and sustainable farmers and U.S. citizens!

COMMENT OF THOMAS FREEMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:47 p.m.

City, State: San Luis Obispo, CA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Fruits

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: It is time to act for the sustainable future and the health of our country and give equitable support for small family farms. We need more support for nourishing producers of locally grown healthy foods. The future of our nation depends on you.

COMMENT OF JAN FREESE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 1:03 a.m.

City, State: Tucson, AZ

Occupation: Retired/Housewife

Comment: Please! Pass this bill! We have far too many people who are hungry in our community and the food bank is struggling to feed all those who need help. There is no excuse for people in this country to go hungry. Cut some aid for foreign countries, if necessary, but not for our own people!

COMMENT OF DAVID FREID

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:04 p.m.

City, State: Brooklyn, NY

Occupation: Editor

Comment: Please put the health of the nation and the pursuit and use of the best agricultural practices—like conservation programs and organic research funding—first, before corporate profits.

Also, please don't slash the food stamp program and keep entitlement programs for big business.

Allowing giant commodity farmers and insurance companies walk away with billions is socialism for the rich. It shouldn't be allowed!

COMMENT OF LYNN FREITAG

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:18 p.m.

City, State: Rolling Meadows, IL

Occupation: Official Court Reporter

Comment: There is probably nothing that has a greater impact on our health than the nutrition we do or do not get from our food. It is vitally important for the health of our nation that we do everything we can to ensure organic farms thrive. GMO crops are poisoning our soil for generations to come. Please, this is no time for cutbacks to organic growers.

COMMENT OF AMANDA FREITAS

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 11:52 p.m.

City, State: West Hartford, CT

Comment: Dear Chairman Lucas,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony to the House Committee on Agriculture on the next farm bill. My district representative is being copied on this testimony. I'd like to share my support for programs that help the next generation of growers build strong farm businesses. As it's estimated that 125,000 farmers will retire in the next 5 years, it's absolutely critical that farm bill programs help citizens get started in this challenging field. I ask that the Committee endorse all of the provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236), including:

- Mandatory funding for Individual Development Accounts at \$5 million per year. This program helps new farmers raise capital to start farm businesses and is tested and proven by organizations like Practical Farmers of Iowa and the California Farmlink.
- Mandatory funding for the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program at \$25 million a year. This program funds essential education for new farmers around the country. Authorize a new microloan program, to enable young and beginning farmers to better access FSA loan programs.
- Revise FSA rules to make loan programs more accessible to more young and beginning farmers.
- Reaffirm the existing cost share differential for BFRs within EQIP. Also, reaffirm the advance payment option allowing beginning and socially disadvantaged producers to receive an advance payment for the project's costs for purchasing materials or contracting services, but increase the limit on the advance payment from 30 percent to 50 percent of costs.
- Amend the Farm and Ranch Land Protection Program (FRPP) to make farm viability part of the purpose of the program and to give discretionary authority to the eligible entities that implement the program to give priority to easements with an option to purchase at the agricultural use value, deals that transfer the land to beginning and farmers and ranchers, applicants with farm succession plans, and other similar mechanisms to maintain the affordability of protected land.

These and other provisions within the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act will help new growers succeed and I urge you to include them in the next farm bill. **Most** importantly, I urge you to do all you can to curb the amount of money going to biotechnology research. The very small percentage of funding allocated specifically to more ecologically sound farming methods is a travesty, particularly as concern grows about the disturbing studies that are gradually illuminating all the ill-effects of GMO foods. We are gambling with American's lives, and all on the American taxpayers' dollars. Big Ag does not need any more help—they've done and received quite enough. The future of farming is with the little guy, which is who the farm bill should be helping anyway—those who would contribute to the economy, to our national security, and to our quality of life, but who need a bit of a hand to do so. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely, Amanda Freitas

AMANDA FREITAS,
[Redacted].
West Hartford, CT.

COMMENT OF J. FRENCH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:23 p.m.
City, State: Oakland, CA
Occupation: Filmmaker
Comment: Pesticides are killing the race and the animals and the planet (have you thought about what is causing all of this infertility in humans? hmmm). Support organics if you like human beings.

COMMENT OF JIM & LISA FRENCH

Date Submitted: Tuesday, April 24, 2012, 6:30 p.m.
City, State: Partridge, KS
Producer/Non-producer: Producer
Type: Field Crops, Livestock
Size: 500–999 acres
Comment: April 20, 2012

Dear members of the U.S. House Agriculture Committee:

I am writing today to offer comments on the reauthorization of the farm bill. Crafting effective and fiscally responsible agriculture policy is essential for the future.

My wife and I were both reared on the farms we now manage. We are fifth generation Reno County, KS farmers and ranchers. Both of us also work in jobs that complement our agricultural interests. Lisa coordinates the Cheney Lake Watershed Project; and I am the Agriculture Advocacy Lead for the global development organization, Oxfam America.

Both of us believe that for U.S. agriculture to remain profitable, productive, and resilient, we must have farm programs that support risk management and conservation while not distorting the market or putting current trade agreements at risk.

First, I take advantage of federally subsidized crop insurance. It made a tremendous difference last year as we experienced severe drought and suffered complete loss of our fall crops. However, we oppose moving toward shallow loss revenue programs. Shallow loss programs will definitely distort planting decisions and provide incentives for farmers to take on greater risk than is advisable.

Second, moving to increase target prices and loan rates is a move in the wrong direction. We already know that our current marketing loan and countercyclical program are within the Amber Box. We must not go back in time and fashion farm programs that distort the market. The best option would be to eliminate the marketing loan and countercyclical payment altogether.

Conservation investments are all green box investments. They allow our agriculture to protect the resources necessary to produce for a global table that will be at 9 billion by mid-century. While efficiencies may be gained in the way current programs are configured and administered, we should not lose sight of our long range vision of resource protection and enhancement. In addition, conservation compliance must remain a part of all Title I programs, and should be added crop insurance in Title XII.

Finally, our international food aid programs are flawed and wasteful. Nearly ½ of taxpayer money going to food aid are spent on shipping, procurement, and administrative costs. We need to shift more of our food aid into allowing for purchase of food closer to areas of food emergencies. U.S. farmers no longer face huge surpluses

and chronic low prices. In fact, in the face of erratic weather, increasing population, and global instability, we can no longer afford to discourage production and disrupt world markets. I would encourage the committee to increase the local and regional purchase, and to decrease the damaging practice of monetization.

Thank you so much for your dedication and hard work.

Sincerely,

JIM & LISA FRENCH,
[Redacted].

COMMENT OF RODNEY FRENCH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:22 p.m.

City, State: Otsego, MI

Occupation: Self-Employed Fire Protection

Comment: Please take time to stop and listen even within your heart. Money is not the control of us. We, I count on my politician people to do what's right. Listen to us if you can't hear what's needed.

COMMENT OF LYNNE FRETZ

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 4:34 p.m.

City, State: Rochester, NY

Occupation: Educator

Comment: Please protect funding for critical Federal nutrition programs, including the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) as you work to re-authorize the farm bill.

Everyone in the U.S. should have enough food to eat. This is more important than the military budget. Thank you.

COMMENT OF SUSAN FRIAR

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:25 p.m.

City, State: Hillsboro, OR

Occupation: Environmental Educator

Comment: I ask you to support the full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286), fully funding of conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.

The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236). Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative. I have worked with farmers, USDA-NRCS, USFW Service, Audubon partnering with high school science classes in habitat restoration project that incorporate farms supporting some of the above programs. They are making a positive difference and helping our urban youth understand the impact of using a minimal of pesticides and what can happen when farms partner with supporters to make a healthier environment.

COMMENT OF PAMELA FRIDGEN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:03 p.m.

City, State: Scarborough, ME

Occupation: Educational Technician

Comment: The importance of local farms and sustainable practices is of the utmost importance. I would like to see a farm bill that reflects that. Help the small farms that really need it not the big Ag. operations that don't and utilize unsustainable practices.

COMMENT OF FIONA FRIEDLAND

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:59 p.m.

City, State: San Francisco, CA

Occupation: Part-Time Reception, Bookkeeper

Comment: I want to know what I am putting in my mouth. It is time for the U.S. Government to get behind it's people and stop supporting big ag business. I want organics and non-GMO and I don't want to have to read every label before I buy something. In the past couple of years I have started to have digestive issues. I have to think about everything that goes into my body. It would be helpful if the government supported it's citizen's instead of big business. There is a growing

health epidemic in the country. Think about it! Make the connection. You are what you eat!

COMMENT OF KRYSTAL FRIEDLY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:06 p.m.

City, State: Soldotna, AK

Occupation: Homemaker/Mom

Comment: I as a mom and a U.S citizen, believe that we have the right to eat good nutritious food. There is no reason that the people of our country should be fed food that has been altered. Food should be as its meant to be. We have so many rights and this should be at the top of that list.

COMMENT OF REBECCA FRIEDMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:05 p.m.

City, State: Asheville, NC

Occupation: Caterer

Comment: This is so overdue. Please don't spend another penny of my money on toxic food commodities produced by Big Ag. Level the playing field for our small organic farmers! Thank you.

COMMENT OF DOUG FRIEND

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 4:21 p.m.

City, State: Boston, MA

Occupation: Self-Employed

Comment: Small family farms are much more vested in their farms and communities than agra business. They are better stewards of the land and help to maintain productive open space. The food that is raised is done so with less intensive use of antibiotics and pesticides.

COMMENT OF CHRISTINE FRISCO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:12 p.m.

City, State: Palo Alto, CA

Occupation: Registered Nurse

Comment: U.S. politicians are out of touch with the values of the American people, and corporate agribusiness has a stranglehold on our regulatory system and our political leaders. It's time for real reform! We need an Organic Farm Bill. I support:

1. The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
2. Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
3. The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
4. Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

U.S. food and agricultural policy must focus on adopting best agricultural practices that put the health of its citizens, the land, and the livelihood of farmers and farm workers over the interests of industrial agriculture lobbyists.

I urge you to not cut funding to vital programs such as nutrition, conservation, and support for organic and sustainable agriculture.

I urge you to create real reform and a healthy, organic future for Americans!

COMMENT OF CHARLES FRITSCH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:23 p.m.

City, State: Newark, OH

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Fruits

Size: 50-150 acres

Comment: I have a small commercial organic apple orchard that is failing to produce a crop for 2 years and counting. Pollinators and their habitat are being destroyed by my surrounding corn and soybeans industrial farms. Those farms have pollinator habitat NFS and NRCS programs available to THEM but not to me because I don't raise "row crops". Worse, they are irresponsible in not taking advan-

tage of the programs. Give these programs to us small farmers even though we are not a part of corporate America.

COMMENT OF ANN FRODEL

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 1:27 a.m.

City, State: Poulsbo, WA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: After a lifetime of eating the standard American diet I have colon cancer. True, what I chose to eat was my own business, but since being diagnosed in 2000 I have come to realize that the more encouragement we can give the people who are growing wholesome, organic food (or would like to grow it), the better off we as a nation will be health wise and in multitudinous other ways as well. What better "educational" stimulus for eating healthy food than the recommendations of our political leaders who are on record as supporting wholesome food products, uncontaminated by the chemicals our bodies do not know how to process. Please think about this as you peruse all the "farm" bills on your agendas. We'll all do better if we have access to healthy, pollution-free food.

Thanks for listening.

COMMENT OF CATHERINE J. FROMPOVICH

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 4:48 p.m.

City, State: Ambler, PA

Occupation: Consumer Health Researcher & Journalist

Comment: Organic farming must have the same financial support from Congress and the USA as Big Ag and its minions have in the way of farm subsidies. Genetically Modified crops must be sequestered from ruining natural heirloom crops and seeds that have come down throughout the evolutionary process. Food crops cannot be patented and owned. Will air be next? Food is an essential for life and living.

Congress must re-evaluate the FDA's role in declaring GMO crops as the same as others, which is **Not** the case. Heirloom crops cannot produce their own pesticides as GMO bt crops can or resist glyphosate as Roundup Ready crops can.

Because of the GMO fiasco, USA grown food crops are not welcome nor exported to many countries, especially the European Union. Let's get smart about USA agriculture and re-evaluate what's really needed to keep USA independent farmers growing healthy food to keep taxpayers healthy and well: organically grown food. Thank you!

COMMENT OF MARIAN FRY

Date Submitted: Monday, May 14, 2012, 2:09 p.m.

City, State: Chestertown, MD

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Dairy, Field Crops, Livestock, Vegetables

Size: 1,000+ acres

Comment: The most basic form of homeland security is the ability of a nation to feed its people from its domestic agriculture. It is vitally important to keep agriculture viable in every state in the U.S. To this end, I support programs aiding young and beginning farmers, conservation programs aimed at clean water and productive farms, funding for organic research at the University level as an alternative to research funded by chemical companies, and farm to school programs to get local food into local schools.

Thank you,

MARIAN FRY,

MD Sunrise Farm, LLC,

Fair Hill Farms, Inc.,

A Maryland farm family for five generations.

COMMENT OF MAHALA FRYE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:55 p.m.

City, State: Poulsbo, WA

Occupation: Self-Employed Woodworker

Comment: I am 62 years old have really started paying attention to what I eat and how it makes me feel. When I eat organic, non-GMO foods, raw milk products and other live foods, my body is much healthier and I function much better. I have to search these food out and read the fine print and pay a lot more, am I worth

it? **Yes!** I urge you to do what you can to support the small farmers, organic food producers and cut subsidies to the large agribusinesses that are creating disease and ill-health in this country. By recreating healthy agriculture and healthy food products you will be saving a great deal on the sick care front. Please be working FOR me, my children and my grandchildren.

Thank you,

MAHALA FRYE.

COMMENT OF CHRISTINA FUGITT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:34 a.m.

City, State: Springfield, MO

Occupation: Export Sales

Comment: End the subsidies for corn, sugar and wheat, indeed to any and all big industrial agriculture producers.

Do help with subsidies or insurance or loans or all of these the small farmers and producers.

Do fund government programs to feed the people in this country who need it. It is obvious that the government programs are not funded well enough because otherwise we would not need countless charities to do it.

COMMENT OF ANDREA FUHRMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:58 p.m.

City, State: Abilene, KS

Occupation: Artist

Comment: Please do the right thing. Feed the hungry. Grow organic and label GMO foods. Label dairy products so consumers know whether their milk *etc.* is free of growth hormones. Don't grow corn to make ethanol; instead find ways of using solar, wind and water power that does not pollute the Earth and does not contribute to global climate change!

COMMENT OF CHARLES E. FULLEN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:44 p.m.

City, State: Jonesboro, AR

Occupation: Management Consultant

Comment: As a fifth generation resident of the Arkansas Delta, I am very concerned about the lack of program support for rural economic development in the 2012 Farm Bill. Many of our rural Delta communities have lost population; suffer from high unemployment and poverty. Many factories have left our communities sending thousands of jobs outside the country. It is critical to rebuild our local economies by helping existing businesses and beginning farmers and businessmen with programs providing technical assistance and affordable loan funds. Renewable energy and sustainable food production can help local communities become more sustainable while providing job opportunities.

Many of the vital programs that help rural economic development have been greatly reduced or eliminated altogether. We need funding for these programs place back into the 2012 Farm Bill. A slight reduction in some of the subsidy programs already proposed can provide enough funding to continue these programs.

Thanks,

CHARLES E. FULLEN.

COMMENT OF CHRIS FULLER

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 16, 2012, 1:33 p.m.

City, State: Monterey, VA

Occupation: Meat Processing

Comment: The farm bill must include language that continues the recent efforts to create a more humane life for all farm animals and livestock. From birth to slaughter livestock should be treated with more respect than they are currently given in many large scale environments. Please consider making stricter regulations on the welfare and humane treatment of livestock.

COMMENT OF KATHIE FULLER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:48 a.m.

City, State: Morrisonville, NY

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: First and foremost, the use of any antibiotics in feeds to animals should be outlawed. Second, subsidies for not growing should be outlawed. Protections should be put in place to maintain small, local farms with an emphasis on organics. The industrialization of the American food supply is tragic and wrong. Thank you for your time and consideration of these issues.

COMMENT OF VICTORIA FULLER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:14 p.m.

City, State: Del Valle, TX

Occupation: Film Professional

Comment: I am a 32 year old Diabetic. I live in the country and eat all organic foods. I hope to grow my own food one day, because I don't trust the government to protect us. The foods we serve ourselves and children are unsafe if they aren't organic. If we don't protect and find the growth of a healthier population it will be catastrophic. We must fight for the right to eat unpoisoned foods. I urge you to do your part in recognizing the importance of a healthier world without chemicals. It's killing us.

COMMENT OF SUSAN FULSOME

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:12 p.m.

City, State: Salt Lake City, UT

Occupation: Healthcare Consultant

Comment: My son has owned and operated an organic farm for over 10 years. It has been a very eye-opening experience to see what is possible when a farmer is a good steward of his land. It has also been disheartening to see how rigged the U.S. system is, in favor of conventional agriculture. This is not so much a matter of fairness, although it is that. It is a matter of investing in the wrong paradigm—conventional agriculture depletes the soil, making it harder every year to produce the same amount of food. It also encourages the use of toxic pesticides (dead bee colonies, anyone?) and overuse of petroleum-based fertilizers that create dead zones in our oceans. Organic and sustainable agriculture bypasses ALL of those issues, while producing food that is vastly higher in nutrients and is safer for the consumers.

Please rethink farm policies with an eye to the overall health of the nation and our resources, **Not** just continuing to pork-barrel and rig corn prices. It is past time for a change that looks at long-term health and long-term consequences, rather than just the expedient.

COMMENT OF WILL FULTON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:55 p.m.

City, State: Corvallis, OR

Occupation: Soil Scientist

Comment: The current agricultural policies of this country are absurdly inappropriate, if their intended purpose is to meet the nutritional needs of the citizenry. If their intended purpose is to stimulate the flow of cash from corporations to government officials, then they could not be more appropriate.

COMMENT OF SHERMAN FUNG

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 8:00 p.m.

City, State: Pasadena, CA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: The Farm bill should work for the good of as many sectors of America as possible. Already American producers enjoy the assistance the government offers them. There are others who need assistance to survive who enjoy no such assistance. The private sector helps as much as it can for the needy, but such assistance is not sufficient. Federal provisions should be structured in a way for everybody to address hunger.

COMMENT OF NAN FUNKHOUSER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 10:56 a.m.

City, State: Baldwin, KS

Occupation: Self-Employed

Comment: Organic food is imperative to our health. GMO food is poisoning the planet and must be stopped **Now**. Please support any and all organic efforts on the part of citizens.

COMMENT OF ERIC FURROW

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:20 a.m.

City, State: Lisbon, ME

Occupation: Oil Heat Technician

Comment: Agriculture deserves all the funding it needs to find us clean, organic, farming practices. We do not need mass produced cheap slime . . . We need fresh vegetables not genetically engineered tomatoes the size of my house. We need animals raised on grass among other natural seasonal local wildlife, not corn and grains just because it makes them really fat very quickly.

COMMENT OF SALLY GABRIEL

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 12:41 a.m.

City, State: Sarasota, FL

Occupation: Nutritionist & Health Coach

Comment: I would like the farm bill to support small farmers who grow vegetables and fruits. People should be eating more fresh fruits and vegetables, grown locally, and yet we do nothing to help small local farmers. Big agribusinesses don't need government help; they're rich enough, not to mention they are not producing healthy food in most cases. Please support the small, local farmers.

COMMENT OF BARBARA GABRIELSEN

Date Submitted: Thursday, April 19, 2012, 10:14 p.m.

City, State: North Salem, NY

Occupation: Speech Language Pathologist

Comment: I am concerned about the country's nutrition. I don't believe that the current farming system is focused on healthy food as much as they are focused on profit. Profit concerns are understandable, however I feel it is out of control. I work with many children on the autistic spectrum, have had several family members die from cancers, and believe that there is a correspondence between improved health and functioning and organic, and responsible food sources, and farming. I'm concerned about the neglect of the land we use to produce food from, so much poison has been put into our soil, and it is chaining into our populations health. The future of farming needs to be more responsible and refocus its goals of what successful farming is. It's time for responsibility! I am neither a producer or non producer, I have a small organic garden I use to supplement my families nutrition.

COMMENT OF PATRICIA GADSBY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 10:41 a.m.

City, State: New York, NY

Occupation: Farmers' Market Organizer

Comment: America needs a farm bill

- that creates jobs, including jobs for returning veterans, and spurs innovation and economic growth
- that makes healthy local food available to all, especially the young
- that protects our "natural capital" (natural resources)
- that invests in the next generation of farmers and capitalizes on the eagerness of young people to farm by making entry into farming affordable to them.

The world is changing . . . America needs to adapt by thinking big in many small ways, instead of thinking small by disproportionately supporting big agri/food businesses that have created many problems, including a large obesity/health problem that will cost the country dearly.

COMMENT OF WILLIAM GAFFNEY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:05 p.m.

City, State: Oakland, CA

Occupation: Farm Equipment Sales

Comment: We sell water conditioning equipment to help farmers end their reliance on petro chemicals and to help them grow organic food that doesn't poison the Earth, water, air, people, plants, and animals. Please help by passing this bill.

COMMENT OF YANA GAFOURI

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:43 p.m.

City, State: Corte Madera, CA

Occupation: Housewife

Comment: I am on disability due to end stage renal disease. I want to support local organic farms, because if America does not want to eat healthy clean foods, there will be more and more people like me on dialysis or other debilitation diseases. But I guess this is the goal of the big pharmaceutical companies, so that they can "treat" us with more chemicals, and stuff their pockets with cash.

COMMENT OF SANDRA GAGNON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:10 p.m.

City, State: Manchester, NH

Occupation: Homemaker

Comment: Our farm bill must, most importantly, protect food security for all Americans.

Second, we need to subsidize the cost of healthy foods such as fresh fruits and vegetables, not ingredients that go into making junk food.

Also, farm bill subsidies should not go to wealthy "farmers" (who may never even see their farm) or big agribusiness, but to small family farms and to those who use sustainable, organic farming methods.

COMMENTS OF THERESA GAIGNARD

Date Submitted: Friday, April 27, 2012, 11:54 a.m.

City, State: West Roxbury, MA

Occupation: Administrative Assistant

Comment: I know little about the farm bill or its history or how it helps hungry people. I only know that we have a lot of hungry people that we need to help.

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 2:57 p.m.

Comment: I do not understand the farm bill and all its complexities. I do know that a strong nation has an obligation to protect its vulnerable. We cannot let our children and elderly starve. The Republicans have no heart and are certainly not Christian.

COMMENT OF BRENDA GAINES

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 4:44 p.m.

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Forestry, Fruits, Nuts, Poultry/poultry products, Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Pesticides are killing pollinators, contaminating water, destroying soil micro-organisms, poisoning people and our food. Support organic agriculture. Don't give our tax money to high fructose corn syrup makers, or animal abusing factory farms. Label GMOs.

COMMENT OF KATRINA GAINES

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:50 p.m.

City, State: Cove, OR

Occupation: Library Tech 3

Comment: I think that a farm bill that supports organic and sustainable farming is critical. I do not want to eat genetically modified foods. Without labeling to know if a product has GMOs, I stick with organic, because I know it hasn't been chemically engineered or modified, its real food. I think more money needs to be spent supporting organic farming and keep our food healthy. Support labeling, so people can make informed decisions in purchasing products. All the chemicals used in corporate farming are poisoning our bodies and the Earth. Support those that are trying to care for the land.

COMMENT OF LOUISE GALARNEAU

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 9:01 p.m.

City, State: Leicester, NC

Comment: As a consumer, I am concerned with the many additives, GMO's, and pesticide residues in our food. As a citizen, I am concerned with the long and short term effects that continued and increasing pesticide and herbicide use will have on

our land and both fresh and ocean water. As a realist, I am concerned for the small and beginning farmers, depending on the huge agribusinesses for an entire country's food supply is not safe. As a voter, I will be watching what happens with this bill. Do the right thing for your constituents and your country. Please support organic farming. My Grandchild is depending on you.

COMMENT OF ROBIN GALAS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:23 a.m.

City, State: Hayward, CA

Occupation: Garden & Nutrition Educator

Comment: The current farm bill and versions the heavily subsidize corn and soy are costing us billions in health care costs! These commodities are turned into high fructose corn syrup, animal feed, and unhealthy foods (that contribute to our epidemic of obesity, diabetes, heart disease, *etc.* We have spent (and continue to spend) so much time as a nation squabbling over health care while doing very little to change the essence of the farm bill which impacts our nation's health. If you are going to offer subsidies, do it for broccoli and kale and apples!

COMMENT OF REBECCA GALE-GONZALEZ

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:30 a.m.

City, State: Flint, MI

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: I am independent grower with edible flint Co-op and am trying to produce a health product that doesn't pollute the environment or destroy DNA and contribute to disease and destruction of the environment. We need help to make this an affordable practice we must stop contributing to the likes of Monsanto and big agribusiness that is using unhealthy practices and reverse the trend we are on.

COMMENT OF RON GALEN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:52 p.m.

City, State: Richmond, CA

Occupation: College Instructor

Comment: I eat, therefore I live. If I eat badly, I live badly. I would rather eat well. Not luxuriously, just healthy. Please insure our food supply is healthy. Big Agra makes more profit if we eat badly. Unrestrained capitalism and doing the right thing are at odds. Please do the right thing.

COMMENT OF KEVIN GALLAGHER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:00 p.m.

City, State: Garden City, NY

Occupation: Videographer

Comment: Please keep our food clear of pesticides and genetic modification. All foods should be clearly marked if they are modified, processed, sprayed, irradiated or genetically modified. Let the consumer decide. The market place will be regulated by our informed choice. Do not let the growers hide what they are doing. Your job is to protect we the people. Not the corporation!

COMMENT OF PEGGY GALLAHER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:57 p.m.

City, State: Medford, OR

Occupation: Transportation

Comment: Please protect the rights of family & small American farmers and those of us who depend on healthy, non-GMO, and healthy organic foods. As a parent, I beg that we have choices and full disclosure of how our foods are grown. As an American, I plead to you to truly represent the desires of those you represent.

COMMENT OF ROB GALLINGER

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 2:40 p.m.

City, State: Los Angeles, CA

Occupation: Hair Stylist

Comment: Protect Older Americans—House Agriculture Committee Please preserve programs and services that would be cut under the farm bill. Help us protect SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP today! We must ensure hunger-relief programs remain protected so that seniors who worked their entire lives continue to have access to these vital programs.

COMMENT OF JASON GALLIVAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:59 a.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Local, small sustainable farming is the only way we will be able to feed the world in the future. Agribusiness stands against this for two reasons, the first being profits at the cost of human suffering, and the second scarcity. Profits come from a direct correlation between scarcity and demand, artificial scarcity is causing starvation across the globe and even in the USA. We need to support small local farmers that are following sustainable practices, not using chemicals that destroy the environment and sell their produce within their state or surrounding areas. Genetically modified crops and seeds also have a detriment on the environment, animals and humans. They are not sustainable and chemical companies are after profits, again at the expense of human suffering. If the government is not going to step in and do something good for its people, then they should at least make the people able to do something for themselves. Farming should be allowed in all areas, even urban (roof tops/balconies) without penalties. Genetically modified foods need to be labeled as such and foods that are sprayed with chemicals should also be disclosed on the food packaging. Sprays are absorbed by the food and so become part of what you eat.

COMMENT OF PAULA GALLO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:24 p.m.

City, State: Fairfield, CT

Occupation: Music Teacher/Vocalist

Comment: Stop Monsanto and other companies from poisoning our food. Want a cure for cancer? An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

I'm sure the people in our government eat organic and feed their children organic food. If this country is by the people and for the people. Get the corporations out of our food!

If people want raw milk, they should have it. It's not illegal or political.

Stop poisoning the animals and creating mutant genetically modified food. It is poisonous.

When will it end? It's disgusting.

Make it stop NOW.

COMMENT OF SUSAN GANCHER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:39 p.m.

City, State: Vero Beach, FL

Occupation: Jeweler

Comment: I listen to many of your Town Hall Meetings by phone.

Once again I find my representative wanting to take from the majority of people to give to business. It doesn't matter what kind of money business gives to you to run for office again if you are not supporting the people's needs you need to rethink your choice of work. You are taking entirely too many liberties with food health and safety, which indicates to me you are ignorant of the most recent research on these things. I've heard that an extraordinary amount of your time is spent on securing money for your next run for re-election. That deprives you of the time needed to learn from more than those giving you money. Please heed my words, I know you want to be a good representative of all your constituents.

COMMENT OF CROITIENE GANMORYN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:14 p.m.

City, State: Ocala, FL

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Dear Congressman Stearns,

When the Senate considers the next farm bill, I urge you to defend progress made in the 2008 Farm Bill and to protect critical programs that we need to help farmers transition to organic production. Specifically, I urge you to:

- **Include a Packer Ban:** Allowing meat packers to own the animals they slaughter reduces competition for livestock raised by independent farmers and ranchers. A ban on the ownership of livestock by meat packers would afford family farmers the opportunity to remain independent and retain control over their operations. I urge you to include S. 2141 in the farm bill.
- **Protect Organic Agriculture:** The 2008 Farm Bill made progress on giving organic agriculture a fair share of support. In this farm bill, I urge you to protect the organic cost-share program, amend the AFRI program to require 5 percent of funding to go to the development of locally adapted, publicly available seeds and breeds, and to keep language from the last farm bill that would assure organic producers that they are not required to pay unfair surcharges to access crop insurance.
- **Protect Country of Origin Labeling:** Consumers started to get this basic information about their food just a few years ago. We need more information about where our food comes from, not less, and this farm bill should not weaken the current requirement for mandatory country of origin labeling for meat, poultry, fruits and vegetables, seafood and nuts.

Sincerest Regards,

CROTTIENE GANMORYN.

COMMENT OF DAN GANNON

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 11:11 p.m.

City, State: Sacramento, CA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Other

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Dear Chairman Lucas,

My name is Daniel Gannon, in my second year as owner of my own farm business. My entire income is earned on ½ acre in organic production. The only real consideration I need is to be rid of farm subsidies in order that citizens may begin to appreciate the true cost of our food. Please stop giving money to farmers for participating in a failing system. Let the rest of us offer a future of hope for our food system and ag sector. The following letter is a form letter that makes great recommendations for trying to carve out a slice for new farmers in a way that will be effective for improving the odds of success in the current system. But first I ask you to consider again, eliminate farm subsidies. It is a system that keeps our nation insecure. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony to the House Committee on Agriculture on the next farm bill. My district representative is being copied on this testimony. I am a young farmer and I'd like to share my support for programs that help the next generation of growers build strong farm businesses. As it's estimated that 125,000 farmers will retire in the next 5 years, it's absolutely critical that farm bill programs help citizens get started in this challenging field. I ask that the Committee endorse all of the provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236), including:

- **Mandatory funding for Individual Development Accounts at \$5 million per year.** This program helps new farmers raise capital to start farm businesses and is tested and proven by organizations like Practical Farmers of Iowa and the California Farmlink.
- **Mandatory funding for the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program at \$25 million a year.** This program funds essential education for new farmers around the country.
- **Authorize a new microloan program, to enable young and beginning farmers to better access FSA loan programs.**
- **Revise FSA rules to make loan programs more accessible to more young and beginning farmers.**
- **Reaffirm the existing cost share differential for BFRs within EQIP.** Please consider including allowances for farmers on leased land to take advantage of NRCS matching funds to make improvements in resource management. Also, reaffirm the advance payment option allowing beginning and socially disadvantaged producers to receive an advance payment for the project's costs for purchasing materials or contracting services, but increase the limit on the advance payment from 30 percent to 50 percent of costs.

- Amend the Farm and Ranch Land Protection Program (FRPP) to make farm viability part of the purpose of the program and to give discretionary authority to the eligible entities that implement the program to give priority to easements with an option to purchase at the agricultural use value, deals that transfer the land to beginning and farmers and ranchers, applicants with farm succession plans, and other similar mechanisms to maintain the affordability of protected land.

These and other provisions within the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act will help new growers succeed and I urge you to include them in the next farm bill.

Sincerely,

DAN GANNON,
[Redacted],
Sacramento, CA.

COMMENT OF PEGGY GANNON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:37 p.m.

City, State: Palmyra, ME

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Corporate Ag is making millions producing food unfit to eat. They need **No** taxpayer support! What Americans desperately need is affordable organic food produced sustainably. **Please** listen to your constituents. We have no lobby . . . but we put you in office to do the right thing. Listen to your conscience. Support small organic farmers.

COMMENT OF THOMAS GANNON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:51 p.m.

City, State: Montpelier, VA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Greenhouse/nursery, Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: It is time to protect our food and stop the alterations and poisoning of our supply chain. It will get to a point where we will be unable to repair the damage. More and different poisons are introduced because the others fast becoming useless to eradicate bugs and weeds. The toxins are in our water and food. When will this madness stop?

COMMENTS OF CELIN GARCIA

Date Submitted: May 18, 2012, 11:47 a.m.

City, State: Norwalk, CT

Occupation: Chef

Comment: Rep. James Himes, Please help maintain the integrity of foods as it was intended.

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:32 p.m.

Comment: Please help pass The farm bill. You must protect the best interest of consumers and farmers and not Special Interest and Lobbyist. And do not cut funding for nutrition and vital programs. Thank you.

CELIN GARCIA.
Norwalk, CT.

COMMENT OF JOSHUA GARCIA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:37 p.m.

City, State: Littleton, CO

Occupation: Personal Fitness Coach

Comment: Please help to create a collaborative and sustainable approach to our food system through the all empowering act of regard for all humanity. Not just for short term profits of a few.

COMMENT OF JOHN GARDINER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:35 p.m.

City, State: Cave Junction, OR

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Livestock

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Small farmers selling their local produce organically produced, are the past and future Homeland Food Security. We richly deserve some help to grow food and fiber that will maintain the health of the Nation, once it is weaned off the subsidized, unfairly-traded, industrial ag model that has created the obesity epidemic and all that goes with it.

COMMENT OF ANGELA GARDNER

Date Submitted: Tuesday, March 27, 2012, 9:54 p.m.

City, State: Little Rock, AR

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Specialty Crops, Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Local and regional food systems help create jobs and spur economic growth in rural and urban communities. Will you support the Local Farms, Food, and Jobs Act to invest in this growing sector?

- The future of family farming and ranching in America depends upon ensuring that would-be new farmers have access to land, capital, and markets. Will you support the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act to help them?
- Farmers depend on quality, cutting-edge research, such as traditional plant breeding, to stay successful—how will the farm bill invest in this crucial work?
- Working lands conservation programs help farmers maintain productivity while protecting our air, water, and soil. Will you protect these programs from unfair funding cuts?
- Local and regional agriculture is a major driver in the farm economy. Producers are responding to skyrocketing demand for local and regional food by increasing production, creating new markets, and launching new businesses. Locally marketed foods accounted for an estimated \$4.8 billion in gross sales in 2008, the number of farmers markets nationwide jumped 17 percent in 2011, and all 50 states now have farm-to-school programs.

Despite these opportunities, significant infrastructure, marketing, and information barriers are limiting growth in local and regional agriculture.

Bill Basics

The Local Farms, Food, and Jobs Act will drive economic growth by:

- Creating economic opportunities for farmers and ranchers through local and regional markets.
- Improving processing and distribution infrastructure for local and regional agriculture.
- Expanding access to healthy food for consumers, including underserved communities.
- Providing research, training, and information that farm entrepreneurs need to be successful.

Why It Matters

- Small, mid-sized, and large farm businesses currently sell through local markets and will benefit from investments in local and regional agriculture.
- Empirical research shows that expanding local agriculture in a community can increase employment and income in that community.
- Every two jobs created at a farmers market supports an additional job in another sector of the local economy.
- The bill's investment in local and regional agriculture amounts to less than 1/6 of 1 percent of USDA's budget, yet will address the needs of a large and growing sector of American agriculture.

For More Information: All Members are encouraged to co-sponsor the Local Farms, Food, and Jobs Act. Contact Claire Benjamin in Rep. Pingree's office at (202) 225-6116 or Claire.Benjamin@mail.house.gov, or Kristin Vennekotter in Sen. Brown's office at (202) 224-2315 or Kristin_Vennekotter@brown.senate.gov.

COMMENT OF ARNIE GARDNER

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 16, 2012, 11:28 a.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Finance Director

Comment: I am writing to support re-authorization and enhancement of the farm bill. These are tough times for millions of Americans, especially those unfortunate ones who must rely on SNAP benefits or emergency food to feed their families. I am Board Chair of the Oregon Food Bank and we see daily the growing hunger problem that is getting worse not better. This last year drops in Federal food commodities has resulted in a drop off of food to hungry people and also required tapping into dwindling Oregon Food Bank reserves to provide necessary help. Please fund TEFAP back to historical levels. Millions of Americans rely on food stamps (SNAP) to help them get by. It provides an efficient and effect way to provide food to hungry people, and also helps stimulate the economy as these are redeemed with local retailers. SNAP is the single biggest fighter of hunger we have in this country. Since the hunger problem is getting worse not better, it makes no sense to reduce these critical benefits to those Americans struggling to get through each day. I realize that pressure on Federal budgets exist, but cutting back on benefits to people living in poverty is not the answer.

Sincerely,

ARNIE GARDNER,
Oregon Food Bank Board Chair.

COMMENT OF ELIAS GARDNER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:57 p.m.

City, State: Middlesex, VT

Occupation: Educator

Comment: I believe that we need to focus on smaller scale, local, sustainable, diverse growing. These things are hard and cost more but will lead to a much more stable and healthy food system. Our current food system is controlled by giant corporations that don't care about our health only our bottom lines. We have succeeded in creating cheap food which is great in the short term but in the long run our cheap food is also not nutritious or healthy and will end up costing much more in our healthcare system.

COMMENT OF GAIL GARDNER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:49 a.m.

City, State: Cambridge, MA

Occupation: Educator

Comment: I'm tired of worrying about our food supply. Agribusiness has no interest in our health, only in its own profits. I eat as much organic food as possible, but why should I have to worry? Stop the subsidizing of big agriculture and support the farmers who are growing food that is actually good for us.

COMMENT OF WILLIAM GARLETTE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:47 a.m.

City, State: Newport News, VA

Occupation: Organic Master Gardener/Master Naturalist

Comment: There is no more critical issue than the health of our Nation's citizens. The first line of action must be safe, nutritious, clean food. We must have a government that guarantees this and a farm bill that insures it.

COMMENT OF ELLEN GARMS

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 12, 2012, 6:13 p.m.

City, State: Tucson, AZ

Occupation: Retired

Comment: We need a sustainable farm bill that encourages organ foods and healthy crops. There is no place in our food chain for toxins, animal abuse in factory farms or abusive seed producers like Monsanto. Please help make our food safe and healthy for this and future generations.

Thank you.

ELLEN GARMS.

COMMENT OF PRACHI GARODIA, M.D.

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:03 a.m.

City, State: Hood River OR

Occupation: M.D.

Comment: I support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Please do not cut any funding to vital programs such as nutrition, conservation and support for organic and sustainable agriculture.

We need to have GMO labeled in food/products so we know what we are eating! Stop putting the land, soil and environment at greater risk by exposure to more chemicals/pesticide/GMO lobbied by big corps.

COMMENT OF GRACE GARRISON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:19 a.m.

City, State: Newbury, MA

Occupation: Marketing and Events

Comment: I support the Slow Foods movement and the efforts to effect change throughout our environmentally damaging food systems that threaten public health and community well-fare on a consistent basis. I know there is a better way and I want to be part of the solution. Please vote for farm bill changes that are Good, Clean and Fair.

COMMENT OF ESTHER GARVETT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:20 p.m.

City, State: Miami, FL

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: I am concerned about humane, safe, and fair farming procedures. We use too many unsafe chemicals in farming. Some of these chemicals are used on crops and others are used in our animals. Animals are not treated humanely. This angers and disturbs me. It should disturb you as well. Our far workers are not treated fairly. Our large farms are not concerned with anything but profits. I would like to see a change in all of these areas. Please make sure that you vote to support these simple and humane concepts. Thank you.

COMMENT OF ARMANDO GARZA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:37 p.m.

City, State: Austin, TX

Occupation: CSR for Speedy Stop Convenient Stores

Comment: Food just does not taste like it should, especially the fruit! I buy organic when I can. I really believe that small farmers take pride in the food they harvest.

COMMENT OF JENNIFER GASPERINI

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:09 p.m.

City, State: Woodbury, MN

Occupation: Customer Service

Comment: There is nothing more important than whole food! It is the basis of our health, our brains and in turn the health of our state. We must stop allowing corporations to poison our food for their financial gain. Organics are critical to the entire food chain. Please do the right thing for the people of Minnesota.

- I support the full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

COMMENT OF PAUL GAST

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:26 a.m.

City, State: Seattle, WA

Occupation: Physician

Comment: What could be more important to our health than the food that we eat; water we drink and air that we breathe. This is not about elitist 'foodies' and gourmet. It is about eating real food that has been grown in a way that is healthy for the grower; the land and the rest of us! Please think of people; not businesses when you make your decisions!

COMMENT OF CHERYL GATZ

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:36 p.m.

City, State: Atwater, CA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Livestock

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: We need to produce good quality food that is not full of growth enhancing drugs, pink slime and all the other crap that is allowed without consequences or policing.

COMMENT OF CHRISTINE GAUS

Date Submitted: Thursday, April 19, 2012, 10:45 a.m.

City, State: Pittsburgh, PA

Occupation: Community Services

Comment: There is no function of government that is more important than the preservation of the health and welfare of our people. Through the anti-hunger programs such as SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP, our government contributes in a highly tangible way to the health of low income families, children, and seniors. This governmental support unlocks millions of dollars in private funds, thousands of hours of volunteer help, and massive amounts of in-kind assistance dedicated to the alleviation of hunger and the promotion of good nutrition. These programs are critical to the well-being of our citizenry and merit the support of all Members of the House Committee on Agriculture. Through these programs, Americans are united in a fundamental public-private partnership to build stronger families and a stronger nation.

COMMENT OF ROBERTO GAUTIER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:14 a.m.

City, State: Brooklyn, NY

Occupation: Teacher/Farm Tour Organizer

Comment: My 88 year old mother receives Meals on Wheels.

As a life-long cook, my mother and I talked about the dedication of the volunteers who deliver several times a week. That aspect is inspirational, but the actual food is so disappointing to all of us. We've grown up with the knowledge that food is also medicine. As a senior, my mother knows that the government is not going to provide organic food to those on the way out. She wishes that that were the case and wonders why Americans must be presented a diet of processed, highly-sprayed "food." We spoke of the collapse of the bee hives that has been linked to a pesticide and shook our heads. We should be shaking our fists! We've all known for so long that food inspections are mostly out of government hands and in the hands of agribusiness.

The Food Bill should be thought of as a national health bill. America is extremely unhealthy, but it doesn't have to be. A good farm bill should be crafted that assures a healthy food and fair conditions for the producers, especially the dwindling group of small farmers, who are aging rapidly.

Large-scale agriculture is not only impersonal and reliant on cheap labor, but it holds no candle to what would be possible with a more scaled-down, environmentally-sustainable model.

Real food is a right and, sadly, something that should not be left to entities that concentrate solely on the bottom line.

Pass a Food Bill that will assure edible, healthy, affordable food for even seniors who are the way out of this world.

COMMENT OF JAY GAWLIKOSKI

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 6:47 p.m.
City, State: Madison, WI
Occupation: Local Government
Comment: Representative Baldwin,

I would like to share my thoughts on food and agriculture as you consider the upcoming farm bill.

First I only purchase organic, chemical-free, local food from farmers and producers that I can visit in person when at all possible. Everything else that I purchase is from our local food cooperative. I will not spend 1¢ cent on anything produced by a major food conglomerate and check out every product and its origin in detail. If there is any doubt, I refuse to participate.

Much of what is for sale in regular grocery stores is not food and is really not fit for human consumption. We have a health and obesity crisis in the USA precisely because of what is being passed off as food to the public. And it would appear that decisions are usually made in the interest of a corporation rather than what is common sense.

I do not want my tax dollars supporting any form of research or subsidies into any genetically modified plants or animals. On the contrary, I do expect that any such products would be boldly labeled as containing GMO if even the slightest bit of contamination exists.

I would like to know that our meat supply is free of “pink slime” and that any corporations who try to sell such material be prosecuted for criminal fraud. I would also like to see the agencies responsible for ensuring such filth does not enter our food supply do their job. Obviously they have not. It is not good enough for me to see that the BPI Corporation is filing for bankruptcy. They should be prosecuted in criminal court and the agencies that approved such a product should be prosecuted as assisting that fraud. How else could this have happened. Maybe government agencies are too busy trying to scare the public with stories about mad cow disease, swine flu, bird flu and bombs in people’s underwear. Well we don’t believe it anymore. Government has lied and lost all credibility. FDA-approved = Who cares & So what.

I would like the government to get out of our food supply altogether. A few months ago I wrote you about my expectation that raw milk should be freely available and that no government agency has any legitimate authority to come between a willing farmer and a willing client who wish to produce and eat what they choose.

You responded with a letter about your concern for food safety. Well just where is that food safety that you speak of? When we have GMO products polluting the entire food supply, poisonous fluoride being added to the water, high fructose corn syrup contained in almost every product and pink slime in the hamburger, is that really food safety? I would argue no it is not. It is instead a farce. Government continues to harass, regulate and control our lives under the guise of safety and security. The people are waking up to this charade. Obviously votes are being cast in the opposite direction and the corporations’ money are influencing that vote.

It is high time that change happens. Let’s see it start with this farm bill.

Thank you,

JAY GAWLIKOSKI,
 Madison, WI.

COMMENT OF SUZANNE GEACI

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 15, 2012, 7:03 p.m.
City, State: Eugene, OR
Occupation: Retired

Comment: I am writing to voice my support for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) to help prevent hunger in the U.S. These programs need full funding and support.

COMMENT OF PETER GEBHARDT

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 1:01 p.m.
City, State: New London, WI
Occupation: Operations Supervisor

Comment: I have been working for the last 7 months at a large meat packing operation. The need for a Bill that gives the small producer a chance is desperately needed. I will not eat commercially produced meat products now after I have seen what goes into them and how they are made. People need to given a chance to eat

food coming from an organic or Natural farm without Cargill, Tyson, Swift, etc having a hand in it.

COMMENT OF KATRIN GEIST

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:14 p.m.

City, State: Missoula, MT

Occupation: Biologist

Comment: I fully support an organic farm bill to mutually benefit producers, consumers, the environment, and future generations. Conventional practices are not only toxic and unsustainable, but also cost millions in alleviating negative environmental effects later. Millions nobody wants to pay, let alone the industry causing that harm. And consumers are affected too. Pesticides and food additives bio-accumulate in the body, leading to a decline in health and increased medical bills over time—only people may not link that to polluted soils, waterways, air, and the toxic foods they eat. I ask you to serve current and future generations by adopting an organic farm bill. Now.

P.S.: I'm a mini-producer and grow veggies for my own use. The difference to supermarket foods is unbelievable. Organic is definitely the way.

COMMENT OF LAVERNE GEMAR

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 12:00 a.m.

City, State: Edmonds, WA

Occupation: Registered Dietitian, Consultant Dietitian in Health Care Communities

Comment: Please continue to support nutrition programs & family farms, end subsidies and limit funds to concentrated feed lots. Thank you!

COMMENT OF MARYA GENDRON

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 1:06 p.m.

City, State: San Lorenzo, NM

Occupation: Community Organizer

Comment: As a rural homesteader and advocate for a sane future for all, especially the generations to come, I see sustainable agriculture as the most crucial issue facing our country. This is a moral issue. It is essential that this year's farm bill recognize the importance of healthy food for all, jobs for small family-owned farmers, and the promotion of farming practices that are gentle on the land. There is sufficient research proving that small-scale organic farming makes more sense economically, ecologically, and also in terms of crop yields. Please make sure that the farm bill is **Sane**—meaning that it serves the interests of future generations, quality of life, and the Earth, rather than the interests of monoculture and agribusiness. You are in the position of power to make them on our behalf. Please have mercy on us and do the right thing as a conscientious and moral leader.

COMMENT OF KAREN GENEST

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 5:46 a.m.

City, State: Vancouver, WA

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: I am extremely concerned about the sources of our food in America. We need a farm bill that supports the healthy choices, healthy produce rather than the moneyed organizations that can buy their way into anything. Our organic farms and smaller family farms, are in need of the subsidies, not the huge farm conglomerates that constantly put our environment, including our land and waterways at risk.

Please endorse all of the provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286) as well as the provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236). We also need to maintain the EQIP Organic Initiative.

If we don't work to improve the source of our foods, we are condemning our children to a life of health issues, issues that could be avoided if we had healthy, non-toxic, non-GMO food to eat.

COMMENT OF MERIDETH GENIN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:28 p.m.

City, State: New York, NY

Occupation: Editor and Holistic Health Educator

Comment: I support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

I most emphatically do not support the genetic modification of our food supply, which is proceeding with alarming speed. This not only contaminates the organic farms from which I purchase, it also creates new proteins in food which both humans and animals cannot digest, and which are causing a horrifying rise in allergies and gut disorders. Even more alarming is that intensive farming with GM seeds and the chemicals (including glyphosate) used with them is sterilizing our soil by killing soil-borne organisms.

COMMENT OF GREG GENSHEIMER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:44 a.m.

City, State: Vancouver, WA

Occupation: Registered Nurse

Comment: "While the surgeon general is raising alarms over the epidemic of obesity, the president is signing farm bills designed to keep the river of cheap corn flowing, guaranteeing that the cheapest calories in the supermarket will continue to be the unhealthiest?"—Michael Pollan

COMMENT OF CAROL GEORGE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:24 p.m.

City, State: Santa Cruz, CA

Occupation: Health Care Worker (Hospital Quality Director)

Comment: e need to support organic farmers, small farmers and sustainable agriculture. GMO's do not fit into this picture and should not be promoted or even supported because of ecological and health threats (super weeds and dependence on pesticides and herbicides).

COMMENT OF CHRIS GEORGE

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 3:44 a.m.

City, State: Scottsdale, AZ

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Bioenergy, Fruits, Greenhouse/nursery, Poultry/poultry products, Specialty Crops

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: I am an urban farmer. I practice permaculture and sustainability and grow organically. I don't know all of the details of this bill, but please don't let it restrict me from providing my friends and neighbors clean, healthy, organic, nutrient dense food.

COMMENT OF DARIEN GEORGE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:21 a.m.

City, State: Fort Worth, TX

Occupation: Consultant

Comment: Its time to start supporting the right producers. Start supporting the sustainable producers, not the big farm subsidies that the U.S. has consistently given money to. Support farms that are friendly to the environment, not CAFO's. It's time to take politics and money out of the equation and do what is right for the future, not what is easiest or *status quo*.

COMMENT OF MICHAEL GEORGER

Date Submitted: Sunday, April 22, 2012, 6:34 p.m.

City, State: Oran, MO

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Field Crops, Specialty Crops

Size: 301–500 acres

Comment: Dear Honorable Members of Congress,

I write to you with my concerns about what is being largely considered as being the major component and 'safety net' for production agriculture, and that is Crop Insurance. Personally, I am a big believer in insuring one's property and health in the event of a disaster, but I see the current crop insurance program as a failure that rewards inefficiency and poor production, management, and marketing practices. I see many large producers using crop insurance as a safeguard against frequent poor production practices and management, rather than using it for its intended purpose to provide financial security when Mother Nature throws a weather event at us that we cannot control. I do not purchase crop insurance due to my personal 'situation' where it would be nearly impossible to ever collect on it. Most of the soils I farm in Southeast Missouri are naturally fertile, have an adequate to plentiful supply of water during the growing season, and have had improvements made to remove excess water by use of tiles, land 'grading', and surface drainage. What fields that are not subject to adequate subsurface water, benefit from irrigation practices. Through personal expenditures of time, and money, I have tried to ensure that my production (and subsequent income) has remained relatively stable.

What bothers me the most about only using crop insurance as the safety net for production agriculture is the abuse that I have seen of it at taxpayer's expense. Last year (my area was part of the extensive and record flooding caused by excessive rains; and then a hot, summer drought), I saw producers not planting parts of their corn crop because they knew it was easier, and a guaranteed profit, to collect on Preventive Planting Insurance since the required planting date had passed. My family, as well as many other producers in the area without PPI, were continuing to plant our corn crops because we thought we could manage to make a respectable yield. Yes, our yields were off due to the growing conditions, but we took the risks, increased the management, and still made a profit. Those that purchased this type of insurance took no risks, produced nothing, yet made a profit with the help of taxpayers subsidizing the insurance programs. I have also seen some producers employ poor production practices with the knowing that if they aren't able to produce a sustaining income for their business and family through the production of a crop and then sound marketing of it, they will be able to make up the shortfalls through Crop Insurance or Revenue Insurance. I have seen poor planting practices, and heard of low levels of input (namely nitrogen and some weed control) applications by producers with the full knowledge that their yields will be low and they will collect on the insurance.

How does this affect me you may ask? Besides being a taxpayer, this type of subsidized (insurance) behavior is allowing the largest farmers to get larger and have control over more ground, inflating rental rates on ground, and increasing the purchase price of land far past what it's production value is. I'm a young farmer (34 years old), with a younger brother who has recently joined our family business of about 1,500 acres. We would like to expand our family farm and increase the acreage, but only want to do so if it is profitable in an ethical (both environmentally and socially) manner. My father farms with us as well, and has checked into crop insurance before, but we have never had growing conditions that we would have been able to collect on for the expense of our insurance premium. Many of the largest farms (5,000 or more acres) in the area are purchasing insurance to insure profitability; due to them bidding up rental rates on ground, and buying ground at rates much higher than what the production on those purchased acres can cover. Those large farms have profit margins so thin, they cannot risk any production or revenue losses due to them from over-extending themselves with management, labor, equipment, or weather/market collapse related losses. I know of smaller farmers that also collect in their crop insurance policies, but it is generally due to weather related losses (what the insurance was originally set up to cover). Being smaller acreage farmers, they are able to devote more time to the management of their family business, and generally have better production yields and marketing than those larger farms with similar growing conditions. Nationwide, what crop insurance seems to have done is make agricultural land valued more on the "dollars per acre it can generate," rather than the "profitability (based on production and marketing of produced crops) per acre," with the biggest beneficiaries being those who can control the most acres, while collecting the most often, while spending the least amount per acre with little regard to what it actually produces in yield or the price it is sold at. While I agree producers need a safe-guard against a weather event that may wipe them out financially, there needs to be some type of oversight to make sure the producer is not increasing that risk by over-paying for rent or the purchase of ground. Land is usually the single largest expense per acre of production, and farm-

ers paying high rates for this fixed cost input are only increasing the risk of collecting on insurance to be profitable.

By subsidizing crop insurance, the government is distorting the fair market value and rental rates of productive farmland across the U.S., with those areas of greatest weather-related losses, and those with large-acreage farmers who regularly collect on their insurance coverage being the greatest distorted.

What I would like to see in the farm bill for production agriculture is a modified direct-payment type of program. As I am sure you are well aware, the direct-payment is one of the few areas of past safety-net programs that is WTO compliant. If payments were made at the same amount per acre across the U.S. into some type of individual revenue-loss account (similar to a Health Savings Account) with no regard to what crop is grown on that acre, or the past production history of that acre; and then only withdrawn during periods of severe losses it would decrease the distortion of land and rental values caused by subsidized crop insurance. In order to withdraw money from the account, producers would need to give up part of their following year's payment (say 10–20% for each year and increasing for consecutive years it is withdrawn) to insure that it is only used when most needed, and not abused. There should not be a limit on the amount that is collected by an individual (remember a producer collects it per acre regardless of the crop grown. A soybean, wheat, corn, cotton, *etc.* acre all receive the same amount of payment, and double-cropped acres do not receive double payments), and there should not be a limit allowed in the account. As a producer grows his/her business, they usually have greater risks and this increase in the account would help cover the increased risks in subsequent years. The government would only have to make an actual payment when a producer withdraws money from the account, helping reduce budgetary costs of the program. It would be a producer controlled safety-net that could be used when greatest needed, yet have controls to ensure that it does not have a 'snow-ball' financial effect for future government budgets. The free-market system would determine what is produced based on price and profit, farmers would be free to produce whatever crop they choose, all crop growing regions of the country would be treated equally, farmers would have a safety-net type of account to withdraw from when losses occur, it would be WTO compliant, the true production value of the land would eventually return to determine the value of said land, and it would reward those producers most who withdraw from it the least.

I would also recommend that the government significantly reduce or eliminate subsidies to the crop insurance program to eliminate distortions in land values and allow young farmers with fewer assets a greater chance of obtaining farmland (either through purchase or rental) to engage in production agriculture. Members of Congress, please allow crop insurance to work as it should like other insurance types. A grower is allowed to purchase it, but they have to pay at full expected cost of what it may cost the insurance provider. I am sure you would see a drop in insurance coverage, but it would cause an increase in producer management, a slowing in growth of extremely large (and often times inefficient) farms, and allow young and efficient producers to have the opportunity to get started or grow their business.

On another note, please keep the grain marketing loan program the same as in the past. It is a program that costs the government nothing, but allows producers who need it to receive a loan on the bushels of produced grain (collateral) to help cash-flow their business to make payments on purchases, while waiting for market prices to hopefully improve.

Thank you for taking the time to read and consider my comments.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL GEORGER: Corn, Soybean, Wheat, and Grain Sorghum producer.

COMMENT OF DR. ROBERT M. GERACI

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:44 p.m.

City, State: Nyack, NY

Occupation: College Professor

Comment: The farm bill needs to help local producers provide their communities with nutritious (not simply caloric) food—it must support real farmers (not international corporations) as they grow a healthy variety of vegetables and fruit.

The farm bill has traditionally focused upon large scale production of specific crops (corn, soybean, *etc.*) under the work of agribusiness. Unfortunately, this comes at the expense of producing nutritious food for the public. It is outrageous that something like a cheeseburger (with all of its ingredients, shipping costs, distribution costs, and in-restaurant preparation costs) could be cheaper than a head of broccoli. It is time to end that.

The farm bill needs to stop catering to huge agribusiness corporations and instead focus upon local farmers producing a healthy variety of food at an affordable price.

COMMENT OF CYNTHIA GERDES

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:40 p.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Semi-Retired Music Teacher

Comment: The health of our food, water and farm soil is our country's greatest treasure, and needs to be protected from threats from a number of factors—including pollutants, erosion and non-organic practices.

COMMENT OF LAURIE GERSHGORN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:21 p.m.

City, State: Cortland Manor, NY

Occupation: Chef, Food Educator, Nutrition Consultant

Comment: Time is of the essence to support traditional, hard working independent farmers, not associated with agricultural corporations, for the sake of a healthy and sustainable economy, people and environment. As someone that purchases 90% or more products from within the U.S., and has been supporting local and small organic farms for many, many years, we need legislation that continues to support a farm bill that changes convention and moves forward. Obesity can only be fought through education, real food winning over factory food. Supporting farmers who grow clean food without being indebted to agri-corporations is the key to a progressive reform. Listen to the people, not the lobbyists, please.

COMMENT OF E'LONNIA GESCH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:39 p.m.

City, State: Seward, NE

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Funding for the organic farmer is essential as that is my preference also purchasing natural organic health products is what I rely on. Please consider this while you are discussing a farm bill. Thank you.

COMMENT OF CAROL GEYER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:01 p.m.

City, State: Pagosa Springs, CO

Occupation: Retired RDH

Comment: Organic for your children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren's healthy future . . . and mine too. Save our planet from the for-profit corporations.

COMMENT OF PATSY GHICKS

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 13, 2012, 3:12 p.m.

City, State: Hilliard, OH

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Please as you look at the food and farm industry bill, be aware of how many people are depending on food subsidy and no the churches cannot feed the masses. Churches do what they can in giving food to those who aren't working/are falling through the cracks, so to speak, earning too much for food stamps but not enough to keep food on the table and a roof over the family's heads.

And not all folk believe in "church"; what are the non-believers to do when circumstances put them into this position of not being able to feed themselves or the family. And this is a free country of choice of religion, is it not?

Pay attention to the masses and don't take away the life line. Keep healthy well balanced lunches in our schools, too.

COMMENT OF LESLIE GHIRLA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:59 p.m.

City, State: Nevada City, CA

Occupation: Hairdresser

Comment: Make labeling and disclosure of all GMO foods and foods manufactured with GMO products. Make it legal to BUY and produce raw milk.

Let people feed themselves and grow their own food so that food I ate in the 1960's as a child becomes the norm again—that is vegetables grown without all the chemicals and GMO.

COMMENT OF VICTOR GIAMMATTEI

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:52 p.m.

City, State: Santa Fe, NM

Occupation: Writer

Comment: I worked on the Idaho Oneplan 1999–2001 to help farmers become better stewards of the land. Anyone who looks closely at our food production system, knows that conventional agriculture has to move towards sustainability and best practices which will require less reliance on pesticides and excess use of chemical nutrients and minimum or no till practices. Our best models today for sustainability and production of healthy nutritious foods is the certified organic model in conjunction with bio-intensive farming as in the John Jeavons model. There is more than adequate data now to show that the latter methods can produce amounts equal to and even more than conventional farming per acre and do so using less energy inputs. In the final analysis the later, organic and bio-intensive farming is where our legislators, should place their emphasis and support by way of whatever subsidies are needed to support these models and help integrate these into conventional farming. Ideally, some day, conventional farming should be mostly organic bio-intensive farming.

COMMENT OF BARBARA GIBBON

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 10:49 a.m.

City, State: Columbus, OH

Occupation: Library Assistant

Comment: Please stop all factory farming! The health of our nation and the emotional and physical health of the animals we farm are both extremely important. Factory farming is making both people and animals sicker, and more dependent on medicines. Organic, natural farming of animals, animal products, vegetables, and fruit are the healthiest options, and should be supported by the government! Please stop promoting and funding factory farms, and stop injecting fruits and vegetables with chemicals so they grow faster. These chemicals are absorbed into our bodies and cause harm. Thank you.

COMMENT OF JO GIBBONS

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 1:18 a.m.

City, State: Pleasanton, CA

Occupation: Business Owner

Comment: We need to have an Organic farm bill. Big agricultural business is not serving all of America's food needs. Organic farming is a very important component in our food supply. The lobbyists for the industrial agriculture business does not seem to be concerned with the health and welfare of America. They are more focused on profit rather than quality.

COMMENT OF ROZANNE GIBBS

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 8:21 p.m.

City, State: Tucson, AZ

Occupation: Retired

Comment: It is a crime that Americans are going hungry in this country. We have money for all these horrible dictator countries but not for our own people. We can pay for war but not food? I am very tired of my tax dollar going to support these countries. They need to take care of their own and we need to take care of our own. When all Americans can have access to food and health care then we can try to save the world!

COMMENT OF GLEN GIBELLINA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:33 p.m.

City, State: Sarasota, FL

Occupation: Consumer

Comment: We need an Organic Farm Bill. We need to build a world for our children that makes access to healthy food a reality, protects the environment and puts

farmers first, then we have to put our ideas for change forward to those who serve us in Washington. It's time for wise solutions America can no longer afford to continue to blindly stumble down the toxic and costly path that industrial agriculture has paved. I advocates for family farms and sustainable agriculture today, tomorrow and for our children's future.

And God said, "Let the Earth sprout vegetation, plants yielding seed, and fruit trees bearing fruit in which is their seed, each according to its kind, on the Earth."—Genesis 1:11 ESV
And it was so. FYI, that would be "organic".

COMMENT OF MARSHALL GIBSON

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 7:38 p.m.

City, State: Indianapolis, IN

Occupation: Retired

Comment: When I was in 4th grade, we saw movies of farmers contour plowing to save soil from washing away. This is a healthier way to control runoff than chemicals that wash down rivers and kill plankton which apparently produces ½ the oxygen we breathe. I would like to have my great and great-great grandchildren breathe clean air with plenty of oxygen. Consider agriculture science rather than agriculture profits in your deliberations so you and I can assure (we hope) oxygen for our progeny.

COMMENT OF MICHAEL GIBSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:26 p.m.

City, State: Honokaa, HI

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Fruits

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: I think it is one of the deepest signs of our skewed priorities that the very food we eat has been hijacked, adulterated and diminished for corporate gain at the expense of the entire nation in countless ways. Please get this right!

COMMENT OF THEO GIESY

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 3:37 p.m.

City, State: Norfolk, VA

Occupation: Homemaker

Comment: Because we require safe health giving food, we need small and organic farmers to provide it. The products produced by agribusiness are not health giving food, they are contributing to the rise in obesity, diabetes, cancers and heart disease. Agribusiness also contributes to climate change, contamination of water and air. For these reasons I urge you to endorse all provisions of H.R. 3286, fully fund conservation programs, support all provisions of H.R. 3236, maintain EQIP Organic Initiative.

COMMENT OF DAWN GIFFORD

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 2:17 a.m.

City, State: San Diego, CA

Occupation: Nutritionist

Comment: The only way we can improve the health of our nation and reduce staggering medical costs is to put our money where our **Values** are. If we value our health—and what is life without health—we should subsidize only those things that encourage health.

GMO corn and soy made into livestock feed, corn syrup and processed food ingredients does **Not** encourage health. Miles and miles of heavily sprayed monocultures and CAFOs does **Not** encourage health of people or our precious soil, air and water.

If we put our money where our **Values** are, we would subsidize farmers to produce nutritious whole foods in ways that have minimal impact on the environment, like fruits, vegetables, free-ranging meat and eggs, and hybrid non-GMO staple crops that don't require constant spraying—like we used to have 20 years ago.

We would place local food security and healthy rural communities above grossly inefficient crop biofuels and commodity exports that put farmers here and in other countries into debt peonage or out of business.

We would dump “get big or get out” ag policies that harm small and mid-size farmers and drive prices so low that farmers have to destroy their land over-cropping and cropping on marginal/sensitive lands to make a living.

We would help farmers keep their land in agricultural use after they retire with creative sub-parceling to the next generation of farmers. We would incentivize and help farmers find less expensive, less environmentally detrimental ways to produce crops.

We would put research dollars into agroecology and finding ways to farm with minimal use of fossil fuels and water, since our current rate of use will become increasingly unsustainable.

We would place soil and water conservation and protection of bees above all else, because without all of them, we have no farming and no food.

This is what the farm bill should focus on.

COMMENT OF RICHARD GIFFORD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:37 p.m.

City, State: Conway, AR

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Forestry, Livestock

Size: 500–999 acres

Comment: Diversity leads to security and health in almost all settings—from financial investments to social systems. In the American agricultural system a diversity of profitable producers benefits everyone. Please assure that smaller, value-scaled producers have an opportunity to succeed without anti-competitive funding disadvantages imposed by commodified agribusiness.

(1) I believe that the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286) economically benefits Americans and value-scaled producers like myself and should be passed.

(2) The Conservation Stewardship Program is valuable to Americans by assuring that productive lands remain productive for future generations without dependence upon synthetic inputs. Please continue it, assuring that potential new insurance subsidies are tied to compliance with conservation programs.

(3) The Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236) assures healthy diversity on the production side of American agriculture. I hope that all of its provisions will be implemented.

(4) Participation in the EQIP program has made our farm more efficient, profitable, and an economic asset to the region. Please continue to fund it fully for the benefit of American producers.

COMMENT OF BERNADETTE GIGLIO

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 12:09 p.m.

City, State: Altadena, CA

Occupation: Fitness Form Model

Comment: We need subsidies for organic farmers . . . not big ag and biotech which is causing soil erosion and killing our mother Earth! Enough is enough . . . stand up and stop this insanity! It is time to get back to knowing where our food source is coming from, help American’s once again rise and be a great nation and grow our own whole organic food in its natural state! Subsidize programs on organic edible landscaping. Subsidize organic farmers and tax the garbage makers, like Pepsi Co., Coca Cola, ConAgra, Kraft, Tyson, Fosters, Taco Bell, McDonald’s and the **Posion** they all make for the **Real Cost** it is causing to the **Health** of all **American’s** and the **COST** to our **Planet!**

COMMENT OF MARSHA GILBERT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:45 p.m.

City, State: Hope, ID

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Can you not for once have the courage to override big agribusiness and consider the American people in your decision-making. You have a family that has to eat adulterated foods with hidden ingredients. These foods will impair the health of your children and grandchildren as well as the adults in your family. If we are to control health-care spending, we will also have to provide healthy food to Americans. If you cannot stand up to the pressures of corporations over the well-

being of our children—the future of America—then step down as a Legislator. You do not deserve the honor of serving this Country.

COMMENT OF VALERIE GILBERT

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 6:07 p.m.

City, State: New York, NY

Occupation: Actress/Writer

Comment: I want a clean, green, organic, fair trade, humanely certified, non-GMO world? Got it? No Monsanto! No crazy agribusiness CAFO factory farming BS. No more! Time for people, **We The People** to claim our land and heritage and planet back. 2012 is here, and that's exactly what it means.

COMMENT OF CLAIRE GILCHRIST

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:15 a.m.

City, State: New York, NY

Occupation: Lawyer

Comment: Please end subsidies to large farms and replace them with loophole-free agriculture risk coverage. Additionally, implement a cap on crop insurance premium subsidies.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF L.F.J. GILL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:42 p.m.

City, State: Southborough, MA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: It is time—critically so—so start supporting small, clean, organic, humane farming. The huge factory farms and “agribusiness” have wreaked plenty of havoc, on our food supply and our environment. Maybe they meant well at the beginning, but it has gotten way out of hand—soil depletion, toxins in our foods, and now tampering with the genetic code of plants—and even taking out *patents* on seeds! The FDA has been taking its cues from agribusiness and chemical companies—even hired an ex-Monsanto lawyer to write the rules for Monsanto and their ilk! Does this need to be thought about?

Please, stop subsidizing factory farming, filthy and inhumane feedlots, contaminated soil, damaged food supply, sabotage of the seeds of life, the drastic reduction of genetic diversity in the seeds supply, and the killing off of wildlife by the makers of Agent Orange and DDT—who now have a free hand in deciding the fate of our food supply. It would be unbelievable if it were science fiction. That it is the reality is beyond terrifying. If **you** will not do something about it, **Now**, who can? Thank you.

L.F.J. GILL.

COMMENT OF J. DAVID GILLANDERS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:26 p.m.

City, State: State University, AR

Occupation: Retired Engineering Professor

Comment: To improve the health of our country the government must stop subsidizing unhealthy foods and start subsidizing healthy foods.

The current farm subsidies make unhealthy fast foods the only foods many poor people can afford to eat. Start subsidizing healthy fruits and vegetables.

The subsidies on feed grains that are used to produce unhealthy high fat meats that clog our arteries are creating major health problems and therefore increasing health care costs.

Start subsidizing healthy food and health care costs will go down.

COMMENT OF BOB GILLESPIE

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 2:51 p.m.

City, State: Wenatchee, WA

Occupation: Teacher Sustainable/Organic Agriculture and Natural Resources

Comment: Protect the farm bill that provides opportunities for beginning farmers, incentives for farmers to produce and market food locally, and programs that encourage farmers to develop habitat for wildlife and pollinators.

COMMENT OF ERIN GILLETT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:42 p.m.
City, State: Menlo Park, CA
Occupation: Teacher—Mother—Graphic Designer
Comment: Stop selling your citizens short in order to produce in the stock market! Enough! Do not let **Greed** dictate the future of our children's health and our food system. Enough!
 Do not let Greed validate the demise of our planet and it's water supply.
 Say it with me, "**Enough!**"

COMMENT OF CHRISTINA GILMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:32 p.m.
City, State: Seattle, WA
Occupation: Freelance Web Developer, Mom, Eater
Comment: We need a fair and healthy farm bill, one that protects the soil and water so critical to farming **And** provides healthy food for our citizens. These should be the priority **Above** that of ensuring large profit margins for agribusiness.

I support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

I care deeply about the quality of food I eat and feed to my family. I also care deeply that we as a nation steward our resources wisely so there is food for the future, for everyone not just those who got rich at the expense of our natural resources.

SUBMITTED STATEMENT BY STEVE GILMAN, POLICY COORDINATOR, NORTHEAST
 ORGANIC FARMING ASSOCIATION

Chairman Lucas, Ranking Member Peterson, Members of the Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to submit this testimony on behalf of the member organizations of the Northeast Organic Farming Association, Interstate Council (NOFA-IC).

I'm here today representing the seven state chapters of the Northeast Organic Farming Association—NOFA-NY, NOFA-VT, NOFA-NH, NOFA-RI, NOFA/MASS, CT-NOFA and NOFA-NJ. Begun in 1971, NOFA is one of the oldest organic farming organizations in the United States. NOFA members include a wide range of farmers, gardeners, landscape professionals, homesteaders and consumers working together to promote healthy food, organic farming practices, food system fairness and a cleaner environment through education and policy initiatives.

Welcome to upstate New York and the rural splendor of the Adirondacks! While there's been public grumbling about hosting a farm bill field hearing on short notice in a far off place that's hard to get to in a region not known for its farmland—we're glad you're here.

Local Farms As An Important Economic Engine

The fact is—this mountainous, thin-soiled area with a very short growing season is home to numerous appropriately scaled family farms, produce growers, greenhouses, dairies, livestock operations and orchards—supplying local restaurants, groceries, Farmers Markets, roadside stands, Community Supported Agriculture projects as well as Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) recipients that generates a significant year round contribution to jobs and the region's economy. It's clear that the economic benefits of producing food for local markets has tangible effects on job creation. Economic Research Service data shows that for every \$1 million in sales of local foods, 13 jobs are created compared to 7.5 jobs in production agriculture. Multiply this economic driver across our entire Northeast region, home to some 40% of this nation's consumers, and it's easy to see that local agriculture plays a substantial role in the overall economy.

This is not just a regional issue, however. We urge the Agriculture Committee to strongly support a number of farm bill initiatives that are instrumental in promoting the growth and viability of local family farms all across the country. In this

time of intense negotiations over budget cuts its hard to find more bang for the buck than USDA's exemplary low cost **Know Your Farmer, Know Your Food** initiative, for example. This provides a real service for farmers and citizens trying to negotiate the Federal labyrinth by delivering public access to conservation, farm credit, rural economic development and marketing programs that were authorized by Congress. This USDA initiative is increasing the farming opportunities for growers looking to capture these expanding new markets and helping community agriculture scale up their local and regional food systems, create jobs and strengthen their rural economies.

The low cost **Farmers Market Promotion Program** also produces many benefits for community agriculture. However, specialty crop and organic producers who attempt to scale up from direct producer-to-consumer markets are encountering huge barriers in selling products to local institutional and retail outlets. There is an urgent need for crop insurance products and food safety farmer training programs to serve this dynamic sector of agriculture. Therefore, we also advocate strong support for the comprehensive provisions outlined in the **Local Farm, Food and Jobs Act** and the **Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act**, which are aimed at inclusion in the 2012 Farm Bill and have the support of hundreds of farm, food, and rural organizations nationwide.

Importance of Conservation Programs

As is true all across America, maintaining environmental quality is the absolute lifeblood of the Adirondack region. In addition to providing a healthy quality of life for all citizens, outdoor recreation enthusiasts have a special relationship with the out-of-doors. Teeming with wildlife and awesome vistas, this area's economy is built on travelers from around the world who come to hike, rock climb, ski, swim, fish, hunt, boat, bird watch, *etc.* Conservation of resources is paramount. Agriculture, with all its ecological impacts, must do its part—that's why the **farm bill conservation programs should be augmented instead of suffering ruinous cuts**. It is only fair that public agricultural subsidy and crop insurance dollars should be accompanied with mandated participation in conservation programs.

Competition Title

We urge support of a strong, comprehensive and improved competition title in the next farm bill by placing a moratorium on mergers of large food and agricultural companies and reviewing prior mergers for antitrust issues; banning meatpackers from owning livestock, which can be used to manipulate the market; requiring fully transparent contracts for farmers; supporting the **GIPSA rule** and investigating and enforcing antitrust laws across the food system and protecting Mandatory **Country-of-Origin Labeling (COOL)**.

Support for the Organic Sector

We are disappointed that no organic farmers have been invited to testify at this hearing, even though organic is such an important and growing part of the New York State agricultural economy and also because organic has been so vulnerable to cutbacks in this farm bill cycle. The 2012 Farm Bill represents an opportunity for the Agriculture Committee to honor consumer food preferences and fully support organic agriculture initiatives. For over a decade now consumer demand has continued to fuel the exponential growth of the organic sector, which even in this time of recession remains the fastest-growing segment in the food economy, by far.

Currently, however, domestic demand for organic food and beverages exceeds domestic production—and this represents a tremendous opportunity for U.S. farmers and businesses. Organic agriculture is open to all farmers and represents a practical opportunity for growers of all scales who wish to transition to organic farming methods and access these growing markets. In order to meet projected market demand with domestic production by 2015, we will need 42,000 organic farmers. With just a modest investment in USDA research, marketing, and farmer assistance programs to support the U.S. organic sector, we can close the gap and expand this critical job base here at home.

To foster that growth, we urge a continued and expanded Federal investment in the following USDA programs:

National Organic Program (NOP)

In order for organic to remain a feasible option for farmers and consumers alike there is Federal responsibility through USDA to insure that organic standards remain viable and keep pace with the growth in the sector through adequate funding of the National Organic Program (NOP). Charged with the promulgation and enforcement of organic standards, the NOP is also responsible for accrediting certifiers, developing equivalency agreements, handling complaints—and ensuring the integrity of the organic seal. These are essential functions for the survival and transparent growth of the organic sector. In order for the NOP to be able to grow

along with the organic sector it requires a technology upgrade to better provide domestic and international oversight as well as transparency and streamlining of systems, data, and information.

NOP should receive a one-time infusion of \$5 million in mandatory funds for the technology upgrade, and then should be authorized to receive appropriations increasing at a rate of 20 percent annually beginning with \$10 million in FY 2013.

National Organic Certification Cost-Share Program (NOCCSP)

This program is essential in helping small and medium-size businesses become certified as organic, a critical step if we are to meet growing consumer demand for organic products and maintain a scale diversity in organic operations. Unlike bail outs and direct payment subsidies organic farmers are simply asking to be put in a position to compete and succeed in new markets.

The annual process of organic certification is a necessary step for ensuring that all organic operations meet stringent organic standards, in order to ensure the integrity of the USDA organic seal and meet consumer expectations. But certification costs can be prohibitive for small, mid-sized, and beginning farmer businesses. This cost-share program enables certified organic farmers and handlers to offset the costs of certification by providing a small reimbursement of currently no more than \$750 per year, capped at 75% of total certification costs.

NOCCSP should be funded at \$30 million in total mandatory funding over the 5 year life of the next farm bill.

Public Plant and Animal Breeding

One of the basic building blocks of any successful agricultural system, conventional or organic, is *farmer access to seeds* that are well adapted to local soils and climates. Farmers nationwide have fewer choices of seeds to meet changing environmental stresses and consumer demands. Often, the seeds that are available are not bred to address local soil and climate conditions, placing entire regions at a competitive disadvantage. The Federal Government has largely stopped funding *classical breeding* efforts at state land-grant institutions to develop public cultivars, and has largely shifted agricultural germplasm research toward only patented varieties that prevent farmers from saving seeds. The problem is particularly acute for organic farmers whose farming systems demand seeds that are well adapted to their local conditions. The 2008 Farm Bill addressed this growing crisis by requiring USDA to make classical plant and animal breeding a priority with the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI), but USDA has not complied with that Congressional mandate.

The next farm bill should require a set aside of ten percent of annual AFRI funding to be used for classical breeding efforts to ensure meaningful public seed variety choices for farmers.

Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative (OREI)

This program is USDA's flagship competitive research and extension grants program dedicated to organic agriculture. Unique in its scope and function, OREI funds research and extension projects to help meet the production, marketing, and policy needs of the growing organic industry. The program is very competitive and each year funds only a small percentage of eligible proposals and comes nowhere near meeting the growing sector's research and extension needs.

OREI should be funded at \$30 million in mandatory funds annually, and retain its authorization for appropriation.

Organic Production and Market Data Initiatives (ODI)

This is a small but significant multi-agency initiative that ensures that USDA collects organic statistics, conducts organic price reporting, and releases organic economic reports. The Economic Research Service, the National Agricultural Statistics Service, and the Agricultural Marketing Service all collaborate on this data collection initiative. Access to segregated organic data is critical to help organic farmers and handlers make wise business decisions, and to policymakers needing to assess trends in agriculture.

ODI should receive \$5 million in mandatory funding over the life of the next farm bill, and retain its authorization for appropriations.

Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP)

The 2008 Farm Bill included important provisions for organic farmers in recognition of the historical lack of participation and conservation benefits of these systems. However, both programs are in need of reform to address the unique needs of organic farming systems.

Issues such as the unfamiliarity of NRCS staff with organic systems, overlapping planning requirements with the National Organic Program, and lack of adequate planning assistance should be addressed in the next farm bill.

Address the Lack of Risk Management Tools for Organic Producers

Despite mandates in the 2008 Farm Bill, USDA currently does not provide appropriate risk management tools for organic producers. The agency charges an unjustified surcharge to organic farmers who participate in Federal Crop Insurance Program, and for most organic crops, does not pay organic farmers at the organic price when they experience a loss. In addition, the agency does not provide appropriate tools for diversified farmers. The 2008 Farm Bill required USDA to remove the unjustified organic crop insurance surcharge and to provide organic price elections. While USDA has started the process for some organic crops, it has fallen far short of the 2008 Farm Bill mandates in that regard.

The next farm bill must fully remove these unnecessary and unjustified disincentives to organic farmer use of USDA risk management tools.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



STEVE GILMAN,
NOFA-IC Policy Coordinator.

COMMENT OF JAMIE GILMORE

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 6:07 p.m.

City, State: Naalehu, HI

Occupation: Self-Employed

Comment:

- Support for small farmers & farms.
- Different regulations for small farms & large scale farms.
- Support for farmers markets & direct selling by the farmer to the consumer.
- Support for organics.
- Upholding the organic standards . . . keeping “organic” free of genetically modified ingredients preservatives & chemicals.

COMMENT OF DAVID GILROY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:13 p.m.

City, State: East Granby, CT

Occupation: Psychotherapist

Comment: As a person who enjoys the right to healthy eating, I want to invite you to think in much the same way we once did with student loans. We can call it The National Defense Organic Farms Bill.

COMMENT OF ERINN GILSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:30 p.m.

City, State: Jacksonville, FL

Occupation: Professor

Comment: I urge members of the Committee on Agriculture to refuse to continue to allow the farm bill to include the excessive subsidies for commodity agriculture. It has become increasingly clear to U.S. citizens that the *status quo* for agriculture in the United States must change. The farm bill should support food that is healthy and safe for families and the environment (the air, water, and soil) in which those families live. Subsidizing the production of corn and soy, which are transformed into nutritionally empty processed foods, is a failure of policy. It only serves to perpetuate a food system that makes unhealthy, processed food cheap and plentiful, and so harms the health of American people. Changes to the farm bill should foster the growth of local producers and jobs in local food business, and continue to support the organic production that is healthier for people and, in overall terms, more efficient.

Instead, I urge the committee members to:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).

- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

COMMENT OF MICHAEL GIMMESON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:08 p.m.

City, State: Powell, WY

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Dry Beans & Peas, Field Crops, Livestock

Size: 500–999 acres

Comment: Please stop the insanity! Everyone knows that you're paid off by the big ag corporations like Monsanto. How can you live with yourself knowing that you are poisoning people, all in the name of money? One day, justice will be served and you will be accountable for the terrible decisions you have made.

Remember, you can't eat money and you can't buy your way out of a lie.

COMMENT OF ANNE GINN; ON BEHALF OF SUSAN ELLIS GOODELL, PRESIDENT & CEO, FORGOTTEN HARVEST, INC.

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:31 a.m.

City, State: Oak Park, MI

Occupation: Food Rescue Organization/Emergency Food Provider

Comment:

U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Agriculture

SUSAN ELLIS GOODELL,
President & CEO.

Statement submitted by Forgotten Harvest, Inc.

Statement submitted on May 19, 2012

Forgotten Harvest is honored to submit comments to the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Agriculture.

As the nation's largest food rescue organization, Forgotten Harvest rescued over 23 million pounds of surplus nutritious food last year and is on track to rescue over 42 million pounds this year—equivalent to about 42 million meals. This food is distributed free-of-charge to people facing hunger in metro Detroit.

Principle: Eating healthy food is a basic human right. The nutritious food raised, processed, and sold in our nation and exported to other nations provides a critical engine for our nation's and Michigan's economy. The agricultural sector is one of the most important contributors to the nation's jobs, recovery from the recent deep recession, and future growth. The nutritious food from America's agricultural sector feeds people. Without nutritious food, there is no life. For our nation's vulnerable population, however, accessing this healthy food often is a significant challenge.

Forgotten Harvest urges the Committee to retain the fundamental principle that eating healthy food is a basic human right, not a privilege. A nutritious diet for the nation's population is critical for America's future. Eating a healthy diet enables children's bodies and brains to grow normally so that our nation's children may live productive, contributing, economically viable adult lives. Educators observe that hungry children are inattentive, fail to socialize effectively, and often drop-out of school, which results in life-long limits on earning capacity. Adults, particularly seniors, need a nutritious diet for healthy living. A poor diet contributes to the risk of debilitating and costly diseases, including heart and kidney disease, diabetes, and related complications. While the correlation between income and obesity is complex, a nutritious diet enables people to maintain a healthy weight, which is important in averting disease and costly long-term health problems. Reducing poor-diet-related disease risks may help reduce the nation's escalating health care costs. Our nation depends upon healthy people able to serve in the military service, lead businesses, provide health care, and educate future generations. Eating nutritious food, regardless of personal or household income, is critical in assuring our nation can depend on a capable, healthy population.

As the nation knows well, the recent recession continues to affect millions of people in the nation, including Michigan, who now rely upon the emergency food system for help meeting their basic human needs. Forgotten Harvest is a leading source of nutritious food for people facing hunger in metro Detroit, one of the na-

tion's and Michigan's most seriously affected communities over the past decade and in the recent economic recession. Forgotten Harvest's food rescue/distribution business model brings together partners across the economic sectors—for-profit agricultural/food businesses, nonprofit food distribution agencies, and government organizations—to help people facing dire barriers to acquire and eat healthy food. Forgotten Harvest rescues surplus, fresh and prepared food from over 455 generous food businesses: farmers, dairies, processors, wholesalers and distributors, retailers, and high quality entertainment venues. We distribute this surplus, rescued, healthy fresh and prepared food free-of-charge to over 250 partner emergency food distribution agencies: pantries, soup kitchens, shelters, and faith-based and community partners via our farmers' market-style mobile pantry. This surplus healthy food—vegetables, fruit, meat, dairy, baked goods, juice, and prepared food—is distributed free-of-charge to no- and low-income people facing hunger in metro-Detroit.

The equitable principle that eating nutritious food is a basic human right guided the provisions in prior farm bills. Forgotten Harvest is deeply distressed with the cuts to nutrition programs and other safety net programs that the House passed in recent budget action—and that have been proposed over the past year. A major portion of these cuts will hurt households with children and seniors. From first-hand experience, Forgotten Harvest knows that the hundreds of thousands of vulnerable people it serves are least able to expand their current financial resources when government safety net programs are cut.

As the Committee addresses the 2012 Farm Bill provisions coincident with the nation's need to "live within its means," Forgotten Harvest urges the Committee to continue to reinforce this fundamental basic human right as a factor in the significant economic role of the agricultural and nutrition sectors. Forgotten Harvest believes that the farm bill must continue to structure the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to assure that communities of eligible people are able to receive expedient SNAP allocations regardless of their residential locations and the timing of dire need: in every state and in every rural, suburban, and urban community. As currently structured, SNAP is available rapidly to meet the need of eligible people. Forgotten Harvest urges the Committee to retain the current structure and not change SNAP to a block grant program, which would greatly limit the program's flexibility to respond rapidly and would add additional bureaucratic burdens without benefit for people facing need. In considering modifications to SNAP, Forgotten Harvest urges the 2012 Farm Bill to expand innovative and effective SNAP outreach programs, such as the SNAP outreach demonstration program implemented by the Northern Illinois Food, as a model to help provide rapid emergency food support to people facing dire need.

SNAP recipients' spending reinforces and enhances the economic value of the agricultural sector, because SNAP funds supports jobs for farmers and ranchers, food processors, distributors, and retailers. As the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) reports, the economic multiplier of the SNAP program is \$1.79: when recipients spend their SNAP allocations to acquire food, the community and food sector benefit by an even greater amount. Forgotten Harvest urges the 2012 Farm Bill to assure that no additional cuts are made to the SNAP allocation amounts for eligible people. Such cuts harm the people intended to benefit from SNAP and also will have a negative economic impact on the agriculture and broader food economic sectors.

Forgotten Harvest also urges the Committee to strengthen The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) to help keep up with increased demand. TEFAP supplies about 25 percent of the food in the nation's national network of "food banks." TEFAP should have triggers to enable it to respond rapidly to need and also have provisions to enable the Secretary of Agriculture to use discretionary funds to enhance the quantities of food in the TEFAP system when economic need requires this food.

While Forgotten Harvest acknowledges the difficult and painful questions that the nation must ask in addressing current budget challenges, our nation must not place additional and undue burdens on its most vulnerable people. Provisions that help feed vulnerable people must recognize that the same people may be least able to help fund these feeding support programs or to endure additional hardship caused by program or budgetary revisions. Forgotten Harvest is honored to meet many of the clients receiving its food and, through a SNAP pilot outreach program, to meet people applying for SNAP allocations: long-term jobless people striving to secure employment, seniors struggling to live on minimal incomes, low-income parents and grandparents raising children, people with emotional challenges that place barriers on higher-income employment. As the Committee considers these emergency support programs, including SNAP and other nutrition and emergency food support programs,

Forgotten Harvest urges careful evaluation of all possible unintended consequences that could harm the people these support programs are designed to help, on the agriculture sector, and on the gradually improving nation's economy.

Principle: Surplus food must feed people, not landfills.

The USDA reports that 96 billion pounds of food are wasted annually while 49 million people in our nation, including 17 million children, face hunger each year. The USDA has a significant role in helping feed people facing hunger. The EPA has reported that wasted food comprises the second largest volume in the nation's municipal landfills. The EPA has established a high priority on reducing wasted food for environmental reasons and urges diverting food to feed hungry people as a priority action. Forgotten Harvest urges USDA and EPA collaboration to address this mutually recognized human crisis.

Forgotten Harvest urges the Committee to include provisions in the 2012 Farm Bill to urge USDA to help reduce the waste of surplus healthy food by using innovative and cost-effective methods to redirect surplus food, currently wasted, to feed the nation's hungry people. Food recovery and diversion to feed people can be accomplished in a very cost effective model. For example, Forgotten Harvest rescues and distributes the equivalent of one nutritious meal for less than 20¢. Forgotten Harvest offers to provide the Committee with examples of locations in our nation and other countries that may provide insights into innovative, cost-effective programs with effective outcomes to address this principle.

The U.S. has the power to end hunger in America and to be a model to other nations by denying healthy, safe, surplus food to landfills and instead providing that good food to our most vulnerable citizens. Even with the nation's extensive and effective government and nonprofit human service programs, millions of children and adults still face hunger. The House Committee on Agriculture can lead in addressing this hunger gap by emphasizing a principle in the 2012 Farm Bill that directs surplus healthy food to our nation's hungry people and not to waste sites.

COMMENT OF CAROLINE GINSBERG

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:20 p.m.

City, State: San Luis Obispo, CA

Occupation: Coordinator at the Food Bank Coalition

Comment: Allow small school districts and school districts with low percentages of free and reduced price meals served (annual Entitlement Value less than \$50,000) to volunteer to receive Cash-in-Lieu of the USDA Commodity Foods. Districts requesting this voluntary option, if it were made available by the farm bill, could purchase fresh, nutritious, locally grown, raised and/or caught foods for their students school meals and therefore invest in local food systems and at the same reduce USDA Food Program administration costs at the State level and perhaps, the Federal level.

COMMENT OF DEBORAH GIORDANO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:21 p.m.

City, State: Castro Valley, CA

Occupation: Clergy

Comment: Don't weaken poultry inspection standards!

Current rules provide for three inspectors to examine 140 birds per minute. Under the new rules, inspections would speed up to 200 per minute—with only one inspector on the line. Even the professionals say that is way too fast.

With far less time to inspect each chicken, unsanitary, defective poultry meat has a higher chance of making it into our supermarkets. And while USDA says it would save less than \$30 million per year on poultry inspection costs, it could cost the agency (and us) far more to deal with potential increases in foodborne illness.

Speeding up the poultry line isn't just hazardous to our health—it's also hazardous to those who work in poultry factories. Poultry workers already have an alarming rate of workplace injury from conditions which include a workplace full sharp objects like knives and scissors, and from the repetitive nature of poultry factory tasks. Speeding up the chicken line will only make conditions even more hazardous.

But while food and worker safety will undoubtedly suffer, the new rules are expected to result in a \$¼ billion windfall to poultry companies.

The safety of our food, especially poultry which has such a high incidence of contamination, should be the highest priority of USDA. If their answer is less quality control inspection, more dangerous workplace conditions, and allowing an industry

with a horrible safety record to police itself, it's probably time to go back to the drawing board.

COMMENT OF JUSTIN GIORGI

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 03, 2012, 2:48 p.m.

City, State: Klamath Falls, OR

Occupation: Optician

Comment: Our food system is in crisis largely due to government policy subsidizing large producers of low quality products. The foods produced by our system are tasteless and nutritionally-deficient. We have failed our small family farmers. We have failed to support them and we have failed to support the production of wholesome food.

Since the current policies have been implemented we have seen a huge increase in health issues across the board. Any physician, anyone who studies health and wellness will tell you that the first factor in any one's health is their diet. A nutritionally balanced diet consisting largely of fruits and vegetables strengthens every system in the body allowing the body to naturally resist disease and fight infections. Our current salt, sugar, fat diet isn't just a personal choice. That is what the food system produces.

Wholesome food simply isn't an option. We produce too little nutritious food and too much junk. Even the fruits and vegetables we produce are void of nutrients due to the way they are grown. This is a direct result of government policy. We must take quick and decisive action to correct this.

Instead of encouraging large scale production of nutritionally void foods lets encourage small scale production of quality goods. We can do that by supporting the family farmer. If we must subsidize our food system we must do so wisely. We must subsidize the wholesome foods not the garbage. We must allow and encourage farmers to produce and sell the best product possible instead of the most that is possible.

The end result will be a food system that produces quality food, a population that consumes less and is healthier overall. We cannot continue to reduce the cost of our food at the expense of our health. The truth is if we don't spend our time and money on food we will spend much more on health care.

I must mention that I will be taking a great interest in the committee's hearings and decisions regarding the next farm bill. Anyone who stands up and challenges the current system, encourages change and at least makes an attempt to improve the system will earn my vote.

COMMENT OF KAREN GIOVANNINI

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 12:28 p.m.

City, State: Windsor, CA

Occupation: Ombudsman

Comment: I am writing in support of the suggestions by the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition. Specifically, healthy food for school children (not processed food-like substances), Value-Added Producer Grants, Organic Ag Research & Extension, Conservation Stewardship Program and the Beginning Farmer & Rancher Development Program. We are conducting our first year of the Beginning Farmer & Rancher program and the response was overwhelming—100 applicants for 25 openings. Clearly, the interest in small agriculture is alive and well. Thank you.

COMMENT OF JENNIFER GIRVIN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:36 a.m.

City, State: Boston, MA

Occupation: Executive Recruitment

Comment: Please for the health and welfare of this country and our children's children, we must reform the farm subsidy system! Greed has played havoc on every vital sector of our economy and it will ruin the USA. We need to support small farms and eliminate factory farming now.

COMMENT OF DIEDRE GISH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:43 p.m.

City, State: Sharon, VT

Occupation: Finance Manager

Comment: The farm bill should support small, diversified, healthy agriculture. The farm bill should not subsidize commodity crops and should not encourage

CAFOs. The farm bill should have more incentives for organic agriculture that provides sustainable soils without the use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides.

COMMENT OF STEVE GIVEN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:55 p.m.

City, State: Bainbridge Island, WA

Occupation: Musician

Comment: Congress should be very careful in weighing the arguments put forth by Big Business lobbyists when the average person who will be more affected rarely gets a voice.

COMMENT OF NANCY GIVENS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:03 p.m.

City, State: Bowling Green, KY

Occupation: University Sustainability Program Coordinator

Comment: In 1985, American taxpayers and farmers entered into a compact to provide a safety net for the country's food producers in return for protection of critical natural resources. Known as "conservation compliance" this policy requires farmers to follow conservation plans that limit soil erosion on highly erodible land as well as preventing destruction of wetlands and native grasslands. Farmers who willfully violate their conservation plans risk losing taxpayer funded benefits.

Today, this important connection is at risk. Taxpayer-funded subsidies for crop insurance are not currently linked to conservation compliance as they once were. Congress is currently considering eliminating Direct Payments, the major subsidy program that is linked to conservation compliance, and moving some of those funds to support increased subsidies for crop insurance, which currently lacks compliance requirements. Unless Congress connects crop insurance subsidies to conservation compliance, a significant part of farmers' incentive to follow conservation plans will disappear this year.

In order to ensure that the agricultural safety net works in harmony with conservation programs and responsible land uses, conservation compliance provisions must be strengthened and enforced. Long-term protection of our nation's agricultural land is of vital importance to our country. Thank you for consideration.

COMMENT OF ROGER G. GIVENS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:39 p.m.

City, State: Morgantown, KY

Occupation: Retired

Comment: In this time of large equipment farming where the necessity to till large acres in order to profit good conservation programs are of the highest importance. Please don't underfund these programs. Our waterways depend on them.

COMMENT OF DAVID GIVERS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:55 p.m.

City, State: Moorhead, MN

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I am opposed to farm subsidies that make the big farms bigger and the rich richer. I am opposed to the cuts in food stamps when we are in the midst of an economic depression.

America needs a farm bill that supports jobs and organic ag.

COMMENT OF KATHERINE GLASCOCK

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:49 p.m.

City, State: Studio City, CA

Occupation: Garden Designer

Comment: Please, on behalf of our children and their children: give us healthy sustainable food so our Earth is protected from the giant footsteps of the chemical corporations. They have done so much harm; we must turn everything around with determination.

COMMENT OF AVIVA GLASER

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 5:03 p.m.

City, State: Washington, D.C.

Occupation: Legislative Representative for Agriculture Policy, National Wildlife Federation

Comment: The National Wildlife Federation (NWF) would like to thank Chairman Lucas, Ranking Member Peterson and the members of the House Agriculture Committee for considering our input on the 2012 Farm Bill. NWF is America's largest wildlife conservation organization, representing more than 4 million members and supporters throughout the United States and 48 affiliated state and territorial conservation organizations. NWF strongly supports farm bill conservation and energy programs. Farm bill conservation programs are particularly important for wildlife and wildlife habitat. Thousands of farmers are restoring imperiled wildlife habitat and wetlands throughout the country with the assistance of farm bill programs. The hard work of these local stewards is critical to protecting our natural resources and valued ecosystems across the country, but their success is at risk unless these programs are maintained under the next farm bill.

The following represent some of our top priorities for the 2012 Farm Bill:

Adopt a "Sodsaver" provision to protect native habitat:

The current agriculture safety net provides substantial price support and risk protection to crop producers which make crop production economically viable even where yields are consistently poor. The reduction in economic risk for crop production, combined with advances in herbicides and genetically modified crops provides incentives to break new ground—even where that ground is not likely to be productive.

Currently, crop insurance and disaster payments incentivize farmers to bring disaster-prone farmland into cultivation, creating taxpayer liability for the high risks associated with producing crops on marginal land. In South Dakota, for instance, from 1997 to 2006 the 16 counties with the highest number of native grassland conversions to cropland had annual crop insurance net benefits to producers that were more than double those in all other counties (GAO 2007).

In order to halt the continued "break out" of native habitats that are too dry, marginal or flood-prone to produce good crops, but can still be broken without economic risk to producers due to an extensive safety net of subsidies and disaster payments, the National Wildlife Federation strongly supports the adoption of a "Sodsaver" provision in the 2012 Farm Bill. Such a provision would make non-cropland that is converted to cropland ineligible for any farm bill benefit, including but not limited to price and income support payments, crop insurance, disaster payments, and conservation program enrollment. Landowners may choose to break native prairie or other non-cropland if they so desire, but they must do so with the full understanding that the profitability of crops grown on this acreage will depend on free-market economics, not agricultural subsidies, crop insurance, and disaster payments.

A Sodsaver provision would provide significant budget savings. Estimates determined in previous farm bill reauthorizations placed Sodsaver's 10 year savings in a range from \$1.4 billion (2002 CBO) to a low of \$119 million (2008 CBO score for just crop insurance subsidies).

The National Wildlife Federation supports the Sodsaver provision that was included in the farm bill that passed out of the Senate Agriculture Committee last month, but urges the House Agriculture Committee to include a stronger provision in the bill they write. A stronger Sodsaver provision would include a prohibition on receiving the entire premium subsidy for crop insurance should a landowner choose to convert land without a cropping history.

Maintain funding for a strong conservation title:

As we move into the 2012 Farm Bill in one of the toughest budget climates in recent years, farm bill conservation programs are increasingly seen as a target for budget cuts. Farm bill conservation programs have demonstrated benefits for soil, water, and wildlife. Moreover, they have been shown to contribute to rural economies through increased revenues from hunting, fishing, and other recreational activities.

Farmer and rancher demand for conservation assistance dollars remains high, outstripping the supply of available program dollars even before any funding cuts are considered. As of April 2010, there was a backlog of over 1,000,000 unfunded applications for the Wetlands Reserve Program and Grasslands Reserve Program. In 2009, for every application that received funding under the Environmental Quality Incentives Program, there were 3.4 applications that did not. Clearly these are programs that are popular with farmers that also provide benefits to taxpayers through cleaner water, improved water management and flood prevention, and the protection of vital wildlife habitat and special places that define many areas of the

United States. According to a USDA study, EQIP projects that address erosion provide over \$54 per acre in value by reducing nutrient replacement costs for farmers and avoiding costs for public works to develop alternative ways to clean up polluted waters (USDA 2010a). Other conservation programs such as WRP, GRP, WHIP, and CSP provide similar returns to taxpayers that exceed costs (USDA 2009; USDA 2010b).

The conservation title must continue to balance the pressing needs of wildlife, along with soil and water and other conservation needs. In the 2008 Farm Bill, the Conservation Reserve Program took a cut of 7 million acres—a cut that is likely beginning to have serious negative repercussions for wildlife on the agricultural landscape. The National Wildlife Federation understands that in this challenging fiscal climate, cuts to all parts of the farm bill are inevitable. The Senate Agriculture Committee's bill cuts \$6 billion from conservation programs over the next decade, cuts that will have serious impacts on the landscape. Any further cuts to conservation programs and spending on wildlife will be lead to an unsustainable situation for wildlife on the agricultural landscape could lead to the listing of several species of wildlife under the Endangered Species Act.

Provide funding for wetland and grassland easements with flexibility for grassland easements:

Both the Wetland Reserve Program (WRP) and Grassland Reserve Program (GRP) are critically important programs for wildlife with baselines that expire in September, 2012. The Wetland Reserve Program (WRP) is a critically-important program that plays a significant role in taking flood-prone land out of production and putting it back to its most beneficial use, filtering runoff, storing flood water, and providing for wildlife habitat. Funding must be found to continue to support the restoration and protection of wetlands on agricultural land and such funding should continue to be focused on ecological restoration of wetland systems and their long-term protection.

The Grassland Reserve Program (GRP) is critical to protecting our last remaining native grasslands as well as keeping ranching economically viable. There is an enormous demand for GRP—as of April 2010, there were over 800,000 acres waiting to be enrolled in the program—yet the program has never been sufficiently funded to even begin to keep up with demand.

The National Wildlife Federation supports the general framework of a combined easement program. However, we are concerned that the inclusion of a 50% matching requirement for GRP would be highly detrimental to the program. More than 95% of America's native grasslands have been converted to other uses since settlement. The lands that remain in grass are increasingly important to the continued viability of the ranching community throughout the west. Grassland nesting birds have been repeatedly listed by the U.S. Geological Survey as the fastest declining group of bird species in North America and several species could soon be federally listed under the Endangered Species Act if their habitat continues to decline. Keeping what is left of intact grasslands in grazing use should be a high priority of the farm bill conservation title to support both the ranching industry and biodiversity.

Yet many areas where such lands remain do not have a well developed land trust community and/or there is little money to fund the purchase of grassland easements. In order to ensure continued opportunities to enroll rapidly disappearing native grasslands that are important active grazing lands, and where few opportunities exist to leverage matching funds for such conservation, we recommend the creation of a 1 million acre priority grasslands option within the agricultural land easements program under which the cost share would be waived for high priority, large, intact native grasslands. Additionally, we recommend flexibility within the program for the Secretary to adjust cost share requirement on a case by case basis if the Secretary determines that environmentally sensitive land of special significance would be protected.

Provide adequate funding for wildlife practices in the Conservation Title:

The Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP) is a voluntary program that pays up to 75 percent of the cost to private land owners for enhancing wildlife habitat on their land. The program is not limited to agricultural lands, but is open to any private landowner who would like to create wildlife-friendly habitat enhancements to a portion of their land, such as restoring native prairie grasses, performing forest management practices, or improving aquatic areas. The program is highly popular among landowners, and in 2010, there were over 1 million acres enrolled in the program, with a backlog of over 500,000 acres waiting to be enrolled.

The farm bill that passed through the Senate Agriculture committee combined WHIP into the Environmental Quality Incentives Program, with a provision saying that at least 5% of EQIP funds had to go towards WHIP. However, at least 5% of

EQIP funds are currently going to wildlife practices. The bill authorizes EQIP for FY13 at \$1.5 billion; 5% of that would be \$75 million, which would be around a 12% cut. However, because EQIP already includes wildlife practices—and currently at least 5% of EQIP is already going towards wildlife practices, we run the very real risk of losing the additionality of WHIP. Already, WHIP has over 500,000 acres in backlog that are not funded (as of 2010): the farm bill as written could effectively eliminate the WHIP program as we know it. A better solution to meet the needs to wildlife, should EQIP and WHIP be consolidated, is to provide for at least 8% of EQIP funds to go towards WHIP.

Maintain the integrity of the Conservation Reserve Program:

Since its creation in 1985, each year Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) has been responsible for reducing hundreds of millions of tons of erosion, and nutrient pollution into our nation's waterways. CRP is also an important reservoir for wildlife, and has had significant benefits for populations of ducks, grassland birds, and other species. We understand that high commodity prices, expiring acres, and the current fiscal environment are leading to pressure to re-examine the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) acreage cap. We strongly urge the Senate Agriculture Committee to maintain an adequate CRP program to address soil, water and wildlife concerns across the landscape.

Additionally, while we support further compatible uses of CRP, such as expanded grazing, we call on members of the committee to oppose increased economic uses of the CRP that are incompatible with the program's focus on soil, water and wildlife conservation, as well as the penalty free early release of land enrolled in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). We request that timing and frequency of haying and grazing continue to be set according to the needs of grassland species in each region, under consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and state wildlife agencies. We support eliminating the requirement that materials generated by mid contract management activities be destroyed. Where such materials can be sold, as hay, biomass, *etc.*, it is more likely that needed management activities will be undertaken by contract holders.

CRP also promotes underlying economic benefits. Every year, hunters and anglers inject billions of dollars into rural economies throughout the country. The Congressional Research Service estimates that the Conservation Reserve Program averages around \$1.4 billion per year in monetized benefits, not including the value of benefits such as improved water quality and reduced loss of topsoil. The program plays a key role in providing habitat for wildlife and is critical for protection of the water quality. Each year, CRP prevents an estimated 600 million tons of nitrogen and 100 million tons of phosphorus from being released into the air and water. Additionally, by enrolling lands in CRP, the nation benefits from the sequestration of carbon dioxide. In 2010 alone, CRP lands sequestered 51 million tons of carbon dioxide.

Current high commodity prices have led some to call for a reduction in CRP acres or penalty-free releases for farmers with lands currently enrolled in CRP. Many justify this position by concluding those lands could be used to grow more commodities which would then help bring down the high cost of food. Unfortunately, that assumption fails to consider many details and completely ignores the cost of allowing CRP lands back into production. A 2008 USDA analysis concluded that allowing early release of CRP lands would impact corn prices by no more than \$0.27 per bushel and would result in little to no price impact for consumers. Unfortunately, releasing CRP acres would put so much more at risk. CRP acres protect highly-erodible lands from practices that would result in substantial soil erosion and nutrient pollution. Additionally, CRP protects critical habitat for grassland birds such as the Lesser Prairie Chicken and Sharp Tail Grouse. CRP has played a vital role in keeping the Henslow's Sparrow off of the endangered species list. Also included in CRP are over 2 million acres of buffers that filter nutrients out of field run off before it enters waterways. All of these ecosystem services would be lost with an early release of CRP acres while the farmers would see little gain by farming these often marginal and highly-erodible lands.

Re-link conservation compliance to crop insurance:

Sodbuster and Swampbuster provisions, originally enacted as part of the 1985 Food Security Act, require agricultural producers to refrain from draining wetlands on their property and from farming highly erodible lands without a conservation plan if the producers wish to maintain eligibility for certain farm program benefits. These provisions have been widely credited with turning the tide for wetlands loss on agricultural lands and for preventing significant amounts of soil erosion. Yet this compliance was decoupled from the crop insurance program during the 1996 Farm Bill in an effort to make crop insurance more attractive. Now crop insurance is fast becoming the most important Federal benefit many farmers receive. Sixty percent

of the cost of crop insurance is covered by taxpayer funding. It is critical, therefore that producers be required to refrain from damaging activities if they want to receive this benefit. Compliance must be re-linked to crop insurance and disaster payments, and apply to all Federal agriculture program benefits. It will be very hard to justify the continued taxpayer investment in crop insurance if participants in the program are allowed to drain thousands of acres of wetlands and increase erosion running into waterways by farming highly erodible land without any conservation planning. In addition, Congress should consider expanding compliance to require tillage setbacks from streams, wetlands, lakes and rivers. Several states already have such provisions in state law. This will help prevent erosion and improve water quality and are common-sense practices all producers should follow.

Address nutrient pollution into the Great Lakes and other waters:

America's waters, including the Great Lakes and Chesapeake Bay, are facing a crisis. Algae blooms brought on by excess nutrients running into our rivers and lakes are suffocating fish and other aquatic organisms. Dead zones caused by these algae blooms are disrupting entire ecosystems as well as fishing and recreational industries that have defined the Great Lakes for hundreds of years. This has been a growing problem over the last 30 years. If we are to protect America's great waters, we must address the largest threat to its health and our wellbeing.

Fortunately, there are a number of solutions to nutrient pollution, each of which present not only solutions to protecting our water, but also provide ways for farmers to increase their profit margins. The National Wildlife Federation supports the innovative Regional Conservation Partnership Program that was included in the farm bill that passed out of the Senate Agriculture Committee. This program provides resources to leverage existing regional partnerships to most cost-effectively protect and restore great waters of the U.S. This program will help direct Federal resources toward well-developed conservation and restoration plans while leveraging state and private resources to maximize total impact in on the ground conservation efforts.

Support an Effective Biomass Crop Assistance Program:

The Biomass Crop Assistance Program (BCAP) assists producers with the cost of establishing crops to be used in a biomass facility, plus annual payments to help compensate for lost income while the crops are established. The program also provides cost-share payments for collection, harvesting, storage, and transportation of biomass. The annual payments portion of the program has only begun to be implemented over the past 2 years, but producers have already successfully begun establishing next generation feedstocks under this portion of BCAP. This annual payments portion of the program is critical to support development of the next generation of biofuels and bioenergy, and the National Wildlife Federation urges the House Agriculture Committee to support next generation bioenergy by continuing funding to this portion of the program. NWF supported the Conrad-Lugar amendment to the Senate Agriculture Committee's bill. The amendment, which passed with almost full support from the committee, provides almost \$200 million for BCAP over the next 5 years. NWF also supports limiting the collection, harvest, storage, and transportation portion of BCAP to no more than 10% of the program. With limited funds going towards BCAP, the annual payments portion of the program should be prioritized.

Currently, BCAP includes a prohibition on using project area funds to plant "any plant that is invasive or noxious or has the potential to become invasive or noxious, as determined by the Secretary, in consultation with other appropriate Federal or State departments and agencies." Unfortunately, several early efforts to reauthorize the program left out the proscription on use of "potentially invasive species in the program. As research on next generation bioenergy crops is rapidly progressing, there are many non-native and GMO crops that are being proposed for use as bioenergy crops, many of which have not been used in this country before, and the invasive potential of these crops must be evaluated. It takes a long time to list something as invasive, and since many of these plants have not been used here before, they are unlikely to have been listed as invasive. There are plenty of species that have not been officially listed as invasive or noxious that are still of significant concern. Without the 'potentially invasive' clause, they will not have to go through the same review that they go through now, and we may be inadvertently funding a highly invasive plant that could spread from establishment sites and become a nuisance on nearby farms, rangelands, or natural areas. The Conrad-Lugar amendment to the Senate Agriculture Committee's 2012 Farm Bill further clarifies the term 'potential to become invasive or noxious' by prohibiting: "any plant that is invasive or noxious or species or varieties of plants that credible risk assessment tools or other credible sources determine are potentially invasive, as determined by the Secretary in consultation with other appropriate Federal or State departments

and agencies.” NWF urges the House Agriculture committee to continue to prohibit BCAP dollars from funding the planting of potentially invasive species, either through the clarified language or the language that is currently in law.

Conclusion

Thank you again for the opportunity to submit these comments. The 2012 Farm Bill presents both great challenges and great opportunities. We look forward to working with Chairman Lucas, Ranking Member Peterson and the rest of the members of the House Agriculture Committee to ensure strong conservation and energy provisions that will protect our air, soil, water and wildlife habitat.

References *

Government Accountability Office. 2007. *Farm Program Payments Are an Important Factor in Landowners' Decisions to Convert Grassland to Cropland*. GAO Report 07-1054.

USDA-NRCS. 2009. *Interim Final Benefit-Cost Analysis for the Wetlands Reserve Program* (Jan. 9, 2009), 17.

USDA-NRCS. 2010a. *Final Benefit-Cost Analysis for the Environmental Quality Improvement Program* (May 24, 2010), 21.

USDA-NRCS. 2010b. *Final Benefit-Cost Analysis for the Grassland Reserve Program* (March 31, 2010), 12.

COMMENT OF JEAN GLASER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:23 p.m.

City, State: Park City, UT

Occupation: Artist

Comment: It is vital to the future health of our society and our Agriculture that we encourage sustainable, organic farming in which nutrition and conservation are key to the production of food in this country.

COMMENT OF JOE GLASTON

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 5:52 p.m.

City, State: Desert Hot Springs, CA

Occupation: Retired Video Post Production Worker

Comment: Older Americans' struggles with hunger are often invisible. It's too easy for most people to overlook how many seniors have serious trouble accessing the food and nutrition they need to survive and thrive. Often, they are forced to make difficult decisions between food, medicine, or paying their utilities or rent. Please protect SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP.

COMMENT OF KATHERINE GLATTER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:41 p.m.

City, State: Amherst, MA

Occupation: Massage Therapist

Comment: Please do all in your power to support local, sustainable, organic farming practices in the USA. Do not kid yourselves; hand-outs to big Ag will eventually effect us all for the worse.

I want change!

Thank you,

KATHERINE GLATTER.

COMMENT OF TED GLAUB

Date Submitted: Thursday, March 29, 2012, 3:01 p.m.

City, State: Jonesboro, AR

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Field Crops

Size: 1,000+ acres

Comment: Statement on the 2012 Farm Bill

March 2012

Arkansas Soybean Association and American Soybean Association

*The information referred to is retained in Committee file.

Reasons for a Farm Program Safety Net

Soybean farmers believe an income safety net is essential for production agriculture. Critics of farm programs argue that agriculture is no different from other businesses, so why should the government support it? They also point to the historically high commodity prices we have enjoyed in recent years and say it's time to eliminate or phase out these programs.

To the first point, U.S. agriculture has always been and remains based on the family farm as the economic unit of production. As individual businesses, we compete not only with farmers in South America and other countries around the world, but with our neighbors and producers across the country.

Programs to ensure food production in the U.S. is stable and produced in large enough quantities to meet demand are important to our nation. We do not want to become dependent on imports for our food. We should support agricultural production in the U.S. to continue meeting our food needs and to increase our production of renewable fuels, such as ethanol and biodiesel. With one out of every 12 U.S. jobs tied to agriculture, a positive trade impact by farm products, renewable fuel production, plus the security of a large portion of our country's food supply grown domestically, it quickly becomes apparent that farming is an essential asset for our nation's economy and security. Numerous factors such as government policies that restrict trade, surplus global production, and unfavorable weather all negatively affect our farmers' ability to operate profitably. Government support for risk management and crop insurance programs is a necessary investment to protect our country's valuable asset.

Regarding current price levels, farmers all remember 1995 and 1996, when prices were relatively high and Congress decided to phase out the target price program to reduce costs. Three years later, prices for most commodities fell sharply due to global oversupply and reduced demand. By 2001, prices were down an average of 45 percent for major commodities, and Congress had to step in to provide emergency assistance.

Without that assistance, many U.S. soybean farmers would have gone out of business. The reality in farming is that markets are cyclical. We need a safety net, not to pay us year-in and year-out, but to keep us in business when, through no fault of our own, we can't make ends meet.

Farmers want to make their living from the market, not from the government. We support policies that allow and encourage us to respond to market signals, and which provide assistance only when the economics of farming are so negative that we have no other recourse. We believe we perform a vital service in providing our country and a growing world with an abundant supply of high quality food, feed, fiber and fuel at reasonable prices.

Background on Past and Current Farm Programs

To underscore this statement, we would like to provide some background on how farm programs and policy have become increasingly market-oriented in recent years. In 1981, the prevailing thinking was that, as the world's largest exporter of major commodities, the U.S. could support prices by idling productive farmland and diverting surpluses into farmer-owned reserves. In order to be eligible for payments under the old Target Price program, we were restricted to growing crops on acreage bases determined for each farm. Moreover, we had to grow those crops in order to receive these payments.

This policy resulted in planting distortions and overproduction of crops already in surplus, further depressing prices and shifting increasing quantities into reserve. It prevented farmers from responding to market signals that called for greater production of crops which did not have acreage bases, including soybeans. And it made the U.S. the supplier of last resort, as competitors in Europe and South America increased production and exports, knowing that our crops would be held off the market until prices rose above world price levels.

This policy remained in place until 1996, when Congress enacted the landmark "Freedom to Farm" legislation. Under "Freedom to Farm," the government safety net was decoupled from planting decisions, and producers were allowed to plant any program crop on their farm. The result has been a return to competitiveness and greater profitability for U.S. agriculture. In response to increased global demand, soybean plantings rose from 60 million acres in 1995 to 75 million acres in 2010. Most producers have wholeheartedly supported the planting flexibility provided under the last three farm bills. For soybeans, which have relatively modest supports under the Marketing Loan and Counter-Cyclical Payment Programs, maintaining planting flexibility is of paramount importance.

Position on Commodity Programs

Soybean farmers recognize that deficit reduction is a national priority, and that agriculture should do its fair share in helping to bring down Federal spending. We supported the deficit reduction efforts of leaders in both the Senate and House Agriculture Committees last fall, when they committed to cut \$23 billion from the cost of the next farm bill. We believe this level of cuts will still allow the Committees to write new farm legislation that continues to provide an adequate safety net to producers.

We also recognize that cuts in the commodities title will come from elimination of the Direct Payment program, and that existing programs will need to be restructured. While Direct Payments to soybean producers are not as significant, proportionate to crop value, as payments to producers of other crops, this program has been the cornerstone of planting flexibility for the past 15 years. However, since payments are made regardless of price levels, and prices have been historically high for several years, Direct Payments have become untenable in the current budget environment.

As ASA looked at program alternatives to help farmers manage risk, we concluded that the best complement to income protection under the existing crop insurance program would be a revenue-based program that partially offset losses that exceed a specified revenue threshold. This approach would make significant changes to but is similar to the current ACRE program, which has had limited participation due to its complexity, reductions in Direct Payments and Marketing Loan rates, and a state-level revenue-loss trigger. ASA supports a single farm-level trigger under which producers would be required to document losses on a commodity-specific basis, so payments would be made only when actual losses occur. This requirement would address criticism that payments under current programs are made regardless of commodity prices and yields. We also support a revenue loss requirement under this program of not less than 10 percent, and a coverage band not to exceed 15 percent.

While payments under this program would be tied to actual production in the current year, we do not believe it will distort planting decisions and production. Requiring farmers to document actual losses in order to receive revenue payments would be a significant deterrent to "planting for the program" rather than following market signals. Additionally, using moving Olympic average prices as part of the revenue threshold calculation would make the program responsive to market price movements over time. Finally, revenue payments would only be made on a specified percentage of actual revenue losses that exceed a threshold loss, thereby further limiting the possibility of planting distortions.

We acknowledge that a revenue-based program may not be appropriate for producers of certain commodities, or in areas where yield variability is relatively low. We support providing flexibility or alternative programs for these producers, provided they do not have the potential to affect planting decisions and reduce planting flexibility. The argument may be made that, with prices expected to remain at historically high levels, the chance that fixed support prices tied to actual production could distort producer cropping decisions is relatively small. However, as pointed out earlier, we need go back no further than 1999 to 2001 to see how wrong such projections can be.

Opposition to Restructuring Crop Insurance

ASA also strongly supports the existing crop insurance program as the foundation for risk management under the farm safety net. Soybean producers actively participate in crop insurance, and repeatedly express opposition to any restructuring of the program or reductions in its baseline for deficit reduction. We applaud the decision by the leaders of both the Senate and House Committees last fall to leave crop insurance untouched in developing a farm bill proposal that met your deficit reduction target.

ASA opposes making crop insurance premium subsidies subject to payment limitations, or subjecting crop insurance participation to conservation compliance requirements. These provisions are appropriately applied to eligibility for farm program benefits. Tying either to crop insurance would discourage participation in the most important risk management program for soybean producers.

We would like to reemphasize the importance of maintaining planting flexibility and avoiding the possibility of planting distortions under any alternative programs the Committee may consider in restructuring the farm safety net. Analysis and modeling by noted agricultural economists show the potential for planting distortions under some alternative farm program policy options, as well as the potential for the United States to exceed its WTO commitments as a result of these farm policy options under a low price scenario where prices fall 15 percent per year for 3

years from current levels. The avoidance of farm program-induced planting distortions and allowing producers to respond to markets while managing risk has been the most valuable policy provided under the current farm program and must be maintained.

Attached to this statement is an annex that provides personal experiences from several members of the American Soybean Association Board of Directors on past and current farm programs.

Position on Conservation Programs

ASA supports the framework of the Conservation Title put together for the Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction. That framework, as we understand it, consolidates the existing 23 conservation programs into 13. ASA members support efforts to focus scarce conservation funding on working lands conservation rather than on land retirement under the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). CRP enrollment should be reserved for the most environmentally sensitive land. We also believe the complexity and labor-intensiveness of conservation programs is a serious issue that has limited farmer participation in these programs. We hope that simplifying and consolidating important conservation tools into fewer, more flexible programs will increase the participation of soybean farmers in USDA conservation programs.

Position on Agricultural Research

ASA supports robust funding for USDA research programs, which are critical to achieving the agricultural production levels necessary to feed 9 billion people and to remain competitive in a global economy. ASA strongly supports reauthorization of the Agricultural Food and Research Initiative (AFRI) with appropriations authorized at \$700 million annually. AFRI is the Nation's premier competitive, peer-reviewed research program for fundamental and applied sciences in agriculture. We recognize that AFRI funding has fallen well short of levels authorized in the 2008 Farm Bill and will continue to advocate full funding in the appropriations process.

ASA also supports reauthorization of provisions that support research at land-grant universities.

Position on Energy Programs

There are several Energy Title programs in which soybean producers have a strong interest, including the Biobased Market Program (Section 9002), the Biodiesel Fuel Education Program (Section 9006), and the Bioenergy Program for Advanced Biofuels (Section 9005). ASA recognizes that the Energy Title programs do not have baseline funding beyond 2012, which creates a significant challenge to extending these programs and building on the benefits they have provided. However, the Biobased Market Program and the Biodiesel Fuel Education Program remain as high priorities for ASA and we believe that the relatively low cost and the benefits provided through these programs warrant their continuation with an increased level of mandatory funding.

Section 9002, Biobased Market Program: The Biobased Market Program continues and expands the Federal biobased procurement program and voluntary labeling program. This is an effective and important program for promoting the emerging biobased industry, which has significant potential to enhance agricultural markets, displace foreign petroleum and fossil fuels, and contribute new "green" jobs to the economy. Under the Biobased Market Program, USDA administers the BioPreferred Program, which is a preferred procurement program for all Federal agencies.

The Biobased Market Program received mandatory funding totaling \$9 million for FY 2008–2012. With the expansion of the BioPreferred and biobased labeling program, ASA supports providing increased mandatory funding for USDA to administer the programs and further promote biobased markets.

Section 9006, Biodiesel Fuel Education Program: The Biodiesel Education Program plays a vital role in helping expand marketplace acceptance and use of biodiesel as a low-carbon, renewable diesel replacement fuel. It supports technical outreach efforts to engine manufacturers, truckers, and fuel marketers that will eventually allow the use of higher biodiesel blends in conventional diesel applications. The education program serves to expand and increase market penetration, thus promoting growth for the entire industry. This translates into higher production, more jobs, and more economic value, especially in rural communities.

Specifically, the biodiesel education program had a large part to play in building automakers trust in, and support for, biodiesel blends. Since 2003, the industry has achieved great success in garnering support from engine manufacturers for biodiesel through the biodiesel education program. Currently, 34 major U.S. automakers and engine manufacturers accept the use of B5 and up to B20.

Biodiesel is providing energy, economic, and environmental benefits and ASA urges the continuation of this program with a relatively small investment of \$2 million annually in mandatory funding in the 2012 Farm Bill.

Position on International Trade Programs

ASA strongly supports maintaining full funding of both the FMD program and MAP at the current levels of \$34.5 million and \$200 million, respectively.

Through the World Initiative for Soy in Human Health (WISHH) and the World Soy Foundation, soybean farmers are committed to improving nutrition in populations suffering from malnutrition and poverty. We strongly support all U.S. food aid programs, and uses of food in development and emergency assistance to developing nations. While ASA recognizes that a plan to reduce deficit spending and debt may include across-the board cuts in the national budget, we oppose disproportionate reductions in development food aid programs.

Annex

Under the target price farm bill of the 1980's and early 1990's, we were forced economically to plant crops that require more tillage, such as cotton and peanuts, and had little to no ability to rotate. Under subsequent farm bills that are decoupled from bases, we are now able to implement rotations that reduce erosion and make more efficient use of our resources because we can develop better farming practices according to market signals.

WADE COWAN,
Brownfield, Texas.

In the late 1980's and until Freedom to farm legislation, we were required to plant all our corn base area in order to maintain our corn base and not lose government support. Our corn base was about 2/3 of our total area, and on some farms 100%—so we were 'required' to plant more corn than our best crop rotation plan for soybeans/corn would allow. The requirement to maintain base area caused us to plant more corn than the market indicated we would. It was a great relief when the Freedom to Farm legislation passed and we could plant the right crop at the right time.

RAY GAESSER,
Corning, Iowa.

In the 1980's and early 1990's, I planted cotton on all my allotment acres. Most of that time, cotton prices were fairly low, so we planted cotton hoping to break even on expenses and collect government payments for any profit we might have.

Into the late 1990's, I was still planting 75% cotton and 25% soybeans. Cotton yields were declining due to nematode infestations. It turned out that corn was the perfect rotation crop for this problem in cotton because the reniform nematodes could not grow on the corn roots. With decoupled payments, I was no longer tied to cotton production. I increased soybean and corn acres from 2001 to 2006, since they were more profitable. Beginning in 2007 and through 2010, I planted cotton again because market prices dictated that I needed to plant some. Through the 2000's, I chose the crops that were most profitable for me to plant based on market expectations, not due to government program payments as in the 1980's and 1990's.

DANNY MURPHY,
Canton, Mississippi.

I remember in the 1970's and 1980's, when strict adherence to base limitations was important, staff from the old ASCS (pre-FSA) would have to come out and measure what was allowed. Because of my desire to maximize the allowed program crops to be planted, split fields often were needed. For example, I might be allowed to plant some odd number, such as 52 feet, in the last corn field. And at times planting was delayed until this measurement occurred. Soybeans took the balance.

Later a tolerance factor was introduced, I think 5% was implemented, and most times we could make whole fields fit the allocation. What an improvement!

As we all know, the years of transition to planting flexibility have allowed farmers to focus on fields and crops as the priority, not arcane government bases which were established decades earlier.

ROB JOSLIN,
Sidney, Ohio.

When I started farming in the late 70's, I felt I had to plant corn to be protected against market fluctuations. The only real safety net at the time was the deficiency payment program, which was not available to oilseeds. Also at the

time, the conventional wisdom in the farm policy arena was that ‘corn was king.’ The meaning was clear that the national policy was screaming out the message to farmers that we needed more corn and coarse grains. I responded by planting all I was allowed and participating to the fullest extent of my eligibility.

The Freedom to Farm legislation in the mid-1990’s allowed me to keep that valuable corn base as a hedge against the loss of deficiency payment protection while at the same time chase market signals instead of farm policy. My crop rotation has benefited as well and I’ve been able to adjust plantings without fear of losing valuable crop acreage base history.

An Ohio farmer, forwarded by Rob Joslin.

COMMENT OF LAURA GLEASON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:52 p.m.

City, State: Charlotte, NC

Occupation: Information Technology

Comment: Please support small farmers! They are small business owners, they produce great food, an essential part of life, and they do this for their local communities. Local farmers are key to better agriculture, better nutrition, and reduced impact on the environment. Thank you for your consideration.

COMMENT OF DONNA GLEESON

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 15, 2012, 3:30 p.m.

City, State: Lebanon, NH

Occupation: Registered Dietitian

Comment: I recently read a quote by FDR which resonated with me:

“The nation that destroys its soil destroys itself.”

Industrial agriculture with its emphasis on genetic modification, pesticide use, and monoculture not to mention significant animal abuse is not only destroying our soil, but our health and our future.

COMMENT OF KAREN GLEESON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:18 p.m.

City, State: Northport, ME

Occupation: Retired Social Worker

Comment: I am a home gardener and a vegetarian, who encourages local agriculture in my food buying. I want the food production in the U.S. to be subsidizing organic and zero-chemical agriculture. To use broad use chemicals as fungicides, insecticides and fertilizers is to (1) harm our planet and (2) create an untenable and unsustainable system that only increases the need for ever-more-harmful and expensive systems. Additionally, I do not want my tax dollars spent to encourage GMO crops. Over many millennia farmers have been innovating new crops and domestic animals. Now, however, we have crops whose only aim is to increase the profits for the chemical companies such as Monsanto and Dow. This cannot and should not be subsidized with our tax dollars, and in fact should be actively banned by our government.

I know from my own experience of my food coop and the Maine Farmland Trust, of which I am a member, that it is possible to sustain agriculture on ecologically sound lines, in a state where the winters are long and the growing season is short. We have been doing it for centuries. This is what the Dept. of Agriculture should be assisting to continue.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF ALLISON GLENNON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:21 p.m.

City, State: Malibu, CA

Occupation: Writer/Filmmaker

Comment: Non-toxic food (food without pesticides or herbicides) is critical to a healthy life. We cannot keep eating poison and ignoring the long term degradation it has on our bodies.

COMMENT OF JESSICA GLINES

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:37 p.m.

City, State: Salt Lake City, UT

Occupation: Sales

Comment: I believe that we deserve the right to know what is in our food supply and have the opportunity to provide the food we feel is best for our families. I urge you to label GMO's and allow us to decide what we eat.

COMMENT OF CATHERINE GLOMSKI

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:26 a.m.

City, State: Hubbard Lake, MI

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Dairy

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Dear Representative Dan Benishek:

Agriculture has been the steady segment of Michigan's economy and has been the rock in our nation's economy. It's funny, that the one business that has the most growth potential is one that also has the most consolidation and cuts. We need to invest food production and in new farmers.

We need you to speak up for Michigan, Debbie Stabenow isn't.

Thank you,

CATHERINE GLOMSKI,
Agricultural Entrepreneur.

COMMENT OF JACKIE GLOS

Date Submitted: Tuesday, April 24, 2012, 1:58 p.m.

City, State: Cambridge, MD

Occupation: Retail Sales

Comment: Farming is the most industry for without food we are once again at the mercy of foreign contaminates—God gave us this good Earth that our forefathers ventured to in Faith—that we might have plenty. With our technology we have been able to create food for impoverished countries that they might have food abundantly as well. Farming is our main source of Life well Lived. The life lessons of hard work and prayer are always found on our farms—Life cycles of animals and plants remind us of our realities and extend to other industries. God Bless the American Farmer.

COMMENT OF APRIL GLOVER

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 1:24 a.m.

City, State: Los Angeles, CA

Occupation: Designer

Comment: We deserve to know what is in the foods we are putting into our bodies as well as have access to local grown meats and produce. It is appalling to me how large corporations are allowed to continue to treat animal in humanly, pump them full of antibiotics (which create super bugs), and pour pesticides all over our produce. The American people are becoming unhealthier and obese by the day. Its time for change!

APRIL GLOVER.

COMMENT OF MICHAEL GNAT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:25 p.m.

City, State: Brooklyn, NY

Occupation: Actor—Editor

Comment: The farm bill should support local farmers, not huge agribusinesses, and promote the growth and distribution of healthful & natural food products.

COMMENT OF MARY GOCHER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:26 p.m.

City, State: New York, NY

Occupation: Actor

Comment: I am extremely concerned about cutbacks that would reduce the food stamp program or any measure that would adversely impact the poor, the disabled, children and the elderly. Please make sure that there is no reduction in benefits to this vulnerable segment of our society.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF GALEN GOCKEL

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 12, 2012, 1:01 p.m.
City, State: Oak Park, IL
Occupation: Retired Educator
Comment: Please fully fund Emergency Food Programs and the SNAP program. These are humanitarian programs, but also important to the general economy.

COMMENT OF MARCIA GODICH

Date Submitted: Friday, March 16, 2012, 6:41 p.m.
City, State: Trafford, PA
Occupation: Retired University Professor
Comment: I believe that a distinction needs to be made: statistical and anecdotal evidence shows that the aim of small farmers is to support their families through their farms—which means they have to care about the long term health of their farm and the quality of their products; agribusinesses, on the other hand, have the bottom line of immediate profit to their stockholders as their goal, often running counter to the long term or health or safety of either the farms or those who buy their produce. Since the role of the Federal government is to protect its citizens, not merely minority interests (who have more than enough reserves, if their profit reports are anything to go by!) Since large corporations operate (in their own terms!) on the premise of capitalist enterprise, they should expect to survive or fail by their own efforts. Government should limit its support to small farmers, to offer disaster relief and incentives toward the use of sustainable, humane methods, maintenance of genetic diversity rather than genetic modification, minimization of the use of antibiotics, hormones, or other chemicals.

COMMENT OF JUDY GOEBEL

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 4:18 p.m.
City, State: Richfield, MN
Occupation: Retired
Comment: We need sustainable agriculture that supports families, not big corporations. To achieve that, we need to get rid of subsidies for agrobusiness. We need to stop letting gmo plants become part of our food stream.

COMMENT OF MICHAEL GOEBEL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:26 p.m.
City, State: San Marcos, TX
Occupation: Doctor
Comment: Monsanto needs to be shut down, and the board jailed for biological crimes. The pollution of the biosphere by their GMO-crop pollen is a global crime against humanity and many other species. **Of Course** organic foods should be natural, organic, and so labeled!

COMMENT OF JOHN GOECKERMANN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:28 p.m.
City, State: Grants Pass, OR
Producer/Non-producer: Producer
Type: Forestry
Size: Less than 50 acres
Comment: Just be sure to protect water supplies for migratory birds—do not steal water for potatoes from the Klamath bird refuge . . . There are no endangered potatoes, but the Pacific Flyway is crucial to birds, and helps farmers by allowing birds to stay alive to eat the bugs that threaten crops.

COMMENT OF MARTIN GOEDKEN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 6:59 p.m.
City, State: Conception Jct., MO
Producer/Non-producer: Producer
Type: Specialty Crops
Size: 50–150 acres
Comment: Please work toward a farm bill that invests in the next generation of farmers and ranchers—guarantee \$25 million per year in mandatory funding for the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program. We need a national strategy

and commitment to support beginning farmer and ranchers entering agriculture. With an aging farm population, now is the time to invest in the future of American agriculture by nurturing new agriculture start-ups.

Also, please limit payments to the very large land owners. Thanks.

COMMENT OF ELIZABETH GOERTZ

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 10:01 a.m.

City, State: Lewisburg, WV

Occupation: Food Sales/Gourmet

Comment: Please support organic farming practices. Our current large scale commercial farms are unsustainable and produce food that is low nutrition. This is a contributing factor in the poor health of Americans.

COMMENT OF LINDA GOETZ

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:30 p.m.

City, State: Santa Monica, CA

Occupation: Executive Assistant

Comment: I have developed many food allergies since the USA has allowed companies to create genetically modified foods. Dairy, corn, cruciferous vegetables—I have developed allergies since 1999. Please, keep our food **Real, Organic** and delicious. Apples and tomatoes taste like sand now unless they're organic. Bee populations are dying due to pesticide use. What will our grandchildren be eating?

COMMENT OF LAURIE GOGUEN

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 4:27 a.m.

City, State: San Francisco, CA

Occupation: Chef

Comment: The farm bill must be overhauled. It must put the health of the land and the health of our people first. Organic, sustainable agriculture needs to get proper funding, and subsidies/insurance safety nets for commodity crops must be abolished. Crops like soy, corn and wheat are responsible for epidemics like obesity and malnutrition. Fruits and vegetables are what keep people healthy, and the farmers who grow these crops in an environmentally responsible manner should get the full financial support of our government. You want to keep down health care costs? Stop subsidizing corn, wheat and soy!

COMMENT OF GARY GOLDBERG

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 6:33 a.m.

City, State: Richmond, VA

Occupation: Physician

Comment: Good nutrition is one of the basic components of good health and a fundamental human requirement in supporting the quality of life of a human being. This bill should be fair and should assure the greatest benefit for the most people in America. Please pay close attention and make this a bill that works to improve the quality of life of all Americans!

COMMENT OF HALINA GOLDBERG

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:17 a.m.

City, State: Bloomington, IN

Occupation: Academic

Comment: This set of laws was created under very specific circumstances and has served its purpose. We must reevaluate what works and what needs to be changed in order to make healthy food more available and affordable for people of all incomes and to allow farmers more choices in what they want/need to produce.

COMMENT OF SARAH GOLDBERG

Date Submitted: Monday, May 14, 2012, 4:18 p.m.

City, State: Pittsburgh PA

Occupation: Dispute Resolution Specialist

Comment: Please preserve the food assistance programs, SNAP, TEFAP, CSFP, and FFVP. These programs are to help our neighbors (and ourselves) in times of misfortune. When volunteering at the Squirrel Hill Food Pantry, I have seen people

wait in line for food made available through these programs. The elderly, the disabled, the job seekers, and the injured come to the pantry because their current circumstances mean that they and their families do not have enough to eat. While I am optimistic about our future, I know that anyone can find themselves in this situation. We have these programs to keep our community healthy so that individuals may recover from whatever misfortune has fell upon them and return to being productive members of our society. The United States did not welcome the tired, the poor, the homeless, or the tempest-tossed just to let them fall to tides of fate. These programs are not just expenditures, they are lifelines for our citizens. They should be a top priority for every state and accommodated in the budget.

COMMENT OF BIRDEE GOLDEN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:39 p.m.

City, State: San Diego, CA

Occupation: AA in Surgical Pathology

Comment: Every day we see that there is a rise in cancer and disease, much, I believe, due to the foods we eat—some that can't even be called food. It's time for a change. We need to get back to eating real, unprocessed, whole foods again. When my mother grew up on her parent's farm, no pesticides or GMO seeds were used and they had a high yield as long as they got rain. Food was called organic then—it was just food. What we are getting now is disgusting.

COMMENT OF GABE GOLDEN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 1:49 a.m.

City, State: San Diego, CA

Occupation: Film Producer

Comment: How can you in good conscience allow subsidies to corporate farmers who grow nothing but a few crops while cutting \$33 billion from food stamps. Why not diversify our food supply by stopping big agriculture businesses from using genetically modified crops, and demand healthy soil and diversity in agriculture. They want a subsidy? Make them earn one by producing actual food. Should the U.S. really only grow corn that is turned into sugar that makes people obese and adds billions to our health care crisis. This cycle of insanity must stop.

COMMENT OF HELEN GOLDENBERG

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 2:55 p.m.

City, State: Tamarac, FL

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Let's make farm policy to support small local family farm operations and operators. Let's support conservation of important lands for future generations. Let's try to support organic operations wherever possible so we don't have to ingest lots of pesticides and other chemicals. Thank you.

COMMENT OF LAURA GOLDENBERG

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:38 p.m.

City, State: Sebastopol, CA

Occupation: Marriage, Family Therapist

Comment: I belong to a community sustainable agricultural group and get weekly vegetables grown organically and sustainably in our local neighborhood. We save on gas through trucking food far distances, and we have varieties of food that you cannot get from GMO seeds. Please preserve small family farms, the heart of our country, and please protect us and future generations by not polluting seeds and crops with strains of GMO that we cannot fully know the repercussions of. Please represent the people and not large corporations. We need you and depend on you to represent us and not lobbyists for large moneyed interests.

COMMENT OF PAUL GOLDMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:36 p.m.

City, State: Las Vegas, NV

Occupation: Owner, Small Business

Comment: Please help your fellow Americans have access to a healthful food supply. We work hard, pay our taxes, help our families/friends/neighbors and just want food that doesn't contribute to the increased rates of asthma, diabetes and obesity in our children! Thanks.

COMMENT OF RAY GOLDSBERRY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:12 p.m.

City, State: Lowry City, MO

Occupation: Retired Farmer and Construction Worker

Comment: My feeling is that too much money is going to support the large producers that do not even live or work on a farm at the expense of the small farmer. The same formula used to support the small business should be used for farming. The small family farms of 300 acres or less should be the ones to get the help from the farm bill. Also the people raising GMO crops should be completely eliminated from receiving any subsidies at all. These crops are responsible for destroying the bee population as well as having detrimental effects on the health of people because of the pesticides. If the bees are destroyed there will be no food period. Please think about the importance of your decisions to the future of the U.S.A. instead of the large companies that have almost taken over the farming industry. Thanks for your consideration.

Sincerely

RAY GOLDSBERRY.

COMMENT OF BRUCE GOLDSMITH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:54 p.m.

City, State: Temple, GA

Occupation: Software Manufacturer

Comment: We need safe, organic, non GMO, well labeled food. organic fields must be kept safe from contamination caused by deregulation of dangerous food experiments. Please support local and family farms!

COMMENT OF CATHY GOLDSMITH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:47 p.m.

City, State: Berkeley, CA

Occupation: Baker, Cooperative Retail Food Vender, Café Owner

Comment: There is no single issue more important than how we feed our children. Mono cultures and pesticides will destroy our health and the health of future generations. Do the right thing and pass a farm bill that rewards good environmental practices, provides healthy lunches to our school children, and supports family farms.

COMMENT OF JOAN GOLDSTEIN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 5:00 p.m.

City, State: New York, NY

Occupation: Meditation Teacher/Writer

Comment: No GMOs, organic gardening, and support of health supporting farming and food rather than the food that is mass produced with no respect for the American people whose health is being badly affected by food additives and the effects they're having on the American public, especially on their children. The "mysterious" outbreaks of ADD, Aspergers, autism and other brain challenging diseases. Along with asthma, lactose intolerance is coming from foods that have been altered by tremendous greed, *i.e.*, growth hormone for cows to produce more milk which not only affects the cows by transferring the hormones into the milk we drink, but also affects the udders by causing infections them with constant milking. The result of the infections is requires antibiotics to kill the infections to the udders caused irritations from over milking . . . and the beat goes on . . .

COMMENT OF SUSAN GOLIGHTLY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:28 p.m.

City, State: Silver City, NM

Occupation: Retired

Comment: People have a right to know where their food comes from and how it was produced. And, most of all, they should be able to know what has been added to the food. Being able to grow or buy healthy whole foods should be a God given right.

COMMENT OF CARISSA GOMEZ

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 15, 2012, 12:06 p.m.

City, State: Chicago, IL

Occupation: Communications and Development Manager, Feeding Illinois

Comment: Dear House Agriculture Committee Members,

Feeding Illinois appreciates the opportunity to provide comments on the farm bill. As the state association, Feeding Illinois' eight food banks distributed 120 million pounds of food through a network of 2,000 pantries, soup kitchens and shelters to an estimated 1.4 million people in Illinois in 2011. Currently, 11.1 percent of households in Illinois are food insecure, including 745,310 children in Illinois—23.3 percent of all children in the state. Our food banks served 61 percent more people at our pantries in the last fiscal year than the previous 3 years, and we could not provide current levels of food assistance without significant support from TEFAP, nor could we meet increased demand if current funding levels and structure of SNAP and other Federal nutrition programs were eroded.

We urge the House Committee on Agriculture to protect and strengthen SNAP in the farm bill, and keep in mind the following priorities:

- Oppose proposals to cap or reduce funding for SNAP, restrict eligibility, reduce benefits, or otherwise reduce access or participation in SNAP.
- Protect the adequacy of the SNAP benefit by restoring the cut to the ARRA SNAP benefit increase.
- Adjust the benefit amounts in a timely manner so it reflects current food prices at the time of purchase.
- Increase the minimum benefit so that elderly households receive at the least an amount equivalent to the floor set in the 1970s.
- Fully allow SNAP benefits to be adjusted when high housing costs consume more of a family's income.
- Improve earnings disregards and other benefit computation rules.
- Extend the program to needy people now excluded from benefits by arbitrary eligibility rules.
- Allow all states to operate Supplemental Security Income (SSI) CAP model that seamlessly enrolls SSI recipients into SNAP, and encourage other data matching initiatives.
- Provide adequate resources to states and community partners for administration of SNAP and outreach and nutrition education by restoring a greater Federal share in administrative expenses and enhanced Federal matches for state investments in operational improvement.
- Encourage better nutrition by maintaining nutrition education provisions and ensuring that retailer standards balance adequate access to stores with a range of healthy foods and moderate prices, as well as equipping all farmers' markets with EBT capability.

We also urge you to strengthen TEFAP and CSFP in the farm bill. Please include an increase in mandatory funding for TEFAP foods by providing a trigger that increases the funding level available for commodity purchases in times of high unemployment, and make TEFAP Storage and Distribution funds mandatory. In addition, we ask that the Secretary of Agriculture is given the authority to make bonus commodities available in times when unemployment rates are high. We also encourage the Committee to transition CSFP to a seniors-only program, while grandfathering in current participants, and expand eligibility for the program from 130% to 185% of the Federal Poverty Line.

Once again, thank you for this opportunity to provide comments on the importance of Federal nutrition programs like SNAP, TEFAP and CSFP in the farm bill.

Sincerely,

CARISSA GOMEZ,
Communications and Development Manager,
 Feeding Illinois,
 [Redacted],
 Chicago, Illinois.

COMMENT OF HILDA GOMEZ

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:13 p.m.

City, State: Tucson, AZ

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Other

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: We are Bee Keepers and our business is greatly pacers by the use of GMO's and pesticides. Please ban these two evils in the USA. We can look out after ourselves without the use of GMO's and pesticides.

COMMENT OF CAREN GONTARD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:14 a.m.

City, State: Paonia, CO

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Livestock

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: As a biodynamic farmer in the arid West, I have grave concerns about the heavy weight given to Big Ag in our national farm policies. Small producers and particularly non-GMO and organic producers are critical to the health and security of our nation both from a food production view and energy and water security. We **Must** stop subsidizing big ag and we need strict labeling of **All** GMO products. People have a right to know and a right to choose.

COMMENT OF ANTHONY GONZALES

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 9:52 p.m.

City, State: Dayton, NV

Occupation: Construction

Comment: I'm very shocked that we would allow farm bill that would reduce SNAP benefits by \$36 billion. I believe that we can help the ones that are in need and that making a difference in their effects everyone. I don't think we would even do this to a third world country that asked for help. I know that we would give them the food they need. But I see when it comes to our fiends and neighbors and people I care about we can just tell them Sorry we have to cut the program because? I would not have a good enough answer to give them. I would have to walk away in shame that I could not help a fellow American.

COMMENT OF CHRISTINE GONZALES

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 15, 2012, 11:39 a.m.

City, State: Longmont, CO

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: Feeding the poor should be our number one priority. Making healthy, organic and inorganic fruits, vegetables, and dairy affordable for modest-income folks should be our second priority.

COMMENT OF CRYSTAL GONZALES

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 06, 2012, 4:33 p.m.

City, State: Bernalillo, NM

Occupation: Not Employed

Comment: So many people have lost their homes and still more are going homeless. So many things have been taken away from the needy. Don't cut their food supply short too. This is outrageous. The rich get richer and the poor starve while giving the rich more money.

COMMENT OF FRANK GONZALES, JR.

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:59 a.m.

City, State: Plymouth, MI

Occupation: Retired Engineer

Comment: Let's concentrate on what makes for good nutritious food for our citizens and what's good for our environment rather than what makes the producer the most money!

COMMENT OF AIDA GONZÁLEZ

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 2:06 p.m.

City, State: Putzcuaro Michoacán, Mexico

Occupation: Art Teacher

Comment: I live in Putzcuaro, Michoacán State, in Mexico, and all the people in here would love to keep our soil free of pesticides and poisons that Monsanto try to sell in our country. There is a brave community in here called Cheran and their

people are consciously protecting our original corn so all this new corporations won't ruin it with the transgenic seeds they try to introduce in our country.

We would also love to see the end of arms business, selling to both, our government and the mafia in here. The result is 70,000 people killed in 6 years.

Blessing for you and all the people working for the change.

COMMENT OF CYNTHIA GONZALEZ

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:34 p.m.

City, State: Louisville, KY

Occupation: Education Administration

Comment: As a mother of two and proud KY native who buys organic and local as much as I am able, I need to see some serious commitment on the part of our governing entities to protect the food supply—from the small, family farms to the mass production system. There are dangerous trends in this country that appear to be driven by greed rather than protecting the public interest. That is a huge disconnect for me.

Please consider your own children as you evaluate these decisions . . . and your mother, your grandmother, those you love. We should all have access to food that nourishes.

COMMENT OF KATIE GONZALEZ

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:00 p.m.

City, State: Meridian, ID

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Fresh Local Food is very important to our health and the health of our communities. I value knowing what I am eating, where it came from and even who grew it! Please support local farmers, local economies and the preservation of our food systems!

COMMENT OF NICOLE GONZALEZ

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:45 p.m.

City, State: Evanston, IL

Occupation: Retail Buyer

Comment: Please protect our food ways, farms, and health from the bottom lines and toxic decisions of big corporations. The way we eat today determines who we are as a nation, tomorrow. Thank you.

COMMENT OF WILLIAM G. GONZALEZ

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 4:10 p.m.

City, State: Suffern, NY

Occupation: Student

Comment: Thursday, May 17, 2012.

United States House Representative Members:

By this means I would like to ask the Honorable House of Representative Members to consider providing educational incentives to new farmers and beginner farmers, so they can achieve a higher education in agriculture, at Colleges and Universities in the United States. Also, to provide rural farming educational grants/scholarships for their children so the coming generation will secure the future in agriculture. Finally, I want to ask the Congress the implementation of farming financial moratoriums as insurance for those farmers that can be severely affected by climate changes (drought, tornadoes, floods, fires, *etc.*) Thank you, for attending this message.

COMMENT OF AIMEE GOOD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:47 p.m.

City, State: Brooklyn, NY

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Field Crops

Size: 1,000+ acres

Comment: Dear House Agricultural Committee:

I grew up in Aroostook County, Northern Maine, the daughter of a 4th generation potato farmer, Thomas Good, who is still farming 700 acres of potatoes today on our 1,300 acre farm.

I now live in New York City, **And** have begun to farm an acre of organic garlic on my childhood farm in Aroostook County with plans to expand production on my 40 acre parcel.

I split my time between Maine and New York City and see the crucial importance of programs like the EQIP Transition to Organic program which I participated in to get my organic certification through the Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association in 2011.

This farm bill must support the development of local, regional food systems with the full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286); support of new farmers and ranchers by the implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236), and I strongly urge the Committee to vote to Maintain the EQIP Organic Initiative; as well as fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.

Thank you,

AIMEE GOOD,
Good Dirt Garlic
[Redacted],
Brooklyn, New York, and
Monticello, Maine.

COMMENT OF PHILIP A. GOOD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:40 p.m.

City, State: Middletown, VA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: I am a private producer for my family's survival. You must oppose all efforts to prohibit, complicate, poison, patent and capitalize that basic right. God gives food and sustenance! Men who interfere with that are Godless demons! Producing healthy food organically is a complicated task not an ignorant happenstance. Don't make it any harder, or illegal.

COMMENT OF ANNE GOODMAN

Date Submitted: Wednesday, March 21, 2012, 12:43 p.m.

City, State: Cleveland, OH

Occupation: President and CEO, Cleveland Foodbank

Comment: My name is Anne Goodman and I am the President and CEO of the Cleveland Foodbank. I am honored to be here representing food banks and agencies involved in the day to day fight against hunger, and I am grateful for the opportunity.

There are 200 food banks covering every county in the United States who are members of Feeding America. Together, we serve more than 61,000 pantries, shelters, soup kitchens, and other organizations that provide food directly to people in need.

That need is currently greater than ever. Demand continues to increase even as we've begun to see a decline in unemployment. We are seeing new faces. Many have run out of unemployment benefits, exhausted savings, or had to take jobs paying far less than they were making before the recession. They have turned to pantries, the SNAP program—or both—for help.

But while our ability to meet need has been tested, the effectiveness with which food banks and Federal nutrition programs have responded provides me with great hope. It's critical that we continue to support these programs to ensure their ability to meet immediate need. But it's important to note, these investments also reap long-term benefits, preventing the higher health, education, and workforce productivity costs associated with hunger and poor nutrition.

One of the greatest success stories of the recent recession is how effectively SNAP responded to protect families from hunger. SNAP expands in hard times, helping families buy groceries, and freeing up resources for other needs like rent, utilities, and transportation. SNAP is serving millions of people who can't find a job, can only find part-time work, or can't work because of a disability. Don't get me wrong, it's

still a struggle. On average SNAP only allows \$1.50 per person per meal. So in most cases, SNAP does not provide enough money to last recipients through the month.

There are also many people struggling to put food on the table who don't qualify for SNAP. In both cases, they turn to emergency food pantries to fill the gaps. Any cuts to SNAP benefits or eligibility would only increase the overwhelming need we're already seeing.

To illustrate this point, let me tell you about Cassandra, who has three children and is making \$11 an hour working full time, and is not eligible for SNAP. She takes home \$1,468 a month after taxes. She pays rent, utilities, puts gas in the car to get to work, and one of her children has asthma, requiring frequent doctor visits and daily medication. In Cleveland, her heating bills can go as high as \$200 a month during the winter. There is no room for error for Cassandra. No room for a muffler that needs repairing or a few days off from work to care for a sick child. She makes choices. One month she pays the electric bill, the next it's the gas bill. Food is a genuine luxury.

Because the Foodbank helped Cassandra supplement her meager food budget, she was able to pay both the electric and gas bills. Our food bank and the pantries we serve rely on The Emergency Food Assistance Program, or TEFAP, which supplied 27% of the food we distributed last year. TEFAP provides some of the most nutritious food we distribute, such as milk, green beans, and chickens. Unfortunately, unlike SNAP, TEFAP does not automatically grow when need grows. In fact, TEFAP actually declined markedly when we needed it most—falling 30 percent in 2011—because strong agriculture markets led to fewer bonus purchases. No other sources are increasing to fill that gap, and more Federal TEFAP support is urgently needed.

In addition to emergency food, we continue to develop programs to better meet our clients' needs. One of those areas is nutrition. In 2011, 28% of the food we distributed was produce. We are working on a project to allow local farmers to blast freeze their product and sell it year-round. A portion would be donated so our food bank could distribute frozen fruits and vegetables throughout the year.

Providing healthy food is important, but sometimes people don't know how to prepare it. I've handed out produce countless times where a client didn't know what to do with something like leeks or a turnip and passed it over. But, when we provide recipes and samples, people are informed and make different choices. We educate clients about how to grow, cook, and shop for healthy food on a limited budget. We use community gardens, tastings, and demonstrations to show the impact of nutrition on health and how good healthy food can taste.

Another area where we're evolving to meet our client's needs is the growing senior population. We deliver food boxes to several senior programs through the Commodity Supplemental Food Program. I talked to a woman at one site about how hard it is to take 2 busses to get to the nearest grocery store. Even then, she was only able to carry two bags home. When we could distribute the CSFP food package to her once a month it was a God send.

I've spent time with her, and I wish you could too. I urge each of you to visit your local food bank. Decisions that are small numbers in the Federal budget have such an impact on real people.

Feeding the hungry is not a partisan issue—it is a collective responsibility, indeed a moral responsibility. We have the power to make sure people like Cassandra don't have to choose between food and heat for her family, and that an elderly woman isn't home alone without groceries.

With our nation focused on deficit reduction, I am here to plead with you not to cut these programs. I urge you instead to make small, targeted investments to enable food banks like mine to better meet the need. With that, I offer these recommendations.

Protect SNAP from cuts and harmful policy changes. This program is working as intended to provide benefits that are timely, targeted, and temporary. I can tell you for certain that charity could not make up the difference if SNAP benefits or eligibility were cut.

Increase the funding for mandatory TEFAP, and set aside a portion of the specialty crop purchase requirement to go specifically to food banks. The farm bill should also clarify USDA's authority to make TEFAP bonus purchases when the need for food assistance is high, not only when agriculture markets are weak.

Finally, make CSFP a seniors-only program like we did in Ohio and which it already is in practice. Nearly 97% of participants are seniors.

Let me close by telling you about a special woman who has been visiting a food pantry for several months. She sent us a check for \$5 over the holidays. Even with scarce resources, she made the sacrifice because she wanted to do her part.

I am confident that even in a time of limited resources, we too can make decisions that reflect our shared value of helping our neighbors in need.

Thank you again for your time.

COMMENT OF ARIFA GOODMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:36 p.m.

City, State: San Cristobal, NM

Occupation: Psychological Counseling, Retired

Comment: Dear members of the House Committee on Agriculture:

I ask you to support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Big Agribusiness has a stranglehold on how food is produced in America today, to the detriment of our soil, water and air and destructive to our health. The current policies of the government, designed by and beholden to the Agribusiness industry (bio-engineering/pesticide companies), are harmful to small family farmers, essentially wiping out a way of life that has been the foundation of rural America. It is clear that returning to organic agricultural practices will provide high yields without the high levels of toxicity we are now releasing into our environment and into our bodies. With a return to sound organic agricultural practice, health costs will decrease as environmentally caused cancers decrease, and our soils and rivers will be renewed and replenished, supporting vibrant and healthy eco-systems. It's time to put the interests of the people and the land above the interests of the biochemical agriculture industry.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF ELLEN GOODMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, March 16, 2012, 8:34 a.m.

City, State: East Providence, RI

Occupation: Retired College Professor

Comment: First, I support my local food bank, and I know they are struggling right now to meet the needs of my community. I ask that you pass a strong farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP. These programs are a lifeline to the millions of Americans struggling with hunger, and I urge you make them a priority in the next farm bill.

Also, I urge you to invest in small, sustainable agriculture that employs organic farming methods. We need to diversify the dominant areas supported by the government. We need NO monoculture, much less dairy and cattle, less soy, less corn. Our current big agricultural farming methods are depleting the soil and reducing the nutritional value of our foods.

Finally, farm animals need humane treatment. The horrific lives of factory farm animals cannot help but deplete food value. I urge you to support bans on battery cages and confinement crates. I urge you to curb the influence of the dairy and cattle lobbies. Please work to strengthen organic, humane, and small, sustainable farming methods.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

ELLEN GOODMAN.

COMMENTS OF MARGARET GOODMAN

Date Submitted: Saturday, April 07, 2012, 5:20 a.m.

City, State: Glen Mills, PA

Occupation: Retired Computer Programmer

Comment: Please help and encourage farmers to grow sustainably without GMO crops. Factory food is not nutritious!

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012 12:51 p.m.

Comment: I want SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP protected. Help us build a movement to protect and strengthen programs that put food on the table for hungry Americans! Our country's security is in jeopardy if its populace is hungry.

COMMENT OF HEATHER GOODWATER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:22 p.m.

City, State: Minneapolis, MN

Occupation: Student

Comment: As you consider this farm bill, please support local and organic consumers as they are vital and integral to the community, environment and our health.

COMMENT OF KAREN GOODWIN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:45 p.m.

City, State: Chico, CA

Occupation: Nutrition Educator

Comment: I favor a farm bill that promotes fruit and vegetable consumption and production in a sustainable, environmentally supportive way. We need to encourage young people to become farmers. This bill should support variety in farming, not mono cropping. Local production and direct access to consumers must be emphasized. More jobs can be created if the production and distribution is focused on smaller producers.

COMMENT OF ALEXANDRA GORDON

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 03, 2012, 11:26 a.m.

City, State: Miami, FL

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Fruits, Greenhouse/nursery

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: We need a strong Farm Bill—one that protects and strengthens programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSF. We also think it's time to stop subsidies to large corporate farms and start helping small farmers. Please rethink subsidized food aid overseas that wastes \$ on shipping and hurts local markets.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF GLORIA GORKO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:40 p.m.

City, State: Eastpointe, MI

Occupation: Unemployed Admin. Assistant

Comment: Big agricultural businesses have ruined our farming in the last 15+ years to say the least. Bayer and Monsanto should be held accountable for poisonous food, bad soil, water, and air. And the USDA should be ashamed that in America our food is so poor in nutrition. We're in the 21st Century only by the calendar, our lack of moral/civil responsibility to the land and people is unprecedented in history.

COMMENT OF JANET GORNICK

Date Submitted: Thursday, April 05, 2012, 9:34 p.m.

City, State: Cottage Grove, MN

Occupation: Legal Administrative Assistant

Comment: Please do not cut nutrition programs for the poor and needy women and children of Minnesota. Having the proper nutrition saves dollars in health care costs because of poor nutrition.

COMMENT OF JOE GORSKI

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 11:48 p.m.

City, State: Ann Arbor, MI

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Bioenergy, Dry Beans & Peas, Field Crops, Other

Size: 1,000+ acres

Comment: Organics Work.

They are good for your family and mine.

They keep people healthier and more disease resistant.

JOE GORSKI.

COMMENT OF HARLYENE GOSS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:02 p.m.
City, State: Methuen, MA
Occupation: Medical Technologist
Comment: We need the soils to be more nutritional so our food has more benefit. Also, eliminate growth hormones and antibiotics from our livestock. These and GMOs are compromising the public's health.

COMMENT OF GRACE GOSSON

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 12:49 a.m.
City, State: New York, NY
Occupation: Student
Comment: Every citizen deserves access to fresh and nutrient rich produce. Less than 3% of America's farm land is used to grow fruits and vegetables—this must be changed.

COMMENT OF DEBRIN GOUBERT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:24 p.m.
City, State: Sewickley, PA
Occupation: Physician
Comment: Primary health support is financially smarter than addressing tertiary healthcare needs. This is the best sort of investment for the health of the population.

COMMENT OF DEBORAH GOUGE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:17 p.m.
City, State: Pittsburgh, PA
Occupation: Writer/Editor
Comment: Please take this opportunity to shift the priorities of the farm bill away from financial support of large agricultural corporations (and the sugar, corn, and high-fructose corn syrup they produce) toward support for small farmers and organic production. Specifically, I ask you to do the following:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Voters are becoming aware that Congress too often places the interests of corporations above those of the public. In the past, the farm bill has been an egregious example of that. Please design a farm bill that puts the public good above corporate profits.

COMMENT OF CHRISTINE GOUVEIA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:20 p.m.
City, State: Livermore, CA
Occupation: Collection Administrator
Comment: The land belongs to all of us and you are allowing big business to destroy it with their chemicals and GMO's. We need to go back to healthy farming. These practices being forced into our food are causing illness to kids and adults all in the name of mass production and more profit for corporate farming. Family farming should never have been mowed down. Stop ruining our land. Your family's are being poisoned too. Is the worth the money you're being paid to be bought off. You should be ashamed.

COMMENT OF JOHN GOZDZIALSKI

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 6:02 p.m.
City, State: St. Louis, MO

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: Dear House Agriculture Committee:

Because of the important role farmers play in our food system, taxpayers have supported a safety net for farmers for nearly 30 years, always in return for a guarantee that subsidized farmers will follow basic conservation practices in their fields to protect soil and water. This revolved around the basic realization that while Americans needed food, it was critical to employ conservation practices in order to preserve the economic viability and productivity of our farmlands and resources for the future.

As the House Agriculture Committee prepares your draft of the farm bill, I urge you to restore the link between taxpayer-supported subsidies for crop insurance and conservation compliance protections that will protect the nation's water and land.

This action is especially important as Congress considers eliminating direct payments, the major subsidy program that is linked to conservation compliance, and moving some of those funds to support increased subsidies for crop insurance, which lacks compliance requirements. Unless you help to reconnect crop insurance subsidies to conservation compliance, a significant part of farmers' incentive to follow conservation plans will vanish this year.

Farmers need crop insurance as part of their safety net and the public needs basic conservation practices on farms to make sure that quality farmland and water can support future generations as well as the current needs of our country. We cannot accept sacrificing long-term economic and environmental sustainability for short-sighted and short-term economic profits.

Connecting eligibility for crop insurance subsidies to conservation compliance is fiscally responsible and ensures public subsidies for farmers' insurance premium payments align with the public's interest in basic conservation of our soil and water. Missouri consistently ranks in the top five for soil loss, losing more than 5 tons per acre per year, so we have a lot to gain.

It's high time leaders in our government and in the food and agricultural industries placed the current and future health of its people as the top priority in their industries as opposed to quick and exorbitant profits.

Sincerely,

JOHN GOZDZIALSKI.

COMMENT OF ALEXANDRA GRABBE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:04 a.m.

City, State: Wellfleet, MA

Occupation: Innkeeper

Comment: I serve my guests only organic food. I am concerned that small farmers will be edged out. I am against GMOs and find it hard to find food that does not harm future generations. Get pesticides out of our food! Help the small farmer, not Big Ag. Thanks for your attention to this important matter.

COMMENT OF TOM GRABOW

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 5:12 p.m.

City, State: Evansville, IN

Comment: It is way past time to end the depression-era subsidies. Crop insurance should be provided by a private insurance market; the Federal government should get out of the business altogether. Markets can work much better if government allows a fair playing field and promotes sustainable practices. This should be done with much lower expenditures which would help reduce the deficit.

COMMENT OF HARRY GRACE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:47 p.m.

City, State: Buffalo, NY

Occupation: Clergy

Comment: I am a strong advocate of supporting small farms and especially the increasing number of organic growers. As a consequence, I am opposed to GMO produce and seafood entering into the nation's food supply—especially when not identified on labels.

There are many things about the farm bill that need to be addressed, not the least of which is the undue influence of large agricultural producers and ag-biz corporations.

Please understand the I am in support of:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

COMMENT OF RICHARD GRAF

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:53 p.m.

City, State: Whitefish, MT

Occupation: Home Inspector

Comment: Its time to clean up the agricultural/food supply in this country. If that cannot be done there should at least be sufficient labeling so that we can determine what we choose to eat.

COMMENT OF GAIL G. GRAFF

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:32 p.m.

City, State: Thousand Oaks, CA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Stop subsidizing farmers for corn to make high fructose corn syrup. Obviously, it's not a healthy addition to anyone's diet. Stop allowing our food to be poisoned with pesticides. You should be protecting people's health instead of making them sick and killing them! Canned goods also need to be changed due to PBA leaching into the food. And maybe you could act like adults and actually do the job of representing the people!

COMMENT OF BONNIE JONES GRAHAM

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 12:48 p.m.

City, State: Billings, MT

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: I am a 4th generation Montanan! I am pleading with you to support legislation, including the next farm bill that supports small family farmers who want to continue to make a viable living with traditional farming practices that support sustainable production of "real food", especially in our rural communities. I encourage you to vote against subsidies that benefit corporate farms. Big agribusiness should be able to survive on their own just like any other big business does without tax payer support. I also urge you to limit and regulate more strongly, CAFO producers and promote a more humane, environmentally sound process that does not endanger humans or communities in which CAFOs exist. I am also a Montana teacher and I see "day in and day out" the horrific effects of our food inequalities: obese and unhealthy children whose diet consists of highly processed and cheap food with no nutritional value because fresh produce and "real" food is too expensive for their families. When, in the United States of America, has nutritional food become a luxury item only for the wealthy? How can we accept in this country, that children's academic achievement, brain function, and physical movement is being fueled by chemicals, additives, and "product" instead of high quality, real food that supports Montana's historical and agricultural heritage . . . as well as our tradition of high quality educational outcomes? We feed animals in our zoos better quality food than what many Montana children are provided! We can't expect a child to perform at peak levels with "modified" fuel any more than we would expect our vehicles to perform with gas that has no "energy" value to the engine. Please, we are so, so much better than this!

Sincerely,

BONNIE JONES GRAHAM.

COMMENT OF DIANA GRAHAM

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 10, 2012, 10:34 p.m.

City, State: Chicago, IL

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Every month I serve hundreds of hungry people at our food pantry. Cutting SNAP will mean hundreds of people will go hungry each month. Please don't cut SNAP, even families who receive food stamps sometimes need to come to

our food pantry. Cutting SNAP will mean even less food for people already in poverty. Please don't cut SNAP.

COMMENT OF JON GRAHAM

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:08 p.m.

City, State: Rochester, VT

Occupation: Editor

Comment: This farm bill is weighed far too heavily with support for industrial agriculture—support it no longer needs—with very little support for more sustainable and healthier options.

JOINT COMMENT OF LAURA AND CARL GRAHAM

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 9:53 a.m.

City, State: Jacksonville, FL

Occupation: Physician Trainer, Full-Time Mother, and Wife; Welder, Father, and Husband.

Comment: Please help us to remove the fine that organic producers have to pay to do the right thing and put a **Heavy Fine** on the factory farm and commercial food production industry for all of their pollution, poison and land damage. We need to get the subsidies redirected from those damaging our lives and put them toward those doing the right thing. Thank you.

COMMENT OF NANCY GRAHAM

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:09 a.m.

City, State: Eugene, OR

Occupation: Registered Dietitian

Comment: We need every means available to promote and ensure health and well-being. Our health is intimately tied to our food production. The fight against obesity and all of its consequences (heart disease, diabetes, *etc.*) requires that we provide nutritious foods.

COMMENT OF PATRICIA GRAMES

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:31 p.m.

City, State: Tucson, AZ

Occupation: Retired

Comment: We need to have better, cleaner food available in this country for people like me who don't want pesticide and chemical laden food. Please include help for organic farmers in the farm bill. Also, please rein in some of the big corporate farms from some of their worst practices, like overuse of pesticides, allowing excess fertilizers to pollute water, and so. And feeding bad food to chickens, cows and pigs.

COMMENT OF LISA GRANDSTAFF

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:49 p.m.

City, State: Pittsburgh, PA

Occupation: Electronics Technician, Factory Equipment Facility

Comment: I am writing today to ask you to end the give-aways to **Huge** corporate farming entities and to restore whatever we can to small and medium-sized operations, as well as family-held and private farms and animal husbandry operations.

While I understand that corporate agriculture is here to stay, there is **NO Need** for these entities to receive tax payer money, especially at this precarious time in our economic climate.

I would like to see the full endorsement of the provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286) upheld and not stripped away.

I feel that we need to maintain funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.

I feel it is important to move forward with the implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).

And I whole-heartedly support maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Thank you,

LISA J. GRANDSTAFF.

COMMENT OF ANDERS GRANNING

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:32 p.m.

City, State: Milford, MI

Occupation: Truck Repair Manager

Comment: Please stop funding unsustainable forms of agriculture and allow this bill to emphasize and strengthen small and local farms for the betterment of our family's health and society. Our citizens and children are suffering from hunger and malnutrition. Please consider all of the economic factors such as mobility for food producers, programs to feed our nation's hungry, and education and implementation of balanced diets from healthy and sustainable sourced foods.

COMMENT OF ANN GRANT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:25 p.m.

City, State: Sunnyvale, CA

Occupation: Realtor

Comment: Am always surprised when I visit my daughter in Great Britain by how much more care they take of their food sources. What we eat is so important to the health of our nation in all respects, please pass organic standards that will allow us to shop wisely.

COMMENT OF MARSHA GRANT

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 9:56 a.m.

City, State: Hotchkiss, CO

Occupation: Retired

Comment: The farm bill only supports corporate agriculture. We need to all support clean and fair food in this country produced by smaller family farms. They all struggle in the valley where we live. Have the courage to support small, sustainable agriculture in the new farm bill. The public is waking up to this issue and is watching.

COMMENT OF GRACE GRATSCH

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 16, 2012, 10:58 a.m.

City, State: Cincinnati, OH

Occupation: Retired Teacher

Comment: We need a farm bill that will provide initiative and support to the next generation of farmers. We need a bill that will make farming possible for families to work on the land and not be monopolized by huge corporations. Small farms on the heart of America.

COMMENT OF TAMMY GRAVES

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:49 a.m.

City, State: Richfield Springs, NY

Occupation: Graphic Designer

Comment: Give incentives to food stamps to buy fresh instead of processed foods. We need to have a farm bill foster food production where the infrastructure exists and the people live, *i.e.*, Northeast—keep the dairy farms so we can have a local source of milk instead of it coming in from Idaho or Wisconsin. Thank you.

COMMENT OF TERRELL GRAVES

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:16 a.m.

City, State: Alexandria, VA

Occupation: Information Technology Manager

Comment: It's **Way** past time to get out of bed with agribusiness and start to put good, natural, local food into the hands of **Every** American. We can make a good dent in local economies across every state in the union by helping to push food production back to the local level. It will also, curiously, help without epidemic health and obesity issues so the issues go beyond the purview of Agriculture.

COMMENT OF HERBERT "HERB" R. GRAVES, JR.

Date Submitted: Friday, April 13, 2012, 9:35 a.m.

City, State: Chapman, KS

Occupation: Executive Director, State Association of Kansas Watersheds

Comment: April 13, 2012

Hon. FRANK D. LUCAS,
Chairman
 House Committee on Agriculture,
 Washington, D.C.

Dear Representative Lucas,

The State Association of Kansas Watersheds (SAKW) supports funding of the P.L. 83-566 (PL-566) watershed program as an inclusion in the Conservation Title of the 2012 Farm Bill.

Kansas like all states understands the difficult task of putting our country's financial future in order. Having said that, one of the dangers of all out war on existing programs, is the fact that sometimes we lose track of what programs truly benefits our country.

The PL-566 program has seen a steady decline in funding since the late nineties. First it was the need to finance flood damage expenses then it was the need to curtail the practice of Federal earmarks to now some twenty years later a total denial of what really has worked for over fifty years. How many Federal programs can show a return on investment of 15-25% for each and every year since the early 1950's that the PL-566 program can.

Today we have decided that this country can no longer afford to finance flood reduction programs and will just rely on paying more and more for flood damages as they occur. A case in point is the Missouri River disaster this past year. Just let the floods come and we will deal with them the best we can. The forefathers that thought prevention was much wiser to deal with must be turning over in their graves at the way we look at flood control today. The facts and figures of what the PL-566 watershed program has meant to Kansas and this country are substantial, defensible, and undeniable.

We hear from USDA and NRCS that we must get out of the business of federally supported planning, operations and rehabilitation of flood reduction and send it back to the local folks. For the past fifty some years the local folks have done their part. In Kansas alone, millions of local dollars are being spent on maintenance of existing dams, design of new projects, securing of land rights, securing needed environmental mitigation, and now the Federal government wants to pull the plug and leave a job unfinished.

Kansas has gotten a late start with rehabilitation of PL-566 dams, but our first is now complete, the second is under contract, and the third has funding secured. Four new dams are ready for NRCS rehabilitation planning, but FY 2013 funding for any phase of the program is uncertain at best.

SAKW and the watershed districts of Kansas thanks you for your service and dedication to all phases of the PL-566 watershed program. Good luck in your efforts to secure a farm bill preserves and protects production agriculture into the near future.

HERBERT "HERB" R. GRAVES, JR.,
SAKW Executive Director.

COMMENT OF JEFF GRAY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:38 p.m.

City, State: Grayson, GA

Occupation: Graphic Design

Comment: As a long-time Republican, I'm asking that you endorse the Local Foods, Farms, and Jobs Act, H.R. 3286, as well as the EQIP Organic Initiative. Please don't put more money into wasteful big ag farm subsidies. The future of food is with small farms husbanding land and animals with care. It's not in factories maximizing profits via scorched Earth environment policies and heavy government subsidies.

COMMENT OF MARY GRAY

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 12:48 p.m.

City, State: Boone, NC

Occupation: Writer

Comment: We need a farm bill that will help us move to a sustainable agricultural system with ample support for small family farms and organic growers. With global climate change already happening, we need to sequester as much carbon as possible in our soils with no-till systems and programs to conserve and increase depth of topsoil.

COMMENT OF NATALIE GRAY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:47 p.m.

City, State: Ojai, CA

Occupation: Voiceover Actor—Home Vegetable Grower

Comment: Dear House Agricultural Committee,

Food issues are of utmost importance to me, and I vote for representatives who think accordingly.

I am writing to let you know that I want things to change for us here in the U.S. with regard to how farmers are subsidized and big agribusiness is given full reign over MY food. This is your food, too! Don't you realize that?! For God's sake, get real. You eat the stuff that they are putting out too! Even if you have tons of money and can afford to eat "organic", if sustainable farming and the small farmer are not supported, you can kiss any difference you feel you might be able to experience good-bye; not to mention the changes to our environment, *etc.*

In that regard, I support:

- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.
- The FULL endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).

Thank you for your time and attention.

Most sincerely,

NATALIE GRAY.

 COMMENT OF PAMELA GRAY

Date Submitted: Tuesday, March 20, 2012, 1:10 p.m.

City, State: Lubbock, TX

Occupation: Mammographer

Comment: I do not believe corporate farm operations should receive government subsidies. I believe this is a deplorable waste of government funds. These excessive subsidies could be eliminated to bring down the government deficit.

 COMMENT OF PILAR GRAY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:32 p.m.

City, State: Fort Bragg, CA

Occupation: School Nutrition Services Director

Comment: Funding to school meals needs more than the meager \$0.06 per meal we are to receive from the Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act if we are to serve fresh, healthy food to this nation's children.

I would love to see a financial incentive program for schools to purchase more regional, unprocessed agriculture products to support small, local farmers, boost local economies, and provide school children with not only the freshest foods possible but with also an increased awareness of where and how food is grown and the seasonality of produce.

Thank you for your consideration.

 COMMENT OF SUE GRAY

Date Submitted: Saturday, March 24, 2012, 7:36 p.m.

City, State: Geneseo, IL

Occupation: Ag Consultant, Farm Owner

Comment: The producers attending the Galesburg, IL, hearing presented great commentary from the farmer's perspective. There is one role of the farm bill that was barely mentioned, but that is absolutely crucial [to farmers, and] to the long term sustainability of agriculture, and for our dominant position in feeding the U.S. and the world—and that is as a foundation for ag research. The 2008 Farm Bill provided mandatory funding for four NIFA programs with \$129M in FY 2012, but there is no budgetary "baseline" in 2013 or beyond.

The farm community near Galesburg places a high value on research. Just a few years ago, in a remarkable display of conviction, a group of concerned citizens comprising the Northwest Agricultural Education Foundation raised money to buy 80

acres of land which was leased to the University of Illinois for \$1 dollar per year, in order to secure the Monmouth location as one of the University's experimental farms. Their actions and commitment speak volumes for their recognition of the value of agricultural research—a value that I urge you to also recognize and support in developing the upcoming farm bill, by restoring the crucial investment in ag research programs. Thank you.

Respectfully,

SUE GRAY.

COMMENTS OF SYLVIA RUTH GRAY

Date Submitted: Friday, April 27, 2012 10:36 a.m.

City, State: Salt Lake City, UT

Occupation: Unemployed

Comment: I want a farm bill which protects and strengthens programs like TEFAP and SNAP in the farm bill—which funds programs like TEFAP and SNAP that help vulnerable children, seniors, and low-income families. I also want small family farms to be encouraged. Ditto for organic farming and increased regulation for factory farms!

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:49 p.m.

Comment: I support small farm, organic, non-GMO agriculture on behalf of the soil and beneficial soil bacteria.

COMMENT OF YURIKO GRAY

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 9:09 a.m.

City, State: New York, NY

Occupation: Educator

Comment: We eat only organic foods at home and only visit the doctor for required check-ups. Our health is an indicator of how organic foods help strengthen and maintain healthy immune systems thus lowering spending on medical needs. (But I still pay over \$500 per month for health insurance as a government worker.) Please support organic foods for better health.

COMMENT OF MARY GRAZIANO

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 9:07 a.m.

City, State: Galesville, WI

Occupation: Self-Employed Piano Teacher

Comment: Our nation's food policy is a sham, geared towards large corporate farms and production of monoculture, commodity crops that consumers cannot directly consume. We need to move toward an agriculture policy that promotes and supports the production of healthy food as locally as possible by sustainable practices.

COMMENT OF MARIAN GREBANIER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:08 p.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I urge this committee to support H.R. 3286 and H.R. 3236 which would give funds to where they are needed . . . farmers, smaller farms, local agriculture and the training of new farmers. New farmers are greatly needed at the current farmers are getting old and not being replaced at the rate our country needs to have the good healthful food it needs for good nourishment.

I am completely opposed to the furthering of subsidizing, in the many billions, agribusiness using bad farming techniques, chemicals, GMOs and largely raising commodity crops. The new insurance program being offered is yet another boondoggle with no requirements for these businesses remediating soil erosion or doing wetland conservation.

We need Congress to look out for the well-being of its land and people, not the agribusinesses that have been walking off with most of the support and money.

Please do the right thing.

COMMENT OF GIULIO GRECCHI

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 01, 2012, 4:46 p.m.

City, State: Tucson, AZ

Occupation: Retired—Volunteer Assisting the Poor

Comment: We ask that you support a farm bill that provides for poor and hungry people both at home and abroad, offers effective help for those who grow our food, ensures fairness to family farmers and ranchers, and promotes stewardship of the land. We also urge that this farm bill target limited resources, such as subsidies and direct payments, to those farmers and ranchers who truly need assistance to be competitive and successful.

COMMENT OF LORIS A. GRECO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:01 p.m.

City, State: Franklin, WI

Occupation: Retired Teacher

Comment: We need safe, healthful, sustainable, and whenever possible, locally grown food. Can you help to set out the infrastructure that will make this possible. All institutions need reforming from time to time, don't they?

LORRIE GRECO.

COMMENT OF CAROL GREEN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:10 p.m.

City, State: Napa, CA

Occupation: Grandmother

Comment: Our grandchildren need us to be vigilant in providing healthy meals. We need you to be vigilant in protecting those interests. When families can't stay healthy eating GMO products disguised as foods and mostly not labeled as such, and mom's are too busy working AND caring for family and home, we all suffer the consequence with higher health care costs while our air, land and water are polluted with the poisons used.

If you believe pandering to the almighty dollar will save your family, you would be misguided as these issues will cross into your family life as well.

Please consider the health of our once great nation and do the job we are paying and praying for.

Thank you for all you do to protect the health of our children.

COMMENT OF DAVID GREEN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:26 p.m.

City, State: Berkeley, CA

Occupation: Food Service Industry

Comment: Small scale and family farms are only way to ensure healthy farmland for future generations, and that alone should be reason enough to pass a bill that ensures the future of sustainable agriculture. However, I imagine a plea that incorporates business interests would garner more political response, and thus, I feel that with the current depressed economy, family farms should be subsidized and farmers put back to work instead of money and political protection allocated to giant agriculture conglomerates whose practices have, for decades, put the local farmer and America's health far behind their ever-soaring profits. Politics, lately more than ever, seems to deal in the fast fix and the immediately gratifying, but on the current trend, there will come a day when big business owns all the seeds, when American farmland has become so poisoned and poorly cared for that we can't turn back. The health of the country calls for preemptive measures. I want my representative to think about what would be good for everyone and what would benefit the country even after their run in office is over.

COMMENT OF MARY GREEN

Date Submitted: Wednesday, March 21, 2012, 10:43 a.m.

City, State: Arlington Heights, IL

Occupation: Nonprofit Corporate Trainer

Comment: I am a local activist for healthy food and environment. I am also a mother and concerned citizen. Please do the right thing and support in the strongest way the needs and rights of farmers and consumers.

Local and regional food systems help create jobs and spur economic growth in rural and urban communities. Please support investment in this growing sector by including the Local Farms, Food, and Jobs Act in the next farm bill.

The future of family farming and ranching in America depends upon ensuring that would-be new farmers have access to land, capital, and markets. Please support

beginning farmers and ranchers by including Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act in the next farm bill.

Farmers depend on quality, cutting-edge research to stay successful—please make sure the next farm bill invests in this crucial work.

Working lands conservation programs help farmers maintain productivity while protecting our air, water, and soil, protect these programs from unfair funding cuts!

COMMENT OF DORIAN GREENBAUM

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:00 a.m.

City, State: Duxbury, MA

Occupation: Researcher

Comment: I urge you to support a farm bill that supports and encourages organic and non-pesticide/herbicide farming, using sustainable methods. Agribusiness does not need subsidies—level the playing field and give subsidies to the organic and non-chemical farmers who are growing food in a healthy and sustainable way. I no longer buy non-organic produce at supermarkets, and I strongly support local farmers and farmers' markets. Monsanto doesn't need any more money from you—my local CSA could sure use a minute portion of the billions you have shelled out to the companies that are ruining our food supply and poisoning our environment. Support heirloom vegetables, not GMOs!

COMMENT OF JOYCE GREENBERG

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:30 p.m.

City, State: Highmount, NY

Occupation: Realtor

Comment: Support for family farms is vital to homeland security. Agribusiness has plenty of money, enough to grease a lot of Washington palms. Family farms produce quality products that I choose over the chemically contaminated, genetically engineered produce of agribusiness.

COMMENT OF HARRY GREENE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:17 p.m.

City, State: Littleton, MA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Fruits, Livestock, Vegetables

Size: 50–150 acres

Comment: We're fed by the food industry that knows nothing about health, and treated by the health industry who knows nothing about food. I'd like to put my bid in to change that.

With the obesity epidemic destroying our nation, promoting and even subsidizing real-food industries is leagues more important than subsidizing big oil.

Which is more important, the quality of life of all Americans, or the depth of the pockets of those at the top of the pyramid? It all starts with what you put into your body. Do we want to spend millions on the real-food industry, or billions on cancer and diabetes treatments that could have been prevented?

On top of health, investing in sustainable agriculture keeps the producer-market-consumer system alive. Industrial agriculture is headed on a crash course for plains of dust instead of fields of soil.

COMMENT OF JANE GREENE

Date Submitted: Thursday, April 12, 2012, 10:44 a.m.

City, State: Truth or Consequences, NM

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: Last year, while the number of people in poverty was increasing, the food coming to New Mexico's food bank decreased by over 1/3. As you work on the farm bill, please do not forget that the economy has devastated many American families and this is the most basic form of help.

COMMENT OF VAUGHAN GREENE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:24 a.m.

City, State: Panama City Beach, FL

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: I want access to more small farmer's markets. We need more small family farms to fill these markets. I like the diversity of plants and food that I can

get from a local/small farm. Big-agriculture is only offering a few types of food that is bred for transport and not taste. Quit giving so much money to the big corporations.

COMMENT OF ANNE GREENIA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:17 p.m.

City, State: Tulalip, WA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: The health and welfare of the children, current and those to come, must be protected by those of us that are responsible for the protection of society as a whole.

Even twenty years down the road is too late to start those protections, I feel.

Please save our environment from pillage by the folks whose only interest is making the most money they can at the rest of our expense.

Please support the following:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

ANNE GREENIA.

COMMENT OF ALAN GREENLAND

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:49 p.m.

City, State: Surprise, AZ

Occupation: Purchaser

Comment: Please stop subsidizing foods like GM corn that are making people sick and start subsidizing food that is good for people, the environment, and the farmers. Thank you.

COMMENT OF BARRY GREENSTEIN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:24 p.m.

City, State: Ft. Lauderdale, FL

Occupation: Executive Chef

Comment: It is vital that we have independent small family farms growing sustainable foods to not only keep our environment healthy, but to additionally supply the most diverse selection of grains, fruit and vegetables, beans, seeds and nuts available. Many varieties of grains and seeds have been reduced or eliminated due to genetic modification. The survival of our food system is dependent upon a fair farm bill, where organic, sustainable and small family farms are given an equal chance in the current food system. We cannot survive if the current large seed and agribusiness companies are allowed to monopolize, reduce and destroy our food diversity. I ask as a taxpaying citizen of this country to make sure mine and future generations are allowed a choice to have the widest variety of healthy foods at their disposal.

Monsanto Corp. has been granted a patent on life through our Supreme Court justice system, and have the ability, by law, to completely monopolize the food seed banks in the world market. Heading in this direction will certainly benefit Monsanto, but will be a disaster for all of humanity. I urge you to pass a sensible farm bill so our farmers can survive, and even thrive in our current food system.

COMMENT OF CINDY GREENSTEIN

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 03, 2012, 11:56 a.m.

City, State: Baton Rouge, LA

Occupation: Executive Director of the Louisiana Food Bank Association

Comment: I am writing to encourage the House to not make cuts in the SNAP program. The Food Banks of Louisiana are doing their best to keep up with the needs of the hungry in Louisiana and if there are cuts to the SNAP program, it is doubtful they will be able to provide for all in need. Food insecurity increased to

16.7% of all Louisianans in 2010. The food banks have seen an increase in those seeking out food that have never had to get food from them before. The food banks in Louisiana are funded 99% by private and corporate donations, grants, and the commodities program for which they provide distribution. If this program is cut, the burden will shift to the food banks but without an increase in their resources. I know this country needs to make cuts, but please don't take from a program that makes this a civilized country. Hunger is detrimental to the individual and the community. Thank you.

COMMENT OF ALEX GREETHAM

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:00 p.m.

City, State: New York, NY

Occupation: Student

Comment: I want to be able to ensure that my food was grown in ethically sound conditions. When I buy free-range chicken and eggs, I actually want it to mean free range, being raised with plenty of room and fresh air, not just a few minutes outside of a cramped wire cage. I want my milk to not contain bovine growth hormone (rBGH) as I do not want pus in my milk, or the milk that children have with their cereal every day. And I want my burgers to be actual meat, none of this pink slime. I would like to see a transparent food industry, not one that tries to hide its actions. What has it got to hide? Also, I no longer want to see this conflict of interest as seen when the president hired Monsanto lawyer Tom Vilsack as the Secretary of Agriculture.

COMMENT OF SARA GREGG

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 3:17 p.m.

City, State: Lawrence, KS

Occupation: Professor

Comment: The time is long past when agriculture reflected the values of the people who rely on its produce, but Americans and their elected officials today can still correct for the misuse of our nation's agroecosystems. Please make our food safe for human consumption again, and allow our farms to provide healthy habitat for both their human and their animal residents.

COMMENT OF CHRIS GREGOIRE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:59 p.m.

City, State: King George, VA

Occupation: Holistic Wellness Practitioner

Comment: I completely support the farm bill. I am fed up with the Department of Ag robbing us of the chance to live healthy, vital lives. The special interest groups (MONSANTO) have run this country too long, and have all but destroyed the quality of life that once existed.

For once . . . do what is right for this nation.

COMMENT OF CAROL GREGOR

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:41 p.m.

City, State: Brooksville, ME

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Livestock

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Organic farming is the best future for agriculture. The quality of our food has been lost to huge profit driven corporations. Let small farmers produce quality as we always have.

COMMENT OF ANDREW GREGORY

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 2:27 p.m.

City, State: Truckee, CA

Occupation: Culinary Artist

Comment: Please pass legislation that limits the power of commercial farming and empowers the growth of small-scale and sustainable agricultural practices. I would like to be able to feed my family with foods that are free of chemicals, hormones, and antibiotics and grown locally by local farmers and ranchers. Thank you!

COMMENT OF CLAIRE GREGORY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:36 p.m.

City, State: Bloomington, IN

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Citizen farmers who face many problems as they try to meet the need of community farms should receive financial support from Congress just as Congress has supported the multinational corporate "farmers".

COMMENT OF ELLEN GREGORY

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:13 a.m.

City, State: Old Bridge, NJ

Occupation: Marriage and Family Therapist

Comment: Please consider an organic farm bill . . . I've had three people in my life in the last 2 weeks die of cancer. Our food supply has become our biggest toxin and I'm scared for the health of my children.

In my area, there is a limited supply of organic food available and most of the time it is more expensive.

We, the 'in the know' people, know what greedy business and government has done to our food. And . . . by not advocating for labeled GMO food and siding with the producers who are killing us . . . there is no better way for your people to lose faith in a government that **Is Not** out for the protection of its citizens.

There is not a more pressing issue then the food we put into our body and to deny your 'people' the right to know what is in our food, and to restrict access to organic food is the biggest betrayal.

I do not know how our country will recover if the U.S. government does not hear the voice of the food movement. All we are asking is to stop making us sick!

COMMENT OF JENNIFER GREGORY

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 11:29 a.m.

City, State: Truckee, CA

Occupation: Accounting

Comment: Please help the American people by passing some legislature that ensures the food we buy and eat is not going to harm them. Here in the greatest country in the world I am scared to feed my children what is sold as "food". Please support the small. Local, organic farms, and limit the power of the large commercial farms. For my kids' sake, please.

COMMENT OF T. GREGORY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:49 p.m.

City, State: Sedalia, CO

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: I grow organic vegetables not for profit but to give to my local food bank. I know what the quality of my food is and like to think I save lives with my food. I think it's **Extremely** important that our country's farm bill support **All** organic and sustainably grown food. I am adamantly opposed to **Any** GM/GE crops because of the poisons required to even grow it and it's impact to our planet in **Every** way. I support:

- (1) The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- (2) Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- (3) The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- (4) Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

I also think Congress should be looking at ways to allow communities to use vacant land for community gardens. This will have a **Huge Positive** impact on those communities by bringing people together, providing education for children to see how food is actually grown, and improving the health of our citizens! (obesity). It's time for YOU to think outside the box and find ways to support our country's health by providing incentives to do just that. I hope you do.

COMMENT OF DORIS GREY

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 11:11 a.m.

City, State: Philadelphia, PA

Occupation: Concerned Citizen

Comment: Look at the statistics: one in four people in the U.S. will get cancer—look at the “allowed amounts” of herbicides and pesticides allowed in our food—now we are faced with genetically engineered crops! Yes, to eat means to ingest poisons, which of course, have no relation to how unhealthy we are as a nation. Please wake up and protect our food supply!

COMMENT OF DEBORAH GREYMOON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:46 p.m.

City, State: Cascade, CO

Occupation: Nurse

Comment: Our farm policy needs to be restructured to care more for the people responsible for producing food rather than the large corporations that profit by their labor. Please do the right thing and vote for decent farm policy reform.

COMMENT OF AUDREY GRIER

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 12:31 p.m.

City, State: East Rutherford, NJ

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: It is time to consider the source of our food, which is in turn the source of our energy and health.

Please develop, support and fund only legislation which enables family farms; organic farms; seed saving and diverse natural variations; responsible stewardship of the soil and water sources; and which discourages genetically modified seeds and organisms; corporate pressure to control seed distribution and farming methods which rob the soil of its richness.

This is truly a matter of great scope and importance. What we eat affects our intellectual functioning, our physical health or sickness and the economics of our neighbors.

Thank you for your attention and please take time to legislate in favor of health.

COMMENT OF BRWYN GRIFFIN

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 13, 2012, 3:58 p.m.

City, State: Port Townsend, WA

Occupation: Organic Grocery Education Manager

Comment: First of all, thank you for your service to our district. It's with the greatest urgency that I write. Our farm bill, for years, has supported big corporate agriculture, I'm assuming, in an attempt to make our food production system more efficient. BUT, we now realize that big ag is not the answer. We need to support localized, sustainable agriculture, give subsidies to small farmers, make the permitting procedures easier for cottage food industry, and think less globally and more locally. I'm asking Norm Dicks to consider all the Port Townsend Food Co-op owners, over 7,000, when considering how important healthy, nutritious foods are to his constituents. We want less packaged foods containing GMO ingredients and more locally grown, organic foods. Please help make this happen by voting to change our farm bill in support of more sustainable policies.

SUBMITTED STATEMENT BY HON. ROBERT T. GRIFFIN, INDEPENDENCE COUNTY JUDGE,
ARKANSAS

House of Representatives Committee on Agriculture:

Chairman Lucas and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to be heard for the record. I am Robert T. Griffin, Independence County Judge in Arkansas. I am a farmer born and raised and owned a Federal grain warehouse for thirty-three years in Independence County before being elected to this position in 2011. I have observed, first-hand, the decline of the number of people able to continue in farming as the years have passed. While my farmer base shrank, the number of acres I handled increased. I witnessed the lack of interest as the children of farmers declined to continue in the footsteps of the older generation. I also myself declined to row crop farm due to the uncertainties of price, pests, and weather. The risk *versus* the return was too great although I continued participating by ownership of cropland and building a cattle herd on other acreage.

Knowing the Federal budget is approaching being beyond control and the dangers of continuing without constraints could collapse our economy, I do ask you to consider the security of production of our own food in this nation before making cuts to the farm bill. We cannot become dependent on foreign powers controlling our food as they do our oil and to some extent, our manufacturing. Consider the costs analysis done by the research at the University of Arkansas and the small margin of net income within the production of crops. The numbers I have seen for this year show only a few crops yielding a net return if you consider most farmers rent land and take the rent from the return shown from that research. A high farm income is based on gross sales but the input expenses have risen out of control to limit the net margin to the farmer.

High grain prices and low margins are creating even greater risk for our producers of food. Our nation's farmers have been resilient over the years yet they are advancing in age with no young to follow in many cases. You can increase this decline by making the risk more and endangering our internal production of foodstuffs across this nation by taking a cookie cutter, one-size-fits-all approach. Each region is different and we need diversity in the program. Rather than cut, we should retain the direct payments to buffer the risk. If anything, we need a price trigger to increase the direct payments as the cycle of prices decline and inputs remain high.

The main point to consider is the total farm bill yields very little to the producers by assistance through direct payments. The total bill costs the budget \$145 billion while the farm and commodity part is only \$18.85 billion all of which is not directed to producers of crops. This is the only true safety net available to farmers to lower risk and ultimately keep them in business for the nation's food security. It is one of the smallest parts of the farm bill.

ATTACHMENT 1

5-3-2012

Re: GSA waste to the system

I was told recently by a Federal agency employee about running out of copy paper and getting it locally at a much cheaper price. It seems they are required to buy from and through General Services Administration but GSA didn't have the paper so they just went locally and purchased some. This intrigued me and I did a little pricing.

Without trying to find the very cheapest prices, I simply obtained a 2012 GSA catalog and did an Internet search for office supplies. Here are my comparisons for common items and I found none that were higher than those quoted by GSA.

GSA	5000	copy paper	41.33	
Quill	5000	" "	34.99	
Sam's	5000	" "	29.88	save 38.32% increase plus save shipping
GSA	12	G2 gel pens	18.85	
Office Max	12	" "	14.99	
Sam's	12	" "	12.63	save 49.25% increase plus save shipping
GSA	1	electric stapler	562.23	
Office Max	1	" "	389.99	
Sam's	1	" "	344.00	save 63.44% increase plus save shipping
GSA	1	2 drawer file	490.69	
Office Max	1	" "	169.99	
Sam's	1	" "	164.98	save 197.43% increase plus save shipping
GSA	1	5 drawer file	685.91	
Office Max	1	" "	409.99	
Sam's	1	" "	399.98	save 71.49% increase plus save shipping
GSA	1	HP 29 X Toner	174.93	
Office Max	1	generic toner	149.99	save 16.68% increase plus save shipping

As we look for savings for the nation, let us first look at our gross waste in requiring and promoting use of GSA to cost our agencies valuable money that could go to save programs under the chopping block. At the least, we should start here to find a way to eliminate this waste. I did not try to find the worse of differences; this was a random look in general at common items and a comparison from the lowest price in percentage with the difference as an increase of cost.

ROBERT T. GRIFFIN.

ATTACHMENT 2

Table 27. Summary of Revenue and Expenses per Acre, Surface Irrigation ^{1/3}

Receipts	^{2/3}			Soybean, ^{4/3}		Rice, ^{6/3}	Rice, ^{7/3}
	Cotton	Corn	Sorghum	Furrow	Conventional	Hybrid	
Yield (cotton-lb, other-bu)	1200	175	110	60	170	190	
Price (\$/yield unit)	0.90	6.00	5.28	11.75	5.85	5.85	
Total Crop Revenue	1080.00	1050.00	580.80	705.00	994.50	1111.50	
Cottonseed Value	146.28						
Operating Expenses							
Seed	106.26	113.85	20.15	70.20	25.92	120.00	
Fertilizers & Nutrients	126.45	263.76	165.78	60.20	170.81	150.82	
Chemicals	102.87	18.66	30.47	61.18	112.80	71.07	
Custom Applications	0.00	7.00	0.00	14.00	44.10	35.00	
Fuel	42.45	25.20	25.36	20.87	32.88	32.88	
Repairs & Maintenance	35.82	21.38	18.75	16.89	27.78	27.78	
Irrigation Energy Costs	49.04	61.30	40.87	49.04	122.60	122.60	
Labor, Field Activities	17.91	8.44	8.47	7.00	10.45	10.45	
Other Inputs & Fees, Pre-harvest	38.73	16.12	10.98	10.73	19.42	19.99	
Post-harvest Expenses	146.28	73.50	25.30	15.00	99.20	110.87	
Net Operating Expenses	519.53	609.21	346.13	325.11	665.95	701.46	
Returns to Operating Expenses	560.47	440.79	234.67	379.89	328.55	410.04	
Capital Recovery & Fixed Costs	121.26	69.13	60.74	56.59	102.16	102.16	
Total Specified Expenses¹	640.79	678.33	406.87	381.69	768.11	803.61	
Returns to Specified Expenses	439.21	371.67	173.93	323.31	226.39	307.89	
Operating Expenses/yield unit	0.43	3.48	3.15	5.42	3.92	3.69	
Total Expenses/yield unit	0.53	3.88	3.70	6.36	4.52	4.23	

¹Does not include land costs, management, or other expenses and fees not associated with production.

Rent 262⁵⁰ 145³¹ 176²⁵ 247⁴² 277⁷⁷
 + 109⁵⁰ + 27⁵⁰ + 146⁵⁰ < 22⁵⁰ + 30⁵⁰

Table 29. Summary of Revenue and Expenses per Acre, No Irrigation ^{1 3 0 5}

Receipts	^{5 15}				
	Cotton	Corn	Sorghum	Soybean ^{12 70}	Wheat ^{6 30}
Yield (cotton-lb, other-bu)	800	125	70	30	55
Price (\$/yield unit)	0.90	6.00	5.28	11.75	6.50
Total Crop Revenue	720.00	750.00	369.60	352.50	357.50
Cottonseed Value	97.52				
Operating Expenses					
Seed	106.26	89.70	13.95	70.20	30.00
Fertilizers & Nutrients	93.79	218.20	152.18	60.20	152.96
Chemicals	91.75	18.66	30.47	61.18	40.69
Custom Applications	0.00	0.00	0.00	14.00	28.00
Fuel	40.04	23.24	23.40	18.91	21.95
Repairs & Maintenance	32.96	18.67	16.78	14.62	14.72
Irrigation Energy Costs	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Labor, Field Activities	16.88	7.57	7.60	6.13	7.07
Other Inputs & Fees, Pre-harvest	32.91	9.21	5.99	6.01	7.24
Post-harvest Expenses	97.52	52.50	16.10	7.50	12.10
Net Operating Expenses	414.60	437.75	266.47	258.75	314.72
Returns to Operating Expenses	305.40	312.25	103.13	93.75	42.78
Capital Recovery & Fixed Costs	101.91	47.29	45.29	38.58	40.93
Total Specified Expenses¹	516.50	485.05	311.76	297.34	355.65
Returns to Specified Expenses	203.50	264.95	57.84	55.16	1.85
Operating Expenses/yield unit	0.52	3.50	3.81	8.63	5.72
Total Expenses/yield unit	0.65	3.88	4.45	9.91	6.47

¹ Does not include land costs, management, or other expenses and fees not associated with production.

$R_{int} @ 25\%$ 187^{50} 92^{40} 88^{15} 89^{37}
 $+ 77^{60}$ $< 35^{20} >$ $< 33^{20} >$ $< 87^{20} >$
 CW 5^{30}
 SB 13^{27}
 W 6^{30}
 Rice 6^{25}

Table 28. Summary of Revenue and Expenses per Acre, Center Pivot Irrigation

Receipts	Crops			
	Cotton	Corn	Sorghum	Soybean
Yield (cotton-lb, other-bu)	1200	175	110	60
Price (\$/yield unit)	0.90	6.00	5.28	11.75
Total Crop Revenue	1080.00	1050.00	580.80	705.00
Cottonseed Value	146.28			
Operating Expenses				
Seed	106.26	113.85	20.15	70.20
Fertilizers & Nutrients	126.45	263.76	165.78	60.20
Chemicals	102.87	18.66	30.47	61.18
Custom Applications	0.00	7.00	0.00	14.00
Fuel	40.49	23.24	23.40	18.91
Repairs & Maintenance	49.47	38.57	30.05	30.54
Irrigation Energy Costs	74.49	93.12	62.08	74.49
Labor, Field Activities	17.04	7.57	7.60	6.13
Other Inputs & Fees, Pre-harvest	36.23	13.86	8.32	8.22
Post-harvest Expenses	146.28	73.50	25.30	15.00
Net Operating Expenses	553.31	653.13	373.15	358.88
Returns to Operating Expenses	526.69	396.87	207.65	346.12
Capital Recovery & Fixed Costs	152.73	109.13	86.52	88.06
Total Specified Expenses¹	706.04	762.26	459.66	446.94
Returns to Specified Expenses	373.96	287.74	121.14	258.06
Operating Expenses/yield unit	0.46	3.73	3.39	5.98
Total Expenses/yield unit	0.59	4.36	4.18	7.45

¹ Does not include land costs, management, or other expenses and fees not associated with production.

$\text{Rent} \quad 262^{57} \quad 145^{20} \quad 176^{25}$
 $+ 25^{20} \quad < 27^{20} > \quad + 22^{20}$

Table 26-A. Arkansas Wheat Enterprise Budget

CROP VALUE					
	Grower %	Unit	Yield	Price/Unit	Revenue Your Farm
Crop Value	100%	Bu	55.00	6.50	357.50
OPERATING EXPENSES					
		Unit	Quantity	Price/Unit	Costs
Seed, Includes All Fees	100%	Acre	1	30.00	30.00
Nitrogen	100%	Lbs	115	0.68	78.20
Phosphate (P2O5)	100%	Lbs	40	0.71	28.40
Potash (K2O)	100%	Lbs	80	0.53	42.40
Sulfur	100%	Lbs	12	0.33	3.96
Boron	100%	Lbs	0.00	6.13	0.00
Other Nutrients, Including Poultry Litter	100%	Unit	0.00	0.00	0.00
Herbicide	100%	Acre	1	25.92	25.92
Insecticide	100%	Acre	1	0.00	0.00
Fungicide	100%	Acre	1	14.77	14.77
Other Chemical	100%	Acre	1	0.00	0.00
Other Chemical	100%	Acre	1	0.00	0.00
Custom Chemical & Fertilizer Applications					
Ground Application: Fertilizer & Chemical	100%	Acre	0	6.00	0.00
Air Application: Fertilizer & Chemical	100%	Acre	3	7.00	21.00
Air Application: Urea	100%	Lbs	100	0.070	7.00
Other Custom Hire, Air Seeding	100%	Acre	0	12.00	0.00
Machinery and Equipment					
Diesel Fuel, Pre-Post Harvest	100%	Gallons	3.202	3.46	11.08
Repairs and Maintenance, Pre-Post Harvest	100%	Acre	1.00	5.82	5.82
Diesel Fuel, Harvest	100%	Gallons	3.141	3.46	10.87
Repairs and Maintenance, Harvest	100%	Acre	1	8.90	8.90
Irrigation Energy Cost	100%	Ac-In	0	0.00	0.00
Irrigation System Repairs & Maintenance	100%	Ac-In	0	0.00	0.00
Supplies (ex. polypipe, levee gates, other)	100%	Acre	1	0.00	0.00
Other Inputs	100%	Acre	1	0.00	0.00
Labor, Field Activities	100%	Hrs	0.663	10.66	7.07
Scouting/Consultant Fee	100%	Acre	1	0.00	0.00
Other Expenses	100%	Acre	1	0.00	0.00
Crop Insurance	100%	Acre	1	0.00	0.00
Interest, Annual Rate for 6 Months	100%	Rate %	4.90	0.0245	7.24
Custom Harvest	100%	Acre	0.00	0.00	0.00
Post-Harvest Expenses					
Drying	100%	Bu	55.00	0.00	0.00
Hauling	100%	Bu	55.00	0.22	12.10
Check Off, Boards	100%	Bu	55.00	0.00	0.00
Cash Rent		Acre	1.00	0.00	0.00
Total Operating Expenses					\$314.72
Returns to Operating Expenses					\$42.78
CAPITAL RECOVERY & UNALLOCATED COSTS					
Pre-Harvest and Harvest Machinery		Acre	1	32.74	32.74
Irrigation Equipment		Acre	1	0.00	0.00
Miscellaneous Overhead; See Note 1		Acre	1	8.19	8.19
Total Capital Recovery & Unallocated Costs					\$40.93
TOTAL SPECIFIED EXPENSES					\$355.65
NET RETURNS					\$1.85

Note 1: Estimated as 25% of pre-harvest and harvest machinery.

Table 20-A. Arkansas Soybean Enterprise Budget, RR, No Irrigation

CROP VALUE	Grower %	Unit	Yield	Price/Unit	Revenue Your Farm
Crop Value	100%	Bu	30.00	11.75	352.50
OPERATING EXPENSES					
Seed, Includes All Fees	100%	Acre	1	70.20	70.20
Nitrogen	100%	Lbs	0	0.68	0.00
Phosphate (P2O5)	100%	Lbs	40	0.71	28.40
Potash (K2O)	100%	Lbs	60	0.53	31.80
Sulfur	100%	Lbs	0	0.33	0.00
Boron	100%	Lbs	0.00	6.13	0.00
Other Nutrients, Including Poultry Litter	100%	Unit	0.00	0.00	0.00
Herbicide	100%	Acre	1	36.71	36.71
Insecticide	100%	Acre	1	4.91	4.91
Fungicide	100%	Acre	1	19.56	19.56
Other Chemical	100%	Acre	1	0.00	0.00
Other Chemical	100%	Acre	1	0.00	0.00
Custom Chemical & Fertilizer Applications					
Ground Application: Fertilizer & Chemical	100%	Acre	0	6.00	0.00
Air Application: Fertilizer & Chemical	100%	Acre	2	7.00	14.00
Air Application: Urea	100%	Lbs	0	0.070	0.00
Other Custom Hire, Air Seeding	100%	Acre	0	12.00	0.00
Machinery and Equipment					
Diesel Fuel, Pre-Post Harvest	100%	Gallons	3,429	3.46	11.86
Repairs and Maintenance, Pre-Post Harvest	100%	Acre	1.00	8.54	8.54
Diesel Fuel, Harvest	100%	Gallons	2,036	3.46	7.04
Repairs and Maintenance, Harvest	100%	Acre	1	6.08	6.08
Irrigation Energy Cost	100%	Ac-In	0	0.00	0.00
Irrigation System Repairs & Maintenance	100%	Ac-In	0	0.00	0.00
Supplies (ex. poly pipe, levee gates, other)	100%	Acre	1	0.00	0.00
Survey Levees, Other Inputs	100%	Acre	1	0.00	0.00
Labor, Field Activities	100%	Hrs	0.575	10.66	6.13
Scouting/Consultant Fee	100%	Acre	1	0.00	0.00
Other Expenses	100%	Acre	1	0.00	0.00
Crop Insurance	100%	Acre	1	0.00	0.00
Interest, Annual Rate for 6 Months	100%	Rate %	4.90	0.0245	6.01
Custom Harvest	100%	Acre	0.00	0.00	0.00
Post-Harvest Expenses					
Drying	100%	Bu	30.00	0.00	0.00
Hauling	100%	Bu	30.00	0.22	6.60
Check Off, Boards	100%	Bu	30.00	0.03	0.90
Cash Rent		Acre	1.00	0.00	0.00
Total Operating Expenses					\$258.75
Returns to Operating Expenses					\$93.75
CAPITAL RECOVERY & UNALLOCATED COSTS					
Pre-Harvest and Harvest Machinery		Acre	1	30.87	30.87
Irrigation Equipment		Acre	1	0.00	0.00
Miscellaneous Overhead; See Note 1		Acre	1	7.72	7.72
Total Capital Recovery & Unallocated Costs					\$38.58
TOTAL SPECIFIED EXPENSES					\$297.34
NET RETURNS					\$55.16

Note 1: Estimated as 25% of pre-harvest and harvest machinery.

Table 19-A. Arkansas Soybean Enterprise Budget, RR, Center Pivot Irrigation

CROP VALUE	Grower %	Unit	Yield	Price/Unit	Revenue Your Farm
Crop Value	100%	Bu	60.00	11.75	705.00
OPERATING EXPENSES					
		Unit	Quantity	Price/Unit	Costs
Seed, Includes All Fees	100%	Acre	1	70.20	70.20
Nitrogen	100%	Lbs	0	0.68	0.00
Phosphate (P2O5)	100%	Lbs	40	0.71	28.40
Potash (K2O)	100%	Lbs	60	0.53	31.80
Sulfur	100%	Lbs	0	0.33	0.00
Boron	100%	Lbs	0.00	6.13	0.00
Other Nutrients, Including Poultry Litter	100%	Unit	0.00	0.00	0.00
Herbicide	100%	Acre	1	36.71	36.71
Insecticide	100%	Acre	1	4.91	4.91
Fungicide	100%	Acre	1	19.56	19.56
Other Chemical	100%	Acre	1	0.00	0.00
Other Chemical	100%	Acre	1	0.00	0.00
Custom Chemical & Fertilizer Applications					
Ground Application: Fertilizer & Chemical	100%	Acre	0	6.00	0.00
Air Application: Fertilizer & Chemical	100%	Acre	2	7.00	14.00
Air Application: Urea	100%	Lbs	0	0.070	0.00
Other Custom Hire, Air Seeding	100%	Acre	0	12.00	0.00
Machinery and Equipment					
Diesel Fuel, Pre-Post Harvest	100%	Gallons	3,429	3.46	11.86
Repairs and Maintenance, Pre-Post Harvest	100%	Acre	1.00	8.54	8.54
Diesel Fuel, Harvest	100%	Gallons	2,036	3.46	7.04
Repairs and Maintenance, Harvest	100%	Acre	1	6.08	6.08
Irrigation Energy Cost	100%	Ac-In	12	6.21	74.49
Irrigation System Repairs & Maintenance	100%	Ac-In	12	1.33	15.92
Supplies (ex. poly pipe, levee gates, other)	100%	Acre	1	0.00	0.00
Survey Levees, Other Inputs	100%	Acre	1	0.00	0.00
Labor, Field Activities	100%	Hrs	0.575	10.66	6.13
Scouting/Consultant Fee	100%	Acre	1	0.00	0.00
Other Expenses	100%	Acre	1	0.00	0.00
Crop Insurance	100%	Acre	1	0.00	0.00
Interest, Annual Rate for 6 Months	100%	Rate %	4.90	0.0245	8.22
Custom Harvest	100%	Acre	0.00	0.00	0.00
Post-Harvest Expenses					
Drying	100%	Bu	60.00	0.00	0.00
Hauling	100%	Bu	60.00	0.22	13.20
Check Off, Boards	100%	Bu	60.00	0.03	1.80
Cash Rent		Acre	1.00	0.00	0.00
Total Operating Expenses					\$358.88
Returns to Operating Expenses					\$346.12
CAPITAL RECOVERY & UNALLOCATED COSTS					
Pre-Harvest and Harvest Machinery		Acre	1	30.87	30.87
Irrigation Equipment		Acre	1	49.47	49.47
Miscellaneous Overhead; See Note 1		Acre	1	7.72	7.72
Total Capital Recovery & Unallocated Costs					\$88.06
TOTAL SPECIFIED EXPENSES					\$446.94
NET RETURNS					\$258.06

Note 1: Estimated as 25% of pre-harvest and harvest machinery.

Table 18-A. Arkansas Soybean Enterprise Budget, RR, Furrow Irrigation

CROP VALUE	Grower %	Unit	Yield	Price/Unit	Revenue	Your Farm
Crop Value	100%	Bu	60.00	11.75	705.00	
OPERATING EXPENSES						
		Unit	Quantity	Price/Unit	Costs	
Seed, Includes All Fees	100%	Acre	1	70.20	70.20	
Nitrogen	100%	Lbs	0	0.68	0.00	
Phosphate (P2O5)	100%	Lbs	40	0.71	28.40	
Potash (K2O)	100%	Lbs	60	0.53	31.80	
Sulfur	100%	Lbs	0	0.33	0.00	
Boron	100%	Lbs	0.00	6.13	0.00	
Other Nutrients, Including Poultry Litter	100%	Unit	0.00	0.00	0.00	
Herbicide	100%	Acre	1	36.71	36.71	
Insecticide	100%	Acre	1	4.91	4.91	
Fungicide	100%	Acre	1	19.56	19.56	
Other Chemical	100%	Acre	1	0.00	0.00	
Other Chemical	100%	Acre	1	0.00	0.00	
Custom Chemical & Fertilizer Applications						
Ground Application: Fertilizer & Chemical	100%	Acre	0	6.00	0.00	
Air Application: Fertilizer & Chemical	100%	Acre	2	7.00	14.00	
Air Application: Urea	100%	Lbs	0	0.070	0.00	
Other Custom Hire, Air Seeding	100%	Acre	0	12.00	0.00	
Machinery and Equipment						
Diesel Fuel, Pre-Post Harvest	100%	Gallons	3.995	3.46	13.82	
Repairs and Maintenance, Pre-Post Harvest	100%	Acre	1.00	9.04	9.04	
Diesel Fuel, Harvest	100%	Gallons	2.036	3.46	7.04	
Repairs and Maintenance, Harvest	100%	Acre	1	6.08	6.08	
Irrigation Energy Cost	100%	Ac-In	12	4.09	49.04	
Irrigation System Repairs & Maintenance	100%	Ac-In	12	0.15	1.77	
Supplies (ex. polypipe, levee gates, other)	100%	Acre	1	3.31	3.31	
Survey Levees, Other Inputs	100%	Acre	1	0.00	0.00	
Labor, Field Activities	100%	Hrs	0.657	10.66	7.00	
Scouting/Consultant Fee	100%	Acre	1	0.00	0.00	
Other Expenses	100%	Acre	1	0.00	0.00	
Crop Insurance	100%	Acre	1	0.00	0.00	
Interest, Annual Rate for 6 Months	100%	Rate %	4.90	0.0245	7.42	
Custom Harvest	100%	Acre	0.00	0.00	0.00	
Post-Harvest Expenses						
Drying	100%	Bu	60.00	0.00	0.00	
Hauling	100%	Bu	60.00	0.22	13.20	
Check Off, Boards	100%	Bu	60.00	0.03	1.80	
Cash Rent		Acre	1.00	0.00	0.00	
Total Operating Expenses					\$325.11	
Returns to Operating Expenses					\$379.89	
CAPITAL RECOVERY & UNALLOCATED COSTS						
Pre-Harvest and Harvest Machinery		Acre	1	33.02	33.02	
Irrigation Equipment		Acre	1	15.32	15.32	
Miscellaneous Overhead; See Note 1		Acre	1	8.25	8.25	
Total Capital Recovery & Unallocated Costs					\$56.59	
TOTAL SPECIFIED EXPENSES					\$381.69	
NET RETURNS					\$323.31	

Note 1: Estimated as 25% of pre-harvest and harvest machinery.

Table 15-A. Arkansas Rice Enterprise Budget, Hybrid Seed

CROP VALUE	Grower %	Unit	Yield	Price/Unit	Revenue Your Farm
Crop Value	100%	Bu	190.00	5.85	1,111.50
OPERATING EXPENSES					
		Unit	Quantity	Price/Unit	Costs
Seed, Includes All Fees	100%	Acre	1	120.00	120.00
Nitrogen	100%	Lbs	124	0.68	84.32
Phosphate (P2O5)	100%	Lbs	40	0.71	28.40
Potash (K2O)	100%	Lbs	60	0.53	31.80
Sulfur	100%	Lbs	0	0.33	0.00
Boron	100%	Lbs	0.00	6.13	0.00
Other Nutrients, Agrotain	100%	Qt	0.40	15.75	6.30
Herbicide	100%	Acre	1	66.70	66.70
Insecticide	100%	Acre	1	4.37	4.37
Fungicide	100%	Acre	1	0.00	0.00
Other Chemical	100%	Acre	1	0.00	0.00
Other Chemical	100%	Acre	1	0.00	0.00
Custom Chemical & Fertilizer Applications					
Ground Application: Fertilizer & Chemical	100%	Acre	0	6.00	0.00
Air Application: Fertilizer & Chemical	100%	Acre	3	7.00	21.00
Air Application: Urea	100%	Lbs	200	0.070	14.00
Other Custom Hire, Air Seeding	100%	Acre	0	12.00	0.00
Machinery and Equipment					
Diesel Fuel, Pre-Post Harvest	100%	Gallons	4,006	3.46	13.86
Repairs and Maintenance, Pre-Post Harvest	100%	Acre	1.00	6.85	6.85
Diesel Fuel, Harvest	100%	Gallons	5,497	3.46	19.02
Repairs and Maintenance, Harvest	100%	Acre	1	16.51	16.51
Irrigation Energy Cost	100%	Ac-In	30	4.09	122.60
Irrigation System Repairs & Maintenance	100%	Ac-In	30	0.15	4.41
Supplies (ex. polypipe, levee gates, other)	100%	Acre	1	0.37	0.37
Survey Levees, Other Inputs	100%	Acre	1	5.50	5.50
Labor, Field Activities	100%	Hrs	0.981	10.66	10.45
Scouting/Consultant Fee	100%	Acre	1	0.00	0.00
Other Expenses	100%	Acre	1	0.00	0.00
Crop Insurance	100%	Acre	1	0.00	0.00
Interest, Annual Rate for 6 Months	100%	Rate %	4.90	0.0245	14.12
Custom Harvest	100%	Acre	0.00	0.00	0.00
Post-Harvest Expenses					
Drying	100%	Bu	190.00	0.35	66.50
Hauling	100%	Bu	190.00	0.22	41.80
Check Off, Boards	100%	Bu	190.00	0.01	2.57
Cash Rent		Acre	1.00	0.00	0.00
Total Operating Expenses					\$701.46
Returns to Operating Expenses					\$410.04
CAPITAL RECOVERY & UNALLOCATED COSTS					
Pre-Harvest and Harvest Machinery		Acre	1	51.09	51.09
Irrigation Equipment		Acre	1	38.29	38.29
Miscellaneous Overhead; See Note 1		Acre	1	12.77	12.77
Total Capital Recovery & Unallocated Costs					\$102.16
TOTAL SPECIFIED EXPENSES					\$803.61
NET RETURNS					\$307.89

Note 1: Estimated as 25% of pre-harvest and harvest machinery.

Table 14-A. Arkansas Rice Enterprise Budget, Clearfield Seed

CROP VALUE					
	Grower %	Unit	Yield	Price/Unit	Revenue Your Farm
Crop Value	100%	Bu	160.00	5.85	936.00
OPERATING EXPENSES					
		Unit	Quantity	Price/Unit	Costs
Seed, Includes All Fees	100%	Acre	1	79.92	79.92
Nitrogen	100%	Lbs	152	0.68	103.36
Phosphate (P2O5)	100%	Lbs	40	0.71	28.40
Potash (K2O)	100%	Lbs	60	0.53	31.80
Sulfur	100%	Lbs	0	0.33	0.00
Boron	100%	Lbs	0.00	6.13	0.00
Other Nutrients, Agrotain	100%	Qt	0.46	15.75	7.25
Herbicide	100%	Acre	1	58.88	58.88
Insecticide	100%	Acre	1	4.37	4.37
Fungicide	100%	Acre	1	41.73	41.73
Other Chemical	100%	Acre	1	0.00	0.00
Other Chemical	100%	Acre	1	0.00	0.00
Custom Chemical & Fertilizer Applications					
Ground Application: Fertilizer & Chemical	100%	Acre	0	6.00	0.00
Air Application: Fertilizer & Chemical	100%	Acre	4	7.00	28.00
Air Application: Urea	100%	Lbs	330	0.070	23.10
Other Custom Hire, Air Seeding	100%	Acre	0	12.00	0.00
Machinery and Equipment					
Diesel Fuel, Pre-Post Harvest	100%	Gallons	4.006	3.46	13.86
Repairs and Maintenance, Pre-Post Harvest	100%	Acre	1.00	6.85	6.85
Diesel Fuel, Harvest	100%	Gallons	5.497	3.46	19.02
Repairs and Maintenance, Harvest	100%	Acre	1	16.51	16.51
Irrigation Energy Cost	100%	Ac-In	30	4.09	122.60
Irrigation System Repairs & Maintenance	100%	Ac-In	30	0.15	4.41
Supplies (ex. polypipe, levee gates, other)	100%	Acre	1	0.37	0.37
Survey Levees, Other Inputs	100%	Acre	1	5.50	5.50
Labor, Field Activities	100%	Hrs	0.981	10.66	10.45
Scouting/Consultant Fee	100%	Acre	1	0.00	0.00
Other Expenses	100%	Acre	1	0.00	0.00
Crop Insurance	100%	Acre	1	0.00	0.00
Interest, Annual Rate for 6 Months	100%	Rate %	4.90	0.0245	14.86
Custom Harvest	100%	Acre	0.00	0.00	0.00
Post-Harvest Expenses					
Drying	100%	Bu	160.00	0.35	56.00
Hauling	100%	Bu	160.00	0.22	35.20
Check Off, Boards	100%	Bu	160.00	0.01	2.16
Cash Rent		Acre	1.00	0.00	0.00
Total Operating Expenses					\$714.59
Returns to Operating Expenses					\$221.41
CAPITAL RECOVERY & UNALLOCATED COSTS					
Pre-Harvest and Harvest Machinery		Acre	1	51.09	51.09
Irrigation Equipment		Acre	1	38.29	38.29
Miscellaneous Overhead; See Note 1		Acre	1	12.77	12.77
Total Capital Recovery & Unallocated Costs					\$102.16
TOTAL SPECIFIED EXPENSES					\$816.75
NET RETURNS					\$119.25

Note 1: Estimated as 25% of pre-harvest and harvest machinery.

Table 13-A. Arkansas Rice Enterprise Budget, Conventional Seed

CROP VALUE		Grower %	Unit	Yield	Price/Unit	Revenue Your Farm
Crop Value		100%	Bu	170.00	5.85	994.50
OPERATING EXPENSES						
			Unit	Quantity	Price/Unit	Costs
Seed, Includes All Fees		100%	Acre	1	25.92	25.92
Nitrogen		100%	Lbs	152	0.68	103.36
Phosphate (P2O5)		100%	Lbs	40	0.71	28.40
Potash (K2O)		100%	Lbs	60	0.53	31.80
Sulfur		100%	Lbs	0	0.33	0.00
Boron		100%	Lbs	0.00	6.13	0.00
Other Nutrients, Agrotain		100%	Qt	0.46	15.75	7.25
Herbicide		100%	Acre	1	66.70	66.70
Insecticide		100%	Acre	1	4.37	4.37
Fungicide		100%	Acre	1	41.73	41.73
Other Chemical		100%	Acre	1	0.00	0.00
Other Chemical		100%	Acre	1	0.00	0.00
Custom Chemical & Fertilizer Applications						
Ground Application: Fertilizer & Chemical		100%	Acre	0	6.00	0.00
Air Application: Fertilizer & Chemical		100%	Acre	3	7.00	21.00
Air Application: Urea		100%	Lbs	330	0.070	23.10
Other Custom Hire, Air Seeding		100%	Acre	0	12.00	0.00
Machinery and Equipment						
Diesel Fuel, Pre-Post Harvest		100%	Gallons	4.006	3.46	13.86
Repairs and Maintenance, Pre-Post Harvest		100%	Acre	1.00	6.85	6.85
Diesel Fuel, Harvest		100%	Gallons	5.497	3.46	19.02
Repairs and Maintenance, Harvest		100%	Acre	1	16.51	16.51
Irrigation Energy Cost		100%	Ac-In	30	4.09	122.60
Irrigation System Repairs & Maintenance		100%	Ac-In	30	0.15	4.41
Supplies (ex. polypipe, levee gates, other)		100%	Acre	1	0.37	0.37
Survey Levees, Other Inputs		100%	Acre	1	5.50	5.50
Labor, Field Activities		100%	Hrs	0.981	10.66	10.45
Scouting/Consultant Fee		100%	Acre	1	0.00	0.00
Other Expenses		100%	Acre	1	0.00	0.00
Crop Insurance		100%	Acre	1	0.00	0.00
Interest, Annual Rate for 6 Months		100%	Rate %	4.90	0.0245	13.55
Custom Harvest		100%	Acre	0.00	0.00	0.00
Post-Harvest Expenses						
Drying		100%	Bu	170.00	0.35	59.50
Hauling		100%	Bu	170.00	0.22	37.40
Check Off, Boards		100%	Bu	170.00	0.01	2.30
Cash Rent			Acre	1.00	0.00	0.00
Total Operating Expenses						\$665.95
Returns to Operating Expenses						\$328.55
CAPITAL RECOVERY & UNALLOCATED COSTS						
Pre-Harvest and Harvest Machinery			Acre	1	51.09	51.09
Irrigation Equipment			Acre	1	38.29	38.29
Miscellaneous Overhead; See Note 1			Acre	1	12.77	12.77
Total Capital Recovery & Unallocated Costs						\$102.16
TOTAL SPECIFIED EXPENSES						\$768.11
NET RETURNS						\$226.39

Note 1: Estimated as 25% of pre-harvest and harvest machinery.

Table 2-A. Arkansas Corn Enterprise Budget, Stacked Gene, Center Pivot Irrigation

CROP VALUE		Grower %	Unit	Yield	Price/Unit	Revenue	Your Farm
Crop Value		100%	Bu	175.00	6.00	1,050.00	
OPERATING EXPENSES							
			Unit	Quantity	Price/Unit	Costs	
Seed, Includes All Fees	100%	Acre	1		113.85	113.85	
Nitrogen	100%	Lbs	223		0.68	151.64	
Phosphate (P2O5)	100%	Lbs	60		0.71	42.60	
Potash (K2O)	100%	Lbs	90		0.53	47.70	
Sulfur	100%	Lbs	24		0.33	7.92	
Zinc	100%	Lbs	10.00		1.39	13.90	
Other Nutrients, Including Poultry Litter	100%	Unit	0.00		0.00	0.00	
Herbicide	100%	Acre	1		18.66	18.66	
Insecticide	100%	Acre	1		0.00	0.00	
Fungicide	100%	Acre	1		0.00	0.00	
Other Chemical	100%	Acre	1		0.00	0.00	
Other Chemical	100%	Acre	1		0.00	0.00	
Custom Chemical & Fertilizer Applications							
Ground Application: Fertilizer & Chemical	100%	Acre	0		6.00	0.00	
Air Application: Fertilizer & Chemical	100%	Acre	0		7.00	0.00	
Air Application: Urea	100%	Lbs	100		0.070	7.00	
Other Custom Hire, Air Seeding	100%	Acre	0		12.00	0.00	
Machinery and Equipment							
Diesel Fuel, Pre-Post Harvest	100%	Gallons	3.576		3.46	12.37	
Repairs and Maintenance, Pre-Post Harvest	100%	Acre	1.00		7.88	7.88	
Diesel Fuel, Harvest	100%	Gallons	3.141		3.46	10.87	
Repairs and Maintenance, Harvest	100%	Acre	1		10.79	10.79	
Irrigation Energy Cost	100%	Ac-In	15		6.21	93.12	
Irrigation System Repairs & Maintenance	100%	Ac-In	15		1.33	19.90	
Supplies (ex. polypipe, levee gates, other)	100%	Acre	1		0.00	0.00	
Other Inputs	100%	Acre	1		0.00	0.00	
Labor, Field Activities	100%	Hrs	0.710		10.66	7.57	
Scouting/Consultant Fee	100%	Acre	1		0.00	0.00	
Other Expenses	100%	Acre	1		0.00	0.00	
Crop Insurance	100%	Acre	1		0.00	0.00	
Interest, Annual Rate for 6 Months	100%	Rate %	4.90		0.0245	13.86	
Custom Harvest	100%	Acre	0.00		0.00	0.00	
Post-Harvest Expenses							
Drying	100%	Bu	175.00		0.19	33.25	
Hauling	100%	Bu	175.00		0.22	38.50	
Check Off, Boards	100%	Bu	175.00		0.01	1.75	
Cash Rent		Acre	1.00		0.00	0.00	
Total Operating Expenses						\$653.13	
Returns to Operating Expenses						\$396.87	
CAPITAL RECOVERY & UNALLOCATED COSTS							
Pre-Harvest and Harvest Machinery		Acre	1		37.83	37.83	
Irrigation Equipment		Acre	1		61.84	61.84	
Miscellaneous Overhead; See Note 1		Acre	1		9.46	9.46	
Total Capital Recovery & Unallocated Costs						\$109.13	
TOTAL SPECIFIED EXPENSES						\$762.26	
NET RETURNS						\$287.74	

Note 1: Estimated as 25% of pre-harvest and harvest machinery.

Table I-A. Arkansas Corn Enterprise Budget, Stacked Gene, Furrow Irrigation

CROP VALUE		Grower %	Unit	Yield	Price/Unit	Revenue Your Farm
Crop Value		100%	Bu	175.00	6.00	1,050.00
OPERATING EXPENSES			Unit	Quantity	Price/Unit	Costs
Seed, Includes All Fees		100%	Acre	1	113.85	113.85
Nitrogen		100%	Lbs	223	0.68	151.64
Phosphate (P2O5)		100%	Lbs	60	0.71	42.60
Potash (K2O)		100%	Lbs	90	0.53	47.70
Sulfur		100%	Lbs	24	0.33	7.92
Zinc		100%	Lbs	10.00	1.39	13.90
Other Nutrients, Including Poultry Litter		100%	Unit	0.00	0.00	0.00
Herbicide		100%	Acre	1	18.66	18.66
Insecticide		100%	Acre	1	0.00	0.00
Fungicide		100%	Acre	1	0.00	0.00
Other Chemical		100%	Acre	1	0.00	0.00
Other Chemical		100%	Acre	1	0.00	0.00
Custom Chemical & Fertilizer Applications						
Ground Application: Fertilizer & Chemical		100%	Acre	0	6.00	0.00
Air Application: Fertilizer & Chemical		100%	Acre	0	7.00	0.00
Air Application: Urea		100%	Lbs	100	0.070	7.00
Other Custom Hire, Air Seeding		100%	Acre	0	12.00	0.00
Machinery and Equipment						
Diesel Fuel, Pre-Post Harvest		100%	Gallons	4.142	3.46	14.33
Repairs and Maintenance, Pre-Post Harvest		100%	Acre	1.00	8.38	8.38
Diesel Fuel, Harvest		100%	Gallons	3.141	3.46	10.87
Repairs and Maintenance, Harvest		100%	Acre	1	10.79	10.79
Irrigation Energy Cost		100%	Ac-In	15	4.09	61.30
Irrigation System Repairs & Maintenance		100%	Ac-In	15	0.15	2.21
Supplies (ex. polypipe, levee gates, other)		100%	Acre	1	3.31	3.31
Other Inputs		100%	Acre	1	0.00	0.00
Labor, Field Activities		100%	Hrs	0.791	10.66	8.44
Scouting/Consultant Fee		100%	Acre	1	0.00	0.00
Other Expenses		100%	Acre	1	0.00	0.00
Crop Insurance		100%	Acre	1	0.00	0.00
Interest, Annual Rate for 6 Months		100%	Rate %	4.90	0.0245	12.81
Custom Harvest		100%	Acre	0.00	0.00	0.00
Post-Harvest Expenses						
Drying		100%	Bu	175.00	0.19	33.25
Hauling		100%	Bu	175.00	0.22	38.50
Check Off, Boards		100%	Bu	175.00	0.01	1.75
Cash Rent			Acre	1.00	0.00	0.00
Total Operating Expenses						\$609.21
Returns to Operating Expenses						\$440.79
CAPITAL RECOVERY & UNALLOCATED COSTS						
Pre-Harvest and Harvest Machinery			Acre	1	39.98	39.98
Irrigation Equipment			Acre	1	19.15	19.15
Miscellaneous Overhead; See Note 1			Acre	1	10.00	10.00
Total Capital Recovery & Unallocated Costs						\$69.13
TOTAL SPECIFIED EXPENSES						\$678.33
NET RETURNS						\$371.67

Note 1: Estimated as 25% of pre-harvest and harvest machinery.

COMMENT OF KASANDRA GRIFFIN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 12:01 p.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Public Health Advocate

Comment: I would like to see a farm bill structured to improve the health and well-being of all Americans, which in turn would reduce the health care burden we are facing. I want to see a gradual decrease of commodity subsidies, especially corn, and a rapid increase in subsidies to fruits and vegetables, so that we can decrease their cost to consumers. I also want to see an increase in resource conservation programs, organic agriculture support, and direct marketing assistance. I believe this type of a farm bill can improve rural economies, improve American's health, and protect our farmland and natural resources.

COMMENT OF STEPHANIE GRIFFIN

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 10, 2012, 11:58 a.m.

City, State: Tucson, AZ

Occupation: Environmental Health Sciences Researcher

Comment: The farm bill has the power to transform agriculture and communities, halt the obesity epidemic, and prevent environmental destruction from chemically-intensive factory farming practices. End subsidies for commodity agricultural products (they don't need the help any more than the oil companies do) and increase subsidies for small producers, especially organic farmers. Incentives matter. If farmers have a reason to produce healthful products and sell them locally, they will. America is watching!

COMMENT OF LINDA GRIFFITH

Date Submitted: Friday, April 20, 2012, 1:30 a.m.

City, State: Altadena, CA

Occupation: Educator (College Professor)

Comment: The farm bill is long overdue for reform. I would like my tax dollars to go to helping small organic farmers learn best practices for using resources sustainably to produce healthy food. We should have stopped years ago adding such vast sums to the coffers of bloated huge agribusinesses that waste so much petroleum making fertilizers, endanger our health with pesticides and GMO seeds, and maintain their financial support from the government by the fundamentally corrupt intercession of lobbyists. We're falling like the Roman empire of yore, pulled down by the greed of a few. Turn this around: direct monies where they will help give jobs to many and produce healthy food. Please!

COMMENT OF FRANCES GRIFFITHS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:56 p.m.

City, State: Raleigh, NC

Occupation: Physician

Comment: I am a retired physician, very concerned that our current system, fully influenced as it is by agribusiness, does not adequately take account of best practice as regards public health.

COMMENT OF RICHARD GRIGGS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:41 a.m.

City, State: Kannapolis, NC

Occupation: USPS Manual Clerk

Comment: The 2012 farm bill is the most important legislation to come before Congress. Sustainable, environmentally safe farming practices are absolutely vital to a healthy America, free of GMO and pesticide tainted food. If this were done right, we wouldn't need an Affordable Care Act.

COMMENT OF LYNNE GRIMALDI

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 2:10 p.m.

City, State: Cape Neddick, ME

Occupation: Retired 1st Grade Teacher

Comment: I endorse all of the input that Chellie Pingree has given to the farm bill. These include consideration and protection of small local farmers and organic farmers who work toward providing our communities with nutritious foods and provide the opportunity for citizens to improve their health, at reasonable prices, and defray the cost of health care, particularly children!

COMMENT OF R. GRIMM

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:19 p.m.

City, State: Berkeley, CA

Occupation: Unemployed

Comment: I am writing today as a constituent to ask that you help support the most strongest and sustainable farm bill possible.
Specifically:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).

- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Reports from Washington D.C. about the farm bill negotiations have been quite outrageous. According to an editorial in the *San Francisco Chronicle* by Environmental Working Group's Ken Cook and Kari Hamerschlag, Republicans in the House Agricultural Committee have already "voted to slash \$33 billion from the food stamp program while leaving farm subsidies unscathed."

The editorial goes on to report on the latest agribusiness "Trojan horse" that gladly steals food from the mouths of the hungry to create a "\$33 billion new entitlement program that guarantees the income of profitable farm businesses. That's on top of \$90 billion in subsidies for crop and revenue insurance policies."

If this weren't egregious enough, the Senate Agricultural Committee has already voted to cut \$4 million from organic research funding and cut funding to support Beginning Farmers in half. This is outrageous and completely unacceptable!

At the same time, the Senate Ag Committee has voted to get rid of wasteful subsidy payments. It has proposed to replace it with a new subsidized insurance program that leading sustainable agriculture advocates are calling rife with potential for fraud and abuse.

While Congress is looking to get rid of direct payments to commodity farmers, the subsidized insurance program it proposes to replace it with will allow giant commodity farmers and insurance companies to walk away with a multitude of taxpayer dollars while putting the land, soil and environment at greater risk.

We can't allow this to happen. Please join me in supporting real reform and a healthy, organic future.

Thanks as always for being my Progressive voice in our Nation's Capital.

COMMENT OF JACOB GROELL

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:10 p.m.

City, State: Janesville, WI

Occupation: Cheese Factory Worker

Comment: Please support organic local foods and the opportunities for more local people to start profitable small farms. Industrial agriculture has a negative effect on us as individuals and as local communities. Thank you for your consideration.

COMMENT OF JEN GROEN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:45 a.m.

City, State: Chicago, IL

Occupation: Unemployed

Comment: Farm policies should not promote excess production of crops, as this turns food into commodities and takes income from the farmers. Farm policies should encourage fair business trade, proper land management and healthy, diverse agricultures.

COMMENT OF STAN GROFF

Date Submitted: Monday, April 02, 2012, 7:14 p.m.

City, State: Medford, MN

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Dear Representative Walz:

I am a citizen of Steele County and as such I strongly urge you to support existing funding levels for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) within the farm bill.

One in nine Minnesota citizens struggles to put food on the table. In Steele County, at least ten percent of the population or close to 4,000 people are food insecure. SNAP is critical to maintaining good nutrition and health among our population.

Economic studies in Minnesota show that people who lack access to adequate nutrition are more often chronically ill; children don't fully develop physically and cognitively and are more prone to fail courses, repeat grades and drop out of school before graduation. The cost of hunger's impact—largely as uninsured medical care—is conservatively estimated at \$1.6 billion annually. Cutting SNAP or limiting access to it will increase charity care caseloads for the counties, which will be borne by local property taxes.

Last but not least, every dollar of SNAP purchases goes into the local economy and generates \$1.73 in economic activity. This is not a net expense; it is a net gain of 73% that supports jobs on Main Street. In a time of high unemployment, we cannot afford to add to the unemployed by reducing community economic assets of which SNAP is one.

As a constituent and as a public servant, I strongly oppose cuts to critical anti-hunger programs SNAP, TEFAP as well as the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) for seniors and Women, Infants and Children (WIC)

For the sake of our neighbors who can't earn enough to get the food they need, it is important to maintain funding for programs that provide basic food assistance programs.

Sincerely,

STAN GROFF,
[Redacted],
Medford, MN.

COMMENT OF JUDY GROSCH

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 4:06 a.m.

City, State: Nokomis, FL

Occupation: Retired/Grandmother

Comment: Mr. Buchanan,

Please help keep our food clean by composing a farm bill that excludes MON-SANTO GMOs and supports small local farmers.

COMMENT OF CHERYL GROSS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:05 p.m.

City, State: Sarasota, FL

Occupation: Environmental Scientist

Comment: The continued poisoning of our environment through the use of pesticides and the development and planting of crops genetically modified to produce or be resistant to pesticides is leading to a complete disruption of the environment that supports agriculture. To truly meet the requirements of the world's growing population it is vital to support a return to smaller farms and organic farming techniques that protect and enrich the environment and provide nontoxic, nutrient-rich foods. Monocrop culture, particularly with genetically modified crops, leads to depleted, poisoned soil, contaminated water and nutrient deficient food crops. The farm bill should reflect the growing knowledge that corporate farms and Monsanto GMO's are not in the public interest and should not have taxpayer support through agricultural subsidies. It is time to devote taxpayer dollars and agricultural support programs to smaller, organic farms and farmers that understand, respect and work with our environment to produce healthful crops for America.

COMMENT OF DENA GROSS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:44 p.m.

City, State: Irvine, CA

Occupation: Researcher

Comment: Please do **Not** cut funding for organic research or supporting beginning farmers. If anything we need to increase our efforts to stop allowing big Ag to poison the American food supply. Cutting funding would be shameful.

COMMENT OF STACY GROSSMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:41 p.m.

City, State: Bexley, OH

Occupation: Student, Stay-at-Home Mom

Comment: There is too much control of the food industry by a concentrated few. Indigenous food, indigenous people, and cultures are being dismantled and destroyed.

Food has now become toxic and for-profit. It's time to get back to the basics: support local farmers and produce.

COMMENT OF EARL GROVE

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 10, 2012, 10:00 a.m.

City, State: East Canton, OH

Occupation: Electrician

Comment: To me, the trend toward smaller farms and locally grown produce is an excellent way to achieve both healthier food and reduce carbon emissions. Therefore, we need a bill that is friendly to America's small farmers allowing them to compete fairly with the mega farms. Locally grown produce tends to be more affordable and fresher when purchased from farmers markets rather than from larger chain stores and super-sized markets.

COMMENT OF JENNIFER GROVE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:07 a.m.

City, State: Omaha, NE

Occupation: Cytogenetic Technologist

Comment: I want organic fruits and vegetables at a reasonable cost. I would like to see fresh produce being a more economical choice for me and my family *versus* processed foods made from corn and soy!

COMMENT OF NANCY GROVE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:41 p.m.

City, State: Atherton, CA

Occupation: Physician

Comment: Don't make taxpayers pay twice, first to subsidize producers of high-calorie, low-value crops (*e.g.*, corn which is converted to high fructose corn syrup) and then to treat the effects of obesity, Type 2 diabetes and heart disease. Conventional agribusiness does not need our subsidy dollars; small farmers growing a variety of produce locally do.

COMMENT OF LINDA GROVES

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 9:44 p.m.

City, State: Harleysville, PA

Occupation: Small Business Owner

Comment: Thank you for your attention to help people in this country get the kinds of foods they need for their best health. Good food is expensive, but it is the best medicine, when paired with some exercise. The best foods are raised by farmers who love the land, love to feed and nurture animals used for food, without chemicals, without GMO, just **Old School** food.

LINDA GROVES.

COMMENT OF JANET GRUBAUGH

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 08, 2012 12:23 p.m.

City, State: Mansfield, OH

Occupation: Florist, Farmer & Director of a Food Pantry

Comment: As a volunteer at a hunger program, I am writing to share my concern about hunger in Ohio. With unemployment still high and many Americans still struggling to make ends meet, anti-hunger programs are helping many of our neighbors just put food on the table.

Nearly 50 million Americans are living in food insecurity. While food banks, churches, and pantries are doing great work in our community, charity alone cannot meet the need for food assistance. My program, Lucas Area Food Pantry in Lucas Ohio just outside of Mansfield Ohio serves about 1,000–1,100 families each month, so many more than we were serving when the recession began.

A pantry client called and asked if distribution was Saturday and I told her it was the following Saturday, the following was the short conversation I had with her . . . “Are you okay?” I have 4 cans of soup and some soda crackers, I can wait.” This was a family of 4 and they were going to wait a week for food! **No, No**, it's **Not** okay!

Congress should do its part by continuing to support anti-hunger programs like the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), and the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP), all of which are authorized in the farm bill.

Cutting anti-hunger programs will increase hunger in America. Given the associated health care and educational costs of hunger and poor nutrition, cuts to anti-hunger programs are short-sighted.

I ask you to please remember the families who are struggling in our country, and urge you to protect and strengthen important anti-hunger programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP in the 2012 Farm Bill reauthorization.

COMMENT OF CATHERINE GRUENSTEIN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 11:45 a.m.

City, State: Oakland, CA

Occupation: Nonprofit Sector

Comment: Please support a 2012 Farm Bill that does not compromise the SNAP program—new environmental protections and benefits for sustainable agriculture should not come at the expense of my fellow citizens who need food assistance.

COMMENT OF SARAH GUARE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:34 a.m.

City, State: North Adams, MA

Occupation: Editor of Farming Books

Comment: Please support small farmers, the majority of whom are practicing sustainable methods for the care of the Earth and everyone and everything on this planet. We need more people willing to think and work with a holistic viewpoint if we are to truly nourish ourselves.

COMMENT OF JOANNA GUBMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:12 p.m.

City, State: San Francisco, CA

Occupation: Fellow, in Solar Electricity

Comment: I support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

In general, I support promotion of organic farming practices, dismantling incentives for monocultures, dismantling incentives for specific foods such as corn and soy, protecting and incentivizing use of heirloom and non-engineered crops that help to preserve biodiversity, ensuring that farmers pay for water-intensive, energy-intensive, and environmentally damaging farming practices, supporting small farms, and better educating consumers about where their food comes from and how it was produced. I also support providing assistance to lower-income individuals to enable them to afford healthy food. The government should also set an example in its own food sourcing, for Federal employees and for school lunches.

COMMENT OF MICHELLE GUBMAN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:31 p.m.

City, State: San Francisco, CA

Occupation: Product Marketing Manager

Comment: I support promotion of organic farming practices, dismantling incentives for monocultures, dismantling incentives for specific foods such as corn and soy, protecting and incentivizing use of heirloom and non-engineered crops that help to preserve biodiversity, ensuring that farmers pay for water-intensive, energy-intensive, and environmentally damaging farming practices, supporting small farms, and better educating consumers about where their food comes from and how it was produced. I also support providing assistance to lower-income individuals to enable them to afford healthy food. The government should also set an example in its own food sourcing, for Federal employees and for school lunches.

COMMENT OF JEAN GUENTHER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 3:07 p.m.

City, State: Burlington, VT

Occupation: Psychotherapist

Comment: Citizens—not chemical corporations—should be able to eat organic, non-GMO foods, so stop allowing these chemical & GMO intrusions on everyone's soil, air, and right for healthy, safe food. WE need to take this lesson from Europe!

COMMENT OF MICHAEL GUERRA

Date Submitted: Sunday, April 08, 2012, 8:20 a.m.
City, State: San Antonio, TX
Occupation: Organizational Development
Comment: Please protect critical food programs like SNAP. This safety net for people in poverty, and the emphasis on healthy lifestyles, is key to a good economy.

COMMENT OF RICARDO GUERRERO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:12 p.m.
City, State: Covina, CA
Occupation: Pharmacy Service Rep.
Comment: With more and more research showing positive's in consuming organic products, it is vital no funding be pulled from research involving organic products. It is our right to pursue happiness as citizens of the United States of America, **Health** being a major factor in that pursuit. Please support the field of Organic Research and Farming, if only for the sake of fellow humanity.

COMMENT OF GEORGE GUGICH

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:09 p.m.
City, State: Baton Rouge, MI
Occupation: Restaurant Owner
Comment: All Plant based foods should be clearly labeled as Organic, Conventionally Produced or GMO.

COMMENT OF LILACE GUIGNARD

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 10:01 a.m.
City, State: Mansfield, PA
Occupation: Teacher, Volunteer Farm Market Manager
Comment: As a manager of a rural farmers market, I see firsthand how the current subsidies benefit agribusiness and make it harder on small producers. Small producers who farm organic or at least more sustainably, are key to our nation's food security. People want local, fresher food that's affordable. It's more nutritious, it keeps money in the local economy, and keeps farmland from being subdivided and lost forever. GMO products and giants like Monsanto do not need government help. The people do—the biological, not corporate, ones!

COMMENT OF CLAUDE GUILLEMARD

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:31 p.m.
City, State: Baltimore, MD
Occupation: Teacher
Comment: It is absolutely crucial to my family that a farm bill protect local food, organic practices, and family farming. More and more research shows the link between industrial, uncontrolled, agricultural practices and health ailments.

COMMENT OF SANIYE GUNGOR

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:59 a.m.
City, State: Hurleyville, NY
Producer/Non-producer: Producer
Type: Vegetables
Size: Less than 50 acres
Comment: Our nation's health and well being depends on clean sustainable agriculture friendly to Earth, animals and humans, to share and thrive together supporting one another!

COMMENT OF KARLENE GUNTER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:43 p.m.
City, State: Rochester, NY
Occupation: Professor (Retired)

Comment: We need to conserve farmland and family farmers. Corporate farmers or farmers with huge incomes should not receive any government money. Farmers should not poison their neighbors with insecticides or herbicides. Factory chicken, hog and beef farms should not be permitted to poison their neighbors with toxic air and wastes. Farmers should be rewarded for best practices in farming that protect farmland from degradation and don't use excessive water.

COMMENT OF ALICE GÜNTERT

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 4:20 p.m.

City, State: Rego Park, NY

Occupation: Free-Lance Biologist

Comment: American Agriculture has acquired a fearful reputation on the International Parquet. U.S. Ag Exports pressure local economies around the world to buy unwanted products. These products probably undermine more American Diplomatic Efforts than fought wars. These products cause people around the world to disdain the U.S. and the important democratic values that our founding fathers cherished. Have we forgotten about the Boston Tea Party?

Only a return to sustainable Agricultural Production can turn this situation around.

COMMENT OF JUDI GUSTAFSON

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 16, 2012, 11:23 p.m.

City, State: Forest City, NC

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Fruits, Poultry/poultry products, Specialty Crops, Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: I am a small farmer who tries to maintain sustainability. I find it difficult especially when rules are applied to my farm that were written for corporations. Please consider small farmers in the farm bill. We are truly the backbone of America.

COMMENT OF RAE ANN GUSTAFSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:24 p.m.

City, State: Mill Valley, CA

Occupation: Registered Nurse

Comment: It is beyond time to remember that it is the people of this country that are more important than the pocketbooks of a very few corporate billionaires. We need healthy food that is free of anything unnatural, that is the way it was before humans started messing with it with chemicals, genetic engineering, *etc.* We don't know how these things will affect us in the distant future. And most of us don't want to be the guinea pigs! Please let us go back to nature.

COMMENT OF JOSEPH GUSTON

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 1:37 p.m.

City, State: Poughkeepsie, NY

Occupation: Retired

Comment: There must be a fair farm bill, not one that caters to large agribusiness at the expense of everything and everyone else. Don't use subsidies as a blunt weapon. Thank you.

COMMENT OF SHARYN GUTHIE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:20 p.m.

City, State: Hickory, NC

Occupation: Nutritionist

Comment: For the health of our nation, the well-being of our environment, and the restoration of responsible, sustainable farming methods, I urge you to consider the reformation of the farm bill. Thank you!

COMMENT OF NANCY GUTIERREZ

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:36 p.m.

City, State: Palm Desert, CA

Occupation: Substitute Teacher

Comment: The farm bill's focus should be on supporting organic and non-genetically modified produce. The farm bill must address long-term solutions. Easily, about 80% of Americans (those that understand that horrible science of genetic engineering) do not want GMOs.

The farm bill should include the recommendations of the scientific community, not from the corporations whose bottom line does not include the health and well-being of its citizens. The farm bill needs to change to reflect the long-term needs of its citizens, not the corporations in agriculture and food producers who only care about profit.

COMMENT OF GEORGINA GUZZON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:38 p.m.

City, State: Santa Barbara, CA

Occupation: Administrative Assistant

Comment: Please make every effort to steer our country toward an agricultural future that will promote health, not just for consumers, but for the people who produce our food.

We have the right, as consumers, to choose what we eat and to know how it was produced. If the laws of this country create an environment that is inhospitable to organic, sustainable food grown by smaller, more localized farms and ranches, the government will essentially be limiting our choices.

Please, please help to create an environment in our country in which healthful, responsibly grown and raised food is not an upper-middle class luxury.

COMMENTS OF ABRA GWARTNEY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012 4:57 p.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Big Ag., aka the industrial food producers, use the current farm bill to grab 85–90% of the subsidy and work 24/7 to put small organic farmers out of business and then buying up their farm lands at bargain basement prices to expand Big Ag's grip on that precious farm bill. This expands the use of GMO plants that go to market in the U.S.A. This is terrible news for the American consumer! The farm bill is overdue for or a complete over haul to prevent a bully from tilting the playing field in favor of the bully!

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:10 p.m.

Comment: Make sure that the playing field is **Level** for **All** players in agriculture. Currently, Cargill et al. takes advantage of their influence in the farm bill! Reduce industrial farms' influence over the small mom & pop organic farms to keep them in business. With GMO rapidly becoming the norm in our super markets, organic produce and small farm animals becomes extremely important for the consumer to access.

COMMENT OF JENNIFER H.

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:41 p.m.

City, State: Edina, MN

Occupation: Real Estate Broker

Comment: Without reading the entire proposed bill, I find it difficult to elaborate on all particular items that may be included. However, in general, I would like to comment that presently I am very concerned about the current policies that are in place, and concerned about policies that are in discussion, particularly with regard to genetically modified seed and such farming. Genetically modified seed and farming policies should NOT have precedence over organic farming. In fact, all policies should strengthen and aim for all organic farming and aim to reduce and eliminate all GMOs. The future impact of these GMO strategies are unknown, first and foremost, and dangerous. Additionally, organic and natural farmers should in no way be penalized by GMO companies or policies supporting such GMO procedures. GMO farming should be restricted from most areas and not allowed near organic farms. We should be focused on conserving our land and rotating crops accordingly to maintain the benefits and nutrients of the soil. Prairie grass lands and other natural habitats should also be protected. We should restrict the use of pesticides and chemicals that are negatively impacting our natural resources, such as the negative affects it is having on the bee and the grand contribution the bee makes to our agricultural industry. Not to mention, protecting the wetlands, rivers and streams from pesticide and chemical run off, and preserving our natural water supply and re-

sources is imminent. We need to get back to basics. We need to use common sense. We need to stop the expansion of GMOs, protect our natural resources, and get back to a healthy and more natural way. The farm bill needs to protect these natural resources and support the expansion of organic farming.

COMMENT OF BILL HAAS

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 1:29 p.m.

City, State: St. Louis, MO

Occupation: Teacher, Candidate for MO Lt. Gov.

Comment: Require Conservation Compliance for Taxpayer Subsidized Crop Insurance Programs in the 2012 Farm Bill to restore the link between soil and water conservation and taxpayer benefits to farmers. This would ensure that all new crop and revenue insurance or other risk management programs that make up a safety-net for farmers do not incentivize environmental destruction and it helps protect America's investment in our farmland and farmers.

Set reasonable limits on taxpayer-funded crop insurance subsidies to help keep costs from continuing their upward spiral.

Help grow jobs by retaining programs like the Value Added Producer Grants Program. Guarantee \$30 million of mandatory funding per year. VAPG provides seed money to help farmers innovate in agriculture and create jobs while securing a sustainable path to market-based farm profitability.

Help grow local farm economies and support healthy food in schools by providing flexibility for states to use existing food procurement programs to purchase fresh, healthy food from local farmers and ranchers.

Retain effective conservation programs in the farm bill that deliver clean water and wildlife benefits.

Grow farmers through mandatory funding for the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program. The National Sustainable Agriculture Campaign recommends \$30 million in mandatory funding. With an aging farm population, now is the time to invest in the future of American agriculture by nurturing new agriculture start-ups.

Secure our food future and fund the Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative at \$30 million per year in mandatory funding. Investment in agricultural research is vital to continued productivity and innovation in growing and diverse sectors of American agriculture, such as organic agriculture.

Dear House Agricultural Committee:

Because of the important role farmers play in our food system, taxpayers have supported a safety net for farmers for nearly 30 years, always in return for a guarantee that subsidized farmers will follow basic conservation practices in their fields to protect soil and water. This revolved around the basic realization that while Americans needed food, it was critical to employ conservation practices in order to preserve the economic viability and productivity of our farmlands and resources for the future.

As the House Agriculture Committee prepares your draft of the farm bill, I urge you to restore the link between taxpayer-supported subsidies for crop insurance and conservation compliance protections that will protect the nation's water and land.

This action is especially important as Congress considers eliminating direct payments, the major subsidy program that is linked to conservation compliance, and moving some of those funds to support increased subsidies for crop insurance, which lacks compliance requirements. Unless you help to reconnect crop insurance subsidies to conservation compliance, a significant part of farmers' incentive to follow conservation plans will vanish this year.

Farmers need crop insurance as part of their safety net and the public needs basic conservation practices on farms to make sure that quality farmland and water can support future generations as well as the current needs of our country. We cannot accept sacrificing long-term economic and environmental sustainability for short-sighted and short-term economic profits.

Connecting eligibility for crop insurance subsidies to conservation compliance is fiscally responsible and ensures public subsidies for farmers' insurance premium payments align with the public's interest in basic conservation of our soil and water. Missouri consistently ranks in the top five for soil loss, losing more than 5 tons per acre per year, so we have a lot to gain.

Sincerely,

BILL HAAS.

COMMENT OF MARTHA HABER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:47 p.m.

City, State: Long Beach, CA

Occupation: Retired

Comment:

1. Do not take money from the food stamp program. Take it from the farm subsidies instead.
2. Stop supporting the large agribusiness concerns, and begin supporting small family farms, especially those that are using organic farming methods to produce food for our nation.
3. It is wrong for Congress to pass laws and programs that give more money and power to huge companies at the expense of the small farmer. Listen to the will of the people, and stop climbing into bed with agribusiness. Make a commitment to the health of our nation, instead of to the coffers of the multimillionaire mega-farm corporations.

COMMENT OF SUZANNE HACHEY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:25 p.m.

City, State: Stetson, ME

Occupation: Beginning Farmer

Comment: We need support of local produced **Real** food without preference to large factory farms who only care about profits! Local farms care about healthy food for their neighbors and families. Monsanto and General Foods are not what our future should include.

COMMENT OF CHRISTINE HACHFELD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:20 p.m.

City, State: West Concord, MN

Occupation: Research Tech

Comment: I would like to see subsidized programs for vegetable and organic farmers. We need to stop putting such emphasis on corn and soybean production. Corn production trickles down to contribute to obesity by producing corn syrup for junk foods juice and soda pop. We need to wean America off sugar and promote eating healthy to help lower health care cost. Farmers will not produce healthy foods if there is no profit margin like with corn and soybean. One-third of Americans are at an Ideal weight statics show, due to poor diets and sedentary lifestyles we are reaching a huge epidemic and to change this it needs to start somewhere. It is cheaper for people to feed their kids fast food than local produce and healthy foods. This is truly sad.

COMMENT OF CHERIE HACKER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 6:24 p.m.

City, State: Sacramento, CA

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: I have a single organic garden in an urban, community garden plot. I'd like all of my community, grandchildren, and nation to be able to eat save non-GMO foods. We have a right to have the labeled knowledge of what we are buying with all food products and to abolish products and seeds that will adversely affect future generations on this planet.

COMMENT OF LAURA HACKNEY

Date Submitted: Monday, May 07, 2012, 5:59 p.m.

City, State: Orono, ME

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Field Crops, Greenhouse/nursery, Vegetables, Other

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: I am a student at the University of Maine studying Environmental Horticulture and Sustainable Food Systems. This summer I am part of a small group of students who manage a MOFGA certified organic vegetable CSA. We grow crops to feed our community members all summer long, even into the fall with winter squash and pumpkins. As part of a growing movement towards local food production, I highly urge you to consider making funding more readily available for projects like ours. Not only in producing the food but in advertising this incredible

opportunity for students and their families. We are happy to help grow food for our communities and want it to be possible for anyone with a desire for fresh food to attain a share. Thank you for your time and consideration in representing us.

COMMENT OF ILSE HADDA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:26 p.m.

City, State: Berkeley, CA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I believe that it is extremely important that this country encourages eating organic food and that our population is encouraged to grow it by creating something like victory gardens which we used to have during World War II.

COMMENT OF STEPHANIE HADDAD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:20 p.m.

City, State: Haiku, HI

Occupation: Massage Therapist

Comment: Please help farmers and everyone else in our great country have access to quality food and help us take care of the environment. Thank you for all you have done in this regard so far, as I know you are aligned with these hopes.

COMMENT OF RON HADFIELD

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 6:33 p.m.

City, State: San Francisco, CA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: My monthly allotment of food stamps is vital to my well-being. Although I still have to scrape by, I could not survive without the food stamp program. Let's do the humane thing and keep this vital program.

COMMENT OF ROBERT HADLEY

Date Submitted: Friday, March 16, 2012, 5:52 p.m.

City, State: Dayton, OH

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I strongly support passage of the farm bill. Our country simply cannot turn its back on the people who would benefit from this legislation. The America of which I am proud helps its poor and needy in times like this. Vote for this bill to keep our country living up to its ideals.

COMMENT OF MARK HADLOCK

Date Submitted: Wednesday, April 11, 2012, 10:40 a.m.

City, State: Rio Rancho, NM

Occupation: COO

Comment: Please increase support of Federal nutrition programs. Last year New Mexico saw a reduction of 37% in TEFAP food distribution which means that over 1.2 million meals were not available to people who need donated food to survive. You **Must** take care of the most basic needs of the people you have been elected to represent before considering any non-essential social improvements.

COMMENT OF HARRY HAFF

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:02 p.m.

City, State: Prescott, AZ

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: Commodity farmers should not get tax subsidies. Period. Agribusiness is about corporate profits and not about what is good for the country. Therefore, they should stand or fall without corporate welfare of any kind.

According to the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition's Ferd Hoefner, "By failing to place limitations on crop insurance subsidies and to re-attach soil erosion and wetland conservation requirements to crop insurance programs, the Committee has failed to do the full reform that is needed." The very same practices that caused such agricultural havoc during the depression—poor soil management, excessive use of pesticides and fungicides, over reliance on monoculture farming and chemical fertilizers—will be perpetuated unless meaningfully addressed and real progress is made in farming practices and government welfare for agribusiness.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF SAEEDA HAFIZ

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:15 p.m.

City, State: San Francisco, CA

Occupation: Food Educator

Comment: Please do the simple thing and make eating support the long-term goals of our health and our planet. The last 100 years was successful for making sure that our food supply is plentiful, but now it is time to make our food supply healthier for all as well as abundant. Thank you for your consideration.

COMMENT OF CASSANDRA P. HAGE

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 9:25 a.m.

City, State: St. Louis, MO

Occupation: Environmental Educator

Comment: Dear House Agriculture Committee:

I work for a small nonprofit organization that educates people about environmental issues and encourages them to support the local green economy. I took several sustainable agriculture courses in college, worked on a small organic farm for two summers and currently produce ample food, including vegetables, fruit and honey, on my 1/8 acre plot in St. Louis City. Whatever I can't produce myself, I try to source from local farmers and producers. In sum, sustainable food production and environmental conservation are important to me and my social and professional networks.

Because of the important role farmers play in our food system, taxpayers have supported a safety net for farmers for nearly 30 years, always in return for a guarantee that subsidized farmers will follow basic conservation practices in their fields to protect soil and water. This revolved around the basic realization that while Americans needed food, it was critical to employ conservation practices in order to preserve the economic viability and productivity of our farmlands and resources for the future.

As the House Agriculture Committee prepares a draft of the farm bill, I urge you to restore the link between taxpayer-supported subsidies for crop insurance and conservation compliance protections that will protect the nation's water and land.

This action is especially important as Congress considers eliminating direct payments, the major subsidy program that is linked to conservation compliance, and moving some of those funds to support increased subsidies for crop insurance, which lacks compliance requirements. Unless you help to reconnect crop insurance subsidies to conservation compliance, a significant part of farmers' incentive to follow conservation plans will vanish this year.

Farmers need crop insurance as part of their safety net and the public needs basic conservation practices on farms to make sure that quality farmland and water can support future generations as well as the current needs of our country. We cannot accept sacrificing long-term economic and environmental sustainability for short-sighted and short-term economic profits.

Connecting eligibility for crop insurance subsidies to conservation compliance is fiscally responsible and ensures public subsidies for farmers' insurance premium payments align with the public's interest in basic conservation of our soil and water. Missouri consistently ranks in the top five for soil loss, losing more than 5 tons per acre per year, so we have a lot to gain.

Thank you for seriously considering my comments and making sustainable, economically and environmentally viable incentives a strong component of the farm bill.

Sincerely,

CASSANDRA P. HAGE.

COMMENT OF ALEXANDRA HAGER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:55 p.m.

City, State: Chicago, IL

Occupation: Facility Manager of Holistic Health Fitness Center

Comment: Please support Small local farms/sustainable farming, conservation and organic farming—this is very crucial to support for the public's health and access to these types of foods.

COMMENT OF GABRIELLE HAGGARD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:02 p.m.

City, State: Berryville, VA

Occupation: Alpaca & Horse Farm Owner/Homemaker

Comment: Please reject the spending cut that singles out conservation, research, extension, and other programs important to sustainable and organic agriculture. It terminates programs that serve beginning and minority farmers without making any cuts to commodity or crop insurance programs. If cuts are to be made then everything must be on the table. Cuts must be fair, equitable and based on the merits of each program.

COMMENT OF ALICE HAINING

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:07 p.m.

City, State: East Setauket, NY

Occupation: Self-Employed Actor, Yoga Teacher, and Mother

Comment: It is well beyond time for the traditional farm subsidies to end. I ask Congress to support small family farmers, sustainable and organic agricultural farming practices, to end GMOs being sold without labeling, and to back independent scientific research into best practices to create secure, regional, sustainable farming, harvesting, slaughtering, and distribution networks. Food safety and availability is more crucial to our national security than almost anything else. We can live without bombs, guns, and nuclear waste, but we can't live without safe food, water, and air.

COMMENT OF KAREN HAKUN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:01 p.m.

City, State: North Wales, PA

Occupation: Psychotherapist

Comment: We need to preserve our land, soil, seeds, and farmers. We need to prevent big agribusinesses from destroying what is left of the healthy food-producing industry.

COMMENT OF JEANETTE HALE

Date Submitted: Monday, April 02, 2012, 9:55 a.m.

City, State: Russellville, AR

Occupation: Conservation District Employee

Comment: My concern for the conservation/agriculture community reaches far beyond my interests as an employee tasked with administering the farm bill programs. It is essential that we enable those that feed us and give us clean water. What is more basic than food, water and clean air? Our future depends on the successfulness and productivity of farmers in America and the need to make stewardship of our natural resources a way of life. Stewardship education in urban America is an area that desperately needs to be addressed, as well as the continued support of beneficial programs for farmers.

COMMENT OF JENNIFER HALES

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:56 a.m.

City, State: San Leandro, CA

Occupation: Health Care Worker

Comment: I support families battling hunger, helps communities operate farmers' markets, and am concerned about the part of bill that unfortunately, subsidizes the production of food that is making us and our planet sick.

COMMENT OF JIL HALES

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:40 p.m.

City, State: Healdsburg, CA

Occupation: Restaurant Owner

Comment: I support changes to the existing farm bill as succinctly laid out by Slow Food. Our entire way of life here in Sonoma County will depend upon how you vote this farm bill. The ramifications of the bill—making it fair and making it work for smaller producers—will resonate across the country and if implemented help 'grow' sustainable food production that is our heritage and should be part of our future.

COMMENT OF JAMES HALFAKER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 6:37 p.m.
City, State: Seattle, WA
Occupation: Northwest Harvest Board Member—Clergy
Comment: SNAP support is vital to our range of over 300 feeding programs. Help for disabled, and legal immigrants needed food is also vital. Please do what you can to sustain these programs.

COMMENT OF ANTHONY HALL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:22 p.m.
City, State: Topanga, CA
Comment: Energy is not the only renewable resource we must pay attention to. We must learn to farm sustainably, not only for those of us who can afford organic, non-GMO food but also for those to whom these options are not yet available. GMO crops must be stopped. Permanently. We must learn to farm sensibly or we are all going to perish.

COMMENT OF CAMILLE HALL

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 2:01 p.m.
City, State: Corvallis, OR
Occupation: Teacher
Comment: The family farm is a dying breed in America. Current government policies support corporate agriculture with subsidies and preferential tax codes. It is time to give equal footing to the family farm and stop spending billions of taxpayer dollars on corporate tax credits and exemptions.

COMMENT OF DENNY HALL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:47 p.m.
City, State: Haleyville, AL
Occupation: Disabled
Comment: I respectfully remind you that being a good steward of the food and Earth falls in the guidelines of your job description. Don't let us down. We need a better bill. Thank You and God Bless you.

COMMENT OF DR. JOHN R. HALL

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 4:17 p.m.
City, State: Lansing, MI
Occupation: College Instructor
Comment: We should be extending the "helping net" rather than pusillanimously retracting it. Are we at core a greedy and selfish nation? I like to think there is some generosity of spirit remaining in the U.S. Show it.
 DR. JOHN R. HALL

COMMENT OF MARIANNE HALL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:49 p.m.
City, State: Eugene, OR
Occupation: Home Gardener and Farmers' Market Shopper
Comment: Time for absolutely No Subsidies for Agriculture. Farm bill for farmers to have Equality of benefits and market accessibility. Organic, non-toxic, and healthful is what the people want, so make it possible for consumers to make the choice in direct markets. Choice by buying in the marketplace; Not by the Lobbyists. No more GMO or shoddy inspected meats, *etc.*, going to market and Label, label, label. No more hidden ingredients. Make all accountable for what is in their food products.

COMMENT OF MICHELE HALL

Date Submitted: Sunday, April 29, 2012, 11:54 a.m.
City, State: Bolingbrook, IL
Occupation: Customer Service Rep.
Comment: I work a full time job and still am unable to afford food, medical, and other minimum life necessities. I'm forced to decide each month whether to pay a doctor bill, a utility bill, or late fees on rent in order to feed my son and myself.

And yet, we don't qualify for food stamp benefits because I earn \$5 more than state qualifiers for benefits. My concern is that if my small family is on the edge then certainly there are so many more like us and even more folks who are less fortunate and unable to provide meals for their families as well. I, personally, know working families in shelters and living in their cars who simply cannot afford to eat, much less eat nutritious meals! Please, don't let Americans go hungry! In America there should not be a family in any community going to "bed" hungry every day God sends! I urge you to support initiatives that will make a way for American families to worry less about their next meal! I wonder if the shoe where on the other foot, would policymakers allow their own families to suffer? I love this country but I cringe each time I look at my son and wonder is today the day we don't eat? Will my neighbors go hungry? I'm ashamed that this is something that Americans must face daily. Don't be ashamed, help your countrymen and do something about it! God Bless America and her less fortunate people!

COMMENT OF PAMELA HALL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:58 p.m.

City, State: New York, NY

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Please do everything that you can to insure that consumers have ready access to all the ingredients and types of alien and composed food as they unsuspectingly purchase it. Do not allow huge businesses to dictate to our farmers and keep them from using the seed that they always have used. Mass production is important but these other issues are important too. I want to know what it is that I am eating. I want to be sure that I am not going to get sick from it or that inhumane means have been used to produce it or that animals up to their knees in excrement are allowed to be called food. Thank you.

COMMENT OF SARAH HALL

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 10:20 p.m.

City, State: Burbank, CA

Occupation: Writer

Comment: Small organic farmers and ranchers need to be supported, rather than punished with regulations that require them to spend money they cannot afford to spend. Organic farming is an essential part of a healthy America.

COMMENT OF SHANNON HALLETT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:46 p.m.

City, State: Yakima, WA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: No one should go hungry in this affluent Nation . . . there is no excuse and your positions on aid to the elderly and children is shameful and does not represent people with a heart and soul!

COMMENT OF NANCY HAMER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:07 p.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Social Work

Comment: It is important that local small farms be encouraged in order to develop community resources and also to allow for greater availability of organic and wholesome food that is not GM. I am opposed to large corporations such as Monsanto controlling agriculture, here in the U.S. and in other countries such as Africa. If we start to change our practices now, it will benefit everyone in the future.

JOINT COMMENT OF JANET AND GEOFFREY HAMILL

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 16, 2012 9:55 p.m.

City, State: St. Louis, MO

Occupation: Occupational Therapist, Physician

Comment: Hi Rep Carnahan: We believe that any farm subsidies should be tied to conservation as they were in the past. We are losing soil due to erosion and harmful farming practices here in Missouri, and we need incentives for farmers to

preserve our land. We also believe that family farmers should be given more support than the large agribusinesses. Local production must be preserved.

Sincerely,

JANET and GEOFFREY HAMILL.

COMMENT OF BRUCE HAMILTON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:57 p.m.

City, State: Salt Lake City, UT

Occupation: Retired Computer System Administrator

Comment: Re: the 2012 farm bill: Please

- end farm subsidies
- support sustainable organic farming
- stop pollution from CAFOs
- support small family farms and place severe limits on any support for big agriculture

COMMENT OF KERRI HAMILTON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:15 p.m.

City, State: San Jose, CA

Occupation: Community Advocate

Comment: So many critical issues tie to our Federal farm bill, including health care inflation. Please stop subsidizing big agriculture and disease! We don't need more high fructose corn syrup laden products to drive obesity, gluten laden wheat to promote disease, and GMO's. Please help the small/organic farmers who toil to promote health and care about quality food.

COMMENT OF LAURA HAMILTON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:07 a.m.

City, State: Augusta, ME

Occupation: Yoga Teacher

Comment: No GMOs—Stop big farming. **Leave Our Seeds Alone!** This is an absolute disgrace what you have done to farms in this country. Please do everything to bring back small local farms. No more farm subsidies. Leave us alone and let us produce our own food.

COMMENTS OF TRICIA HAMILTON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 9:49 a.m.

City, State: Shirley, NY

Occupation: Homemaker, Caregiver

Comment: There should be no reason for hunger in a country which throws tons & tons of leftovers in the garbage.

Date Submitted: May 18, 2012 12:23 p.m.

Comment: Shame on us if we have no control over, what the meat industry is doing now & forever. We are the consumers, we have the right to see inside their dark doors.

COMMENT OF WILLIAM HAMILTON

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 8:11 a.m.

City, State: Cecilia, KY

Occupation: Self-Employed Truck Driver

Comment: More often than not Corporate Agriculture is rewarded for practices that are detrimental to the to the small farmer and at odds with the principles of the country at large. More consideration needs to be given to the small producers, these are the ones who will keep the people fed and clothed in all times, good and bad not any large corporation.

COMMENT OF DEBORAH HAMLIN

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 9:31 p.m.

City, State: Falls Church, VA

Occupation: Executive Director, Irrigation Association

Comment:

2012 Farm Bill Development

The pending work in developing the next iteration of the farm bill will be pivotal to the future of U.S. agriculture well beyond the 5 year lifespan of the legislation. We at the Irrigation Association understand and appreciate the daunting task you have ahead of you of not only developing sound policies to keep America at the forefront of agricultural production, but also doing so in the midst of a financial climate this nation has not seen for generations. However, we believe that this Congress, with your leadership and partnership with the U.S. Senate and the Administration, can develop a strong farm bill that is effective, efficient and fiscally responsible. On behalf of the Irrigation Association, we urge you to consider the recommendations set forth in these comments to help you achieve this goal.

First, the Irrigation Association is a trade association representing approximately 1,800 member companies in the irrigation industry. Our members include irrigation product manufacturers, dealers, distributors, consultants, contractors and end users in the agricultural and landscape industries. The mission of the Irrigation Association is to promote efficient irrigation technologies, products and services, and our expertise lies in ensuring every drop of water applied to a crop is done so in an efficient manner, thus leading to more agricultural output per unit of input. Our members not only manufacture and sell efficient irrigation products and technologies to agricultural producers, we also work with the producer on the design, use, implementation and maintenance of their irrigation systems and technologies to ensure maximum efficiency of the water used.

According to the Soil and Water Resources Conservation Act of 2011 Appraisal conducted by the USDA, farms with irrigated crops produced 40 percent of the value of agricultural products sold in 2007, and farms with at least some irrigation were larger than the average farm and had annual sales more than four times higher than their dryland counterparts. As you know, irrigated agriculture is crucial to overall U.S. agricultural production and essential as our nation's population continues to increase. In fact, according to the USAID, water availability threatens to reduce global food supply by more than 10 percent within the next 25 years. If we are to meet the demand of our nation's future generations with a safe and reliable food supply, while remaining productive and competitive on a global scale, the next farm bill must recognize the importance of not only using water efficiently, but also the importance of producing more with the resources that are available now.

The Conservation Title

Like Congress, agricultural production needs to achieve more with the resources provided. The irrigation industry understands the need for the balance between environmental performance and agricultural productivity. For this reason, the Irrigation Association strongly believes in the importance of the conservation programs administered by the NRCS, specifically the EQIP program. Over the years, EQIP has been a key component to not only assist agricultural producers with incentivizing environmentally sound on-farm practices; it has also made U.S. agriculture more productive and competitive globally. As Congress considers changes to the existing EQIP program, the Irrigation Association urges the following:

- Title II programs, including EQIP, should receive sufficient funding, so that on-farm environmental performance goals of the program are achieved;
- Conservation Title programs should be streamlined in a way that does not lessen funding opportunities for agricultural producers, but rather increases opportunities, due to overhead reduction, elimination of redundancies, *etc.*;
- Program delivery should be improved with the continuation of the NRCS's "Conservation Delivery Streamlining Initiative," along with the increased use and support of third-party Technical Service Providers (TSPs) to assist agricultural producers with their conservation plans, ensuring sound decisions for environmental and production performance;
- The EQIP program should expand the priority qualification of irrigation efficiency-related projects;
- The majority of project funding decisions and prioritization should be made at the state level; providing the local, regional and state land managers the ability to match public investments in environmental performance in that state with the type of agricultural production (livestock, specialty, commodity, *etc.*) and watershed enhancement goals.

Technical Service Providers

As we stated earlier, the Irrigation Association continues to be a strong supporter of NRCS and the EQIP program. Through a signed memorandum of understanding with the NRCS, the Irrigation Association's Certified Irrigation Designer (CID) for

agriculture and the Certified Agricultural Irrigation Specialist (CAIS) are recognized by the NRCS. This recognition affords those professionals who hold an agricultural CID and/or CAIS certification the opportunity to become an NRCS Technical Service Provider. As you look into opportunities to promote jobs and third-party expertise in this farm bill, the Technical Service Provider program promotes private job opportunities through consulting agricultural producers on their conservation plans. This program is very positive for the irrigation industry and for on-farm production as producers look to increase yields through applying irrigation water more efficiently. If you'd like more information about IA's certifications and opportunities to promote these professionals through conservation programs, please visit <http://www.irrigation.org/certification/>.

Funding of EQIP Projects

The Irrigation Association recognizes that the improvement of environmental performance of on-farm operations is the goal of the EQIP program. However, we urge Congress to consider expanding the priority funding opportunities associated with irrigation improvements beyond achieving a "net savings of water." As we mentioned earlier, the Irrigation Association supports funding decisions and priorities being made at the local level, recognizing the differing needs in agricultural production in California *versus* Colorado *versus* Florida, for example. We believe that the priority funding of irrigation-related EQIP on-farm projects should expand to also include

- improving irrigation distribution uniformity; and
- reduce impairment of water quality through irrigation efficiencies.

Congress must act to ensure that programmatic policies contained within EQIP and other conservation programs recognize the balance between environmental and agricultural performance. We believe that the addition of these two funding opportunities associated with irrigation efficiencies are a step in the right direction.

Recommendations to Improve AWEP

The Irrigation Association joins groups such as the Family Farm Alliance in calling for improvements to the NRCS's Agricultural Water Enhancement Program (AWEP). As FFA's President Patrick O'Toole stated in his April 26, 2012, testimony before the Subcommittee on Conservation, Energy, and Forestry, "the original AWEP proposal was solid from a conceptual standpoint, but by the time the concept made it through the legislative and administrative process, the program that is now in place is not being implemented in a manner consistent with the original vision. In Arizona, for example, state NRCS local working groups came up with a list of priorities and resource concerns at the request of NRCS headquarters in Washington, D.C. While irrigation efficiency was one of the highest priorities listed, local working groups noted that AWEP simply was not being applied in a way that could maximize its potential benefits. Rather than providing funds directly to irrigation districts, the districts instead have been put in situation where they essentially pass the phone number of the local NRCS office on to the individual landowner, and NRCS takes over from there. In essence, this AWEP has simply become an expansion of the existing EQIP program, which was definitely not the intent when this concept was crafted 4 years ago."

The IA joins the FFA in calling for a more streamlined approach to AWEP that places emphasis on helping farmers and ranchers improve water conservation, management, reuse and efficiency while keeping their operations viable, rather than eliminating irrigated agricultural lands altogether at a time when worldwide demand for food is growing every day.

We must create opportunities within the new farm bill to further improve upon AWEP's initial concept, such as:

- Allowing AWEP to provide direct payments to irrigation districts to work directly with their landowner member farmers on NRCS-approved coordinated water conservation and management projects. Administrative expenses for such partners should be allowed, but capped;
- Irrigation districts and/or landowners should be allowed to implement water conservation or water quality projects outside of the normal projects funded under the EQIP program, given that they can show improvements to either water quantity or quality;
- Irrigation districts or similar entities should be allowed to be the basis for "pooling" arrangements, where the benefits of a project which affects multiple landowners is funded by "pooling" their individual AWEP interests into a larger, coordinated project;

- Direction must be provided to improve how NRCS program administrators deliver timely and accurate information, provide reliable and transparent processes, and set firm deadlines;
- Administrative costs associated with any work performed by the NRCS should be capped at a reasonable level;
- The role of the Bureau of Reclamation in coordinating with NRCS in the implementation of this program in Western states must be well defined, and should complement the collaborative philosophy (between the Departments of Agriculture and Interior) embedded in the “Bridging the Headgates” initiative endorsed by both the Bush and Clinton Administrations;
- The program should provide assurances that the intent is not to reallocate water away from agriculture, but to help stretch limited water supplies for future regional beneficial use. We do not believe AWEP funds should be used to retire farmland or convert irrigated ground to dryland crops. It must also recognize the traditional deference of Federal agencies to state water laws and allocation systems;
- The money obligated for these programs in the farm bill needs to be “no year” money, so that it doesn’t have to all be obligated in the first year, with nothing left in later years. This has proven to be real hindrance for projects that take more than 1 year to build. Water managers have also noticed that the NRCS funding levels fluctuate, and so they are never sure what level of funding their farmers will receive. During the application process to secure funding, NRCS should agree how much a district is going to receive and ensure this money will be there. To minimize administrative complications, sharing some of the control over funds with the partnering irrigation districts would simplify the responsibilities of the NRCS. Districts could be held accountable through audits and reports delivered to the NRCS.

Regulation Uncertainty

As you are well aware, U.S. agricultural producers and suppliers are currently facing regulation uncertainty. Whether those regulations deal with water availability, water quality or other on-farm practices, we at the Irrigation Association believe that mutual environmental and agricultural productivity goals can be achieved through voluntary programs, such as EQIP, much more efficiently than productivity-hindering regulations. For this reason, the Irrigation Association has joined the Western Agriculture and Conservation Coalition, as a steering committee member and supports all of the recommendations from that coalition. We are excited to partner with Trout Unlimited, Family Farm Alliance, The Nature Conservancy, Public Lands Council, Environmental Defense Fund, California Farm Bureau, Arizona Public Lands Council and the Wyoming Stock Growers Association, as we promote common environmental goals, while recognizing the need for a globally competitive U.S. agricultural sector.

Pass a Farm Bill This Year

Finally, we appreciate all you are doing to advance a farm bill reauthorization this year. This farm bill is among the most important pieces of legislation the U.S. Congress will consider in 2012 and we urge you to continue your work to pass a bill before the current authorization expires. Failure to pass a bill, or “settling” for a temporary extension, will create tremendous uncertainty throughout the U.S. agricultural community and will sharply decrease the positive opportunities that a farm bill passed this year has to offer this year.

Thank you for your time and consideration. We look forward to working with you as your 2012 Farm Bill development continues. If you have any questions regarding these recommendations or for further information regarding our partnership with NRCS and our working with agricultural producers to promote efficient irrigation, please contact John Farner, IA’s Government Affairs Director, at [Redacted] or [Redacted].

COMMENT OF THOMAS HAMLIN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:08 p.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Web Developer and Designer

Comment: A good friend of mine is a farmer in Ashland, OR, where he is struggling to make a living as a CSA and farmer’s market producer. He raises a diverse crop of organics, builds resilient natural systems based on permaculture, and educates his local high school students about farming.

Why should he receive less government assistance than industrial-scale commodity farmers who rely on unsustainable mono-crops, pesticides, herbicides, and nonrenewable energy to produce food that is less nutritious?

I support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

COMMENT OF LOUISE HAMM

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:00 p.m.

City, State: Paso Robles, CA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Livestock

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: As many small farmers such as myself are trying to move away from chemical farming, cutting the organic research is a mistake. We need our organic farms and farmers. It is the way of the future for our country, our environment, and our planet.

COMMENT OF TAMI HAMMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:32 p.m.

City, State: Chino Hills, CA

Occupation: Office Manager

Comment: I am a cancer survivor and I know the importance of what we put in our bodies and how it relates to our health. I know we have a healthcare problem. Prevention is the key! I can't afford many luxuries in life please don't take away good healthy food too! I will not buy food with fillers, GMOs, pesticides, *etc.* I hope you do the right thing. Thank you for listening.

A concerned American.

COMMENT OF SALLY HAMMERMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:36 p.m.

City, State: West Chester, PA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Field Crops

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: We are a small, organic, spray-free community building farm whose members share in our produce and our work. We are concerned farmers. Our land and those of us who live on it and from it all work reciprocally to maintain our health and happiness. Governmental representatives should also see their work as farmers who maintain a healthy landscape that feeds them and their supporters. Otherwise the soil from which we farmers gain our livelihood will deteriorate and no longer sustain.

COMMENT OF ROSS HAMMERSLEY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:03 p.m.

City, State: Traverse City, MI

Occupation: Land Use, Agriculture & Environmental Law Attorney

Comment: Over the past 40 years a new breed of farmer has developed highly sophisticated ways of farming with nature that promote soil health, higher nutrient value of food and increased farm income.

In order to meet the serious challenges of the 21st century, U.S. agricultural policy in the farm bill must shift from its focus of creating cheap commodities and artificially propping up income for farmers, toward implementing best agricultural practices for sustainable and organic production methods.

I support:

- (1) the full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286);

- (2) Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs;
- (3) The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236); and
- (4) Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

COMMENT OF HOLLY HAMPTON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:14 p.m.

City, State: San Francisco, CA

Comment: Please support funding for organic food and farming research. This is the only sensible way to ensure that our nation's food supply is not completely overtaken by Big Agriculture's GMO practices. All citizens of this country deserve to have their food truly safe and free from any monopoly that endangers our health through the use of dangerous pesticides and gene manipulation. Don't mess with Mother Nature—respect her!

Thank you for reading this.

JOINT COMMENT OF STEVE & MARY HAMPTON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 9:06 p.m.

City, State: Seminole, FL

Occupation: Retired Educator & Retired Wall Street Trader

Comment: We are writing on May 11, 2012, to express our interest in the creation of a wonderful Food and Farm Bill. We believe this Bill would create jobs and spur economic growth. We believe this Bill would make healthy food widely available to **All** Americans, including school children. We believe this Bill would help protect our natural resources. We need to protect the **Conservation Stewardship Program** from unfair funding cuts. Our farmers need conservation programs to conserve soil for future generations. We also need habitat to be created/preserved for wildlife.

We believe the Food and Farm Bill represents an investment in the next generation of farmers and ranchers. We believe that \$25 million per year needs to be set up in mandatory funding for the **Beginning Farmer & Rancher Development Program**. We, obviously, need a national strategy and commitment to support beginning farmers and ranchers who are entering agricultural careers.

Finally, the Food and Farm Bill will serve to drive innovation for tomorrow's farmers and food entrepreneurs. The **Organic Agricultural Research & Extension Initiative** needs to be funded at \$30 million/year in mandatory funding. Investing in agricultural research is vital to continued productivity and innovation in growing and diverse sectors of American agriculture, such as organic agriculture.

We look forward to hearing that the U.S. Congress will take these recommended actions to create the 2012 Farm & Food Bill.

With best regards,

STEVE & MARY HAMPTON.

COMMENT OF JUDITH HANCE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:41 p.m.

City, State: Seattle, WA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Food, its production and safety in growing and in eating, is one of the most important things in our lives. Government is the only agency that can insure the current and future safety of our food supply. In addition, we must encourage young people to be involved in the agricultural community.

To cut back funding in this area is dangerous.

If you have children, grandchildren, or know any children, or even care at all about the health of all our citizens, please be aware of the risks to our current and future welfare as a nation by cutting back on funding in this vital area.

COMMENTS OF JUDITH HAND

Date Submitted: Friday, April 27, 2012, 12:21 p.m.

City, State: Daytona Beach, FL

Occupation: Retired, Disabled

Comment: I worked all of my life, many years in social service, until my disability prevented continuance. I live in an area that is well below the poverty level

and am personally grateful that my church has included a food pantry in their ministries. I think this is the 'poorest' I've ever been. This area needs help and supporting our agricultural resources and food delivery is essential. I've never seen so many homeless as I have since living both on the mainland and even beachside of Daytona Beach, FL. Please support our producers, pave the way for advocates and help those in the glut of low (and no-, many through no fault of their own) in our area. Thank you!

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 12, 2012, 1:36 p.m. Daytona Beach FL

Comment: At 54 years of age, and no longer working due to unexpected disability, I have more time than some to consider issues such as you examine and work with daily. Years ago, I attended town meetings in North Dakota and was struck by the hardships on family farms because of the preferences granted large farms. While still working in and for the State of Florida, I encountered a client whose work entailed gathering ferns in western Volusia County and saw the conditions that he and others faced. While on a committee that joined Flagler and Volusia counties, I learned of the outbreak of (untreated and unaddressed) ill health including AIDS on the farms along Rte. 100 from Bunnell to St. John's county. I've lived in Florida almost 25 years and have seen and lived near more poor people than in my 29 years prior. I've learned about and have gratefully benefitted from a couple of food banks in this area. We have a big problem here and one that is not being addressed. We need to focus on our poor, on those who have no access to nutrition and the important agricultural products that we grow right here in our State. We must stop relying on making money from other States when ours needs our agricultural products so desperately. When I was doing care giving for seniors, granted many had nutritive diets because they had the funds (or they wouldn't have been able to afford the care giving). Since then, I've met many, many seniors without such wealth who are literally living hand-to-mouth. We cannot continue to act as though these folks are few and far between, because they are NOT. It is not something we want to face, but we must. As a Democrat, I don't know how Republicans address these problems. But it is our reality in Congressional District 24. I've never seen so many homeless. It is usually no fault of theirs—we must change that point of view! There are many who don't have families to assist them, who have lost jobs due to the economy not supporting them (and employers hiding behind the "Right To Work State" ethic don't help), who have mental illness that isn't addressed and medicated . . . how do we help our citizens if we continue to yell "small government!" and just swipe them aside as unfortunates?! They are our neighbors, our friends, our former coworkers. How can we sit on our committees without taking seriously the desperate needs of those around us? Thank you!

COMMENT OF NEAL HANDLY

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 2:54 p.m.

City, State: Furnace, PA

Comment: I am concerned that the support for industrial level farming is far too great. Subsidies for pricing of regular commodity products need to be phased out. At the same time, the government does have a role in making sure that choice is possible. Organic farms need to find markets as well, but should not be inhibited by laws that are designed for the large commodity farming industry.

Labeling is important—consumers should know what they are buying so that they can approach the market with knowledge.

Thank you.

COMMENTS OF HELEN HANNA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012 10:40 a.m.

City, State: Sacramento, CA

Occupation: Retired Educator

Comment: We need a farm bill that encourages small family farms and that protects our natural resources. Please protect the Conservation Stewardship Program from unfair funding cuts, and improve it by ranking applications solely on their conservation benefits. Farmers count on this and other conservation programs to conserve soil for future generations, keep water and air clean, and create habitat for wildlife.

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:50 p.m.

Comment: It is time for a farm bill that recognizes the needs of small family farmers who grow organic produce and take care of the soil in harmony with nature, instead of subsidizing and rewarding huge monocultures dependent upon the chemicals that are polluting our water and soil and even killing the bees on which our

survival eventually depends. Our government should be smarter about this, starting now.

COMMENT OF AVERY HANNEKEN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 7:20 a.m.

City, State: Holland, MI

Occupation: Professional Painter

Comment: Please continue to support local farmers and local communities raise healthy food for people who want to make that choice. Besides aiding the farmers, keeping the monetary aspect in town, providing healthy food choices for families, it is just the right thing to do. Can't we please just make the right choice, the obvious choice for ourselves. Raising organic/healthy food and choosing what goes in our bodies is a freedom that should always be able to be explored. Please for my family and many more, help us out and support simple/healthy living. It just seems instinctively right.

COMMENT OF TRACY HANNEMANN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:10 p.m.

City, State: Milwaukee, WI

Occupation: Singer

Comment: I come from a long line of farmers, at least four generations. I also work for produce once a week on a farm in the Milwaukee area. Two of my brothers are currently farming. Although they are not organic farms, they would like to go in that direction, but the transition is so hard to do and expensive. They don't like having to use Monsanto based seed or fertilizer either. I want to see support of those farmers as well that decide to not only provide organic produce for others, but in turn help the environment by making a strong and difficult choice to farm organically. Many people care about this and want to go this route, but it seems the powers that be would rather not have that happen. Start support for natural, chemical free farming, farmers and people instead of large corporations whose main interest is in profit at the cost of people's health and this Earth.

COMMENT OF MARGARET HANNIGAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:18 p.m.

City, State: Milford, MA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I am concerned that many large agricultural companies are ruining this country's soil and adversely affecting the health of U.S. citizens with their unchecked use of toxic chemicals, unneeded use of antibiotics and failure to utilize sound conservation methods. If this farm bill is to serve all Americans, it should include monies for conservation and sustainable agricultural methods.

COMMENT OF JOYCE HANNUM

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:01 p.m.

City, State: Union, WA

Occupation: Whole Foods Cook

Comment: PLEASE, no more entitlements for corporate agribusiness! Please limit crop insurance subsidies. I **Support** small organic sustainable farms. Our **Soil Is More Than Just Dirt!** It is a living microcosm upon which our entire life depends. We **Must** protect it.

COMMENT OF ROBERT HANSARD

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 06, 2012, 7:35 p.m.

City, State: Palm Bay, FL

Occupation: C.N.A.

Comment: I think we should try getting them on more sustainable plant based diets, they'll be healthier for it. We shouldn't be feeding anyone the factory farmed diseased tortured animals anymore, it's unsustainable and it's contaminating all the land and waterways, and is the reason we have so many starving people. There are about 7 billion human beings on the planet, and around 65 billion land animals are being raised each year worldwide for human consumption. that's almost 100 times more enslaved animals than humans covering 1/3 of the Earth's land surface: 1 lb of beef cost over 5.200 gallons of water.

COMMENT OF AMY HANSEN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:28 p.m.

City, State: Far Hills, NJ

Occupation: Policy Analyst, New Jersey Conservation Foundation

Comment: Dear Congressman Frelinghuysen and Members of the House Committee on Agriculture:

New Jersey Conservation Foundation is a 50 year old statewide conservation organization. We have used funding from the Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program (FRPP) to help protect thousands of acres of New Jersey farmland. Thank you for considering our comments on the 2012 Farm Bill.

We urge you to support the Senate funding levels for Agricultural Land Easements, which include the FRPP easements. These easements advance the proven model of leveraging Federal funds through local partners to secure perpetual conservation easements that help keep farm and ranch lands in production, while conserving important natural resources.

In addition to fully funding conservation easement programs, we urge you to retain the existing FRPP fund-match formula to encourage bargain sales and allow waivers of the match requirements for strategic projects.

It is also important to restore language in the easement program clarifying that the Federal government is not acquiring a real property interest and has only a "contingent right of enforcement," should the cooperating entity fail to enforce its easement.

We also respectfully ask you to make this farm bill one that creates jobs and spurs economic growth by supporting programs like the Value-Added Producer Grants Program at a guaranteed level of \$30 million of mandatory funding per year. VAPG provides seed money to help farmers innovate in agriculture and create jobs while securing a sustainable path to market-based farm profitability.

America needs a farm bill that makes healthy food widely available to all Americans—including schoolchildren! We must provide flexibility for states to use existing food procurement programs to purchase fresh, healthy food from local farmers and ranchers.

It is so important that the 2012 Farm Bill strongly protects our natural resources. Please fully fund the Conservation Stewardship Program and improve it by ranking applications solely on their conservation benefits. Farmers count on CSP and other conservation programs to conserve soil for future generations, keep water and air clean, and create habitat for wildlife—all while farming profitably.

Our country needs a farm bill that invests in the next generation of farmers and ranchers—we urge you to guarantee \$25 million per year in mandatory funding for the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program. We need a national strategy and commitment to support beginning farmer and ranchers entering agriculture. With an aging farm population, now is the time to invest in the future of American agriculture by nurturing new sustainable agriculture start-ups.

Please make the 2012 Farm Bill help drive innovation for tomorrow's farmers and food entrepreneurs by funding the Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative at \$30 million per year in mandatory funding. Investment in agricultural research is vital to continued productivity and innovation in growing and diverse sectors of American agriculture, such as organic agriculture.

Thank you very much for providing an opportunity to comment on this very important issue.

Sincerely,

AMY HANSEN,
Policy Analyst
 New Jersey Conservation Foundation,
 [Redacted],
 Far Hills NJ.

COMMENT OF JAN HANSEN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 11:44 a.m.

City, State: Somerset, CA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Switch the focus from big corporate agribusiness to small, local farmers. Use more funds for sustainable, organic farming that protects our valuable water systems from run-off.

COMMENT OF JEREMY A. HANSEN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:01 p.m.

City, State: Montpelier, VT

Occupation: Professor

Comment: While I am not a producer of food for sale, I do grow some of my own organic vegetables and fruit and raise chickens for organic eggs.

It is unfortunate that it has been the position of the U.S. Government to subsidize large agribusinesses and stand idly by while small producers are driven away by the virtual monopolies the large producers are given.

It is doubly unfortunate that more resources have not been provided for research in sustainable and organic agriculture. By supporting the creation of a decentralized food production system where every American citizen is given the opportunity to participate, we can lead the U.S. into a future where food production continues to be a robust and useful portion of our economy.

As a final note, I wholeheartedly endorse the improvement of food labeling, particularly in terms of GMO ingredients and detected pesticide levels.

Thank you for your consideration!

PROF. JEREMY A. HANSEN.

 JOINT COMMENT OF JERRY AND JOYCE HANSEN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:38 p.m.

City, State: Ferryville, WI

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Dairy, Field Crops, Livestock

Size: 50–150 acres

Comment: By failing to place limitations on crop insurance subsidies and to re-attach soil erosion and wetland conservation requirements to crop insurance programs, the Committee has failed to do the full reform that is needed.

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Republicans in the House Agricultural Committee have already “voted to slash \$33 billion from the food stamp program while leaving farm subsidies unscathed. This is unconscionable in our present economy. Please consider all our citizens when you vote, not the entitled few agribusinesses.”

 COMMENT OF MATTHEW HANSEN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:31 p.m.

City, State: Kentfield, CA

Occupation: Auto Mechanic

Comment: We must break the stranglehold of agribusiness giants like Monsanto that could not care less about what havoc their practices wreak on the planet or the food chain, nor what destruction they bring to the small family and sustenance farmers. I don't want to consume the garbage they produce or have it affect what I choose to put on my family's table.

Thank you.

 COMMENT OF MITCH HANSEN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:59 a.m.

City, State: Nashville, TN

Occupation: Lighting Director

Comment: As a consumer of agriculture, I'm very concerned about the processes and method by which my food is produced. We need strict labeling on our food supply, so consumers can make informed choices as to what they put into their bodies. This is not a political agenda; it falls much closer to an economic demand. This is what the market is asking for, we should drive that economic opportunity by giving it to them.

COMMENT OF YVONNE HANSEN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 10:34 a.m.

City, State: Austin, TX

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Remove any and all barriers to growing food locally and organically, and to educating youth in all phases of food, including strategies to ensure food security.

Fund research that examines differences in level of health (absence of temporary or chronic diseases) between individuals who eat industrial, mass produced foods and organic or pesticide and GMO free food. Then publish results. Determine what essential components found in whole foods and not found in processed, industrial foods that lead to a sense of satisfaction and 'I'm full' that says stop eating more food. What component is removed that triggers the sense of fullness and satisfaction?

COMMENT OF ANNE HANSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:30 p.m.

City, State: Florida, NY

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I have a little garden. I shop at health food stores and farmer's markets. We create our meals from scratch. I seek organic produce and meat in the supermarket. We keep chickens that lay eggs. In other words, I try to avoid all the additives in the so-called normal food supply.

Surely you care about the health of the nation more than the bottom line of the big farms whose practices pollute air and water and endanger citizens. All the substances eaten and breathed and drunk add up.

COMMENT OF LAURIE HANSON

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 1:36 p.m.

City, State: Chicago, IL

Occupation: Flight Attendant

Comment: Farm policy should be simple and straight forward. No GMOs and no pesticides! Have you done your research? The results are already in. Hormonal disruption and DNA mutation related cancers in both men and women exposed to GMO's and pesticides. Even in "limited" usage, the "drifting" of seed and pesticides into organic fields and water ways will yield the same results. There are sound reasons why the EU countries ban the use of these. We must stand firm. Our health and the health of our Earth, and the health of our future generations are at stake. There are no short term economic benefits worth such dyer long-term consequences. Please stand firm and only support a farm bill that will sustain the future health of the farm, the farmer, the Earth, and it's populace without any GMOs and pesticides. Thank you.

COMMENT OF MELISSA HANSON

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 11:15 p.m.

City, State: Atascadero, CA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Dear Chairman Lucas,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony to the House Committee on Agriculture on the next farm bill. My district representative is being copied on this testimony. I am a young farmer and I'd like to share my support for programs that help the next generation of growers build strong farm businesses. As it's estimated that 125,000 farmers will retire in the next 5 years, it's absolutely critical that farm bill programs help citizens get started in this challenging field. I want my children and their children to be able to eat fresh, wholesome, local food, and we need an army of farmers to make that possible. Our greatest challenge as beginning farmers is access to land and capital. It is nearly impossible today for a young farmer to access the land and tools they need to start a successful farm. Through funding the BFRDA and the other programs mentioned below, beginning farmers may actually have a fighting chance of having a financially sustainable business which provides them with a dignified livelihood as well as food and jobs for their community. The systems currently in place tend to favor large, industrial agriculture that is poi-

soning our land and communities. If we want our society to thrive, we need to realign our focus onto small, sustainable farms, and support the farmers who are working on them. I ask that the Committee endorse all of the provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236), including:

- Mandatory funding for Individual Development Accounts at \$5 million per year. This program helps new farmers raise capital to start farm businesses and is tested and proven by organizations like Practical Farmers of Iowa and the California Farmlink.
- Mandatory funding for the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program at \$25 million a year. This program funds essential education for new farmers around the country.
- Authorize a new microloan program, to enable young and beginning farmers to better access FSA loan programs.
- Revise FSA rules to make loan programs more accessible to more young and beginning farmers.
- Reaffirm the existing cost share differential for BFRs within EQIP. Also, reaffirm the advance payment option allowing beginning and socially disadvantaged producers to receive an advance payment for the project's costs for purchasing materials or contracting services, but increase the limit on the advance payment from 30 percent to 50 percent of costs.
- Amend the Farm and Ranch Land Protection Program (FRPP) to make farm viability part of the purpose of the program and to give discretionary authority to the eligible entities that implement the program to give priority to easements with an option to purchase at the agricultural use value, deals that transfer the land to beginning and farmers and ranchers, applicants with farm succession plans, and other similar mechanisms to maintain the affordability of protected land.

These and other provisions within the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act will help new growers succeed and I urge you to include them in the next farm bill.

Sincerely,

MELISSA HANSON.

COMMENT OF MICHELLE HANSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:01 p.m.

City, State: Chatham, IL

Occupation: Student

Comment: I buy a lot of fresh vegetables from farmers. I have relatives that grow their own and sell the rest. This is much healthier than much of what we buy in the store. Please save our organic sources.

COMMENT OF PAUL R. HANSON

Date Submitted: Monday, May 14, 2012, 12:57 p.m.

City, State: Mayville, ND

Occupation: Locked Out Worker, presently a Senior Research Analyst at UND

Comment: Honorable House Members,

I am writing in regards to upcoming Sugar Act legislation.

It would be easy to assume a bias on this position considering I am a locked out worker from American Crystal's processing plant in Hillsboro North Dakota and as a beginning farmer was unable to compete with those that had privileged access to markets. However, there are compelling reasons to question the continuation of protectionist sugar legislation.

The domestic sugar industry is mature. Early legislation was enacted in part due to the extreme hard physical work necessary to produce and refine the crop. Now, modern and efficient machinery have made dramatic improvements. Except for the rare circumstances when wet fields make for harvest nightmares, the physical demands have been eliminated.

Since the earliest sugar legislation was enacted in the 1930's, the industry has experienced nearly uninterrupted protection. That means the industry has had ample time to prepare for self sustenance. It is difficult to identify other farm commodities that receive price protection with the dimensions of sugar; corn, soybeans, wheat and oil seeds have been competing in the world market for decades.

Sugar beet (and cane) processing schemes have been around for more than a century. The decades of protection have eliminated the need for more sophisticated

technologies. There hasn't been a sense of urgency. As a chemist in a laboratory, my job was to calculate daily factory through puts and efficiencies. A sugar beet factory works well for only about 75% of the time. Very little has been done in terms of processing improvements. Meanwhile, the public is forced to endure obnoxious odors, the effects of large amount of green house gas and mercury emissions, and wasteful use of precious energy.

It would seem that for the sake of survival, industries would find the need to become more efficient. Has the protectionist sugar legislation pre-empted the need for the domestic industry to modernize and become responsible citizens in the environment?

We must seriously consider the possibility of opening our doors to third world and developing countries. A chance to raise the standard of living for those in beleaguered countries is appealing. There is an adequate supply of sugar in Central America, the Caribbean nations and our friends in the European Union to supply our domestic needs.

Please consider these thoughts in your deliberations.

PAUL R. HANSON
[Redacted],
Mayville, ND,
[Redacted].

COMMENT OF ALLYN HARAD

Date Submitted: Wednesday, April 11, 2012, 8:12 p.m.

City, State: Albuquerque, NM

Occupation: School Counselor

Comment: We help feed more than 70 families per week who otherwise would go hungry over the weekends. The children especially are hungry and do not have control over their parents budget. It is essential that we have enough food to help our children grow and develop in good health.

COMMENT OF SABRINA HARDENBERGH

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 2:40 p.m.

City, State: Carbondale, IL

Occupation: Research (Health, Nutrition, Food Security)

Comment: A number of people where I live, including myself, are interested to see more support for organic, bio-ecological, regional and agroecology orientation in agriculture and food security processes. Please orient to this small-scale sector, and stop putting such major emphasis on "Big-Agriculture" and the corporate sector in our education, market, local to international development, and farm extension systems. The UN recently has noted the importance of agroecology, the likes of which fit what I witnessed during international conservation-development health/nutrition research in Madagascar 2 decades ago, as well as what people are concerned about here at home in southern Illinois. But our local institutions do not mirror this path, since they are more driven by corporate sponsorship and goals. Are we a land for the people, or the corporations (that make wild claims for personhood and their goals at the expense of public and ecological health, and even broader fiscal health)?

*<http://www.un.org/apps/news/story.asp?NewsID=37704&Cr=farming>.**

COMMENT OF SUSAN HARDER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:28 p.m.

City, State: Utica, OH

Occupation: Finance Manager

Comment: I am a Mother of 5 ages 27-8, Grandmother of 4 ages 7-1 with 2 on the way.

I am continually dismayed at how the American family is being bombarded with food that is not safe or nutritious. My husband and I have recently moved to a 23 acre property so that we can start generating our own food for us and our loved ones. Thank God that we are able to do this, but what about the families that can't do this? Where the husband and wife both work and don't have the time or knowledge to grow and preserve food? There is a sense of betrayal that is being felt by the food producers who would like to provide food that is healthy and the people who look at a 99 cent bottle of ketchup that has GMO corn syrup in it and then

*The information referred to is retained in Committee file.

look at the \$4.00 bottle of organic ketchup and has to choose the cheaper one because they can't afford the extra money. I have been that person and sometimes still am. I understand driving an older car, living in a smaller house or not having cable service to make money stretch, but we should not have to give up the health of our children or ourselves just to be able to afford to feed everyone. Our laws should make it easier for the organic and small farms to survive and more difficult for big ag to push laws and small farms out of business. If our politicians keep neglecting the desires of the people, either they won't be in office long term or they will lose the ability to choose healthy foods themselves. Haven't we given up enough freedoms? Please help the families and the small organic farms of Ohio.

COMMENT OF FRAN HARDY

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 11:55 a.m.

City, State: Lamy, NM

Occupation: Environmental Artist

Comment: Please write a bill that supports small family farms, organic producers and protects the public from GMO planting and the heavy use of pesticides they encourage. Don't create a bill that penalizes the small local family farm with undue burdens that are of no import to large scale agribusiness.

COMMENT OF INGRID HARDY

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 1:37 a.m.

City, State: Sedona, AZ

Occupation: Self-Employed

Comment: Dear Ones,

I support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

To me and many Americans, there is nothing more important than eating healthy, labeled, non-gmo, organic, food that is produced by farmers that are paid fair wages and that have uncontaminated fields from Monsanto.

If you want to eat what you think is "fine" for consumption, go ahead, yet I urge you, to make sure that every American can choose what they eat.

May I remind you that you are not above, but work for "The People". You are there to make sure to implement what the people want. This has shifted now to making sure that the corporations get what they want. I know they have strangely elevated themselves to being "people", yet they are nothing but a corporation that only answer to their shareholders. You are here to serve the interest of "The People".

Thank you for your time,

INGRID.

COMMENT OF DAN HARE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:15 p.m.

City, State: Longmont, CO

Occupation: Field Biologist

Comment: I would like to see a farm bill that supports sustainable agriculture like poly-culture or seasonal multi-cropping and permaculture. I would also like to see real support for Holistic Management practices on our prairies and rangelands founded by Savory Institute and Holistic Management International.

COMMENT OF JIM HARKNESS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:41 p.m.

City, State: Minneapolis, MN

Occupation: President, Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy

Comment: The Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy, a 25 year non profit organization based in Minnesota, asks that the House Agriculture Committee to include the following proposals in the farm bill:

- Re-couple conservation compliance with crop insurance. Unless Congress reconnects crop insurance subsidies to conservation compliance, a significant part of farmers' incentive to follow conservation plans will disappear this year if direct payments are removed.
- Full funding for the SNAP program that protects against hunger and improves nutrition by providing critical resources to vulnerable people. Cuts to SNAP will only make it harder for millions of families to afford a nutritious diet.
- Adopt the National Farmers Union proposal for a Market Driven Inventory System in the Commodity Title, that would both save money for taxpayers and help ensure a safety net for farmers.
- Better, more affordable crop insurance for organic farmers that helps reduce the increased financial risk of growing organic crops, which reduce the use of harmful chemicals that endanger human health and the environment.
- A House version of Senator Leahy's public health reporting amendment which would require USDA to report on the public health impacts of Federal agricultural policies.
- Full funding for the 2501 Outreach and Technical Assistance for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers Program. This program is a small effort to correct the policy barriers and institutional biases that farmers of color have faced for decades.
- Support the Packer Ban that prohibits a meatpacker to own, feed or control livestock intended for slaughter, and helps to ensure transparency and competition in the marketplace.
- Ensure and fully fund existing programs allow and encourage schools to choose fresh, healthy, local food for schoolchildren.
- Direct the USDA to create Whole Farm Diversified Risk Management Insurance products for diversified farming operations.
- Support the expansion of local and regional procurement of all international food aid. We strongly encourage you to maintain and expand authorities currently provided on a pilot basis under Sec. 3206 of the 2008 Farm Bill and to establish that initiative as a permanent program. Authorized funding should be set at no less than \$40 million annually.
- Follow the leadership of the Conrad-Lugar bill that creates mandatory funding programs for core programs, like the Biomass Crop Assistance Program, in the Energy Title of the farm bill.

We look forward to working with you and your staff as this process continues. Thank you for considering these proposals.

JIM HARKNESS,
President,
 Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy.

COMMENT OF LYNN HARMET

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:14 p.m.

City, State: Madison, WI

Occupation: Retired

Comment: It's time to end subsidies for corn, soy, and dairy. Please take the lead in making healthy plants affordable to all Americans. This will help us solve our huge public health problems as well as support smaller farmers. Thanks.

COMMENT OF KATHERINE HARPER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:36 p.m.

City, State: Playa del Rey, CA

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: Why would you want to allow big business to poison your nation? Do you want your own children, grandchildren and generations to eat toxic foods? Do you personally want to eat toxic GMO's and unsafe food for the rest of your own life. Think about the dire, long-range ramifications of supporting unsafe agri-business **Please!** Support a safe food bill and battle against GMOs. Thank you.

COMMENT OF TERRY HARR

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:13 p.m.

City, State: St. Louis, MO

Occupation: Construction

Comment: You are **Not** God, you have **No** right to tamper with our food, don't add nothing to our food, we don't want imported food, we don't want our food sprayed with chemicals that give us cancer, we need workers in the fields to grow our food, we want all organic food, quit killing us.

COMMENT OF CATHY HARRIS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:43 p.m.

City, State: Vancouver, WA

Occupation: Retired-Education

Comment: There are too many "auto-immune" diseases in our lives these days including my granddaughter's rheumatoid arthritis (age 2) along with increase in autism that can't be explained. It just makes sense that the food we fill our bodies with and the air we breathe has to be affecting all people. We must be protected from chemicals and pollution to be a healthy, intelligent nation.

COMMENT OF JACK H. HARRIS

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 10:46 a.m.

City, State: St. Louis, MO

Occupation: Retired

Comment: TO: House Agriculture Committee

As the House Agricultural Committee prepares your draft of the farm bill, I urge you to restore the link between taxpayer-supported subsidies for crop insurance and conservation compliance protections that will protect the nation's water and land.

This action is especially important as Congress considers eliminating direct payments, the major subsidy program that is linked to conservation compliance, and moving some of those funds to support increased subsidies for crop insurance, which lacks compliance requirements. Unless you help to reconnect crop insurance subsidies to conservation compliance, a significant part of farmers' incentive to follow conservation plans will vanish this year.

Farmers need crop insurance as part of their safety net and the public needs basic conservation practices on farms to make sure that quality farmland and water can support future generations as well as the current needs of our country. We cannot accept sacrificing long-term economic and environmental sustainability for short-sighted and short-term economic profits.

Connecting eligibility for crop insurance subsidies to conservation compliance is fiscally responsible and ensures public subsidies for farmers' insurance premium payments align with the public's interest in basic conservation of our soil and water. Missouri consistently ranks in the top five for soil loss, losing more than 5 tons per acre per year, so we have a lot to gain.

Sincerely,

JACK H. HARRIS.

COMMENT OF JOHN HARRIS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:11 p.m.

City, State: Lansing, MI

Occupation: Executive, Printing Company

Comment: Rather than cut 1¢ from food stamps, cut all subsidies to any farmer or farming corporation who exceeds \$250,000 in profit in the year or preceding year. End all farm insurance payments for any farming entity that exceeded \$500,000 in profits in any of the preceding 2 years. End all subsidies or insurance payments entirely for any reason for genetically modified (GM) crops which have never been tested to be safe for consumption over the long term (three generations) and which poison the soil with herbicides. If you must have subsidies for farmers make them widely available for organic farming which makes more nutritious food for Americans and enriches soils rather than depleting and poisoning the soil as GM crops do.

COMMENT OF KAREN HARRIS

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:07 p.m.

City, State: Fayetteville, AR

Occupation: Counselor/Educator

Comment: Food, farming, agriculture and being good stewards of the Earth we have been given are in my opinion the **Most** important topics facing our country. All other "issues" ripple outward from what we do with the basics.

I have worked in "at risk" school districts and seen generational poverty. There are so many people who would rejoice in the opportunity to work hard and eat healthy and live abundantly if they had the chance. Generational poverty kills those opportunities. There is poverty of even knowing what healthy food is or how we are connected to the Earth from which it comes. This is a large and complicated problem I realize, but change comes in very simple and small steps in the right direction. Those who want to work the Earth and put in the blood, sweat and tears that goes into it should be able to reap the rewards fully from their labor. The rest of us will reap the rewards as well. Please do everything you can to plant the seeds of change that will not only benefit this generation but all those who might follow.

COMMENT OF MELISSA HARRIS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:37 p.m.

City, State: Nashville, TN

Occupation: Consulting Company

Comment: Please support a fair and healthy farm bill.

Earlier this year more than 30,000 Food Democracy Now! members signed a letter calling for an Organic Farm Bill. The letter was an idealized version of what a growing number of Americans are beginning to realize: that U.S. food and agricultural policy must focus on adopting best agricultural practices that put the health of its citizens, the land and the livelihood of farmers and farmworkers over the interests of industrial agriculture lobbyists.

Unfortunately, we as a nation are not there yet. Not only are our politicians out of touch with the values of the American people, but corporate agribusiness has a stranglehold on our regulatory system and our political leaders.

Farmers and eaters across the U.S. benefit from a fair and healthy farm bill.

Please do not cut funding to vital programs such as nutrition, conservation and support for organic and sustainable agriculture.

- It's time for real reform. I support:
- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

COMMENT OF MYRA HARRIS

Date Submitted: Monday, March 26, 2012, 10:53 p.m.

City, State: Northwood, IA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Field Crops, Livestock

Size: 1,000+ acres

Comment: Common Sense Of all things in our world to have a safety net for is food. You can't survive without it. This is the most important part of the whole ag bill. We are not in control everyone tells us what our costs are and what we can get for our product. Weather, any little glitch in foreign policy, stock markets, you name it. Think can you survive without food, you can get along without everything else. Cut direct payments but protect the Federal crop insurance.

COMMENT OF PEGGY HARRIS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:26 p.m.

City, State: Fork Union, VA

Occupation: Insurance Agent

Comment: PLEASE encourage and support our family farms against the overpowering influence of the huge agribusiness. We want safe, wholesome food, not chemicals which are harmful to our bodies.

COMMENT OF REBECCA HARRIS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:04 p.m.

City, State: Candler, NC

Occupation: IT Consultant

Comment: I am one generation removed from a family farm. My father still owns a piece of the old family farm. I care about family farmers, soil conservation, and environmentally sound farming practices. I am a consumer of farm products, being a member of a CSA and truly enjoying farm fresh organic produce every week.

I urge you to support the following:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

COMMENT OF SHARON HARRIS

Date Submitted: Sunday, April 15, 2012, 9:59 p.m.

City, State: Albuquerque, NM

Occupation: Retired

Comment: There are a lot of hungry people right here in the United States. They need all the help they can get. And with some talk of cutting SS and programs that help the elderly you are going to see more need. So please if you haven't ever been poor or lived paycheck to paycheck, or just above poverty where you can't receive help. Visit some have or are. We need all the help we can get.

COMMENT OF MEGAN HARRISON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:14 a.m.

City, State: San Antonio, TX

Occupation: Artist/Professor

Comment: Please work on creating transparency in food production. It would allow the consumer to make healthier choices. I have a high sensitivity to toxins and allergens that greatly affect my health. Many chemicals deemed safe for consumption or exposure might need more testing.

COMMENT OF RICHARD HARRISON

Date Submitted: Friday, April 27, 2012, 6:31 p.m.

City, State: Marblehead, MA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Field Crops, Fruits, Vegetables

Size: 50-150 acres

Comment: We are a mixed vegetable certified organic farm located in Montville, Maine, although our permanent residence is in Massachusetts. We supply Good Shepherd Food Bank, Maine's source for soup kitchens and pantries. We sell to Good Shepherd at a flat rate approximately 50% of wholesale so we are supporting the hungry in Maine. We have also donated vegetables to local pantries. We hope that you will continue to support programs for food for the poor. We can vouch for the fact that the need in Maine is dire.

COMMENT OF PATRICIA HARRISS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:47 p.m.

City, State: Angier, NC

Occupation: Retired

Comment: People who want to be healthy, and have done any research at all, find that they can't safely consume any products produced by factory farms, which is everything in the grocery store. Everything has been tainted by pesticides, herbicides, hormones and Genetic Engineering. We have to spend a lot of time finding local eggs, meat and organic vegetables. We'd buy raw milk if it wasn't against the law. My children were raised on it and they are healthier than most people. My husband and I are healthier than most people our age (68, 75) and are not dependent on any drugs. If everybody could be healthy like us, there would be no problem pro-

viding free health care to those few that needed it. Stop subsidizing corn and soy so that all this junk food that's produced with it would dry up. You are contributing to the obesity epidemic by subsidizing it. And if you don't stop the Genetic Engineering there is going to be a famine in this land. Super weeds and super bugs are going to take over. The worst decision ever made was to allow patents on seeds. Rescind that law and take the power away from Monsanto. They don't care about our health. Do some research for yourself and don't depend on them to tell you the truth! Please protect us from that giant corporation!

COMMENT OF MAGGIE HARRS

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 10:28 a.m.

City, State: Sleepy Hollow, NY

Occupation: Chef

Comment: 42% of Americans are now considered obese. When will this end? The food system in this country is a major part of the problem and the solution can start with the food bill. We can no longer operate the same way any longer! It's your **Job** as Members of the House Committee to do the **Right** thing!

COMMENT OF CAROLE HART

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:49 p.m.

City, State: New York, NY

Occupation: Filmmaker

Comment: With all the revelations over the past few years of heinous violations of safe health practices by big agriculture, it's critical that we monitor them and sanction them for their activities or lack of them.

COMMENT OF DANNIE HART

Date Submitted: Friday, March 16, 2012, 8:49 a.m.

City, State: Tallahassee, FL

Occupation: Mom

Comment: I am concerned about the effect of the farm bill on the health and variety of our food supply. Continuing to subsidize corn and soy skews our food supply in unhealthy directions. Perhaps a requirement that no more than a certain percentage of any subsidized farm's crops could be planted in either of these commodities would improve our health. Too much high fructose corn syrup too cheaply is bad for America.

COMMENT OF JESSICA HART

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:43 p.m.

City, State: Evanston, IL

Occupation: Clinic, Program, and Administrative Assistant

Comment: As a consumer, I spend large amounts of money on food. I rarely shop at the "regular" chain grocery stores because they do not carry food I deem safe, non-toxic, environmentally friendly, sustainable, fair-trade, *etc.*, *etc.* I buy largely organic & local whenever possible & spend a pretty penny doing so. I'm very concerned for those who can not afford this luxury, which is in the best interest of my personal health as well the health of our country.

I fully support all measures for organic & local foods & best environmental farm practices. I will not buy GMO laden foods & do not support subsidies to Big Ag for products that aren't healthy, safe, or farmed in an environmentally sustainable way. We need to throw out our current policies & rethink all food policy in this country. It is broken & needs immediate attention & support to remake. The time should absolutely be now to fix this system.

Consumers needs should be put before the corporate, greedy interests of Big Ag. We need change. We demand change. Policy should reflect smart, sustainable, healthy change not the same old broken system.

I fully support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).

- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Thank you,
A very concerned citizen who has not trusted gov't on anything pertaining to food her entire adult life. Very sad.

COMMENT OF SPRING HARTKE

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 12, 2012, 11:44 a.m.

City, State: Tacoma, WA

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: I believe that it is imperative that we have a farm bill that protects our environment. I believe that we, too often, look only at the present and ignore the fact that our practices need to protect resources for future generations. In addition, I believe that the farm bill should be used to support small farmers, particularly organic farmers. I do not believe that the farm bill should be used to support corporations.

COMMENT OF KARA HARTLEY

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 1:15 a.m.

City, State: Parker, CO

Occupation: Customer Service Lead

Comment: Stop GMO crops and poor animal conditions and pumping them with chemicals. Go back to nature where animals had purposes, worked with one another and ate what they were supposed to eat. The movie *Fresh* and *Food Inc.* should be watched by everyone!

COMMENT OF WILL HARTZELL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:08 p.m.

City, State: Bozeman, MT

Occupation: Acupuncturist

Comment: We have to all remember that we are talking about producing healthy food for the PEOPLE, and that that should be our focus, not corporate profits. Awaken your humanity. Remember that people, children and grandchildren deserve the chance to grow up healthy.

COMMENT OF LUCY HARVEST

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:58 p.m.

City, State: San Antonio, TX

Occupation: Organic Gardener

Comment: NO GM food. Already too much cancer and increase in children's food allergies! Don't blame on fast food industry . . . blame on Monsanto & Chinese pesticides on our food.

COMMENT OF MICHAEL HASARA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:10 p.m.

City, State: Columbus, OH

Occupation: Designer

Comment: It's tragic, and criminal, the way the FDA and other government agencies are treating the small farmers.

It's obvious that much of the government is corrupt and that big business with their piles of cash are running the government.

This is **Not** the representation that our officials have been elected for by the people. If this situation is not corrected, the people will rise up. We will make change occur through our votes and through our choices at the supermarket, and any elected officials that continue to support the greedy big business agendas that hurt our country, our food quality, and our small farmers will be quickly ousted.

MICHAEL HASARA.

COMMENT OF ZACHARY HASH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:08 a.m.

City, State: Rocky Face, GA

Occupation: Commercial Insurance

Comment: Please consider the grave impact of a bad choice regarding our nation's food production. A human cannot express it's true potential without the proper fuel. I know you wouldn't let you children eat sub-par food . . .

COMMENT OF DENISE HASKAMP-GEHARDT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:15 p.m.

City, State: Glasgow, MO

Occupation: Adjunct Instructor

Comment: I live in a farming community and often hear farmers railing about government bailouts, handouts to the poor, *etc.*, all the while receiving government money themselves. Such a disconnect. I do firmly believe we need to focus on sustainability and more local controls *versus* big ag. My husband and I consistently shop for organic and locally grown, fresh food. Thanks for reading.

DENISE HASKAMP-GEHARDT.

COMMENT OF MARK HASKINS

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 9:00 a.m.

City, State: Encinitas, CA

Occupation: Primary Care Physician

Comment: Agricultural subsidies should go to foods that Doctors recommend, like fruits and vegetables, not corn and soy. High-fructose corn syrup is not a food, has only caloric value, and drives the obesity and diabetes epidemics in America. We are paying to poison ourselves while the small farmers who produce real food go unassisted! Stop the madness of subsidizing illness!

COMMENT OF JOYCE HATFIELD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:12 p.m.

City, State: Meadowlands, MN

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Do not force out the family farm. Children have always learned good work habits by working with their parents on the family farm. This experience is far more valuable to children than other activities that children are apt to become involved with. Children need to know where and how their food is grown and produced with hands-on experience. Support the children and allow children to work.

COMMENT OF LAURA HATFIELD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:32 p.m.

City, State: Woodland Park, CO

Occupation: Retired

Comment: As a consumer it is of vital importance to my health and the health of this nation to have a strong organic and sustainable production of food to our table. Please support legislation that considers the small farmer as I believe our health depends on them.

COMMENT OF ROSS HATHAWAY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:19 p.m.

City, State: Ithaca, NY

Occupation: Student Studying Plant Science

Comment: Instead of subsidizing corn, Europe gives money to farmers for doing sustainable practices. If America's industrial farms were given money for planting cover crops, this would have an amazing impact on our environment. It would sequester a huge amount of carbon. It would reduce leaching of fertilizer and pesticides, and it would help the farmers' future crops. This is one easy step that would make a world of difference.

COMMENT OF SHARON HATOK

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:15 p.m.

City, State: Santa Ana, CA

Occupation: Housewife

Comment: Allowing Monsanto & others to poison our foods is a crime & you wonder why there is so much illness in this nation. Please do not allow others to harm

our food sources with GMO's that our body cannot digest because it is not natural food.

Please stand up for the health of this nation by voting for bills that will help us all.

COMMENT OF ROBERT HAUGEN

Date Submitted: Monday, March 19, 2012, 5:35 p.m.

City, State: La Farge, WI

Occupation: Food Network Software Programmer

Comment: I work with groups of farmers who operate cooperative local food networks such as the Fifth Season Cooperative in Viroqua, WI.

These networks help small farmers sell their food for a fair price, and help local institutions, businesses and consumers to get good local food. They also provide an increasing number of non-farm jobs, as the networks are starting to develop food processing operations.

We think the Local Farms, Food, and Jobs Act will help support more local food networks and thus more local farms and local jobs in rural communities.

Please include the Local Farms, Food, and Jobs Act in the farm bill.

Thank you very much.

COMMENT OF SONJA HAUTER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:31 p.m.

City, State: St. Paul, MN

Occupation: Computer Programmer

Comment: It is **Critical** to both the health of the citizens of the united states **And** to our national security that you, our representative, help to pass a farm bill that supports small farmers. Please help us consumers to be able to purchase the healthy food we want from small local farms!

COMMENT OF KEVIN HAVENER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 2:53 p.m.

City, State: Chicago, IL

Occupation: Educator

Comment: Support small and independent farms, **Not** corporate mega-farms! Also Monsanto's GMO crop experiment (on 300 million unsuspecting Americans) needs to stop **Now!** Untested and unregulated GMO crops are basically environmental and human health pollutants, and should be treated as such. Thank you.

COMMENT OF ADRIAN HAVENS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:30 p.m.

City, State: Norcross, GA

Occupation: Writer

Comment: As a consumer, I am becoming more and more alarmed by the reports about the practices of big agriculture and the potential threats GMOs pose to America's food supply and Americans' health in general. Please drive toward more transparency with regard to the policies and safety of GMOs and chemical pesticides. Future generations depend on it.

Thank you for your consideration on this matter.

COMMENT OF COURTNEY HAWKES

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:56 a.m.

City, State: Cambridge, MA

Occupation: Management Associate/Backyard Farmer

Comment: Please support small family farmers and get rid of subsidies for factory farms that are producing more corn than we need. Move those subsidies to help small farms produce nutritious foods that don't need further processing to feed people.

COMMENT OF EILEEN HAWKEY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:05 p.m.

City, State: West Dundee, IL

Occupation: Mom

Comment: Dear Members of the House Committee on Agriculture;

My name is Eileen Hawkey and I'm an adoptive parent to a young man who is now 16 years old. His name is Anthony. He came to us when he was 4½ years old—already having suffered abuse. He was diagnosed with RAD, PTSD, ADD, and Autism. Our life together was very rough. He also suffered from a processing problem.

At the beginning of this year we switched to an organic diet for the family. The results are amazing! No pill, talk therapy, educational prevention has done what good organic food has done for Anthony. At 16 he is beginning to have friends and I can honestly say that he will become a good citizen. (I had my doubts)

If you want to bring Americans back to good health **Please** address our food source and the additives allowed in it. Our kids don't want to be handicapped by the food they eat.

Thank you in advance,

EILEEN.

COMMENT OF BLANCHE HAWKINS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:24 p.m.

City, State: St. Paul, MN

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Keep the Conservation measures intact, and get rid of the boondoggles of price protections for sugarbeet farmers, corn ethanol supports and other measures that make **No** sense except to put money in the pockets of agricultural state legislators.

Above all, don't cut programs like food stamps, WIC and other aids for the impoverished.

COMMENT OF MARK HAY

Date Submitted: Tuesday, April 24, 2012, 12:32 p.m.

City, State: Springfield, MO

Occupation: Donation Coordinator

Comment: We need a strong farm bill to help put food on the table for vulnerable children, elderly and low income families. I ask that you pass a bill that strengthens TEFAP, SNAP and CSFP. Cutting these programs is not the way to balance the budget. They are a lifeline to people struggling in your district. Please make them a priority in the next farm bill.

COMMENT OF MITSUKO HAYAKAWA

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 2:15 a.m.

City, State: Pearl City, HI

Occupation: Artist/Homemaker/Mother

Comment: No GMOs and GMO subsidizing. Stringent restrictions on chemical application. I do not want chemicals or GM pollutants in the soil, water, and air. None of it is helpful to our environment and delicate eco-system. Thank you.

COMMENT OF GERARD HAYDEN

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 1:18 p.m.

City, State: Southold, NY

Occupation: Chef and Owner of North Fork Table and Inn

Comment: I am a small business owner of a restaurant in Southold Long Island, N.Y. It is a critically acclaimed restaurant because of the sourcing of our food products from small organic farms. If Congress and the President start stripping away funding from programs that assist in promoting healthier more sustainable ways of producing our food to try and make up deficit spending. We will be a Nation that has clearly lost our way and no longer listens to the people of this great country who are moving in a direction to eat healthier and make less of a carbon foot print. We need government to get behind small farms and sustainable farming practices with the type of funding that is put behind Corporate agribusiness. Please for the future of all the children in this country use your heads.

JOINT COMMENT OF JEANNETTE & JAMES HAYDEN

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 10, 2012, 11:43 p.m.

City, State: Tucson, AZ

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Don't throw another \$140 billion into subsidies, including a brand-new \$33 billion "shallow loss" entitlement program that guarantees business income for a few thousand agribusiness operations growing industrial commodity crops.

How about a program that encourages healthy eating, especially among kids? How about supporting small farmers, organic growers?

COMMENT OF SARA HAYDEN

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 7:17 p.m.

City, State: Half Moon Bay, CA

Occupation: Disabled

Comment: Please protect our small and family farms. I would ask that you reconsider all of the subsidy programs you give to large corporate producers whose annual revenue clearly indicate they do not need subsidies.

COMMENT OF AISHA HAYES

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 4:47 p.m.

City, State: Edgewater Park, NJ

Occupation: Mother

Comment: I am requesting that the SNAP program not be cut. It is a sad thing to see our own children suffer from hunger as we are eating 3 & 4 course meals. Hunger puts our children in a place where they can't learn & function @ a normal level. When my own children are telling me their stomachs are hurting or they have a headache because of hunger that hurts. To know these that really need assistance are not eating when there are politicians who can serve for one term & have their health ins. taken care of for the rest of their lives is ridiculous. Please don't cut funding for this program!

COMMENT OF KIM HAYES

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 7:54 p.m.

City, State: McGregor, IA

Occupation: Independent Contractor

Comment: Please keep the taxpayer crop insurance linked to the conservation compliance. That's the least you can do since you have all the big commercial growers on government welfare that is totally unnecessary. Get in a plane and fly the Gulf of Mexico, notice that big dark spot spewing forth from the Mississippi River. That's South Iowa! It got there from all the erosion the welfare farmers in bed with Big Ag put it there with their reckless farming practices. We're mining our topsoil away to grow commodities instead of food.

So, the least you can do is force these government welfare farmers to think about the water & soil by linking their crop insurance to conservation compliances.

COMMENT OF LINDA HAYES

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:00 a.m.

City, State: Philadelphia, PA

Occupation: Educator

Comment: Our food is killing more Americans than all our wars combined! Imagine if our good conscience was in charge rather than corporations and greed. Monsanto and Cargill are the real terrorists!

COMMENT OF MICHELLE HAYES

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:11 p.m.

City, State: Livonia, MI

Occupation: Homemaker

Comment: Thank you for considering my comments. I fully support organic, diverse, and sustainable farming. I will go out of my way to purchase organic foods, especially from local sources. I support cooperation and reverence for all life. The current model of big, industrial farming is not working for the health and well being of all living things. We need a paradigm shift. We need to support and nurture small scale, local organic farmers/farms. Supporting the local farmers, across all states, creates job stability and a better quality of life for the farmers. Farming is one of the most important professions in the world. It's so simple really—healthy soil, healthy organic diverse seeds, clean water, good farming practices = healthy people. We need to increase funding to support healthy farming initiatives. Please

look at the truth/facts carefully and work towards keeping our country vibrant and healthy. Thank you.

COMMENT OF TIM HAYES

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:38 p.m.

City, State: El Cajon, CA

Occupation: Builder

Comment: Big Ag has tilted the scale long enough to the tune of devastated soil and obese citizens. We need an honest organic bill that promotes small, local food production.

COMMENTS OF MICHAEL W. HAYNES, M.P.A.

Date Submitted: Friday, April 13, 2012, 2:16 p.m.

MICHAEL W. HAYNES, M.P.A.,

City, State: Hauppauge, NY.

Occupation: Coordinator, Gov't Affairs & Public Policy for LI Cares, Inc.—The Harry Chapin Food Bank.

Comment: On behalf of Long Island Cares, Inc.—The Harry Chapin Bank we thankfully request that Congress protect and strengthen SNAP, TEFAP and other Federal nutrition programs.

Regarding SNAP, please oppose proposals to cap or reduce SNAP funding, restrict eligibility or reduce benefits and support proposals to increase benefit adequacy to ensure that households have the resources to purchase a nutritionally sound diet. Regarding TEFAP, please make mandatory funding for TEFAP food more responsive to changes in need by providing a trigger that ties funding to unemployment levels. Also, please enhance the Secretary of Agriculture's authority to purchase bonus commodities in times of high need for emergency food relief in addition to times of low commodity prices so the program is responsive both to excess supply and excess demand. Furthermore, please reauthorize funding for TEFAP Storage and Distribution Funds at \$100 million per year and TEFAP Infrastructure Grants at \$15 million per year.

As Long Island's regional food bank, we annually serve over 320,000 food insecure persons through our network of community partners (kitchens, pantries, emergency shelters, and senior centers). We also directly serve 20,000 food insecure persons through our direct service programs such as our mobile pantry, mobile outreach units, veterans project, and 2 triage pantries. Despite indicators of economic recovery, times are still extremely tough on Long Island and our agencies still report increases of demand in the 15–25 percent range. TEFAP purchases accounted for greater than 1/3 of the 6.2 million pounds of food we distributed in 2011. SNAP and TEFAP are vital to the people we serve, and we urge that you fight to at least sustain if not bolster these programs that are keeping Long Islanders and Americans fed.

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 15, 2012, 2012, 1:13 p.m.

Comment: Dear Chairman Lucas, Ranking Member Peterson, and members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on the upcoming farm bill reauthorization. Given the increasing need for food assistance in our state and the declining supply of Federal commodity support, I strongly urge you protect and strengthen nutrition programs in the 2012 Farm Bill.

At Long Island Cares, we see every day how important Federal nutrition programs are in our community and how effectively they are working to ensure that struggling Long Islanders can provide enough food for their families. Long Island Cares distributed 6.2 million pounds of food to food insecure Long Islanders in 2011.

Nationally, the Feeding America network of more than 200 food banks has seen a 46 percent increase in food bank clients from 2006 to 2010, and we are struggling to keep up with increased demand. Without strong farm bill nutrition programs like The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CFSP), food banks across the country would be struggling even more to meet the increased need.

We recognize the challenge you face drafting a farm bill in a time of deficit reduction, but we are also sensitive to the tremendous, ongoing need in our state. As such, we have two key priorities for the farm bill.

First, we urge you to strengthen TEFAP to help us keep up with increased demand. TEFAP supplies about 25 percent of the food moving through Feeding America's national network of food banks. But because of strong commodity prices,

TEFAP food declined 30 percent last year, and our food bank is struggling to make up the difference. We urge you to make TEFAP more responsive during times of high need by tying increases in mandatory funding to a trigger based on unemployment levels. We also propose to enhance the Secretary of Agriculture's authority to make TEFAP bonus purchases at times when the need for emergency food assistance is high—for example high unemployment—in addition to times of weak agriculture markets so that the program can respond to both excess supply and excess demand.

Second, we also strongly urge you to protect SNAP from harmful funding cuts or policy proposals that would restrict eligibility or reduce benefits. SNAP has responded effectively to growing need in the recession with benefits that are timely, targeted, and temporary. The average SNAP household has an income of only 57 percent of the Federal poverty guideline, and 84 percent of benefits go to households with a child, senior, or disabled person. The program is working to support vulnerable Long Island families, and our food bank or local agency partners would not be able to meet the increased need for food assistance if SNAP were cut.

These programs have a real impact on your constituents, many of whom must rely on the food bank and Federal nutrition programs to meet their basic food needs. I would encourage you to visit the food banks serving your district before the Committee marks up a farm bill so you can meet our clients and see firsthand how Federal nutrition programs are working to protect vulnerable Americans from hunger.

Long Island Cares believes that feeding our neighbors is a shared responsibility, and food banks like ours rely on a variety of food streams to support our communities, including generous support from partners in retail, manufacturing, and agriculture. However, the Federal government is an equally critical partner through programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP, and with tremendous, ongoing need in our state, ongoing Federal support is more important than ever.

As the House Agriculture Committee moves forward with farm bill reauthorization, our food bank urges you to protect the nutrition safety net and offers the specific recommendations below.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL W. HAYNES, M.P.A.

COMMENT OF MARYANN HAYTMANEK

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 5:19 p.m.

City, State: Allentown, PA

Occupation: Community College Administrator

Comment: Please recognize the importance of the SNAP program as a means for our local community to feed their families and inject much-needed income into our community. In Pennsylvania, the state government has pursued nothing less than a witch hunt to punish people who rely on government assistance in any form, including the very-well-run SNAP program. The families who receive this assistance rely on this bit of help to maintain their energies to go to work to be alert in school and to maintain their families.

COMMENT OF JAMES HAYWARD

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 02, 2012, 2:46 p.m.

City, State: Acton, MA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Because farming, as in sustainable farming—the preservation of a system to sustain life of our future generations with food and fiber, is so centralized and localized to regional areas, national legislation for farming seems irresponsible. The legislation should return power to districts and states by allowing them to source the majority of their food from around their area. Yes, it is viable to buy avocados at the supermarket that were grown in California. But with a more regionalized food system the avocados will be less enticing because of its higher price. The avocado in this sense is not literal; It representative of our transnational food systems and how it's simply not a viable option for the future.

Anyways, this relates to the Farm Bill 2012 because this bill does not dive into how many of our nation's farms need to be restructured to promote soil fertility and long term stewardship, not solely based on price per pound and uniform structure for large scale shipping. Let the farmers dictate how they can feed our nation. They are smarter than the stigma we put on them. Letting smaller scale co-ops of regionalized farmers will let our farmers figure out the best way to feed everyone in the

region. A beautiful dependency between farmer and consumer will arise, based on farmers dependence for consumer's money to sustain and reinvest in the farm, and the consumer relying on the farm to feed their families healthy food.

COMMENT OF MERLE HAYWARD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:44 p.m.

City, State: Hilo, HI

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Subsidize transition to organic ag, protect organic growers from GMO and chemical contamination, set use limits on RoundUp and other toxic ag chemicals, protect bees from toxic chemicals and require bee refuges.

COMMENT OF CRAIGEN HEALY

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 7:48 p.m.

City, State: New Vineyard, ME

Occupation: Retired Teacher

Comment: Please support the whole Ag. Reform Bill do that we can have more confidence in the integrity of the food we buy. I have been raising as much of my own vegetables as I can for years in my organic garden, but **All** Americans need healthier food, and small farmers need equal recognition with industrial farms.

COMMENT OF ELIZABETH HEALY

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 11:02 p.m.

City, State: Tucson, AZ

Occupation: Personal Assistant

Comment: We need a Farm Food Bill that supports the work the nation's Food Banks are doing. Make sure the bill includes lots of money for food assistance programs like SNAP. Here in Southern AZ we have an increased demand for food assistance. This nation has too many hungry people and this bill should be helping them, not hurting them more. Have you ever gone to bed hungry? Do you know how many children in AZ will do that tonight? We need your help! Thank you.

COMMENT OF ROBYN HEALY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:15 p.m.

City, State: Philadelphia, PA

Occupation: Disabled

Comment: We need to take back farming from big Ag and help out the little farmers around our great nation. Family owned farms provide a great resource for our nation. They provide healthy foods for our families and some even provide the experience of "pick-your-own" produce. Please protect our local growers.

COMMENT OF PETA HEARSEY-MCCOMAS

Date Submitted: Thursday, April 05, 2012, 10:35 a.m.

City, State: Charlottesville, VA

Occupation: Clinician

Comment: Families and individuals who are scraping by on minimum wage or limited food program will start to starve. You do not want to raise taxes but will spend millions on special interest companies. Is it not time to take care of the people who are trying to make a life and be productive members of our society?

COMMENT OF JEWEL HEART

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:34 p.m.

City, State: Cornville, AZ

Occupation: Volunteer

Comment: If humanity is going to survive through all the toxins that have been spewed across the planet, we need real organic food to live so that we can clean up the planet for future generations of people and animals and plants.

COMMENT OF SUSAN HEATHCOTE

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 15, 2012, 5:37 p.m.

City, State: Des Moines, IA

Occupation: Water Program Director for Iowa Environmental Council

Comment: I urge the House Agriculture Committee to restore the link between conservation compliance and eligibility for taxpayer-supported subsidies for crop and revenue insurance. This link between compliance and crop insurance is especially important as Congress considers elimination of direct payments, the major subsidy program that is currently linked to compliance. I am not a farmer, but I pay taxes to help support a safety net for farmers. All that I ask in return is that subsidized farmers will follow basic conservation practices on their fields to prevent soil erosion and preserve wetlands that will help protect water quality downstream from the farm. This conservation compliance compact between farmers and the public has worked for 30 years, but if crop insurance and compliance are not linked, a significant part of a farmer's incentive to follow conservation plans will disappear this year. Please don't let that happen.

COMMENT OF KRISTI HEATON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:20 p.m.

City, State: East Windsor, CT

Occupation: Homemaker

Comment: I want the corporations to stop dictating the way I feed my family. Please support and promote organic farms and food labeling. I do not want to feed my family GMO foods. Care more about us than you do Monsanto and do the right thing.

COMMENT OF SYLVIA HEBEL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:51 p.m.

City, State: Rice Lake, WI

Occupation: College Student, Homemaker

Comment: There are three things people need to live, clean air, clean water, and a place to grow their food. The factory turkey and heifer farms I have seen have got me eating less beef and no turkey. Commercial farmers care about their animals insofar as they are good for sale. The lack of pasture, and the crowded sheds say it all.

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012 9:53 p.m.

Comment: I will continue to vote with my money. I have little and will spend less for factory farmed food. I grow a garden and buy locally if possible.

COMMENT OF LYN HEBENSTREIT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:33 p.m.

City, State: Ojai, CA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Is it not obvious that people and the Earth should take priority over the profits of giant agribusiness corporation profits when it comes to legislating how our food is produced? Small scale organic agriculture has been shown to be the most productive, healthy and sustainable way to produce food by the most comprehensive agricultural study ever completed under the auspices of the UN. I suggest you use that as a guide.

COMMENT OF SUSAN HECKEL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012 1:24 p.m.

City, State: Naples FL

Occupation: Retired Homemaker

Comment: Please Do The Right Thing.

Fight big agribusiness and **End Factory Farming**. For the sake of our children and grandchildren. Sick animal carcasses are what is contributing to childhood and all kinds of obesity and illness.

COMMENT OF LAURA HEDLUND

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 6:52 p.m.

City, State: Eagan, MN

Occupation: Sales

Comment: America needs the type of farm bill President Jefferson would have supported. We need to support environmentally responsible farmers. I support the principles of Slow Food.

COMMENT OF DWAYNE HEDSTROM

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 7:54 p.m.
City, State: Portland, OR
Occupation: Unemployed
Comment: No more welfare for the big ag corps. Small family farms that sell where they produce need and can be the backbone of food secure and economically secure communities.

COMMENT OF WYNNIE HEE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:03 p.m.
City, State: Mililani, HI
Occupation: Retired Teacher
Comment: Please subsidize organic farmers or at least make it cheaper for them to be certified. Please do not subsidize GMO corn and GMO soy. There so much corn that we don't know what to do with it—except feed it to cattle that are healthier on a grass diet or make biofuel. Subsidize good food for people, not expensive fuel. Thank you for listening.

COMMENT OF JEFF HEEHS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:24 p.m.
City, State: Brooklyn, NY
Occupation: Corporate Sales Account Manager
Comment: I urge Congress to support a Food and Farm bill that:

- prevents the near-monopoly concentration of food production and distribution in a small number of private companies.
- focuses on increasing the production and distribution of healthy foods—including fruits, vegetables, and whole grains—for consumption in our communities, homes, schools, and institutions.
- Ends food insecurity and hunger by protecting our nation's nutrition programs and ensuring equitable access to healthful, sustainably produced food.
- mandates labeling of food according to country of origin and food that includes ingredients from genetically modified organisms.
- supports agricultural practices to preserve our vital agricultural soil and water resources, reduce farm and other food-system energy consumption, and practice sustainable agricultural production methods that minimize air and water pollution.
- supports innovative methods to strengthen our regional food systems as a means to regain economic vitality.
- provides entrepreneurial opportunities and fosters business growth and job creation in rural and urban production, processing, and distribution.
- supports beginning and disadvantaged urban and rural farmers, as well as established farmers facing the challenges of feeding America.

In this Food and Farm Bill I support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.
- Full, mandatory funding to community food project grants.

COMMENT OF JAMIE HEERINGA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:35 a.m.
City, State: Grand Rapids, MI
Occupation: Costume Designer and Educator
Comment: I am shocked and frustrated that my government has allowed and promoted the corruption and poisoning of our food system by big agribusiness through the use of toxic pesticides and fungicides and GMOs. This is capitalism run amuck. It's time for you to get at the truth by questioning the lies told by those whose goal is only profit, and to read the independent research. Our children, future

generations, and our environment (which is connected to our health) are all being poisoned for greed. It is immoral. Why does most of our financial help go to the least nutritious and most damaging industrial crops rather than to those we know to be the best for our health . . . fruits and vegetables? We know the answer . . . money and power of the big companies. Our health care costs will continue to sky rocket out of control until we stop poisoning our bodies and the environment and figure out how to get these toxins out. Common sense tells us that organic is the best. Poison is poison, and that's what we get with our current system. Research shows it can be done . . . we just have to place our health and the health of the planet above profit. Who is willing to do that? Are you? Or will you be one of those that have been elected by the people, but serves big business? Our innocent children, now and in future generations, need your help and protection. Please have the courage to stand up and do the right thing for us.

COMMENT OF KELSEY HEERINGA

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 1:31 a.m.

City, State: Rockford, MI

Occupation: Writer

Comment: The farm bill no longer makes sense in the world we live in. It is not supporting healthy farming practices for the land or the people. To move forward this country **Has** to have support for organic practices, new farmers that want to farm organically to local markets, and conservation programs. If you take a step back and think about the direction the country **MUST** move it, before we destroy it and our health. The farm bill is the most important piece of legislation in the government, in my voting opinion, and would like my representative to represent me and my family.

COMMENT OF REED HEFFELFINGER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:59 p.m.

City, State: Minneapolis, MN

Occupation: Health Care, Western Herbalist, Minister, Counselor, Artist, Single Mother, Grandmother

Comment: I grew up in a Minnesota Milling Family—'Peavey Company'.

I spent 4 years as a founder of a certified organic food company that was meat based. I care how animals are treated in this country. I have observed over and over again that they do not know what it is to be in nature—their natural habitat. Large corporate farms know that if a baby chick does not go outside in their first week or so—they will not. Therefore, this huge organic producers can put a small fenced in area (mostly dead soil, no grasses or bugs) and call them cage free/free range—jeez. They are not healthy. They are fed unhealthy food. Often GMO corn. Therefore we are not eating healthy food.

I know the toxins/chemicals released in animals on that 'Long Good Bye' Death walk to slaughter.

I know what the communities stink like where animals are slaughtered—how tightly they are packed in corrals.

I know that we have depleted the soil. I know that money talks. I know that we are the least BioDynamically farmed country in the world . . . check it out. I know that other countries use Flow Forms to create living pristine water . . . even from hog sludge. I know that we are laughed at regarding our 'water purification' attempts—all hidden within buildings. There is so much information regarding living water—*i.e.*, *Flow Forms* by John Wilkes for a start.

When we can get over ourselves and the quest for money and more money and power perhaps there would be space for wisdom. Perhaps, some of you could move on over and bring in some fresh insights/wisdom. There is enough for everyone.

Thank you for your time.

REED HEFFELFINGER.

COMMENT OF MARY HEFT

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 4:58 p.m.

City, State: Kansas City, MO

Occupation: Registered Nurse

Comment: President Truman said, "nothing is more important in our national life than the welfare of our children, and proper nourishment comes first in attaining this welfare." For the first time in our national history our children have a lower life expectancy than we do because of what they eat.

Every leading cause of disability and death in the U.S.; obesity, diabetes, heart disease, stroke and cancer is correlated to poor nutrition. According to a USDA report in 2011 there is not even enough vegetables, fruits and grains in the American food supply to even meet dietary requirements for all citizens. Our citizens lack both physical and monetary access to safe, fresh, nutritious foods, and yet all physiological, biochemical, and immunological systems in the body are changed in the malnourished individual. Correcting our diets can decrease health care costs.

The mandate to increase ethanol production is devastating our food supply. Less and less edible produce is being grown due to the subsidies given for corn production.

The sugars in our processed foods have been repeatedly shown to cause disease and genetically modified crops are proving to do the same. Why are we one of the only industrialized nations to allow GMO's to flood our food environment without even basic labeling requirements?

Mission Readiness, the group of retired military generals, say that the leading medical disqualifier for military service is obesity—a diet related condition.

We MUST put our health before the powerful interests of agribusiness giants. We are dying and we are killing our children with our food.

Being free from hunger is not synonymous with being nourished.

Please subsidize fresh, nutritious foods. Require labeling for types of sugars and GMO ingredients.

Our country's food system is in crisis! It is only when all citizens, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food that our country can be healthy and our children's future secure.

COMMENT OF GENA HEGELMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:37 p.m.

City, State: Nesses, SC

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: We need the business of growing food to return to being about just that, not about chemicals, genetic modifications, *etc.* We need to support healthy foods, organic such as we grow here. Too much of our land is covered in corn and soybeans that is not even used to feed people. Subsidies, if necessary should be for the real food crops. Nutrition is the true way of the future of our civilization. Right now we are killing ourselves and the government is paying for the poison.

COMMENT OF GEORGE HEGEMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:56 p.m.

City, State: Bloomington, IN

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Forestry, Fruits, Livestock

Size: 50–150 acres

Comment: Halt the corn ethanol subsidy and keep the SNAP program! SNAP is an important part of the safety net and further shredding of this net in these times would be awful.

COMMENT OF SUSAN HEGGESTAD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:44 p.m.

City, State: Vermillion, SD

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: Please give stronger consideration to practices that benefit the health of all, strengthen small communities, and contribute to sustainable practices in agriculture. It is time for communities and families to take priority over the financial gains of large ag companies.

COMMENT OF JEFF HEIDT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:21 p.m.

City, State: Sedona, AZ

Comment: I support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).

- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Is it true that:

- Agribusiness has a stranglehold on our regulatory system and our political leaders?
- The Senate Agricultural Committee has already voted to cut \$4 million from organic research funding and cut funding to support Beginning Farmers in half?
- The Senate Ag Committee has voted to get rid of wasteful subsidy payments, and has proposed to replace it with a new subsidized insurance program that leading sustainable agriculture advocates are calling rife with opportunities for fraud and abuse?
- While Congress is looking to get rid of direct payments to commodity farmers, the subsidized insurance program it proposes to replace it with will allow giant commodity farmers and insurance companies to walk away with billions in taxpayer dollars while putting the land, soil and environment at greater risk?

U.S. food and agricultural policy must focus on adopting best agricultural practices that put the health of its citizens, the land and the livelihood of farmers and farm workers over the interests of industrial agriculture lobbyists.

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter!

JEFF HEIDT,
Sedona, AZ.

COMMENT OF DORIS HEIL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:32 p.m.

City, State: San Clemente, CA

Occupation: Office Worker

Comment: Yes I am in favor of **Any** kind of farms that have been taken away from America's farmlands. Being Organic or **Not** organic makes not much difference to me.

Just why are foreign countries allowed to be producing the food and products that America should be enabling **And, Please Tell Me Why Ken Calvert Does Not Answer Any Of My Questions. I Think Perhaps, That He And Others Have Been In Office Much Too Long.**

Americans to produce and earn a living from?

COMMENT OF KARI HEIMDAL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:24 a.m.

City, State: Milford, IA

Occupation: Church Outreach Coordinator

Comment: As a hobby farmer on 3 acres near Milford and potential future small/ niche farmer I feel the subsidy system is broken* and eliminating conservation compliance from insurance subsidy ties would be a huge mistake and step backward for our state and **All** farmers. **Please** consider the long term need for conservation which will continue to keep Iowa economically stable into the far future.

These policies only serve to proliferate the monoculture mentality and deter diversity within farming. Inclusion of niche/small farm security measures within the system would certainly encourage more small farmers to pursue their Iowa Small Farm Dream! Please consider the **Whole** of Iowa as you deal with the farm bill, not just our military industrial machine of corn, beans, pigs & cows!

My vote hangs in the balance, Rep. King!

Sincerely,

KARI HEIMDAL.

COMMENT OF MALLEY HEINLEIN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:56 a.m.

City, State: Kingston, NY

*When I say it is broken, I am referring to the limited crops which are available for subsidy assistance.

Occupation: Homemaker

Comment: Support Beginning Farmers! Continue and develop Organic Farming Research! Stop the rampant subsidizing of Factory Farms and make smaller farms who pay attention to quality control Sustainable! Farming should not be the work of large Corporations!

COMMENT OF DONNA HEINLIN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:58 p.m.

City, State: Evansville, IN

Occupation: Retired

Comment: We should have a right to know what we are eating? We want certified organic farming to get the subsidies? Stop GMO foods. At the very least label . . . them. So we can make our own decisions.

COMMENT OF ROSALIE HEIWNS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:59 p.m.

City, State: Morrison, CO

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I believe in the right to have clean food without pesticides and non GMO modified. I believe that the toxins in our food chain are the cause of disease and cancer in this country. I believe our government should be protecting us from these harmful ingredients instead of protecting the very companies, such as Monsanto, who are producing foods that are bad for us, and not only that, but receiving huge subsidies. Now tell me why does a multibillion dollar company need farm subsidies. The only people who need subsidies are the small farmers and those starting up and growing organic produce. These are the people we need to support, not the multimillion dollar farm. It has been reported that many people in Congress, who happen to own farms, are receiving subsidies. This is absolutely wrong. Again, this is just another way that the good old boys club of Congress rewards itself. A subsidy is to support farmers who need the money to continue doing what they do and hopefully to encourage healthy and organic farms to start up and continue. Please do the right thing by awarding subsidies to the people who need it and not as bribes for votes.

COMMENT OF LAURA HELD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 11:21 a.m.

City, State: Somerville, MA

Occupation: Graduate Student in Agriculture, Food, and Environment

Comment: We need a farm bill that supports low-income Americans, both producers and consumers. We need to support farms that practice sustainable agriculture and that are small to medium in size. We need to restrict abuses to animals in agriculture, particularly CAFOs.

COMMENT OF LYNETTE HELLE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:39 p.m.

City, State: Redding, CA

Occupation: Homemaker

Comment: Please support better Farming. We desire to eat food, that is pure. Not GMO. We are tired of eating food, that makes us sick. We would like to support good old fashion farming. **We Would Like To See Organic Farming As A True Choice For The American People.**

COMMENT OF GIGI HELLIWELL

Date Submitted: Friday, April 27, 2012, 11:44 p.m.

City, State: Buffalo, NY

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: Save the family farm. Stop GMO's. Stop corporate takeover of farms; stop the chemical pollution of our land with pesticides and stop bad farming practices like rampant monocultures of crops where even bees can't survive. Stop this nonsense and work to make our food safe, tasty and nutrient-rich the way nature is designed—not the way Monsanto and all that multi-billion dollar agribusiness want it to go!

COMMENT OF HANNAH HELM

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:21 a.m.

City, State: Frankfort, KY

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I am concerned that the 2012 Farm Bill will not have provisions linking crop insurance subsidies to compliance with Conservation Plans. I want to ensure farmer's entitled to payments with my tax dollars be required to follow sustainable agriculture practices. Thank you.

COMMENT OF GAYLE HEMENWAY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:00 p.m.

City, State: Fort Collins, CO

Occupation: Homemaker

Comment: It is high time we had a farm bill that did more than just continue subsidies to huge producers and alter in negative ways the competitive landscape for food production. Please support the kinds of farmers and ranchers and food production that those of us who cook, eat, and feed our families want to support: small farms, organic and biodynamic farms, local and regional farms that feed their communities with a harvest of variety. Thank you.

COMMENT OF DANIEL HEMESATH

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:58 a.m.

City, State: Clovis, CA

Occupation: Photographer

Comment: Organic farming is vitally important. It is our only hope of solving the biggest problems facing the country. The playing field should be leveled. Organic farming should be given equal incentives. Otherwise big food conglomerates will continue to dominate and our health and the environment will pay the price.

COMMENT OF PHIL HEMESATH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:02 p.m.

City, State: Decorah, IA

Occupation: Retired Dairy Farmer

Comment: Do away with direct payments. Connect conservation payments and incentives on outcome based criteria. Producers should develop a conservation plan that best fits their own farm. Phase out support prices. Keep crop insurance affordable.

COMMENT OF CARMEN HENDERSHOTT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:57 a.m.

City, State: New York, NY

Occupation: Librarian

Comment: We need a farm bill that supports organic farming and small family farms; that stops subsidizing large agribusinesses, such as Monsanto, thereby wasting taxpayer monies; that works against genetically modified food, indiscriminate and excessive use of pesticides; and that encourages local buying, which would reduce transportation costs. Please remember this when you are drafting the farm bill.

COMMENT OF ELLA HENDERSON

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 3:04 p.m.

City, State: Gallion, AL

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Greenhouse/nursery, Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: I'm looking for a bill that will assist the 10 acre or less farmer. The farmers who really feed the communities. Invest in sustaining heirloom seeds. Foster innovation for future farmers and non-GMO food entrepreneurs.

COMMENT OF HEATHER HENDERSON

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 15, 2012, 4:44 p.m.

City, State: Tallahassee, FL

Occupation: Student

Comment: I am a student at Florida State University studying Food and Nutrition Science. I am the president of a group called the Tallahassee Sustainability group, we have a community farm and a greenhouse at a second chance middle school. I would like for the farm bill to include community farms like ours. Promoting nutrition to the community through producing food is a wonderful tool. Grants are available but if there were more we could do more. We are currently attempting to incorporate a community kitchen at the farm and are having difficulty finding funding. More grants for projects such as this one would be greatly appreciated.

 COMMENT OF JANICE HENDERSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:28 p.m.

City, State: Medford, OR

Occupation: Retired from Self-Employment

Comment: It is critical that you do not cut funding to programs such as nutrition, conservation and support for organic agriculture. Organic farmers are vital to the sustainability of a **Healthy** food supply industry, sustainability of the land, and vital to sustaining public health which ultimately will lower healthcare cost. Please do the **Right** thing. Support the **Organic Farm Industry**. Our future depends on it.

 COMMENT OF JEANETTE HENDERSON

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 9:59 a.m.

City, State: Seattle, WA

Occupation: University Employee

Comment: U.S. food and agricultural policy should preference public health, including local food produced by small farmers. It should focus on adopting best agricultural practices that put the health of its citizens, the land and the livelihood of farmers and farm workers over the interests of industrial agriculture.

I support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

 COMMENT OF JOHN HENDERSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:16 p.m.

City, State: Chattanooga, TN

Occupation: Waiter/Food Activist

Comment: I believe in you, our legislators. And I believe in your commitment to the voice of the people, and your oath to pass laws that benefit the greater good. The farm bill should benefit the people, not corporate interests and agribusiness giants. Please uphold the sanctity of the Constitution and develop a bill that fully endorses all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286). Provide full funding of conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and make sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs. I would like to see the implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236), and please maintain the EQIP Organic Initiative. These are very important issues that will affect future generations, long after we are all gone. Let's move toward doing the right things for our world, not just for us, but for the benefit of our posterity. Thank you.

 COMMENT OF NANCY HENDERSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:52 a.m.

City, State: Lincoln, MA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Specialty Crops

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: It is critical that we wrest control of our food system from corrupt giant agribusinesses and allow farmers to grow food that is safe to eat and safe for the environment. Real inspections by independent (Government *i.e.*, FDA) inspectors and use every available means to educate the public as to where their food comes from and how they can become partners in making healthier choices that benefit good farming practice and the environment.

COMMENT OF PAIGE HENDERSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:11 p.m.

City, State: Grapevine, TX

Occupation: Sales Representative

Comment: Our nation is out of control. It is time to get back to the basics of agriculture and get big business out. I am tired of the "science" of pesticides which is killing people. Please get a clue.

COMMENT OF SHERRY HENDERSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:12 p.m.

City, State: Alpharetta, GA

Occupation: Magazine Publisher

Comment: The farm bill must support small farmers and abolish ridiculous rules against raw milk, free range poultry and eggs and other very healthy farm products.

We must stop the filthy factory farming practices that are poisoning our environment and bringing misery to livestock.

COMMENT OF KATE HENDRICKS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:23 a.m.

City, State: Healdsburg, CA

Occupation: Farm Gleaner

Comment: Food production is connected to the health of our environment. Our current food system accounts for about 20 percent of our national energy consumption and relies heavily on chemical, fossil fuel, and water inputs. Unchecked, such practices can degrade our natural resources, erode our soil, and pollute our air and water. The next farm bill can help reverse these detrimental effects—the time to act is now!

COMMENT OF JEAN HENDRIX

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 3:45 a.m.

City, State: Kamuela, HI

Occupation: Retired Sales Manager

Comment: Please save our family farms and our food. Protect us like you said you would when we elected you. We need safe **Non-GMO** food and we want labels on foods that contain any GMOs in any of the ingredients. We have the right to unmolested food, and the right to know when it has been played with.

COMMENT OF LINDA HENDRIX

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 1:25 p.m.

City, State: Bend, OR

Occupation: Therapist

Comment: We deserve better than what we are getting all around from our government and the corporations that are using us as guinea pigs in their quest for record profits.

COMMENT OF JAMES HENRIKSEN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:04 p.m.

City, State: Green Valley, AZ

Occupation: Retired

Comment: All farm subsidies should be implemented for the growing of crops, not for non-planting. Also, more attention should be given for crops that can be used for biofuel.

COMMENT OF MICHELLE HENSLEY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:54 a.m.

City, State: Minneapolis, MN

Occupation: Theater Director

Comment: We barely live in a democracy any more. Corporate interests control our food supply and are ruining our health, our children's health and our planet's health! **Please Show Some Courage And Stand Up For The People—For The Children**—and stop pandering to wealthy corporations who are destroying us all!

COMMENT OF KAREN HENSON

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 10:44 a.m.

City, State: Longmont, CO

Occupation: Elementary School Teacher and Landscaping Business Owner

Comment: Farmers are the ultimate entrepreneurs. Please continue to support these brave business people who are risking so much to serve us by growing beautiful organic food. Let's continue to encourage new farmers who want to feed us whole food without using insecticides. These people work **Hard!**

COMMENT OF APRIL HEPNER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 10:36 a.m.

City, State: Denver, CO

Occupation: Social Work

Comment: I would like to see an administration that puts the health of the people & the environment first. This would happen through allowing native crops to be grown, supporting crop rotation & land conservation, and the humane treatment of agriculture. I will continue to support local organic, grass-fed, and free range/pastured food. Please consider the demand for this in reviewing the future of the farm bill.

COMMENT OF JOSEPH HERBERT

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 5:29 p.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: IT Desktop Engineer, for a Steel Manufacturing Corporation

Comment: As a civic-minded citizen—and voter—I hereby urge you to carry out “in the strongest language possible”:

- (1) Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any “new insurance subsidies” are tied directly to “compliance with conservation programs.”
- (2) The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- (3) Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.
- (4) The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).

The goal of Ag must be to contribute to the health of all U.S. citizens, and to do so in an economically and socially sustainable manner.

In the past 60 years, the Dept of Ag has instead focused on: “Producing as much food as cheaply as possible” . . . which is direct opposition to the above-stated goals.

COMMENT OF NICOLE HERD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:04 a.m.

City, State: Sunbury, OH

Occupation: Marketing

Comment: Please support local, organic farming and food stamps being accepted for healthy fruits and vegetables at farmers' markets. We need a healthier Ohio!

COMMENT OF CYNTHIA HERNANDEZ

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:31 p.m.

City, State: Ukiah, CA

Occupation: Therapist

Comment: The American people desire and deserve to know what is in their food. We want safe food and the ability to make an inform choice in what we are eating.

COMMENT OF GLENDARAE HERNANDEZ

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:33 a.m.

City, State: South Bend, IN

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Common decency as well as my Christian faith insists that the hungry among us cannot be overlooked. There is plenty in the military budget that can be cut without snatching the food out of the mouths of the hungry.

COMMENT OF JOE HERNANDEZ

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 11:04 p.m.

City, State: Saugerties, NY

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Other

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Dear Chairman Lucas,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony to the House Committee on Agriculture on the next farm bill. My district representative is being copied on this testimony. I'd like to share my support for programs that help the next generation of growers build strong farm businesses. As it's estimated that 125,000 farmers will retire in the next 5 years, it's absolutely critical that farm bill programs help citizens get started in this challenging field. I ask that the Committee endorse all of the provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236), including:

- Mandatory funding for Individual Development Accounts at \$5 million per year. This program helps new farmers raise capital to start farm businesses and is tested and proven by organizations like Practical Farmers of Iowa and the California Farmlink.
- Mandatory funding for the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program at \$25 million a year. This program funds essential education for new farmers around the country.
- Authorize a new microloan program, to enable young and beginning farmers to better access FSA loan programs.
- Revise FSA rules to make loan programs more accessible to more young and beginning farmers.
- Reaffirm the existing cost share differential for BFRs within EQIP. Also, reaffirm the advance payment option allowing beginning and socially disadvantaged producers to receive an advance payment for the project's costs for purchasing materials or contracting services, but increase the limit on the advance payment from 30 percent to 50 percent of costs.

These and other provisions within the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act will help new growers succeed and I urge you to include them in the next farm bill.

Why only one young farmer was invited to be a member of the panel is an indication that the questions and problems as they relate to the **Future** of agriculture and farming are not to be addressed. In the same way not **One Woman** was on the panel that discussed **Women's** health issues, this again shows that Congress has not learned anything about talking with the people. To many of you talk **At** the people and turn to your money handlers for direction and advise. After the **Money** tells you what to think then you act. Money may be in short supply but there is always millions for the millionaire farmers. When these are dead and gone how will you feed those that are left?

Sincerely,

JOSEPH A. HERNANDEZ,

[Redacted],

Saugerties, NY.

COMMENT OF MICHELLE D. HERNANDEZ

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 02, 2012, 4:57 p.m.

City, State: New York, NY

Occupation: College Student

Comment: As a concerned citizen, I write in support of increasing access of SNAP participants to farmers markets, in effort to provide those of lower income to fresh available foods. Coming from a city with many who fall under low income households but with many farmers markets, I feel that is unjust for a such large population to not have the chance to make more healthier choices, especially in a epoch of obesity and chronic diseases which tends to impact those of working class the most. With access to fresh produce at the farmer's markets, we can help tackle the

negative health effects that can come from picking unhealthy products at the super-markets as well as support a growing sector in our agricultural system which therefore supports small farmers and our local economy. Thank you for your time and consideration as you all go on to creating a better future for America.

COMMENT OF ANN HERNDAY

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 15, 2012, 2:00 p.m.
City, State: Santa Rosa, CA
Occupation: Retired, Homemaker, Caregiver, Long Time Gardener
Comment: Dear Chairman Lucas,

I wish to express my agreement with the testimony of author Vicki Robin. A basis of our life depends on our healthy, life nurturing soils/environment and farmers who know how to support those healthy, life nurturing interactions. What could be more important.

Thank you for this opportunity.

ANN HERNDAY.

COMMENT OF IRMINE HERO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:27 p.m.
City, State: Glen Ridge, NJ
Occupation: Mother of 4 and Small Green Business Owner

Comment: As a mother I want my kids to be safe when they eat or drink and have the right to chose products I know. Lately getting organic produce and ultimately non GMO products has been extremely difficult and next to impossible . . . tell me which cereal comes from a non GMO products? you can't and that is the saddest thing on Earth. Stop that and give consumer the right to know and the right to be able to choose by helping organic farmers to grow good food and helping them by not sponsoring corn and Monsanto.

COMMENT OF ANNIQUE HEROLD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:25 p.m.
City, State: New York, NY
Occupation: SI Practitioner
Comment:

1. Redefine humane treatment to truly mean humane.
2. True humane treatment for all farm animals.
3. Strong labeling defining GMO *versus* non-GMO.
4. More sewer treatment for all animal waste on large farms.
5. Support/subsidize smallest farms.
6. End large farm subsidies.
7. Change definition of **Organic** so it somehow doesn't exclude smallest farms.

COMMENT OF JOHN HERR

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:49 p.m.
City, State: Everett, PA
Occupation: Retired

Comment: Given the general health of the U.S. population, primarily obesity and diabetes the current farm bill only exacerbates this situation by payment to support the corporate agriculture of sugar, corn (high fructose corn syrup)and soy most of which is GMO modified. All this finds its way into the food supply. There is little or no support of small farms with diversification and could be organic. The small dairy farmer which could sell raw milk, is being besieged by state and Federal agencies and is being prevented from selling raw milk across state lines. For the sake and security of our nation the sale of locally produced produce and non-CAFO meat and milk should be encouraged instead of legislation that favors the large corporate operations. Less and less of our produce is coming from the U.S. and is now imported. What happens when that supply is interrupted? By encouraging farmers, especially corporate farmers to grow the very foods that are having an adverse effect upon the health of the nation. This increases the cost of health care. Deep subsidy cuts would benefit not only the budget but the health of the nation.

JOINT COMMENT OF NANCY HERRICK, P.A. AND ROGER MORRISON, M.D.

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 3:55 p.m.
City, State: Nevada City, CA
Producer/Non-producer: Producer
Type: Fruits
Size: Less than 50 acres
Comment: We support local foods and farms act (HR 3286).
 We support fully funding conservation programs.
 We support Beginning farmer and rancher Act (HR3236).
 We support maintaining EQIP Organic Initiative.

Sincerely,

NANCY HERRICK, P.A.;
 ROGER MORRISON, M.D.

COMMENT OF AMY HERRON

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 1:40 p.m.
City, State: Virginia Beach, VA
Occupation: Student
Comment: Please do more to support family farms and growers of fruits and vegetables. Help produce "food" not commodities! The health of the nation depends on good quality food.

COMMENT OF ANDRIA HERRON

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 12, 2012, 2:06 a.m.
City, State: Bremerton, WA
Occupation: Student
Comment: I am a former Food & Beverage industry person who has been forced to change my profession in these hard economic times. I have returned to college to get my degree in Nutrition & Dietetics. It is more than obvious that the Big Agriculture has poisoned our land, waters and our food. Organic is the only option to restore our health and the health of our Earth.

COMMENT OF PAMELA HERRON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:15 p.m.
City, State: El Paso, TX
Occupation: Educator and Writer
Comment: Our food is essential to our success as a nation. I was raised on a farm and am very selective about what I eat. I believe in supporting the small farmers, especially those who are attempting to incorporate organic or sustainable farming methods. The gov't. has to stop their continued support of huge agribusinesses and throw their support behind the local, family-run farms.

COMMENT OF BARBARA J. HERTZ

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:01 p.m.
City, State: Towaco, NJ
Producer/Non-producer: Producer
Type: Fruits, Vegetables, Other
Size: Less than 50 acres
Comment: The farm subsidy supporting GMO (Genetically Mutilated organisms (misnomer "modified") should be eliminated. The subsidy represents a violation of the U.S. constitution, separation of Church from affairs of State: the "belief" that GMO ingredients in our food supply and also in animal feed is safe, is a belief system that is challenged by a wide following of credible scientists from all over the world. In fact, there is no similar following of independent science contending that these are either similar in nutritional value or metabolized as the 'natural' (non-mutilated) foods. Therefore, it is established that 'GMO' is a false religion.
 In all areas and subjects where differing beliefs may be supported the topic under dispute is a belief and therefore, the U.S. constitution forbids select support. For this reason alone, the U.S. government and the elected officials responsible for its consideration must abstain from proving support of the 'false' faith—as a misguided belief that GMO ingredients could be tolerated since they are not safe, in any amount and not safe to include in animals feed (whether the flesh or the products of animals are used as food) or human directly in a healthy diet.

The fact that pesticide (GMO corn is registered as a pesticide by the DEP) is found in the blood of a consumer (including a pregnant woman) and also found in the fetal core blood (therefore, also in the unborn child) is sufficiently alarming to prompt swift recall and regulation of all GMO ingredients, until there is sufficient testing to conclusively establish the hazards. There is no doubt that allergies are increased in persons who consume GMO ingredients as well as the offspring of pregnant mother's—pesticide crossing the placental barrier and infecting the unborn (passive consumer) of pesticide.

I strongly recommend that the Members of the House Committee on Agriculture seriously consider revoking the carte blanche approvals and certainly revoke any farm subsidy supporting the hazards posed by GMO's. These facts are established and recognized by the international community of environmental medicine physicians.

COMMENT OF DON HESS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:39 p.m.

City, State: The Villages, FL

Occupation: Retired Airline Captain

Comment: Too many foods are grown on plants that are addicted to pesticides. More pesticides are required every year to fend off weeds and insect pests. Genetically modified plants are exposing us to dangers that have never been tested for or whose time span of effects is longer than current evidence can show. Corporate agricultural conglomerates concentrate our crops into "monocultures" that are vulnerable to wipeouts by a single pest they have not been defended against. Diversity is the best protection against famine exposure through monoculture. Organic farming is the best protection for the consumer against unanticipated disease threats. Please don't let "politics" and moneyed interests get in the way of good policy and good nutrition.

COMMENT OF PHYLLIS HESS

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 9:34 p.m.

City, State: Spokane Valley, WA

Occupation: Homemaker

Comment: I'm not really sure what the farm bill covers so I may be way off base here but my concern is that farmers seem to be prohibited from selling their meat, milk, eggs, produce, without a bunch of regulation. Why can't I just go next door and buy milk without the farmer being in fear of government reprisal? I was raised on fresh milk and want my children to have fresh wholesome food from the farm. I want to be responsible for choosing the quality of food my children eat. Right now the government says that genetically modified corn is ok for my family but I can't buy fresh milk. The government says its ok to sell chickens from confinement operations where the chickens are walking in their own feces and breathing powdered feces every day and eating genetically modified feed but the farmer who wants to raise clean free range chickens and process them in his own clean (by my standards and I'm the consumer) processing facility, is prohibited by government regulation. We need food choice and less regulation of the farmer. If we go to the farm and don't like the standard we see, we can stop buying there. We don't need government micro-managing our food supply. The constitution gives no authority to the government to manage the raising or selling of food. Just saying.

COMMENT OF KARL HESSE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:10 p.m.

City, State: Huntersville, NC

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Fruits

Size: 50–150 acres

Comment: The current subsidies for commodity crops do not help farmers but raise land rents and give big business processors cheap inputs for junk food products. Further, such large scale industrial processing is a source for super bug breeding by excessive use of chemical and hormonal inputs.

Instead support and create programs that support beginning farmers and ranchers, organic farming, regional farm and food economies, and rural development. The future of the U.S. depends upon clean local food which means more small diversified farmers and ranchers, more sustainable food production, and more economic opportunity in our food system;

KARL HESSE.

COMMENT OF SUZETTE HEWETT

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 03, 2012, 10:32 p.m.

City, State: Abington, PA

Occupation: Management Consultant

Comment: I work part time as a workshare with a local CSA. We produce a lot of food organically.

We don't use chemical sprays, fertilizers, or GMO seeds and we are thriving. We could put one of these in every neighborhood and still keep growing. People want local food.

Food that creates local jobs, that is safe to eat, that doesn't require you to subsidize it with large payments to large agriculture growers. We provide subsidized food to low income families and donate to food pantries.

Rethink the process you are doing and implement the needed changes to support local small agriculture. We can feed America and the World.

COMMENT OF ANGELA HIBBARD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:27 p.m.

City, State: Detroit, MI

Occupation: Minister

Comment: I come from farm country and respect the land and the living that comes from it not just in terms of profit but the kind of "living" that comes from access to healthy fresh food. American agriculture is held hostage to agribusiness, chemical companies, and "markets" that have nothing to do with people's real needs. You are in the places of power which can maintain this hostage situation or begin to free both farmers and consumers to benefit the land and the food distribution system. In the name of the honesty which you entered public service I beg you to show some courage in the face of lobbyists and their money.

COMMENT OF ALISON HICKS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:25 p.m.

City, State: Omaha, NE

Occupation: Call Center

Comment: Fake food is negatively impacting the health of many Americans. We require healthy food (not GMO) raised sustainably without the use of harmful pesticides, extra antibiotics, or GMO (Monsanto). Monsanto "food" is not healthy for human beings.

COMMENT OF BRIAN HICKS

Date Submitted: Monday, May 14, 2012, 11:12 a.m.

City, State: Oakland, CA

Occupation: Software Product Manager

Comment: The farm bill must serve Americans as a whole. This means several things:

1. Support for small local farmers, and for new farmers, so that rural communities can thrive;
2. Support for growing genuine food (not just industrial commodities like corn and soybeans) to feed people directly;
3. Ensure that our farmers are good stewards of the land so that it will be healthy and productive for many, many generations. This means supporting farming practices that build soil fertility and do not poison land, plants or animals for short-term productivity gains.

Thank you!

COMMENT OF MOLLY HICKS

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 13, 2012, 3:32 p.m.

City, State: Hilliard, OH

Occupation: Social Worker

Comment: Hello,

I am writing to urge Congress to NOT reduce funding in the current SNAP program. As a housing case manager for The Salvation Army, I see hunger firsthand

every day. If it weren't for the current SNAP program coverage some of my clients would not receive any assistance, which would be a huge burden to their already difficult lives.

COMMENT OF HARVEY HIEBEL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:35 p.m.

City, State: Ramona, CA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: We need a farm bill that will encourage the small farm again not the big ConAgra business. We need to get back to organic farming to protect the soil we have and grow more healthy crops. no more farm aid to the big farms that grow GM crops. The ConAgra corporations do not care about how healthy our food is they only care about how much money they can make.

COMMENT OF ALISON HIGGINS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:21 p.m.

City, State: Belpre, OH

Occupation: Office Manager

Comment: Please help farmers and stop the monopolization of seed patenting by Monsanto. The people of this country are becoming more informed about what is in our food and we do **Not** want genetically modified foods on the shelves of our grocery stores and markets! The more people become aware, the more people will stand up and say **No** to these practices that have become the rule instead of what use to be the exception. Please stop the madness.

COMMENT OF BRUCE HIGGINS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:22 p.m.

City, State: Livermore, CA

Occupation: Sales

Comment: For me it's simple . . . help the small farmers who are using sustainable and organic practices . . . period. If large farmers commit to using 100% organic practices, then they should be included as well.

COMMENT OF LAURIE HIGGINS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:54 a.m.

City, State: Collegeville, PA

Occupation: Homeowner

Comment: The farm bill must be changed. Support organic, vegetables, fruit, and **Small** family farms—**Not** agribusiness such as Monsanto, Cargill, ADM—or **Any** GMO "foods".

COMMENT OF SUSAN HIGGINS

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 16, 2012, 1:25 p.m.

City, State: Phoenix, AZ

Occupation: Community Outreach Specialist

Comment: Problems for low-income people regarding the quality and quantity of food continue to appear as I visit my clients. We need to support community food banks with policies and programs like SNAP and others. Seniors especially need help in getting proper nutrition. Thank you for supporting food programs as part of the safety net for those who are struggling.

COMMENT OF MIKE HILAND

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:15 a.m.

City, State: Sherwood, OR

Occupation: Computer Programmer

Comment: Please restore full funding for the SNAP and TEFAP programs and do not cut them. Now is not the time to turn our backs on the poor and vulnerable, we cannot bring down the deficit on the backs of the poor.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF AMANDA HILBURN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:09 p.m.

City, State: Fort Collins, CO
Occupation: Domestic
Comment: No GMO! Please consider how deadly and harmful it has been for rats . . . how would it be any better for humans. And no Monsanto crops that make their own pesticide . . . Monsanto is responsible for **Round Up** and **Agent Orange**. **Stop Killing Sustainable, Local Organic Farming**. Hemp can be used for thousands of purposes . . . please consider hemp.

COMMENT OF CINDY HILDEBRAND

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:12 p.m.
City, State: Ames, IA
Producer/Non-producer: Producer
Type: Specialty Crops
Size: 301–500 acres
Comment: I am a rural Iowa resident and own land in two counties. My land produces diverse prairie seed which is harvested every year, in addition to biodiversity, clean water, clean air, improved soil, stored carbon, research, and recreation. My absolute number one priority for the new farm bill is conservation compliance in return for subsidized crop insurance. My second priority is the strongest possible Sodsaver provision. My third priority is conservation funding. I will be blunt. As a rural Iowa resident, I can see for myself that the farm conservation situation in rural Iowa is bad enough even WITH conservation compliance in place. I don't even want to imagine what would happen if conservation compliance disappeared. I can drive in any direction and see sheet erosion, gulying, officially-impaired rivers, creeks, and lakes, and more trees and perennial vegetation being bulldozed for the sake of more row crops. I drove through what looked like a miniature Dust Bowl scene just yesterday as planting was being done. Iowa has some of the worst water in the nation and is a major contributor to the Dead Zone. The average Iowa row cropped acre is losing topsoil more than ten times as fast as it can be replaced. We desperately need more conservation in this farm bill, not less. And if more funding is not possible, American taxpayers have every right to at least expect conservation compliance in return for handing over money for crop insurance. From what I read, new subsidized crop insurance plans promise to be very expensive. Why should my tax dollars subsidize soil erosion and water pollution so irresponsible producers can make more money? Conservation compliance should be a bottom line requirement for any tax-subsidized crop insurance. Period. And the more that modest proposal is resisted by some farm organizations, the more it is obviously needed. If all farmers planned to do good conservation anyway, why would there be resistance to conservation compliance? Unfortunately, the question answers itself. Thank you for reading this message.

COMMENT OF NITA HILDENBRAND

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:19 p.m.
City, State: Kirkland, WA
Occupation: Retired
Comment: This country needs to be more conservative in using GMOs, treating our farm animals more humanely, be more careful in farm pesticide use so that the runoff into our rivers and streams is kept at a minimum, stop using our land as if there is no such thing as poison, erosion *etc., etc., etc.*
 Thank you.

COMMENT OF ALLISON HILL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:36 p.m.
City, State: Taos, NM
Occupation: Chef
Comment: Increase subsidies to vegetable and Organic producers. Stop supporting factory farms. Let small producers prosper with a system so they can succeed. Boycott GMO crops completely, and ensure their labeling.

COMMENT OF STEVE HILL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:34 p.m.

City, State: Brookings, OR

Occupation: Welder, Writer

Comment: My initial thought is to thank the members of the committee for serving, but I have to wonder who is being served. Less and less do I believe it is the consumer, or small farmer, but industrial agriculture and their moneyed concerns.

When I fly over the country, or see photos of current agricultural practices, what I am reminded of is not the hard-working American farmer, but the Soviet Collective we were taught to fear as children. I have to ask, does it matter if food supply is controlled by a Politburo or a boardroom? The reality is the end result is the same; no choice, no say, no recourse if there is a serious problem. Many say let markets sort it out, they'll do the right thing. When? The reality is that unless there is an untenable loss of life and resultant outcry that may impact the bottom line, there has never been an impetus for installing a moral compass at the helm of industry. Agriculture in this country is now an industry more than anything else. I read numerous fabrication journals relating to my business, and what I have noticed is industry today is focused not on quality of product, but efficiency of process. The push is not to make a good level of profit by turning out the very best products, but my streamlining and paring down the process so that the largest amount of product at the least cost is shoved out. I've not seen an article about maximizing quality of product in years (advertising notwithstanding), but hundreds about how to maximize profit.

Agriculture is the same. We turn out ton after ton of product with no real thought about its quality. Industry would say that isn't true, but if you do as many of us have and compare a personal diet of organic, heirloom, or homegrown produce, and meat not from a factory or feedlot but from a pasture, you will simply know that industry claims are untrue.

The backbone of the American diet is the small farmer growing high quality produce. Industrial agriculture and U.S. farm policy has made that backbone soft, porous, in danger of a major fracture.

In a world where money is deified, I urge the committee to make decisions that favor the farmers, and by extension the rest of us. Do what industry will not. Agribusiness has money enough. Help small organic farmers and their local communities.

COMMENT OF GABRIELLE HINAHARA

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 12, 2012, 10:24 a.m.

City, State: Middleton, WI

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: I believe that America needs a farm bill that supports sustainable agriculture and access to healthy, fresh, local, and chemical and GMO-free food for everyone, including students eating school lunch. The priority should be on supporting agricultural and food systems that will benefit people and environment long-term, which means an emphasis on soil fertility, crop rotation, diversity (animals and crops being grown on the same piece of land), *etc.*

COMMENT OF SANDRA HINDS

Date Submitted: Friday, April 27, 2012, 2:32 p.m.

City, State: Las Vegas, NV

Occupation: Displaced Worker—Full Time Student UNLV—Elementary Education

Comment: Protect the TEFAP and SNAP programs within the farm bill. The statistics are staggering of those people who have been affected by the recession. Even though the economy is growing, the programs need to continue until the time those who **Need** these helpers are able to get on their feet and no longer need the programs! It will self correct with the economy going in the positive direction. Thanks for listening.

SANDRA HINDS,
Las Vegas.

COMMENT OF AREN HINELY

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 1:12 a.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables
Size: Less than 50 acres
Comment: It's important that any Federal assistance for large farms be connected to conservation requirements, if only because large scale can lead to larger problems and benefits.

COMMENT OF ROBERT HINELY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:23 p.m.
City, State: Sheridan, OR
Producer/Non-producer: Producer
Type: Fruits, Greenhouse/nursery, Livestock, Poultry/poultry products
Size: Less than 50 acres
Comment: I come from a health care background and when we started our farm a year ago I was shocked to see what it takes to earn a living from a small farm. In fact, both my wife and I still subsidize our farming activity with our day jobs and I think that is not fair. From talking with other family farmers, I think that is also the norm; at least one of the producers must work outside the farm. You should be able to make a living from growing good quality food for people without having to rely on outside income. I strongly urge this committee to end subsidies to large scale agri-biz so that smaller entities can compete. We should not need expensive lobbyists for you folks to see the light of day. (Read some Wendell Berry for heaven's sake). This country's agricultural policy started going downhill with Earl Butz in the 1970s but you can put us back on the road to sustainability with an improved farm bill. Good luck.

COMMENT OF BRANT HINRICHS

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 1:17 a.m.
City, State: Springfield, MO
Occupation: Teacher
Comment: I support the following provisions:

- (1) The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- (2) Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- (3) The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- (4) Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Local sustainable food supplies are absolutely essential if we are to get off our addiction to cheap energy and prepare for a difficult and challenging future. My kids are depending on it. What do big factory farmers fear? Let us have the opportunity to eat healthy sustainably grown food. The obesity epidemic in the USA pleads on both knees for it.

Please watch the movie *Food Inc.* to learn about how broken our "food;" system really is—economically, ethically, morally, environmentally, sustainably, healthily, etc., etc., etc.

Thank you for reading this far and taking my comments into consideration.

COMMENT OF RUTH HIPPI

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:05 p.m.
City, State: Alexis, NC
Occupation: Elementary School Media Assistant
Comment: As a cancer survivor, I know the importance of healthy food and environment. We must put a stop to GMO foods, excessive chemical use, and poor agricultural practices. Joel Salatin of Polyface farms in Va. has the right idea for growing crops and livestock for better food and environment. We **Must** support our local farmers, particularly those in organic growing and cut the mega factory farms and commodity crops that have been detrimental to our health and environment. Monsanto needs to be **Stopped** with all its GMO, pesticide related crop growing. They have sucked the life out of those farmers who initially grew their products for profit, only to find themselves trapped in a losing situation. America won't have to worry about being taken down by terrorists because we have become our own worst enemy by the way we practice agriculture and throw in big Pharma's drugs while you're

at it! **It Is Time To Take Back America's Health In Agriculture And Environmental Practices.**

COMMENT OF RUSSELL HIRSCH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:06 p.m.

City, State: Kailua, HI

Comment: The security of our nation demands that we focus financial support of local, small farmers growing food products. We must be prepared for a future of high petroleum input costs and transportation costs that does not result in inflation in food costs for our people. Medical costs and the cost of sickness on productivity that are now skyrocketing can also be dramatically be improved by eliminating support for mono-field and GMO corn, soy, cotton, beet and canola. Encouraging the use of organic and natural system farming is key to our nation having a healthy, positive future.

COMMENT OF JERRY HIRSCHINGER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:39 p.m.

City, State: West Lafayette, IN

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Field Crops

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Support small farmers who attempt to grow their own seed. Stop subsidies to factory farms and agribusinesses which pollute heirloom gene pools with patented DNA. Allow consumers to choose organic and unpasteurized produce. Stop giving large corporate agribusinesses competitive advantages over small producers.

COMMENT OF WENDY HIRSCHMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:21 p.m.

City, State: Frisco, TX

Occupation: Mom

Comment: I find it very interesting that the government wants to make restaurants to list on their menu's the fat content, *etc.* for each dish, appetizer, *etc.* but (and that is a big **But**) the Federal government is allowing GMO foods to be continued to be produced even though they have carcinogenics that could not only make the citizens of the U.S. sick, affect babies while they are still in the womb, *etc.* This is inexcusable and GMO grown food should be outlawed. Who knows what other horrendous effects that these GMO's products can do to a human being. The government does not do any studies about GMO effects on the populace—**Why**. I believe that the government should let the people to be able to purchase food for our families that do not have anything to do with GMO's. Please support the organic farmers who are trying to produce and sell their products to the American people. This will also lower our health care bills since we will not get sick as much. Thanks for your time. Wendy Hirschman a mom who wants to keep her family healthy and to be able to purchase safe food for us to consume.

COMMENT OF CAROL HIRTH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:44 p.m.

City, State: Berkeley, CA

Occupation: State Employee

Comment: Please put small farmers, consumers and farmworkers first, not big agricultural corporations, they don't need or deserve subsidies, support or priority.

COMMENT OF JAMIE HIRTHLER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:52 p.m.

City, State: Atlanta, GA

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: We need major reform for our country's policies on food and agriculture. Corporate agribusiness has become the dominant force in determining the agricultural practices of our nation, thus feeding our people based on cheap products with high profit margins instead of focusing on health. This in turn creates more sickness and disease because we are not eating right, and we end up spending more money on health care. Wouldn't it be better if we prevented the illnesses by eating healthy, natural, nutritious organic foods? We could also stop poisoning our Earth

and our farm workers with harsh chemical pesticides. Please support nutrition and organic farming in the next farm bill. Our country needs to be healthy in order to thrive!

COMMENT OF JOHN HIRTLE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:20 p.m.

City, State: Lexington, MA

Occupation: Carpenter

Comment: Our survival depends on re-evaluating big ag—factory farming—which the U.S. has favored over smaller, family owned sustainable farms, which have been unfairly systematically destroyed by this imbalance. Giant wealthy ag corporations don't need subsidies or to be paid to not grow crops. Obviously factory farms are where the big money is and therefore have an army of lobbyists influencing policy. So instead of common sense, what prevails is what's good for rich factory farm operations that are only interested in profits that come at the expense of our environment, the ethical treatment of livestock, our health and countless traditional farming families who have been using the land sustainably for generations.

COMMENT OF BARBARA HLADUN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:13 p.m.

City, State: Fairport, NY

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Please do the right thing for the people . . . give us food that is safe to eat and feed to our families. Leave politics and lobbyists, especially companies like Monsanto, out of the equation. And never forget you work for the people that put you in office, not the corporations with the big bucks.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF MICHAEL HOCEVAR

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 4:48 p.m.

City, State: Georgetown, CO

Occupation: Finance Real Estate

Comment: If people let the government decide what foods they eat and what medicines they take, their bodies will soon be in as sorry a state as are the souls who live under tyranny.

COMMENT OF SUSAN HOCHANADEL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:18 p.m.

City, State: La Follette, TN

Occupation: Retired

Comment: If we are serious about improving the health of the citizens of our nation (and reducing healthcare costs) we need to look first at our food and the source of our food. Please consider a farm bill that supports food production that is healthy for consumers and for our planet.

COMMENT OF AMY HOCKING

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:03 p.m.

City, State: Minooka, IL

Occupation: Substitute Teacher and Stay-at-Home Mom

Comment: Our family is a middle class educated family that lives in Minooka. I care what goes into the mouths of my family. Our diet consists of whole foods, barely any foods processed. We do not consume refined and artificial sugar (HFCS). We rely on organic farmers in our area for our beef, chicken, and produce. Please do not ignore our plea for a smart Farm bill. I want to be able to buy from local farms who grow food for my family responsibly without the use of pesticides or GMO seed.

COMMENT OF CLAUDINE HODGES

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 9:55 a.m.

City, State: Fincastle, VA

Occupation: Organic Edible Landscape Design and Installer

Comment: I am 39 years old. I have an environmental Science degree from the University of Virginia. I have worked as an arborist, for the Department of Forestry,

and as a High School Horticulture and Ecology teacher for 3 years though the SOL requirements ran me off—When my provisional licensure ran out as I was missing two classes for dual certification, I quit. What I felt the education system needed that I might be able to provide was nutrition. My students had very limited familiarity and access to healthy food.

I started a pastured poultry farm with the Salatin method on a borrowed farm—paid for in \$6,000 of manure applied to the beef cattle pastures. When that farm went up for sale I ran another organic vegetable operation that also went up for sale 2 years later. Both operations were clearly headed for profitability after the first year! And I had no experience farming. Small scale farming works but I couldn't afford the land. Mentorship programs are key! I had a farmer pull up in front of my home in the middle of town and offer that first farm to me. Americans need healthy food—and they want it. My clients ask me to sell produce all the time, but I simply can't afford to get started. Now, I am just trying to teach them how to grow their own. Really the vast majority would rather just be able to buy greens and salad—my specialty and something that isn't available many places.

COMMENT OF SUEYAMA HODGES

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:09 a.m.

City, State: Ft. Myers, FL

Comment: We the people deserve fresh chemical free produce and at an affordable price. Where everyone involved in growing, transporting, selling and consuming is treated fairly. Keep our foods whole and healthy with minimal chemical use! Our kids need healthy unaltered fruits and vegetables on their tables!

COMMENT OF SUSAN HODGES

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:03 a.m.

City, State: Athens, GA

Occupation: Pastry Chef, Backyard Gardener

Comment: U.S. Agriculture policies need to change to reflect our growing understanding of the importance of supporting local and sustainable agriculture; we need to stop funding the biggest, most industrialized agricultural enterprises that do not need money and do not provide the most nutritious food, and use some of those funds instead to support smaller scale farmers and ranchers, especially those using environmentally friendly production methods.

Therefore, as the committee considers the 2012 Food and Farm Bill, I urge you to:

- Support our fight against hunger by maintaining and strengthening critical nutrition programs in this time of unprecedented need. We must not solve our budget problems on the backs of those experiencing food insecurity, including our most vulnerable—our children, the elderly, and the disabled;
- Provide an even “plowing” field by fully funding programs that support beginning and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, organic farming, regional farm and food economies, and rural development. We need more farmers and ranchers, more sustainable food production, and more economic opportunity in our food system;
- Support family farmers that really need help, not the biggest farms that don't: End subsidies (aka direct payments and countercyclical commodity programs), and replace them with loophole-free agriculture risk coverage. Additionally, implement a cap on crop insurance premium subsidies;
- Ensure that limited conservation funding maximizes lasting environmental benefits: Limit funds to Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) for animal waste management infrastructure by eliminating the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) Livestock Set-aside and protect the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) from disproportionate cuts, and improve it by ranking applications solely on their conservation benefits.

COMMENT OF HEINZ HOEKE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:19 p.m.

City, State: Highland, UT

Occupation: Retired

Comment: The American people need a farm bill that protects their interests, *e.g.*, food crops produced free of GMOs and organic. The agricultural corporations are only interested in profits regardless of the consequences. Organic farmers need

to be protected from inroads made by Monsanto, which are aimed to destroy family farmers.

COMMENT OF LINDA HOFF

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:17 p.m.

City, State: Grand Blanc, MI

Occupation: Advocate

Comment: I am a consumer and a back yard producer. As a taxpayer, I endorse legislative support of healthy farm practices, **Not** big business CAFOs, or tobacco farming, GM foods, or any other antisocial practices. I believe that our current system of farming with pesticides and antibiotics is harming people's health and our economy.

COMMENT OF ANTONIA HOFFMAN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 1:28 p.m.

City, State: Las Vegas, NV

Occupation: Realtor

Comment: I am all for **Organic** Farmers. I care where my food comes from and want pesticide free produce. We talk about health care when we should be concerned what we are eating first.

COMMENT OF CARLETON HOFFMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:41 p.m.

City, State: San Francisco, CA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Stop taking orders from Monsanto and other lobbyists and develop a policy that supports strictly defined organic standards and prohibits genetically engineered crops.

COMMENT OF MARC HOFFMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:07 p.m.

City, State: North Wales, PA

Occupation: Real Estate

Comment: It is critical that a farm bill address the need for healthier, more humane foods. Organic food must play an important role. Our food choices in this country are entirely too unhealthy.

COMMENT OF PAULINE HOFFMAN

Date Submitted: Tuesday, April 17, 2012, 2:56 p.m.

City, State: Butler, PA

Occupation: Homemaker/Stay-at-Home Mother

Comment: Please sign the farm bill and give the people of your district the right to good, healthy, food and the choice to choose the additives and the lack of chemicals in our food. We want the choice of knowing what is being used, what is being put into our food. What the additives are, what the chemicals are that are used to grow the food. Pink slime is a terrible time in our country's history that I hope will never be again and we will look at it as a terrible mistake and learn from it, and never allow that kinds of additive in our food again without the express knowledge of the consumer and full disclosure. Thank you.

COMMENT OF JANET HOFFMANN

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 3:04 p.m.

City, State: Campbell, CA

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: Please support a farm bill that stops giving subsidies to large, wealthy, growers for crops that are unhealthy and unsustainable. Instead we should be using public funding to support small farms who are truly struggling and for development of agricultural methods that use fewer herbicides and pesticides.

COMMENT OF KYLE HOFFMANN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:15 p.m.

City, State: Newton, IA

Occupation: Student of Mechanical Engineering at Iowa State University

Comment: Please fund the Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative at \$30 million per year in mandatory funding. Investing in sustainable agricultural research such as organic, permaculture, Holistic Management, and garden forestry while promoting local foods are essential to providing the quality of life we all deserve.

Please support the full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).

Please support the full funding of conservation programs like the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), and make sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs. Also, improve CSP by ranking applications solely on their conservation benefits. Many farmers count on CSP as well as other conservation programs to conserve soil for future generations, keep water and air clean, and create habitat for wildlife while simultaneously farming profitably.

Please fully fund the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program with mandatory funding that guarantees \$25 million per year while implementing all of the provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236). We need to support beginning farmers and ranchers entering agriculture.

Please support the maintaining of the EQIP Organic Initiative.

With the increase in energy costs, the increase in obesity, the increase in cancer and other chronic diseases we need to focus on improving the quality of food people are eating and that starts with improving the quality of the soil. We can't afford to have the average American meal shipped 1500 miles before it reaches our plate. We need to set up a system that relies on locally produced foods from farmers who use sustainable practices that builds soil instead of degrading it.

Please eliminate all subsidies that support ethanol production and ethanol research. Current research from the University of California, Cornell University, and others has shown that it takes more energy to produce ethanol than it saves when incorporating the overall energy balance. Therefore we have been wasting billions of taxpayers' dollars on a fuel that doesn't save energy and the practice of growing corn for ethanol has been degrading our soil, water, and air dramatically.

Thank you for your time.

COMMENT OF MARY HOGAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:00 p.m.

City, State: Guysville, OH

Occupation: Artist, Gardener

Comment: We need a farm bill that supports small diversified family farms. These farms provide true food security. Almost all food issues of safety and animal abuse are issues of mega, corporate farms, not small farms. Small, family farms, ideally using organic and sustainable methods, need support and exemptions from the rules needed by the mega-farms.

COMMENT OF SABRINA HOGAN

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 9:05 p.m.

City, State: Monrovia, CA

Occupation: Actor/Artist/Environmentalist

Comment: Please keep Organic food pure, the way GOD create it, in the context of how it was grown in the early 1900's and before . . . before chemicals and science altered it! Keep the farms in the hands of the people not corporations or government and grow what we need not subsidize crops! Thanks!

SUBMITTED LETTER BY LAURA HOLBROOK

Hon. FRANK D. LUCAS,
Chairman,
House Committee on Agriculture,
Washington, D.C.

Dear Congressman Lucas:

I am writing to you about the U.S. farm bill. First, I hope you will accept the Senate's recent draft provisions that support healthy diets and food security, including the \$5 million annual funding increase for Community Food Projects and the inclusion of \$100 million over 5 years for healthy food incentives.

I have, however, several concerns about the draft bill that I hope can be addressed:

1. At a time when more households than ever rely on SNAP benefits that often run out before the end of the month, Congress should strengthen, not weaken SNAP, by raising benefits by adopting the Low-Cost Food Plan and eliminating restrictions such as the cap on shelter deductions. This bill would cut \$4 billion from SNAP by limiting states' ability to operate "Heat and Eat" policies, which would mean less food in the refrigerator for already hungry families.
2. We commend the Committee's recognition of the urgent need for additional funding for The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) but it needs to be fully funded as the need for emergency food has grown substantially. Please include that in the farm bill.
3. Increased funding to the Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP) is needed as the program's demand already outpaces funding. Its mandatory allocation should increase.
4. While I congratulate you on proposing the elimination of direct payments for commodities and introduction of much needed whole-farm revenue insurance, it is unfortunate that these subsidies exist at all, especially in a period in which austerity is being applied in other areas. I would like to see a meaningful per-farm cap on subsidies and a lower individual income limit for recipients (which this bill in fact raises from \$500,000 to \$900,000). This would save enough money to spare conservation and anti-hunger programs from the proposed cuts. Such payments should be more strongly tied to conservation measures.
5. I would like to see the following revenue-neutral changes that were not adopted in this draft bill. Requiring that marketing agreements have a firm base price derived from an external source would help restore competition and promote fairness in our food system. Eliminating the EQIP livestock "set-aside" and reinstating caps on the size of livestock operations eligible for manure management funding would better achieve conservation goals. In this deficit-cutting climate, we should not miss the opportunity to make these and other important no-cost improvements.

Thank you for your time and attention.
Sincerely,



LAURA HOLBROOK.

COMMENT OF STEPHANIE HOLBROOK

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 3:26 p.m.
City, State: Concord, NC
Occupation: Writer

Comment: I write to urge you to support organic farm funding and also to label foods that are genetically modified. The people have a right to know what they are eating. It might also help if you did not have a former Monsanto worker having free reign over our food supply. If I wanted polyester slacks I'd go to Monsanto but if I want good wholesome food I'll go to a local organic farmer.

JOINT COMMENT OF BILL, MARGOT & SCOTT HOLCOMB

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:30 p.m.
City, State: Tryon, NC
Occupation: Retired Educator(s) and Son

Comment: The older male member of this household was raised part-time on a (hard) working ranch on the Mojave Desert. We are all dedicated to the ideal organic farming and encouragement of relatively small family owned and operated farms.

COMMENT OF CHRIS HOLDER

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 13, 2012, 7:32 a.m.
City, State: Hammondsport, NY

Comment: Good grief, please restore all SNAP funding! Who truly believes it is a good idea to take from those who can least afford it? This punishes hungry children all across America.

COMMENT OF REBECCA HOLDER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 12, 2012, 7:22 a.m.

City, State: Hammondsport, NY

Occupation: Retired

Comment: As a person who works with programs which feed hungry children and families in Yates County (Milly's Pantry Weekend BackPack program director and co-director of Food for the Needy,) I am distressed about the possibility of cuts to SNAP. We have already had large increases in need at our distributions. The local community cannot bear the hugely increased cost which will result if these cuts are enacted. Thank you for considering.

COMMENT OF KIM HOLETON

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 11:33 p.m.

City, State: Sycamore, IL

Occupation: Organic Food Retailer Store Employee

Comment: As much as possible, I only buy organic food or locally, sustainable raised food. Please ensure that the providers of organic, sustainable and local food are protected and supported by the U.S. government.

COMMENT OF SHARON HOLFORD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:53 p.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Retired Librarian

Comment: Please support small local farmers. Stop the subsidies to conglomerates that poison our food and make it impossible for farmers to compete to provide us with healthy, nutritious foods.

COMMENT OF DEL HOLLAND

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:28 p.m.

City, State: Iowa City, IA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: As the House Agriculture Committee prepares its version of the farm bill, I urge you to restore the link between taxpayer-supported subsidies for crop insurance and conservation compliance protections that will protect the nation's water and land.

COMMENT OF SAGE HOLLAND

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 12:19 p.m.

City, State: Fox, AR

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Big farming and semi big Farms ruins the water and the soil and creates problems for all the small farmers downstream! If continually subsidized it will ruin the future of our hope for simple sustenance, there is too much food being wasted and too much commercial fertilizers going into the water table, now with drought conditions here in our area, entire regions are becoming deserts where there was once rain forests !They prevent this reoccurrence of the dust bowl days in other countries, but here sanity is seen as big government, when really the subsidies is the culprit! we need better regulations to make the production of food more long term environmentally sound. The little farmers shouldn't have to close up and move away because the big farms ruin the land and take all the water!

COMMENT OF JEFFREY HOLLAR

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:10 p.m.

City, State: Woodstock, VA

Occupation: Professor

Comment: Stop subsidizing corn and soybeans. This policy enables huge agribusiness to make more money while providing less nutritious food for consumption, particularly for low income people. Farm policies must be addressed in the context of health policies. Look at the data for diabetes and other chronic health issues and compare it to poor farm policies that help big business instead of the consumers. Thank you for considering my opinion.

COMMENT OF KIM HOLLENS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:37 p.m.

City, State: Stewartstown, PA

Occupation: Homemaker

Comment: I have been supporting the organic farmer and sustainable practices as a consumer for over 10 years now. Spurred by my sons demand for quality food. We immediately experienced better taste, quality and nutrition. Even though the cost was 30% more, I found I needed less food as the food I was eating provided 30% more nutrition. My body demanded less. All of my grown children and their families make the sacrifice to pay more to eat better. Our food should not be a commodity for profit alone. It must come with care and concern for our environment, the Earth we grow on and the people we feed. We are growing Americans. Consider that when you eat food produced by industrial farms and wonder if there might be a correlation between what we feed our people and how poorly we perform when compared to many other countries that do take seriously what they put into their bodies.

I, Kim Hollens, a voting American, fully endorse the following bills,

- All provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

COMMENT OF EUTRINA HOLLEY

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 10, 2012, 4:45 a.m.

City, State: Springfield, MA

Occupation: Cosmetologist/Entrepreneur

Comment: Please protect funding for critical Federal nutrition programs, and please take into consideration the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) as you re-evaluate the farm bill.

COMMENT OF ELIZABETH HOLLINGSWORTH

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 7:26 p.m.

City, State: Pinetta, FL

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Greenhouse/nursery

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Get agriculture out of the hands of factory farms & politicians! We can feed America just fine without them. Support small family farms, which built this country in the first place! And we'll all be the healthier for it!

COMMENT OF CHRISTOPHER HOLLIS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:09 p.m.

City, State: Oakland, CA

Occupation: Entrepreneur

Comment: It would be good for this country if the government started helping to make this country healthy again and worked for the small farmers instead of just the corporations. Can you not see that the American people are growing tired of your love of campaign dollars at our expense?

COMMENT OF JUDITH HOLLIS

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 4:22 p.m.

City, State: Fond Du Lac, WI

Occupation: Pharmacist

Comment: I am a natural medicine pharmacist & am concerned greatly about what our citizens are eating and the growing tons of insecticides used on our foods. Gastroenterologists are saying our G.I. tracts are becoming insecticide factories. What is that doing for our delicate enzyme systems? Too many people are on proton-pump inhibitors as it is. Start thinking about life and less about profits!

COMMENT OF ALICIA JOY HOLLOPETER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:06 p.m.

City, State: Lexington Park, MD

Occupation: Mechanical Engineer

Comment: Please focus on small, local, sustainable farms, and organic foods. Congruently, if American awareness of reasonably priced, fresh, local produce is elevated, it would certainly help alleviate the pressing national problem of obesity. Southern Maryland has a great local farm community and access to healthy choices—and the farmers themselves are so knowledgeable about what they provide and offer clever recipes and suggestions. This is a lovely way to shop and eat, and I feel Americans could benefit from contact like this and become healthier. Please help these farms and others like them to thrive, and provide the opportunity for other farmers to benefit their communities with good, non-processed food.

COMMENT OF WILBUR HOLLOWAY

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 7:20 p.m.

City, State: Newark, OH

Occupation: Janitor

Comment: I believe that the United States and Mexico can work together showing them how to farm their land. In return the United States can buy back some of the food also to help feed the people here and also help lower cost here in the United States. Both countries can benefit from this we can save lives and it can spread to other countries helping there bordering countries.

COMMENT OF DELORES HOLMES

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:01 p.m.

City, State: Aston, PA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: As a board certified Holistic Health Counselor and a mother of children that have struggled with mental health problems I cannot stress it enough, how important it is to have access to good quality organic food. I have seen first-hand, how people are suffering due to eating poor quality food, either pay the farmer or pay the Doctor.

COMMENT OF DIANE HOLMES

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 3:30 p.m.

City, State: San Juan Capistrano, CA

Occupation: Unemployed

Comment: Please support the Organic Farm Bill. Please continue to provide funding to vital programs such as nutrition, conservation and support for organic and sustainable agriculture. The future wellbeing of our population is in your hands.

COMMENT OF TYLER HOLMES

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:13 a.m.

City, State: Swannanoa, NC

Occupation: Adventure Education: SOAR Outdoor Trip Leader

Comment: The majority of government subsidies for conventional agricultural farms is far disproportionate to that of small farms who supply fresh local food, which is the most nutritious for the health of our nation. There needs to be substantial investments put into replenishing the soil with microbiology and nutrients, and scientific research is clearly showing that conventional agriculture is unsustainable and destructive. Remember the Dust Bowl? I was not alive but my grandfather remembers it clearly. He was a true American Farmer, and a government nature conservationist.

Please, think seven generations ahead.

COMMENT OF NANCY HOLSTE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:00 p.m.

City, State: Fall City, WA

Occupation: Interior Designer and Health Coach

Comment: As someone who battled environmental illness with no insurance and still working at age 72 I can tell you GMO and chemicals are big business not con-

sidering the welfare of the people. May no one in your families experience the years of suffering, I endured. I finally overcame threew years of study and keeping my surroundings and food **Organic**.

COMMENT OF CHANDRA HOLSTEN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:32 p.m.

City, State: Ashland, OR

Occupation: Gallery Director

Comment: We, as citizens and consumers, have a right to your considerations of our preferences for organic foods that has not been affected by GMOs. We are asking you to honor these needs above those of big agri-biz to protect us from foods we consider to be unhealthy, or even dangerous. Your department needs to be more directly involved in the overseeing and regulations that guarantee the purity and safety of our foods. Thank you.

COMMENT OF KENDRA HOLT

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:52 a.m.

City, State: Wheaton, MD

Occupation: Professional Musician

Comment: It is of the utmost importance that U.S. organic standards be as strict as any states' (CA for instance) for the safety of consumers. I have bought organic products for years and expect them to be just that, not some halfway compromise of convenience. Please do your jobs and protect the public from the chemicals and dangers of big Agriculture.

COMMENT OF ANA HOLTEY

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:10 p.m.

City, State: Prescott, AZ

Occupation: Retired

Comment: With impunity, big farmers ruin **Any** competition, but the small or organic farmer is the best farmer, so much so that they keep **Earth** the way it was meant to be. What are **You** going to eat when there is nothing free of chemicals or hormones left? Girls 13 or 14, with breast that Jane Mansfield would had envied, boys big or bigger at the same age that most adults, **Thanks** to the **Hormones** in milk. **Please**, stop this insanity of not giving people options! If you want poison, eat it, I don't and I want a choice.

COMMENT OF JAMES HOLTZ

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:49 p.m.

City, State: Petoskey, MI

Occupation: Manager for Casual Dining Restaurant

Comment: It is time to end hunger. We cannot continue to give funds to farmers so that do not have to grow food on the land. This must stop.

I would like to see aid to farmers to grow more food so that America can continue to help all Americans. I would think that it would be better to have a food surplus. Thank you.

COMMENT OF JAKE HOLTZMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:37 a.m.

City, State: Oberlin, OH

Occupation: Student

Comment: We cannot live without food. So there needs to be more policy that allows all people to have access to clean and fresh produce. That should be an undeniable right. Secondly, the injustices that farmers face across the nation are unbelievable. No farmer should be forced into planting GMOs or spraying toxic pesticides that endanger the health of both the farmers and the consumers. Let's change the system now so that it actually abides by common sense!

COMMENT OF MARGOT HOLTZMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:16 p.m.

City, State: San Rafael, CA

Occupation: Substitute Teacher

Comment: It is critical that we change our current agricultural laws and practices. We need to support sustainable and conservation land practices. We need to fund programs that support new and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, organic farming and regional and local food economies. It is imperative that we end subsidies that award big industrial farms and replace that with loophole free agriculture risk coverage. Thank you for your consideration. It is in the best interests of all of us.

COMMENT OF MICHAEL HOLZMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:49 p.m.
City, State: Lacey, WA
Comment: Stop supporting the Big Agra Corporations with subsidies, properly label food and it's ingredients (GMO) and if any assistance is to be given, let it be to the small farmers.

COMMENT OF KELLY HOLZWORTH

Date Submitted: Saturday, March 17, 2012, 7:34 a.m.
City, State: Saratoga Springs, NY
Producer/Non-producer: Producer
Type: Specialty Crops
Size: Less than 50 acres
Comment: Please support our small farms by increasing funding for programs that help farmers sell their products to their communities. Please stop subsidizing big ag and CAFOs. Please increase funding for research of organic growing techniques, beginner farmer training, and small farm distribution of products.

COMMENT OF DEANNA HOMER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:21 p.m.
City, State: Stillwater, OK
Occupation: Retired
Comment: Big agriculture does not need to be subsidized, especially at the expense of hungry children. Monocultures have ruined the soil and the pesticides and herbicides used leave residues in the plants and in the soil before being washed into our rivers and streams. Compare the money earned by agribusiness with that earned by poor families who are trying to feed their children.

COMMENT OF KADY HOMMEL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:06 p.m.
City, State: Colorado Springs, CO
Occupation: Marketing Consultant
Comment: Please—let's get this right. Let's make things fair for consumers, and for the producers who are working hard, with integrity, to bring us safe, sustainable food, and who are committed to good stewardship of our land resources.

COMMENT OF YUNIE HONG

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 1:42 p.m.
City, State: Washington, D.C.
Occupation: Policy Advocate, Hmong National Development, Inc.
Comment: Hmong National Development, Inc. is a national advocacy organization that works on behalf of Hmong communities throughout the U.S. Large swaths of the Hmong communities are small family farmers that are filling the void in rural communities as older generations of farmers leave the industry. While they could benefit greatly from certain Federal programs, they lack access due to linguistic and cultural barriers. As you move forward with the farm bill, we encourage you to support and fund programs for small, beginner, minority, and socially disadvantaged farmers. Specifically, we ask that you incorporate programs that promote rural development such as the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program and the Local Farms, Food, and Jobs Act. We also ask that you not cut vital SNAP and WIC benefits and continue to provide a safety net for those that are struggling. In addition, we ask that you support the language in the GIPSA rule that protects small farmers from unfair business practices. Hmong farmers, particularly those in the poultry business in the Ozarks, are being forced to file for bankruptcy and losing their life savings due to the conditions in the poultry industry, and they need the GIPSA rules to level the playing field.

COMMENT OF WENDY HONOLD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:38 p.m.

City, State: Sheboygan, WI

Occupation: Managed Care Companion

Comment: I want GMO labeling on foods, and I support sustainable organic farms. I'm very unhappy that Obama appointed a former Monsanto Exec. to be the head of agriculture. I wish GMO mutated crop pollen invasion of neighboring fields was considered a punishable violation. All of your unnecessary pesticides are killing back the bee population and other valuable insects. **You Are Reforming The Earth In Detrimental Ways.**

COMMENT OF STAN HOOBING

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 3:08 p.m.

City, State: Boise, ID

Occupation: Ordained Lutheran Pastor

Comment: I would like to see in the farm bill items that strengthen such programs as SNAP, meals for senior citizens and that help feed young people in public schools.

COMMENT OF GREGORY HOOD

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 2:21 p.m.

City, State: Apple Valley, CA

Occupation: Military Contractor

Comment: The food issue is a personal issue that goes beyond what I am putting in my mouth. My wife has an extensive number of food allergies and suffers from anaphylaxis to some very basic vegetables like carrots and celery. Bottom line is the toxicity of her body is in direct proportion with the amount of processed/industrially produced food she eats. Soy, wheat, corn and their secondary products like lecithin, which prevents proper liver function are far greater problems than mold on cheese (many of us pay extra for the mold). I could go on but most major industrial food operations are in the business of making money—not delivering healthy product. Example: Mad Cow is back. That didn't happen in a small dairy operation. Pink slime and meat glue are not present or employed to assemble meat products in small food operations. The bottom line is the FDA and government is lazy when it comes **To** foodborne illness prevention and disease control. It is far easier to monitor one large operation, if poorly, than to track the processes of 1,000 smaller ones. The fact that I can't sell or even give away fruit from my trees is without a license and overzealous regulatory control is crazy. It is waste. This is counter to free enterprise and is anti-democratic. Let the people chose what's good for them. If we are going to regulate, regulate what is bad, not what is good.

COMMENT OF MARGARET HOOS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:20 p.m.

City, State: Royersford, PA

Occupation: Housewife

Comment: There is a limit to what this planet can give in resources and take in abuse. We will have to start to take care of it and get rid of the overload of man-made chemicals that will destroy nature. We have to think about sustainability and not profit (money).

COMMENT OF KIM HOOVER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 12, 2012, 4:34 p.m.

City, State: Port Townsend, WA

Occupation: Home Health Care Worker

Comment: I am very concerned about the serious state of health of our citizens and our environment. Numerous reliable, peer-reviewed, governmentally funded studies show that eating an animal-based diet is deleterious to our health and that we would all be healthier eating a plant-based diet. Animal-based diets are correlated with obesity, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and cancer,¹⁻³ the leading

¹*The China Study*, T. Colin Campbell and Thomas M. Campbell.

²Dr. Neal Barnard's *Program for Reversing Diabetes*

³*Prevent and Reverse Heart Disease*, Caldwell B. Esselstyn, Jr., M.D.

causes of deaths in the U.S., in addition to being a serious detriment to our economy. In addition, growing animals for food uses 50% more energy,⁴ takes much more water and land,⁵ and produces much more soil, air, and water pollution.⁶

Yet, the majority of our farm subsidies go to the dairy, meat, and fishery industries and to grow the monoculture of corn and soybeans that are fed to these animals. Basically, as taxpayers, and as a government, we are in reality PAYING to make people sick and to degrade the environment at the same time.

This is nothing less than a travesty and I implore you to please make the changes necessary to the next farm bill to eliminate these subsidies so as to support healthy plant-based diets for our school lunch programs, WIC and SNAP programs. Elimination of the meat and dairy subsidies will show the true cost of a fast food meal and will result in an increase in healthy eating habits of all Americans.

Sincerely,

KIM HOOVER.

COMMENT OF REV. GLENDA HOPE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:35 p.m.

City, State: San Francisco, CA

Occupation: Clergy

Comment: For 40 years I have worked with the poor families, disabled people and others in San Francisco's Tenderloin. I know how vital the food stamps are for them.

Surely it is time to stop subsidies for such crops as cotton and soybeans and invest in developing farming practices that are sustainable and positive for the planet.

Thank you for considering this as you vote on this legislation.

REV. GLENDA HOPE.

COMMENT OF BRITTANY HOPKINS

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 9:55 p.m.

City, State: Bangor, ME

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Dear Chairman Lucas,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony to the House Committee on Agriculture on the next farm bill. My district representative is being copied on this testimony. I am a young farmer in my first year as owner of Wise Acre Farm in Kenduskeag, Maine, which will be selling fresh vegetables to local farmers' markets and institutions in the greater Bangor area. I think it is important for the farm bill to include and expand programs that help the next generation of growers build strong farm businesses. The country needs us to grow food, create jobs and support the many other businesses that furnish our supplies and equipment. I ask that the Committee endorse all of the provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236), including:

- Mandatory funding for Individual Development Accounts at \$5 million per year. This program helps new farmers raise capital to start farm businesses and is tested and proven by organizations like Practical Farmers of Iowa and the California Farmlink.
- Mandatory funding for the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program at \$25 million a year. This program funds essential education for new farmers around the country, including the Maine Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association's Journeyperson program, which is providing incredibly helpful educational and technical assistance to me for the next 2 years as I launch my farm business.
- Authorize a new microloan program, to enable young and beginning farmers to better access FSA loan programs.
- Revise FSA rules to make loan programs more accessible to more young and beginning farmers.
- Reaffirm the existing cost share differential for BFRs within EQIP. Also, reaffirm the advance payment option allowing beginning and socially disadvantaged producers to receive an advance payment for the project's costs for purchasing

⁴*Food, Energy, and Society*. Pimental, D. and Pimental, M.H.

⁵*Bioscience* 54 (10): 909-918

⁶*Plan B: Rescuing a Planet under Stress and A Civilization in Trouble*, Lester R. Brown.

materials or contracting services, but increase the limit on the advance payment from 30 percent to 50 percent of costs. I have applied for funding to support a high tunnel, cover cropping and establishing organic certification through the EQIP Organic Initiative, and the cost share differential for beginning farmers makes a big difference in making this program worth the time and paperwork for me and other farmers starting out on a small scale.

- Amend the Farm and Ranch Land Protection Program (FRPP) to make farm viability part of the purpose of the program and to give discretionary authority to the eligible entities that implement the program to give priority to easements with an option to purchase at the agricultural use value, deals that transfer the land to beginning and farmers and ranchers, applicants with farm succession plans, and other similar mechanisms to maintain the affordability of protected land.

These and other provisions within the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act will help new growers succeed and I urge you to include them in the next farm bill.

Sincerely,

BRITTANY HOPKINS.

COMMENT OF ROBERT HORAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:02 p.m.

City, State: Vermilion, OH

Comment: Farm food should be free to grow, sell, eat, and transport **Period**. Only **Food Factories** and **Corporations** should be controlled and manipulated. It was the family farm that built this country and it was corporations and politicians who have ruined it. It's time once again for the Constitution to be used and our freedoms to reign. I have the right to drink raw milk should I chose to. It's none of your concern until factories poison our food and intentionally destroy the life within it. Family farms are to be protected and free at all costs. Corporations and food factories are to be discouraged and defeated at every turn and at all costs. Food should be grown, sold, and eaten locally without regulation. Bad farmers do not last long if his customers choose the farm down the road. The government is the one needing regulation, and it was written in the Constitution that it be severely limited.

COMMENT OF MAIKA HORJUS

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 2:31 a.m.

City, State: Vancouver, WA

Occupation: Transportation/Administration

Comment: I appreciate your work on our nation's food and farm policy and strongly urge you to make this farm bill about **Food**. Make this a Bill about creating a healthy, resilient nation that values the health of its people, its land, and **All** of its farmers. Make this Bill about healthy, nutritious, accessible food for every child, family, and individual in every region of the nation.

I strongly support:

1. The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
2. Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
3. The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
4. Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

I also beg that you defend our democracy and keep the good of the people—particularly the most vulnerable in our nation—at the forefront of your policy-making. Thank you so much for your consideration in this matter and for your public service on behalf of all Americans—the hungry, the hardworking, the malnourished, the obese, the uneducated, the well-educated, the aspiring farmers, the health workers, the farm workers, the politicians, the fathers and mothers and sons and daughters, the grandchildren . . . this is not just a bill about agriculture; this Bill is about all of them. This Bill is about our values and priorities as a country. Please consider this as you discuss.

Thanks again.

COMMENT OF JANE HORN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:36 p.m.
City, State: Eugene, OR
Occupation: Real Estate Agent
Comment: For all of our sakes, you have this chance to give us the kind of food we need to thrive. Processed food is causing a raft of lifelong ailments. We need to keep the food system natural.

COMMENT OF DEBORAH HORNER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:44 p.m.
City, State: Denver, CO
Occupation: Retired Teacher
Comment: We urgently need a farm bill that puts the health of individuals, of precious farm land and small farmers **First**. Corporate agribusiness practices negate all of the above priorities. Let's get it right! Now!

COMMENT OF JOANNE HORSMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:55 p.m.
City, State: Camillus, NY
Occupation: Marketing Consultant
Comment: We desperately need a farm bill that supports local, organic and NOFA pledged farming standards. Enough with all the subsidies for Big Agribusiness. I plead for a more local friendly farm bill.

COMMENT OF RUTH HOSEK

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:08 p.m.
City, State: Chicago, IL
Occupation: Retired Teacher
Comment: There is no excuse for growing crops that are injurious to the health of those who eat them. GMO crops are especially injurious and should be banned as soon as possible. They have already done great damage but perhaps their continued evil can be mitigated by destroying them forever. Oh, yes—poor Monsanto. They might lose money. It is only money and they can make more by devising helpful things instead of evil and polluting things. Interesting idea?
 I hope you will not condemn your progeny to early disease and death by allowing more distribution of these GMOs. Your name will live on only to be excoriated and hated by them as they live short, unhealthy lives.
 And we who now are alive, we need to have that produce labeled so we can choose between health and death. You were chosen to preserve and protect. Do your jobs. Or have they given you a cook book on how to prepare money as a meal?

COMMENT OF NANCY HOTALING

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:38 p.m.
City, State: Riverside, CA
Occupation: Grounds Keeper
Comment: We need to support Sustainable farming! AND make sure we have adequate oversight to assure that our food is kept safe. Please work to protect the American people's food sources. Take a look at the wonderful work being done by the Kansas Land Institute.
 Thank you.

COMMENT OF EVELYN HOUBEN

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 4:39 p.m.
City, State: Ft. Lauderdale, FL
Occupation: Writer
Comment: Let's protect small farmers. We need locally grown food which isn't transported thousands of miles before it just reaches our stores. We need to do more to encourage organic foods. GMO foods or ingredients shouldn't simply be labeled, which, for the most part, they are not, and "natural" labeling allows consumers to be misinformed. We need a ban on GMO crops. We need high fructose banned from all foods. These are only some of the changes needed. Our food chain is making Americans **Sick** and think of how much health care costs! Agro-business is a shady industry. Do not allow it to continue poisoning us.

Thanks for your attention and concern about these matters.

COMMENT OF DIXIE HOUSE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:38 p.m.

City, State: Jeffersonville, IN

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I feel strongly that everyone should be able to know what is in the food we buy. Also, I support organic farming and all small farmers. I will be watching to see how you vote.

COMMENT OF BRIAN L. HOUSEAL

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 12:25 p.m.

City, State: Elizabethtown, NY

Occupation: Executive Director—Adirondack Council

Comment: May 16, 2012

House Committee on Agriculture,
Washington, D.C.

Dear Mr. Chairman and the House Committee on Agriculture:

The Adirondack Council, a member based nonprofit organization dedicated to ensuring the ecological integrity and wild character of the Adirondack Park, appreciates the opportunity to comment on the 2012 Farm Bill. Our organization advocates for the conservation and improvement of agricultural lands in the Adirondack Park, for the sustainable production of food crops and forestry products, and for the protection of ecological resources. We seek to support and promote farming and forestry that upholds rural quality of life, clean air and water, native wildlife, and vibrant local communities. In addition to its recognition as the East's greatest wilderness, the Adirondack Park is home to approximately 52,000 acres of farmland, with the greatest concentration in the Lake Champlain and St. Lawrence River valleys.

Despite growing public interest in local food and open space preservation, these farmlands and forests face the same formidable list of challenges as others across the nation. The celebrated woodlands of the Adirondacks are under constant siege of fragmentation due to second home development, and similarly, small family farmers disadvantaged by incentives that favor large-scale agribusiness are pressured to subdivide or sell their land to developers.

Mindful of these challenges, it is imperative that the farm bill puts incentives in place to protect the quality and quantity of our forests, and strives to ensure that small farms remain economically viable, while also building upon past initiatives to promote ecologically sound farming practices and conservation efforts.

The Adirondack Council enthusiastically applauds the Senate Committee on Agriculture's continued and expanded support of the Forest Legacy Program, and wishes to see the House follow their example.

Additionally, the Committee's endorsement of the grant-based Northern Border Regional Commission is vital for advancing environmentally responsible community development projects in rural areas of New York, Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine.

While the Senate's support of these programs is commendable, we urge the House Committee to distinguish itself by fully funding the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP). As the primary vehicle for encouraging farmers to implement ecologically beneficial practices through economic incentives (encompassing issues such as soil quality, erosion, water quantity and quality, biodiversity, air quality, energy conservation, *etc.*), funding of the CSP would greatly improve the capacity of farmers to restore the resilience and health of their farmland and parent ecosystems throughout the country. Such an investment would not only pay dividends to farmers now, but the consequent boon to ecosystem services would yield sustained benefits for those farmers and adjacent communities in the future.

The farm bill has tremendous potential to positively influence the present and future livelihoods of American farmers and the millions of people they feed. The Adirondack Council firmly believes that a renewed commitment to the Conservation Stewardship Program is essential to realizing our vision of sustainable agriculture, and would effectively sow the seeds of a brighter future for not only our farmers, but our society as a whole.

Sincerely,

BRIAN L. HOUSEAL,
Executive Director,
Adirondack Council.

COMMENT OF ALAN W. HOUSEMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:30 p.m.**City, State:** Washington, D.C.**Occupation:** Executive Director, Center for Law and Social Policy**Comment:** Dear Representative:

As Congress works to craft the FY 2013 Agriculture Appropriations bill, CLASP, the Center for Law and Social Policy, strongly urges you to protect the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and other programs that serve vulnerable families, children and the elderly. CLASP is a national policy organization that seeks to improve the lives of low-income people by developing and advocating for Federal, state and local policies to strengthen families and create pathways to education and work.

In these tough economic times when unemployment and underemployment rates remain high and families across the country continue to struggle, vital nutrition programs have proven to be a lifeline for millions. According to a report by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Economic Research Service released in April 2012, on average, SNAP helped 44.7 million individuals monthly with modest food supports averaging just \$134 in 2011. The findings showed that SNAP has lifted millions out of poverty, achieving an annual decline in the nation's poverty rate of 4.4 percent between 2000 and 2009. SNAP has effectively responded to the needs of low-income families and communities during times of economic downturn and increased struggle. Enrollment increases when the economy weakens and decreases when the economy recovers. It is a program that must be protected and strengthened to serve the needs of so many families still facing real hardship across this country.

One of the cuts that this committee has considered would eliminate states' ability to align SNAP's rules with other programs serving low-income families through "categorical eligibility." Categorical eligibility makes it simpler to administer the program, reduces administrative costs, and helps ensure that eligible households have access to all applicable support programs. Most categorically eligible recipients would still qualify for SNAP under the standard rules, but would have to struggle through additional red tape to do so. According to the Congressional Budget Office, eliminating broad-based categorical eligibility would save less than 2 percent of projected spending for the program between 2013 and 2022, because most recipients affected by it receive a minimal benefit. Increased time to verify information on SNAP applications would result in more errors and greater administrative costs, further diminishing savings. Categorical eligibility must be protected as Congress considers the FY2013 Agriculture Appropriations bill.

One of the ways that states have used categorical eligibility is to raise the excessively low asset limit that often traps people in poverty. According to Federal provisions, SNAP participants are disqualified if they have assets above just \$2,000. This very low asset limit discourages low-income families from saving for emergencies and building assets and it prevents families from escaping poverty. It also disqualifies the long-term unemployed from receiving benefits until they have completely exhausted their savings, making it harder for them to repair a car, buy an interview suit, or move in pursuit of a new job. Congress should consider raising this limit in all states. In President Obama's FY 2011 budget, he proposed setting a national asset limit floor of \$10,000 for SNAP and other programs serving low-income families to allow them to accumulate a modest amount of savings and still qualify for assistance.

While it is essential that SNAP remain available for those who need it, everyone agrees that it would be better for workers to have jobs that pay well enough that they no longer need benefits. Therefore, it is important to preserve the SNAP Employment and Training program, which prepares participants for jobs and ensures access to services for a particularly vulnerable group of people. SNAP Employment and Training must not be cut, especially in these times when unemployment is still high.

SNAP is particularly important given that millions of people will be exhausting their unemployment benefits over the next year due to the economy's slow recovery. For a significant share of recipients, SNAP is truly all that stands between them and destitution and is one of the few resources available to them. In fact, a U.S. Congress Joint Economic Committee report revealed that in 2010, more than one in five workers unemployed for over 6 months received SNAP benefits.

SNAP is a vital program to low-income individuals and to our recovering economy and it is necessary that we protect and strengthen it. Not only does it help individuals make ends meet, but the expenditures of SNAP help to boost the economy as low income families are able to make purchases in local grocery stores and markets.

We urge your strong opposition to any harmful attacks at restricting or cutting SNAP eligibility or benefits and efforts to weaken the responsiveness of the program, and ask that you support SNAP and other vital programs that serve low-income families, children and the elderly as discussions around the Agriculture Appropriations bill moves forward. In addition, we urge your steadfast leadership in ensuring adequate funding levels for SNAP to strengthen its reach to low-income families, children and the elderly.

Sincerely,

ALAN W. HOUSEMAN.

COMMENT OF DAVID HOUSEMAN

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 13, 2012, 4:48 p.m.

City, State: Grand Ledge, MI

Occupation: Retired

Comment: We must have a farm bill that restores economic sense to viable family farms and to consumers, while it preserves/enhances our natural resources. That means not subsidizing large absentee landowners who abuse the land by using great quantities of fossil fuel inputs which, over the long term, ruin our soil and water resources and contribute to air and water pollution. Farmers and ranchers must use **Sustainable** practices that preserve our precious resources for generations to come and make it possible for young people to take over as existing farmer and ranch owners grow older.

COMMENT OF SUSAN HOUSTON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:33 p.m.

City, State: Nashville, TN

Occupation: Computer Technician

Comment: I am deeply concerned with the growing power of corporate agribusiness in this country. It is destroying the future of independent farming. It is patently obvious that companies like Monsanto have no interest in preserving any livelihood but their own, and both the integrity of the food they produce and their lobbying in Washington is extremely suspect.

I believe that this is an issue that, in future years, is going to prove to be a significant turning point for this country, and I beg Congress to **Do The Right Thing** and help American farmers to survive and thrive, as well as ensure the safety and nutrition of the food produced.

I support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

This is not the time to be collecting donations from agribusiness; please, be on the right side of history instead of thinking about your next election, and vote for these measures.

COMMENT OF TANYA HOUSTON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:01 p.m.

City, State: Black Diamond, WA

Occupation: Sales

Comment: Please listen to the people who are effected by your decisions and help the U.S.A. become a healthier nation by focusing on healthy food and agriculture. Clean, whole food, clean water and fresh air is the foundation. Its time to make that a priority.

Thank you for attention to this vital matter.

TANYA HOUSTON,
Black Diamond, WA.

COMMENTS OF CATHERINE HOUTAKKER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 11:55 a.m.

City, State: Sinsinawa, WI
Producer/Non-producer: Producer
Type: Field Crops
Size: 151–300 acres

Comment: I am from a farm and suffer from the use of chemicals which we were told were safe for humans, the land and animals by the chemical companies. I strongly believe organic farming is the safest and healthiest way to farm for the good of all. I beg you to support organic family farmers and help them to feed our world. Thanks.

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:03 p.m.

Comment: Organic is the only way to go for the health and welfare of the Earth and its inhabitants.

COMMENT OF KRIS HOVIS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:11 p.m.

City, State: Mill Valley, CA

Occupation: Retail Owner

Comment: We're all eaters, and therefore, we are all in this together. For maximum health and well-being, and to reduce health care costs, organic foods are essential. We need an Organic Food Bill!

Thank you,

KRIS HOVIS.

COMMENT OF CHRISTINE HOWARD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:39 p.m.

City, State: Rockford, IL

Occupation: Accounting Dept.

Comment: We need the farmlands of America to be "healthy" for ourselves, our children, and future generations. **Stop!** the corruption & blatant canoodling with big business. Get some common sense, decency, and **Backbone** and stand up for what is right & good for everyone. Our future depends on it.

COMMENT OF DALE HOWARD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:13 p.m.

City, State: Huntington, TX

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I want all small farmers to grow & sell their products to anyone who wants them. I am against all GMO products & corporate farms. The small family farms are the backbone of our country & I think we should preserve them.

Thank you,

DALE HOWARD.

COMMENT OF LORI HOWARD

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 10, 2012, 2:18 p.m.

City, State: Albuquerque, NM

Occupation: Retirement Disability

Comment: I have not yet had to go to the food banks. But I am looking in my area. Not only that I am going to apply for food stamps. I have not eaten properly for years because I don't have the money to buy food to get by. I basically live on cereal beans and Peanut butter and jelly. Most of my money goes to insurance, Medicare trying to keep up my very old mobile home. I was declared disabled in 2005 and did not work as of 2002 doctors orders, I am 47 now. I can't imagine if they cut social security and food assistance.

We Need The Governments Help! Please I want you to Fight To Keep Our Agriculture. I, Worked My Rear End Off At Ups Then The Post Office. And look at me now.

It it's not only the seniors but all of the disabled who this is going to affect!

Please! Work For Our State! I Voted For You Before I Would Like To Keep It That Way. Please State You Are Fighting For Our Agriculture!

COMMENT OF MIKE R. HOWARD

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 11:32 p.m.

City, State: Owensboro, KY

Occupation: Retired

Comment: We need organic farmers for people with allergies. Not all people have the same metabolism. Some chemical additives used in agriculture get into the food and wreak havoc with their systems. I may be an aged (experienced) American, but I vote and put money into the economy. I just would rather spend it on food than on medicine.

Thank you,

MIKE R. HOWARD.

 COMMENT OF VERNON HOWARD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:57 p.m.

City, State: Jacksonville, FL

Occupation: Professional Architect

Comment: Mr. Crenshaw,

Please do all you can to turn the health of our nation around, there is an epidemic of auto immune disorders due to the destruction of our food and water this is being ignored by the nation and big businesses. The Earth is waning away, mimicking the morals and depravity of man's minds and heart.

We talk about Greening America with LEED, *etc.*, however not one thing is being done to get rid of all the unnatural chemicals and the unproven GMO forced techniques we utilize in agriculture. The U.S. is allowing the destruction of our planet and this in turn is destroying everyone's health.

Look at your own family, I'm sure you will find at least one family member in dire straits. Our health industry is over burdened with this epidemic however no one seems to care. Let's just let the big business pad their pockets.

All the Obesity, Celiac, IBS, and myriad of auto immune disorders can be traced back to all the toxins we allow in our food and water, I personally just turned my health issues around by drinking and eating clean purified water and organic fresh fruits vegetables, however I understand if companies like Monsanto, DuPont have their way all of this healthy lifestyles will be a thing of the past. We need to turn this around and start "Paying this Forward" for the livelihood of our children's children.

 COMMENT OF JAMES HOWE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:11 p.m.

City, State: Goehner, NE

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Farm policy recently has focused far too much on allowing advantages to large corporate agribusinesses, which are as far removed from actual agriculture as one can get. The small farm, the family farm, organic farms, healthy farm practices that do not rely heavily on chemicals or genetically modified crop substances should be the focus. Genetically modified foods of all sorts should be scientific experiments in the labs only and are not fit to be fed to animals or people and should never have been unleashed onto the environment. Backing away from and eliminating policies they allow the altered organism to be found anywhere in our food supply would be a boon to the world at large and especially the people in America. Please focus farm policy on independently proven healthy choices (not industry proven), on small farms, organic farms and naturally reinigorated resources. Thank you.

 COMMENT OF AMANDA HOWELL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:22 p.m.

City, State: Los Angeles, CA

Occupation: Educator

Comment: Organic, local, sustainably farmed food is a must for this country's future. The innumerable environmental and health problems caused by the industrial agriculture system are destroying the U.S. and our planet.

 COMMENT OF JO ANNE HOWELL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:18 p.m.

City, State: Aromas, CA

Occupation: Librarian

Comment: When you are writing farm policy, please consider that our present farm policy encourages the growing of corn, which encourages the use of cheap high fructose corn syrup. The researchers from the Department of Psychology and the Princeton Neuroscience Institute just reported on two experiments investigating the link between the consumption of high-fructose corn syrup and obesity: <http://www.princeton.edu/main/news/archive/S26/91/22K07/>*

There seems to be a direct link between high obesity rates and our present farm policy. Perhaps we should be looking at alternatives.

I understand that the Senate Agricultural Committee voted to cut \$4 million from organic research funding and cut funding to support Beginning Farmers in half.

Please consider what you're doing.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF JAMES HOYLE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:21 p.m.

City, State: Mount Vernon, WA

Occupation: Retail Wine Sales—Small Local Grocery Chain

Comment: Please support local small farmers, not just “big corp landowner farms”, support origin and content (GMO) labeling, protect open pollinated crops and seed savers, rights, spend money for agronomic crop diversity as well as minor crop research. Create buffers between big ag chemistry inputs and gov't. Decision makers; rethink “basically the same as” when it comes to genetic engineered or modified inputs and crops. Thanks for this input opportunity. Make good and right things happen for all our futures.

Sincerely,

JIM H.

COMMENT OF ALLEYNE HOYT

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 10:00 a.m.

City, State: Louisville, KY

Comment: The integrity of our lands is important to me as they support our well-being. I want my tax dollars that go towards supporting this nation's food producers to be used in ways that protect the integrity of those lands & the quality of food they produce.

In 1985, American taxpayers and farmers entered into a compact to provide a safety net for the country's food producers in return for protection of critical natural resources. Known as “conservation compliance,” this policy requires farmers to follow conservation plans that limit soil erosion on highly erodible land as well as preventing destruction of wetlands and native grasslands. Farmers who willfully violate their conservation plans risk losing taxpayer funded benefits.

Today, this important connection is at risk. Taxpayer-funded subsidies for crop insurance are not currently linked to conservation compliance as they once were. In the current farm bill debate, Congress is considering eliminating Direct Payments, the major subsidy program that is linked to conservation compliance, and move some of those funds to support increased subsidies for crop insurance, which currently lacks compliance requirements. Unless Congress connects crop insurance subsidies to conservation compliance, a significant part of farmers' incentive to follow conservation plans will disappear this year.

In order to ensure that the agricultural safety net works in harmony with conservation programs and responsible land uses, conservation compliance provisions must be strengthened and enforced.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF LINDA HOYT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:08 p.m.

City, State: Skowhegan, ME

Occupation: Respiratory Therapist

Comment: We have clearly identified pesticide and antibiotic plagued agriculture as contributing factors to health issues today. Please help promote the Organic Food Movement . . . It may not be what big agribusiness wants, but it is what the people want. Thank you.

*The information referred to is retained in Committee file.

COMMENT OF ROBIN HOYT

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 10:42 a.m.
City, State: Allston, MA
Occupation: Higher Ed Information Technology
Comment: I would like a bill that supports farming of food that is healthy for us and our children (nutritious and organic) and that is sustainable, with attention to conservation.

COMMENT OF VIRGINIA HOYT

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 9:30 a.m.
City, State: Adair, OK
Occupation: Retired Small Business
Comment: What we eat is primary in for the life of this nation. Big Ag is interested only in the bottom line and the health of the nation . . . both physical and emotional . . . are of no interest. The small family farmer is way better able to serve his/her community while adding appropriately to the general economy.

COMMENT OF ERIC HUBBARD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:08 p.m.
City, State: Port St. Lucie, FL
Occupation: Commercial Diver
Comment: In this country we need to make some real changes with regards to the growing of food but what types we ingest. GMO foods are not a viable source and who knows what the future problems they might bring.

COMMENT OF MARGOT HUBBARD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:07 p.m.
City, State: Rowle, MA
Occupation: Gardener
Comment: I only support organic, local, sustainable agriculture whereby animals, plants, and the environment are treated with respect. I want this country to support organic agriculture at all levels of development. I oppose agriculture at the agri-business level which has no respect for the life and health of the inhabitants of the planet.

COMMENT OF CAROLLE HUBER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:21 a.m.
City, State: Morristown, NJ
Producer/Non-producer: Producer
Type: Vegetables
Size: Less than 50 acres
Comment: As an organization that runs ½ acre educational garden for the Morris School District, I see everyday how important small farms are. Our students are in awe of food production, because it is so new to them. They did not know where food comes from. Keep it small, keep it local. Work for us please.

COMMENT OF MICHAEL S. HUBLER

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 1:19 p.m.
City, State: Melbourne, FL
Occupation: Executive Director—South Brevard Sharing Center
Comment: Good afternoon Congressmen,
 As a large food pantry we are still breaking the record we set the day before. This has been a continuing trend since 2008. We are still seeing 100–200 new families each and every month who are newly unemployed. We need all the food can possibly get to meet this ever-increasing demand.
 We greatly appreciate your efforts, but need you to understand that this program is key to feeding the millions of hungry Americans.
 Thanks so much for your kind consideration.
 Sincerely,
 MICHAEL S. HUBLER,
Executive Director,
 South Brevard Sharing Center,

[Redacted],
Melbourne, FL,
[Redacted],
www.mysbsc.org.

COMMENT OF CHRISTIE HUCK

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:30 p.m.

City, State: Avondale, AZ

Occupation: Retail Manager

Comment: At a time when you have the power to make very positive and forward thinking policies regarding food and nutrition in America, it is essential that you get Big agriculture (especially Monsanto) out of your pockets. This isn't about your money, this is about the health of the entire world really. This includes you and your family. We need laws protecting the small family farms and organic farmers, better regulations and auditing of farms and animal welfare and safety, transparency in all areas of food safety and stricter penalties for violating laws. **Stop** giving handouts to big Ag and let's get the food system in this country turned around. Insurance companies have no business in our food. Preventative health through a nutritious diet is what is needed to combat the influx of disease and obesity in this country, not big Pharma.

This problem is everyone's and you are not immune from it. It's time to put people first and tell corporations to get the hell out of our food system.

I support the following:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

COMMENT OF AMY HUDSON

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 08, 2012, 6:03 p.m.

City, State: Atlanta, GA

Occupation: Communications Manager

Comment: Please do not cut SNAP and TEFAP! These programs are essential to millions of people—so many are out of work or working jobs that don't pay enough for them to purchase food and pay the bills. This is essential to those who are truly in need.

COMMENT OF CHARLES HUDSON

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 11:56 a.m.

City, State: Arrowsic, ME

Occupation: Videographer

Comment: Corn, soy, and wheat subsidies need to end. These subsidies are in large part what is driving the epidemic in obesity, diabetes, heart disease, *etc.* . . . Food production should be driven by actual demand.

Small farms should not be held to the same standard as enormous industrial processing facilities. Consumers should have the right and opportunity to buy from local farmers that they know, and accept any risk themselves, rather than have the government dictate standards which are too costly for small farms to implement, thus driving small local farms out of business.

Raw milk should be legal! The **Absolute** risk from drinking raw milk from a local farm is much lower than the risk of eating raw spinach from an industrial farm. Why is raw spinach legal and raw milk illegal?!

COMMENT OF MICHELLE HUDSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:25 p.m.

City, State: Holly, MI

Occupation: Art Quilter

Comment: Please put the organic farmers back to work. Stop the ceaseless genetic modification of our food chain. Label all foods that contain genetically modified food products and get America back into the production of good nutritious fruits and

vegetables without the toxic chemical spraying that the Monsanto megalith decided “We” need. Thanks for listening and acting on same.

COMMENT OF JOSEPH HUFFORD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:30 p.m.

City, State: Chico, CA

Occupation: Musician

Comment: Please ensure a future that is focused on responsible farming, limiting big business (and small farms alike) from abusing the financial help and reassurances they receive, conservation of soil and limitation of pollutants & the provision of healthy food for our citizens (*i.e.*, promote organics, limit the use of chemicals, further study any GMO’s, etc).

COMMENT OF ATHENA HUFF-SANDSTROM

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 12:07 p.m.

City, State: Chicago, IL

Occupation: Bartender/Server

Comment: The farm bill needs to focus on sustainable agriculture that gives more power and control to small farmers and organic farmers, and discourages the consolidation of power by “Big Ag” companies. A secure and diverse food supply will give America an economic and environmental boost.

COMMENT OF KITTY HUGENSCHMIDT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:56 p.m.

City, State: Colorado Springs, CO

Occupation: Pet Sitter

Comment: Our Government’s JOB is to serve the People. How are you doing that when you approve poisoning the food the People eat? We have the right to **Life**—and Food and Water is the basis of that. Polluted Water, GMO’s, and Food sprayed with Cancer causing substances does not satisfy that requirement. Protect those growing **Healthy Food!** If you were really doing your job this letter would not be necessary!

COMMENT OF ABIGAIL HUGGINS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:17 p.m.

City, State: Wilkesboro, NC

Occupation: Community Garden Coordinator

Comment: As a potential farmer, I deeply believe in the localization of our agriculture system, training and support for beginning farmers, and the implementation of sustainable practices that protect our environment and collective health. Agriculture affects everyone, everyday. The health of our nation depends on the health of our farms. As your constituent, I urge you to join me in supporting the following:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Thank you in advance for advocating for the aforementioned issues which promote jobs, food security, health, and land preservation in this great nation we share.

JOINT COMMENT OF BROTHER & SISTER J.R. HUGHES

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:23 p.m.

City, State: Lebanon, KS

Occupation: Missionary Evangelist

Comment: Basically, private citizens and farmers should have the right to buy and sell between one another as they please. We do **Not** need to be a nanny state. Things like raw milk and cheese are **Not** harmful, but that is still a moot point. This is the United States of America, not Communist China. As a private citizen I have the right to eat and drink what I please. Get the government **Out** of my kitchen and pantry!

COMMENT OF LOMA HUH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:49 p.m.

City, State: Viroqua, WI

Occupation: Editor

Comment: Do everything possible to support organic farming and small, local farms. Subsidizing the huge corporate farms encourages the use of drugs and chemicals and results in unhealthy food, and therefore unhealthy citizens. We should be wise stewards of the Earth, not abusers of it. Please wake up and recognize what's best for life and for all living forms, and stop being so concerned about keeping corporate pockets full of money.

COMMENT OF GERRIT HUIG

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:15 p.m.

City, State: Goshen, IN

Occupation: Retired

Comment: It seems normal and desirable to me that laws governing food production are based on health (inspection and organic standards), support for local and small producers (they **Are** America!), ecological impact (toxins, transportation, pollution), choice for those who care about their health and choice (labeling) and education (Americans need to know more about the food they eat), rather than on profits for a few oversized businesses, who spend their dubious profits on lobbyists and donations.

COMMENT OF JOSHUA HUISENGA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:03 p.m.

City, State: Seattle, WA

Occupation: Graphic Designer

Comment: The farm bill should support working family farms over agribusiness, should support healthy practices over harmful pesticides and fertilizers, and should put Monsanto out of business.

COMMENT OF GENE HUISMAM

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:42 a.m.

City, State: Sioux Center, IA

Occupation: Retired Farmer

Comment: I would like the congress to regulate farmers to use less chemicals on their land. Please allow small farmers to sell unpasteurized milk.

Thanks,

GENE NO

COMMENT OF NED HULBERT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:44 p.m.

City, State: Harrisville, NH

Occupation: Education and Business Consultant

Comment: Dear Sir and/or Madam

Our government needs to support programs that emphasize producing, distributing and eating—much more widely—food with vitality (*i.e.*, organically grown food—not chemically grown food with little or no nutritional value). I hope that you will also support with practical initiatives those who are growing sustainable food on small privately owned farms, not more giant mono-cultured agribusiness farms.

We need to spread more private ownership, not more giant, owned by the few, corporate farms. This supports local communities and spreads the wealth and prosperity to more.

Organic food is ultimately what we all need to eat to stay healthy. We need to educate people to the fact that our science proves its nutritional value and our taste buds and bodily health confirm it as well.

Agri-biz grown food does not create healthy human bodies or healthy animals or healthy land—on the contrary it slowly poisons human bodies and farm-scapes and water systems. Likewise animals become less healthy and the drugs they are given create human and animal immunity problems.

The devastation the agri-biz companies are spreading is a proven fact and I hope you'll stand up to the corp lobbyists who do not want the truth told about what con-

stitutes healthy food, healthy growing conditions, healthy people and sustainable farms.

Thank you for considering these thoughts.

NED HULBERT.

COMMENT OF LISA HULETT

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 3:47 p.m.

City, State: Arnold, MO

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Support organic farming, the small farmer, don't let Monsanto become a monopoly. Ban any more GMO's, at least require labeling. Support sustainable farming practices, ban the overuse of chemicals, in both fertilizer and as bug control.

COMMENT OF ROBBIN HULS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:54 p.m.

City, State: Ottawa, IL

Occupation: Software Engineer/Part Time Home-Farmer

Comment: I have recently moved back to Illinois and am appalled by the amount of corn/beans farmland and the overabundance of chemicals required to keep them growing in the depleted soil. Having spent time learning about organic and sustainable farming, I have to say "this ain't it". Please do not limit reforms and leave the same system (that continues to fail us!) in place! Help sustainable farmers bring back the beautiful and fertile farms that don't poison us to feed big corporations' bottom lines.

COMMENT OF DEAN HULSE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:51 a.m.

City, State: Fargo, ND

Occupation: Owner of Farmland

Comment: Please make sure the next farm bill does the following:

1. Eliminates funds to Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) for animal waste management infrastructure. Make these corporate operations pay for the pollution each causes. No more taxpayer-subsidized externalities.
2. Protects the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) from disproportionate cuts.

COMMENT OF KAREN HULTGREN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:25 p.m.

City, State: Simi Valley, CA

Occupation: Technical Manager

Comment: I strongly urge you to support and protect local/small organic farmers who produce humanely raised livestock and non-GMO plants (vegs/fruit/herbs). I only purchase organic food. I do not want my food full of pesticides, hormones, antibiotics or stuff created in labs. I don't want the meat/eggs/poultry I buy to come from tortured animals pumped full of chemicals and not allowed to graze outside eating as they are meant to. We should be supporting and protecting the food God has provided us. It's perfectly made for the human body and we should be doing all we can to protect it. We should also be protecting farmers and farm workers to be sure they are working/living in a nontoxic environment, which growing organically ensures. We all know large factory farms take short cuts to make profits. They are compromising our health by adding all kinds of chemicals to livestock or grow genetically modified plants where no testing has been done to see if it's fit for human consumption. Look around you and see how it's affected Americans! People are over-weight and getting sicker! It's not working! Our top soil is dying because the chemicals sprayed on them kills the beneficial organisms. It's insane! We are slowing killing ourselves and compromising the future of the human race. Protecting the *health of people* is more important than making money. Let the chemical companies make money elsewhere and stay out of our food!

COMMENT OF JUDITH HUMBURG

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:29 p.m.

City, State: Menlo Park, CA

Occupation: Market Research and Oral Historian

Comment: For too long, our farm bill has supported practices and policies that have created a very unhealthy food system in the U.S. **Now** is the time to shift support to organic, sustainable farming practices and policies that encourage and support smaller, family farming operations.

COMMENT OF MATTHEW HUMPHREY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 10:34 a.m.

City, State: Baltimore, MD

Occupation: Librarian

Comment: We need a farm bill that supports sustainable, innovative, ecologically friendly family farms, not gigantic, industrialized, polluting agribusiness operations. I want an America where small farmers can thrive by providing healthy, organic, locally grown food to consumers at a price that is competitive with the pesticide-, chemical- and hormone-laden products from distant factory farms which have no interest in the wellbeing of consumers.

COMMENT OF KIM HUMPHREYS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:00 p.m.

City, State: Amherst, NH

Occupation: Doctoral Student/Teacher

Comment: Agribusiness and its unhealthy practices are making the people of this country sick. I support organic farmers and local farmers who are providing a healthy option for consumers. Stop supporting unhealthy, unconscious farming that harms our children and the land!

COMMENT OF ROBERTA HUMPHREYS

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 11:05 p.m.

City, State: Topeka, KS

Occupation: Administrative Specialist

Comment: We want you to put the health of people and our environment before Big Corporations. I am tired of tax dollars subsidizing GMO Corn, etc and antibiotic research for CAFO's.

We want nutritious food not the junk that is making Americans sick and destroying the environment. The water, the land, the bees, *etc.* I am in support of Organic Farming that puts out more crops per acre and better all around for everyone. I am appalled at the Monsanto bullying other Farmers. I am not happy with conflict of interest at the Top of the FDA or the USDA not having power to shut down CAFO's with multiple health violations some resulting in death yet harassment over small farmers over raw milk and sheep that have no health violations or deaths. Something has gone terribly wrong in our system and needs to be made right again. Please do the right thing—we pay you to serve the people not BIG Corporations.

COMMENT OF SALLY HUNDLEY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:59 p.m.

City, State: Park Forest, IL

Occupation: Secretary

Comment: Current agricultural law supports large producers at the expense of farmers working to expand organic options and sustainable practices. Everyone benefits from healthier food options for all and from farming practices that are designed for the long haul and not just for short-term profits for large corporations.

COMMENT OF JONI HUNT

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 4:12 p.m.

City, State: Stuart, VA

Occupation: Director, Patrick Co. Community Food Bank

Comment: We need to do all we can to end hunger in our country, to take care of the elderly and children should not go to bed hungry. Support our local farmers encourage the growing of organic food not adding harmful hormones. There is more than just the "almighty buck."

COMMENT OF AMY HUNTER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:29 p.m.

City, State: Staples, MN
Occupation: Director of Local Chamber
Comment: I am a consumer who wants a safe and healthy food source free of GMO's. We need to stop subsidizing bad farming techniques and help farmers grow healthy foods. **It Can And Must Be Done!**

COMMENT OF GENE HUNTER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 11:08 p.m.
City, State: Easton, PA
Producer/Non-producer: Producer
Type: Vegetables
Size: Less than 50 acres
Comment: Support small CSA type operations; Withdraw support from huge agribusiness and anyone using GMO crops. Encourage new farmers!

COMMENT OF BARBARA HUNTINGTON

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:41 a.m.
City, State: Chula Vista, CA
Occupation: Premedical Advisor
Comment: I am very concerned about the use of pesticides and genetically modified food. These should all be labeled. I go out of my way to be sure I have organic, non genetically modified food and I want to be sure there is a high standard. I also want to know that there are no hormones or antibiotics in milk or egg products.

COMMENT OF LINDSEY HURD

Date Submitted: Tuesday, April 10, 2012, 5:43 p.m.
City, State: Fuquay Varina, NC
Occupation: Dietetic Intern
Comment: Dear Congressman Price,

As a future Registered Dietitian, it is my passion to see families grow into healthful citizens of the United States. In making this a reality, programs such as SNAP, a major component of the farm bill, are a necessary entity. Although SNAP consumes the largest portion of the farm bill funds, it offers families with low incomes, the ability to purchase and consume healthful foods that might have been too expensive to purchase on their own. Although the benefit outweighs the cost, purchasing healthy foods such as fresh fruits and vegetables may be out of reach for families living on very little income. Through your support, children across America are able to consume enough food to avoid being hungry in the day. They are able to learn and think better in school, in turn scoring higher grades and becoming a contributing member to society. It is a proven fact that SNAP families eat more healthfully than families without this service.

As a citizen of the U.S., and member of the nutrition community, I understand the cost constraints this program has placed on the farm bill spending. Through the increased participation of 26 million in 2007 to more than 44 million in 2011, SNAP families have cost the country \$69 billion in the fiscal year of 2011. As a future Registered Dietitian, my job will be to work toward preventing disease for families, avoiding the need for high priced medical care for illnesses and conditions that could have been prevented through a healthful diet. The top 3 causes of death in the United States are caused by nutrition related diseases. This provides evidence that although SNAP contributes to a large cost deficit, in the end it is beneficial for the individual and for the U.S. alike.

I hope that this information will motivate your team to continue supporting SNAP services in future farm policies, ultimately supporting low income families across the country. Thank you for your time and attention.

COMMENT OF BRION HURLEY

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 9:29 p.m.
City, State: Iowa City, IA
Occupation: Engineer
Comment: I support the elimination of direct payments, and replacing them with crop insurance subsidies, but we need to make sure the previous conservation compliance is a requirement to receive the crop insurance, in order to protect our water and land for future generations.

COMMENT OF PAULINE HURST

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 5:00 p.m.

City, State: Lake Charles, LA

Occupation: Administrative Asst. for Relief Center

Comment: Please do not cut any funds or programs that involve our Seniors. It is such a challenge for them now to make ends meet. They should not have to decide between medicine and food. Most of these individuals have worked hard all of their lives and to be put in this type of situation does not speak well of our country. We are a wealthy nation.

COMMENT OF LISA HUSTON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:50 p.m.

City, State: Husum, WA

Occupation: Analyst

Comment: Please support agricultural reform that focuses on sustainability and healthy food. Support organic and local food systems and smaller family farms.

COMMENT OF JULIE HUTCHINSON

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 8:44 a.m.

City, State: Encinitas, CA

Occupation: Pharmacist

Comment: I endorse Slow Food's stand 100%. Family farming is an indelible part of America's heritage and should be preserved and kept alive, not relegated to a museum exhibit.

COMMENT OF AMBER HUTCHISON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:47 p.m.

City, State: Springfield, MO

Occupation: Server

Comment: They're are so many ways to grow crops organically, as many organic farmers have shown. Let's get back to a simpler way of farming and eating. Why so many chemicals? Genetically modified corn is killing our bees, do you have any idea what this could mean for the future of **All** agriculture?

COMMENT OF LEAH HUTCHISON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:36 p.m.

City, State: Aliso Viejo, CA

Occupation: Nanny

Comment: Our food is killing us, why we as a people have to fight for healthy safe food is **Ridiculous**. I am sick of money over people. You should be ashamed of yourselves. I know I'm ashamed of you.

COMMENT OF PAUL HWOSCHINSKY

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 6:12 p.m.

City, State: Ashland, OR

Occupation: Retired Investor

Comment: We **MUST** label all GMO inputs on food. We must protect **Organic** as a label free of food grown without chemical fertilizer or GMO inputs so the consumers have a choice. This is a core choice in our democracy.

COMMENT OF LAURA HYBNER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:15 p.m.

City, State: Austin, TX

Occupation: Manager

Comment: We'd like for our food to be free of chemicals if there are chemicals we'd like to be able to view an ingredient label. This would be great to mandate restaurants to do this and if any restaurants decide not to provide the info they should be fined a large amount of money.

We love our food from our local farmers and we hope that you would too join us in support of them.

COMMENT OF JENNIFER HYDE

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 1:28 p.m.

City, State: Richmond, CA

Occupation: Research Administrator

Comment: The government needs to invest in organic farmers (and research) and beginning farmers, and not subsidize GMO corn and soy production. The over-production of corn which is used for livestock feed and high fructose corn syrup, contributes to the cheapness of unhealthy fattening food compared to healthy vegetables and fruit. Our priorities should be the health of our citizens.

COMMENT OF MARGARET HYLAND

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 5:09 p.m.

City, State: Louisville, KY

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Dear Agriculture Committee Members:

I am writing to urge you to pass a strong farm bill that protects programs like SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP, which help provide food for millions of America's most vulnerable seniors. I have volunteered in the St. Vincent de Paul organization and have visited homes that have no food. Hunger is real in this country as well as abroad. Have you been hungry lately? What would it feel like if you had no way to get food for yourself or your family? I don't like being hungry. I don't like others to go hungry. Please do not cut these basic programs. Thank you.

COMMENT OF MONICA IANARELLI

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:30 p.m.

City, State: Pittsburgh, PA

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: Sustainable agriculture is the future of a healthy country. Chemicals, allowing GMO seed to mix with pure seed and cutting funding for health programs **Before** cutting massive farm subsidies is not the right direction in which we should be heading.

COMMENT OF JOAN IATRIDES

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 10, 2012, 5:08 p.m.

City, State: Brookfield, IL

Occupation: Retired Marketing at Credit Unions

Comment: I'm sending this e-mail to ask Congress to not reduce food benefits to the most needy.

I volunteer at a food pantry and can personally attest to the need of our clients. The clients are most grateful for any food they receive and will not take what is not needed. They thank us for our help and want to get back on their feet, so they too can volunteer at the food pantry.

COMMENT OF HENRY ICKES

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:20 p.m.

City, State: Arlington, VA

Occupation: Retired Communications Worker

Comment: There is no place in my view for weakening or otherwise interfering with the USDA's responsibility for maintaining oversight of agriculture in the U.S., and thus assuring that we have a reliable supply of wholesome food. This is, in fact, a matter of life and death for so many of us. The next farm bill must be as strong as possible, no matter what big-agribusiness says. I frankly don't trust them!

COMMENT OF JANET IEVINS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:56 p.m.

City, State: Medford, OR

Occupation: Retired

Comment: We drive back and forth across the country every year. Many places have happy livestock out grazing. Many others have confined livestock which operations are smelled long before they are sighted. Not only do I feel sad for the animals, I do not want my food coming from such polluted environs. Either the stock is filled w/antibiotics or ill—or both. Not good for our food supply.

Similarly, when our policies subsidize huge crop production rather than diversified smaller farms, we are going against nature. For the sake of profit, we are gambling on the safety of our crops. For instance, the miles and miles of all one crop, all genetically identical, could be wiped out by a disease or pest. This doesn't happen on diversified acreage.

It is time to subsidize local farms and to stop subsidizing Agribusiness. Diversified farms are sustainable. Consumers can buy fresher food directly, energy use goes down, chemical use goes down, the land can be allowed to rejuvenate, and threat of crop failure is lessened.

Many farm families are willing to work hard against all odds, want to continue farming thru the generations. It is a good idea to allow these folks to work on behalf of all of us—just let's stack some of the odds in their favor for a change.

COMMENT OF KATIE IFERT-MILLER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 11:31 a.m.

City, State: Ridgefield, CT

Occupation: Laborer

Comment: Naturally grown foods are the only possibility this world has and robbing those who practice this noble endeavor is detrimental to any chance at a healthy life. We need to support them.

COMMENT OF MARY ANN IHM

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 6:23 p.m.

City, State: West Bend, WI

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Please make mandatory funding for: Conservation Programs, Beginning Farmers (including the dis-advantaged, women, urban agriculture), Rural Development, Local Farm, Food and Credit, Research Programs on publicly funded seeds, Commodity Reform so that recipients must be directly involved with farming, not just an owner, Farm to School Programs.

COMMENT OF GLEN IHRIG

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:53 p.m.

City, State: Burbank CA

Occupation: Software Developer

Comment: I am very upset that the farm bill has become yet another vehicle for corporate welfare and subsidy of the SAD (Standard American Diet).

Until now, farm bill subsidies have drastically reduced the number small farmers, while expanding the control of a few mega-corporations over our food supply. This trend is not sustainable!

Tax payer dollars must be spent to support and encourage healthier, smaller, local agriculture.

COMMENT OF LUCY LJAMS

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 6:57 p.m.

City, State: Utica, NY

Occupation: Ordained Clergy

Comment: End subsidies to Big Ag, which includes companies that create GMOs, keep the SNAP program, support small family farms and people who grow fruits and vegetables organically, encourage conservation of nutrient rich soil and water by encouraging biodiversity rather than monoculture, discourage use of pesticides and herbicides which are causing honeybee colony collapse, and no subsidies to factory farming of meat animals which creates huge problems for manure storage and inhumane conditions requiring the use of antibiotics and stop encouraging the use of growth hormones. Encourage local food production and consumption rather than transporting foods for thousands of miles.

COMMENT OF KATE INGERSOLL

Date Submitted: Thursday, April 26, 2012, 11:01 a.m.

City, State: St. Mary's City, MD

Occupation: Archaeologist

Comment: Please think long and hard about pesticides, American diets, children, and the future of our health. Only you can do the right thing, we—the voting public—can guide you, but we have given you the power to protect our health.

Sincerely,

KATE INGERSOLL.

COMMENT OF LAURA INGLIMA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:11 p.m.

City, State: Homer, AK

Occupation: School Kitchen Manager

Comment: I consider myself a producer, but on a small scale family garden level. Local, organic food production is **Very Important** to me. I want the very best circumstances, conditions and requirements for **All** farmers and gardeners to practice sustainable gardening and farming that nurtures and builds the soil rather than poisoning it and depleting it.

I also **Strongly Support:**

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Thank you for following up on these very important measures.

LAURA INGLIMA.

COMMENT OF CLAUDIA INGRAHAM

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 7:37 p.m.

City, State: Denver, CO

Occupation: Interior Designer, Yoga Instructor, Sound Healer, Landlord, Nanny, Jewelry Designer

Comment: I strongly support organic farming. I try not to buy conventional vegetables and I am vegetarian. We need to support local farming which is healthier and not subsidize any GMO crops which have not been thoroughly tested in the U.S. In Europe they are banned. I support labeling of all GM ingredients in food.

COMMENT OF MARTHA INGRAM

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:27 a.m.

City, State: Brevard, NC

Occupation: Naturopathic Doctor

Comment: Please support organic and sustainable agriculture! The health of our nation and our planet are at stake. We are at a critical juncture and need to start making positive change. Subsidies to factory farms create an unfair playing field for organic farmers to compete in the marketplace.

COMMENT OF MRILL INGRAM

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 11:54 a.m.

City, State: Madison, WI

Occupation: Social Scientist

Comment: I would like to see the farm bill oriented to build diverse and flexible regional food systems. The farm bill should support policies that will enable small scale producers to compete and to make a sustainable living from offering care-fully grown food produced in ways that are humane and ecologically and socially sound. I would like to see food safety policies that respect local diversity and difference by putting enough well-trained, local inspectors on the ground. I would like to see support for urban agriculture and community supported agriculture as well as for natural resources stewardship in agriculture.

COMMENTS OF SHARON INTILLI

Date Submitted: Monday, May 14, 2012 5:09 p.m.

City, State: Warwick, NY

Occupation: Associate Director—Television Network

Comment: The 2012 farm bill needs to reflect what consumers today are demanding: **Healthy** food, not corporate sponsored profit driven dead and processed food! For that reason alone, the farm bill should include protection of our natural resources—which insures healthy quality grown food and **Non-GMO** seeds which protect our heirloom species—and it should add funding to the Organic Research Fund as that is what creates **More Small Farmers Which Is A Heck Of A Lot Better For Local Communities As Well As For Our Environment**. Please support what is HEALTHY and not what is healthy for one's re-election campaign. We all live in the same world and we all need healthy food and a healthy environment in which to grow it!

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 5:07 p.m.

Comment: Please do as consumers desire: **More** organic, less industrial farming! **Protect** organic, independent, **Non-GMO** farming practices because **That Will Protect Our Environment—Which Is What Ultimately Protects Us!**

COMMENT OF KENNETH IRISH

Date Submitted: Thursday, April 12, 2012, 4:59 p.m.

City, State: Duvall, WA

Occupation: Designer

Comment: Current economic theory references three bottom lines to assess and track value. Our farm bill needs to address all three. We have failed in the past by thinking that easily quantifiable dollars represent the only bottom line. That's just the easy one. Please be complete in your assessment of costs and benefits as you formulate the farm bill. Don't do the simplistic calculations, but listen to your children and the health of your community to help you compute the real costs and the real benefits of a particular proposal.

Greater diversity within farming will bring health and strength in the same way that greater diversity through our long history of immigration has brought us great strength even though we have resisted the increased diversity at every turn. We are a nation made strong by the individual proclivities of the many, not by uniformity ruled by the few.

We count on you to not only refrain from playing politics with our health and future, but to legislate with wisdom, insight and foresight.

JOINT COMMENT OF EDIE IRONS AND ELANNE KRESSER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:05 p.m.

Names: Edie Irons and Elanne Kresser

City, State: Oakland, CA; Berkeley, CA.

Occupations: Outreach Coordinator for Local Gov't Agency; Stay-at-Home Mom.

Comment: Please strengthen and protect programs in the farm bill that support nutrition, education, small farms, and organic and sustainable agriculture.

I also believe it is time to phase out support for factory farming and CAFOs, and commodity monocrops like corn and soybeans. These activities are run by huge, profitable corporations, and should not be so heavily subsidized by the Federal government.

Please use farm bill dollars to support agricultural practices that create living wage jobs, healthy food, animal welfare, and diverse thriving ecosystems.

COMMENT OF JEFFREY IRVINE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:35 p.m.

City, State: Romney, WV

Occupation: Retired Educator

Comment: Please don't weaken the country's ability to enjoy safe, organic food stuffs and the small farmer's ability to prosper as good stewards of their land. Agribusiness has far too strong a voice in vital healthy foods decisions.

COMMENT OF LAURA ISELY

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 8:00 a.m.

City, State: Staten Island, NY

Occupation: Chef/Unemployed

Comment: I currently receive food stamps, while not much, every little bit helps. Please do not cut this program. There are way more poor people than not.

COMMENT OF MICHAEL ISENSEE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:59 p.m.

City, State: Ferndale, WA

Occupation: Dairy Nutrient Inspector

Comment: I have seen the power of a variety of farm bill programs to help producers farm smarter and in ways that work with natural systems. Enhance conservation, organic, and programs that directly link producers with consumers in the most direct way possible. When consumers know their farmers, farmers are better able to earn a living without government programs and are willing to meet the stewardship expectations of the vast majority of people who now live in urban areas.

COMMENT OF ANTONIO ISSE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:21 p.m.

City, State: Fort Lauderdale, FL

Occupation: Internet Consultant

Comment: It's time to back the people, not huge corporations. I am ashamed that I've allowed my tax dollars to subsidize corn to provide cheap feed for meat companies. I refuse to let that happen anymore. There is no reason that organic broccoli is \$3 a pound except for this subsidizing of monocultures. Stop subsidizing big ag!

COMMENT OF CARLO IYOG

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:42 p.m.

City, State: San Francisco, CA

Comment: It is very important that we make this change now. There is no excuse for under nourishing and overfeeding our children at the same time with hormone and pesticide-treated rubbish.

COMMENT OF CELIA IZAGUIRRE

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 7:50 p.m.

City, State: Miami, FL

Occupation: Student

Comment: Please support a farm bill that supports an agriculture that will help with our current crisis of global warming. We need to give incentives to farmers to be take care of the valuable resources we have (healthy soil, clean water) that are dwindling down and will only continue to do so if no action is taken now. your decision will affect every human being not only in our country but in our planet. The time is now, tomorrow might be too late.

COMMENT OF ALLISON JACK

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 7:06 p.m.

City, State: Ithaca, NY

Occupation: Agricultural Scientist

Comment: I've seen firsthand how organic farming has revitalized the economy in Tompkins County. Many of my friends are running successful small and medium scale organic farms and/or organic food processing businesses in the area. My husband has worked as a laborer on many of these farms. I've also seen the importance of research in the creation of this economic opportunity.

My research centers around vermin-composted dairy manure, which allows a waste product from NY's thriving dairy industry to be sold off-farm as an organic nutrient source for greenhouse crops. Since this is a new material for organic farmers, it took state (NYFVI, NYSTAR), Federal (USDA SBIR) and non-profit (OFRF, OCIA) research support to figure out the best ways to use vermin-composted dairy manure in organic production systems.

Our industry collaborators have built a \$4.5 M facility in Livingston County and ship product all over the country. I feel this is a successful example of green rural development but it relies on mostly organic farms as customers and research funds targeted towards organic materials to fully understand the potential uses of vermin-compost. This is just one of many examples of researchers working with creative businesspeople and growers to build a sustainable regional food system. Organic farming is and can continue to be a huge part of rural economic green development in the U.S., but only if it is fully supported in the farm bill.

<http://innovationtrail.org/post/worm-power-high-tech-composting>

<http://www.css.cornell.edu/cwmi/vermicompost.htm> *

Please support organic agriculture in the farm bill:

- Fully fund the Organic Research and Extension Initiative (OREI) at the 2008 level.
- Endorse all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Support all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintain EQIP Organic Initiative and do NOT cut the Conservation Stewardship Program.

COMMENT OF AMY JACKSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:27 a.m.

City, State: Fort Worth, TX

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: We need whole food and should provide subsidies to those that produce clean, whole food and not Agri-Products that are unhealthy and unsustainable. I spend my free time practicing, teaching and supporting Urban Agriculture to Be the Change I want to see in the world and teach others to Start where you are!

COMMENT OF BARBARA JACKSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:50 a.m.

City, State: Pocatello, ID

Occupation: Retired

Comment: The health of our nation (which is currently Unhealthy) depends on the small farmer who cares about producing clean, healthy food, as opposed to corporate farms who drench produce in pesticides and herbicides. These chemicals have not been sufficiently tested (thanks to corporate blocking) for the health damage these chemicals do to the human body (especially babies & children—your grandchildren and mine) and to the health of the ground this produce is grown in. Large corporate farms are killing us, Mr. Simpson!

COMMENT OF DAVID JACKSON

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 10:16 p.m.

City, State: Newport News, VA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Dear Sirs,

Within the next year, my wife and I will be starting up own sustainable/organic farm business. As a beginning farmer, I'd like to share my support for programs that help new growers build strong farm businesses. It's absolutely critical that farm bill programs help citizens get started in this challenging field. I ask that the Committee endorse all of the provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236), including:

- Mandatory funding for Individual Development Accounts at \$5 million per year. This program helps new farmers raise capital to start farm businesses and is tested and proven by organizations like Practical Farmers of Iowa and the California Farmlink.
- Mandatory funding for the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program at \$25 million a year. This program funds essential education for new farmers around the country.
- Authorize a new microloan program, to enable young and beginning farmers to better access FSA loan programs.
- Revise FSA rules to make loan programs more accessible to more young and beginning farmers.
- Reaffirm the existing cost share differential for BFRs within EQIP. Also, reaffirm the advance payment option allowing beginning and socially disadvantaged producers to receive an advance payment for the project's costs for purchasing

*The information referred to is retained in Committee file.

materials or contracting services, but increase the limit on the advance payment from 30 percent to 50 percent of costs.

- Amend the Farm and Ranch Land Protection Program (FRPP) to make farm viability part of the purpose of the program and to give discretionary authority to the eligible entities that implement the program to give priority to easements with an option to purchase at the agricultural use value, deals that transfer the land to beginning and farmers and ranchers, applicants with farm succession plans, and other similar mechanisms to maintain the affordability of protected land.

These and other provisions within the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act will help new growers succeed and I urge you to include them in the next farm bill. If it was for programs like the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program, ATTRA, AND SARE . . . I likely wouldn't even consider getting into farming. To me, there's no more noble cause to support than to help the people that feed us. To me, we shouldn't even have to think about this.

Sincerely,

DAVID JACKSON.

COMMENT OF KENT JACKSON

Date Submitted: Monday, March 19, 2012, 6:29 p.m.

City, State: Hereford, TX

Occupation: Banker

Comment: The name should be changed from "farm bill" to the "Food and Fiber Bill" to more clearly convey its ultimate purpose; and it should be promoted to the public as a system that provides modest support for the most efficient, **Stable**, and economical production of food and fiber in the world.

COMMENT OF LISA JACKSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:10 p.m.

City, State: Loveland, CO

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Please! The U.S. food and agricultural policy must focus on adopting best agricultural practices that put the health of its citizens, the land and the livelihood of farmers and farm workers over the interests of industrial agriculture lobbyists.

I would also like to advocate that funding **Not** be cut for conservation or for organic and sustainable agriculture.

- I support: The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Allowing big agribusiness profits at the expense of the smaller guys including those who need nutritious food is downright wrong. Listen to your heart. Wouldn't you want your family to have clean, healthy, nutritious food grown without pesticides?

Sincerely,

LISA JACKSON.

COMMENT OF MARTHA JACKSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:13 p.m.

City, State: Spring, TX

Occupation: Retired

Comment: It is the right of every person on Earth to have healthy food to eat. Those who are elected to office as leaders have a responsibility to make sure that our food source is not contaminated by things that will make people sick or worse.

Small farmers have been the backbone of this country for years and now there seems to be a movement by large food companies to destroy both the farmers and the food source for the people of America. GMO are mutated foods and have not been tested to see what harm they will cause.

It is time for our Government to stop siding with the big Corporations and get back to protecting the people who put them in office.

We want to know what is in our food and who is producing it. I trust the small farmers. I do not trust companies who are only looking to make money.

These unhealthy foods will get into **Your** families food too.

Protect the organic farmers and our food.

COMMENT OF MAUREEN JACKSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:02 p.m.

City, State: Summerfield, FL

Occupation: LPN

Comment: We have the right to know our food, to eat real food, healthy food. We have the right to feed our children wholesome, nutritious food. We want organic food grown in our fields. We are a democracy aren't we?

COMMENT OF DEBORAH JACOBS

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 10:52 p.m.

City, State: Cottage Grove, WI

Occupation: Supervisor

Comment: Please consider taking a look at how the farm bill promotes the production of unhealthy foods in a monoculture by big ag and ignores the small family farms who are trying to make ends meet growing healthy foods. If we are going to supplement farmers income, lets send those checks to farmers who are farming sustainable, healthy products which will also keep prices down so everyone can enjoy healthy foods. If everyone could eat right, we might not have a health care crisis. Thank you.

COMMENT OF DEBORAH JACOBS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:11 a.m.

City, State: Nisswa, MN

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Please think of this as a bill about the future of food in America, and about food independence. Not as another occasion to subsidize big growers.

COMMENT OF ELIZABETH JACOBSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:08 a.m.

City, State: Mt. Hood, OR

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Fruits

Size: 50-150 acres

Comment: My husband and I have been orchardists for 30 years on a century old farm. We were the first certified organic orchard in our area, and are the largest Biodynamic orchard in the U.S. We are considered a small family farm and make our living solely on our farm, and we are becoming a rare breed. Because we are specialty crop growers, we get no crop subsidies to help us survive. We are, however, enrolled in the CSP program, which is very beneficial for both the farmer and the environment. We have also participated in several EQUIP programs that have helped us update our irrigation system. The following are essential to the new farm bill:

- Fully fund the Organic Research and Extension Initiative (OREI) at the 2008 level.
- Endorse all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Support all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintain EQUIP Organic Initiative and do NOT cut the Conservation Stewardship Progm.

Thank you for your consideration.

ELIZABETH JACOBSON,
Mt. Hood Organic Farms.

COMMENT OF MICHAEL JACOBSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:05 p.m.

City, State: Fort Wayne, IN

Occupation: Executive

Comment: My concern is that foods be properly labeled from production through blending as an ingredient or delivered as produce. GMO enhanced food should be identified as a way of protecting those that are concerned about them. Organic foods should be truly organic without GMO or chemical pesticide.

COMMENT OF SARAH JACOBSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:36 p.m.

City, State: Hartford, CT

Occupation: Nonprofit Worker

Comment: SNAP is a vital program to SO many people and it would do NO ONE any good to cut the funding. Food is a basic human right and as the government of this country and of these people who are living with hunger and food insecurity, you should be taking every possible step to help alleviate hunger from every man, woman and child in America. This will not be accomplished by cutting SNAP funding. I have seen first-hand the benefit and the good that the SNAP programs do. It is a crime to cut funding and marginalize the hungry. Keep SNAP funding, if anything, increase SNAP funding!

COMMENT OF SHIRLEY JACOBSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:57 p.m.

City, State: Bellingham, WA

Occupation: Retired Registered Nurse, USPHS

Comment: Our food system is killing us and will eventually lead to the end of our species. The problem is it is not focused on food that contributes to the health of people, animals or the planet. End industrial agriculture and support small local farms. We have made an excellent start here in Bellingham, WA. I buy all my meat and seafood from local farmers and fishers. Most of the year I get produce locally as well from small, organic farms. Having a direct relationship with the producers helps me know my food is safe. I shudder at what I see when I walk through a common grocery store but many people are not able to do this because they rely on cheap food, which is only cheap because the government is subsidizing it production. End that please.

COMMENT OF BEN JACOBY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:24 p.m.

City, State: Bethesda, MD

Occupation: Bicycle Mechanic

Comment: Food is the most important factor in any society. Healthy food, a wide variety of fruits and vegetables, should be available to all people in our nation. Local and organic agriculture are very important for the efficiency of our food system. Businesses should be a moderate size and the control of the food market should be greatly distributed throughout many businesses opposed to few. Just some thoughts. Thanks.

COMMENT OF BRIAN JAEGER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:17 p.m.

City, State: Laurence Harbor, NJ

Occupation: Retired School Counselor

Comment: I value the importance of real food, locally grown, non-GMO, pasture raised, **Not Big Ag And Their Industrial Food Mentality.** It's just not healthy. Please help by supporting the farm bill.

COMMENT OF KAITLIN JAFFE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:33 p.m.

City, State: Berkeley, CA

Occupation: Environmental Policy Student

Comment: Please stop farm subsidies to large commercial farms. They are destroying farm land with monocultures, helping to support an unsustainable animal agriculture process, and increasing the availability of cheap, unhealthy foods. Instead spend that money on small and middle sized farms producing a variety of fruits and vegetables.

COMMENT OF CAROL JAGIELLO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 10:34 a.m.

City, State: Bloomingdale, NJ

Occupation: Disabled

Comment: I want to see a farm bill equitable to those who really need support. Small farmers, new farmers, conservation programs.

Subsidies should not be for huge producers. Subsidies should be for those who truly need them. Fruit and vegetable growers, school access and inner city. Conservation and organics. Stop supporting the ideas that make food less safe like radiation.

Stop funding usable acreage to grow corn for fuel. The farm bill should be for everyone not just a few who play the biotech game.

COMMENT OF SUSAN JAILLET

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:55 a.m.

City, State: Mount Dora, FL

Occupation: Retired Teacher, Writer, Editor

Comment: Giant corporations should not be allowed to control our food sources or the quality of our food. My family heritage is farming and more and more I find myself returning to those roots. More and more Americans are and will be growing their own food.

Corporations are not individuals, nor should they be treated like individuals. They are business entities created to protect their owners and to generate a profit.

It's time for America to return to our basic values—the right to earn a decent living, the right to eat healthy food, the right to pursue our individuals goals without interference from corrupt politicians.

Please support the basic rights of all American citizens—men, women and children—over the rights of large multi-national corporations.

COMMENT OF SUSAN JAMERSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:50 p.m.

City, State: Missoula, MT

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Big Ag does not need subsidies or subsidized crop insurance. Small farmers and new farmers need the help and education to go sustainable. More American's are hungry than since the bread lines of the depression—how could you possibly cut food stamp money? Are you **Out Of Your Minds!**

Support local, organic, small farms = good food, healthy people, more jobs, less fuel for transport—it's so simple—**Why Don't You Politicians Get This!**

COMMENT OF LAUREN JAMES

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:31 p.m.

City, State: Jackson, WY

Occupation: Server at an Organic Restaurant

Comment: Agribusiness-people need to start focusing more on the welfare of **Americans** instead of the welfare of their wallets! Obesity and weigh-related disease is growing at an alarming rate. The first step in combating this issue is to start regulating the food industry better and educating the American people. It does nothing but hurt us when Big Ag spends millions on misleading advertising that only helps their bottom-line.

COMMENT OF LYNDA JAMES

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 16, 2012, 1:03 p.m.

City, State: Bailey, CO

Occupation: Journalist

Comment: I support a farm bill that

1. Creates jobs and spurs economic growth—support programs like the Value Added Producer Grants Program by guaranteeing \$30 million of mandatory funding per year. VAPG provides seed money to help farmers innovate in agriculture and create jobs while securing a sustainable path to market-based farm profitability.

2. Makes healthy food widely available to all Americans—including school-children! We must provide flexibility for states to use existing food procurement programs to purchase fresh, healthy food from local farmers and ranchers.
3. Protects our natural resources—improves the Conservation Stewardship Program by ranking applications solely on their conservation benefits. Farmers count on CSP and other conservation programs to conserve soil for future generations, keep water and air clean, and create habitat for wildlife all while farming profitably.
4. Guarantees \$25 million per year in mandatory funding for the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program. We need a national strategy and commitment to support beginning farmer and ranchers entering agriculture. With an aging farm population, now is the time to invest in the future of American agriculture by nurturing new agriculture start-ups.
5. Funds the Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative at \$30 million per year in mandatory funding. Investment in agricultural research is vital to continued productivity and innovation in growing and diverse sectors of American agriculture, such as organic agriculture.
6. Discourages genetically engineered food supplies including pesticide and herbicide resistant engineered plants.

COMMENT OF STACY JAMES

Date Submitted: Monday, March 26, 2012, 3:56 p.m.

City, State: Champaign, IL

Occupation: Water Resources Scientist

Comment: Since their enactment in 1985, the Conservation Compliance provisions of the farm bill have led to substantial reductions in soil erosion and wetland loss. Society has benefited from these provisions in the form of cleaner water, greater flood control, less dredging, and healthier farmland. Compliance has made an impact because hundreds of thousands of American farms are subject to its common sense requirements in exchange for receiving certain USDA benefits. However, there is a significant gap in the program, namely the absence of Federal crop insurance from the list of benefit programs linked to Compliance. With the looming departure of direct payments—which are linked to Compliance—now is the time to restore the link between Compliance and crop insurance. Otherwise, up to approximately 200 million cropland acres will not fall under Compliance and wetland and soil loss will likely increase in the face of high crop prices and tenant farming. Compliance needs to stay strong and far-reaching because agriculture remains one of the nation's top sources of water pollution. Sedimentation/siltation and nutrient pollution degrade thousands of stream miles and lake acres, and the larger society is paying for this pollution in the form of lost recreational opportunities, less flood storage capacity, and higher water treatment costs. Taxpayers fund the many benefit programs farmers receive. In return for this investment, farmers should be providing environmental benefits, not externalized costs. By linking crop insurance to Conservation Compliance in the next farm bill, the House Committee on Agriculture can maintain and enhance this mutually beneficial social contract and protect our common, shared resources for generations to come.

COMMENTS OF ABIGAIL "ABBE" JAMES-CUPP

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012 2:11 a.m.

City, State: Gardner, KS

Occupation: Student Ambassador/Events Coordinator at JCCC

Comment: While I am sure there are many, complex sides to these issues; I urge you, as a representative of the people, to consider the repercussions of such serious cuts in the areas where we need the most growth as a nation. I am speaking on behalf of my people when I say that we do not, in fact, need more corporate agribusiness turning a profit at the expense of our nation's health. To remove funding from these beneficial programs in favor of such questionable alternatives leaves me questioning what other hands are at play in these changes? As a representative of the voice of the people, I ask you to truly consider the gravity of the weighty decisions yet before you. You hold the future of accessible, quality, cost effective nutrition in your hands, I would be saddened and disappointed to see such lofty responsibilities taken for granted.

We are waiting in anxious anticipation of the upcoming decisions and pray that our confidence in appointing you as our representative in office was not a sad mistake in need of remedying.

Thank you for your time,

ABIGAIL JAMES-CUPP

COMMENT OF DANETTE JAMMER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:49 p.m.

City, State: Yarely, PA

Occupation: Co-Owner of 2 Companies

Comment: Please vote down any bills that have to do with killing any and all natural, healthy farms, health food stores, scientific studies (that prove raw milk and organic foods are healthy for all of us) and keep fluoride out of our water. We are what we eat and drink. Yet the government allows alcohol, cigarettes and GMO in our lives. We already know Monsanto is hurting us with GMO foods. We can live without the government getting into every aspect of our lives. We were doing just fine without the government deciding what is good or bad for us. Now it's the natural food that are under attack. Enough is Enough. We have to eat healthy to survive. Our bodies want healthy foods. Please stop any and all bills that are shortening our lives. Cancer is up because the food we eat is creating it. Please stop these bills now.

COMMENT OF MURRAY JANKUS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:08 p.m.

City, State: Morrisville, PA

Comment: The more we simplify things, on both the supply side and the demand side, the less stable and sustainable our systems of production and market become.

COMMENT OF JON JANOWSKI

Date Submitted: Thursday, March 22, 2012, 3:40 p.m.

City, State: Milwaukee, WI

Occupation: Nutrition Program Advocate

Comment: I am writing to ask Congress to protect and strengthen the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and other Federal food assistance programs in the next farm bill.

For over forty years the SNAP has ensured that the poorest and hungriest people in our nation can put food on the table. The SNAP is this country's first line of defense against hunger. The program helps over 46 million Americans put food on the table each month, including over 831,000 people in our home state of Wisconsin.

The SNAP has a number of strengths, including:

- It responds quickly and effectively to economic downturns and increases in unemployment.
- Its benefits are spent quickly—97 percent of benefits are redeemed by the end of the month of issuance.
- The program is efficient and well-managed. SNAP's current accuracy rate of 96% is an all-time high.
- Its benefits go to the neediest and most vulnerable people—84% of all benefits go to households with a child, senior, or disabled person.
- The program benefits local economies. Moody's Analytics and USDA estimate that the economic growth impact of SNAP ranges from \$1.73 to \$1.79 per \$1 of SNAP benefits.

As a food bank in Milwaukee, we do our best to ensure that people who need emergency food get help today. We also work hard to advertise the SNAP and help people apply for and retain benefits. As an organization with over 30 years of experience working with SNAP applicants and beneficiaries, we ask Congress to invest in the SNAP in the next farm bill. In particular, we ask that Congress:

- Increase the minimum SNAP benefit to \$25 per month so that households receive at least an amount equivalent to base values set in the 1970's
- Extend SNAP to needy people currently excluded from benefits, including restoring eligibility to all legal immigrants and removing time limits on receipt of SNAP by jobless adults seeking employment
- Allow states to operate the SSI CAP model that seamlessly enrolls SSI recipients into SNAP

- Provide adequate resources to states and community partners for administration of SNAP and education, outreach and nutrition education projects
- Oppose any proposal to block grant SNAP, cap its funding, impose restrictive eligibility requirements or otherwise diminish benefits or limit participation
- Oppose any proposal that would limit states' ability to coordinate the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) and SNAP benefits

The farm bill must also invest in government commodity programs like The Emergency Food and Assistance Program (TEFAP) and Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) that fight hunger. As a food bank that operates both programs in Milwaukee County (Wisconsin), we see the impact of these programs every day. Almost $\frac{3}{4}$ of the food we now distribute to our food pantries, soup kitchens, and elderly feeding sites comes from TEFAP and CSFP. These programs allow us to serve over 35,000 people per month in our food pantry network and over 61,000 hot meals each month within our soup kitchens. In particular, we ask that Congress:

- Make mandatory funding for TEFAP food more responsive to changes in need by providing a "trigger" that ties funding to unemployment levels.
- Enhance the Secretary of Agriculture's authority to purchase bonus commodities in times of high need for emergency food as well as in times of low commodity prices so the program is responsive to excess supply and excess demand
- Provide TEFAP storage and distribution funding of at least \$50 million annually
- Expand CSFP to all 50 states and ensure that adequate funding exists for all states operating the program.
- Transition CSFP to a seniors-only program by phasing out eligibility of women, infants and children while grandfathering in current participants

Finally, we ask that Congress invest in the Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP) within the farm bill. Hunger Task Force has administered this program in Milwaukee County for 7 years, last year distributing over 3,200 vouchers to needy seniors. We are consistently disappointed that we are only able to distribute 3,200 vouchers each year, despite the fact that we see increasing need among low-income seniors. We could easily triple the number of vouchers to low-income seniors if more Federal funding were available. We ask Congress to provide a mandatory annual amount of at least \$25 million through the farm bill to address this need in Milwaukee County and throughout the U.S.

Thank you for your attention to these issues and for your efforts to invest in Federal nutrition programs.

COMMENT OF ELAINE JANSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:30 p.m.

City, State: Long Beach, CA

Occupation: Student

Comment: Food is what powers the people of this country. Without clean and organic food, we have no foundation to stand on. In this economy, healthy food will make all the difference. The constant need for health care will diminish and the overall morale will skyrocket. GMOs are not the way of the future, they are the pathway to destruction.

COMMENT OF JOAN JANUS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 10:01 p.m.

City, State: Milwaukee, WI

Occupation: Educator

Comment: Healthy, affordable food for everyone is important but especially for children. Let's put a provision in the new farm bill that will support farmers and ranchers to deliver fresh wholesome food to school lunch program. Proper nutrition is important for optimal learning. Fresh food from local sources is also a great teaching tool. Kids learn to appreciate where food comes from and what it takes to produce it.

COMMENT OF GAYLE JANZEN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:05 p.m.

City, State: Seattle, WA

Occupation: Graphic Design

Comment: We can't keep doing business as usual when it comes to our farming practices. The govt. has got to stop subsidizing the biggest farms and factory farms

which are destroying the bees and the environment with their pollution, chemicals and GMO foods. Organic farming needs to subsidize as more and more people are turning to organic foods as they don't want to ingest chemicals and GMO products. Organic farming is GOOD for the environment and the food is healthy. If we only had organic farming, the bees wouldn't be dying. This is a new century yet we continue to hold onto the old policies and practices that are no longer sustainable and that are now destroying our environment. Subsidizing the heavy use of chemicals and pesticides may look good short term, but in the long term they are a disaster.

COMMENT OF MICHELLE JARVIS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:29 p.m.

City, State: Hartford, CT

Occupation: AmeriCorps VISTA

Comment: SNAP benefits are essential to many peoples lives. Without assistance from SNAP, men, women and children WILL go hungry. Nonprofits and churches are already stretched too thin, they cannot pick up the ridiculous amount of slack that cutting back SNAP will leave. Do not cut SNAP benefits! We already have a large amount of hunger in the nation, let's try to help this issue, not cause more problems. Help feed children, keep SNAP!

COMMENT OF CATHY JASIENOWSKI

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:53 p.m.

City, State: Easthampton, MA

Occupation: Registered Nurse

Comment: Please help establish laws that promote food equity for the people who produce, pick, and process our foods, as well as equity for people of all socioeconomic status to procure fresh, local, organic, and sustainable food with the resources available to them.

COMMENT OF RAJ JAWA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:42 p.m.

City, State: Saugus, CA

Occupation: Business Owner & Filmmaker

Comment: We must ensure we maintain control; the people must always be able to grow their own, the farmers should be able to grow real crops with seeds as nature intended, as God intended. Created crops may as well be considered processed foods, taking away the heart and soul of the vegetables and fruits all in the name of control and money. Let the crops solve hunger issues around the globe but allow the self-reliance and the self-enterprising qualities of consumers thrive; don't not neutralize the seeds in an attempt to maintain steady business, let us do for ourselves if we will.

COMMENT OF BONNIE JAY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:17 p.m.

City, State: Santa Monica, CA

Occupation: Nutritionist

Comment: Food is life.

Food tainted with chemicals and designer genes is death.

Monsanto is beyond evil. Get them out of agriculture.

Wholesome food, grown organically . . . for everyone.

No More Modified, Chemical Laden, Poison Laden, Processed Garbage Referred To As Food. It Is Not And It Should Not Be Produced Or Presented As Food.

Do something about Monsanto, like put them out of business. They are taking small organic farmers to court insinuating that gmo seeds were stolen because they blew onto the organic farmers land. This is the evil the government now allows. Make it stop.

We need more organic farms . . . these farmers work very hard to bring wholesome food to market and are being thwarted by big agra. **Big Agra Must Be Stopped. People Have A Right To Choose What They Put Inside Their Bodies, Not Have A Company Like Monsanto Dictate And Limit Choices.**

Monsanto Is Evil. Put Them Out Of Business. They Are Poisoning Our Land, Ground Water And Putting Good People Off Their Land.

Do Something About It!

**This Is A Matter Of Great Urgency!
Now!
Please!**

COMMENT OF JOHN JAYNE

Date Submitted: Friday, April 27, 2012, 5:22 p.m.
City, State: Weston, MA
Occupation: Unemployed
Comment: When kids are hungry, they don't do as well in school. Then they can't get jobs and can't earn money to support themselves. So it's a vicious circle. It's up to us to rescue them from this never-ending cycle of hunger and poverty.

COMMENT OF JAMIE JEFFRIES

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:41 p.m.
City, State: Santa Cruz, CA
Occupation: Chef/Food Writer & Educator
Comment: Please protect small family farms that produce organic foods & products for their communities and neighbors. We need our small farms. Please don't cut them out in favor of Big Ag subsidies . . . they're so big they don't **Need** subsidies. Small farms **Do!**
 Thank you.

COMMENT OF JOY JENA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:41 p.m.
City, State: Lawndale, CA
Occupation: Retired Registered Nurse
Comment: As the committee considers the 2012 Food and Farm Bill, I urge you to consider the following:

- Small and medium scale farmers and ranchers **Need** subsidies **Not** industrial farmers and ranchers! It is time for an apple and all home grown fruits and vegetables) to be more affordable than a bag of potato chips or a piece of cake. It is time for animals to be fed what their DNA requires important nutrients, now missing in the American diet, will again be provided.
- Traditional farm subsidies which support grain fed animals must be stopped and provided to those who wish to make the transition to sustainable extensive farming.
- Limits on the production of corn, soy and wheat production must be reinstated. The over production of these products as animal fed, sugar and enriched white flour is now the leading risk factor for chronic preventable diseases.
- Nutritional support for school lunches and the SNAP programs must be improved to provide adequate nutrition. Low fat chocolate milk from grain fed cows is not a health food. Whole milk from a grass fed cow is. French fries, potato chips and sugary drinks led the list of foods most eaten by those who are overweight. Please see an example mocking the travesty that begins with a farm bill that does not provide the means to a healthy population (the Bodega food pyramid on you-tube)—this is not an anomaly but rather repeated over and over in poor neighborhoods.
- The farm bill must not be passed without strong support for small scale farmers and ranchers, and a healthier school lunch and SNAP program. If more information is required to validate the needs outlined above, the Bill should be postponed until this is done.

Thank for your attention.

COMMENT OF NANCY JENKINS

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:16 p.m.
City, State: Rocksprings, TX
Producer/Non-producer: Producer
Type: Livestock
Size: 1,000+ acres
Comment: A nation that can feed itself can better defend it own autonomy globally. Organic food should be the norm not the exception so lower prices which are important for the dignity of the less able consumer can to maintain. Chemicals &

GMO foods are not the way for long-term commodity stability. Their use only limits plant diversity & raises prices for everyone.

NANCY JENKINS, *Rancher*.

COMMENT OF CORLISS JENKINS-SHERRY

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 10, 2012, 3:58 p.m.

City, State: Tucson, AZ

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I think it is important that Congress to cut farm subsidies to anyone with an average income over \$1 million. I would like to see the new farm bill increase funding for local sustainable food systems, provide assistance to farmers to prevent pesticide and fertilizer run off as well as providing funds to study ways to maintain healthy production levels while reducing CO₂ output. Lastly it is important to make healthy food available to everyone by reducing corn and soy subsidies and increasing support for healthy foods such as fruits and vegetables.

COMMENT OF DINA JENNEY

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 16, 2012, 3:55 p.m.

City, State: Phoenixville, PA

Occupation: Billing Specialist

Comment: From 1933 with the passage of the *Agricultural Adjustment Act*, until 2008 when Congress approved the *Food, Conservation and Energy Act*, there have been 15 so-called farm bills. Over these many years, the official name of the bill has changed and the scope and reach of the legislation has expanded or contracted to reflect national needs, economic conditions and the political environment. Every 4 or 5 years, Congress "reauthorizes" the Federal programs affecting food and farms. In essence, the farm bill brings most of the critical anti-hunger programs into existence and dictates how they will operate. Among these are the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), and the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP). These programs comprised only one of the 15 sections of the bill, but they accounted for nearly 70% of the spending authorized by the 2008 Farm Bill. For those of us focused on fighting hunger, no other piece of legislation is more important.

COMMENT OF BARBARA JENNINGS

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 10:58 a.m.

City, State: St. Louis, MO

Occupation: Administration & Investments

Comment: Farmers need to be rewarded for good conservation practices . . . planting refuges, hedges, winter cover crops, *etc.*

Poor soil = extra expense for fertilizer = poor water quality, and more nitrates *etc.* in our streams and rivers.

Please preserve our land and our water . . . subsidies should go to those who do this, not those who waste and ruin.

COMMENT OF MIMI JENNINGS

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 12:38 p.m.

City, State: St. Paul, MN

Occupation: Retired Teacher

Comment: Please consider jobs, healthy food programs, our environment and small farms/diversity when you approach the farm bill. The pressure on you from large industrial farms with lots of lobbying money will be enormous, but (1) they don't need your support, and (2) there are other pressures to consider as well. These are: sustainability and a robust economy.

COMMENT OF SUSAN JENNINGS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:59 a.m.

City, State: New York, NY

Occupation: Artist

Comment: Organic farming should be subsidized. Antibiotics, hormones and most pesticides should not be used in farming in as they are endangering the population.

COMMENT OF ERIN JENSEN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:09 a.m.

City, State: Vancouver, WA

Occupation: College Admissions Counselor

Comment: This planet cannot sustain agricultural practices that champion the bottom line over ecological common sense. This economy cannot sustain food production that subsidizes monocultures and encourages food insecurity. Please listen to your constituents and stand up for a farm bill that benefits our land and our citizens . . . **Not** big agribusiness.

COMMENT OF SHARLENE JENSEN

Date Submitted: Sunday, March 18, 2012, 3:32 p.m.

City, State: Oldham, SD

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Livestock

Size: 500–999 acres

Comment: I would like to see as much done as possible to help and encourage farmers & ranchers to reduce their use of chemicals (pesticides, fertilizers . . .), genetically engineered/genetically modified seeds, antibiotics, and hormones. I would like to see research directed toward non-toxic ways to control weeds and pests. I would like to see more incentives for farmers/ranchers to raise organic crops and livestock. I believe this is the only way to save what we have left for future generations.

COMMENT OF PATRICIA JERRELLS

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:23 a.m.

City, State: Shelton, WA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: As a consumer of food, I want the best I can find. This means local and organic if possible. Small family farms are the ones that need help and support. The huge agribusiness farms do not need help and should not be paid to produce nothing. The whole business is out of sync and unreasonable. This is the time for an overhaul of the farm bill to support organic and small family farms that sell locally. This will bring local jobs and healthy food to the population.

COMMENT OF LISA JERVIS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:40 p.m.

City, State: Oakland, CA

Occupation: Nonprofit Administrator

Comment: For the health of our country's families, communities, and economy, we **Need** farm bill reform that ends subsidies to large-scale monoculture farms whose crops get made into nutrition-free refined goods like sodas and chips or animal feed to support cheap fast-food meat. As a taxpayer, I want farm supports to go to small producers growing fruits, vegetables, eggs, dairy, and meat that go directly to people, no complex processing needed. Taking agriculture policy in this direction will help make healthy food more affordable and accessible, build local economies, increase food security, and increase quality of life for small farmers and their customers.

I also want food safety regulations that have appropriate provisions for small producers, without burdening them with over-regulation designed for huge factory farms. Factory farming is inherently less safe, as contamination in one space spreads to food meant for vast numbers of people. Small farms and meat processors don't need the same level of regulation, and if they have to invest in compliance at the same level as huge corporations, we will lose access to healthier, higher quality products.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Respectfully,

LISA JERVIS.

COMMENT OF GAR JEVITT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:02 p.m.

City, State: Tenafly, NJ

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Other

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: The total capitalization of organic life is going down a **Dead** end road. Right now capitalism is flat Earth thinking. Do you want to be part of the living future or just another jerk paid for politician?

COMMENT OF JULIA JIANNACOPOULOS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:17 p.m.

City, State: Potage, WI

Occupation: Education

Comment: CAFO's are really unacceptable factory farms. They pollute, they force their 'waste' contracts on all the local farmers, they outcompete family farms, they flood the market with cheap, antibiotic filled milk and they reduce the water table and the quality of life in the communities they are in/near. Milk Source, n/k/a MS Holdings, Inc. has a CAFO 1 mile from Grand Marsh Elementary School. Talk to the Principal there about how she feels about sending 150 kids out to recess with the stench of the farm. Please require environmental regulations on CAFOs that will be supported/enforced by our sorely understaffed DNR! Thank you for listening.

COMMENT OF LIZZETTE JIMENEZ

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:43 p.m.

City, State: Addison, IL

Occupation: Manager, Strategic Planning

Comment: Please do not cut funding for organic farming or to beginning farmers. This is truly vital to our future as the current "factory farm" method is just simply not sustainable, less healthy and not to mention absolutely deplorable and conditions inhumane. I live in a city and go out of my way to work only with local farmers who are ethical, do things the right way, and use humane environments like allowing their animals to be out on pasture as nature intended.

COMMENT OF GLINDA JIMMERSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:52 p.m.

City, State: Oceanside, CA

Occupation: Nurse

Comment: Please support the farm bill. It is important that we, the consumers, taxpayers, and voters are given the choice to have local organic farms supported by the government for affordability and health. Organic and sustainable farming should be just as if not more subsidized than the large agribusinesses who do not care what we think or say. We do not want G.M.O. foods patented and blown by nature into our local farmer's property so they can sue them in court and shut down the competition. We do not want unlabeled G.M.O. products in our grocery stores. We would like our public schools to get their food from local farmers thereby reducing cost to the public school system and making a healthier menu for our kids.

COMMENT OF DONNA M. JITCHOTVISUT

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 10:02 a.m.

City, State: Chicago, IL

Occupation: Retired

Comment: The strength of our nation depends on the health, fitness, and education of its citizens. We need to ensure that healthy affordable food is available to everyone regardless of where they live or what their occupation. Big Ag has lost sight of this original purpose: producing a food supply that is healthy and affordable and available to all of the citizens of this country. Big Ag is more concerned with creating wealth for its CEOs and stockholders than solving the problem of hunger in this country. In the process of maximizing the rate of return on investment for its stockholders, it is using chemicals and genetically modified crop seed that are already producing nightmarish "super weeds", poisoned soil, crop die-offs, and illnesses in the humans and animals alike. In short, Big Ag is destroying our farm land and making all of us ill with diseases that never existed before. We need to return to a time when production techniques were based in solid provable science; simple cultivation techniques of crop rotation, companion planting, reuse of farm waste as natural soil enhancements, and natural pest and weed control provided by "friendly" insects and animals. If our country is to become healthy and strong again,

we need to return control of our agricultural business to the people who know it best: the small family farmers.

COMMENT OF DONALD JOHANSSON

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 10:14 p.m.

City, State: Tobaccoville, NC

Occupation: Retired Professor

Comment: Please look into the work done by Henry Wallace when he was Sec'y of Agriculture. The subsidies then made sense. We must see that the government's participation in agriculture benefits real farmers, not Monsanto and friends. Here's where you can really speak for American values.

COMMENT OF ANN JOHNSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:50 p.m.

City, State: Denver, CO

Occupation: Retired Nurse

Comment: I grew up on a farm and as far as I can tell farmers never get a fair shake. They feed this country with the hard labor of their bodies, and they operate huge machinery which can be quite dangerous, not to mention the cost of maintenance. So, while we eat food that they produce with never a day off, they don't ever get a fair shake. Do the right thing and make farming a top-notch priority and think about what's on your plate at your next meal, and the next one and the next one, *ad infinitum*.

COMMENT OF BETTEMAE JOHNSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:42 p.m.

City, State: Albuquerque, NM

Occupation: Retired

Comment: No more subsidies for "farmers" making more than \$1 million per *annum*: only for "small" family farmers! Also, additional support should be provided for those farmers who practice sustainable and organic farming!

COMMENT OF CAROL JOHNSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:18 p.m.

City, State: Deer Park, WI

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Poultry/poultry products

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Small farmers have been struggling to keep going. I am a small sustainable poultry farmer. I focus on ethical treatment and feed organic, even though I am not certified. I honestly don't know if I can do it another year. Please stop subsidizing GMO crops that are bad for us and our animals and put more resources toward small, sustainable farmers so we can produce healthy food for all.

COMMENT OF CHRIS JOHNSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:47 p.m.

City, State: Steamboat Springs, CO

Occupation: Full-Time Mother

Comment: As a parent, nutrition and organic options are important to me. As a resident of the Earth, conservation and sustainable agriculture practices are important to me.

COMMENT OF DEAN JOHNSON

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 10:57 a.m.

City, State: Cambridge, MA

Occupation: Retired Environmental Planner

Comment: It is time to stop subsidizing giant agribusiness companies and focus instead on the health of the American people. We need nutrition, conservation and organic produce programs, as well as support for the local food movement. Let's end the subsidies to large corporations and, instead, focus on the health of our citizens. Thank you.

COMMENT OF ELIZABETH JOHNSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:21 p.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Mother

Comment: My parents come from a long line of farmers dating back to the mid 1800's here in Oregon. My parents are very frustrated when they see large developments and shopping malls being built over land they know to be very fertile farming land, and then turn around just to see large farming corporations like Monsanto that use chemicals, and GMO seed on land that is not fit to be farmed. The only way that it is possible is with the destructive chemicals that are used on the land. The Monsanto company, is one of the most dangerous and evil global businesses because it is responsible for poisoning people, wildlife, farm animals and the environment at large—in other words Monsanto are a deadly threat to life on Earth.

COMMENT OF GEORGE JOHNSON

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:29 p.m.

City, State: Laguna Woods, CA

Occupation: Clergy

Comment: Follow the movement of Jesus Christ and support efforts to help the poor. Don't cut funds for food stamps and small farmers. Security of votes sometimes robs one of courage. But not John . . . the Baptist or John Campbell.

Thanks,

GEORGE JOHNSON from Laguna Woods.

COMMENT OF K.L. JOHNSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:05 p.m.

City, State: Ft. Myers, FL

Occupation: Retired Agribusiness

Comment: We must protect our farming families from the chemicals that are killing us. Organics = **Life!** Rather than death from cancer . . . babies with autism . . . neurological abnormalities, cardiac problems, asthma . . .

After decades of farming with "recommended chemicals", my extended family is sick or pre-maturely dead!

COMMENT OF KARL JOHNSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:14 p.m.

City, State: Monroe, NH

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Poultry/poultry products

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Consumer demand for organic produce that comes from sustainable, small, family-owned farms is increasing. Consumers are fed up with large-scale agribusinesses that mistreat livestock, pollute the environment, underpay their workers and deliver unhealthy products. It's time for real legislative reform that gives small farmers an opportunity to compete and gives consumers the information they need to choose their food through truthful labeling.

COMMENT OF KATHRYN JOHNSON

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 12, 2012, 12:41 p.m.

City, State: Plano, TX

Occupation: Student

Comment: The farm bill needs to prioritize healthy foods for growing kids. Obesity is a huge problem in America, yet we have school cafeterias stocked with Domino's pizza, pink slime, fries, and Dr. Pepper machines. School lunches are an opportunity to provide healthful foods to a huge swath of young people who otherwise may not have access to it, and we should capitalize on that. We also need programs that spread the agricultural wealth, so to speak. People across the country face far too many barriers to healthy eating, including cost and proximity. I also think that subsidizing the foods that make our population heavier and less healthy—the corn that becomes corn syrup, for instance—is irresponsible to the point of ridiculousness and really needs to be looked at logically.

COMMENT OF KATHYRN JOHNSON

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 2:07 p.m.
City, State: Minneapolis, MN
Occupation: Homemaker, Nutrition Educator
Comment: Make a level playing field so small producers and co-ops can get good, safe food to consumers. Agri-industries are not the same as small farms—they are inherently more polluting, dangerous and wasteful.

COMMENT OF LESLIE JOHNSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:52 p.m.
City, State: Rowland, NC
Occupation: Registered Nurse/Math Teacher
Comment: I fully support a farm bill that promotes organic farming and sustainable practices. I believe that supporting Big Ag is wrong and that GM products are bad for people and the environment. Terribly bad. It is way past time to quit allowing corporations to run this country for their profit.

COMMENT OF MICHAEL JOHNSON

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:07 p.m.
City, State: West Linn, OR
Occupation: Health Care Worker
Comment: Please stop subsidizing commodity crops and support real farmers—those that help feed our country. We are a nation in the midst of a health emergency caused by obesity, brought on by our government's farm bill.
 Let real food be supported the way corn, soy and the rest of Big Ag is.

COMMENT OF MICHELE JOHNSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:47 p.m.
City, State: Santa Fe, NM
Occupation: Book Artist
Comment: It's time to level the playing field in agriculture. For too long we have looked the other way while the family farm died a slow death and the big agribusiness folks took over. Factory farms that raise animals have shown they have a host of problems, including humane treatment of animals, questionable feeding practices, use of drugs and antibiotics, pollution, and insufficient oversight. Farms raising vegetable and grain crops have their own set of issues, including indiscriminate overuse of pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers and the proliferation of GMOs. The number of sources for food across the nation has dwindled to a "precious few", yet the problems have multiplied. Foodborne illness is at an all time high. Increasingly, we know less and less about where our food comes from, how it's produced and what's in it. Small farm operations, many of them committed to a healthier way of growing and harvesting are under constant threat of over-regulation, even extinction, from the policies that favor the giants of agribusiness. This has to stop. We deserve, at the very least, clean, healthy food, and we deserve to have choices about where that food comes from and how it is processed, stored and delivered. Personally, I no longer purchase meat or poultry from the standard super market, not only because I don't trust it anymore, but because it tastes like nothing. Americans have been lulled into a false sense of security about their food supply, and in the bargain, have been brain-washed to accept as "food" a whole host of products that are nutritionally worthless or even harmful. For starters, the people who are trying to resurrect the model of the small, independent farm should not only be applauded and encouraged, but regulations should be crafted that are favorable to them and not only the big players. It would be wise to pay attention to the environmental damage that has been done—and continues to be done—and take the necessary steps to halt and reverse this alarming trend. It would also be wise to take another look at the way we subsidize agricultural programs in this country. It simply makes no sense any more, given the many changes over the past decades. It appears that there is a lot of work to be done. Please put the process of future decision-making about all facets of agriculture on the "front burner" and listen to the "little folks" out there, not just the special interests of the agribusiness giants.

COMMENT OF ROBYN JOHNSON

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 8:34 p.m.
City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Community Advocacy

Comment: Partners for a Hunger-Free Oregon (PHFO) commends the House of Representatives Committee on Agriculture for this opportunity to submit recommendations for the 2012 Farm Bill. PHFO recognizes this farm bill reauthorization as a tremendous and critical opportunity to strengthen and improve programs and policy that supports our nation's farms, farmers and food system. However, as the problem of hunger persists in Oregon and nationally, it is of tantamount importance to protect, strengthen, and improve the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), among other Federal nutrition programs, as a means of mitigating the tragic affects of hunger on our citizens and in turn, our communities. SNAP currently helps feed over 800,000 Oregonians and 49,000 million people nationally. Serving more people than at any time in the program's history, SNAP continues to be our first defense against hunger in the United States. As a program, it is working exactly as it was designed to combat hunger and malnutrition, and as such, should be maintained in its current structure to ensure that our citizens are fed and healthy.

PHFO is a statewide organization with a mission to end hunger before it begins by promoting the well-being and economic security of Oregonians and eliminating the underlying causes and consequences of hunger. We work with stakeholders throughout Oregon to advocate for public policy improvements on the local, state and Federal level, raise awareness of the extent of hunger and conduct outreach to expand participation in Federal nutrition programs. Our efforts are guided by a plan with three goals: (1) Increase economic stability for people, communities and the state, (2) Cultivate a strong regional food system and (3) Improve the food assistance safety net. Strengthening, improving and protecting federally funded nutrition programs is pursuant to our work on Goal 3 of Oregon's plan. However, we know these programs support strategies in all three goal areas. SNAP, The Emergency Food Assistance Program, Farmers Market Nutrition Programs, the Fresh Fruits and Vegetables Program, together and in conjunction with other nutrition programs, help low-income families piece together their meals every day and their food budget over the course of a month, and allows them to stretch their food dollars and increase their ability to afford to pay other basic living expenses. Additionally, these programs support local grocers, food distributors, processors, farmers, ranchers and dairies. Of equal importance, these programs strengthen our regional food system and the jobs that those sectors provide.

PHFO strongly supports the following improvements to nutrition programs:

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

SNAP is the centerpiece of our nutrition safety net in the United States. We must ensure that SNAP benefits are sufficient to purchase a nutritious diet. In general, we ask that the House Agriculture Committee:

- Support proposals to increase access to adequate and nutritious food.
- Oppose attempts to weaken or restructure these programs that would result in reduced benefits.
- Oppose proposals that would cap or reduce funding.
- Oppose proposals that restrict or reduce program eligibility, benefits, or food choice.

Specifically, we suggest the following policy improvements for SNAP:

- Increase monthly benefit for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to allow for the purchase of a nutritious diet by moving from the Thrifty Food Plan to the Low-Cost Food Plan.
- Make the ARRA funding boost permanent.
- Align AmeriCorps VISTA SNAP eligibility with other AmeriCorps programs. Current legislation counts the living expense allowance against eligibility if a VISTA applies for SNAP after becoming a member. This change would align with medical programs, which currently excludes these payments.
- Allow college students to qualify for SNAP regardless of their work hours. Let college courses count as work participation, or eliminate the current 20 hour student work requirement.
- Expand the minimum benefit to all eligible households. Currently, the \$16 per month minimum benefit is allotted only to households with 1 or 2 people.
- Fully restore immigrant eligibility. Allow documented adult immigrants eligible based on income; eliminate restrictions including, 5 year work history.
- Add incentives for fruit and vegetable purchases in SNAP. These dollars will promote and encourage the purchase of a healthy diet.

- Remove “Able Bodied Adults Without Dependents” (ABAWDS) provision from regulations. Currently, Oregon must seek a waiver each year to be excluded from this requirement, which limits benefits for this population.
- Exclude income earned by members age 18 and under if in school at least half-time. Income from children under 18 should not count against household eligibility, and would align with medical and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families requirements.
- Increase the Transitional Benefit Alternative eligibility period to 12 months. Current law allows for a 5 month period. Expanding this will allow families leaving TANF for employment to receive a greater opportunity to transition off public benefits; it also aligns with extended medical program benefits.

The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP)

At a time of record-level need, we call on the Federal government to provide food banks the full assistance available through TEFAP.

- Make mandatory funding for TEFAP food more responsive to changes in need by providing a trigger that ties funding to unemployment levels.
- Enhance the Secretary of Agriculture’s authority to purchase bonus commodities in times of high need for emergency food relief in addition to times of low commodity prices so the program is responsive both to excess supply and excess demand.
- Reauthorize funding for TEFAP Storage and Distribution Funds at \$100 million per year and TEFAP Infrastructure Grants at \$15 million per year.

Support Oregon Agriculture

We support investments in local food production, processing and marketing systems.

- Increased funding and strengthen programs such as Farmer Market Nutrition Programs, Farmers Market Promotion Program, Fresh Fruits and Vegetables Programs for schools, and Community Food Projects.
- Support reforms to Federal farm support programs that create a more level playing field for Oregon’s small and medium size farms and ranches to ensure an affordable and healthy food supply, and protect Oregon’s natural resources.

PHFO respectfully asks that this Committee recognize the important role that federally funded nutrition programs play in ensuring that people access the food they need. While Oregon is one of the leading states in nation in terms of SNAP participation, we continue to be ranked as a top state for very low food security according to the USDA’s 2010 report Household Food Security in the United States. While the number of our ranking has dropped, the rate at which hunger occurs has remained the same. We credit the SNAP program and particularly provisions such as Categorical Eligibility and “Heat and Eat” as instrumental in allowing our state hold the line on hunger. It would be devastating to thousands of families in Oregon and other states that elect these options to lose them at a time of such great need. We need to protect the current structure of this successful program. Cuts to SNAP will result in increased hunger, as it will mean less food on the table of Oregon’s families. We further recognize that despite the strength and success of the Oregon Food Bank Network, the charitable food sector would not be able to fill in the gaps that cuts to SNAP would create.

PHFO appreciates the opportunity to contribute to this process.

ROBYN JOHNSON,
Community Advocacy Coordinator,
 Partners for a Hunger-Free Oregon
 [Redacted].

COMMENT OF RON JOHNSON

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 7:23 p.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Energy Consultant

Comment: The level of hunger in the United States is shameful given our country’s wealth and resources. We take pride in saying this is a country of opportunity for all who are willing to make the effort, yet we deny children the food necessary for them to have fair opportunity. Please maintain or increase the funding for SNAP and TEFAP so our country does not fall further behind in feeding its people.

COMMENT OF SHARON JOHNSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:06 p.m.

City, State: Windsor Heights, IA

Occupation: Natural Health Coach

Comment: I shop farmers markets because I want to be healthy, not sick. I want to eat locally grown, organic products. I want to eat meat coming from animals that have NOT been fed antibiotics, hormones, and GMO grains. I want my foods to be labeled non-GMO or GMO.

The vast majority of the foods we are offered today are full of toxic additives, are GMO, and making us sicker, not healthier. If you want to curb the runaway costs of healthcare today, then change the way our foods are grown, manufactured, and marketed. **Put People Before Profits Of Big Ag!**

COMMENT OF TIM JOHNSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:27 p.m.

City, State: Corvallis, OR

Occupation: Admin. & Management for Small Businesses

Comment: Stop subsidizing big agriculture and rewarding agricultural practices that produce poor quality, pesticide laden foods while damaging the environment, public health, and future food production.

COMMENT OF BUD JOHNSTON

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 7:35 a.m.

City, State: Garretson, SD

Occupation: Retired

Comment: If we have a "Farm" bill at all, it should be to help farms produce people food, not the genetically modified garbage we are planting now. No one with a Chicago, or New York, Los Angeles address is eligible!

COMMENT OF RONA JOHNSTON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:13 p.m.

City, State: Garretson, SD

Occupation: Artist

Comment: The farm bill should support locally grown food grown in an environmentally responsible way. Foods for families and a healthy environment for everyone living in these communities.

COMMENT OF SIGNA JOHNSTON

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 06, 2012, 1:29 a.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Retired Executive Director, State Program on Aging

Comment: Please do all in your power to support and defend reinstating the funding and the structure of the SNAP (food stamp) program. I know personally the safety net this provides for our children, elderly, veteran and other disabled plus struggling unemployed and low income families.

The Senate approved farm bill calls for drastic cuts which must not become law. How can our nation ever expect to recover from this deep recession if so many of its citizens are left to go hungry and consequently become ill because of lacking adequate nutrition?

Thank you for supporting laws that strengthen our nation's leadership to feed the hungry, promote conservation, lifts up small family farms and helps rural America and thus all America thrive.

Please continue to oppose the drastic cuts to this vital safety net as you did when this formerly was put to a vote in the U.S. House.

Sincerely yours,

SIGNA JOHNSTON.

COMMENT OF VERONICA JOHNSTON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:46 p.m.

City, State: Chicago, IL

Occupation: Health Research Writer

Comment: I buy organic food from small-scale Illinois farmers every week and would like to see their best interests, which are directly connected to our health,

looked after. Further, because of the dangers of the obesity epidemic to our nation's economy, health and security, I would like to see incentives for more farmland to be devoted to growing fruits and vegetables.

COMMENT OF VICKI JOHNSTON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:42 p.m.

City, State: Evergreen, CO

Occupation: Healthy Foods Cooking Instructor

Comment: We would like major emphasis put on bio diverse, organic, family-farms. We would like a deemphasis on industrial agriculture and corporate livestock production. We want more heirloom species foods, more diverse crops like blue potatoes and red carrots. **No** GMOs! Tax credits for going organic and avoiding pesticides please.

VICKI JOHNSTON, MHN,
Evergreen, CO.

COMMENT OF KATHY JOHNSTON-KEANE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:57 p.m.

City, State: Pittsburgh, PA

Occupation: Art Historian

Comment: Farming should contribute to the health of the nation . . . healthy crops grown for our consumption . . . and healthy farming practices with little negative impact on the environment. I support small farms that care about their farmland, their produce, their livestock, and the environment. They should be supported. Big Agriculture has been helped enough . . . help the little farms thrive.

COMMENT OF ALEXANDER JONES

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:37 p.m.

City, State: Eugene, OR

Occupation: Farmer

Comment: We need to close loops if we want to prevent the plethora of problems industrial agriculture and its inputs cause. Dead zones in the Gulf of Mexico, Bees dying by the millions, these are just a few of the destructive tendencies of industrial ag. The Dust Bowl was caused due to poor farming practices, let's not let that happen again!

Be Well,

ALEX.

COMMENT OF ANTHONY JONES

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:14 p.m.

City, State: Simpsonville, SC

Occupation: Semi-Retired

Comment: I Plead for **Reform!** Please stand up for all of the Americans who struggle with small local farms and gardens. Current policy threatens the livelihood and wondrous American heritage lifestyle which raises health well adjusted citizens.

COMMENT OF DIANE JONES

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 11:36 p.m.

City, State: Fort Myers Beach, FL

Occupation: Real Estate Broker

Comment: Dear Representative Mack,

Please consider the following for the new farm bill. Don't sell out to the big factory farms. We'll know who you care about with your vote . . . your constituents or big corporations.

A \$36 million cut to SNAP is not the way to go. The Committee should focus on writing a farm bill that creates economic opportunity and improves access to healthy, affordable food for all Americans.

1. Community Food Projects Program—\$10 million per year to help communities build food self-reliance.
2. Farmers Market and Local Food Promotion Program—\$20 million per year to develop farmers market capacity and create food hubs to connect farmers with schools, hospitals, grocery stores and other markets.

3. Hunger-Free Community Incentive Grants—An average of \$20 million per year for a new SNAP local fruit and vegetable incentive grant program at farmers markets and other healthy food retailers.

COMMENT OF KRIS JONES

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:57 a.m.

City, State: Upland, CA

Occupation: Special Ed. Teacher

Comment: Family farms are economical, social and spiritually the need of the present and the future. Big Ag pollutes and is bad for the planet and creates global warming.

COMMENT OF MARILYN JONES

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:46 p.m.

City, State: San Francisco, CA

Occupation: Designer

Comment: If you are truly interested in lowering health costs, you would encourage and support industry organic farming. I believe that many people my generation are healthy because we were born on the cusp of WWII Families across the U.S. who had no background in farming, grew as much of their own food as was possible. This happened all across the U.S. **Why** would you let healthy food that is grown organically by small farms be destroyed? Is the Committee is made up “fast food junk eaters”? Do they have no concept chemical free food.

It is a pathetic situation when America’s food production relies on chemicals and ignores the health factor of its Citizens.

JOINT COMMENT OF MAXINE & RALPH D. JONES

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 8:33 p.m.

City, State: Midland, SD

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Livestock

Size: 1,000+ acres

Comment: First, I believe you need to do a serious job of educating the public, even including many farmers, on how the farm bill works and why it is necessary.

Too many do not know that the majority of the budget actually serves **All** people needing food assistance, rather than subsidizing farmers.

We livestock producers who don’t grow grain crops for sale rarely know how crop subsidies work and why they are necessary, if they really are.

Those two items generate a tremendous amount of distrust and resentment of those farmers who get “all that free money” as I’ve heard it described.

That said, I do believe cuts should affect **All** who receive money from USDA. I believe cuts should be proportional to need and benefit to the environment.

It appears that conservation will take the hardest hit, and that is not right. Many of us who practice good land stewardship have carried that load without assistance of any kind until very recently. Since the general public wants good stewardship of the land, they should be willing to put some of their own ‘treasure’ into assisting those of us who do not get real returns from our stewardship costs.

Currently, some segments of agriculture seem to be doing quite well. Speaking as one who produces beef cattle as our only ‘crop’, that is deceiving . . . since our costs for absolute necessities for production are going up far faster than our income, and the taxes, from local to the income tax are going up very fast, too.

And Death Tax, the most obscene of all taxes, is forcing us to spend money better spent to help our young grandsons increase their herd numbers so they can become viable ranchers, on even more estate planning with every assault on private businesses via that horrible tax. Remember the Death Tax has a very high compliance and collections cost, too.

Insurance subsidies for losses of our hay crops in times of drought or other weather disasters, and possibly for excessive losses of livestock in unusually difficult storms would be a very possible saving mechanism for our business some years. It is nearly impossible to justify carrying insurance due to high premium costs, however even one year of huge losses has come very near to ending our ranching careers more than once over the past 55 years we have been in business.

I believe ethanol has used up more than its share of subsidies. The market place is the proper place for new, non-fossil fuels to grow, now.

Thanks for the opportunity to comment. As the elder of a four generation ranch (two generations preceded us), we would prefer no ag subsidies, but cannot compete with the subsidized farmers who like to raise cattle to clean up their crop residues while we have to purchase **All** our feed, either by owning or leasing land, growing hay and grain, *etc.*

MAXINE & RALPH D. JONES,
Midland, SD.

COMMENT OF MCKENZIE JONES

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 16, 2012, 9:32 p.m.

City, State: Flagstaff, AZ

Occupation: Community Garden Coordinator

Comment: Please do not cut funding to SNAP. Please support: Community Food Projects Program—\$10 million per year to help communities build food self-reliance.

Farmers Market and Local Food Promotion Program—\$20 million per year to develop farmers market capacity and create food hubs to connect farmers with schools, hospitals, grocery stores and other markets.

Hunger-Free Community Incentive Grants—An average of \$20 million per year for a new SNAP local fruit and vegetable incentive grant program at farmers markets and other healthy food retailers.

Please increase funding for outreach and technical assistance for socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers.

Thank you!

COMMENT OF MORGAN JONES

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 3:48 p.m.

City, State: Bagdad, KY

Occupation: Environmental Technologist

Comment: Don't cut funding for conservation! This is the most important function of the farm bill—to ensure our necessary crop production causes as little environmental harm as possible! This is the kind of governmental function we need **More** of, not less!

COMMENT OF NANCY JONES

Date Submitted: Monday, March 19, 2012, 9:28 p.m.

City, State: Abilene, AR

Occupation: Retired Educator

Comment: Please give more information about this bill. How much will it cost tax payers? Does it primarily assist small farmers or large corporations? How is distribution determined? Thank you for helping to inform us.

COMMENT OF NINA JONES

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 10:51 p.m.

City, State: Oakhurst, CA

Occupation: Delivery

Comment: Our health and the health of our planet depends on humans realizing sustainable farming practices. Huge agribusiness has only profit in mind. This needs to change. Please support organic farming in any decisions. Many health problems facing our nation could be helped by having healthy foods available . . . free of pesticides and chemicals.

COMMENT OF PAULA JONES

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 5:15 p.m.

City, State: Manhattan Beach, CA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Don't let our U.S. food and agricultural policy continue down the unhealthful road it's on. If you truly want to represent the people of the U.S., for policy development must focus on adopting best agricultural practices that put the health of its citizens, the land and the livelihood of farmers and farm workers over the interests of industrial agriculture lobbyists. We want sustainable agriculture with GMO foods labels so that those of us who do not want to eat GMO foods can chose to avoid them. Stop the policies that support the excess production of com-

modity food ingredients that then get dumped on our kids in school. Show the world that we are a truly developed nation and that we can make tough but intelligent decisions about how to best manage our environment, our health and our future through the fundamental farm policies that you create.

COMMENT OF ROSEMARY JONES

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 5:03 a.m.

City, State: Salinas, CA

Occupation: Educator

Comment: I am a consumer of farm products and find that I must shop with more and more trepidation due to the lack of oversight and protections. GMO and a chemical company named Monsanto, known for endangering populations for profits, are now growing our foods putting real farmers out of work and creating these oversized unwieldy industrial farms. Why must be forced to eat whatever they produce, and pay for the privilege?

COMMENT OF KAREN JONES, R.N.

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:34 p.m.

City, State: Bethlehem, PA

Occupation: Community Health Nurse

Comment: Based on the American Nurses Association code of ethics it is my duty to encourage you to support any legislation that would protect the health of our communities, and our environment. Please create and support a new movement in agriculture that is sustainable, local, organic and non GMF based. This is more than a health issue it is a matter of national security. Please act rightly.

Thank you,

KAREN JONES, R.N.,
Registered Nurse to MSN Program,
DeSales University.

COMMENT OF CALLIE JORDAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:42 p.m.

City, State: The Dalles, OR

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: U.S. food and agricultural policy must focus on adopting best agricultural practices that put the health of its citizens, the land and the livelihood of farmers and farm workers over the interests of industrial agriculture lobbyists.

Farmers and eaters across the U.S. benefit from a fair and healthy farm bill. We need your help today. Right now the House Agricultural Committee is accepting public comments on this critical piece of legislation.

There are a lot of bad ideas that Congress is considering, including cutting funding to vital programs such as nutrition, conservation and support for organic and sustainable agriculture.

I support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

COMMENT OF CAMILLE JORDAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:06 p.m.

City, State: Petaluma, CA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Let's give organic farmers the opportunity to expand & thereby lower costs. Many of us do not want to buy either GMO food or food contaminated w/ pesticides.

COMMENT OF JOHN JORDAN

Date Submitted: Friday, April 27, 2012, 10:04 a.m.

City, State: Bend, OR

Occupation: Home Designer

Comment: Dear Representative Walden,

I am writing to voice my concerns about current farming practices and subsidies. It is imperative that the current system be turned on its head and the emphasis be placed on sustaining the local family farm instead of the resource guzzling and pollution producing corporate farm industry.

Subsidies to industrial farms allow unsustainable practices to flourish while responsible organic and natural farmers struggle. Let us level the playing field and make industrial farms compete with the wholesome food producing family owned farms and place foods on the shelf that reflect the "real costs to produce" their products by eliminating subsidies.

Does this idea not reflect a true free enterprise capital system that our GOP representatives preach on a daily basis? Stop socialized farming practices. Call it what it is as most consumers are not aware how this system works for the wealthy industrial farms and not the just, hardworking family farmers that built this country.

The result of the current subsidies system promotes the production of unhealthy, petroleum based pesticide laden foods. Poisonous practices and GMO foods will lead to the downfall of our food supply as we continue to propagate poor farming practices.

Make the industrial farms compete on a level playing field and I assure you that the quality of food in this country will increase as costs decrease. Eliminate subsidies for farms.

Sincerely,

JOHN JORDAN.

COMMENT OF JOLYNN JORDAN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 5:25 p.m.

City, State: Oakland, CA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Please help the American people to get safe food, and to take care of our precious resources *e.g.*, our soil. Cancer is rampant, my son just died from it, we need safe food.

COMMENT OF MELISSA JORDAN

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 11:29 a.m.

City, State: Morrisville, VT

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Other

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: I produce vermicast (earthworms castings) from food scraps. I also try to buy locally raised produce and other food stuffs. I know an increasing number of people with different types of colitis and autoimmune diseases. I can't help but believe that these illnesses, and so many others, are due to the poor nutrient levels in foods from a chemical agriculture that does nothing to improve the quality of soil that food plants are raised in. I focus on producing healthy soil for healthy food. Our government should be doing the same, and supporting local, certified organic agriculture is the best way possible to achieve this goal.

COMMENT OF MICHELE JORDAN

Date Submitted: Thursday, April 26, 2012, 5:08 p.m.

City, State: Marion, MD

Occupation: Unemployed

Comment: First of all we need to protect our farmers on the shore and their right to farm, whether they be raising poultry or farming crops . . . They are being demonized for environmental problems when the fact is farmers were the "first environmentalists".

Second, I feel that any cuts to the Food Stamp program at this time would hurt only those who are struggling the most. The elderly and the working poor who are already close to "making too much" to qualify will be the ones cut off, not the perpetual needy people who have made no effort to work despite ability to and have fostered a dependence on government aid.

COMMENT OF PATRICIA JORDAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:42 p.m.

City, State: Montgomery, AL

Occupation: Health Coach

Comment: The farm bill needs to be for Real Farmers growing Real food not large corporations growing Frankenfood and not for land owners like your family and my family to be subsidized simply for owning land. Those things are welfare for the rich and are **Wrong**. Subsidizing those entities is shameful and is costing our country vast amounts of money beyond the subsidies. The American people are wise to this abuse of tax money and want this to stop!

COMMENT OF STEPHANIE JORDAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:23 p.m.

City, State: Benicia, CA

Occupation: Chef, Caterer, Culinary Faculty

Comment: It's time for real reform. Please fund vital programs including organic and sustainable farming methods, nutrition, and conservation. Specifically, I urge you to do the following:

- Maintain the EQIP Organic Initiative
- Fully endorse all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully fund conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- Implement all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).

For 20+ years, my father was a Nebraska farmer of corn, soybeans, and at times, popcorn. At age 63, he died of Lymphoma, which was caused by farm chemicals. He always wanted to try and grow organically, but due to too many pesticides and herbicides in the ground—not to mention GMOs (thanks a lot, Monsanto), he never had the chance. There are safe, effective ways to grow produce, but it can only happen if organic farmers are supported. Now is the time to support these organic farmers. As a chef, I work with food and the people who eat it every day. I can tell you that consumers across the country are realizing the health benefits of eating chemical-free. The demand is there, so please get on board to pass an Organic Farm Bill.

I am also calling on stricter standards for food safety in this country. Unfortunately, it seems our government is reactive, and not proactive. It seems there always needs to be an outbreak with excessive illness and death before anyone pays attention to the disgusting and inhumane ways in which animals are raised, and the effects this type of farming has on the environment (i.e. runoff into water supplies, neighboring farms). Please implement stricter standards that keep corporate ag businesses in check.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF AARON JOSLIN

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 6:23 p.m.

City, State: Athens, GA

Occupation: Graduate Student—Agroforestry

Comment: The farm bill is a great tool to establish priorities for agricultural practices in the U.S. Those priorities should include support for organic, family-owned and/or ecologically pro-active farmers. Priorities should not include support for practices that concentrate more acreage under the control of corporate farming interests. Please consider reducing or rejecting subsidies paid for crops reliant on GMO technologies and increasing support prices for farmers who create diverse ownership and genetic traits within their crops.

COMMENT OF HARRIET JOSLIN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:57 a.m.

City, State: Raleigh, NC

Occupation: Retired/Home Gardener

Comment: As a lifetime backyard gardener, I know the work it takes to grow fresh, wholesome vegetables. I value locally grown produce and try to support local farmers as much as possible. But I know the way of life as a small farmer who sells locally is disappearing because the odds are stacked against them. I am appalled at the crazy laws that support unsustainable, unhealthy, environmentally destruc-

tive agribusiness and can't figure out how in the world members of congress can continue to vote for those laws. Please take a closer look at how the laws supporting agribusiness is threatening the quality of all of our lives.

Thank you,

HARRIET JOSLIN.

COMMENT OF NANCY JOY

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 7:56 a.m.

City, State: Asheville, NC

Occupation: Retired

Comment: My health is compromised. I am celiac. I scrutinize everything I put in my mouth. I want to know how the food is raised and handled. This is to sustain my life. Now my grandson is celiac, the family has food sensitivities and allergies. We really **Watch** and **Select** with great care what we eat. It is important for you to protect our food sources for purity.

COMMENT OF CHERYL JOYCE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:00 p.m.

City, State: Rainbow Lake, NY

Occupation: Professor of Chemistry

Comment: Please, please stop companies like Monsanto and Syngenta from dictating horrible farming practices that are unhealthy for the people and the soil.

COMMENT OF PAUL JOZEF

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:32 p.m.

City, State: Phoenix, AZ

Occupation: Mediator

Comment: Please support organic farming and local distribution, and withdraw all support for farming that uses toxic chemicals of any kind, and work to improve the quality of nutrition in public schools.

COMMENT OF LILIA JUDD

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 1:28 p.m.

City, State: Temecula, CA

Occupation: Courier

Comment: The current farm bill is a major reason why obesity, diet-related disease and health care costs are skyrocketing. It's partly why food production is responsible for more than 1/2 of greenhouse gas emissions and farm run-off is fouling drinking water and creating dead-zones in the ocean.

I would like to press Congress to cut corporate welfare and enact agriculture reforms that would create jobs, clean up the environment, strengthen sustainable local food systems and make healthy food available to everyone.

COMMENT OF PANDORA JUDGE

Date Submitted: Monday, April 16, 2012, 11:38 a.m.

City, State: Haydenville, MA

Occupation: Educator

Comment: Dear Ag Committee,

It is my fervent hope that as you continue to craft the 2012 Farm Bill, that you are taking to heart the dire need for our policies around farming to reflect a deep concern for the health of our people and the environment, protecting the family farm and rural/agrarian landscape as well as some innovation regarding the localization of our food system.

It is well known that agricultural runoff and pollution from massive industrial farms is a considerable toxic environmental issues for our lands and in particular, our waterways, and that it costs us many billions of dollars per year in clean up. And that is just the economic cost, the true costs to our health and environment of industrial farm pollution is a complex web that is difficult to measure.

The iconic American farmer is no longer represented by the corporate mega farming practices that exist today. There is, however, a strong people-led movement to bring our farming culture back around to a local system that brings the healthiest, freshest food to a people who are plagued with health issues related to food and obesity. The local food movement also tends to support small farmers who take vastly

better care of their land than large ones, reduces our fossil fuel resource needs significantly, brings better wages to farmers and enhances our cultural heritage. It is a strong movement on its own but it needs the help of a farm bill that is innovative and interested in supporting and enhancing this powerful trend. Infrastructure such as food hubs to help re-localize our food systems are critical. Regulation that takes to task (instead of protecting) the large farms that destroy the environment and put our health at risk is paramount, along with creative and flexible regulation that works with small farms to ensure they can continue to produce great products in sustainable ways. Blanket regulations that are designed for industrial agriculture do not make sense with many small farms.

Please please take this momentous opportunity to work with the food movement that is powerfully taking hold with your constituents. This farm bill is a chance to put the people before the corporations. I realize 'Big Ag' and 'Big Chemical' companies have lots of money and powerful lobbies. However, here you have the opportunity to make real change for the right stakeholders—the regular people who care about their health, the environment and their communities, rather than huge corporations whose bottom line is the dollar.

Thank you,

PANDORA JUDGE.

COMMENT OF LYN JUDKINS

Date Submitted: Monday, May 07, 2012, 6:09 p.m.

City, State: Chesterton, IN

Occupation: Disabled

Comment: It is time to help our neighbors living next door instead of across the oceans. Take care of our own families and friends. Senior citizens have to choose between life saving meds or foods. And young families have to depend on not so healthy starchy foods to make ends meet. Let's get healthy and get heart.

LYN from Chesterton Indiana

COMMENT OF MAILYN JUHLIN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 10:11 p.m.

City, State: Virginia Beach, VA

Occupation: Career Counselor

Comment: For our health and for future generations, please protect our food supplies and our soil. Many of these new mass-production farming practices are resulting in declining health in our country and what other countries know from extensive research. Let's stop living in a knee-jerk, reactionary mode and be proactive in our health by protecting our valuable food sources by supporting organic!

COMMENT OF KATHRYN JULIA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:48 p.m.

City, State: Honolulu, HI

Occupation: Massage Therapist and Doula

Comment: There is no greater truth than 'we are what we eat'. In the land of the free we need to be free to know what is in the food we eat and how it was produced.

If you change the DNA in the food we eat you change the DNA in the humans who eat it.

COMMENT OF COURTNEY JUNG

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:06 p.m.

City, State: Lakeside Park, KY

Comment: Natural resources such as: seeds, herbs, fruits, vegetables, spices, nuts, berries, water, honey, cattle, sheep, goats, cows, ox, buffalo, bison, ostrich, pigs, emu's, poultry, chicken, turkeys, geese, ducks, and so much more should be considered a private industry of and by the people of America (if not the world). It should never be taxed or regulated by a government body. The government or a majority of governing corporations should never have autonomy over natural resources that mankind absolutely needs to survive.

That is unless you're trying to control what nutrition we have the right to choose from in order to starve us or kill us via malnutrition; what other reasons are there for the rationing of natural resources like warlords?

COMMENT OF ROXANNE JUNGE

Date Submitted: Tuesday, March 27, 2012, 9:54 p.m.

City, State: Glenview, IL

Occupation: Farmers Market Manager & Teacher

Comment: Local and regional food systems help create jobs and spur economic growth in rural and urban communities. Please support investment in this growing sector by including the Local Farms, Food, and Jobs Act in the next farm bill.

The future of family farming and ranching in America depends upon ensuring that would-be new farmers have access to land, capital, and markets. Please support beginning farmers and ranchers by including Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act in the next farm bill.

Farmers depend on quality, cutting-edge research to stay successful—please make sure the next farm bill invests in this crucial work.

Working lands conservation programs help farmers maintain productivity while protecting our air, water, and soil, protect these programs from unfair funding cuts!

COMMENT OF CAROL JURCZEWSKI

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:41 p.m.

City, State: Riverside, IL

Occupation: Homemaker

Comment: As a person that values the environment and healthy foods, please incorporate funding for organic farmers. More and more people are turning to organic foods rather than cheaply subsidized crops, such as corn and soy.

COMMENT OF CYNTHIA JUSTICE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:12 p.m.

City, State: Asheville, NC

Occupation: Homemaker, Volunteer

Comment: We expect monies given in the farm bill to support small farms, not the Big Agriculture raking in billions. This has been so abused and scammed, it IS a scam even when legal, that it is working against the average farmer and trashing, sapping the land.

COMMENT OF WENDY KACZERSKI

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 1:45 p.m.

City, State: Princeton, NJ

Occupation: Foundation Program Officer

Comment: We need a farm bill that makes healthy food widely available to all Americans—including schoolchildren. We must provide flexibility for states to use existing food procurement programs to purchase fresh, healthy food from local farmers and ranchers. Why aren't we doing this already? Think healthier people, lower medical expenses, lower insurance rates, more farms, better farm wages.

COMMENT OF MO KAFKA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:51 a.m.

City, State: New Brunswick, NJ

Occupation: Property Management

Comment: Support for fair farming, for nutrition programs and programs that protect the environment are essential. If we do not protect the quality of the air, water and Earth the entire nation will suffer. This is a priority, support organic farms, small farms and good nutrition and proper environmental stewardship.

COMMENT OF LUCY KAGAN

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 16, 2012, 3:52 p.m.

City, State: Fayetteville, AR

Occupation: Nonprofit Program Coordinator for Nutrition Education

Comment: Cutting Nutrition programs is unacceptable. We are putting out nation at risk: obesity rates continue to climb and the health effects associated with bigger waist lines are in the billions. We **Need** nutrition programs—A \$36 million cut to SNAP is not the way to go. The Committee should focus on writing a farm bill that creates economic opportunity and improves access to healthy, affordable food for all Americans. Supporting big business is killing our economy and our right to life and liberty. When unhealthy food is cheap due to subsidized commercial

crops, our health suffers as a result. Fund vegetable production and allow SNAP participants access to fresh produce. It **Will** pay for itself in the not so distant future.

COMMENT OF KATHARINE KAGEL

Date Submitted: Sunday, April 15, 2012, 9:11 p.m.

City, State: Santa Fe, NM

Occupation: Restaurateur

Comment: YIKES! We need more Food for our hungry neighbors—we've been cut 37% in 1 year—and have lost 1.2 million meals as a result—Please “beef up” the food banks ASAP! This country has surplus food—what's more important than filling bellies?

Thanks for making this a priority! This is an emergency.

KATHARINE KAGEL.

COMMENT OF JESSICA KAISER

Date Submitted: Monday, May 14, 2012, 4:56 p.m.

City, State: Pasadena, CA

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: Everyone has the right to eat & grow healthy food from farms in this country. We need to support all farmers and individuals, who grow organic produce, so that they may do so freely without having to struggle and can rely on each other. Not terrible giants like Monsanto.

COMMENT OF NATASHA KAISER

Date Submitted: Tuesday, April 03, 2012, 9:37 a.m.

City, State: Farwell, MN

Occupation: Social Worker

Comment: Dear Representative/Senator Collins:

I work as a social worker and strongly urge you to support existing funding levels for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) within the farm bill.

One in 9 Minnesota citizens struggles to put food on the table. In MN, at least a large percentage of the population is food insecure. SNAP is critical to maintaining good nutrition and health among our population.

Economic studies in Minnesota show that people who lack access to adequate nutrition are more often chronically ill; children don't fully develop physically and cognitively and are more prone to fail courses, repeat grades and drop out of school before graduation. The cost of hunger's impact—largely as uninsured medical care—is conservatively estimated at \$1.6 billion annually. Cutting SNAP or limiting access to it will increase charity care caseloads for the counties, which will be borne by local property taxes.

Last but not least, every dollar of SNAP purchases goes into the local economy and generates \$1.73 in economic activity. This is not a net expense; it is a net gain of 73% that supports jobs on Main Street. In a time of high unemployment, we cannot afford to add to the unemployed by reducing community economic assets of which SNAP is one.

As a constituent and as a public servant, I strongly oppose cuts to critical anti-hunger programs SNAP, TEFAP as well as the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) for seniors and Women, Infants and Children (WIC)

For the sake of our neighbors who can't earn enough to get the food they need, it is important to maintain funding for programs that provide basic food assistance programs.

Sincerely,

NATASHA KAISER.

COMMENT OF SHAWN KAKUK

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:00 p.m.

City, State: St. Cloud, MN

Occupation: Education

Comment: As a citizen who does their best to live a sustainable lifestyle, I believe that it is imperative that producers of our nation's food, as well as the world's food, have the opportunity to not be absorbed by giant corporate farms. The family farmer, and the family farmer who has not been co-opted by big agribusiness, have the ability to stay in business and provide those of us who desire our food to come

to us closer to home and from a sustainable entity. Thank you for your time in considering my opinion.

COMMENT OF JEFF KALEY

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 8:13 p.m.
City, State: Brooksville, ME
Occupation: Former Farmer and Govt. Agriculturalist (Retired)
Comment: Dear Mr. Michaud,

I am writing about the farm bill . . . I have worked as a farmer in Maine, and I was an agriculturalist for the Peace Corps for 4 years. I am concerned about the direction farming has gone in this country.

I would like to see organic farming encouraged. I would like to see smaller farms operating and not rely on the big Agri biz which like most big biz really seem to care primarily for their own profits and not the consumers their business is ideally serving. I also have serious concerns about our environment!

Basically in political lingo here is what I would like to see happen.

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Thanks for your help in serving us constituents in Maine.

COMMENT OF ROSLYN KALIFOWICZ-WALETZKY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:58 a.m.
City, State: Brooklyn, NY
Occupation: Instructor

Comment: U.S. food and agricultural policy must focus on adopting best agricultural practices that put the health of its citizens, the land and the livelihood of farmers and farm workers over the interests of industrial agriculture lobbyists.

I have grown some of my food myself and plan to continue doing so.

I do not buy any processed food WHATSOEVER and avoid all Monsanto modified seeds. I also belong to a health food coop so that I avoid all the psuedofoods the American government allows corporations to put on supermarket shelves.

COMMENT OF BENJAMIN KALISH

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 8:51 a.m.
City, State: Northampton, MA
Occupation: Librarian

Comment: Please insure that the farm bill supports adequate research into healthy and sustainable farming practices including organic farming and permaculture, and reduce waste by eliminating unhelpful and outdated subsidies. The farm bill should emphasize the production of healthy, nutritious food in sustainable ways and the economic livelihood of those who do so, not the pocketbooks of corporate agribusiness.

COMMENT OF BRAD KALITA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:45 p.m.
City, State: Chiloquin, OR
Occupation: Self-Employed—Rentals

Comment: Your programs more often lavish the large corporations and wealthy with subsidies while minimizing the little guy by allowing political cronyism to dominate. This must be stopped.

COMMENT OF SANDRA KALSCHUR

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:46 p.m.
City, State: Arlington, VA
Occupation: International Health Communications

Comment: I am an active participant in working to ensure that Americans (all Americans) have access to healthy nutritious food. I am also active in working to ensure that our smaller farmers get a fair shake in all of these laws and regulations (and that they can make a living at doing their important work) and that large agribusiness farms do not continue to run the show.

COMMENT OF KIM KAMBAK

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:32 a.m.

City, State: Prineville, OR

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Dry Beans & Peas, Field Crops, Poultry/poultry products, Vegetables, Other

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Dear Congressman Walden,

I farm 7 acres inside the city limits of Prineville using organic and biodynamic methods. I raise pastured poultry, veal and vegetables. I nearly break even annually. I can farm because I am a retired school administrator. My farm is used for educational field trips and classes. I want small producers like myself to have the opportunity to thrive. I am a small business. The farm bill appears to cater to large ag. They have had enough tax payer dollars. I have watched the end results of their work end up on school cafeteria trays. Small, local producers could feed America's school children cheaper, more effectively, and provide much better nutrition so kids could actually grow into healthy beings. Please scrutinize the bill and take a stand for me in Crook County and America's school kids!

Sincerely,

KIM KAMBAK,

The Last Stand Farm Prineville, Oregon.

COMMENT OF JOHN KANIA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:34 p.m.

City, State: Ione, CA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Dairy

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Take a look at what God says about food and stop allowing American ag business to pay off government to make things better for themselves.

COMMENT OF BARBARA KANN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:20 p.m.

City, State: Nokomis, FL

Occupation: Music Teacher

Comment: Dear Representatives,

We as a nation are suffering the terrible health consequences including rapidly rising obesity, diabetes and heart disease that are directly linked to the over consumption of sweet and fatty foods that have been subsidized by farm bills in the past. Our medical system is a financial disaster because of the extreme medical costs of diseases like diabetes and cancer, which has killed many of my family members, and it will be impossible to control our national debt without reducing medical costs.

A healthy farm bill can help resolve all of these problems. Please phase out all agricultural subsidies while boosting support for farmer's markets, land conservation and organic farming which protects farm workers and consumers against dangerous pesticides and herbicides.

Our nation does not need to subsidize large farmers and food companies. We can all benefit from healthier not cheaper food.

Thank you!

COMMENT OF SHARON KANSAS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:45 p.m.

City, State: Garden City, KS

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Fruits

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: I'm a gardener, but I have a doctorate in alternative medicine. Go to kdhe.org and see that Kansas has 1% higher rate of infant mortality than other states. We have the highest rates of atrazine in our water in the U.S. the U.S. has the highest infant mortality of the developed world.

That impact on the healthcare system helped to destroy our economy. We must go organic-use of cover crops and crop rotation keeps weeds down everywhere else. We can't afford to do this and it's unchristian also.

COMMENT OF PAUL KAPERICK

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:53 p.m.

City, State: Lakewood, WA

Occupation: Real Estate Broker

Comment: We need an agriculture bill that provides a sustainable model for agriculture. Our current system of poisoning the soil with chemical on huge mono crop farms will not feed this nation properly.

COMMENT OF ADAM KAPLAN

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 4:22 p.m.

City, State: Laguna Beach, CA

Occupation: Piano Tuner

Comment: Diversity in nature and business is our safety net. Many small(er) farms are better than a few giant ones. Efficiency and quality are actually better in smaller farms (or any other endeavor). Don't let the "Big Boys" crowd out the little guys.

COMMENT OF ANNE KAPLAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:41 p.m.

City, State: Philadelphia, PA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: We need to stop supporting agribusiness, the corn industry and abusive cattle practices. We need to support growing healthy vegetables, and non-hormone/antibiotic chicken, pork and beef. Please support a healthy and productive farm bill.

COMMENT OF BARRY KAPLAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:35 a.m.

City, State: Madbury, NH

Occupation: Environmental Science Teacher

Comment: Please support farm and food policy that will give the public good, whole food that is produced in a sustainable manner. As the population becomes more overweight and obese year by year, we must reduce our use of corn-based sugars in our foods and beverages. And as our climate continues to warm, we must shift our consumption of foods to those that produce less carbon as a by-product. Thank you!

COMMENT OF CAITLIN KAPOOR

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:03 a.m.

City, State: Pittsburgh, PA

Occupation: Health Counselor

Comment: This country is in a crisis. The obese are getting heavier. Our children are eating Twinkies instead of carrots, and government subsidized crops are the foundation for every junk food on the market, which the lobbyists are fighting hard to keep. Things **Have** to change. We need fresh produce to be affordable and accessible. Deprived socioeconomic classes need to be educated and given ways to provide more nutritious food for their families. The cycle we are currently in will kill this nation.

COMMENT OF ALAN KAPULER, PH.D.

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:01 p.m.

City, State: Corvallis, OR

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Other

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: We cannot allow agriculture to poison us.

First we poison the bugs, then the fungi and animals and now ourselves with the genetically engineered foods that have become our major crops.

Support for organic agriculture by developing microbiological fertilizer regimes will improve our land, water and human health.

It is time for a change from supporting large mega corporations parasitizing our society to helping more people farm organically.

Is it a wonder that we have a set of epidemics *i.e.*, diabetes, obesity, chronic heart disease, Alzheimer's . . .

Too many monocultures, too many huge machines, not enough devoted farmers, not enough biodiversity.

It is time for a change for the good not the greed.

COMMENT OF SALLY KARABELNIKOFF

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:49 p.m.

City, State: Anchorage, AK

Occupation: Organic Grower

Comment: Our country is desperate to have organic food available for improving health. Every time I get my organic food done to eat I feel so much better. Working on health saves thousands of dollars against pills! The talk about expensive organic food is not correct when you count the cost of pills that can be eliminated . . .

COMMENT OF KLAUS KARBAUMER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:35 p.m.

City, State: Platte City, MO

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: The new farm bill has to make sure that small-scale organic producers are not out-competed by large scale industrialized farms, which generally are neither able to give as much attention to the needs of the plants and the soil as smaller producers do. Even more important is the social aspect of keeping people on and in the land with gainful occupation and not depending on the exploitation of cheap migrant labor.

COMMENT OF BROWN KAREN

Date Submitted: Monday, April 30, 2012, 12:17 p.m.

City, State: Lynn, MA

Occupation: Director of Faith Development

Comment: Please do not cut any funding for those in the most need. How we support the agencies that help people the most is indicative of how good and compassionate we are as a state and nation.

COMMENT OF VICKY KARHU

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 3:25 p.m.

City, State: El Prado, NM

Occupation: Nonprofit

Comment: Please protect funding for programs supporting for small and limited resource farmers and ranchers, especially the section 2501 or Outreach and Assistance to Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers Program and Community Food Projects. Thanks!

COMMENT OF PIPER KARIE

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 1:02 a.m.

City, State: Fort Collins, CO

Occupation: Photo-Journalist

Comment: The government exists to serve the people, not the corporations. We need a farm bill that will ensure Organic, safe, healthy farming and food for our country. Not another bill created and pushed by the GMO industry for their own profit. DO the **Right** thing and support the health of the American people! Be a Hero. We could sure use some.

COMMENT OF SAMANTHA KARIM

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:55 p.m.
City, State: Los Angeles, CA
Occupation: Attorney and Student
Comment: Please put the health of the citizens of your district before agro business. Trends are moving towards healthy, organic foods. The farm bill should reflect these consumer desires.

COMMENT OF THERESA KARNECKI

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:33 p.m.
City, State: Palmer, MA
Occupation: Homemaker
Comment: Small sustainable farms can & do match the output of big agriculture, and they do it while producing more nutrient-dense crops **And** replenishing depleted soil. Small farms invigorate our economy. **Support Small Farmers!**

COMMENT OF JASON KARNEZIS

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 9:24 a.m.
City, State: Ridgefield, WA
Producer/Non-producer: Producer
Type: Vegetables
Size: Less than 50 acres
Comment: I'm 37, have been farming part-time for 7 years, finally bought my own property in 2011 and continue to make a go of fruit and vegetable farming in SW Washington. The demand is through the roof. If I had the money, I would increase 10-fold in production, hire full-time staff, and work full time myself. Instead, I'm my own loan officer with off-farm income keeping me afloat. I want you to know that I fully endorse all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).

Within a year of owning our farm, we applied and were awarded conservation funding. I believe congress should fully fund conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and ensure enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.

The past winter, I attended evening classes through my local extension office, to bolster my small business skills and learn about programs designed for beginning farmers. The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236) is key to ensuring the next generation of farmers can produce food made in the USA.

Based on advice from another beginning farmer, I applied for an EQIP grant originally under the organic standards. Since we had just purchased the property, we were still waiting on our Organic Certification but were still awarded a standard EQIP grant to construct efficiencies and conservation initiatives. Please maintain the EQIP Organic Initiative.

I understand you are faced with tough decisions every day. Please take a moment to consider that with little outreach from ourselves, our farm can not keep up with orders, neighbors knock on our door and ask when they can come visit and help, and with only 7 years under our belts, I now have interested younger folks contacting me to learn the ins and outs of local, organic fruit and vegetable production. Farms once served as hubs of the community, but socially and economically. My goal is to build such a hub, work tirelessly, and build a stronger local economy. Thank you for your time.

JASON.

COMMENT OF PATRICIA KARR-SEGAL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:06 p.m.
City, State: Ithaca, NY
Occupation: Social Work
Comment: As a consumer and parent, I am increasingly concerned about the inequitable policies in the proposed farm bills that favor large farms and agribusiness. Supporting family farms and local food production has become a pivotal issue for me as I consider where my votes and dollars go.

SUBMITTED STATEMENT BY CORNELL KASBERGEN, VICE CHAIR, DAIRY COMMITTEE,
LAND O'LAKES BOARD; SECOND VICE CHAIRMAN, NATIONAL MILK PRODUCERS FED-
ERATION

Good morning, Congressmen Costa and Cardoza. Thanks for holding this field hearing today, and inviting me to testify. I am Cornell Kasbergen, a dairyman from Tulare, where I farm with my wife Teri, son Case and his wife Allison. I am a member of the Land O'Lakes Board, serving as vice chair of the Dairy Committee, and serve as the Second Vice Chairman on the National Milk Producers Federation board.

California's dairy sector faces serious challenges. I think you're aware of that, which is why we're all here today. Some of these are local or state issues which, for better or worse, are out of the jurisdiction of the U.S. Congress.

I'm not going to spend time on those issues, because while they're very important, that's not what we need your help with. What we *do need you to do* is enact a new farm bill, containing the provisions of the Dairy Security Act that Congressman Peterson of Minnesota first introduced last fall.

As I think you're aware, one element of the current safety net for dairy farmers is the price support program. It was created after World War II. The other element, the MILC payment program, was modeled after that Northeast Dairy Compact from the 1990s. These 20th century programs aren't doing us any good in the 21st century. Neither the price support program nor the MILC program provides any kind of safety net, because they're tied to the price of milk. They can't address the other key economic driver of our bottom line, which is feed costs.

Perhaps even more so than volatile milk prices, it is this volatility in feed costs that is determining whether we make money, or lose money, in a given year. By ending the price support and MILC programs, as well as the Dairy Export Incentive Program, we can shift those Federal resources to margin insurance. Such insurance will help protect against the type of disastrously low margins we experienced in 2009.

This new approach will be particularly valuable for dairy farmers in our state. It helps guard against surges in feed costs. It doesn't have production or volume limitations, which for larger farmers is a basic matter of fairness. We shouldn't have a significant part of our milk supply exposed, with no safety net coverage at all, which is the problem with the MILC program. Margin insurance will complement our existing ability to use the futures markets to help mitigate our price risk.

The best thing is, this is a voluntary program. Those who don't want this protection don't have to use it. Those who do, will help share in the cost, and they are subject to in the provisions of the Market Stabilization program. This to me is a reasonable and appropriate trade-off. There's no free lunch.

Some have argued that within this proposed program, we should not have a national feed cost calculation, but should make allowances for certain states . . . such as California. I have three reactions to that: first, even within California, the California Department of Food and Ag tracks are four different feed costs. Which of those should be used? Whichever you pick, you're leaving out the other three.

Second, let's be frank: it is not feed costs that are the issue, it is the way milk is priced in California. On average, our feed costs are a little higher than the national average, according to USDA, but our milk price in California averaged 10% less than the average of the top 23 dairy states between 2005 and 2010.

There have been preliminary discussion at our board to analyze if California should join the Federal Order. This would require the farm bill to contain a provision to allow California to join the Order with the current quota system intact. This provision was in the 1996 Farm Bill.

Third and most importantly, I would argue that once you go down the road of making exceptions, we'll lose the national consensus we have achieved so far. The Dairy Security Act was not created to change the competitive dynamic between states.

And we can't afford it. You know how Washington works. It's no different in the dairy business. Once the compromise unravels, we'll be back to square one. And that is unacceptable.

The NMPF effort has come to Congress for the first time in history with a majority of the dairy producer community supporting one bill. This process has involved compromise between large and small farmers and farmers from east to west and north to south.

In conclusion I would say this is your chance to make history and change dairy policy for the better. This is our once in a lifetime opportunity to make history, let's make it happen.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF STEFANI KASDIN

Date Submitted: Thursday, April 26, 2012, 12:25 p.m.

City, State: Cherry Hill, NJ

Occupation: Cashier

Comment: The farm bill needs to include laws for the production of sustainably produced and distributed produce, fruits and meats that affords fair food access for all regardless of income or location with a focus on reduction of chemical usage and promoting locally produced farm products and fair labor practices.

COMMENT OF STEPHEN KASEMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:55 p.m.

City, State: Peachtree City, GA

Occupation: Jewelry Craftsman

Comment: I support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.
- Cutting subsidies to wasteful monocrop agribusiness using GMO crops.
- Maintaining USDA SNAP program to help hungry families meet dietary and nutritional needs to be healthy.

COMMENT OF KATHRYN KASSNER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:29 p.m.

City, State: Milan, NY

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: Please make reforms to the farm bill that encourage organic and sustainable agriculture, as well as promote growing products of nutritional value.

COMMENT OF LINDSAY KASTLE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:09 p.m.

City, State: Carroll, IA

Occupation: Photographer

Comment: Organic farming is do important today more than ever. It's hard enough finding organic produce/food the way it is . . . please do not cut anything that us hoping the organic food industry grow. Organic food is the healthiest kind of food anyone can eat.

COMMENT OF WALLENTA KATHY

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 1:33 p.m.

City, State: Minneapolis, MI

Occupation: Retired

Comment: As an elder who has grown up in rural MN, with home grown chemical free and diverse, delicious food, and as one who has experienced the beauty of growing it and **Knowing** it, it is sad and frightening to see what is happening in the name of "health" and "feeding the world". Profit and abuse of people and land prevail all around. Many of us are waking up to the damage we are doing to ourselves and the planet. Please hear the cry and needs of organic growers and eaters. In the end, it will be profitable all around. A win-win. Thank you.

COMMENT OF MATTHEW KATINSKY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:39 p.m.

City, State: Fort Wayne, IN

Occupation: GIS Programmer

Comment: My daughter has a life-threatening tree-nut allergy, and asthma which is induced by several environmental allergies. Living in Indiana, we are constantly exposed to agricultural pollution from large-scale industrial practices that dump toxins into the air and water while squeezing family farms out of business.

I urge you to shift course. Consumers may want cheap food, but they want healthy food, and they want a clean safe place to raise their children. In constantly putting profit and yield first, our industrial agricultural system does not care how many pesticides, hormones, antibiotics, and other chemicals enter our bloodstreams. This is short-sighted, unsustainable, and morally indefensible.

I support full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286), fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs, the implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236), and maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

COMMENT OF BARB KATZ

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 15, 2012, 2:03 p.m.

City, State: Cherry, NJ

Occupation: Retired

Comment: America is hungry. Please put the people in need back on the list of those we help. We are the richest country with the most selfish congress in history. Let's care for our people.

COMMENT OF PAULA KATZENMEYER

Date Submitted: Friday, April 06, 2012, 3:15 p.m.

City, State: Hutchinson, MN

Occupation: Teacher/Trainer

Comment: As a member of McLeod County's Emergency Food and Shelter Program board, I urge you to resist making any cuts to the Nutrition Programs.

As a constituent and as a public servant, I strongly oppose cuts to critical anti-hunger programs SNAP, TEFAP as well as the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) for seniors and Women, Infants and Children (WIC)

For the sake of our neighbors who can't earn enough to get the food they need, it is important to maintain funding for programs that provide basic food assistance programs.

Our local food shelves are already struggling to keep enough food on their shelves to provide to those in need. Any cuts to the Nutrition Programs would have a significant impact on our local resources and the health and welfare of our community.

Sincerely,

PAULA KATZENMEYER.

COMMENT OF LUCY KAUFMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:30 p.m.

City, State: Goldendale, WA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: The number of Americans seeking food sources free of pesticides, chemicals, and GMOs is growing daily. Those who care of their health and the health of their families look for organic foods every day. We need a Healthy farm bill and we need to get agribusinesses out of our lives.

COMMENT OF ANDREW KAVANAGH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:28 p.m.

City, State: Los Angeles, CA

Occupation: Graphic Artist

Comment: There must be reform to Genetically Modified foods! America should unite with the rest of the world & ban GMO's! Don't put profit over people's health.

COMMENT OF MAUREEN KAVANAGH

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 12:50 a.m.

City, State: Woodside, NY

Occupation: Unemployed

Comment: We need a farm bill that gives help to the family farmer, not big farming corps like Monsanto, who want to shove GMO's down our throats . . .

COMMENT OF JUDITH KAWA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:14 a.m.

City, State: Johnston, RI

Occupation: Chair of Johnston Municipal Land Trust

Comment: I urge you to support the Senate funding levels for Agricultural Land Easements which advance the proven model of leveraging Federal funds through local partners to secure perpetual conservation easements that help keep farm lands in production while conserving important natural resources. Our community is rich with farmland . . . a way of life that is becoming increasingly harder to maintain. Through Federal funding we will be able to work with our farm owners in preserving our natural resources while helping them to produce the food our community needs and deserves.

Restore the existing FRPP match formula to encourage bargain sales & allow waivers of the match requirement for strategic projects.

Restore language clarifying that the Federal government is not acquiring a real property interest and has only a “contingent right of enforcement” should the co-operating entity fail to enforce its easement.

As always, thank you for your continued support.

JUDY KAWA,

Chair,

Johnston Municipal Land Trust.

COMMENTS OF SHEILA KAYE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 2:27 p.m.

City, State: Palm Harbor, FL

Occupation: Licensed Clinical Social Worker

Comment: I was raised in farm country; I am committed to having healthy foods, supporting organics, and educating about the ill effects of GMO and corporate farming & pesticides. Support our family farmers and respect for the Earth before we are completely compromised!

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:11 p.m.

Comment: Please listen to citizens wanting organic foods, healthy eating to maintain our well being. The pesticides and processed foods are contributing to increased disease, diabetes, obesity, cancers. You are supposed to represent citizens, **Not Corporate Greed!**

COMMENT OF MEGHAN KEANE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:21 p.m.

City, State: Brooklyn, NY

Occupation: Artist

Comment: My grandfather was a farmer for 50 years in south western Minnesota. I come from a culture and family of farmers as well as educated individuals who care about the future of the planet and its inhabitants. Thus, I support: the full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286). I support congressional funding of conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.

I also support the implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236). Last, I emphatically support both maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative and cannot stress enough the need to have a universal standard for organic foods, including differentiating between GMO seeds *versus* organic seed sprayed with chemicals. We need to know where our seeds come from and how our food is subsequently grown in order to make informed decisions.

COMMENT OF LANDIS KEARNON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:53 p.m.

City, State: Tucson, AZ

Occupation: Library Clerk, Writer

Comment: We must move firmly and as rapidly as possible in the direction of sustainable and organic farming practices. No more killing our land and water—and us—for big profits.

COMMENT OF EDIE KEASBEY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:09 p.m.

City, State: Patterson, NY

Occupation: Retired Environmentalist

Comment: I grew up on a NY dairy farm. We took care of our animals, we took care of our soil. We worked with the weather. We rotated our crops, we did not drench our soils with poisons. Our animals were fertile, they ate healthy food, not recycled manure. Our crops did not need poisons in order to grow. That farm sustained farmers from before there was a New York State. Today's industrial farms will be useless within the next 50 years, worn out, and poisoned to death. It's time the USDA woke up.

Thank you,

EDIE KEASBEY.

COMMENT OF SUZANNE KEATING

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 15, 2012, 11:07 a.m.

City, State: Woodstock, VT

Occupation: Consultant

Comment: The backbone of America is in the small farms and farming communities that helped build this country. The future of America lies in promoting and supporting the Organic Farmers in every community and state in this great country. The health and well-being of our children and this country depends on our governments' support of the small farmers who grow non-GMO crops to feed their communities.

COMMENT OF CAROL KEGERIZE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:45 p.m.

City, State: Cherokee Village, AR

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I'm concerned and upset about the nutritional value of our food. Mega farm companies is not the answer. We need organic food to produce healthy people and animals. I resent having to take supplements in order to feel good and maintain the health level I'm at, which isn't the greatest because of the unhealthy additives in our food. I'm embarrassed to think our Congressional representatives want to reduce food stamps at a time when so many are hungry due to no jobs. Your goals must be rethought if you are to provide the leadership we require.

COMMENT OF LORI KEGLER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 4:42 p.m.

City, State: San Pedro, CA

Occupation: Science Teacher

Comment: The farm bill needs to support small farmers, not the monolithic giants. Stop welfare funding farmers that are destroying the land with chemicals and GMOs, and support the farmers that practice conservation methodologies.

The Farm bill needs to stop subsidizing dairies, ranchers, and other factory farms, and subsidize those who raise animals humanely. Killing mustangs so they don't compete with beef cattle must be stopped. They are a vital part of our history and heritage.

COMMENT OF KAREN KELLER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:40 p.m.

City, State: Del Mar, CA

Occupation: Physical Education Teacher

Comment: Stop subsidizing factory farms, corn, soy, and GMOs.

The use of pesticides, hormones and antibiotics in industrial agriculture should not be paid for by the taxpayers.

The American health crisis and obesity epidemic are results of the subsidies for foods which have made Americans sick and **Fat**. If there are any subsidies, they should only be for small, local, organic farmers to grow vegetables and fruits.

- Pesticides are responsible for the collapse of the bee colonies.
- Stop subsidizing corporations.
- No taxpayer money for corporations that use pesticides.

COMMENT OF DORINDA KELLEY

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 16, 2012, 9:51 p.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I am a Senior who, because of disability and forced early retirement, live on \$850.00 a month and pay \$700 a month for rent and utilities. If it were not for the SNAP program, I would not be able to afford food. Please think of the poor while you are writing the farm bill.

COMMENT OF ERIN KELLEY

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 02, 2012, 10:45 a.m.

City, State: San Antonio, TX

Occupation: Student

Comment: Given the results from the 2007 Census of Agriculture revealing that American farmers are becoming increasingly concentrated in the 55 years and older age bracket, programs to aid young and beginning farmers and ranchers must be made a priority in the current farm bill. In particular, microloan programs that specifically target young, beginning farmers are essential to ensure the future viability of agricultural production in the United States, as these programs have been proven to especially effective in aiding these new producers.

COMMENT OF JANE KELLOGG

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:43 p.m.

City, State: Ithaca, NY

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Please stop paying subsidies to large corporations and wealthy foreigners who do not even farm. The money is needed here at home to support small family farms and provide healthy food for us all.

COMMENT OF TRACEY KELLOGG

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:32 p.m.

City, State: Poulsbo, WA

Occupation: CPA, Finance Manager

Comment: I'm appalled that impact of big agriculture on the quality of our food and its impact on the environment. It is the small, local farmers that need the support, not mega corporations. Obesity is an epidemic in the U.S. and the public health issues are enormous. There is nothing about big agriculture that will help us with this problem.

COMMENT OF ANN KELLY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:58 a.m.

City, State: Mount Laurel, NJ

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I want to know that my food and the food that my children and grandchildren are free from pesticide, chemicals, and are affordable. It is criminal that a bag of chips is less than a bunch of grapes. Big lot feeding and inhumane treatment of animals is unnecessary. Stop subsidizing big agriculture and allow for organic and more self sustaining farming. End direct payments and countercyclical commodity programs, and replace them with loophole-free agriculture risk coverage.

COMMENT OF C. KELLY

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 4:16 p.m.

City, State: Elk Grove, CA

Occupation: Life Coach

Comment: Responsibility in the growing and producing of life sustainable food is incumbent on the representatives of this country. Moreover foods must be free of GMO's and any other chemicals, Preserving human lives and ending GMO war on un-suspecting people in this country is of priority.

As a constituent in your district this issue is significant and meaningful to all.

Sincerely,

C. KELLY.

COMMENT OF DANIEL KELLY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:01 p.m.

City, State: Canton, MO
Producer/Non-producer: Producer
Type: Fruits
Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: I am an organic farmer, not for the recent benefits (EQIP), but because of health and environmental concerns. I Started out as a volunteer at the NRCS (SCS) and I am greatly concerned about both water quality and keeping soil on the land, not downstream from poor land stewardship. Please, support an Organic Farm Bill. As a certified organic grower, all my decisions are documented with a great emphasis and care for quality nutrition and environmental rigor. I only wish all landowners would do the same. Most of them are not farmers, just landowners, with little connection to our once heritage, good land stewardship.

JOINT COMMENT OF JESSICA AND KASEY KELLY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:22 p.m.
City, State: Faribault, MN
Occupation: Teacher
Comment: Dear Representative Kline,

As a mother and educator it scares me to know what goes into our food on a daily basis. Organic foods we know are safe, healthier and tastier than the alternative and with government support cheaper. The = toll mass produced agriculture has on water quality, soil quality, air quality and societal health is incredibly scary. I want this world to be a safe place for my students and children to grow up in. That is why I am asking you to seriously consider the farm bill and making it one what we can all live with for years to come.

Sincerely,

JESSICA KELLY.

COMMENT OF MARGARET KELLY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:50 a.m.
City, State: St. Louis, MO
Producer/Non-producer: Producer
Type: Vegetables
Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: I grow my own vegetables in my urban garden. These would be specialty crops and are expensive to buy if you can find them. They are chemical free and NOT subsidized, yet I still pay taxes to subsidize 'food' I am that I am unwilling to eat or feed my family. The farm bill is off the rails and destroying this country's health, economy and foreign relationships. **Do something! Please!**

COMMENT OF PATRICIA KELLY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 10:17 a.m.
City, State: Tucson, CT
Occupation: Retired

Comment: Right now the need for assistance with food is greater than ever, and the idea of refusing to help the impoverished after we supported Wall Street is unthinkable. Congress is there to help the public defined as citizens, not corporate to retain their profits. **Do Your Jobs Or Get Off The Ballot, But People Are Suffering.**

COMMENT OF THOMAS KELLY

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:59 p.m.
City, State: Flemington, NJ
Occupation: IT

Comment: I believe the future of farm policy must be directed towards adopting agricultural practices focusing on health and nutrition, along with the land itself, specifically it's ability to sustain and grow not just food, but nutritious food time and again.

Before I mention my own personal thoughts, I would like to lend support to several items already in play:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).

- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Specifically, I would also like to mention:

- Soil Quality & Soil Erosion.

Soil erosion is already a large and mostly unspoken issue, and what soil we do have to grow food with is severely lacking in its ability to produce nutrient dense food, and is increasingly becoming saturated with toxins. The current industrial practices of farming yield food less and less nutritious and yet more and more expensive to produce. Further, it is a major source of the toxins mentioned. Numerous instances have been seen and documented indicating devastating effects from the byproducts of industrial farming in the surrounding environment, as well as the wildlife populations in that environment. These toxins are carried in runoff water far from their originating sources and are building up to hazardous levels well beyond the initial bounds of the problem. Contrary to this, organic farming practices yield nutrient dense food, while enriching the soil and contributing to a healthy and self sustaining environment. Wildlife flourishes in this environment, and farming actually becomes less expensive as the continued practice of organic farming builds up the quality of the soil, requiring less resources to produce bountiful quantities. Current methods of complementary planting should also be introduced along with organic farming practices, as it has shown dramatically beneficial results in controlling pests—one of the big sources of toxins in current farming practices are pesticides.

- Sustainability, Health & Cost

While already mentioned above, I will mention again: organic farming practices lead to sustainable, long term solutions to the current rising cost of food and, therefore, the unsustainable practices in use today. Along with this, I want to introduce the concept of distributed farms as being far more resilient and cost effective than massive farms. In today's environment and changing weather patterns, keeping farming localized to only a few regions leads to massive price fluctuations, as well as shortages. Atypical weather and disease can devastate production. Distributed farms produce food across a wide and varied scope of weather, thereby making weather patterns and their changes and unpredictability less able to impact the total yield. Should disease, bad weather, or unforeseen catastrophe (such as an earthquake or flood) damage, halt or destroy food production in one location, the distributed nature of the overall food production would minimize the overall damage to the food supply as well as fluctuation in prices. Further, as noted in many studies now available, the worldwide spread of factory farming is increasing poverty and threatening health (for a reference among many possible: a report by Compassion in World Farming <http://www.organicconsumers.org/toxic/factoryfarm082902.cfm>).* Beyond the human considerations of factory farming, it is both clear and readily evident, it is both proven and alarming, that current methods of farming are contributing in a dangerous way to the general decline in our ability to deal with emerging threats to human health, they are contributing to the threats themselves, and they are contributing to the decline of the accepted level of health of the general population.

- Future & Economic Uncertainty

Last, I would like to touch upon what it means to have a thriving, distributed, organic farming practice as the primary method of food production in our country. It would practically do away with the need to subsidize the population in order to feed itself. It would ultimately employ a vast number of currently jobless citizens. It would also provide the us with the ability to feed ourselves regardless of what happens to The Dollar on the world stage. Once a certain point in production is reached, we can begin exporting a surplus: there will never be too much food for the world, and exporting high quality, organic items will ensure demand for our surplus the world over.

Thank you for taking time to read my comments, and I hope you consider them, and the importance of removing large corporate interests, control and profit from forming a smart and considered path to a future, healthy America.

*The information referred to is retained in Committee file.

SUBMITTED STATEMENT BY WILLIAM H. KELLY, VICE CHAIRMAN, JELLY BELLY CANDY COMPANY

The history of our company began in Belleville, IL in 1869, when my great-grandfather and his brother bought a small store-front candy business. After that time, several family candy businesses disappeared but the business that is today Jelly Belly Candy Co. moved to Chicago in 1903 and then to North Chicago in 1913, where we still make candy. Over the years we have fought along with others in our industry to change the antiquated sugar provisions of the farm bill. There have been years when we ran out of beet sugar in the fall. We have endured price spikes that stopped retailers from buying candy because they felt the public would not purchase the candies at ever-escalating prices. We have watched while other companies moved to foreign countries or went out of business because of the high price we pay for sugar. It is time to change this law.

The U.S. confectionery industry is still made up of hundreds of small- and mid-sized businesses in addition to well-known international brands. The industry's three largest manufacturing subsectors employed 48,653 workers in 2010, according to the U.S. Census Bureau's Economic Census & Annual Survey of Manufactures. Most confectioners are family-owned, often multi-generational businesses.

Sugar policy affects our company and other confectioners, but it also has an impact on a wide range of other food industries. Sugar is an ingredient in frozen vegetables, pasta sauce, peanut butter, canned fruit and many other products.

Our current sugar policy has clearly failed and needs to be scrapped. Congress should reform the outdated, cumbersome, counterproductive Federal sugar program immediately.

The sugar program does not usually involve direct Treasury outlays, but it certainly imposes significant costs on consumers and the food industry. Study after study has found that it raises consumer costs by billions of dollars each year. This means that the sugar program's costs are regressive, since lower-income Americans spend a much higher share of their income on food than do middle- and upper-class citizens.

A recent study by Iowa State University economists estimated that U.S. consumers could save up to \$3.5 billion a year, and our economy could add 20,000 jobs each year, if Congress reformed the sugar program. At a time when unemployment remains too high and economic growth remains too slow, Congress should take advantage of this opportunity to boost the economy and bolster employment by getting rid of a classic example of big-government intrusion into the private sector.

The sugar program exists in order to restrict sugar supplies and drive up prices. Every part of the program is designed with those goals in mind. There are price supports to put a floor under domestic market prices; there are import quotas to restrict competition from international sources; there is a truly outlandish program (thankfully never used, so far) to buy up surplus sugar and re-sell it to ethanol plants at a loss to taxpayers; and then there is a byzantine system of company-by-company sales quotas, established by U.S. Department of Agriculture bureaucrats, that make it illegal for sugar processors to sell more than their quota.

Yes, in the sugar program the Federal Government tells private companies how much sugar they are allowed to sell. There are hefty penalties for violating these "marketing allotments," which result in a kind of Congressionally-established cartel. If you think that doesn't sound like America, you're absolutely right—but it's the law of the land.

As a result of policies like these under the 2008 Farm Bill, retail sugar prices set a fiscal year record in 2011, at 66.7¢ per pound. That was 20¢ a pound higher than the average under the 2002 Farm Bill. So much for the sugar lobby's claims that consumers aren't harmed by the sugar subsidy.

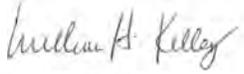
Companies that have to buy sugar, of course, are also paying a price. FY 2011 also set a record for wholesale sugar prices—the prices that companies like ours pay. The 2011 wholesale price averaged 55.8¢ a pound, compared to an average of 28¢ under the 2002 Farm Bill. Today, spot prices remain above 50¢ per pound.

This wholesale price is more than double the government support price for refined beet sugar. And it remains far above the world price of refined sugar, which was recently about 29¢ per pound.

Unfortunately, our company has to compete with products made with this world-priced sugar. It's no surprise that imports have accounted for a growing share of the confectionery market, especially for hard candy that doesn't contain chocolate, and where sugar is therefore a higher percentage of the total value. In fact, attached to this statement is an official brochure circulated by the Canadian Government, urging candy companies to relocate to Canada because **"the average price of refined sugar is usually 30 to 40 percent lower in Canada than in the U.S."**

In today's economy, businesses like ours face enough challenges without our own government deliberately forcing up the price of its key ingredient. It has never been more obvious that the sugar program is a failed policy that hurts consumers, businesses and workers. Congress should get rid of this anachronistic monstrosity and make real reforms in 2012.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "William H. Kelly". The signature is written in dark ink on a light-colored background.

WILLIAM H. KELLY,
Vice Chairman,
Jelly Belly Candy Company.

CANADA'S AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND BEVERAGE INDUSTRIES

CANADA

North America's Location of Choice for Confectionery Manufacturers

OH CANADA: HOW SWEET IT IS!

Canada's business environment is among the best in the world. Indeed, given its openness to foreign trade and capital investment, a superb infrastructure and ready access to American and Mexican markets, Canada is the location of choice for manufacturers of confectionery products wishing to supply North America.

The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) makes Canadian, American and Mexican markets a single trade entity. This provides Canadian-based businesses access to a market of more than 400 million consumers. U.S. markets can be supplied quickly and efficiently, as most Canadian manufacturing centres are less than 90 minutes from the border and 50 per cent of American consumers live within a one-day's drive.

In the last ten years, the value of Canadian exports of confectionery products to the U.S. has increased fourfold, and in 2004, Canada enjoyed a trade surplus of US\$700 million.

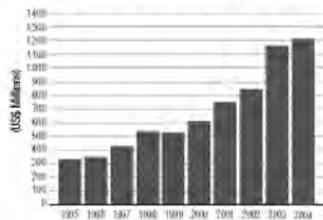
Moreover, the recent KPMG study, *The CED's Guide to International Business Costs, G7-2004 Edition*, confirms that Canadian-based food processors, in general, enjoy significant cost advantages compared to their U.S.-based competitors.



Many of the world's largest confectionery firms have established operations in Canada. Many others have chosen to have their products co-packed in Canada, where agricultural inputs and packaging materials are readily available at competitive costs.

Firms seeking to invest in North America should consider Canada first.

Exports to the US in Confectionery Products



SOURCE: STATISTICS CANADA

 Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada / Agriculture et Agroalimentaire Canada



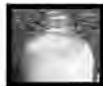

 INVEST IN CANADA

Consider these HARD FACTS



SUGAR REFINERS IMPORT THE VAST MAJORITY OF THEIR RAW MATERIALS AT WORLD PRICES:

Canadian sugar users enjoy a significant advantage – the average price of refined sugar is usually 30 to 40 per cent lower in Canada than in the U.S. Most manufactured products containing sugar are freely traded in the NAFTA region.



SPECIALLY PRICED DAIRY INGREDIENTS:

Confectioners benefit from highly competitive dairy prices administered by the Canadian Dairy Commission (CDC) under five-year agreements with the sector. Details, including administrative requirements, can be found on the CDC Web site, referenced as "Class 5" under the Special Milk Class Permit Program. For more information, visit: www.cdc-ccl.gc.ca.



SKILLED WORKERS AND COMPETITIVE LABOUR COSTS:

Canada possesses a highly skilled workforce known for its loyalty to employers. Canada's average labour costs are lower than in the U.S., which are attributed to Canada's lower salaries and wages combined with Canada's universal health coverage.* In addition, federal and provincial programs provide assistance for training and re-training of employees.



COMPETITIVE ENERGY, LAND AND BUILDING COSTS:

Canadian electricity and gas costs are lower than those in the U.S. and most of Western Europe. Canada's serviced industrial land and factory construction costs are lower than those in most of Western Europe and competitive with those of the U.S.**



LOWEST COST R&D:

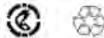
Canada's R&D tax treatment is the most generous in the industrialized world.*



IMPORT FOR RE-EXPORT:

Confectioners manufacturing products exclusively destined for export markets may import duty-free ingredients used in the manufacturing process.

* KPMG Competitive Alternatives Study, The CEO's Guide to International Business Costs, Q7-2004 Edition
www.competitivealternatives.com



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For further information about Canada's agriculture, food and beverage industry and investing in Canada, visit Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's Web site:

www.ats.agr.gc.ca

To find out more about Canada's overall investment opportunities, visit:

www.investincanada.gc.ca

For additional information, please contact:

Investment Secretariat
Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
930 Carling Ave.
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0G5

Phone: (613) 759-7531
Facsimile: (613) 759-1667
Email: invest-investir@agr.gc.ca



COMMENT OF MONICA KELLY WRIGHT

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 10, 2012, 1:37 p.m.

City, State: Hayden, ID

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Please pass a strong farm bill that protects programs like SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP, which help provide food for millions of America's most vulnerable seniors.

In 2010, 7.9 percent of households with seniors (2.3 million households) were at risk.

Many households with seniors have had to choose between food and medical care or between food and paying for heat/utilities.

In 2009, nearly 9 million people over the age of 50 and nearly 4 million people over the age of 60 lived in at-risk households.

We must ensure hunger-relief programs remain protected so that seniors who have worked their entire lives continue to have access to these vital programs.

COMMENT OF VICKIE KEMPE

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 1:27 a.m.

City, State: Phoenix, AZ

Occupation: Florist

Comment: The so called "science" behind anything other than Organic is killing us. The Toxic chemicals necessary to grow GMO's **Never Ever** goes away . . . And the bugs they are meant to kill are becoming immune so **More** and **Different** Chemicals must now be used. The scary part is we allow the Manufacturer of the chemical to run his own Safety Tests . . . ! Stupid.

COMMENT OF CHRISTY KENNEDY

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 10:39 a.m.

City, State: Sedalia, CO

Occupation: Retired—formerly 20 years USDA/FNS in Child Nutrition Programs

Comment: Support our small farmers and ranchers who are true stewards of the land. Allow farmers to save heritage seeds w/o fear that the large seed growers will be able to sue because cross pollination may have occurred from a nearby field owned by another farmer that now renders the seeds a product of the large seed grower.

In the Child Nutrition Programs, update standards for good nutrition that are based on science—not by the special interest groups supporting factory farms/ranches that try to sway elected officials as laws are updated or written. I'm very troubled by how certain aspects of the meal patterns are developed.

Require food label writers to clearly state the ingredients for a food item, *i.e.*, GMO products used.

Allow for free and unfettered sale of raw milk and other dairy products! Why should I have to buy a part of an animal to enjoy buying the dairy products?

COMMENT OF RICHARD KENNEDY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:52 p.m.

City, State: Normandy Park, WA

Occupation: Information Technology

Comment: My grandparents lived on a farm until they passed and they never needed or asked for 1¢ from the Federal government. To help balance the budget eliminate all farm entitlements.

COMMENT OF SAMUEL KENNEDY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:12 a.m.

City, State: Hamilton, NJ

Comment: I would like to see a turn from the funding of large agro-giants who do not have the American public/environment in the best interest. To small farms who are transparent and have the best interest of our great country for years to come.

COMMENT OF TANGELA KENNEDY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:42 p.m.

City, State: Hartford, CT

Comment: Because I am a diabetic and I need certain foods to eat. My SNAP benefits help me get the things I need like fruits, vegetables, juice with no sugar added. And without those certain foods it could cause my diabetes to be not so good. I wouldn't be in good shape at all. Thanks Congress.

COMMENT OF EVELYN KENNENWOOD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:05 p.m.

City, State: Syracuse, NY

Occupation: Retired Teacher

Comment: It is so important that small independent farmers be encouraged. Large agri farms use methods that encourage mono cultures which are at high risk of failure without use of chemicals which are destroying our health and environment. Support methods that support diversity, independence, and health.

COMMENT OF LOIS KENNIS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:07 p.m.

City, State: Rochester, MN

Occupation: Office Support, U of M Extension, Farm to School and Nutrition Programs

Comment: In order to address our country's obesity epidemic and provide access to healthy food for all, it is time to stop subsidizing large commodity crops. We need to invest in building local and regional food and agriculture systems that reduce dependence on oil and chemicals. Organic and smaller farms can feed our country. Citizens, farmers, suppliers and school nutritionists will need to be taught, but the results will be worth it. Stop the subsidies to commodity crops, and invest in building local food systems to stimulate our economy and provide quality whole foods that are less processed and more nutrient dense. Smaller farms and grass-fed animals will also reduce water pollution and stimulate tourism by cleaning up the countryside. The country will smell good again. Thank you.

COMMENT OF DIANE KENT

Date Submitted: Saturday, April 28, 2012, 7:20 p.m.

City, State: Phoenix, AZ

Occupation: Director, Payroll

Comment: Any Farm bill needs to be created to ensure that only organic and humane farming is the complete requirement. We need to establish egg, dairy, meat, fruit and vegetable farmers and producers who use 100% non chemical and free roaming practices. This is needed for a healthy food intake for our children.

COMMENT OF REBECCA KENT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:22 p.m.

City, State: Florence, OR

Occupation: Unemployed Nutritionist/Chef

Comment: Please make the right decision for our entire society's future. Please don't give everything to those who need it least, give it to those who need it most and those who will benefit most from it (not necessarily in the bottom line, but in life!).

COMMENT OF ZACH KENT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:50 a.m.

City, State: Jefferson, MA

Occupation: Student

Comment: Excessive use of petroleum-based pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers that poison our water, deplete our soil, and damage our health; excessive capital inputs that drive farmers into debt and reduce rural employment; and a huge loss of biodiversity that threatens the future of agriculture itself—this is not the way to grow an effective, sustainable, healthy, and equitable food system. We need to change the way we do things TODAY, or explain our selfish weakness to our children when they are left to deal with the consequences.

COMMENT OF SUSAN KEPNER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:20 p.m.

City, State: Hampton, NH

Occupation: Retired Cosmetologist

Comment: Any new bill **Must** provide protection and encouragement for organic farmers. Research \$\$\$ for organic plants and nonchemical pesticides should be continued, not cut out! Bees are dying and it is more than likely that chemicals used in farming are causing it! It also needs to help out new small farmers so that we don't end up with a lack of competition. Big Corporate Farms do **Not** need the huge subsidies! Fraud within the system must be prevented and insurance be monitored so that large corporate farms and insurance companies do **Not** get huge payouts at the expense of the taxpayer! Please have the courage to make **Real Reform!**

COMMENT OF VALERY KERAMATY

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 11:39 p.m.

City, State: Katonah, NY

Occupation: Information Technology

Comment: Take care of U.S., the people that eat the food, not the corporate producers who are willing to risk our health for their profit. We need pesticide free, GMO free local produce. Get rid of the food deserts in our country and encourage small farmers.

Agricultural policy must focus on adopting best agricultural practices that put the health of its citizens, the land and the livelihood of farmers and farm workers over the interests of industrial agriculture lobbyists.

I Support:

1. The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
2. Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
3. The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
4. Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Thank you for working to protect everyone's health by conserving our farmland and protecting our supply of local organic produce.

COMMENT OF SUSAN KERR

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:20 p.m.

City, State: Pittsburgh, PA

Occupation: Social Worker

Comment: Please fully fund SNAP. I see everyday how many people do their part to support the private hunger safety net. Cutting this program will send people straight to over-exhausted programs. We cannot balance our budget on the backs of the most vulnerable—children, seniors, disabled Americans who somehow survive on \$1.40 per meal. It's immoral to ask them to bear this burden.

Government's responsibility to all should include basic safety net programs. Do not allow American to starve. Thank you.

COMMENT OF LUCAS KERSHAW

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 7:17 a.m.

City, State: Bellevue, NE

Occupation: Composer

Comment: Organic farming needs more support. People are getting more and more sick today because of the crap that they are ingesting which has been genetically modified. The best way to lower health care costs is to promote healthy organic eating.

COMMENT OF MARGARET KERTESS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:41 p.m.

City, State: Locust Grove, VA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: We need a farm bill which is a healthy food bill for all Americans. The bill should provide funding for all conservation programs and tie insurance subsidies to compliance with conservation. The bill should fully support local foods, farmers, and jobs, as well as beginning farmers and ranchers. The bill should pro-

vide full support for organic farming. The bill should not put money in the pockets of big commodity farmers or insurance companies.

COMMENT OF CHESTINA KIDD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:05 p.m.
City, State: Louisville, TN
Occupation: Unemployed
Comment: I am a disabled veteran and I would appreciate it if you would not cut funding. I receive disability and yet I do not qualify but many are worse off than me. Please keep the funding.

COMMENT OF SUSAN KIERSTEAD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:09 p.m.
City, State: Amherst, NH
Occupation: Horticulturist
Comment: Agrifarming is harmful to the environment and we all lose in more ways than one. Please do all you can to encourage sustainable farming, and quit the free giveaway of taxpayer money to huge farms.

COMMENT OF CHIP KIGER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:47 a.m.
City, State: Eugene, OR
Occupation: Retired Teacher
Comment: Recommendations:

1. Require labeling of all GMO foods
2. Ban the use of neonicotinoid pesticides pending thorough field testing of these products conducted by research teams not affiliated with the pesticide industry
3. Provide tax credits to farms where at least 3% of cultivatable land is devoted to pollinator friendly plant diversity zones where a wide array of different flowering plants provide nectar and pollen for insects.

COMMENT OF KIM KILCHENSTEIN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:45 p.m.
City, State: Cambridge, MA
Occupation: Healthcare
Comment: It is time to stop funding the poisoning of our Earth, air, and water. It is **Past Time** to stop funding insanely cruel and inhumane factory farms, which torture animals throughout their lifetime.
 Use funds from American taxpayers to support **Organic** farmers and farming, **Non-GMO** crops, and **Free Range** animal farms. I do not want a penny of my money to be funneled into Monsanto corporation's agricultural "solutions", which solve no problems, just create worse ones: such as poisoning our land, air, water wildlife, and destroying our health—and creating disease and mutations in our shared ecology.
 I also do not want a penny of my money funneled toward factory farms—this is a despicable industry, which tortures conscious living/feeling animals for profit. Our nation has no honor left as long as it supports this industry, or even allows it to exist.
 There is no more fooling the American public. We see your priorities, your ethics, and your integrity by the choices you make—and we are watching to see how well you represent our deepest values of decency and humanity.

COMMENT OF PATRICK KILEY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:16 p.m.
City, State: Ridgewood, NY
Producer/Non-producer: Producer
Type: Vegetables
Size: Less than 50 acres
Comment: Hi—I grow food in New York State. Please protect land and fund programs to support young farmers working in sustainable agriculture, particularly small and medium size producers in their first 10 years. I have found these new professionals are the backbone of the small towns in NY State and offer the promise

of food security into the future that does not need to be subsidized at the same vast amount that currently goes to wasteful corporate agriculture. Thank you.

COMMENT OF MAGGIE KILLEEN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:58 a.m.
City, State: Prescott, WI
Occupation: Teacher, Mother, Wife
Comment: Please do not allow GMO, pesticides, and such without notification to me, the consumer. I do not want to eat artificial food that has been changed from its original form.

COMMENT OF DEBORAH KILLINGER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:19 p.m.
City, State: Filer, ID
Occupation: Inspector
Comment: As a concerned citizen, we need to keep laws in The baby needs to get tested against Tim's DNA place to assure good health for everyone. We do not need spending cuts on organic foods and other healthy foods.

COMMENT OF CAROL KILLINGSWORTH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:42 p.m.
City, State: Fall City, WA
Occupation: Audiologist
Comment: It's time to subsidize healthy foods for our populace rather than the damaging foods that are turned into processed "junk". If we want a non-political answer to our health care crisis, then make fruits and vegetables affordable and readily available. A revised farm bill would be the foundation of the beginning to reducing obesity and expensive, chronic health problems in our nation. This is so simple—we just need legislative courage.

SUBMITTED STATEMENT BY MICHAEL KILPATRICK, KILPATRICK FAMILY FARM, MIDDLE GRANVILLE, NY

Members of the House Agriculture Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony for the 2012 Agriculture Bill. I am twenty-four and a first generation farmer. I've wanted to farm since I was 6 years old. My family has pictures of me standing in my first garden, grinning from ear to ear, holding the first cucumber of the season. I started farming commercially with my brother when I was fourteen, raising a variety of domesticated fowl, hatching the eggs, and selling the young. When I was sixteen, we realized that vegetable production was more profitable and sold the hatchery business. As the vegetable farm grew, we rented more land, put up more greenhouses, and hired more employees.

Now, in our eighth year of commercial production, we have expanded to selling retail at three large farmers' markets (2 year-round), have a retail CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) supplying almost 300 families, and sell a limited amount of produce wholesale. We have 1/3 of an acre of covered (greenhouse and hoop house) production, raise twelve acres of vegetables, and manage over sixty other acres in a mixture of pasture and woodlot for our laying flock, pastured poultry, and pork. The farm grosses well over \$300,000 per year, hires six full-time and twelve part-time employees, helps support six different families, and has helped put five employees through college. This is a testimony to the viability and profitability of small, organic farms. The farm has become internationally known as a leader in year-round vegetable production and high-tunnel innovation, allowing me to travel across the country and into Canada to speak about the way we farm.

Our business, as well as the organic market, is growing rapidly, with double digit growth every year. We get requests on an almost weekly basis to begin a relationship with another farmer's market, local school, wholesaler, restaurant, or food coop. We have hit our limit in land, infrastructure, and what we can manage as a small, family-run operation. We get an average of ten job inquiries for every open position on the farm. I get twice as many speaking requests as I can reasonably fill. People are hungry for clean, safe, locally produced food and will spend more money and more time to find and purchase it.

What challenges do we face and what keeps us up at night? What should the next farm bill focus on to bring about real, effective change and make farms affordable once again?

Regulation: From the FDA to the EPA to the DEC to the USDA, we are constantly trying to keep up with the latest codes, rules, and laws. From worrying about how much irrigation water we are using and where we're pumping it from, to the latest poultry processing regulations, to the new Food Safety Modernization Act, the regulations that U.S. farmers are subjected to has reached a critical level. The fact that the government feels that it must regulate direct producer-consumer sales is wrong. Many consumers now take the time to research where their food is coming from, how it is grown, and can establish a relationship with their farmer. They should have every right to purchase what they feel is in the best interest of their family's health and wellness.

Farmer Education: When we got started in farming, we received help from many sources. Two in particular stand out: SARE (Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education) and our local extension agents. Both were key to getting us off to a good start. When we're researching a new cover crop, looking for a new way to grow a vegetable, or just need some data, SARE has been the place to go. Even now, we research their database whenever we face a new or challenging problem. Our local extension agents have been an amazing resource to help us with personalized information and ideas. They were with us through the late blight of 2009 and the flooding of 2011, bringing seasoned, experienced advice to help us make the tough decisions about our crops. Over the last couple of years, both of these programs have had funding cuts which has decreased the availability of information and field agents. As organic agriculture changes, and as localized, year-round vegetable production becomes more prevalent, there are many questions that need good answers and many ideas that we would love to research. We just lack the time and resources to do it.

Farmland Preservation: Part of America's greatness is in its amazing soil. It fueled the Westward Expansion, and even now its products are a major part of our exports and competitive edge. Good farmland is not cheap and it is being gobbled up by development companies at an alarming rate—over 1,200,000 acres in 2011 alone. That is 1,200,000 acres that will probably never be farmed again, that is forever lost to urban sprawl, shopping centers, or factories. While these need to be built too, there is plenty of space that is not on prime agricultural soils. As a young farmer who rents ninety percent of the land we farm, we personally feel the lack of good land available to us. Currently, we rent parts of four different farms, with leases ranging from a handshake to a 3 year signed lease. None of these relationships are sustainable, and until the prices of good agricultural land drop to a reasonable level through the help of conservation easements, we will still be laying awake at night, worrying about losing the land we have worked so hard to make productive.

So what can you, our elected officials in Washington, do to make me a better farmer and help me feed our part of this great nation? How can you work to make the honorable profession of farming an easier field to enter and farmland more accessible to those who love the land and wish to steward it?

Food safety should be testing based, not infrastructure based. Requiring a certain type of infrastructure and having a "one-size-fits-all approach" creates prejudicial hardship on smaller operations and stymies new farmers and producers. Saying that we have to have a million dollar processing plant before we sell 1 pound of beef to our neighbor is a huge impediment to food safety, sustainability and profitability. Why would safety be a part of this statement? When you have 1,000 cows being processed at a plant each day, the probability of cross-contamination is much higher than if you have ten. The reach of a foodborne illness outbreak for a local farm *versus* a nationally-based conglomerate is much less.

The government should pay for all testing to remove the financial burden on small farms. Testing must recognize the difference between pathogenic and non-pathogenic strains of contaminants. There is a difference in strains of *E. coli*. Some are normally found in your gut; some will kill you. Condemning product because it has *E. coli* in it without testing for the specific strain is not only wasteful but wrong. If (and only if) pathogenic contaminants are detected, infrastructure should be required, but only the amount necessary to correct the problem.

Unregulated direct producer to consumer relationships should be allowed. When you put the human aspect of a food transaction back into the equation instead of food being just another PLU or feeling that your product is just another cog in the food machine, growing food for your customers becomes almost a sacred trust. Remember, it's the spinach fields producing truckloads of spinach a day, the melon farms producing hundreds of thousands of melons a week, and the beef plants processing thousands of animals a day that are the cause of major illness outbreaks, not the small family farms selling locally to neighbors and friends. When you bring

transparency and an open door policy back into the food transaction, everyone benefits.

Crop production and experimentation should be encouraged through research grants, extension, and land-grant universities, not government subsidies. All government subsidies should be ended. If a crop needs price support to be profitable, maybe we are growing too much of it, or need to rethink how we are growing it. Subsidies encourage waste, gaming the system, and poor farming practices. In 2009 alone, our country spent \$6,100,000,000 alone on direct payments, an outdated and fantastic system that pays a farmer, even if no crop is produced. On a side note, EPA ethanol mandates should be ended. It reduces the efficiency of engines, harms carburetors, and drives up the price of corn to unrealistic and reckless highs. It is a wasteful use of farm land and an energy neutral process. In the last 2 years, we have had to replace carburetors and rebuild engines on three machines on the farm. When we inquire the cause, it's always linked to the ethanol.

More money needs to be spent funding SARE, Cooperative Extension services, and general education. The Local Farms, Food, and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286) should be fully funded. It has the power to change how the local food system works through education, grants, and research. On another note, land-grant universities should not be able to accept funding from companies that have a vested interest in the outcome of the the study, i.e., pesticide and fertilizer manufacturers. The revolving door between agricultural manufacturing companies and the U.S. Government needs to be stopped. This would apply, for example, to Michael Taylor (previously employer by Monsanto and now Obama food czar).

Protecting our farmland is also vitally important. The Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program (FRPP) administered by the United States Department of Agriculture has been a significant partner in this effort. The main goal of this program should be to protect at risk, working farmland for active agricultural production. Program funds should only be used for permanent agricultural conservation easements. Since the 1970's, almost 800,000 acres have been conserved. Unfortunately, however, far more than this is lost every year to development. It's a sad day when the cows are sold, the barns are torn down, the fields bulldozed, and concrete and house numbers take the place of corn and green pasture.

Farming is not just another career for us. It's in our blood, our way of life, and a lifelong passion. We want to grow old on our farms and see them passed on to our children and grandchildren. We want the government to support us through less regulation, less intervention, and with the tools and research to keep us competitive and on the land. We want to see our land conserved and not bulldozed for the sake of McMansions and Wal-Mart. Let's work together to make this happen.

Thank you for your time and the opportunity to testify. My contact information is below,* feel free to reach me if you have any questions.

MICHAEL KILPATRICK,
Middle Granville, NY.

COMMENT OF JULIE KIM

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:57 p.m.

City, State: Seattle, WA

Occupation: Illustrator

Comment: We need to support small farmers and organic farming industry by not allowing Monsanto and the like compromise these people's livelihood and the future of our food industry. It isn't in the best interest of this nation to only allow big farmers and agricultural industries to survive. It is wise to diversify.

COMMENT OF CLARK KIMBALL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:58 a.m.

City, State: Asheville, NC

Occupation: Real Estate Broker

Comment: Heath,

You of all representatives should understand that the small and family farm is important for so many reasons and that anything which adversely affects the farm affects the people and therefore the nation. Thanks!

* **Editor's note:** the referenced information has been **Redacted**.

COMMENT OF MARLENE KIMBALL

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 7:50 p.m.

City, State: Brevard, NC

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I am dependent on TEFAP and SNAP & barely make it with my \$92 monthly allotment from SNAP. As you are aware, food prices have skyrocketed and I do try to eat healthy foods. I'm frugal and cook my meals at home yet I'm very challenged while trying to eat clean. Please do not make any more cuts to these programs as the health and welfare of a large majority of senior citizens and children depend on them.

COMMENT OF KIM KIMBLE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:12 p.m.

City, State: New Paltz, NY

Comment: Please support the small local organic farmer on my street who provides healthy for, supports his family, and cares for the land for future generations.

COMMENT OF RAENA KIM-GEYER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:43 p.m.

City, State: El Paso, TX

Occupation: Stay-at-Home Mom

Comment: Please Do **Not** take away funding—for organic foods. This is all we have to keep our families healthy and keep away from GMOs. I am very aware of the dangers of these GE foods. I wish GMOs would be eliminated from our fragile food supply. We desperately **Need** organic farmers for the health of this once great nation and be an example to other nations that organic and sustainable farming practices are of the utmost importance to the human race.

“The breakfast slimes, angel food cake, doughnuts, and coffee, white bread and gravy cannot build an enduring nation.”—Martin H. Fischer.

Thank you,

RAENA KIM-GEYER,

Mother of two of our future citizens.

COMMENT OF SARAH KIMMES

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:40 p.m.

City, State: Coon Rapids, MN

Occupation: Disabled

Comment: I have tried to live a healthy lifestyle and find it unbelievable that a good, firm farm bill has not been passed to support small farmers and organic foods. How can I have healthy choices, if healthy farms are unsupported. I don't want better insurance against “illness care”, I want better practices that promote “well care”. Save us **All** a \$\$\$\$ or two, if the bottom line is all you are concerned with. Wise up, will ya? The suffering has **Got** to end!

SARAH.

COMMENT OF REBECCA KIMSEY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:27 p.m.

City, State: Sublimity, OR

Occupation: Retired

Comment: There's too much big business in agriculture these days and not enough stewardship of the land and animals that we depend on for life itself. Big Ag has become a dictator and as such abuses the land, the animals, even the farmers. And we who rely on our representatives to ensure that the right thing is done, find too often that Big Ag controls you. Start doing the right thing for America, and for Oregon. Let's get a farm bill that does right by the land, the animals, the farmers, and the general public.

COMMENT OF ELISA KING

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:57 a.m.

City, State: Wilmington, DE

Occupation: Student of Agriculture and Natural Resources

Comment: It is time that this country start planning for the future. The youngest generation will be the first in history to not live as long as their parents due to obesity. We need to support local and organic farming efforts to reinstall a connection between people and food. As long as big agribusiness has all the control, the health of our people is not of concern. Subsidies for industrial farming are not helping the current health and economic crises. The farm bill should have a focus on what is best for the nation, not what is best for corporations. There are true costs not shown in the price of cheap food that are surfacing and its not pretty.

COMMENT OF GAYLE KING

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:03 p.m.

City, State: McAllen, TX

Occupation: Broker

Comment: Its time for the people to have a say in what we eat, we are becoming an obese nation, we should support measures that encourage a healthy food supply.

COMMENT OF JEAN KING

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:39 p.m.

City, State: Livermore, CA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Please support the Senate funding levels for Agricultural Land Easements, which advance the proven model of leveraging Federal funds through local partners to secure perpetual conservation easements that help keep farm and ranch lands in production, while conserving important natural resources.

As a director of a local agricultural land trust, I know it is important to keep ag land in production.

COMMENT OF MELANIE KING

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:59 p.m.

City, State: Boise, ID

Occupation: Paralegal

Comment: I am very concerned about the quality of the food that is currently being provided to not only myself, but to our nation's children. Also, no child should have to go hungry and while food stamps are a subject nobody wants to talk about, other than ending them, they are necessary for the well being of many, the most important of whom are children who cannot otherwise fend for themselves.

COMMENT OF RICHARD KING

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 03, 2012, 4:00 p.m.

City, State: Monroe, LA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Other

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Making the changes proposed by the House of Representatives would have tragic consequences for millions of the most vulnerable citizens of our nation. It is almost beyond my comprehension that this could even be considered much less enacted.

COMMENT OF WES KING

Date Submitted: Monday, March 19, 2012, 5:28 p.m.

City, State: Springfield, IL

Occupation: Nonprofit Sector

Comment: Please use the farm bill to create a new and bold path for the country's food and farm system. Support the re-localization or America's food supply. Peak oil is a real issue that threatens the long term security of this country, especially our food security, we need to plan for a future that will include less fossil fuels and less financial resources by investing now in new system of food and farming not simply maintaining the energy intensive industrial model that currently dominates the food and farm systems. Support local food, beginning farmers, and conservation now!

COMMENT OF RASHA KINNAMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:51 a.m.

City, State: Elma, WA
Occupation: Homemaker

Comment: This madness has got to stop now. I am a stay-at-home wife and mother to 2 children. I am a Conservative, reasonable, level-minded person and even I know that there are serious issues with the food that we produce in this country. It IS a large reason why we have an obesity epidemic in this country. We're killing people with the food, then turning around and killing them some more with the meds. The greed and stupidity have to stop. This is ridiculous and this is NOT the example that I wish to set out for my children. No thank you. PLEASE change this.

COMMENT OF YANNICK KINNIE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 6:41 p.m.

City, State: Orlando, FL
Occupation: Entrepreneur

Comment: Support small farms, take away subsidies to large agribusinesses, quit undermining organics, get rid of Genetically Engineered seeds engineered to enslave farmers to Monsanto and pesticides and poison our food supply and water supply.

COMMENT OF CHRISTINE KINTNER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:59 p.m.

City, State: Chicago, IL
Occupation: Homemaker

Comment: Please support and continue funding organic farming and the small farmer. Please do not cut funding for organic farming and the beginner farmer. In this era we need to embrace the organic industry and the place in the market they deserve. If nothing else, we as consumers deserve a choice of what foods to bring to our table. Thank you for your attention.

COMMENT OF PAULA KINZIGER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 7:36 a.m.

City, State: Lake Wylie, SC
Occupation: Homemaker

Comment: Please stop with all the farm subsidies . . . including ethanol . . . let the free market decide what's best. Stop letting the Federal government take over our farms as well and stop paying farmers not to farm. Get out of the farming business altogether because government ruins just about everything it touches. Get the environmentalists out of farming too. They're destroying this great country.

COMMENT OF SUTTON KIPLINGER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:20 p.m.

City, State: Cambridge, MA
Producer/Non-producer: Producer
Type: Vegetables
Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Dear Rep. Capuano:

I spent my early career working in public health in Boston before transitioning to farming 2 years ago. I had seen enough of the havoc our food system wreaks on the health of Americans to believe that the only truly preventative work I could do on the myriad health crises that are bankrupting us and taking years off our lives was further upstream even than the public health profession itself.

Americans are beginning to understand what food means for their health and their communities, and they want better. It is my sincere hope that our national policy can reflect and bolster these trends, rather than continuing to subsidize the production of crops that don't nourish us by corporations that systematically destroy the small farm economy.

Thank you so much for your work on this issue.

SUTTON.

COMMENT OF JAMES KIPP

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 7:31 a.m.

City, State: Wilmington, DE
Occupation: Systems Engineer

Comment: Please do not stop funding for vital programs such as nutrition, conservation and support for organic and sustainable agriculture. We need to improve the health of Americans.

COMMENT OF JUSTIN KIRITSIS

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 5:52 p.m.

City, State: St. Clair Shores, MI

Occupation: Sales Associate

Comment: I am a concerned citizen of a suburb of Detroit, Michigan. I am concerned that Michigan and the country as a whole has not fully addressed a food policy from a holistic point of view. I fear that the small farmers are getting squeezed out, there are a record low number of minority owned farms, and not nearly enough non-GMO farms and Co-ops. I also believe that the USDA and FDA need to have a stronger consumer mindset, and allow for certain things like raw milk for local farmers. While not allowing for others like GMO products rated for dog food getting sent overseas as food aid. Please allow for schools to have more flexibility of the menus, listen to the First Lady and Jamie Oliver. I hope that these concerns are addressed. Thank you.

COMMENT OF ALEXANDRA KIRKILIS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:35 p.m.

City, State: Austin, TX

Occupation: Technical Editor

Comment: Stop subsidizing GMO-commodity crops. Start subsidizing small, organic local farms! Processed junk should not be cheaper than real food! Conventional agriculture is by definition unsustainable. We **Must** move to a sustainable, organic food system, and we can't wait any longer. Demand humane treatment of food animals. **Label** GMOs, then **Ban** them! They're slowly destroying our ecosystem and we have **Not** done any testing on them to determine if they're safe for consumption!

COMMENT OF MARK KIRKPATRICK

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 1:28 p.m.

City, State: Amarillo, TX

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Field Crops

Size: 500-999 acres

Comment: I am concerned about the crop subsidy check being eliminated completely. I understand producers taking a cut, but if the producer is to take a cut, I think food stamps and other entitlements should take their share of the cuts also. After all, without the farmer there would be no food. He should have a secure safety net for the amount of risk he takes.

COMMENT OF LILY KIRSANOW

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:38 p.m.

City, State: Austin, TX

Occupation: Retired

Comment: We need conservation and support for organic and sustainable agriculture, but corporate agribusiness has a stranglehold on our regulatory system and our political leaders.

Get rid of Genetically Engineered consumables that masquerade as real food. We, consumers and producers, will and currently are suffering the ravages of that horrible science. Oh, I'm sorry . . . it's about the money. My mistake.

Also, limit chemical additives to soil and plants. They are only creating weeds that are adapting, needing stronger chemicals. It can be done. Once again . . . it's about Monsanto, Dow and others like them to sell their poison.

By not doing anything and folding to their influence (money) you are NOT representing the people.

COMMENT OF ALISON KIRSCH

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 03, 2012, 3:19 p.m.

City, State: Fairfield, CT

Occupation: Student

Comment: When working on the farm bill, I urge the members of the Agricultural Committee to keep in mind the needs of the variety of individual American consumers and producers that the farm bill effects, rather than solely the priorities of large industrial corporations. First, I believe that agricultural workers should enjoy the same rights as other workers, such as minimum wage and protection from harmful and exploitive working conditions. Additionally, I think that farm-to-school programs, including those that bring healthy local produce to school cafeterias, should be a high priority of the 2012 Farm Bill. This will have a myriad of immediate and long term effects, such as increasing the health of schoolchildren, stimulating regional food production, and increasing awareness of nutritional and agricultural concerns in students. In enhancing these programs, the farm bill could also increase the amount of grant money available for schools to implement gardens and garden-based learning curricula. School gardens have been proven to improve health and wellness of students, increase learning achievements, enhance life skills, encourage interest in agriculture, and foster cultural appreciation. Students are the future leaders of our society, which is why it is so important to instill eco-literacy in them at a young age. Last, I believe the subsidy system should be reformed to encourage more growing of fruits and vegetables. Also, the reformed system should include assistance to farmers for running smaller-scale, closed-circuit farms that efficiently use crop rotation and take ecological concerns into account. In conclusion, as a concerned and aware college student in an urban area I feel that it is imperative that our farm bill be revised to take into account the diverse conditions of farming around the country as we work to reform our food system. Thank you.

COMMENT OF SARAN KIRSCHBAUM

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 6:28 p.m.

City, State: Los Angeles, CA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: The lack of healthy soil because of chemicals and GMOs is taking a toll on farming. Pollinators are being hurt too and without them there can be no healthy ecosystems. Changing weather patterns, too much or too little water are having negative affects also. It is incumbent to protect the small farms from the practices of the larger ones, our future depends on it. This says it all: "Human beings are the only species that won't save itself because it's not cost-effective."—Kurt Vonnegut.

COMMENT OF MERLIN KIRSCHENMAN

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 8:22 p.m.

City, State: Moorhead, MN

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Field Crops

Size: 301–500 acres

Comment: Keep GMO's out of our food supply. Require labeling of food ingredients to show if GMO's are in the food. Quit supporting large industrial farm operations. Create a balance and support many food crops, not mainly just corn and beans.

COMMENT OF HAROLD KIRTZ

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 16, 2012, 11:38 p.m.

City, State: Atlanta, GA

Occupation: Attorney

Comment: I am very concerned about putting SNAP and other nutrition programs at serious risk of funding cuts and harmful policy changes.

Decisions that have been placed in the farm bill threaten to cut nutrition assistance for millions of our most vulnerable low-income families, children, and seniors.

Please change the Bill to put back all or most of the \$36 million back into the SNAP program. We cannot put the financial concerns of the nation on the backs of the most vulnerable.

As someone in the top 5% in this country, I would be willing to pay more in taxes. Certainly those in the top 1% must be allowed to share in the stakes of this country on an equitable, proportional basis.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF JOHN KISSEL

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 16, 2012, 8:18 p.m.

City, State: University City, MO

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Fruits, Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Based on first-hand knowledge of the current state of farming in MO/IL, I urge your consideration of several objectives in creating the extremely important Farm Bill of 2012:

- The link between conservation compliance and taxpayer subsidies must be preserved and strengthened. There are, sadly, too many farmers of all sizes who feel they cannot afford to preserve our soil and water for future generations.
- Programs to help and encourage new farmers, such as the Beginning Farmers program are essential, as the majority of American farmers, like myself, are getting too old to continue.
- Programs to support small farmers, organic production, and research and innovation are also critical.

Our current approach to agriculture is not sustainable, and we desperately need a Plan B.

COMMENT OF ANDREA KITREL

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 5:31 p.m.

City, State: Miami, FL

Occupation: Administrative Assistant

Comment: Please support **Real Organic** farming and stop this cancer epidemic! In a matter of 1 year I have lost 2 people to cancer, 2 are battling and 2 very young artists have also lost their lives to cancer. Please stop poisoning our food. I believe the **People** have had **Enough**.

COMMENT OF JANET KITSMILLER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 6:26 a.m.

City, State: Orlando, FL

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: We need a farm bill which will allow farmers to produce healthy food. Food which will support the health of people and animals and will heal the environment and allow the bees to thrive. In order to do this, we have got to have sustainable organic, non-GMO farming practices. It is time to stop letting corrupt, greedy big-business make the rules for everyone just so that a few people can have more money. It is time to start legislating for the people and growing food that everyone would want to eat if they understood the health values of organ *versus* the detrimental effects of sprayed, genetically manipulated food.

Please do the right thing.

COMMENT OF KIM KITTREDGE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:46 p.m.

City, State: Santa Maria, CA

Occupation: Nursing Student

Comment: As a consumer, I want my health and the health of my family to be your #1 priority. I will not purchase or consume GMO products. They are the lead chalice of this nation.

COMMENT OF DONNA KITTRELL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:50 p.m.

City, State: Manassas, VA

Occupation: Artist

Comment: We need to subsidize small organic farms to make organic food more economical and available to more people. Most people need to stretch their food dollar so they buy processed food because it is cheap. It is cheap because we still subsidize big AG. Subsidies need to go to small upstart companies, **Not** corporations!

COMMENT OF PAMELA KJONO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:47 p.m.

City, State: Grand Forks, ND

Comment: Future farm policy must not be allowed to become corporatized at the expense of small farmers and organic producers. You must not allow Monsanto and Dow to continue to poison through the use of their GMO's and use of 2,4-D on crops. Rational thinking must be used along with scientific data about the complications of the use of these products which are already being seen in fields of our farmers, large and small. It gives new meaning to the phrase, "you are what you eat". No wonder traces of roundup are being found in blood tests of human beings. Just another example of unintended consequences of allowing corporations free rein in the use of their products. The USDA must do their job to protect the citizens of this country instead of rubber stamping corporate requests.

COMMENT OF SANDRA KLAHN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:36 p.m.

City, State: Bloomington, IN

Occupation: Project Manager

Comment: I grew up on a farm, we did not use pesticides or government money. We relied on what God had provided and the knowledge of soil, wind, rain and seasons-knowledge that came from God. We understood, rotation, relationship between land, animals and people, we knew when to till, fertilize (with organic material) and when to let soil rest. Most of all, we used seeds that the Good Lord made and gave to us, not from any lab manipulated seed from mans creation. Our crops, land and animals all flourished because we believed in living within the means we were provided. Stop 'playing' God with creation, live within your means.

COMMENT OF HELMUT KLAUER

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 13, 2012, 11:10 a.m.

City, State: Gaviota, CA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: America needs a farm bill that makes healthy food widely available to all Americans—including schoolchildren! We must provide flexibility for states to use existing food procurement programs to purchase fresh, healthy food from local farmers and ranchers.

COMMENT OF JAN KLECKLER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 1:11 a.m.

City, State: Loveland, CO

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Food and it's quality is important to the health of our nation and it's people. Lack of healthy food choices impacts our health and well being. Protect product diversity, purity and our choice to choose non-GMO produce.

COMMENT OF AMY KLEE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:52 p.m.

City, State: San Francisco, CA

Occupation: Speech Pathologist

Comment: The evidence is here. Pesticides, hormones and chemical fertilizers are not healthy for us. If we want to represent ourselves as a nation that cares for its people, what better way to show the world then stepping up to the plate and offering healthy organic food for all of our people.

COMMENT OF MARJORIE KLEE

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:10 a.m.

City, State: Summerfield, FL

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I have cancer and from research it seems as if the pesticides and additives to our foods are at least partially responsible. It seems that healthy, pesticide free food should be the standard, not the exception.

COMMENT OF PAULA KLEIHAUER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:18 p.m.

City, State: Van Nuys, CA
Occupation: Retired LAUSD

Comment: I am retired and an active volunteer in several Social Justice/Food Security organizations.

I am a University of California Cooperative Extension, LA County, Common Ground Program trained and certified Master Gardener. As such I volunteer to teach/train underserved populations (in schools, community gardens, shelters and through our Victory Garden Initiative, how to grow edibles and the importance of "real food" as opposed to "frankenfood."

I grow some of my own organic produce in a Community Garden and purchase what I don't grow from organic family farmers at local Farmer's Markets.

I cannot stress to you how important it is that local, small scale food production that does not "rape" the environment and mother Earth, be supported and shielded from the attacks by big Agribusiness. I support the following from Slow Food.

As the committee considers the 2012 Food and Farm Bill, I urge you to:

- Support our fight against hunger by maintaining and strengthening critical nutrition programs in this time of unprecedented need. We must not solve our budget problems on the backs of those experiencing food insecurity, including our most vulnerable—our children, the elderly, and the disabled;
- Provide an even "plowing" field by fully funding programs that support beginning and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, organic farming, regional farm and food economies, and rural development. We need more farmers and ranchers, more sustainable food production, and more economic opportunity in our food system;
- Support family farmers that really need help, not the biggest farms that don't: End subsidies (aka direct payments and countercyclical commodity programs), and replace them with loophole-free agriculture risk coverage. Additionally, implement a cap on crop insurance premium subsidies;
- Ensure that limited conservation funding maximizes lasting environmental benefits: Limit funds to Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) for animal waste management infrastructure by eliminating the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) Livestock Set-aside and protect the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) from disproportionate cuts, and improve it by ranking applications solely on their conservation benefits.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF ANN KLEIN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 6:36 p.m.

City, State: Savannah, GA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Please do your homework and talk to organic farmers who are restoring the land rather than depleting it. You are killing yourselves and everyone else. How do you sleep at night knowing this?

COMMENT OF HENRY KLEIN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:57 p.m.

City, State: Pahoa, HI

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Fruits

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: I'm 91 years old and grew up on an organic farm. I'm still alive and healthy because I ate fresh food as a child. I still grow my own food today. Please support small farmers and organic farmers in the farm bill.

COMMENT OF JOHN KLEIN

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 9:49 a.m.

City, State: Carroll, IA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Field Crops

Size: 151–300 acres

Comment: If we do not cut down on the soil loss of our wonderful agricultural lands, our nation will suffer the fate of past civilizations. We are living high now, and producing food for the world, at the loss of our productivity and soil resources. But our great grandchildren will see huge changes as our topsoil becomes depleted.

We are not making more soil! We need to stop thinking of ourselves and how rich we can become in our lifetime, and start thinking long-term. Food comes at the price of soil loss.

Please quit supporting big agricultural commodity groups and corporate industrial agriculture. They are big enough to grow or fail by themselves. They are profit motivated only, and care nothing about our nation's resources or sustainability beyond their own greed.

COMMENT OF JUDITH E. KLEIN

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 11:20 p.m.

City, State: New York NY

Occupation: Dance/Movement Therapist

Comment: We need to have **Organic Food** supports **Not GMO Food** and agribusiness supports. Monsanto is poisoning our food supply. I have a sister who has many allergies and can eat **Only Organic Food**. Monsanto's products are contaminating organic fields rendering them non-organic. GMO foods not being labeled and the possibility of there being no organic foods available because of them means people like my sister may eventually have **Nothing To Eat**. Small family farms and organic farming should be supported and encouraged. Agribusiness does not need support. It is destroying family farms and the environments and destroying the possibility of having a varied, safe, nutritious foods supply.

There should also be adequate funding for nutritious meals for children in school and sufficient funding for Food Stamps for everyone who needs them. Food Stamps should be usable for fresh fruits and vegetables and organic food as well as regular staples. They should not be used for junk food.

COMMENT OF KIRSTEN KLEIN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:56 p.m.

City, State: Monroe, CT

Occupation: Sales

Comment: Organic farming is the one way to reduce the obesity rate in America. If we start producing organic fresh food people will be healthier and farmers will be happier and hopefully better paid.

COMMENT OF MOLLY KLEIN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 2:26 p.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Stay-at-Home Mom

Comment: Please keep farming natural. Encourage farming for heirloom varieties of fruits, vegetables, and grains. Encourage organic farming. Say no to GMOs. Say no to huge farms. Say yes to funding for smaller farms. Say yes to sustainable farming practices. Please, we can't afford not to. Our health and our children depend on the decisions we are making today.

Thank you for listening.

Sincerely,

MOLLY KLEIN.

COMMENT OF LISA KLEINWOLTERINK

Date Submitted: Monday, April 02, 2012, 4:56 p.m.

City, State: Morris, MN

Occupation: County Social Worker

Comment: I cannot begin to tell you how important the current food programs are to help feed our local residents. I cannot imagine not being able to meet this need in my position as a county social worker. There are so many problems in my work that I cannot fix. However, one thing I have been able to consistently do for 22 years as a county social worker is to connect people with food. Please do not compromise on this basic provision that defines us as a community, a State and a Nation.

COMMENT OF LAURIE KLEISINGER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:23 p.m.

City, State: Edwards, CO

Occupation: Education/Customer Service

Comment: Please label foods that are genetically modified. Please label foods that are made from animals treated with antibiotics and hormones. Please maintain strict standards for organic foods both domestic and imports. I rely on you to inform me and keep me safe as an American citizen. Many Americans are sick and obese from tiny levels of toxins in their food supply that are ingested over decades. We need the government to allow us the freedom to make informed choices by requiring labeling of food and drinks. Please do your job to the best of your ability and with integrity to keep Americans safe.

COMMENT OF KENNETH KLEMP

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 1:13 a.m.

City, State: Appleton, WI

Occupation: Retired

Comment: It is time for the American people to realize that the food we eat determines the health of our bodies to a greater extent and a farm bill that steers our country to that direction will be a plus for everyone involved.

COMMENT OF DR. R.H. KLIEWER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:29 p.m.

City, State: Cromwell, CT

Occupation: Retired Ag. Prof. & Dir. of R&D for U.S. Holstein Assoc.

Comment: Let's get down to Earth and realize that the family farm of 10 to 12 cows is impractical as well as organic dreams that cost the public a fortune to purchase. Industrialized farming is the future which includes good care of the individual animal and sound conservation of the product and byproducts in a conservation process which uses the food produced and the byproducts which can be converted to energy (methane).

Get over the last hundred years and step into the future of food production. Quit horsing around with B.S. from the past and join the future of food production. We used to milk nearly 30 million cows at the end of WWII and now we only need about 9 million to produce our food needs in America and still have a surplus. We're the envy of all underdeveloped countries. Why go backwards. I worked 15 years with the Hungarian Ministry of Agriculture & Food and by 1988 they were sixth in average milk produced per cow as reported by FOA of the United Nations. We only needed 400,000 cows at that time compared to the 800,000 we started with. And they were exporting to their neighbors.

Let's get our heads out of the sand and listen to progressive farmers and not old wives tales! The past is history, let's move forward!

DR. R.H. KLIEWER.

COMMENT OF LARRY KLINE

Date Submitted: Friday, April 20, 2012, 11:01 a.m.

City, State: Pittsburgh, PA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I contribute to local and national hunger programs. I believe that Federal anti-hunger programs should be funded at present levels or be increased.

LARRY KLINE.

COMMENTS OF ANGEL KLOCK

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 5:15 p.m.

City, State: Colville, WA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Livestock

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: As a biologist and small farmer I now what America needs in a farm bill. One that creates jobs and spurs economic growth—support programs like the Value-Added Producer Grants Program by guaranteeing \$30 million of mandatory funding per year. VAPG provides seed money to help farmers innovate in agriculture and create jobs while securing a sustainable path to market-based farm profitability.

America also desperately needs a farm bill that makes healthy food widely available to all Americans—including schoolchildren! We must provide flexibility for states to use existing food procurement programs to purchase fresh, healthy food from local farmers and ranchers and not from giant corporate entities.

America needs a farm bill that protects our natural resources and addresses the issues of environmental destruction brought about by practices that encourage and benefit large monopolies like CAFOs of all kinds,

CAFOs are the single most destructive farm policy that has ever been enacted. The mass benefits of a few becomes the liability of the many. The environment, local communities and the lives of millions of animals are unnecessarily degraded, polluted and farm animals undergo extreme suffering and cruelty. Therefore please protect the Conservation Stewardship Program from unfair funding cuts, and improve it by ranking applications solely on their conservation benefits. Farmers count on CSP and other conservation programs to conserve soil for future generations, keep water and air clean, and create habitat for wildlife—all while farming profitably.

America needs a farm bill that invests in the next generation of farmers and ranchers—guarantee \$25 million per year in mandatory funding for the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program. We need a national strategy and commitment to support beginning farmer and ranchers entering agriculture. With an aging farm population, now is the time to invest in the future of American agriculture by nurturing new agriculture start-ups.

America needs a farm bill that drives innovation for tomorrow's farmers and food entrepreneurs—fund the Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative at \$30 million per year in mandatory funding. Investment in agricultural research is vital to continued productivity and innovation in growing and diverse sectors of American agriculture, such as organic agriculture.

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 10:39 a.m.

Comment: We need the farm bill to take a more holistic and comprehensive view of our domestic agricultural development. We need to widely disperse our farm aid programs to stimulate small farms over the entire country, and REMOVE the incentives and rewards that have created the major consolidation in agricultural production practices. These practices have given us GMO seeds, CAFOs, and other monopolies that have destroyed communities, small farming operations, and the well-fare of millions of people and farm animals. These incentives have also the added benefit of degrading the environment and externalizing the costs to the public. U.S. agriculture should foster millions of small farms, which will improve our food quality, decrease the costs of delivery (improving energy policy), produce healthier and safer food, secure the availability of food and the resilience of our food system, and most importantly improve the lives of people that want to farm and raise crops and animals responsibly within a sustainable model of land and water use. In these days of concern about terrorism, foodborne illness, energy efficiency, costs, and quality there is no better insurance to a food production and delivery system other than millions of small, local farms. The public is behind this and its time for the government to follow suit.

COMMENT OF ROBERT KLUSON

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 7:42 p.m.

City, State: Bradenton, FL

Occupation: Ag Extension Agent

Comment: Dear Representative Buchanon, I'm sending you my input to prioritize your analysis and actions in the development and passage of the 2012 Farm Bill. We are at a turning point in our country concerning the intersection of our agriculture sector and the rest of our society. Please, take the time to seriously read my input and integrate them in your on-going participation in the development and implementation of the 2012 Farm Bill:

- (1) support the expansion of the initiatives of the USDA/SARE program to implement local food system development in all 50 states, especially infrastructure, policy, and community issues.
- (2) take yourself and have your entire staff take the online self-tutorial about sustainable agriculture—see <http://www.sare.org/Learning-Center/Courses-and-Curricula/National-Continuing-Education-Program/Course-1-Sustainable-Agriculture>
- (3) add funding that will fully implement a separate section in USDA to implement urban agriculture development to develop job and economy opportunities. To this end, also allow full access of urban food producers to all of the funded programs of USDA
- (4) support a 3 year gradual elimination of the commodity support program and a 3 year gradual substitution of a national program to support these producers for a transition to an organic and sustainable system of food production. This

program would include Federal funding to support local food purchasing programs at the state, county and municipality levels to create consumer demand to make the diversification of these farms as profitable as possible.

(5) provide full funding to USDA School Lunch Program to provide purchasing capacity to 25 pilot project per state to fully implement Farm to School Programs

Thanks,

ROBERT KLUSON.

COMMENT OF RENEE KNIGHT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:58 a.m.

City, State: Madison, WI

Occupation: Agricultural and Environmental Justice Funder

Comment:

- Eliminate corporate ag subsidies
- Support family farms, especially with less than 10 employees
- Support urban ag development
- Support clear and fair sustainable organic regulation that emphasizes small scale local production and distribution
- Eliminate corn for fuel subsidies
- Support farm land conservation initiatives and conservation easements

COMMENT OF ANNE KNOLL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 10:16 a.m.

City, State: Post Falls, ID

Occupation: Graphic Designer

Comment: Please support organic and non-GMO farming. As a consumer, I am critically concerned about my right to choose Earth friendly organic, non-GMO products grown by local farmers as opposed to commercial farms, many of whom choose to use toxic herbicides, pesticides and dangerous GMO's.

COMMENT OF KIMBERLY KNOLLENBERG

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 7:36 a.m.

City, State: South Tamworth, NH

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Dry Beans & Peas, Fruits, Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: It took less than one generation for our country's families to go from eating low-calorie, nutritious, meals together in a healthy way to eating fast, empty-calorie, over-processed "happy" meals from the freezer or a pick-up window. In that time, our nation has become overweight and under nourished. This can be reversed in just as much time . . . but the time to make that change is **Now**. Please include nutrition initiatives in the farm bill, just as initiatives to help fund processed, empty foods were included just decades ago. Thank you.

COMMENT OF CONNIE KNOX

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:01 p.m.

City, State: Fort Madison, IA

Occupation: Writer

Comment: I do grow organic produce, but not commercially. I'm getting more and more concerned about the direction I see our food going in, with a lot of help from companies like Monsanto. Does it take a genius to figure out why we have an epidemic of obesity in this country? Or diabetes? Or heart disease? And let's not forget cancer. Leave our food alone, unadulterated, the way nature meant for it to be consumed. You will see a remarkable return to health. Yes, it might cost you some campaign money from the big boys, big Ag, big Pharma, *etc.* But you will win more votes at home and you will be doing the right thing. How important is that going to be on your final day? And I have a question for the people who run Monsanto. "If you're so proud of what you produce, why are you fighting the labeling so hard?"

COMMENT OF KATE KNOX

Date Submitted: Monday, May 14, 2012, 11:27 a.m.

City, State: Seattle, WA

Occupation: Scientist

Comment: Please design a farm bill that will start farmers from farming the system and stop providing free programs, food, food stamps/EBT, and other benefits to those who can work. I support a farm bill which encourages integrating environmental conservation and integration of natural environment with food production. The United States needs productive farmlands that grow healthy foods without relying on destroying top soil (a limited resource) and without heavy inputs of artificial fertilizers and toxic pesticides, herbicides, and fungicides. The farm bill should support local small scale agriculture above large-scale commercial agriculture which relies on pesticides and other chemicals and subsidies to make a product and/or profit.

Thank you for your consideration of the important need for small scale food crops rather than more corn and soybeans.

COMMENT OF MARGARET KNUTH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:15 p.m.

City, State: Cedar Bluffs, NE

Occupation: Translator

Comment: If we cannot drink the water because pesticides *etc.*, have filtered through the soil and there are no more animals living in the fields, how can humans consume what is being produced?

COMMENT OF ROSEMARY KNUTSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:10 p.m.

City, State: Minneapolis, MN

Occupation: Residential Real Estate Sales

Comment: I'm a born and raised Minnesota farmer's daughter. I learned to love the land early. Please, stop the degradation and destruction of this precious resource. Ban GMO's! Encourage and support the small, independent, organic farmers. They are our lifeblood and the future of our civilization. Corporate farmers are destroying our land! In the name of greed. Please, think about our children and future generations. If we continue with this madness we will destroy our very Earth. It's not too late. Thank you for your service and for your attention to this issue.

ROSEMARY KNUTSON.

JOINT COMMENT OF DAVID AND BETTY KNUTZEN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:35 p.m.

City, State: Waunakee, WI

Occupation: Retired

Comment: The SNAP program is essential now in an economy which has failed millions of citizens and where 20% of children go to school hungry. Please do not make cuts to this vital program. Also, provide more assistance to small producers and organic farmers. The huge agribusinesses receive far too much of the assistance which should be helping the small producers.

COMMENT OF JOAN KOC SIS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:11 p.m.

City, State: Buzzards Bay, MA

Occupation: Writer

Comment: Why does the farm bill give billions to giant corporations like Cargill and Monsanto to produce food that only makes people fat (like high-fructose corn syrup)? They certainly don't need government help. The bulk of subsidies should go to growers of fruits and vegetables—the stuff that government tells us we should be eating much more of—especially to those who sell locally. Please use your voice to ask for radical change in the farm bill. We also need to know what foods are genetically modified; as it is, we're running a giant experiment on how GMOs will affect humans and the natural world. The U.S. may be the largest, richest country that doesn't mandate GMO labeling. Even repressive China lets its citizens know what food contains GMOs.

COMMENT OF SPERIE KODA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:57 p.m.

City, State: Leicester, NC

Occupation: Artist—Landscape

Comment: My main concerns are for mandatory decent conditions for livestock right up to the very end and also for common sense laws regarding chemical additives and genetic tampering. 200 million male chicks killed the same day they are born is a pathetic practice for example.

COMMENT OF AMY KOEGEL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:29 p.m.

City, State: Lexington, KY

Occupation: Self-Employed

Comment: Our health and nutrition needs are directly impacted by the quality of food we consume. I support sustainable farming and local, organic produce to help meet my family's nutritional needs. Please keep our nation's health at the frontlines when discussing the new farm bill. Thank you.

COMMENT OF MATTHEW KOELSCH

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 10:24 a.m.

City, State: Honeoye Falls, NY

Occupation: Father/Student

Comment: Agricultural policy should be focused on:

1. safe, responsible, sustainable practices
2. full, grassroots, employment
3. production of safe and healthy food
4. local production and distribution

Large scale, mechanized, petrochemical-intensive operations employ fewer Americans, pollute and degrade our soil and water, and produce massive quantities of fodder to be processed into the low-nutrient, high calorie foodstuffs that leads to obesity and diabetes. Policies that favor this approach enrich corporate shareholders at the expense of our nation's health and the purity of our soil and water. Please support the alternatives: organic, local, small-scale, family and community-owned farms. Thanks for listening.

COMMENT OF RON KOENIG

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:20 p.m.

City, State: Bellevue, WA

Occupation: Organist/Newspaper Delivery

Comment: I am concerned that money will go to promote large agricultural companies and the small sustainable farmer will be left out. Please do not cut funding for the food stamp program as many people rely upon it to be able to buy food. As the rich continue to get richer and more jobs leave the country, more and more people are unable to buy food without government programs such as food stamps.

COMMENT OF ELAINE KOKAI

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 11:40 a.m.

City, State: Daytona Beach, FL

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Please consider all the working poor, children and women who rely on help with the basic need for food. Even in this wealthy country we have those who through no fault of their own cannot feed themselves. I work at a food pantry where the number of families we are helping has increased steadily over the last year. Please think of those less fortunate and help them.

COMMENT OF REGINA KOLBER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:55 a.m.

City, State: Brooklyn, NY

Occupation: Admin. Worker

Comment: I want fresh, healthy food without pesticides and all the workers involved from beginning to end should be treated well and paid a decent wage. If we can put people on the moon, we can pay agricultural workers well with safe working conditions. I'd also like to see a lot more attention paid to organic farming and the small family farm.

COMMENT OF SUSAN KOLLAR

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 6:04 p.m.

City, State: Westlake, OH

Occupation: Realtor

Comment: We need the Congress to focus on protecting small farmers, organic farmers. We do not need to pay big farm corporation to pollute our environment and control what we eat. We need to protect the **Environment** for honey bees, our children. Tell Monsanto no more controlling what is planted.

COMMENT OF STEVE KONIGSBAUER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 9:27 p.m.

City, State: Salley, SC

Occupation: Stocker Cattle Grazing

Comment: We need to keep American AG. strong and sustainable for the long haul. We must all support programs that:

- (1) creates jobs and spurs economic growth.
- (2) makes healthy food widely available to all americans.
- (3) protects our natural resources.
- (4) invests in the next generation of farmers and ranchers.
- (5) drives innovation for tomorrows farmers and ranchers. Please do the right thing, our children are Humanity's reach into the future and we must leave them well equipped to survive whatever shall come along. Thank you.

STEVE KONIGSBAUER.

COMMENT OF CLAUDIA KONKUS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:02 p.m.

City, State: Severna Park, MD

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: We need to do everything in our power to change the way this country eats and lives. Organic farmers are on the forefront of healthy living and we need to support them. Do not cut funding!

COMMENT OF KITTY KOON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:50 p.m.

City, State: Sandpoint, ID

Occupation: Massage Therapist

Comment: Please change the law so it requires all food producers to let me know what is in my food especially GMO's. I really don't want to have to grow all my food to make sure it is safe but I will if congress keeps trying to poison most of us through our food.

COMMENT OF HARV KOPLO

Date Submitted: Monday, March 26, 2012, 9:09 p.m.

City, State: Springfield, IL

Occupation: Computer Consultant

Comment: Local and regional food systems help create jobs and spur economic growth in rural and urban communities. Please support investment in this growing sector by including the Local Farms, Food, and Jobs Act in the next farm bill.

The future of family farming and ranching in America depends upon ensuring that would-be new farmers have access to land, capital, and markets. Please support beginning farmers and ranchers by including Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act in the next farm bill.

Farmers depend on quality, cutting-edge research to stay successful—please make sure the next farm bill invests in this crucial work.

Working lands conservation programs help farmers maintain productivity while protecting our air, water, and soil, protect these programs from unfair funding cuts!

COMMENT OF MARILYN KOPP

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 1:14 a.m.

City, State: Huntington, NY

Occupation: Retired Teacher

Comment: We need government support for organic agriculture and much more study of genetically modified foods and the use of pesticides on food crops **Before** they are allowed to come to market. The explosion of the number of children with autism alone tells us we are doing something wrong, and we don't know what it is.

COMMENT OF MERYLE A. KORN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:57 p.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I am a consumer of certified organic produce and selected animal meats. Please do nothing to impair my ability to purchase food that is pesticide-free, chemical fertilizer-free, hormone-free, antibiotic-free, and free of any other additives that do not belong in the food chain.

COMMENT OF TERESA KOSCHMEDER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:17 a.m.

City, State: Lawrenceburg, IN

Occupation: Full-Time Homemaker

Comment: America needs a farm bill that allows organic foods to thrive and become mainstream.

America needs a farm bill that encourages the small family farmers to grow again.

No pesticides, no chemicals, no preservatives no hormones on the animals should ever be used. Humane treatment for all the animals and farmers. Allow fair trading and innovation that encourages research for healthier foods. America should be able to feed everyone in America with healthy food.

There should be plenty of support with the acceptance of science. No one should be able to change the facts because of their belief system. Thank you for your time and consideration.

COMMENT OF KATE KOSEK

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 1:28 p.m.

City, State: Hopewell Junction, NY

Occupation: Educator/Writer

Comment: Let's help the small, responsible farmers to provide us with healthy, affordable food while supporting a healthy, bio-diverse environment. Supporting industrial ag is corporate welfare.

COMMENT OF DEBI KOSHIK

Date Submitted: Friday, April 27, 2012, 3:26 p.m.

City, State: Chula Vista, CA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: The government of this country need to make sure us low income people get fed before you send food off overseas for one thing . . . there are people starving here even in Cities like San Diego! Just because our income is "middle" we get no help and that dollar don't go far any more . . . make the consumer cost in America go down and the export cost to go up!

COMMENT OF JOHANNA KOVITZ

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:28 p.m.

City, State: Allston, MA

Occupation: Transcriber

Comment: I believe the U.S. government's responsibility should be less about supporting large agribusiness, and more about encouraging small independent farmers, organic farming, and opportunities for citizens to buy locally grown and organic produce. The aim should be to ensure that all Americans have access to fresh, healthful, and affordable food, not to make sure agribusiness stays rich by growing and selling things that Americans don't need, or selling commodity products at home and abroad while many Americans go hungry or become obese on a diet of junk food.

Just one example of our wrong priorities: As a result of subsidized corn production, it is almost impossible to find processed foods in this country that don't contain

high fructose corn syrup, which keeps Americans addicted to sugar and increases the rates of obesity and diabetes. The incentives in this system are all wrong.

If any of the Representatives on this committee do their own shopping or cooking, they will know how much easier it is to find junk food in our supermarkets it is than to find quality food and produce. Our agriculture system should do everything possible to turn around this unhealthy reality. As you consider the next farm bill and as you meet with lobbyists from agribusiness, please don't lose sight of the nutritional and health needs of the American people as a whole.

COMMENT OF DOUGLAS KOWALEWSKI

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 5:46 p.m.

City, State: Lake in the Hills, IL

Occupation: Realtor

Comment: Stop selling out to multi-national corporations and their terrorist tactics. Protect the small farmer, help these small businesses succeed and encourage the farming of healthy, real food. Because politicians get wealthy by serving the masters of big companies, I have no hope that the Agricultural Committee will ever do anything that helps a small farmer. It just doesn't put enough in their pockets.

COMMENT OF KELLY ANN KOWALSKI

Date Submitted: Friday, April 20, 2012, 3:55 p.m.

City, State: Cheektowaga, NY

Occupation: Program Director

Comment: It is so important that we protect and do not harm the Food Stamp program under the farm bill. In these hard times, people need a program like Food Stamps to have healthy and productive lives. The average person who uses food stamps much whether have a job that pays enough that they do not have to use Food Stamps. Being able to buy healthy food on your table is so important and it will cost the nation less money in the long wrong. Please do not harm this program.

COMMENT OF MICHAEL KOZAK

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:15 a.m.

City, State: Pittsburgh, PA

Occupation: College Admission Counselor

Comment: As the committee considers the 2012 Food and Farm Bill, I urge you to:

- Support small, sustainable family farms.
- Support organic agriculture that does not harm the environmental with chemical inputs.
- Take a stand against subsidies for large scale farms that do not need them.
- Take a stand against GMOs in our food system.
- Focus on providing access to good, local, organic produce to all.
- Support young and beginning farmers with access to land and funding. There are many who want to farm, but the barrier to entry is too high for most.

COMMENT OF CONSTANCE KOZEL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:29 p.m.

City, State: Dallas, PA

Occupation: Retired Teacher

Comment: Farms are one of our most precious and indispensable resources. We must protect them and what is grown on them for the health of **Earth And All Its Inhabitants.**

COMMENT OF DAVID KOZLOWSKI

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:58 p.m.

City, State: Santa Fe, NM

Occupation: Woodworker

Comment: The agricultural industry should be encouraged to produce fresh food instead of processed food. Our food right now is based on exploiting corn and corn products to the maximum. This has resulted in an explosion of carbohydrates in our food supply and has resulted in an obesity epidemic that especially affects the poorest members of our society.

For most of history, after all, the poor have typically suffered from a shortage of calories, not a surfeit. So how is it that today the people with the least amount of money to spend on food are the ones most likely to be overweight?
<http://www.nytimes.com/2007/04/22/magazine/22wvlnlede.t.html?pagewanted=all>*

Iowa Senator Chuck Grassley has said: “The agriculture industry has consolidated to the point where family farmers, independent producers and other smaller market participants do not have equal access to fair and competitive markets,” he says. “Increased concentration in agriculture will lead to fewer product choices and higher product prices for the American consumer.”

COMMENT OF JOHN KOZMA

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 1:23 p.m.

City, State: Charleston, SC

Occupation: College Instructor

Comment: Although I am not a producer, I am very interested in agriculture policies. I am an elected member of the Charleston County Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Commissioners, but these comments are my own, in no way endorsed by the board.

I am also a member of a local CSA, and I buy organic, local non-GMO food when it is available and affordable. I understand that non-organic practices are the only practical way to produce enough food to satisfy everyone's needs, and that economies of scale sometimes demand that food be shipped long distances from farm to table. I also understand that genetically modified foods can be beneficial. However, there are known—and not yet known—problems with these practices. The use of chemical pesticides and herbicides leads to increased resistance among the species sought to be controlled. Likewise, dependence on mono-cultures increases susceptibility to insects and diseases. There is also evidence that crop varieties selected for mono-cultures sacrifice nutritional value for high yield. Transporting farm products to distant processing facilities and markets requires additional expense and pollution. And while I don't believe, as some may, that genetically modified food products are inherently unsafe, I find it troubling that there is no requirement that they be tested more rigorously.

By subsidizing farmers on the basis of the quantity of crops they produce, as all U.S. farm bills have done for at least the past twenty years, our farm policy makes organic, local, non-GMO choices relatively more expensive. I am among many who believe that many of the health problems in the U.S. are related to our diet, which to a large extent is shaped by farm policy. Yet another consequence of our current farm policy is increased dependence on foreign oil due to the widespread use fertilizers and long distance transportation of farm products. Even immigration is impacted by farm policy, since the export of cheap, subsidized farm products from the U.S. drives many farmers out of business in Mexico and other Central and South American countries, with the result that many displaced workers from those countries to seek employment here.

The admonition to first, do no harm might well be applied to farm policy. There is no need to subsidize corn, wheat, rice, cotton, and soybeans—the market can effectively deal with them without government intervention. Even if the current subsidies are not redirected to organic and local production, there should at least be a level playing field.

COMMENT OF MARYLOU KRAEMER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:05 p.m.

City, State: Albuquerque, NM

Occupation: Marketing Director for a Independent Pharmacy

Comment: This country needs good, healthy clean food. I am sick and tired of McDonalds and Burger King ruling Americans. I only eat organic and real food. Please return our country to this state. The food is making this nation obese and sick!

COMMENT OF DIANE KRAFT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:16 p.m.

City, State: Niagara Falls, NY

*The information referred to is retained in Committee file.

Occupation: Psychotherapist

Comment: The feeding of America and the decisions made to this end, requires a serious shift in our goals. It is time to think smarter about the healthy sustainability of our food supply.

COMMENT OF MARYLIN KRAKER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:01 p.m.

City, State: Fremont, MI

Occupation: Retired

Comment: It is important to support small farmers more than big Ag, especially organic farmers. Also to support/fund healthier school meals, as well as nutrition support for those in need. This is **Not** the time to cut 'food stamps' or subsidies for school breakfasts and lunches for poor children.

COMMENT OF ANN KRAMER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 12, 2012, 12:26 a.m.

City, State: Hood River, OR

Occupation: Counselor

Comment: We need a farm bill that supports small farmers and a diverse, regional food system. For far too long only the large producers have benefited by the farm bill. This is short sighted and has resulted in a food system that is leaving us with limited food diversity. Obesity and Type II Diabetes have grown steadily due to this commoditized food system. Solutions like in small farmers, regional food systems.

COMMENT OF JOEL KRAMME

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 2:14 p.m.

City, State: Rolla, MO

Occupation: Retired Teacher

Comment: Your constituent's health and well-being must be your top priority when setting farm policy. Just look at the increasing popularity of local farmers' markets and you will see a ground-swell of concern about people's individual health. Big Agra. needs to revamp their priorities or we will soon tell them, RIP.

COMMENT OF BRUCE KRAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:00 p.m.

City, State: Reno, NV

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Organic and small farming are on the comeback because big ag has maximized profits without regard to health concerns. Health care costs too much to ignore this healthy trend. Support it.

COMMENT OF GRETA KRANZ

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:13 p.m.

City, State: Sun Valley, ID

Occupation: Consultant

Comment: Stop promoting the use and destruction of our land, our farming communities, and the health of our nation by supporting terrible companies like Monsanto! I want the working farmer to be able to do just that—work, and produce true crops in the ways he/she know are best.

COMMENT OF MICHAEL KRASNER

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 10:16 p.m.

City, State: Putney, VT

Occupation: Teacher, Hobby Farmer

Comment: Please craft a bill that continues to provide generous support via SNAP for those people who continue to be hurt by our economic situation. Please also support measures that will allow young and innovative farmers to begin farming and flourish and that will direct aid to them and other family farmers who truly need help as opposed to the large, industrialized farming enterprises that do not.

Thank you,

MICHAEL KRASNER.

COMMENT OF C.E. KRAUSE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:35 p.m.

City, State: La Quinta, CA

Occupation: Environmentalist, Teacher, Political Activist, Artist

Comment: Food and Farm Bill? HA! What do you think I think you're going to do with my input!?!

Well, our food is unhealthy from start to stomach: whether grown from genetically modified seeds that have had all the nutrients extracted and are Round-Up Ready and filled with noxious chemicals; or raised in filth, crammed together, abused and tortured, force-fed and plied with steroids and unhealthful chemicals; our food doesn't taste like it should, doesn't look like it should (colorized) and doesn't nourish like it should.

And, well, our farms are all run by big multinational agribusiness monopolies and chemical manufacturing conglomerates, subsidized by taxpayers; they serve the agenda of the 1%: to wipe out large populations who own coveted natural resources and/or are otherwise undesirable. [There would be no world hunger, except that it is part of the New World Order!]

That's what I think. What do I want? Stop subsidizing multinational corporations; label GMO foods; let us know which petro-chemical corporations are involved (as owners, producers, *etc.*) and which petro-chemicals are being forced upon us via our edibles and potables; regulate, regulate, regulate; start treating animals humanely and stop over killing; stop allowing our soil to be contaminated and our food to be grown in contaminated soil; and stop the pollution of our water—rivers, streams, lakes, seas, oceans (including by the inevitable big oil spills and nuclear waste leakage!) and stop the watering of our food with polluted liquids!

That's a start! Do these things and you'll be doing the decent thing, doing right by your constituents and all of (wo-)mankind.

COMMENT OF HAROLD KRAVITZ

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 12:34 a.m.

City, State: Minnetonka, MN

Occupation: Clergy

Comment: I am profoundly troubled by the proposed cuts to Federal Food benefits in both the House and Senate Ag Committees budgets. It is shameful to balance the Federal budget at the expense of those who are most vulnerable.

COMMENT OF CLARENCE KREITER

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 8:25 p.m.

City, State: Iowa City, IA

Occupation: Professor—U of Iowa

Comment: What I see in Iowa is truly heartbreaking. So much land going into production and so little nature left. The rivers are totally polluted. This is important legislation—please put the brakes on refunding. This state is destroying itself by putting so much land into production.

COMMENT OF REBECCA KRIEGER COTTINGHAM

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:02 p.m.

City, State: Batesville, IN

Occupation: Homemaker/Mother

Comment: It's time for real reform. I support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

To be totally honest, I grew up on a small farm, but my family never ever had any benefit from all of these subsidies, *etc.* . . . that are always discussed. All of these subsidies only go towards one place . . . **Big Business** . . . Thus, in the U.S., it is now difficult to even buy meat, *etc.* that is not produced by one of the three major meat producers . . . Consequently, we now have food that is so standardized

and industrialized that it does not have the benefits and nutrition, nor the taste, of “real food”.

I am disappointed that the Senate Agricultural Committee has already voted to cut \$4 million from organic research funding and cut funding to support Beginning Farmers in half. We cannot let this stand!

At the same time, the Senate Ag Committee has voted to get rid of wasteful subsidy payments. It has proposed to replace it with a new subsidized insurance program that leading sustainable agriculture advocates are calling rife with opportunities for fraud and abuse. If course, from our past experience, this is bound to happen. Thus, why are we doing this once again?

While Congress is looking to get rid of direct payments to commodity farmers, the subsidized insurance program it proposes to replace it with will allow giant commodity farmers and insurance companies to walk away with billions in taxpayer dollars while putting the land, soil and environment at greater risk. Thus, big business will once again benefit.

According to the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition’s Ferd Hoefner, “By failing to place limitations on crop insurance subsidies and to re-attach soil erosion and wetland conservation requirements to crop insurance programs, the Committee has failed to do the full reform that is needed.”

We can’t allow this to happen. Please help to create real reform and a healthy, organic future! Please do not just think of the large businesses that are located your districts asking for your support. Think of your children and grandchildren, Do you not want your children and grandchildren to be able to experience “real food” with real nutrition and benefits . . . rather than mass produced food? As is proven, this is a key to good health and less obesity . . . which Americans desperately need. If Americans ate more real food, then health care costs would decrease. Of course, once again, that would hurt big business.

I personally find it affronts me that many of these policies are introduced and supported by males . . . who definitely don’t seem to have the some forward thinking as mothers who worry much more about the future of their children, and their children. Thus, these policies are often made with big business in mind, NOT for the people.

To conclude, thank you for your attention.

COMMENT OF SUSAN KRIVIN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:25 p.m.

City, State: Santa Cruz, CA

Occupation: Custom Sewing/Tailor, Former Food Producer

Comment: As a former food producer, I know from personal experience how difficult it is for small farmers to make a living, so first I ask that you end farm subsidies. The largest farms that need the least help seem to benefit most from these. Instead, I would urge you to support programs benefiting smaller farms serving their local communities, especially those of low income.

Please strengthen, as opposed to cutting back, nutrition programs in this time of great economic instability. Everyone deserves access to healthy food, especially children.

Last, but equally important, protect the Conservation Stewardship Program to insure farmers have incentives to adopt practices that protect the soil, water, air, and surrounding landscapes for the benefit of current and future generations.

COMMENT OF GERI KROMMINGA

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 13, 2012, 12:55 a.m.

City, State: Vancouver, WA

Comment: Our family farmers need support for their farms, especially when they are marketing directly to the public. Consumers need access to clean, healthy food grown in ways to support our environment, not deplete it. Family farms are much more efficient than corporate farms. We need to end subsidies for corporate farms.

COMMENT OF ESTHER KRONENBERG

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:07 p.m.

City, State: Olympia, WA

Occupation: Retired Educator

Comment: As an educated person who is aware of the current agribusiness model and its disastrous consequences for the health of the land and the people, I write to urge you to fully endorse all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act

(H.R. 3286), to fully fund conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and to make sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs. I also support the implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236) and maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Continuing to run this country at the behest and for the profit of the 1% who have absolutely no interest in their fellow man or the sustainability of the planet, but only in short-term profit is the road to **Hell**. In the end, **All** of us including all the living creatures with whom we share this Earth, will suffer. The actions of this government are so contrary to basic Western religious tradition that continuing on is a **Grave Sin**.

I urge you to act in the best sense of being human—with compassion and common sense. Do not let our fellow citizens go hungry while continuing to cater to those who would rape the land for profit.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF CAM KROSNOFF

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:08 p.m.

City, State: Wills Point, TX

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Politicians out of touch with the values of the American people; and, corporate agribusiness has a stranglehold on our regulatory system and our political leaders.

Farmers and eaters across the U.S. benefit from a fair and healthy farm bill.

I support:

1. The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
2. Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
3. The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
4. Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

While Congress is looking to get rid of direct payments to commodity farmers, the subsidized insurance program it proposes to replace it with will allow giant commodity farmers and insurance companies to walk away with billions in taxpayer dollars while putting the land, soil and environment at greater risk.

By failing to place limitations on crop insurance subsidies and to re-attach soil erosion and wetland conservation requirements to crop insurance programs, the Committee has failed to do the full reform that is needed . . . do something right for America **Now** . . . otherwise all of you will be out of office before you realize it . . . I promise.

COMMENT OF DIANNE KRUEGER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:40 p.m.

City, State: Delafield, WI

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: Keep the family farm alive. We need to support new farmers not the huge commodity farms. Taking money away from the food stamp programs and giving it to large farms is wrong. Organic, sustainable farming is the best alternative for healthy, nutritious food for all. Support local farms and farmers.

COMMENT OF FRANCES KRUEGER-JACKSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:52 p.m.

City, State: Chicago, IL

Occupation: Bookkeeper and Artist

Comment: I feel that there needs to be more emphasis put on helping the small farmer rather than big Agribusinesses. Small farms and organic farming is better for the environment, is more sustainable, and ultimately better for the people and communities involved. I would also like to see tougher standards in long term research on the environmental and health effects of GMO crops as well as labeling of GMO foods.

In addition, I support the full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).

I support fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.

I also support the implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).

And, I support maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Your job is to protect the long term health (and I mean more than medical) of the people and the environment we live in not corporate interests (and despite what the courts may say, they **Are Not** people, they are entities with different priorities, values, and interests).

COMMENT OF RYAN KRUG

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:13 p.m.

City, State: Eagan, MN

Comment: Steps need to be taken to pass along the real costs of farming. Taxes should be added to products based on their manufacturing process to take into account the environmental impact of production.

COMMENT OF ROBERT KRUGER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:43 p.m.

City, State: Chicago, IL

Occupation: Social Worker

Comment: This Nations children & people need a future where non GMO/Corporate food exists. Our plant needs crops that don't rely on the chemical fertilizers & pesticides promoted by the **Corporations!** This Earth is fragile and those chemicals are destroying our water supply and when they flow into the Gulf life there.

Someone must stand up for the people & not the Corporations. We the people are the ones who put you in office to voice our wishes and **Not The Corporations!**

Thanks for your time and support.

COMMENT OF WENDY KRUPNICK

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 12, 2012, 12:20 a.m.

City, State: Santa Rosa, CA

Occupation: Instructor, Organic Farming and Gardening

Comment: It is time for the farm bill to get back to its original intent—to keep American agriculture the strong backbone of our economy and protect the food security of the American people. It was not designed to support the huge corporate agribiz profit structure which has no regard for the destruction of our natural resources and the diverse family farm, and is producing food products that are making Americans sick. It is time to eliminate subsidies for corn that is used as a sweetener and ethanol. Instead, conservation, organic farming, and the local food movement must receive more support. With millions of Americans out of work and below poverty level, food support programs need to also support local farmers and a healthy food supply, circulating these dollars in our communities and creating better health outcomes for all.

COMMENT OF SCOTT KRUSE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:35 p.m.

City, State: Fresno, CA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Specialty Crops

Size: 301–500 acres

Comment: Support specialty crops, organic farming and Slow Food. Time is overdue to wean industrial farming off of subsidies and crop insurance. All crops should be climate- and soil-appropriate (you don't grow oranges in Montana). Restore the San Joaquin River to sustainability for both the watershed and growers.

COMMENT OF WILLIAM KUEHL

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 15, 2012, 8:16 p.m.

City, State: Astoria, OR

Occupation: Volunteer Pantry Manager

Comment: Suzanne Bonamici:

It is not time to make cuts in these programs. I know so many that are in hard times and not of their own doing and having to swallow their pride and go to pantries for the first time in their lives. it's bad enough that people are losing their homes. As a pantry manager I see the fear in these good people's eyes first hand. **Please Protect This Life Line For The People That Need It.**

COMMENT OF SARA KUHN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:45 p.m.

City, State: West Hollywood, CA

Occupation: Teacher, Writer

Comment: I urge you to return to the roots of farming in this country. Support small, beginning, and socially-disadvantaged farmers and ranchers. Fund programs that support organic, sustainable, and local and regional farming practices—not the detached and inhumane mentality of corporate farms and big agribusinesses. **I Beg** of you to please end our government's support of corporate farms and big agribusiness. The result of their production is chemically-enhanced and non-sustainable farming/ranching practices—that, in the long run, are not good for any of us. **I Plead** with you to please act out of concern for the population of this country and not with regard to the corporate farming and agribusiness companies who seem to have their hands in the pockets of everyone on Capitol Hill. Support critical nutrition programs and fight food insecurity. Stop giving breaks to those who over-produce, those who are inhumane to food animals, those who pollute the environment with disregard for the delicate ecological balance. Our small and family farmers work hard to continue the tradition of working WITH the land, not raping it, to provide healthy food to the people of this country in a sustainable manner. Yet increasingly, they are being put out of business by large corporations. Please, please, please—act with regard for the people, the animals and the environment. Don't give to greedy corporations and lobbyists. Do the right thing.

COMMENT OF HILARY KUKLA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:32 p.m.

City, State: Fort Collins, CO

Occupation: Graphic Artist

Comment: Please stop subsidizing food that is making our planet and people sick! Having a soy allergy, I have a personal connection with the commodity crop. My tax dollars go to the over production of a plant that makes me sick. Give the money to diverse farms that grow more than a monocrop.

COMMENT OF PAMELA KUKLA

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 10, 2012, 10:39 a.m.

City, State: West Dennis, MA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: SNAP is desperately needed now more than ever as even average Americans, struck in so many ways by this years-long recession, continue to struggle to feed themselves and their families.

COMMENT OF JERRY KUKUCZKA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:43 p.m.

City, State: Janesville, MN

Occupation: Unemployed

Comment: Small farmers, and organic farmers need to be considered in the next farm bill . . . they and we need all the help we can get to keep our food safe and edible for all . . . thank you.

COMMENT OF WALTER KUMIEGA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:38 p.m.

City, State: Little Der Isle, ME

Occupation: Carpenter

Comment: Sick and tired of Big Ag getting billions in subsidies while small family farms get nothing but grief from the FDA and USDA. End the subsidies, fund Food Stamps and fund programs that support small farms and organic farms. Stop the corporate welfare!

COMMENT OF AMY KUNDE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:53 p.m.

City, State: San Carlos, CA

Occupation: Stay-at-Home Mom

Comment: Please support the smaller family farms. Please keep our food supplies clean and without harmful toxic pesticides and fertilizers. Please help to provide clean and healthy food for the disadvantaged, elderly, and young.

Thank you.

AMY KUNDE.

COMMENT OF HAROLD J. KUNISCH

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 08, 2012, 2:18 p.m.

City, State: Winter Park, FL

Occupation: Employment Counselor

Comment: This is a "double sword" situation . . . at some point we have to cut our spending. The taxpayers are "not" a bottom less pit when it comes to spending. I work with a lot of people on food stamps & I've come to the conclusion based on who gets & who does not & the amounts given, it is a corrupt system. All things being equal some get \$16 (which is hardly worth all the paper work), some get \$200 & then I see people with \$500-\$600-\$700 a month all with basically the same similar situations. I am tired of people who get high amounts of food stamps, live on welfare, haven't worked in years & don't intend on doing so. It's time to take the politics out of food stamps & make sure only people who truly deserve them, get them . . . throw all the "dead beats" off the program, **Now!** . . . I support the cut in food stamps as tough as it maybe . . . we are going bankrupt, maybe (?) people will get off the couch & fend for themselves.

JOINT COMMENTS OF MIKE AND MIRIAM KURLAND

Date Submitted: Friday, April 27, 2012, 12:51 p.m.

City, State: Mansfield Center, CT

Occupation: Speech-Language Therapist

Comment: Please protect and save our small, local farmers who are doing their best to keep our foods healthy, organic and free of MGO's. the large corporate farmers are destroying our food supply and mistreating animals. we need laws to protect those who care about our communities, our nation and the future of our world.

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 12:22 p.m.

Comment: We need a farm bill that takes away Federal funds from large, corporate farms that use unproven for health, safety and environmentally sustainable procedures including MGO's, hormones, *etc.* and instead provides funding for small, local, organic, independent farms that are a mainstay in our communities.

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012 12:12 p.m.

Comment: Protect our small local organic farms, please.

COMMENT OF STEVEN KURTZ

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:03 p.m.

City, State: Portland, ME

Occupation: Retired

Comment: We are eating fossil fuel derived, genetically engineered garbage. The nutrition is greatly lower than organic produce. Your progeny are getting short-changed. Better wake up and convince the public that muscle power would grow better food plus help the obesity epidemic.

COMMENT OF MICHAEL LA COURSE

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 11:32 p.m.

City, State: Vista, CA

Occupation: Educator

Comment: We need to get a sustainable agriculture in this country, without GMO's which have no long term health studies. I do not want my children poisoned, just because the status quo states as long as it is not proven dangerous it isn't (DDT anyone?). Please help the public be able to make a decision about if they want to buy GMO foods or not.

COMMENT OF DEANNA LACK

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:26 a.m.

City, State: Sparta, TN

Occupation: Medical Transcriptionist

Comment: Please include small farmers and organic farming in the next farm bill. Our current farming system is unsustainable and is damaging the health of the nation. End subsidies and replace with agricultural risk coverage. At least some of the money Big Ag gets should go to small operations, and there should be some accountability for environmental practices.

Thanks for your attention to this matter.

COMMENT OF BARBARA LADD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:06 p.m.

City, State: Croton on Hudson, NY

Occupation: Publishing

Comment: We want reform! U.S. food and agricultural policy must focus on adopting best agricultural practices that put the health of its citizens, the land and the livelihood of farmers and farm workers over the interests of industrial agriculture lobbyists.

Politicians out of touch with the values of the American people, and corporate agribusiness has too much influence over our regulatory system and our political leaders.

A fair and healthy farm bill is a win for farmers and eaters across the U.S. Don't cut funding to vital programs such as nutrition, conservation and support for organic and sustainable agriculture.

COMMENT OF RYAN LADUC

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 2:48 a.m.

City, State: Saugerties, NY

Occupation: Student

Comment: Congressman Hinchey,

The writing of the nation's new farm bill is an important time for us. There is a lot that is disturbing about our current agricultural system, most of which is unknown to society because we lack information on how and where our food is coming from. Science and economics argue that pesticides, herbicides, fertilizer, GMOs and monoculture farming on a massive scale are the only way to effectively and efficiently grow crops to feed our hungry nation. Those same experts claim that livestock should be mass-produced, injected with antibiotics, growth hormones, fed foods which are largely disagreeable with their digestive systems, and then never shown the light of day, before they are herded into slaughter houses after standing in their own feces for months on end, as the only effective and efficient way to feed our nation. I disagree. Not only are such methods of agriculture and livestock production, wildly destructive to the environment, but they are also destructive to our health. Research shows that mad cow disease, *E. coli*, *Salmonella* poisoning, diabetes and many other health issues, including links to cancer, and even autism, have been caused or worsened by our industrial agriculture system. Large scale does **Not** mean efficient, when it puts our planet, our environment, our oceans, our health, especially that of our children and the elderly, at risk! I urge Congress to demand open information on food, and better labeling, so that the public can hold our food suppliers responsible. After all, business is driven by the consumer, and it should be up to us to decide what we buy. If government subsidies only support massive food corporations, what choice do we have in our health and in our planet's future? Not only that, but such biased agricultural subsidies allow for every small-scale mom and pop farm to be squashed by the bigger corporations within months, both financially and legally over issues of GMOs.

Government subsidies lean heavily towards corn and soy—two of the most environmentally destructive crops in the world. Such crops are then used in ethanol which is anything but sustainable or helpful to the environment. With such subsidies, corn is the cheapest thing for food conglomerates to produce, so they feed it to their livestock, which their digestive tracts can't handle, causing *E. coli* to run rampant, and for our meat to be filled with bacteria, and antibiotics to try and curb it. The corn that is leftover is then used in the making of chips, alcohol, soda, popcorn, butter, sugar, candy, cookies, fast foods, such as McDonald's, microwaveable foods, and other nutritionally lacking foods all of which can be sold dirt cheap due to subsidies. As a result of their cheap costs, these foods make up the primary food

diets of poorer consumers, including those who are on your government assistance programs. What other choices do they have? Beer and potato chips are cheaper to buy than carrots and celery! No wonder our nation is continually battling a rising obesity and diabetes epidemic. I urge Congress to use this opportunity of a new farm bill, to spend money investigating the health and environmental impacts of our current agricultural system. I urge you to urge Congress to support and give subsidies to organic farms and to support small-scale local farms who, like any other small business trying to make it big, should **Not** be run out by monopoly corporations. They have every right to our free markets as the big food producers do, and they are using better, healthier, more sustainable, and friendly methods. I urge you to urge Congress to create better labeling laws so that we as consumers can reclaim our rights to free information, especially in regards to our health, and so that we can know what it is that we are eating. After all, like any global market, the consumers should hold the control, not be controlled by the producers. This is the basic principal upon which our economic system is based. I also urge you to urge Congress to renew the SNAP, TEFAP, CSFP, WIC and other nutrition programs instituted by previous bills. These programs and initiatives are necessary for the stability of our nation. In these times of economic struggle and hardship, health should not be put on the back-burner and neither should the hunger of 1,000s of poor families. There are many Americans in need of food assistance and programs such as these are their only hope in many cases. However, I hope that Congress can come to understand, that such programs are only effective if they allow for the recipients to purchase healthy foods, not beer and potato chips, which add to national health problems and consequently, healthcare issues. We can't simply continue food assistance, we have to specify what foods are supported and subsidized, and allowable for purchase by these systems.

And we all reserve the right to know **What It Is That We Are Buying**. What we eat is who we are, and we all need to realize that more, and act in our own interests to better our food market. We the people, humbly in your hands Congressmen, and I ask that you heed our cries for change and help our nation move towards a better, brighter, healthier, more sustainable future. Our country's agricultural system needs some serious restructuring and it starts here!

COMMENT OF SHAWN LADUKE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:47 a.m.

City, State: Sheboygan, WI

Occupation: Self-Employed Yoga Studio Owner

Comment: I support organic farming! I do not want to each food that has been altered, sprayed with herbicide, pesticide or any chemicals that have been shown to cause cancer in animals. Please support local small farmers that give a shit about the environment and aren't in it for the money. They need jobs too!

COMMENT OF MICHELLE LAFAYE

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:57 a.m.

City, State: Grants, NM

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: Have our leaders all gone mad and lost all forms of any moral compass and common sense?

Why does the government insist on supporting the likes of the mega agricultural industry through subsidies? Our food is poison! It is really that simple. You are an accomplice poisoning a massive number of people . . . perhaps that is the goal. But, more than likely, it is a deeply embedded greed where all the dots connect on the money trail. The government does not represent the people any longer but it does represent corporate interests completely which is wrong! It is wrong even more so when people's health is placed at risk due to preference for corporations over people.

It makes no sense that government would, at this time in our history, with the knowledge we now possess, even consider obliterating conservation, and stewardship programs. Local organic farmers and small growers need to be a part of our nation's sustainable food growing programs. New and small farmers and growers need the opportunity to begin to farming again. We may even need to create homesteading for organic growers so they may have the opportunity to grow crops again. They do not need loans . . . they need some of the subsidies which are given to the Mega Agricultural Industry.

Farmers grow the gift of health for all of the people. Government policies of past have created this mess we are in by basically ruining farmers through the loan system for equipment, buildings and the methods the government demanded.

It is ridiculous to believe that a farmer is going to quickly rebound from a flood, drought, insects, tornado, late frosts, and *etc.* Farmers must deal with nature as it comes . . . it doesn't fit into our neat little boxes which the government loves to create. We don't need pesticides in all of our food, or artificial chemicals fertilizers, or Genetically modified crops, Bigger is not better. Bigger is out of control and the risks are to great.

Organic local farmers take great pride in their crops. They know their customers on a personal basis and vice versa. If a farmer is not meeting standards of cleanliness and high quality farming practices the farm will either have to change or end up out of business. Locally people have more control over their food and word passes quickly between people when there is a problem.

What can you do to help the situation? You can support small farmers by supporting the following:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

I would also like to see the USDA, FDA, meet the California standard and definitions for Organic foods.

I would like for Monsanto be closed down. They do not deserve the honor of being in business, for they are the major contributors to the poisoning of our lands, waters, and the people of our nation and others. It began with their "harmless" DDT, Dioxin, Agent Orange, and now GMO crops which control the market in corn, soy, cotton, Canola, and sugar beets.

How is it that Monsanto got GMO foods into the market place without allowing full independent research into the safety. I can find research from other nations regarding GMO's but none in America? Why is it that research on this has not happened in America? How is it that they have been able to fight GMO labeling? How is it that when Monsanto crops cross pollinate with a farmers heritage seeds the farmer always loses in court? We really need for government to solve these problems and quit the petty stalemates in government.

COMMENT OF JOANNE LAFRENIERE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:12 p.m.

City, State: South Burlington, VT

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: Please support farmers who use healthy agricultural practices—for both human beings and for the planet. Please support ideas for making sure that every person in this world has enough food to eat.

COMMENT OF BARBARA LAING

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:54 a.m.

City, State: Chicago, IL

Occupation: Photographer and Custom Framer—Small Business Owner

Comment: Why are we continuing to subsidize a mega-agricultural industry that produces food that is endangering and possibly even killing our children—corn and soy = high fructose corn syrup and fatty processed food products that are known to be unhealthy, are heavily marketed to kids especially and lead to obesity and diabetes. Talk about skyrocketing health care costs? Very foolish and taking our nation in the completely wrong direction.

Support small family farms and support more growing of health-giving fruits and vegetables. It's not rocket science!

Stop lining the pockets of huge corporate food interests and keep the interests of the American citizenry on your plate.

Thank you,

BARBARA LAING.

COMMENT OF GEORGE LAKOFF

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:26 p.m.

City, State: Berkeley, CA

Occupation: Professor

Comment: Food is central to life and health. The farm bill is really a Food Bill. It should be supporting organic, local farming, not factory farms that introduce toxics into our foods and make foods unhealthy.

COMMENT OF THERESA LAM

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:33 p.m.

City, State: East Brunswick, NJ

Occupation: Home Gardener

Comment: Since we are all working towards the establishment of local food systems, I would like to suggest giving some type of offering some type of benefit to farmers that farm on microfarms. Also is it possible to encourage local governments to become more tolerant of backyard animals such as chickens, goats, *etc.*? And give small incentives for this?

Thank you,

THERESA LAM.

COMMENT OF JOE L'AMARCA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:20 p.m.

City, State: University Place, WA

Occupation: Iron Worker/Local 9/11

Comment: If they pass this bill, then feed the criminals that engineered this food/plant to start with! And then the crown of England, the Vatican, and the Zionist of Washington.

This food bill should be called the population reduction by Bill Gates Sr.

Natural seeds, in order to germinate them they must be kept alike Condition as if they were out on the field but not like in a seed vault.

You can't beat nature it was here before humanity and it will be here when it ends and restarts, also the fact that Mother Nature can be present in the Universe without humanity or a license but Humanity can't be anywhere without Mother Nature and their license.

Anyone of you see's God give him my e-mail and I will tell him all about the criminals that causes Humanity to suffer on this Planet.

Thank you,

JOE L'AMARCA.

COMMENT OF GWEN LAMBERT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:13 p.m.

City, State: Dayton, OH

Occupation: Manager

Comment: Please consider keeping the full funding of organic farming and also of helping new farmers to ensure a strong next generation of farmers. Cut subsidies to big agriculture CAFO's and GMO corn, soy, rapeseed, and cotton, which have not only proved to be inferior to natural strains of the same crops, but also continue to pollute our ecosystems and compromise our own health in the long run. Please also keep intact funding for healthy lunches for children. Thank you for your consideration.

COMMENT OF KRIS LAMBERT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:58 p.m.

City, State: Kailua, HI

Occupation: Assistant Professor

Comment: As the resident of a state where food security has been 90% dependent on importation of industrial agricultural commodities, I have experienced the effects of accidental and deliberate manipulation of Island access to food supplies mainland capriciousness.

This has made me, and many Island citizens keenly aware of the need to protect and promote small local farmers, and move toward a more self-sustainable future.

To this end I support a 2012 Food and Farm Bill that supports small farmers—not the huge factory farms that are currently the recipients of governmental subsidies.

COMMENT OF IDA LAMBRECHT

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 12, 2012, 8:23 a.m.

City, State: El Dorado Springs, MO

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Specialty Crops

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: We have a small farm with a greenhouse and small livestock fruit and orchard specialty crops. I want to teach kids with disabilities (Autism spectrum disorders) how to farm and sell at local farmers market for hands on skill unable to obtain in public school. I want to see more easily obtainable grants for these types of farm program.

COMMENT OF VANESSA LAMERS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:59 p.m.

City, State: New Haven, CT

Occupation: Student/Researcher/Consultant

Comment: We need a real farm bill—we need to cut the subsidies for unhealthy processed food and farm feed, and we need to increase the subsidies and programs supporting farmer's markets, produce, and whole foods. Really, it's that simple. Support SNAP, don't support big production. Give the people what they want—fresh food. Help us build a real agricultural system again in the U.S.!

COMMENT OF TARA LAMKIN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 12:16 p.m.

City, State: Skokie, IL

Occupation: Food Scientist

Comment: I would like to see a farm bill that has the best interest of our citizens at heart, rather than the best interest of the few giant corporations that control the majority of our national food system. This would mean much less subsidizing of commodity crops to encourage farmers to branch out into other food products that can be sold more locally.

COMMENT OF TANYA LAMOTHE

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 7:26 p.m.

City, State: Malta, NY

Occupation: Volunteer/Community Member/Mom/Wife

Comment: I believe we as citizens of the United States of American have a say on the food we eat, as our quality of life depends on it. My family enjoys the taste of our healthy, organic, naturally grown food from local farmers. We have the right to choose that food & know that the farmers we choose to support, continue to have the right to farm, to grow unsprayed, non-GMO, high quality food. To lose the right to farm, purchase & eat good, wholesome food to the control of corporate greed is against every Law of the Universe & that infraction will have a very high price for the future of America & our Earth. Countries around the globe are passing laws to protect their citizens from large corporations who don't care about the planet, the health of their citizens and all living things for that matter. It is the responsibility for you, those people voted into office & those appointed by the President to make wise decisions for the People of this Nation, not for the corporate few who are only interested in big \$'s for a very small community of U.S. citizens. It is my hope that this House Committee on Agriculture remembers who they are reviewing info for & in the end voting for—the American People. Please hear our words and give us back the Hope & Trust in our government to make the right choices & decisions when it comes to the food of our Nation. Let us join those countries around the globe who are interested in protecting this planet and people who live on it, with much thought and consideration for the generations beyond. Please make your contribution today—good, responsible decisions for we the People of the World.

Very truly yours,

TANYA LAMOTHE.

COMMENT OF MICHAEL LAMPI

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:41 p.m.

City, State: Bellevue, WA

Occupation: Software Engineer

Comment: Farm subsidies should be eliminated for all farming organizations with over \$1 million in revenue. Absolutely no support should be given for GMO crops and animals. Support should be given to organically grown crops and animals, and for non-aquifer depleting farming.

COMMENT OF GARY LAMPMAN

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 7:12 p.m.

City, State: Hendersonville, TN

Comment: Ladies and Gentleman,

I'm a consumer or end-user if you will. My concerns are varied but the most immediate concern is to stop the abuse of Antibiotics, Steroids, and Hormones in our food supply. Agriculture uses 8 times the amount of Antibiotics than Humans and another Point is these Antibiotics are Used on **Healthy Animals Which Become Antibiotic Resistant** and **They Cause** antibiotic resistance in Humans! These abuses have caused Humans to be Maimed and cause complications and death!

These CFO Confined Factory Organizations need to be shut down and Best Practice open range methods need to be re-established. The Biggest threat to our National Security is Monsanto who pollutes the land with terminator seed that causes farmers to buy new seed each year. Then crushing farmers who disagree with them if they choose to remove themselves from land pollution. This same company has placed third world farmers into bankruptcy and poverty. This company is no different than a payday loan shark. Monsanto seeds contaminate the soil and compromise our Food Supply! Last, GMO's need to be **Labeled!** We have a right to know where food comes from and if it is a GMO product. The FDA and the USDA have F@cked us on this recently. Are you going to do the same?

COMMENT OF MARILEE LAMPMAN, R.N.

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 10:52 a.m.

City, State: Red Wing, MN

Occupation: Registered Nurse

Comment: We Need To Protect Our Food Supply!

We Cannot Allow Factory Farms And Corporate Agriculture To Control Our Food Supply! . . . By Contaminating Our Ground Water With Chemicals, Or Using Gmos In The Seed, Cross-Pollinating With Organic Farmers' Crops! This Must Stop!

I Hold Congress Responsible For Protecting The American People!

I Support:

- (1)The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- (2)Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- (3) The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- (4)Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

MRS. MARILEE LAMPMAN, R.N.

COMMENT OF ROSANNE LANDES

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:09 p.m.

City, State: Harrisonburg, VA

Occupation: Admin. Assistant

Comment: I believe that family farms are vital to the diversification and localization of food without them you are dependent on huge agricultural corporations who have no interest in providing wholesome food to a community instead they are solely interested in profit. Do not destroy family farms.

COMMENT OF LAUREN LANDFRIED

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 3:23 p.m.

City, State: Affton, MO

Occupation: Dietitian

Comment: I would like to see a push to use SNAP at Farmer's Markets. This would give people who need to live off of SNAP an opportunity to purchase local produce that has been shown through research to be nutritionally superior than produce that is not grown to its prime. It also provides more money for the local

farmers to continue to farm. According to a research article, farmers have had to decrease their labor costs, accept the possibility that they may lose money, and find jobs away from the farm in order to break even financially (Hoppe, 2010).^{1*} Let's stop this trend and allow the farmers to keep their job on the farm.

COMMENT OF MOLLY LANDIS

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 02, 2012, 2:47 p.m.

City, State: Old Greenwich, CT

Occupation: Student

Comment: Mr. Himes,

I am a student at Brown University interested in the U.S. agricultural system. I am currently taking a class about it, and it is clear that the U.S. needs to work toward a more sustainable system: ecologically, economically, and nutritionally.

So much of the farm bill allocates money toward food assistance programs such as SNAP, which is obviously important in economically difficult times when unemployment is high and many struggle to find food. The food that programs like SNAP have people buying though are not ideal—most of it is processed, high in sugar, fat and refined ingredients. Supply-side policy might be good here—help producers, local especially, to produce fresh vegetables and fruit and to have viable businesses. Also the consumer side, though—make it easier for low-income people relying on food stamps *etc.* to access fresh produce.

We need to conserve open lands as well. Incentivize farmers and land owners to keep their lands free of development, and in production.

Obviously these problems are extremely complex, and I'm sure that you understand them far better than I do. As my representative, though, I would very much appreciate if you would try to address these issues as best you can in working towards a more sustainable system.

Thank you for all your hard work.

COMMENT OF JOANN LONDON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:24 p.m.

City, State: Ventura, CA

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: I want an organic farm bill. I want to stop subsidizing agribusiness. I want GMO's labeled. I want my food to be grown organically. I want small farmers protected. I want an end to factory farms and corn fed hormone fed cows. I support:

- the full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286);
- fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs;
- the implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236); and
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF ARTHUR LANDRY

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 01, 2012, 10:56 a.m.

City, State: Baton Rouge, LA

Comment: The farm bill needs to incorporate a change into the tax code for an "extended period (10 year minimum)" of the encouragement of conserving lands for agriculture, with a modification from the existing, in limbo, conservation easement legislation.

The modification would be as follow: Land placed into a perpetual conservation easement for "Agricultural Use" would allow the landholder to sell their "tax benefits" to the taxpayer of their choice within 48 months after the conservation easement is put in place.

¹Hoppe, R.A., MacDonald, J.M., Korb, P. (2010). Small farms in the United States: persistence under pressure. Economic Information Bulletin No. (EIB-63) 39 pp. <http://www.ers.usda.gov/Publications/EIB63/EIB63.pdf>.

*The information referred to is retained in Committee file.

This in addition to conserving land for agriculture uses, especially smaller landowners; (600 acres and less farmers, which encompasses the largest number of our farm properties in the USA), would also act as an “economic stimulus” for these rural areas. First, the placement of a conservation easement for agriculture uses on land that is in agriculture use, it will allow land to stay in agriculture, Second, it will trigger a taxable event on land that has traditionally not been taxed on the “hidden value” useless it is converted to some form of developed land and thus out of agriculture, permanently. Third, it will allow the small landowners to play on a level playing field as the wealthy individuals that are conserving land that only the “higher tax-bracket groups can use currently”. Fourth, it will trigger a re-investment by landowners into agricultural/rural communities throughout America. Fifth, this would make sure that monies intended for conserving agricultural lands do not get redirected. The Tax Code could limit the % a taxpayer could use of these “purchased benefits” to no more than 35% of their current tax bill. This would help all because in the long and short of it no reduction in tax revenues would be involved and it would create jobs and businesses from local business people.

COMMENT OF GISELE LANDRY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:48 p.m.

City, State: Housatonic, MA

Occupation: Self-Employed

Comment: Large agribusiness do not understand or care about health and they must not be in charge here! It is time we reorder our priorities with a farm policy that will put organic family farms first and foremost. This is foundational for a system that will truly provide for the health and vitality of our people and environment. This will benefit your family and loved ones also. We are all in this together.

COMMENT OF PAUL LANDUSKY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:09 p.m.

City, State: Appleton, WI

Occupation: Painter

Comment: This is about American *Family Farms*, not lobbyists or multinational agribusiness. Please consider this and vote what you know is right for all of “U.S.” and our future food security.

Thank you, Rep. Ribble.

COMMENT OF ABBIE LANE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:21 p.m.

City, State: Atlanta, GA

Occupation: ITIL Change Manager

Comment: Please fix the Farm bill so it will actually **Help** the organic farmers, and punish **Monsanto** and other GMO organizations. Monsanto is putting farmers out of business, and this country would not be where it is today without our wonderful farmers. Please stop listening to your greed from a big bad corporation and help the little man. From a concerned consumer. Thank you.

COMMENT OF CRAIG LANE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:02 p.m.

City, State: Santa Cruz, CA

Occupation: Nutrition, Herbal Medicine

Comment: We need more local grown foods, more organic safety, more protection for small family farmers. We need raw milk, raw cream, more sanity than mass produced Monsanto GMO unproven “so-called” foods.

COMMENT OF DARYN LANE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:53 p.m.

City, State: Chapel Hill, NC

Occupation: Intern with Student Action With Farmworkers

Comment: I am aware that the Senate Agricultural Committee has already voted to cut \$4 million from organic research funding and cut funding to support Beginning Farmers in half. I am outraged over these cuts.

While Congress is looking to get rid of direct payments to commodity farmers, the subsidized insurance program it proposes to replace it with will allow giant com-

modity farmers and insurance companies to walk away with billions in taxpayer dollars while putting the land, soil and environment at greater risk.

I would like to see Congress' full support for:

- (1) The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- (2) Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- (3) The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- (4) Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

COMMENT OF GINNY LANE

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 9:24 a.m.

City, State: Grafton, WI

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Specialty Crops

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: It is imperative that the farm bill stretches to include real incentives for farmers who are not using petrochemicals and genetically modified seed for the health of the people and the land. We can no longer deny the detrimental effects of current agribusiness on our collective health and the health of the ecosystems we live in. The farm bill needs to require that big farms have risk management plans, conservation plans. The way to grow a healthy America is not to increase the quantity of cheaply grown food or to fund access to low nutrient grocery store food, but to strengthen local food systems and fund community projects involving participatory food production, nutrition education and access to locally grown vegetables.

COMMENT OF BARB LANGER, PH.D.

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 1:59 p.m.

City, State: River Forest, IL

Occupation: Scientific and Regulatory Analyst

Comment: As a volunteer, I serve hungry people several times a month at the Oak Park-River Forest Food Pantry. Cutting SNAP will mean that even more of my neighbors will go hungry. Even families who receive food stamps sometimes need to come to our food pantry. Cutting SNAP will mean even less food for people already in poverty.

Government wastes so much of our tax dollars. But ensuring basic nutrition to fellow citizens and families is **Never** a waste. It is **Not** negotiable. It is **Always** the right thing to do. How can we have a civil society with starvation in our midst? Folks who don't get basic daily nutrition are unable to contribute and eventually end up in emergency rooms or worse at far higher public expense than it would have cost to ensure their basic nutrition in the first place.

To even contemplate cutting SNAP is to regress centuries to the horrors of the industrial revolution in England, when starvation in the midst of plenty was rampant. Remember Dickens' *Oliver Twist* and Blake's *Jerusalem*:

And did those feet in ancient time
Walk upon England's mountains green
And was the holy lamb of God
On England's pleasant pastures seen
And did the countenance divine
Shine forth upon our clouded hills
And was Jerusalem builded here
Among those dark Satanic mills
Bring me my bow of burning gold
Bring me my arrows of desire
Bring me my spears o'clouds unfold
Bring me my chariot of fire
I will not cease from mental fight
Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand
'Til we have built Jerusalem
In England's green and pleasant land

We're one vote away from a revival of those horrors here, such as WE have not seen since the Great Depression.

Please don't cut SNAP.

COMMENT OF CHARLES LANGFORD

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 15, 2012, 11:24 p.m.

City, State: Corvallis, OR

Occupation: Retired College Teacher

Comment: I believe people should not go hungry, here in the U.S. or anywhere in the world. In this country we should increase the SNAP program as well as the program that supplies food banks. The stress should be on providing nutritious food, not on getting rid of agricultural surpluses. Expansion should also be made so the SNAP program could be used at farmers' markets all over the country. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

COMMENT OF SHANNON LANGHAM

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:43 p.m.

City, State: Austin, TX

Occupation: Homemaker

Comment: I am a suburban homemaker. The more I learn the more I must demand that the industrialization of our food sources, the destruction of the small farm and the dismantling of our freedom to choose something as simple as raw milk *versus* pasteurized milk. My grandfather was a dairy farmer in Mexia, TX. My great-grandparents were share-croppers in Caldwell County, TX. I'm appalled at what I am learning about where/how our food gets to the table, and concerned that government no longer represents people, but corporations. Please vote to protect our rights to sustain ourselves in the same manner that has been done since the beginning of time. Do not vote to make the masses dependent upon the profit margins of industrialized food. Thank you for your time.

Respectfully,

SHANNON LANGHAM.

COMMENT OF JUDITH LANGHANS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:13 p.m.

City, State: San Diego, CA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: The farm bill comes up so infrequently, we have to get this right. It is time for the citizens to be heard. We want subsidies for **Good** food; not Monsanto type and non-organic foods.

COMMENT OF ELIZABETH LANGHORNE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:14 p.m.

City, State: Lexington, VA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Please consider the importance of preserving the small family farmer. More and more people are becoming aware of the value of their products to personal welfare and to preserving many of the values that helped this country grow. Monsanto and the large commercial farms are undermining health while the small farmer contributes to the well-being of the Earth as well as of its people.

COMMENT OF MARGARET LANGTEAU

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:06 p.m.

City, State: Plano, TX

Occupation: Health Coach

Comment: The current health crisis and obesity epidemic is a direct result of corporate influence in Washington. My job is to re-teach people on what it means to eat healthy. The current processed food system is creating our healthcare unsustainable cost situation and a nation of sick people. Help me do my job by making it cost more for people to make unhealthy choices and less to eat good fresh organic whole foods.

COMMENT OF SUSAN LANNIN

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 15, 2012, 10:46 p.m.

City, State: Chicago, IL

Occupation: Community Volunteer

Comment: The farm bill gives us the opportunity to shape the health, equity, and long-term environmental sustainability of our American farm and food system. In shaping the omnibus bill, please include the provisions currently captured in the following three marker bills:

- The Local Farms, Food, & Jobs Act (H.R. 3286/S. 1773)
This bill sponsored by Rep. Chellie Pingree (D-ME) & Sen. Sherrod Brown (D-OH) will encourage growth in our economy by:
 - Creating economic opportunities for farmers and ranchers through local and regional markets.
 - Improving processing and distribution infrastructure for local and regional agriculture.
 - Expanding access to healthy food for consumers, including underserved communities.
 - Providing research, training, and information that farm entrepreneurs need succeed.

More info: <http://sustainableagriculture.net/our-work/local-food-bill/>

Please support local food, farmers markets, and small farmers by becoming a co-sponsor of the Local Farms, Food, & Jobs Act.

- The Beginning Farmer & Rancher Opportunity Act (S.1850/H.R. 3236)
This bill sponsored by Rep. Walz (D-MN), Rep. Fortenberry (R-NE), and Sen. Harkin (D-IA) invests in the next generation of American producers by:
 - Enabling access to land, credit, and crop insurance for new producers.
 - Assisting new producers to start and strengthen new farm and value-added businesses.
 - Helping new producers become good stewards of the land.
 - Providing training, mentoring, and research that beginning farmers and ranchers need to succeed.
 - Conducting outreach on agricultural job opportunities for military veterans.

More info: <http://sustainableagriculture.net/our-work/beginning-farmer-bill/>

Please support beginning farmers and ranchers by becoming a co-sponsor of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act.

- The Community Agriculture Development Act (H.R. 3225)
This bill sponsored by Rep. Marcy Kaptur (D-OH) will promote and enhance community agricultural development in urban and other non-traditional agriculture areas by helping to:
 - Create the next generation of farmers in our nation's cities.
 - Work to eliminate food deserts.
 - Strengthen local food systems and increase marketing opportunities for small farmers.

More info: <http://www.foodsecurity.org/>

Please support urban agriculture by co-sponsoring the Community Agriculture Development Act.

Thank you for this opportunity to participate in creating our 2012 Farm Bill, a bill that will impact the health and economic well-being of all Americans, whether living in cities, suburbs, or rural areas.

COMMENT OF RUTH LANTON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:52 p.m.

City, State: Plainview, NY

Occupation: Stay-at-Home Mom

Comment: For the next farm bill, please support organic farming and nutrition programs.

Big agricultural corporations don't need financial help, and it's a waste of taxpayer money to award subsidies to them.

Use the farm bill to support smaller farmers, newer farmers, and farms that are using fewer pesticides, including organic farms and farms using IPM.

Also save programs such as SNAP and WIC so that everybody has access to healthy food.

COMMENT OF ANGELA LAPORTA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:54 p.m.

City, State: Pleasant Hill, CA

Occupation: Small Business Owner

Comment: Despite the influence of lobbyists, the committee must always remember that its first responsibility is to the largest number of people . . . the public. Food grown that does not treat the crops, land, and the workers who work it with respect, is not healthy, vital food for the people it feeds. Agribusiness is tainting our food and water with chemical fertilizers and pesticides, and persecuting farmers for practicing healthy agriculture simply out of control and greed. This is a crime against the American people. It is a crime against the land.

COMMENT OF ANNA LEE LARIMORE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:19 p.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Student

Comment: I shop for food with the following criteria:

- (1) Are the people who grow this food getting a fair wage and wholesome working and living conditions?
- (2) Is the food grown sustainably, without chemicals and drugs or cruel conditions?
- (3) Does the farming of this food enhance the Earth or diminish it? Is the soil enriched or depleted? Are the aquifers being consumed too quickly? Is surface water being polluted?

These are the considerations I want to see put to this farm bill.

Thank you for listening,

ANNA LEE LARIMORE.

COMMENT OF GLORIA LARKIN

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 7:11 p.m.

City, State: Los Angeles, CA

Occupation: Corp. Administrator

Comment: We, especially **Organic Farmers**, deserve a fair farm bill!

We're tired of the corporate agribusiness stranglehold on our system and **You**, who seem to be very out of touch with most Americans!

You need to fully fund the Conservation Stewardship Program!

Please Maintain The EQIP Organic Initiative!

No Subsidized Insurance Program! Just another way our tax dollars will get ripped off while putting our soil, environment and, therefore, our health at risk!

A lot more people are watching what happens with this farm bill than you think. If you don't do what's right for the people, **We Will Vote All Of You Out Of Office!**

Thank you.

COMMENT OF SARAH LARRABEE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:06 a.m.

City, State: Boulder, CO

Occupation: Realtor

Comment: It's time to stop subsidies for mono-cropping, big ag, biofuels, GMO's, and toxic chemicals that pollute the Earth and grow food that is unsafe for human consumption. We need to farm in harmony with Nature, preserving wildlife, clean air, rich fertile, natural soil and untainted water.

Support family and community farms. Support organic agriculture. The citizens want that, and it is the right thing to do.

COMMENT OF JOHN LARRIEU

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:52 p.m.

City, State: Chicago, IL

Occupation: Student

Comment: Control of food sources need to belong to the people that live on that land in question, less control by big corporations when it comes to sustenance.

COMMENT OF DENISE LARSEN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:18 p.m.

City, State: Fairfax, CA

Occupation: Corporate Trainer, Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist and Nutritionist

Comment: As someone who grew up in a farming area in Northern Cal. and with friends still farming, I understand what they are facing. I also spend the vast majority of my food dollars buying organic food at Farmer's Markets (where local farmers sell directly to us). Again, I know what they are up against with Big Ag and Monsanto. I am tired of people we elect and pay being in the pockets of Big Ag and lobbyists. **You** are working for U.S. citizens! I ask that you maintain the EQIP Organic initiative, fully endorse all of the provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act, fully fund the conservation program and have any new insurance subsidies be tied directly to compliance with conservation programs, and implement all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act. Please start doing the Right Thing *versus* continuing to do the Wrong Thing. We are sick and tired of it! Our health, environment, country, and future are depending on people like you doing what is truly right for once.

COMMENT OF WINIFRED LARSEN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:13 p.m.

City, State: St. Paul, MN

Occupation: Disabled

Comment: I can't help but wonder why anyone, given the choice, wouldn't want non-GMO organic foods to eat. Clean, healthy food creates healthy humans. GMO's are killing us! So called 'cheaper foods' that destroy our bodies and minds—what kind of bargain is that?

COMMENT OF LINDA LARSON

Date Submitted: Thursday, April 12, 2012, 12:10 a.m.

City, State: Silver City, NM

Occupation: Retired Retail Executive

Comment: Food insecurity impacts 25% of our nations children and it is time for congress to act to eliminate systemic hunger in this great country. Surely as the richest nation in the world we can look inward and find the compassion to do the right thing by providing food to the poor & disenfranchised.

COMMENT OF LINDA LASALLA

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 4:45 p.m.

City, State: Corona, CA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I grew up in Chattanooga, TN . . . many, many days I was hungry . . . I still remember those days. I am now 63—I am going to have to find a place to live and food to eat and not real sure how I am going to do that on 928.00 per month, so since I am having problems finding a part time job, I am going to have to relive my first years of my life. Shame on you for letting that happen. We have given to our country, we aren't asking for something we haven't earned . . . go look at your mom, your kids . . . do they have what they need? We don't deserve the same thing?

COMMENT OF ELIZABETH LASENSKY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:05 p.m.

City, State: San Carlos, CA

Occupation: Administrator

Comment: It's time that the "farm bill" became the "Food Bill" and directed our national resources into encouraging healthy, locally and sustainably grown, food. We should stop paying subsidies, including crop insurance, to agribusinesses and redirect that money to assisting small and medium size farmers and ranchers and in promoting conservation and restoration of our resources.

COMMENT OF COY M. LASISTER

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 8:47 p.m.

City, State: Saint Petersburg, FL

Occupation: Community Victory Garden Coordinator

Comment: I believe the House Agriculture Committee needs to explore the Farm to Fork initiatives to develop more collaborative efforts between local farm pro-

ducers, food suppliers, retail and wholesale food markets, community victory gardens and agricultural schools to improve the food delivery system that serve to produce more and better nutritional fruits and vegetables to build stronger minds and bodies of youth, adults. And seniors in underserved communities nationwide. I further believe that the community victory garden concept developed in war effort in the 1940s in communities nationwide, particularly underserved minority communities can not only serve to improve the health and well being of citizens but teach our youth the meaning of nutrition and health in all of our daily lives. I challenge the House Agriculture Committee to seek out certain Farm to Fork initiatives in the farm bill and upcoming legislation to better utilize community victory gardens and link them with farms and agricultural producers to improve the health of all American senior and youth citizens. I stand ready to work with House Committee members to develop solutions to our food and health issues. Thank you for taking the time to read this statement. Please contact me at your earliest convenience.

COY M. LASISTER,
*Senior Resident,
 Community Victory Garden Coordinator.*

COMMENT OF IRA LASTER, JR.

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 4:36 p.m.

City, State: Bethesda, MD

Comment: As Congress works to modify the farm bill please do not cut aspects of the program that provides funds that provide food to needy individuals and families.

COMMENT OF JENNIFER LAUCLAN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 7:56 p.m.

City, State: Washington, D.C.

Occupation: School Librarian

Comment: We need to reform farm policies so that they support small farms and real food, not big agribusiness and processed artificial foods.

COMMENT OF JOHN LAUDENSLAGER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:48 p.m.

City, State: Fort Worth, TX

Occupation: Graduate Student

Comment: I've heard about some of the elements of the farm bill and would like to offer my feedback. I think the time has come to reduce the amount of subsidies going to corporate farms. I know many of them get hundreds of thousands in subsidies, possibly more, that just pads their bottom line. It's hard for me to understand that in an era of conservative economics, conservative politicians want to increase those subsidies at the expense of programs that support sustainable farming. It just sounds like undue industry influence by large agribusiness and the likes of Monsanto.

Here are my other positions:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

COMMENT OF MAUREEN LAUDER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:54 a.m.

City, State: Victor, NY

Occupation: Retail

Comment: Please support sustainable, local, and organic agriculture in the U.S. Our reliance on pesticides, GMOs, and environmentally unsound farming practices is endangering our nation's health and food security. And concentrating our food supply in the hands of huge corporations whose primary motivations are corporate share value and profit all but ensures that our nation's food production will not be aligned with the best interests of our citizens. Please take a stand against big ag

and help craft an agriculture policy that serves the best interests of our citizens and small farmers.

COMMENT OF ANGELA LAUGHINGHEART

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:13 p.m.
City, State: Milwaukee, WI
Occupation: College Instructor
Comment: City dwellers have no understanding or control over our food industry. Legislation must protect us, not fleece us. You must be the guardians of the food supply of the people.

COMMENT OF ROSE LAUGHLIN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:26 p.m.
City, State: Seattle, WA
Occupation: Office Manager
Comment: Organic food should be affordable for all people. Please consider subsidizing organic agriculture. It is better for our bodies it is better for the Earth. The agri-industry is obviously in cahoots with the American government. It is time for a sustainable food system in America.
 Thank you,
 ROSE LAUGHLIN,
 Seattle, WA.

COMMENT OF SUZANNE LAVINE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:24 p.m.
City, State: Grants Pass, OR
Occupation: Sales
Comment: Please continue to support the small family farmers. It is vital that all farmers that want to farm organically can safely do so with full gov't support and no bullying by large corporations. Keep Genetically Modified products out of Oregon.

COMMENT OF SUZANNE LAW

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:59 p.m.
City, State: Ijamsville, MD
Occupation: Bookkeeper, Grandmother
Comment: Please recognize that our future depends on healthy farm practices, *i.e.*, soil and water conservation, crop rotation, and careful preservation of heirloom plant varieties. The more mankind has intensely farmed the land, the sicker we have become, and the less sustainable our practices have become. We cannot afford to abuse ourselves and our environment any longer.

COMMENT OF LIANA LAWRENCE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:09 p.m.
City, State: Oakland, CA
Occupation: Graphic Designer
Comment: The health of the citizens of this nation depends on the food produced by the country's farmers. The current Farm Policy around subsidies allows for cheap unhealthy food to flow abundantly in our food supply. This in turn makes it easier for our population to consume, which is one of many factors contributing to the obesity epidemic. I'd like to see a farm bill that makes healthier food flow abundantly to our citizens. So that an easier, more affordable, and wiser food choice is made readily available to everyone in our communities.

COMMENT OF CHRIS LAWRENCE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:17 p.m.
City, State: Terrebonne, OR
Producer/Non-producer: Producer
Type: Field Crops, Vegetables
Size: 50-150 acres
Comment: The farm bill has included some small budget items to encourage organic production. It is imperative that we increase spending in this area. Our gov-

ernment should not favor through legislation the growth of corporations like Monsanto. Science and experience on the ground, have clearly demonstrated that genetic modified crops are causing some serious problems in the field with the increased use of herbicides and are threatening our health in this country. If we are to continue to feed our people and be good stewards of the land, we need diversity in our cropping methods, number of seed varieties and availability of seed. I know that our elected officials have been hearing from individuals and groups that are concerned about these issues. They also donate to campaigns and deserve to be represented. It is critical to do the right thing and not favor any one side.

I would also urge lawmakers to carefully evaluate the effects of crop subsidies beyond their backyards.

Thank you for your time.

COMMENT OF TRACEY LAWRENCE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:01 p.m.

City, State: Ringwood, NJ

Occupation: Digital Arts Consultant

Comment: I highly value the food I put in my body, and am very concerned with the farming practices being subsidized in this nation. We should be supporting small family farms that produce livestock and plant produce responsibly and healthfully. The health of our people and planet are at stake.

COMMENT OF TRINA LAWRY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:38 p.m.

City, State: Ambler, PA

Occupation: Long-Term Unemployed

Comment: For the health of our people and the security of our nation, we should be supporting local, sustainable farms. Instead of huge corn and soy subsidies, pay large farmers to change their fields over to grow more diversified fruits and vegetables. Support initiatives that bring healthy food to the small stores in food deserts. Increase the SNAP payments for use at Farmer's Markets and stop all SNAP payments for soda and sugared drinks. Use the tax dollars you are already spending to steer the nation to a more balanced food system. Also, with so many unemployed, sustainable ag would be a great way to employ more people.

In addition, I support the following:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

COMMENT OF LINDA LAYER

Date Submitted: Friday, March 16, 2012, 3:06 p.m.

City, State: Lockport, NY

Occupation: Retired Cust. Service Representative

Comment: Please make sure that the farm bill passed continues to support the Food Banks and government programs such as SNAP. Many families and especially seniors depend on food banks for help. Thank you.

COMMENT OF BETTY LAYNE

Date Submitted: Wednesday, April 11, 2012, 1:33 a.m.

City, State: Albuquerque, NM

Occupation: Founder and Chairperson of a Food Pantry

Comment: I founded a Food Pantry 3½ years ago. In that period my "Participant" numbers have **Increased** by 146%. Of those we serve, 97% are Seniors living on horrific, fixed incomes. Social Security and other retirements had no COLAS for 2 years. In that same period how much did **All** other prices raise? Have you ever tried to survive on under \$800 per month income in today's world? My Participants rely on our Pantry to simply survive. It doesn't cure, but it certainly helps when they have to decide between buying food or their prescriptions. The National statistics are appalling regarding Americans who are food challenged. The U.S. spends

more money on foreign food aid for other countries than they spend for our own people who battle hunger every day. Please, please **Increase** the funding for TEAFAP programs—the need grows more each day. Roadrunner Food Bank impacts thousands of New Mexicans every, single day. A 37% decrease in Federal funding from 2010 to 2011 is criminal. More food assistance is mandatory for a disproportionate number of our State's population—not less. Thank you.

BETTY LAYNE,
Helping Hands Food Pantry,
[Redacted].

COMMENT OF LINDA LAYNE

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 11:22 p.m.

City, State: Woodbridge, VA

Occupation: Unemployed

Comment: Our current agricultural system is totally broken. Full reform is desperately needed to improve our access to healthy, non-GMO food. I fully support the following:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied **Directly To Compliance** with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

It is also **Essential** to fully fund organic research, nutrition, sustainable agriculture, and true conservation programs as this is extremely necessary to free our country from the control of industrial agriculture entities that don't have the health of the public in mind but seek to walk away with billions in taxpayer money while putting the land, soil, and environment in serious continued jeopardy.

Please Take This Opportunity to fully reform agricultural policies to protect the environment and the health of the American people while removing the subsidies that go to gigantic commodity farmers and insurance companies that don't actually comply with any established conservation policies.

COMMENT OF STEVE LAZARSKI

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 10:54 a.m.

City, State: Minneapolis, MN

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: As a small scale producer and crop consultant, many of my clients are organic or sustainable farmers. They are a fast growing market, that serves the demands of the public desire to have safe, organic and sustainably raised foods. By cutting funding to organic and sustainable you will be affecting the lives of 1,000 or small scale, organic and sustainable farmers and those that support them.

It is time to do the right thing for the farmer and not for the large corporate entities that appear to be buying their way into our legislation. Get Big Business out of Congress and do the right thing for the people, the farmers, the land and the nation.

COMMENT OF HOLLY LE DU

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:47 p.m.

City, State: Oakland, CA

Occupation: Catering Chef

Comment: PLEASE do not cut the funding for organic research and to small farmers! Organics are the direction we must take for the health of society. There has been too much independent research and anecdotal evidence that pesticides and GMO's will cause huge health problems in the future and cost society millions of dollars. Please, I urge you to put as much money towards organic agriculture and small farms as possible. Thank you.

COMMENT OF ANDREA LEA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:29 p.m.
City, State: O'Brien, FL
Occupation: Social Entrepreneur/Retired
Comment: Organic food should be our number 1 priority as a country. Eating the provender recommended by corporate interests will result in ever-escalating obesity along with failing health, further diminishing our vitality as a nation.

COMMENT OF LUCY LEAF

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:01 p.m.
City, State: Surry, ME
Occupation: Health Worker
Comment: Please support organic practice, local small farming and organic research. Please discontinue farm subsidies in response to agribusiness lobbies.
 Thank you.

COMMENT OF MICHAEL LEAHY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:29 a.m.
City, State: New York, NY
Occupation: Consultant
Comment: I would like to see a food system that could react to market demands rather than be distorted by subsidies and intervention. Remove subsidies to allow small and medium-sized farmers and ranchers to earn an honest living growing and raising what they think will best meet consumer demand and protect their land and community.

JOINT COMMENT OF NANCY AND GARY LEAHY

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 9:42 a.m.
City, State: Portland, OR
Occupation: Professional Window Washer
Comment: Please take in consideration the food that our population is currently taken in, in their diets. I recently changed my diet to whole foods, no dairy, no gluten and cut my meat consumption to 10%, I was having a lot of health problems and depression before I changed my diet, once I cleaned up what I was eating and went to a whole food, plant based diet, all my symptoms went away. I could not believe the energy and the clarity in my thinking after I did this. We could really make a difference in this world of ours if we could get others to eat like this, but it won't happen until we get the GMO's out of our food system. I have been a farmer all my life up until now and my husband was an agronomist we have seen firsthand what happens by putting chemicals in to our food, and the corruption in the industry. We had to sell our farm because we could no longer make a living due to the farming practices that are out there today. We have seen our community dying over the past years, due to corporate farmers buying up family farms because they could no longer compete with the bigger farmers. People have had to move away to find work because there is nothing left in the community except for a few big farmers. Again I plead please make the changes that we need so that we can have a healthier and sustainable world. Thank you for taking the time to read this.
 NANCY and GARY LEAHY

COMMENT OF VICTORIA LEANZA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:20 p.m.
City, State: Albany, NY
Occupation: Education Advocacy/Exec. Secretary
Comment: Dear Mr. Tonko:
 Knowing you support community farms, community gardens, local farm-to-table initiatives, I write to you to request from you the full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286). Us little folk here who just want to feed our families simple healthy foods, who want to support **Our** local farms—which in our part of beautiful upstate New York are plenty, but struggling, just want to make sure that they don't get the short end of the stick, especially considering that they support us in a most vital, most important manner.
 I write in support of:

- Fully funded conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

This all is for the health and well-being of us and future generations.

Most sincerely,

VICTORIA LEANZA.

COMMENT OF LANE LEARD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:35 p.m.

City, State: San Antonio, NM

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Livestock

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: We don't need dictators of any description, (political or corporate) to decide our lives.

Let's get all of them out of policy and rule making roles.

LANE LEARD,

[Redacted],

San Antonio, NM.

COMMENT OF JACQUELINE LEAVY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:11 p.m.

City, State: Oak Park, IL

Occupation: Consultant to Nonprofit Organizations

Comment: I am a mother who's always tried to feed my family healthy foods. I reared a daughter who now helps run a restaurant with healthy foods, and a son who also advocates for community-supported agriculture, neighborhood "Farmers' Markets" and organic food to become mainstream parts of our society and economy. We must acknowledge all of the threats to health from GMOs and Factory-style farming & livestock production, and move forward toward a real transformation of our food system, including assurances that **All** Americans—no matter their race or income—have access to healthy foods. Just think how much money could be saved by providing healthy food, instead of millions of Americans suffering from obesity, cancer, and preventable diseases!

COMMENT OF RICHARD LEBER

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 10, 2012, 10:07 a.m.

City, State: Atlanta, GA

Occupation: Executive

Comment: I strongly urge the Committee not to cut the Food Stamp program. This program has been demonstrated to be one of the most effective tools for assisting Americans in poverty and experiencing hunger. Millions of American families and children rely on it every year. Cutting it would be disastrous for them and bad social policy for the country.

COMMENT OF ELAINE LEBLANC

Date Submitted: Friday, April 20, 2012, 9:57 a.m.

City, State: Shrewsbury, MA

Occupation: Director, Shrewsbury Human Services Food Pantry

Comment: I am the Director at the Shrewsbury Human Services Food Pantry, a partner agency of the Worcester County Food Bank, located at St. Anne's Church in Shrewsbury, MA. Thank you for this chance to share my concerns about hunger in Massachusetts with you.

First, I would like to tell you a little bit about the Shrewsbury Human Services Food Pantry. We are a group of volunteer-only staff consisting of women and men of all ages, backgrounds and economic situations. Our income is derived from our thrift shop as well as other benefactors who help us in this endeavor. Schools, civic organizations, churches and companies throughout the community provide support in a variety of ways. We also receive private and memorial donations along with having yearly food drives and fairs in order to better service our clients.

As of March 2012, we provided food for 1,810 registered people, which is 5% of the Shrewsbury population. Our clients represent 692 families, which has increased 13% since January. Unfortunately, there is significant potential that this number will continue to increase due to the current state of the economy, even more so during any holiday season.

Second, I know there are great difficulties ahead for you while drafting a farm bill in today's economy. But without a strong farm bill, not only will The Emergency Food Assistance Program and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program struggle to maintain food resources but so will food banks across the country. This is why I ask you to continue to support these anti-hunger programs. Programs that help put food on the tables of Americans who are having trouble making ends meet.

Many of your constituents rely on the Shrewsbury Human Services Food Pantry to ensure they and their families at least meet their basic food needs and we do all we can to help them. However, charity alone cannot meet the ever increasing need for assistance in Massachusetts and the country, Federal support is extremely important, more so now than ever. Supporting and protecting anti-hunger programs is not only imperative, it's the right thing to do for Americans in need.

Again, I thank you for this opportunity to provide my thoughts about hunger in Massachusetts and the upcoming farm bill.

COMMENT OF DENNIS LEDDEN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:14 a.m.

City, State: Fiddletown, CA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Fruits, Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: We farm organically, yet find little or no support in the current Farm bill like "factory" farms who use insecticides, pesticides, and chemical fertilizers. Please consider the small farmer who grows organically and focuses on sustainability and enrichment of the soil and our Earth by including a provision for "Organic Farming".

Thank you.

SUBMITTED STATEMENT BY MICHELE E. LEDOUX, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, LEWIS COUNTY COOPERATIVE EXTENSION ASSOCIATION, LEWIS COUNTY, NY

This is some information I have from working with forestry communities and individuals in Northern New York. Thank you for letting me submit this important information.

Farm Bill Programs and the Northern New York Forest Communities

The 2008 Farm Bill authorized several programs targeted specifically to the opportunities and needs of Northern New York and Northern Forest communities. These programs address the crucial intersections between forest stewardship and sustainable economic development by directing resources to projects that grow jobs and create local wealth through the sustainable use and management of natural resources. In reauthorizing the farm bill in 2012 Congress should focus on five key areas (in priority order) that will better enable forest conservation, stewardship and benefit New York's rural economy:

1. Maintain Rural Development investments and sustain focus on the Northern Forest region.
2. Promote policies for sustainably produced biomass energy production.
3. Improve conservation programs for forests.
4. Combat forest-related invasive species.
5. Strengthen forestry outreach, education, research and inventories.

Maintain Rural Development Investments and Focus on the Northern Forest Region

Extreme fiscal challenges under which the farm bill will be written and the pressure to cut mandatory funding. However, Rural Development investments have already made a disproportionate contribution to deficit reduction as investments in this critical area have fallen by nearly $\frac{1}{3}$ since 2003. These huge cuts to Rural Development come at a time when the rural communities and individuals represent the most need access to the agency's grants and loans, which help spur private capital to finance infrastructure, housing and business development. Action to reverse this decline in funding and the impending deeper cuts signaled by the discretionary spending targets of the Budget Control Act are critical to helping rural individuals create and sustain vibrant rural communities and regions. Nearly all Rural Develop-

ment programs are funded with discretionary funding through the appropriations process. However, Rural Development did receive mandatory funding in the 1996, 2002 and 2008 Farm Bills. The Rural Development title has no baseline for the 2012 Farm Bill. Congress and the Administration need to work to ensure that rural investments such as USDA Rural Development do not receive disproportionate cuts. Rather inclusion of mandatory funding for Rural Development in the 2012 Farm Bill should be considered. The 2012 Farm Bill will be seriously flawed if no funding is maintained to enhance economic opportunity in rural communities and regions.

For the Northern Forest region, the 2008 Farm Bill established the **Northern Border Regional Commission**. This Federal-state regional commission was created to target resources to promote economic growth strategies and projects within the northern portions of the four-state region of Maine, New Hampshire, New York and Vermont. These efforts focus on leveraging the public, private and philanthropic resources needed to develop and sustain the community building blocks for economic competitiveness and development in the most severely distressed portions of the Northern Forest region, such as: transportation and basic infrastructure, job skills training and entrepreneurial development, telecommunications, resource conservation, tourism, and recreation, and sustainable energy solutions. The Commission has awarded a total of \$2.5 million in grants in the region since FY10. Retaining this regional focus not only helps to leverage rural investment in Northern New York and the Northern Forest but provides the flexibility to help meet the unique needs of this four state region.

Promote Policies for Sustainably Produced Biomass Energy Production

The 2012 Farm Bill has the opportunity to respond to the regionally significant needs of fuel oil dependency in the Northeast while leverage substantial local economic benefits to Northern New York and the Northern Forest region by strengthening policies and programs that enable generation of renewable energy from forests. Renewable energy markets have potential to help supplement traditional forest products markets with a complimentary market for forest owners, helping to keep forests as forests. Wood energy represents a tremendous economic opportunity in the Northeast, which accounts for 84% of the U.S. consumption of home heating oil. A homeowner switching from oil to wood pellets for heat will save an average of 40% annually on their heating costs. Substituting a locally produced fuel for imported oil keeps energy dollars local, and strengthened demand for local wood pellets and wood chips sustains and grows jobs in the local forest economy.

The farm bill can strengthen these opportunities by continuing to support renewable energy research and development and strengthening the focus in R&D on forest-related energy opportunities that minimize impacts on wildlife, water and habitats. The farm bill should also include renewable energy infrastructure development assistance for sustainable community scale projects that focus on efficient biomass technologies such as **thermal and combined heat and power applications** through the Community Wood Energy Program. The purpose of the Community Wood Energy Program is to encourage the development of community wood energy plans and to provide resources for the acquisition or upgrade of community wood energy systems. These “community scaled” efficient technologies have the strongest potential to support sustainable forest management, enable new local markets for forest land owners, and support rural economic development. Several communities in the North Country have taken advantage of using wood for thermal applications that reduce their dependency on foreign oil and are seeing annual fuel cost savings that can help reduce property taxes.

Improve Conservation Programs for Forests

Farm bill conservation programs offer a variety of tools for forest owners to improve their management practices as well as help keep their forests intact and economically viable. These programs help improve wildlife habitat for hunting and fishing, help forest landowners and farmers who own forests implement practices to keep our water and our air clean, lessen flood impacts, and help landowners combat insects, disease, and invasive species.

To ensure these Conservation Programs continue to provide conservation tools for forest owners, the 2012 Farm Bill should:

- Reauthorize the **Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)** and the **Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)** that benefit forest and agricultural land owners by encouraging sound management practices and protecting critical ecological resources.
- Reauthorize the **Forest Legacy Program (FLP)**, and the **Community Forestry and Open Space Conservation Program**.
- Reauthorize and revise the **Grassland Reserve Program (GRP)** and the **Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program (FRPP)**.

Combat Forest-Related Invasive Species

19 million acres of New York forests are at risk of increased mortality due to insects and disease. To help combat these forest-related invasive species the 2012 Farm Bill should support programs that enable New York and our communities detect and rapidly respond to invasive pest threats that if not addressed could result in ecological and economic damage possibly in the hundreds of millions of dollars. Specifically, the 2012 Farm Bill should:

- Maintain the **Plant Pest and Disease Management and Disaster Prevention Program**. This program helps build and preserve critical plant health safeguarding initiatives, helping to protect forests or mitigate damage of invasive.
- Support continued funding as authorized for **Early Plant Pest Detection and Surveillance Improvement Program**.
- Support **Cooperative Forest Health Management Program** within USDA Forest Service State and Private Forestry.

Strengthen Forestry Outreach, Education, Research and Inventories

Forestry outreach and education activities are essential for engaging forest owners in conservation and management activities on their land. Without these activities and programs, landowners will not have the knowledge and tools to take the next steps and practice responsible management on their land. This education and outreach must be informed by solid forestry research and a comprehensive forest inventory that provide real-time information on health and condition of our forests. To strengthen the availability of forestry outreach, education, research, and inventory, the 2012 Farm Bill should reauthorize and reaffirm the importance of the **U.S. Forest Service's Forest Inventory and Analysis Program (FIA)** and direct the Agency to enhance the program's efficiency and effectiveness to ensure the program is fully implemented.

COMMENT OF ANTHONY LEE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:32 p.m.

City, State: Irondequoit, NY

Occupation: Attorney/Consultant

Comment: My wife and I would like to see Congress pass a Food & Farm Bill that enhances food safety, helps small family farmers, preserves SNAP and WIC programs and limits or eliminates the subsidies for "industrial factory farms" and (CAFOs). Encouraging more small family farms to develop and flourish, limit the proliferation of highly processed and nutritionally barren foods while allowing access to fresh fruits and vegetables for **All** American should be a priority for both the House and Senate. I urge you to make this a Bipartisan effort to help make this nation strong again. A strong healthy body in our children will help them to have strong and sharp minds to keep American on top.

COMMENT OF GLORIA LEE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:16 p.m.

City, State: San Francisco, CA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Specialty Crops

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: I dedicated and work at the Growing Home Octavia Garden for the Homeless. It was started by Project Homeless Connect. These 2 small plots are different from Green Gulch Farm where I lived for a number of years.

COMMENT OF RENA LEE

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 2:17 p.m.

City, State: Davie, FL

Occupation: Unemployed Public Experience Mgr.

Comment: I am very concerned about the disregard for Americas organic/local farmers and support for the commercial giant Monsanto shown by government officials. Please support the organic research, food stamp continuance (I have friends out of work friends who will not be able to feed their families), and insist on the labeling of GMO foods.

Thank You.

COMMENT OF CHARLOTTE LEE-ANDERSEN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 4:36 p.m.
City, State: San Francisco, CA
Occupation: Sales/Marketing Media
Comment: Be fair to local family farmers so we can support them, and eat fresh, affordable locally grown foods. Local and fresh unprocessed safe food needs to be accessible to all people regardless of income.

COMMENT OF CAVANA LEE-HAZELTON

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 5:24 p.m.
City, State: New York, NY
Occupation: Teacher
Comment: Please make it a priority to respect those consumers who wish to eat organically without pesticides or food tainted with GMOs. Please make it mandatory to label all GMOs, non-organic or natural foods.
 Please be responsible and research the effects of 'pesticide cocktails' and submit this information to the public.
 Please restrict the use of plastics in our environment and food packaging, as they apparently hold small doses of estrogen which do indeed effect (cancer, organ damage and infertility) the well-being of humans as they intake products wrapped by this afore mentioned plastic.
 Thank you for your dedication to provide healthy foodstuffs to current and future consumers.

COMMENT OF TINA LEGAULT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 3:46 p.m.
City, State: Kenmore, WA
Occupation: Graphic Designer
Comment: As someone who recently stopped eating all animal products due to health and moral reasons, I think that it's irresponsible for our government to continue to pump money into an industry that is more concerned about profit than putting healthy, uncontaminated food on tables. Instead of subsidizing farmers to grow grain for livestock that will be slaughtered, that money could be funneled into growing organic vegetables and grains for human consumption. Why do I have to pay more money to eat non-GMO and pesticide free food? Food that costs less to produce might I add.

COMMENT OF ANNE LEGÈNE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:03 p.m.
City, State: Great Barrington, MA
Occupation: Musician
Comment: The new farm bill needs to look to the future health of the planet and the population. It needs to reflect the vital understanding that small organic farms are the future, the only sustainable way to produce healthy food in a time when agriculture is contributing heavily to global warming. Genetically modified products, exposed to ever growing amounts of pesticides, are threatening the health of livestock and people, and mass produced food is lacking more and more in vital nutrients, though not in chemical additives. Hence the bill needs to support and encourage small (organic) farms, rather than make life more difficult for them. It needs to cut out all subsidies and loopholes for industrial giants like Monsanto and factory farms. It needs to reflect the reality of the strain that Monsanto's monopoly on seed has caused small farmers, who now pay many times the amount for their seed corn that they used to pay, and it needs to help get this situation back to normal. The farm bill needs to reflect the needs of farmers, not the wishes of corporate power.

COMMENT OF EMILY LEHECKA

Date Submitted: Friday, March 23, 2012, 3:27 p.m.
City, State: Smithtown, NY
Occupation: Nonprofit
Comment: Please don't cut these important nutrition programs. There are so many people relying on them to get enough food each day, and even that isn't enough. Cutting programs like SNAP would be devastating.

COMMENT OF HEATHER LEHMAN

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 2:12 p.m.

City, State: Vancouver, WA

Occupation: Local Farmers' Market

Comment: I work hand in hand with small scale farms in a 120 mile radius of where I live in order to supply an area of the city that became a fresh/healthy food desert. I live in an ag state, and one where diversified family farms and their future farmers are direly needed—to keep our economy healthy and to keep our people healthy. Please.

COMMENT OF MARIAN LEHMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:57 p.m.

City, State: Midlothian VA

Occupation: Systems Analyst

Comment: We must clean up our food supply and use sustainable farming methods that protect our food, soil, and water. Stop with harmful pesticides and harsh fertilizers. Support and reward our organic farmers.

COMMENT OF STEVE LEHMAN

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 10, 2012, 12:59 p.m.

City, State: Tucson, AZ

Occupation: Retired Accountant

Comment: I support the local food bank. I find it disgraceful that a rich country would cut needed food for the needy, while giving rich oil companies money to make commercials on TV. Something is wrong.

COMMENT OF SILVIA LEHRER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:23 p.m.

City, State: Water Mill, NY

Occupation: Author/Food Writer/Culinary Educator

Comment: At last the American people have the availability of eating healthy and knowing where their food comes from. I totally support the food and farm bill message and thank you in advance for your support.

SILVIA LEHRER.

COMMENT OF AVRA LEIGH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:05 p.m.

City, State: Harrisonburg, VA

Occupation: Self-Employed

Comment: It is so disheartening and unnecessarily difficult to find meat that is not tainted with hormones or antibiotics. It is even more difficult find fruits and vegetables that have not been subjected to pesticides and genetic wizardry.

STOP allowing companies like AIG and Monsanto from manipulating the toxicity of our nation's foods.

COMMENT OF GARY LEIGH

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 8:18 p.m.

City, State: Granada Hills, CA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: You need to promote hydroponics to grow crops we are losing good ground soil to plant crops we need ways that could be used in deserts to grow fruits and vegetables. This would help third world countries as well. Also use of solar and led technology to help grow 24 hrs. a day.

COMMENT OF LEN LEIKAS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:01 p.m.

City, State: Fargo, ND

Occupation: Retired (Former Farmland Owner)

Comment: I'm very concerned about the state of agriculture in the USA. My roots are with the old fashioned family farm. I think there is much evidence that the corporate controlled agriculture produces an inferior product that has resulted in a steadily deteriorating health of our citizens. The emphasis on GMO crops, anti-

biotics, growth hormones and the like will only lead to health problems and many countries ban such products for human consumption. I accept that the consumer is also to blame for the epidemic of diabetes and obesity, but I ask that you look beyond pragmatics and your loyalty to big ag and push for the family farm and the health of our nation. Thank you.

COMMENT OF SUSAN LEITE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:10 a.m.

City, State: Quinault, WA

Occupation: Clerk

Comment: Please support American farmers and fund the Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative. Organic food is healthier for people and the environment.

COMMENT OF JOSEPH LEMIEUX

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 8:29 p.m.

City, State: Spring Hill, FL

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Give the money to Organic Farmers, we don't need your chemical fertilizers and pesticides and GMO crops. What we need is clean food and healthy soil.

COMMENT OF JANIE LEMKE

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 3:55 p.m.

City, State: Bedford, IA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Other

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Get the government out of private business . . . phase out the "crop insurance" and subsidy payments over a period of 5–10 years and let the farmers who can farm do so. Eliminate the Dept. of Ag., along with most of the Federal departments and **All** of the "czars". The Federal government is usurping the authority and responsibility of the state and local governments. Stop it now or it will become unstoppable.

COMMENT OF EDWARD LEMON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:19 p.m.

City, State: Brattleboro, VT

Occupation: Software Engineer

Comment: Living in rural Vermont, I have ready access to healthy food, at least during the summer. Unfortunately, many Americans do not have this luxury, because the farm bill currently skews production in the direction of unhealthy foods like corn syrup. You can see the consequences of this in any grocery store—lots of junk food, and very little quality food. You can see it in our school cafeterias, where recently pizza was listed as a vegetable.

This needs to change. The farm bill should be promoting the production of foods that are safe and healthy, not foods that produce obesity. The focus should be on quality, not quantity. Subsidies to corporate farms need to stop. The United States can't afford to continue promoting unhealthy eating habits with tax dollars.

COMMENT OF CHRISTA LEMONS

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:09 a.m.

City, State: Paw Paw, WV

Occupation: Artist

Comment: We, as a country, need to be much more diligent about food supplies. Knowing where the food comes from and that it is being grown safely and with our health foremost in mind should be key in any Food Bill that is under consideration. I **Do Not** want to eat GMO foods, meat that has been raised in horrendous conditions and then slaughtered in even worse facilities let alone food from across the world. We **Must** stop thinking that money and big agribusiness is the way to go. We need to support small local farmers and Community Supported Agriculture so we can insure safe healthy food for us all.

COMMENT OF LUKASZ LEMPART

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:33 p.m.

City, State: Santa Clara, CA

Occupation: Software Engineer

Comment: We need to stop subsidizing corn and meat. Corn is essentially a nutritional no-op and meat is one of those things at the smallest point of the food pyramid. We should be eating significantly less of it than anything else. Subsidies need to go to local, sustainable farmers who grow nutritious fruits, vegetables, and grains not to polluting money hungry agribusiness.

Farming has a great effect on our environment and the health of Americans. With good farming practices we can clean up our rivers, cut down on land use and water use, and at the same time provide the population with the nutrients they really need.

I firmly believe that re-evaluating food subsidies will save the country billions of dollars in long term health costs.

COMMENT OF HEIDI LENERT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:50 p.m.

City, State: New Orleans, LA

Occupation: Glass Blower

Comment: I come from a farming family in Louisiana and have watched them struggle, but am very proud of the hard work and dedication they have shown. With all the new research on the dangers of GMO foods and chemicals like fertilizers, organic agriculture has become more important than ever. Please support small farms and the backbone of our state and country.

COMMENT OF PATRICIA LENNOX

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:44 p.m.

City, State: Potsdam, NY

Occupation: United Methodist Pastor

Comment: I believe all people, rich and poor, deserve healthy, organic unprocessed foods to eat. We are seeing the results of farm/factory diets with excessive obesity and diabetes. Why are we allowing the American people to be experimented on with GM foods and rewarding farmers for their use of chemicals that don't belong in our bodies, selling us crops harvested from toxic soils? I support local, small sustainable farming practices and I support the following:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

COMMENT OF KELLY LENTZ

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:21 p.m.

City, State: Ukiah, CA

Occupation: Assistant Store Manager

Comment: In order to meet the serious challenges of the 21st century, U.S. agricultural policy in the farm bill must shift from its focus of creating cheap commodities and artificially propping up income for farmers, toward implementing best agricultural practices for sustainable and organic production methods. U.S. food and agricultural policy must focus on adopting best agricultural practices that put the health of its citizens, the land and the livelihood of farmers and farm workers first.

I fully support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).

- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

COMMENT OF NICK LEON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:12 p.m.
City, State: San Jose, CA
Occupation: Retired Educator
Comment: Corporate welfare in the form of agriculture subsidies needs to be ended. Assistance to family farms and ranches is where the money needs to be channeled.

COMMENT OF BILLIE LEONARD

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:12 a.m.
City, State: Rathdrum, ID
Producer/Non-producer: Producer
Type: Greenhouse/nursery
Size: Less than 50 acres
Comment: Dear Raul Labrador, we as consumers and producers need laws that protect natural food production. We need to be able to produce organic food for ourselves as well as other consumers. Please support a fair farm bill that protects the "little farmer" as well as the corporate farms in their production of agricultural products.

Thank you,
 BILLIE LEONARD.

COMMENT OF JOAN LEONARD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:41 p.m.
City, State: Fridley, MN
Occupation: Retired
Comment: The small farmers should be the only farmers who receive farm subsidies as they are the ones who actually farm and care for their land. Large agribusinesses are only in it for the profit and will put whatever it takes, no matter how much herbicides and fertilizers until the land can produce no more. Land is our precious resource and we need to carefully guard it. In other words, we need stringent regulations on this.

COMMENT OF RITA LEONARD

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 12:52 a.m.
City, State: Portland, OR
Occupation: Special Ed Para-educator
Comment: It's time we redirected military funding that is going toward preemptive invasions and apply it instead toward helping feed people. It's a poor choice whether to starve to death or be shot to death.

COMMENT OF SAM LEOPOLD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:12 p.m.
City, State: Airmont, NY
Producer/Non-producer: Producer
Type: Dairy, Field Crops, Nuts, Poultry/poultry products, Vegetables
Size: 50-150 acres
Comment: We grow for a community of 150 people. We share labor and produce. Sell what is left. We have a care facility for our elders, and gardens provide life sustaining food and activity. I am convinced that outside business interests could never respect us or even understand how people would want to live for the values we enjoy. Cooperative ventures are not safe if organic agriculture is not safe.

COMMENT OF LORRAINE LEPORE

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:13 a.m.
City, State: Egg Harbor City, NJ
Occupation: Executive
Comment: Vital programs such as nutrition, conservation and support for organic and sustainable agriculture must not be cut. Also, GMO's must be stopped to ensure the health of our nation!

COMMENT OF GAIL LESCHER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 7:43 p.m.

City, State: Springfield, MO

Occupation: Organic Gardener, Housekeeper, Community Education

Comment: Dear members of the House Committee on Agriculture,

The time is now to make significant changes in the way agriculture is funded in this country. All signals point to a degradation in the environment, in our citizen's health, and in the compromised nature of our politicians to act on behalf of the people of the United States. We need those who were elected by the people to support the local foods and farms act (H.R. 3286), and support conservation issues that positively benefit the citizens of this country through long term benefits of clean air, water, and the rebuilding of our soils depleted by commercial agriculture. Please turn a deaf ear to the money coming from self-serving corporate entities and start making decisions that benefit the people.

Sincerely,

GAIL LESCHER.

COMMENT OF DANIEL LESTER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:50 p.m.

City, State: Columbia, MO

Occupation: Graduate Student

Comment: Please make sure and support a farm bill that supports sustainable, local, organic agriculture that is fair to producers, consumers, and the land.

COMMENT OF LAURA LESTER

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 12:25 p.m.

City, State: Atlanta, GA

Occupation: Advocacy and Education Director Atlanta Community Food Bank

Comment: I work with the Atlanta Community Food Bank, which serves 38 counties in NorthWest Georgia. In the last 2 years we've seen a 30% increase in our food distribution per year. This is because the demand for emergency food assistance has skyrocketed in the last several years. We need a strong farm bill to make sure that struggling families can put food on the table. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP. Our community cannot afford cuts to these programs. We can't allow our children and seniors to go hungry. This is not only a moral imperative, but an economic one as well. Hungry people can't learn in school, have increased health problems, and miss more days off from work. Cuts to the nutrition programs will only increase our costs in the long-term. Please protect these programs.

JOINT COMMENT OF RUSS LESTER AND JENNIFER MOFFITT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:09 p.m.

City, State: Winters, CA.

Producer/Non-producer: Producer.

Type: Nuts.

Size: 1,000+ acres.

Comment: As a organic walnut farmer, I ask that you . . .

1. Maintain EQIP Organic Initiative and protect the Conservation Stewardship Program from unfair funding cuts, and improve it by ranking applications solely on their conservation benefits. As farmers, we count on CSP and other conservation programs to conserve soil for future generations, keep water and air clean, and create habitat for wildlife—all while farming profitably.
2. Endorse all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286). This act will help ensure that the farm bill makes healthy food widely available to all Americans—including schoolchildren! We must provide flexibility for states and local districts to use existing food procurement programs to purchase fresh, healthy food from local farmers and ranchers.
3. Fully fund the Organic Research and Extension Initiative (OREI) at the 2008 level.
4. Support all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).

COMMENT OF COURTNEY LEVASSEUR

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:29 p.m.

City, State: Omaha, NE

Occupation: Grocer

Comment: As a consumer and member of the public, I believe it has become increasingly important to practice better farming techniques and to share more information with the public about where our food is coming from. I volunteer on a weekly basis at a local organic farm with in my community and I believe that supporting more local organic farming practices will not only benefit our health, but helps build support and cohesiveness in our communities. Too long have we had to ask for our local grocery products to be labeled more clearly, too long have I had to wonder, what are ½ the ingredients in this box of food and too long have the good men and women of this country had to fight for their own rights and land when big ag. companies get handed regulations in their favor. I want to live in a country where I can trust my government and be proud of what they do for us and ethical/sustainable farming practices. Please help us build better communities and grow healthier food.

Thank you for listening,

COURTNEY LEVASSEUR.

COMMENT OF JOSLYN LEVE

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:43 p.m.

City, State: Palo Alto, CA

Occupation: Homemaker

Comment: I am appalled by the drastic cut to food stamp funding when farm subsidies are still in place. There needs to be a shift in priorities in our farm policy, where we support sustainable growth while actually feeding our citizens. We are doing something wrong when nearly 10% of children in the U.S. have experienced food insecurity in 2011.

Our reliance on industrial agriculture brought advances and prosperity in the past; now we are both an obese and malnourished society, saddled with a system that leads to environmental degradation.

I urge you to support legislation that takes care of our citizens, our environment and that helps create the next generation of farmers. Please vote for H.R. 3286 and H.R. 3236.

COMMENT OF DAVID LEVIN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:40 p.m.

City, State: Haverford, PA

Occupation: Disabled Teacher

Comment: Please focus on support for small, family farms as opposed to large, industrial ones. Please regulate these larger ones carefully to protect the environment and minimize the damage of using chemicals such as pesticides. Please label genetically altered produce and products, ensure sustainability of land and of good lives for these hard-working providers of what feeds and sustains us all. Help them channel excess production to feed the poor, practice their craft with the most humane treatment of animals and land.

Thank you,

DAVID WALDEN,
Levin, PA.

COMMENT OF DEBORAH LEVIN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:06 p.m.

City, State: Camarillo, CA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I oppose the current way most of our produce and animal foods are being grown and raised (the big, corporate, inhumane way of producing food). Particularly the cruel and inhumane way animals are raised, housed, and killed for food production; and the use of pesticides, harmful substances, and GMOs in growing our produce.

COMMENT OF GORDON LEVIN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:04 p.m.

City, State: Helena, MT

Occupation: Scientist

Comment: Our farm policy needs to support small producers, crop diversity, sustainable practices and soil conservation. The farm bill should not be a subsidy for Big Ag and Big Chem.

COMMENT OF PENNY LEVIN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:39 p.m.

City, State: Wailuku, HI

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Field Crops, Specialty Crops, Vegetables, Other

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Look to history. The ability of this nation to feed itself with healthy, organic, locally-sourced inputs is how we have weathered all storms in the past, and will in the future. Every community should be able to source the food on their plates within a radius of 50 miles or less. This will cut dramatically reduce our intake and dependency on fossil fuels and increase local farm employment. Nationally and internationally, the data is clear that small farms (a few acres) provide a livelihood to more people per acre than industrial agriculture. The highest on-farm costs are fossil fuel based inputs (chemical fertilizers, herbicides and pesticides). None of those inputs create more soil. Supporting organic agriculture and small farms is imperative to restoring and creating better soils. That only comes from organic material inputs (mulch).

Here in Hawaii, the runoff from large scale agriculture into our oceans, kills our reefs and causes tremendous soil loss. On the mainland, the same practices fill your rivers and end up in the ocean. The deep poverty of the dust bowl era was caused by the very same agricultural practices the farm bill continues to maintain and support. We need a shift from subsidizing large agriculture and bad practices, to supporting small scale, localized and organic agriculture. It's time to get off the debt machine. I support you support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs **Or** organic agriculture practices.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).

I do not support NRCS becoming the deciding factor for compliance, as it is a program that does not work, nor is of interest for all farmers who may be implementing excellent practices; however, I support maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Please support these measures and help to improve the capacity of this nation to feed itself and care for its natural resources for our future generations.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF DONNA LEVINE-SMALL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:00 p.m.

City, State: Greeneville, TN

Occupation: Writer

Comment: We need an organic food bill and a healthy food bill—please don't approve a bill that will reward agribusiness for not having the decency to keep consumers' health in mind and trying to destroy small farms—please remember that you too have to eat and if you approve bills that continue to allow agribusiness to contaminate the food supply you and your family will have to eat this food also—and if you take food stamps away from people—many people will starve.

COMMENT OF PEGGY LEVITON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 7:28 p.m.

City, State: McKinleyville, CA

Comment: Please fund the Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative at \$30 million per year. Investment in agricultural research is vital to continued productivity and innovation in growing and diverse sectors of American agriculture, such as organic agriculture. As an eater, this is important to maintain the vitality and ability to feed all of us in the most healthful way possible, avoiding unnecessary contaminants and toxic chemicals.

COMMENT OF CORINNA LEWIS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:37 p.m.

City, State: Ithaca, NY

Occupation: Program Coordinator

Comment: Please pass the Healthy farm bill. I live in a rural community, and wish there were balanced incentives that promote the long term health of farmers, consumers and our land. But it is more like Wall Street, where you get rewards for pillaging today and leaving the bill for tax payers tomorrow. Please improve our democracy by improving smart, long-term planning. Thank you.

COMMENT OF DONALD LEWIS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:00 p.m.

City, State: Goode, VA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: I was an Organic Dairy Farmer in Vermont 1950. Won The New England in Winter Green Pastures Contest over hundreds of Chemical Farmers. Wrote A Book, *Leaned by the Fencepost*. It is a story, information and education doing without chemical. Theme SOIL FOOD and Health. Can prove Organic is best.

COMMENT OF GRAHAM LEWIS

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 2:17 a.m.

City, State: Eugene, OR

Occupation: Retired

Comment: We the People are outraged at how the U.S. government has allowed Big Corporate/Industrial Agribusiness to squeeze out the family farmers who still give a damn about People Over Profits. Local and organic is the massive trend. I hope you catch up, sooner rather than later. Thank you.

COMMENT OF JILL LEWIS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:22 p.m.

City, State: Horseheads, NY

Occupation: Industrial Engineer and Strong Environmentalist

Comment: In general the U.S. food and agricultural policy must focus on adopting best agricultural practices that put the health of its citizens, the land and the livelihood of farmers and farm workers over the interests of industrial agriculture lobbyists. Organic farming is critical to our health and we need to start labeling food that contains GMO's!

We need you to fully endorse all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).

Also, fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.

The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).

Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

COMMENT OF LAWRENCE LEWIS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:55 p.m.

City, State: Osceola, MO

Occupation: Retired Minister

Comment:

- (1) I'd like to see compliance with conservation practices as a requirement for receiving crop insurance assistance.
- (2) Let's retain value-added producer grants for existing food procurement programs. That will encourage local food production and processing, which in turn will increase food security for our region and nation. Also, it opens the way for schools to buy local, in-season food which will reduce the obesity rates and enhance over-all health among our young people.
- (3) Retain effective conservation programs.

(4) Fund beginning farmer/rancher development programs, which like the value-added grants will strengthen local food production in a decentralized way and hence strengthen the U.S. as a nation.

(5) Fund organic agriculture research and extension initiatives, for long-term better health for all.

Thank you for your attention to my recommendations. The Missouri Environmental Coalition did the research that enabled me to form my convictions. As I live in a rural county seat town in western Missouri, the agriculture legislation will have a direct effect on people I know and on the quality of life in my region in the Osage River watershed.

COMMENT OF PATRICK LEWIS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:18 p.m.

City, State: Emeryville, CA

Occupation: Retail Food Buyer

Comment: I have worked in the food industry (either manufacturing or retail) for over 27 years of my life. As such, I feel qualified to state that the current farm bill is insufficient to support U.S. agricultural needs. We need to stop giving subsidies to huge agribusiness and insurance companies, and instead focus Federal funding on a more efficient and localized system to support the needs of the American people. I advocate for:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Please consider my comments equally as an average citizen despite my inability to compete vocally with those who may have greater influence on your committee due to the depth of their pockets. We need to create a level playing field for all, rather than the “same old, same old” which is failing the American people by repeatedly giving our tax \$ to those **Not** in need of them. Thank you.

PATRICK LEWIS.

COMMENT OF PRISCILLA LEWIS

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 15, 2012, 6:49 p.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Health Care Administration

Comment: Dear Representative Bonamici,

I am writing to stress the importance of reauthorizing the farm bill for hungry Oregonians. Oregon ranks number 1 in childhood hunger nationally—SNAP and TEFAP are essential for ensuring that these children have any shot at a healthy future.

Best,

PRISCILLA LEWIS.

COMMENT OF VICKI LEWIS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:57 a.m.

City, State: Olympia, WA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: It is time to get rid of tax breaks to big farm operators and give to the small farms and organic farmers. They are the future of this country. Stop GM food.

COMMENT OF MARIANNE LEWMAN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:49 p.m.

City, State: Manson, WA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Fruits

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: My husband grows apples the conventional way. In order to grow organically the growers surrounding us need to do the same. The “system” does not support organic. We can’t go to Wilber Ellis or Northwest Wholesale for support if we want to cut down on the dangerous chemicals. The industry won’t change unless they are forced to for monetary reasons, or if mandated. Our beautiful valley is choked with chemicals.

COMMENT OF OLIVA LEYTON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:06 p.m.

City, State: Los Angeles, CA

Occupation: Self-Employed

Comment: Please, **Please**, do everything you can to help protect small farmers and their ability to carry on their livelihood, both conventional and organic farmers alike. Don’t let big ag squeeze them out because they don’t want the competition . . . we the people **Want** our small, local farms!

COMMENT OF BARRY LIA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 5:47 p.m.

City, State: Seattle, WA

Occupation: Consultant

Comment: I am an urban homesteader and consultant, researcher, and educator in biodynamic husbandry. We need support for research in organic, biodynamic, permaculture, and agroecological farming. See the National Research Council report, *Toward Sustainable Agricultural Systems in the 21st Century*.^{*} We need support for educating and training these new farmers.

COMMENT OF LINDA LIANG

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:34 p.m.

City, State: San Francisco, CA

Occupation: Professional

Comment: I want the House of Representatives to make policies that support small-scale family farmers who are stewards of our land and nourish our communities with clean, healthy food.

COMMENT OF WENDIE LIBERT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:42 p.m.

City, State: Washburn, WI

Occupation: Registered Nurse/Adjunct Faculty WI Indianhead Technical College

Comment: It is clear from an ever-growing body of research that our current short-sighted practices in agriculture/agribusiness put the health of people across the globe and the very sustainability of life on this planet at risk. I am, as healthcare professional and American consumer, in support of development of agricultural policy and practices that focus on unbiased and transparent research information, promoting local food production, supporting family and small-scale producers, promoting biodiversity in food production, and supporting organic/sustainable farming methods. It is not acceptable to me for policy-makers to continue to subsidize agricultural practices based on “big business” at the expense of the livelihood of small producers and the health and wellbeing of human beings. This is the basis of my voting decisions.

COMMENT OF ROBIN LIBOW

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:10 p.m.

City, State: New York, NY

Occupation: ESL Teacher

Comment: I am disgusted by the amount of taxpayer money that is going to grow tons and tons of soy and corn, that goes only to Agribusiness.

It is about time my government responds to the needs of the obesity crisis among children and adults in this country, and supports small local farmers, and subsidizes **Vegetables and Fruits**, not fast food and corn, and agribusiness.

^{*}**Editor’s note:** the report, *Toward Sustainable Agricultural Systems in the 21st Century*, is available at http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=12832. The “Brief” is retained in Committee files.

COMMENT OF JULIANNA LICHATZ

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:44 p.m.

City, State: Carbondale, CO

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: I support a right to choose from whom I buy my food. I want my food labeled and I want to be able to buy, local, non-fertilized, non-herbicides, non-GMO food. Please support family farmers and local economies.

COMMENT OF REGAN LICHTENBERG

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 02, 2012, 10:40 a.m.

City, State: Baltimore, MD

Occupation: Student

Comment: Hello Congressman Sarbanes, below are some priorities that I feel are important when it comes to the farm bill:

- I know you have a record of being concerned about the environment and fighting for it, especially when it comes to the Bay. I believe it is very important that we continue to fight for the environment in the farm bill by not forgetting to focus efforts and resources on conservation.
- Also I think a large chunk of farm bill resources should be allocated to the nutrition and horticulture committee. I know that now the majority of resources go to food programs, and I think that this causes other aspects of this committee to be overlooked. More subsidies for organic growers and "specialty crop" growers should be available in order to encourage diversified farms
- Finally I think that there should be a place in the farm bill this year for programs that help to encourage and train young farmers

COMMENT OF YEHUDIT LIEBERMAN

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 9:12 p.m.

City, State: Pleasant Hill, CA

Occupation: Musician

Comment: As a subscriber to a local CSA, I want a farm bill that:

- supports small, local, organic farming and farmers,
- promotes access to healthy, locally grown fresh food for all Americans, regardless of economic circumstances,
- cuts subsidies for large-scale farms growing commodity crops,
- increases funding for the Conservation Stewardship Program and other programs that promote soil and habitat conservation,
- discourages the intensive use of chemicals and the unregulated planting of GMO crops.

COMMENT OF MICHAEL LILLIE

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 4:11 p.m.

City, State: Sterling, VA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Greenhouse/nursery, Nuts, Specialty Crops, Vegetables, Other

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: The future of farming will require an infrastructure investment, training, college incentive and public marketing to turn America back into a healthy country. Food impacts literally every faucet of our economy. Understand that you, the government, are holding the purse strings which have the capability to make America the leading exporter of every major crop. It's time we grow our way out of the Great Recession.

COMMENT OF MICHAEL LILLIQUIST

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:27 p.m.

City, State: Bellingham, WA

Occupation: Municipal Official in Agricultural County

Comment: I am very concerned that the farm bill is headed in the wrong direction, away from healthy foods and sustainable agriculture. I fear that the bill would continue unwise subsidies to commodity crops, rather than continued nutritional aid and support for a wide range of food crops, organic farms, and locally-produced and locally consumed produce.

In particular, I urge full inclusion of all parts of H.R. 3286, the *Local Food, Farms, and Jobs Act*, as well as carrying out all aspects of H.R. 3236, the *Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act*.

Do not cut organic farming research funding!

Do not replace direct commodity subsidies with an even worse subsidized insurance scheme! There needs to be caps or limits on the subsidies available to giant agro-businesses and to insurance companies.

We need real reform, and the committee's version fall very wide of the mark. Please re-focus on healthy foods and smaller farmers, who genuinely need support and government cooperation.

COMMENT OF DAVID LIMPERES

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 11:10 a.m.

City, State: Sheboygan Falls, WI

Occupation: Unemployed

Comment: Stop taxing, stop subsidizing, stop **Meddling**. **Get Out** of the business of trying to "manage" an industry you know **Nothing** about. Let the free market work.

We will be watching very carefully, and taking note of your names and actions, to be evaluated and **Widely** distributed in **Your** next election.

COMMENT OF LAURA LINDEKUGEL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:16 p.m.

City, State: Minnetonka, MN

Occupation: Photographer

Comment: I hope that the committee will work to end or reduce subsidies and insurance to corporate and large-scale farming operations and implement support for small operations growing fruit and vegetables, especially organics.

COMMENT OF JUSTIN LINDENMAYER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:31 p.m.

City, State: Farmington, CT

Occupation: Student

Comment: The farm bill is our best chance at addressing environmental and health related issues that are destroying our country. Please let the 2012 Farm Bill address some of these issues before we lose yet more time.

COMMENT OF DENISE LINDOW

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:39 a.m.

City, State: Cornville, AZ

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Specialty Crops, Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: I would like to see more emphasis on local food production/distribution, more sustainable food operations and the total elimination of subsidies that turns farmers into cogs in a wheel instead of our first line of defense in our nation's food security. More concentration of production only weakens us as a nation.

COMMENT OF ANNIE LINDSTROM

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:48 p.m.

City, State: Cape Coral, FL

Occupation: Writer

Comment: Please provide support for more small local chemical free (organic) farmers! And write a law that requires GMO's to be labeled. Also, do not allow FDA to let ingredients go unlisted such as new sugar substitutes, *etc.* I want to **Know** what is in my food. Support diversity in farming. We need variety and local access to food. Thanks for listening.

COMMENT OF ANDREA LINEBAUGH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:38 p.m.

City, State: York, PA

Occupation: Self-Employed/Student

Comment: Monsanto, it's products, it's policies—let's just say **Hell No!**

We don't want genetically modified foods! We want organic, heirloom, back to nature—the way GOD intended.

I don't care what policies you enact as long as it supports local, organic, and small farmers. It should put a stop to chemicals and poisons used in the growing of foods and label those that are grown using it. Label those GMO foods. I don't want that crap in my food supply. **Support** local family farms and get rid of factory farms.

COMMENT OF JULIAN LINES

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:27 p.m.

City, State: Mount Tremper, NY

Occupation: Retail Store

Comment: My son farms and I am a member of Community Supported Agriculture. I want you to support small independent farmers, crop insurance and organic farmers. The effects of chemicals on bees is of national and international importance. Prioritize for the one's who keep us healthy.

COMMENT OF NOAH LINK

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 8:58 p.m.

City, State: Detroit, MI

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Dry Beans & Peas, Field Crops, Fruits, Greenhouse/nursery, Nuts, Poultry/poultry products

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: I am a young organic farmer on several acres in the city of Detroit. As you know, it is extremely difficult for new farmers to obtain land and capital needed for equipment and supplies, despite surging interest and participation in organic farming. My business has developed thanks to a loan from our state's Farm Service Agency and the Beginning Farmers and Ranchers program. These programs are essential to supporting new farms and businesses. As a strong supporter of organic farming, I ask that you to:

- Fully fund the Organic Research and Extension Initiative (OREI) at the 2008 level.
- Endorse all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Support all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintain EQIP Organic Initiative and do NOT cut the Conservation Stewardship Program.

COMMENT OF ADRIAN LINTON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:37 p.m.

City, State: Mountlake Terrace, WA

Occupation: Facilities Rep.

Comment: Hello, I think when deciding on a bill that influences the nation's food supply it is important to consider all opinions in the matter, the interests that generates those opinions and what percentage of the population those interests represent. I do not want to demonize big business as there will always be a place for big business. However, there is no denying that when considering the subject of agriculture the interests of the mufti-national companies involved in the matter are tied primarily to the free-market and generating profitability, not the sustainability of the land and welfare for the farmers who tend the land. It is also important to point out that although the opinions of the big companies involved in this issue, though incredibly influential, represents by law only one "person" who exists in a group of similar corporate "persons" which combined equates to a tiny fraction of the population who have rights under the law. If we truly are being democratic and putting the welfare of the land, the farmers and greater population who will consume the food we need to consider more than the opinions of our fellow corporate "persons" and look at this bill holistically in terms of what is truly the best long terms agricultural practices that put the health of its citizens, the land and the livelihood of farmers and farm workers first. The latter part of the aforementioned groups involved represent undeniably a massively larger percentage of the population than our fellow corporate "persons".

Thank you for hearing my thoughts,

ADRIAN.

COMMENT OF RITA LIPHAM

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:57 p.m.

City, State: Oxford, AL

Comment: As a consumer I desire to purchase food items that are grown locally by local farmers growing natural and organic produce. Farmers raising animals in environments which are natural to the particular animal eating foods which are natural and organic to the animal and therefore the animal is able to digest the food they are given—food without unnecessary antibiotics, hormones of various sorts, *etc.* Healthy food promotes healthy people.

COMMENT OF SUZANNE LIPKIN

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 16, 2012, 10:56 a.m.

City, State: Brooklyn, NY

Occupation: Nonprofit Program Officer

Comment: A \$36 billion cut to SNAP is not the way to go. The Committee should focus on writing a farm bill that creates economic opportunity and improves access to healthy, affordable food for all Americans.

COMMENT OF VICKI LISH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:52 a.m.

City, State: Pittsburgh, PA

Occupation: Farm Stand Coordinator

Comment: Feeding our neighbors is a public-private partnership, and I am doing my part and I want our government to do its part.

Cutting anti-hunger programs will increase hunger in America, as well as the associated health care, educational, and economic costs of food insecurity and poor nutrition.

Please remember the families who are struggling in our community, and we must protect and strengthen important anti-hunger programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP in the 2012 Farm Bill reauthorization.

COMMENT OF LYNN LISTON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:16 a.m.

City, State: Belvidere, IL

Occupation: Infant/Early Childhood Mental Health Consultant

Comment: I am a member of a CSA-community supported agriculture-farm. I belong to a community food coop and I have gardened my whole life. Small family farms and community supported farms increase the availability of fresh quality food for all. Subsidies to large agribusinesses hurt these local sustainable efforts and benefit only the wealthiest producers.

Please level the field.

COMMENT OF MERCI LITTAUA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 2:43 p.m.

City, State: Fontana, CA

Occupation: Service Coordinator

Comment: Dear Congressman Baca:

I do believe that as a member of the Agricultural Committee you are already and always doing your best in ensuring that programs supporting the poor and hungry are maintained and sustained. I personally, thank you for all these things that you do. Thru this letter I just want you to know that I am joining those little voices, like me, reminding you to take our voices with you to the Congress, as you consider the 2012 Farm Bill.

As the economic condition gets tougher and tougher, the more that All of us rely on those who toil the soil, plant the crops, and move the produce from the farm to our table.

Please do all you can so that they who cultivate the land, grow and gather the harvest, can have more resources—financial, technology, communications and transportation services, available to them so that they can do best in providing food to feed the world, especially those who have less or even, do not have anything to eat.

God bless.

MERCI LITTAUA,
Diocese of San Bernardino.

COMMENT OF KARA LITTELL-MCWILLIAMS

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 11:45 p.m.

City, State: Byron, CA

Occupation: Caregiver

Comment: I am very concerned about the quality of the nation's food supply. I am concerned that profit driven big Ag will trump good, sound policies that protect the small farmer, organic farmer and most importantly, the public. I believe that big Ag will always succumb to the "fiduciary responsibility" they have to their stockholders and their own coffers over the moral, ethical and health driven responsibility they have for the nation's food supply. The House Agriculture Committee's responsibility is to the people of this nation and their expectations of protection, not to lobbyists and their hundreds of thousands of "donations". My expectation is for bi-partisan support of what is morally and ethically "right". This should not be "political". This is about people's lives. Stop playing Russian roulette with us.

COMMENT OF ANTHONY LITTLE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:56 a.m.

City, State: Philadelphia, PA

Occupation: Medical Research Associate

Comment: Please provide adequate funding for the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program. Please support initiatives that reduce soil erosion and provide meaningful opportunities for small/rural farmers and their communities instead of massive agricultural businesses that do not use sustainable methods. Protect the health of Americans first and foremost.

COMMENT OF SHANNA LIVERMORE

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 4:41 p.m.

City, State: Ontario, CA

Occupation: Student

Comment: Feeding America's, *Hunger in America 2010*, study unearthed some startling facts about senior hunger that everyone should know:

- In 2010, 7.9 percent of households with seniors (2.3 million households) were at risk;
- 30 percent of client households with seniors indicated that they have had to choose between food and medical care and 35 percent have had to choose between food and paying for heat/utilities;
- In 2009, nearly 9 million people over the age of 50 and nearly 4 million people over the age of 60 lived in at-risk households.

Cuts to SNAP (food stamps)—like the ones currently under consideration in the farm bill—would further limit access to the food and nutrition programs that millions of older Americans rely on. Meanwhile, the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP), which provides monthly boxes of food to low-income seniors, faces its own funding threats. These issues matter. What will seniors do if they no longer have access to these vital programs?

COMMENT OF HELEN LIVINGSTON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:14 p.m.

City, State: Laurinburg, NC

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Field Crops, Forestry, Specialty Crops, Vegetables

Size: 500–999 acres

Comment: My family has both conventional farming and organic farming. The need for a shift towards local, organic is clear to me. My own health has been affected by ag. chemicals. For the sake of the costs of health care, care must be taken to care for our food.

COMMENT OF RICHARD LIVINGSTON

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 9:54 a.m.

City, State: New Canaan, CT

Occupation: Finance

Comment: Consolidation of our food production into a handful of monster organizations is dangerous on many levels, not to mention economic monopolization, lack of diversification and "too big to fail" issues. Please do the right thing and give the

small guys a chance. Get rid of the ag subsidies to these behemoth companies and open up the market to consumer driven healthier food!

COMMENT OF SALLY LIVINGSTON, R.D.

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 15, 2012, 6:40 p.m.

City, State: Fairfield, CA

Occupation: Registered Dietitian/Nutrition Consultant

Comment: As a Registered Dietitian, I am writing to share my concern about hunger in California. With unemployment still high and many Americans still struggling to make ends meet, anti-hunger programs are helping many of our neighbors just put food on the table.

Nearly 50 million Americans are living in food insecurity. While food banks, churches, and pantries are doing great work in our community, charity alone cannot meet the need for food assistance. Feeding our neighbors is a public-private partnership. I try to do my part by supporting the Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano.

Congress should do its part by continuing to support anti-hunger programs like the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), which are authorized in the farm bill.

Cutting anti-hunger programs will increase hunger in America. Given the associated health care and educational costs of hunger and poor nutrition, cuts to anti-hunger programs are short-sighted.

I ask you to please remember the families who are struggling in our country, and urge you to protect and strengthen important anti-hunger programs like TEFAP and SNAP in the 2012 Farm Bill reauthorization.

COMMENT OF BEVERLY LIZANICH

Date Submitted: Monday, May 07, 2012, 5:49 p.m.

City, State: Sandusky, OH

Occupation: Agency Relations Manager, Second Harvest Food Bank of North Central Ohio

Comment: Hunger is not a partisan issue. Please unite and all stand with us and the families, children and seniors we assist. I am the Agency Relations Manager at Second Harvest Food Bank of North Central Ohio. I respectfully request that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP. The counties we serve in Ohio (Erie, Huron, Crawford and Lorain) cannot afford cuts to these programs, as many families we serve are still struggling. 77, 200 families are seeking assistance annually in our service area, a 134% increase in demand for emergency food assistance since 2006. (*Hunger in America*, 2010) Second Harvest and our agencies are working hard to meet the needs of our communities, utilizing volunteers and donated products. However, with such an increase in demand, higher food and gas prices, and declines in TEFAP commodities, our agencies are having serious difficulty. TEFAP is a major source of the food we distribute and a decrease in SNAP benefits will overflow our emergency food pantries and soup kitchens, which are already serving record numbers of people each month. We need your commitment to help us assist struggling families to put food on their table. Thank you for your support.

COMMENT OF DEJA LIZER

Date Submitted: Saturday, April 28, 2012, 7:57 p.m.

City, State: Asheville, NC

Occupation: Operations Manager

Comment: I am a supporter of Feeding America and my local food bank. Despite the recent improvement of the economy, there are still many people who may not know where their next meal will come from. We need a strong farm bill to help put food on the table for vulnerable children, seniors, and low-income families. Please pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP. Cutting these programs is not the way to balance the budget. I urge you make them a priority in the next farm bill. If it weren't for assistance programs, I would have gone without many meals a child and teenager. My father contracted Polio as a child, and worked hard to further his education while us kids were young. That was because without additional education he could not provide for a family of 5. I was able to eat breakfasts at school that I would have otherwise missed, as well as lunches. We had food for dinners and I was able to focus on school work and do well enough to get grants and scholarships so that I could attend college. Please help feed these children and families. It made all the difference for me growing up,

and I am able to donate my time and money to local programs that assistance children and families in the same predicaments.

COMMENT OF JANE LLOYD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:59 p.m.

City, State: Anacortes, WA

Occupation: Artist

Comment: Agriculture policy should be set by what's best for the health of the citizens and planet not by chemical companies and big agra corporations that are literally poisoning us through tainted food and water supply as well as air born chemicals and ones out-gassing into our environment. There is enough evidence that organic is better! Do the right thing!

COMMENT OF KURT LLOYD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:48 p.m.

City, State: Hudson, NH

Occupation: Engineer

Comment: It is critical that we move swiftly toward a different way of growing food. One where smaller-scale organic farming is the norm, not the large unnatural monoculture techniques. I am not a science experiment . . . genetically engineered crops are totally unnecessary, are insufficiently understood, and should be banned from widespread use. Health of the soil should be paramount, unlike what has happened to the soil of this country after decades of bombardment with unnatural chemicals and practices. We could easily reduce health care costs in this country by more than 50% if everyone migrated to a diet so incredibly more natural than the totally absurd diet that the vast majority of the people in this country eat today. Our agricultural policy must be changed drastically to facilitate this.

COMMENT OF ANNA LOAR

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:07 p.m.

City, State: Middletown, CT

Occupation: Technical Specialist, Yale University

Comment: I am writing today to ask that the HAC support a farm bill that puts the interests of farm workers, citizens, and consumers ahead of the profits of large agribusinesses. This would include:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

In addition, we as citizens are concerned with the governmental lack of concern for both citizen outcry and a flood of scientific data that showing that genetically modified foods are linked to a range of health problems and should be clearly labeled if they are approved at all.

COMMENT OF JAMES LOBDELL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:15 p.m.

City, State: Santa Rosa, CA

Occupation: Retired College Professor

Comment: We urgently need a farm bill that doesn't compromise standards for the health and safety of farm workers and consumers. I know lots of farmers because I grew up in farming country and currently reside in an area where farming is one of the major industries. As a consumer, I want to be sure my food is safe, and I'd like it to be locally produced, not shipped in from some factory farm whose practices are unknown and probably suspect.

COMMENT OF MARGARET LOBUE

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 9:35 a.m.

City, State: Orlando, FL

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I volunteer at my church's food pantry and have seen the numbers of families needing food assistance increase dramatically over the years. How can we reduce the aid available to these families when the economy is so distressed? Please help them and find some other area to cut expenses.

COMMENT OF GEORGIA LOCKER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:08 p.m.

City, State: Fort Collins, CO

Occupation: Retired

Comment: The farm bill must remove subsidies for corn. It must support small farmers. It must support organic farming. It absolutely must oppose the Monsanto chemical alterations of corn, canola, rice, *etc.* They are bad for the environment, with the increased use of herbicides and pesticides, bad for our health.

COMMENT OF TRENT LOCKHART

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 10, 2012, 11:52 p.m.

City, State: Bloomington, IN

Occupation: U.S. Air Force Active Duty Service Member

Comment: I support the strengthening and protection of nutritional assistance programs funded by the farm bill. I read and hear so much about efficiency and the current economic situation, but I cannot help but feel disgusted at the idea that we would cut into much needed programs for low-income families to balance debt and fix a financial crisis so firmly connected to the wealthy in our society. Fraud, waste, and abuse should be eliminated at all levels of government and in all Federal and state programs, but reducing benefits for those in need is nothing short of immoral.

I have been a recipient of nutritional assistance, and it helped bridge the gap for my family between post-student temporary jobs and my current full-time position in the Air Force. My family accepted help so that we didn't become dependent on nutritionally defunct cheap food sources when our income wasn't steady. Once we found solid financial footing, we began supporting ourselves. Keep nutritional assistance programs strong for the future of this country.

COMMENT OF CORY LOCKINGTON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:17 p.m.

City, State: La Crosse, WI

Occupation: Workplace Manager

Comment: Small farms that can produce local foods without chemicals are the most helpful and least harmful entity in the food chain. Family farms need protection from corporations that are using Americans as chemical testing lab rats. I do not want arsenic in my chicken or corn in my beef. I do want non-toxic food. I do not want GMO's in any of my foods and I do want **All** GMO's to be labeled like other countries.

COMMENT OF DIANE LOCKSPEISER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 7:30 p.m.

City, State: Melville, NY

Occupation: Artist, Herb Gardener at a local CSA

Comment: I am not good with details, but I do know that for the public health we do need to discourage CAFOs, GMOs, and pesticide/herbicide use and better support the small, healthy farms.

COMMENT OF EDWARD LOEFFLER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:05 p.m.

City, State: New York, NY

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Stop giving huge farm subsidies to MegaFoods and start giving help to the new, small farmers. Corporate agribusiness shouldn't have the influence that it does over regulations, as is easily shown by the food poisoner corporation Monsanto.

COMMENT OF ANNE LOFTFIELD

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 08, 2012, 1:23 p.m.

City, State: Tucson, AZ
Producer/Non-producer: Producer
Type: Poultry/poultry products, Vegetables
Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: We are working hard to grow healthy non-GMO foods through biodynamic methods which enhance our soil rather than deplete it, using all our resources as efficiently as possible, yet our tax dollars are passed out to corporate farms who are raping our land. The food stamp program sounds good on paper but is producing a dependent society which is getting more obese each day; is that your intention?

COMMENT OF CORINNE LOGAN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 10:13 a.m.
City, State: Boise, ID
Producer/Non-producer: Producer
Type: Livestock
Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: The subsidies and entitlements have **Got To End!** It is ridiculous that we still have such wasteful spending going on to the tune of Billions of dollars. Stop the subsidies and entitlements and food prices will be what they are.

COMMENT OF SHANE LOGAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:46 p.m.
City, State: Interlaken, NY
Occupation: Chef

Comment: I am concerned with the state of the American diet. Subsidizing socially disadvantaged farmers, local farmers markets and local organic farms is important to me because right now eating an unhealthy meal is cheaper than farm fresh food and proper nutrition is the base from which we need to fight hunger.

COMMENT OF KATHLEEN LOGAN SMITH

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 6:08 p.m.
City, State: Saint Louis, MO
Occupation: Executive Director, Missouri Coalition for the Environment
Comment: Dear House Agricultural Committee:

On behalf of the Missouri Coalition for the Environment, our members and our Board, thank you for the opportunity to submit comments on the 2012 Farm Bill.

We work to promote stewardship of Missouri's soil and water resources, to reduce our dependence of fossil fuels and encourage food and energy security.

Nothing concerns thoughtful Americans more than the state of our nation's food supply and the water and soil resources upon which its productivity depend. The 2012 Farm Bill will succeed if it responds to that concern through the following key measures:

1. Restoring the link between conservation compliance and crop insurance subsidy programs.

Because of the important role farmers play in our food system, taxpayers have supported a safety net for farmers for nearly 30 years, always in return for a guarantee that subsidized farmers will follow basic conservation practices in their fields. This revolved around the basic realization that while Americans needed food, it was critical to utilize conservation practices in order to preserve the economic viability and productivity of our farmlands and resources for the future.

As the House Agriculture Committee prepares their draft of the farm bill, I urge you to restore the link between taxpayer-supported subsidies for crop insurance and conservation compliance protections that will protect the nation's water and land.

This action is especially important as Congress considers eliminating direct payments, the major subsidy program that is linked to conservation compliance, and moving some of those funds to support increased subsidies for crop insurance, which lacks compliance requirements. Unless you help to reconnect crop insurance subsidies to conservation compliance, a significant part of farmers' incentive to follow conservation plans will disappear this year.

Farmers need crop insurance as part of their safety net and the public needs basic conservation practices on farms to make sure that quality farm land and water can support future generations as well as the current needs of our country. We cannot accept sacrificing long-term economic and environmental sustainability for short-sighted and short-term economic profits.

Connecting eligibility for crop insurance subsidies to conservation compliance is fiscally responsible and ensures public subsidies for farmer's insurance premium payments align with the public's interest in basic conservation of our soil and water.

Missouri's water and soil resources are suffering now as farmers violate conservation agreements and ignore good conservation practices while still collecting taxpayer subsidies. This must end. Taxpayers should not be subsidizing destruction. Our state is among the top five in the nation for soil loss and our farmers need incentives to save soil—not to abuse it.

2. Meaningfully incorporate whole farm insurance for diversified farming operations and beginning farmers.

Producers of diversified, non-commodity crops and livestock need to be able to manage their risks too. A crop insurance policy that offers a whole farm revenue protection plan to protect against low revenue due to unavoidable natural disasters and market fluctuations would allow farmers to insure all the crops grown to feed Americans. Effective risk management products also need to be available nationwide. And they too **Must** require conservation compliance to protect soil and water resources.

3. Capping premium subsidies.

Currently there are some proposals circulating that would limit the amount of crop insurance subsidies—which make good sense and would help ease the burden on the taxpayers.

4. Cutting payments to crop insurance companies and agents.

Recent data indicate that crop insurance companies and agents collect \$1 for every \$1 farmers receive in crop insurance. Congress could generate significant savings and more than eliminate the need to slash anti-hunger or environmental programs by setting a more modest payment level.

5. Strengthen “sod buster” and “swamp buster” provisions in ALL Farm programs.

The pursuit of profits from commodity crops, and their accompanying lucrative revenue insurance programs, has enticed farmers across the plains to plow grasslands and prairie and drain wetlands though they can never hope to get a consistent and decent harvest on those lands—except what profits are harvested from taxpayer funded programs. Planting commodity crops in most of the dry and arid Texas panhandle and irrigating it with the non-renewable Ogallala Aquifer is one example of where our tax dollars are sent to just blow in the wind—along with the thin layer of eroding soil. Ground suited to tumbleweeds and prickly pear cactus or to cattails and water lilies—should not receive crop-oriented taxpayer dollars because they do us more good left undisturbed (and cost less too). Plowing these marginal grounds increases water pollution, soil erosion, and destroys important ecosystem functions. It's a foolish short-term gamble and the 2012 Farm Bill needs to stop it from being a taxpayer payout.

6. Maintain funding for conservation programs.

Title II funding continues to be eroded farm bill after farm bill. Proven programs, like the Wetland Reserve Program, should be maintained and funded. Per producer caps for each program would a prudent way to maximize the impact and productivity of these programs.

7. Include mandatory funding for Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program.

Food creates jobs. Let us create these in America and increase our food security in the process by growing the next generations of farmers and ensuring they are trained and equipped to produce healthy food and conserve critical resources. The National Sustainable Agriculture Campaign recommends \$30 million in mandatory funding. With an aging farm population, now is the time to invest in the future of American agriculture by nurturing new agriculture start-ups.

8. Help grow jobs by retaining programs like the Value Added Producer Grants Program.

Guarantee \$30 million of mandatory funding per year. VAPG provides seed money to help farmers innovate in agriculture and create jobs while securing a sustainable path to market-based farm profitability.

9. Help grow local farm economies and support healthy food in schools by providing flexibility for states to use existing food procurement programs to purchase fresh, healthy food from local farmers and ranchers.

10. Secure our food future and fund the Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative at \$30 million per year in mandatory funding.

Investment in agricultural research is vital to continued productivity and innovation in growing and diverse sectors of American agriculture, such as organic agriculture.

Thank you for your commitment to America's food system.

Yours truly,

KATHLEEN LOGAN SMITH,
Executive Director
 Missouri Coalition for the Environment
 [Redacted], St. Louis, MO,
 www.moenviron.org
 [Redacted].

COMMENT OF SHARON LOHRMANN

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 8:29 p.m.

City, State: Sisters, OR

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Field Crops

Size: 50–150 acres

Comment: The time to support organic farmers is now! I own cropland and I am a cancer survivor. I understand the importance of what we eat, breathe and drink. Please consider our future generations when contemplating the various aspects of the next farm bill.

COMMENT OF REBECCA LOKEN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:35 p.m.

City, State: Lake Nebagamon, WI

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: What really bothers me the most is how tight the FDA and Monsanto is. The former lawyer for Monsanto is the head of the FDA. That is absurd! The Farm Bill should be small farmer friendly, not just corporate friendly.

COMMENT OF ROBERT LOMBARDO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:44 p.m.

City, State: Boulder, CO

Occupation: Computer Support

Comment: I understand that there are strong incentives to continue taking from the poor to give to the rich but I ask that you please consider the long term results of such unethical behavior. Thou there is no compelling reason to do the right thing for America and American's, there should be and you should not need to be compelled to do what you were elected to do.

COMMENT OF SCHERYL LOMONICO

Date Submitted: Friday, March 16, 2012, 5:50 p.m.

City, State: Ft. Edward, NY

Occupation: Retired Professional and Homeowner

Comment: I am a retired professional who cares deeply about the environmental impact that farming has on our rivers, soil, oceans, and the meats and produce grown for our consumption. I am fortunate to be able to afford organic produce and locally grown, grass-fed meats. I know by talking to the farmers at the Saratoga Springs and Glens Falls markets how important sustainable farming is to them. I buy only those products that I know do not have additives and have been grown using organic methods. The farming industry in our country is decades behind the industries in Europe, the UK and Australia/New Zealand. I would like to see more conventional farms and dairies change to organic methods. I don't want RBHT used on dairy cows ever! I recently saw a sign in the dairy section of my local supermarket apologizing if I could not find organic milk, as the supply could not keep up with the demand. Now that's saying something. I will continue to speak with my dollars, and I know others will too. We need your help to make our farmers change their methods. They need our support, and I want my tax dollars to work for them and, indirectly, for the consumers. Our land and waterways and the creatures living on or in them deserve to be free of chemicals. I'll be watching.

COMMENT OF DONNA LOMP

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 11:45 a.m.

City, State: Newton, MA

Occupation: Investor/Philanthropist

Comment: Please take out all assistance for GMO and pesticide-laden crops and big agribusiness. Please help the local organic biodynamic farms. Please let's get healthy organic food back on our table. GMOs, pesticides, herbicides, and chemical fertilizers are killing us. Monoculture crops, along with chemical agriculture are killing the bees and animals. Let's get back to nature and eat the way we are intended to eat. It IS NOT true that GMO/pesticide crops provide better yields, they don't! Organic crops do just as well and better! And truthfully, even if they didn't, what's the point of producing more food if it is causing cancer, allergies, infertility, and many diseases directly related to GMOs and farming chemicals? Both my parents died young from cancer. There is enough evidence that organic farming is better for people, animals, and the planet! Please help local organic farmers thrive! The only reason we pay more for organic food is because of big agribusiness farm subsidies (put in place by the original farm bill). Please at least make it a "fair fight" and stop supporting Monsanto/Dow/Bayer and big agribusiness. Because when you help the big farms, you are helping the big chemical companies. And hurting people in the process! Please rethink everything in that bill and make organic/biodynamic/sustainable farming (and the health of people and the planet) priority! Thank you.

COMMENT OF DAVID LONG

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:45 p.m.

City, State: Jonesboro, AR

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Forestry

Size: 50-150 acres

Occupation: Private Lands Supervisor, Arkansas Game & Fish Commission

Comment:

March 30, 2012

To: Chairman, Agriculture Committee, U.S. House of Representatives

Reference: 2012 Farm Bill Hearings

Comments in support of continuing a strong Conservation Title in the 2012 Farm Bill:

I am David Long, Private Lands Supervisor for the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission (AGFC) and also a landowner managing a tree farm here in Arkansas. AGFC has a staff ranging from 8 full time private lands biologists that work with hundreds of row-crop farmers and ranchers each year to assist them in improving their lands for fish and wildlife while recommending practices that also improves water quality, reduces erosion and helps reduce flooding. We work side by side with the Natural Resources Conservation Service and the Farm Service Agency and farm producers to promote farmland conservation through farm bill conservation programs.

We am providing comments to lend support to continue funding and conservation programs in the 2012 Farm Bill that has been so successful here in Arkansas.

The people of Arkansas are strong supporters of conservation in Arkansas and conservation is so important to our citizens they passed a $\frac{1}{8}$ of 1% conservation sales tax in 1996 to help ensure the future of fish and wildlife populations across Arkansas.

The conservation programs in the farm bill are vital not only to the sustainability of production agriculture, but equally our fish and wildlife populations and their required habitats.

Programs like the Wetland Reserve Program (WRP) and the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) are incentive programs that have helped farmers stay on the farm by retiring unproductive, hard-to-farm croplands they lose money on most years. These programs help improve the farmer's financial health while providing tremendous environmental benefits to society. Bottom-line, these programs help keep farmers-farming.

USDA conservation programs here in Arkansas have and continue to provide significant benefits to fish and wildlife resources along with improving water quality where conservation practices are applied. However, without continued funding of these critical programs, sustainability of these resources will not be possible.

We have much work ahead of us to implement conservation practices at a landscape scale to see significant improvements in our water quality and fish and wildlife resources across our farmlands in Arkansas. Cutting programs to deeply while

we continue to battle water quality problems and declining habitats for farm wildlife could result in future regulatory requirements and the listing of more species on the Threatened and Endangered Species list, neither of which anybody desires because of all the problems these regulatory functions place on our farm producers. Conservation programs provide financial assistance to our farm producers to ensure we maintain productive, healthy lands and natural resources to include soil, water and wildlife for the present and future generations.

We would like to provide specific comments on the conservation programs and their continued importance to farmers, ranchers, fish, wildlife and society as a whole and recommend this Committee support continued strong conservation opportunities in the 2012 Farm Bill.

Wetland Reserve Program (WRP)

Arkansas farmers have enrolled over 200,000 acres in the program since its beginning. We have numerous field reports from our biologists and WRP farmer owners of increased populations of migratory birds, numerous resident birds along with a host of other wildlife species utilizing these WRP lands. In addition, increased populations of deer, turkey, quail, rabbits, all game species important to the economy and outdoor recreation in the delta, have been observed on WRP lands across the delta of Arkansas.

WRP is another program that helps producers keep producing and staying on the farm.

We encourage you to support continued WRP funding and the acreage caps sufficiently for states to continue their wetland restoration success story and provide this critical financial assistance to our farmers.

Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)

Arkansas is not a big CRP state in terms of millions of acres enrolled under the General CRP sign-up as many other states have realized. However, our biggest benefits of the program in Arkansas are found under the Continuous CRP where conservation buffers, wetlands and bottomland hardwoods may be enrolled. As of January 2012, Arkansas row-crop farmers and ranchers have enrolled 70,239 acres of buffers. These conservation buffers cover an estimated 5,853 miles of stream, rivers, and creeks across Arkansas. Arkansas has an estimated 90,000 miles of streams with approximately 36,000 miles (40%) degraded either with nutrients, sediments or both. Yea, this is very disheartening for the state called the "Natural State". How exciting it would be if we could buffer all of these degraded riparian edges that are contributing to our water quality problems using CRP. We could capture a significant percentage of the sediment and nutrient from run-off in Arkansas' waterways by using CRP buffers while paying producers rental and incentive payments along with cost-share assistance to install.

The Continuous CRP has enrolled 44,103 acres of wetlands along with another 51,299 acres of bottomland hardwoods in Arkansas. These are mostly hard-to-farm, unproductive croplands that farmers enrolled that now are serving to improve water quality, increase flood water storage, and reduce sediments and nutrients from entering our waterways while improving farm producers financial bottom-line, assisting in keeping them on the farm.

Maintaining the CRP with an adequate national acreage cap is critical to assisting states like Arkansas to continue to promote CRP buffers and wetland/bottomland hardwood restoration to achieve cleaner waters, higher fish populations, benefit migratory birds and reverse the number of declining species of wildlife on farms across the state.

Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP)

This cost-share program is providing significant conservation on working farmers across Arkansas. In 2011, over 161,000 acres of critical conservation practices were installed to: reduce erosion and pollution from nutrients, animal waste, and sedimentation; improve irrigation while reducing ground water use; improve forest health; improvements to grazing lands; and creating and improving wildlife habitat.

Wildlife Habitat Improvement Program (WHIP)

This program places emphasis on declining species to include bobwhite quail, elk, neo-tropical migratory songbirds, and threatened and endangered wildlife species along with numerous other game and non-game species.

In 2011, WHIP funded conservation practices to benefit fish and wildlife covering more than 46,500 acres. Over the course of its existence, the WHIP has help create and improve habitat in Arkansas on over 500,000 acres.

With talk of consolidating WHIP into EQIP, we are concerned WHIP funding will be lost in this larger program targeting primarily soil and water conservation prac-

tices and expect fish and wildlife practices will not compete with these resource concerns. Any consolidation of WHIP into EQIP should include language in the legislation emphasizing fish and wildlife habitat restoration in the EQIP and a minimum of 5% of EQIP funds be available for wildlife habitat restoration to ensure landowners continue to have financial assistance available to target habitat restoration on their lands.

Mississippi River Basin Initiative (MRBI)

We recommend the ability of NRCS to continue to develop special initiatives such as the MRBI using farm bill conservation programs. We have significant waterways degraded with sediment and nutrients that need conservation practices installed. The MRBI provides funding for targeting the most degraded sub-watersheds first and practices are being implemented across the row-crop areas of the Mississippi delta in Arkansas to reduce this pollution.

Arkansas is a significant contributor to the nutrient pollution (nitrogen and phosphorous) in the Lower Mississippi River Basin and the creation of the hypoxic zone (dead zone) in the Gulf of Mexico with the largest coverage ever recorded of 8,481 square miles reported in 2002. The MRBI funding is providing critical assistance to abate this pollution in the Arkansas portion of the watershed.

Closing

With the increased frequency of flooding and droughts occurring across our state and the nation, farm producers will continue to experience cropland losses. As a result, conservation programs are more important today than ever. Farmers need options to take these revenue losing croplands out of production with compensation to remain a viable farming operation and continue to produce the food and fiber we require as a nation. Our policy should continue to be—farm the best, retire the rest. Programs like WRP and CRP have helped do that over and over and farmers are farming today because of these programs. Plus, these programs have resulted in huge fish, wildlife and environmental benefits to society. However, we have a ways to go to ensure soil, water and wildlife sustainability across the agricultural lands in Arkansas.

Estimates are circulating that the world population will reach 9 billion by the year 2050. The pressure on food production on U.S. farms to help feed this growing population will rise proportionally. However, you don't have to be a rocket scientist, not even a biologist, to know without substantial conservation funding in place to ensure the sustainability of our farm lands, maintain fishable streams and rivers, provide habitat for terrestrial wildlife and outdoor recreation, and plentiful drinking water, environmental problems can be expected to increase dramatically which ultimately will greatly impact our quality of life as we know it here in the natural state and across the nation. Are we going to strive to feed the world while destroying our very own natural resources and environment? Conservation funding has never been as important as it is today.

Thanks for the opportunity to provide critical input this this vital component of the 2012 Farm Bill.

DAVID LONG,
Private Lands Supervisor,
Arkansas Game and Fish Commission,
Wildlife Management Division.

COMMENT OF DWIGHT LONG

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:07 p.m.

City, State: Klamath Falls, OR

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I work with several groups in Klamath Falls that are concerned about food security in Klamath County.

The following should be included in the bill to increase food security:

Community Food Projects Program—\$10 million per year to help communities build food self-reliance.

Farmers Market and Local Food Promotion Program—\$20 million per year to develop farmers market capacity and create food hubs to connect farmers with schools, hospitals, grocery stores and other markets.

Hunger-Free Community Incentive Grants—An average of \$20 million per year for a new SNAP local fruit and vegetable incentive grant program at farmers markets and other healthy food retailers.

COMMENT OF GLORIA LONG

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 12:20 a.m.
City, State: Hartford, CT
Occupation: Retired Teacher
Comment: Please pass a strong farm bill which will enable food banks, food stamps, *etc.* to feed the hungry. This is a most basic human need (which is unconscionable to deny). Thank you.

COMMENT OF HOLLY LONG

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:25 p.m.
City, State: Menomonie, WI
Occupation: Homemaker/Disabled
Comment: It is not a difficult concept to realize we need a safe and healthy food supply. Keeping it safe also protects the environment. Subsidize small farmers or those who organically produce. Subsidize fruit and veggies. Stop the pollution and support of nasty factory farms which are cruel to the animals and the environment. God intended free range and clean specie appropriate sources of foods and water for the animals to be healthy and in turn provide healthy food for humans. Go back to the basics. Bigger is not always better. Mass produced food-like items genetically modified are not healthy. When we take care of the Earth it will take care of us. Our programs need to be safe, clean and sustainable so there is a safe food supply for our grandchildren. **Support Local.**

COMMENT OF JOHN LONG

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 7:32 p.m.
City, State: Houston, TX
Occupation: Laundry Owner
Comment: Americans need more organically-grown, locally-produced food. Achieving this means eliminating, at all government levels, the rules and subsidies that favor large commercial farms. It also means investigating the practices of companies like Monsanto who are attempting to monopolize the production of seed. The Department of Agriculture has become a shell for corporate agribusiness, whose institutional objective seems to be to protect the profits of the large corporate players, even when doing so works against the health and long-term economic interest of the consuming public. Congress must recognize that the wholesome, nutritious food that Americans increasingly demand has far-reaching benefits for our society.

COMMENT OF VALERIE LONG

Date Submitted: Monday, April 02, 2012, 6:27 p.m.
City, State: International Falls, MN
Occupation: Economic Assistance Supervisor
Comment: To decrease funding for economic assistance programs such as SNAP, WIC, *etc.*, would increase the number of Minnesota families having to choose between eating or paying bills.

COMMENT OF TONI LONGLEY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:52 p.m.
City, State: McKinleyville, CA
Occupation: Environmental Agroecology
Comment: I would like to see subsidies for conventional crops ended completely. No more flooding the market with corn, wheat, and soybeans that are genetically modified and bathed in synthetic chemical herbicides, pesticides, and fertilizers. Farms should be smaller and more diverse, growing many crops rather than one or two. The cheap commodity crops have created an obese and overweight society by encouraging fast eating and a complete disconnect from where, how, and by whom the food was produced. Organic and sustainable agriculture is what we should be encouraging. I propose a tax on unhealthy foods such as soda and fast food such as McDonalds, Taco Bell, Burger King, Wendy's, KFC, *etc.* If people aren't going to make the right decisions with their eating choices to lead to healthy living, then they ought to be swayed by tax incentives or disincentives. I would also like to see priority places on integrated pest management rather than chemical pest management. I'd like to see less mechanization and less factory production of our food. I want factory farms and CAFOs for animals to end completely, they are heinous and inhumane. I want to see GMO crops and foods labeled clearly in stores. I am not

a proponent of GMO crops, it is just a way to maintain monocultures and continue using the chemicals. Also, the horror stories about GMOs spreading to organic fields and having those fields be contaminated and ruined are enough to make GMOs seem like a dangerous alternative. I don't believe anyone who says that GMO's are going to make it so that there are less starving people on Earth. From my understanding, enough food is produced every year to feed everyone on the planet. Probably enough food is wasted or thrown out to feed the starving. It is more a matter of equity, access, and distribution. By encouraging other countries to use agroecological farming methods, rather than dump cheap commodity corn and wheat on them and take their food sovereignty away in the name of aid, their people can grow their own food while benefitting the land that they live on, rather than degrading and polluting it with GMO crops, fossil fuel agriculture, and chemicals. People should do agriculture where there is water, not in deserts and places where water must be stolen from a river or watershed far away.

SUBMITTED STATEMENT BY DR. KARL LONGLEY, P.E., B.C.E.E., CALIFORNIA WATER INSTITUTE, CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FRESNO

Congressman Costa, Congressman Cardoza Under Secretary Schubert, I thank you for inviting me to address you today. The agenda shows that I am associated with California State University, Fresno's California Water Institute. In the interest of full disclosure, I am also a member and current chair of the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board.

I will briefly describe some of the more significant water quality threats to Central Valley agricultural production and the health of Valley residents that require protective action and funding and other legislative support in the 2012 Farm Bill.

The first water quality issue I will discuss is the salinity impacts that can be measured as yearly reduction of crop production and farmable land across an impacted region, lost jobs, higher utility rates, reduction of community growth potential, loss of habitat, premature corrosion of equipment, and other lost opportunities.

Salinity issues are rarely considered newsworthy until the impacts have already occurred—it is like a cancer—slow to develop but often fatal when it does occur. A current example is Australia's Murray-Darling Basin, an agricultural area larger than California where agricultural production was reduced by more than fifty percent by drought and horrific salinity impacts. A SWRCB report authored by Dr. Howitt of UC Davis confirmed that very significant salinity impacts are occurring in the Central Valley (2008). Similar studies have been performed in other parts of the state and all indicate that proactive salt management is economically beneficial.

Salinity management includes source control, treatment (membrane or distillation technologies), collection and storage, real-time salinity management, salt recycling, and export. Significant continued funding is needed for the ongoing development of saline water treatment and Best Management Practices.

The second water quality issue I will discuss is nitrate contamination of groundwater. A recent report by Dr. Thomas Harter of UC Davis provides the scientific study that documents the nitrate groundwater contamination problem with the major source of nitrate being irrigated agriculture and dairy manure. This groundwater nitrate contamination issue is the subject of a SWRCB workshop on May 23, 2012.

Nitrate contamination of groundwater poses major problems including public health risks. It also can have an adverse impact on the production of certain crops such as grapes. Remediation of nitrate in groundwater is necessary for both the support of agriculture and safe drinking water supplies for many Central Valley communities, particularly disadvantaged communities. Besides treating nitrate contaminated groundwater, remediation also can be accomplished by using groundwater contaminated with nitrate for fertilization of crops applying it when the contaminated groundwater is used for irrigation.

Dairy manure can be processed to produce bioenergy and a very good fertilizer that reportedly increases crop production substantially and is capable of meeting organic standards. Under one scenario over fifty percent of the optimized revenue potential from dairy manure can be from an enhanced fertilizer made from anaerobically digested manure with a substantial amount of the remaining revenue from bioenergy production.

A Federal-State Dairy Digester program being led by some very knowledgeable and far-sighted individuals, including Ed Burton and Sandy Schubert here with us today, addresses the regulatory, technical, and economic issues of implementing the use of manure digesters on dairies. 2012 Farm Bill support is needed to be focused on bioenergy from dairy manure and the development of Best Management Practices for enhanced use of dairy manure for crops.

The Central Valley Salinity Alternatives for Long Term Sustainability (CVSALTS) is a stakeholder focused on the development and adoption of a Central Valley Salinity Management Plan. Implementation of CVSALTS is essential for insuring the future availability of good water quality for both urban and agricultural use. The implementation of an effective Central Valley Salinity Management Plan will require research and significant funding. Nevertheless, salinity management produces revenue and economic sustainability. It is being done elsewhere but not on the scale needed in the Central Valley.

The Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program was initiated nearly a decade ago addressing agricultural non-point source water quality impairments to surface waters. The revised Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program to be adopted soon will add measures for controlling contamination of groundwater by agricultural practices including contamination by salinity and nitrates.

The Dairy Program, another Regional Board program, is a program similar to the Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program but tailored for the specific safe manure management needs necessary for dairies.

The identification and development of effective Best Management Practices, including improvements to irrigation technology, is a critical element for protecting water quality and can benefit greatly from funding available from the 2012 Farm Bill. Monitoring of water quality also is an important element of all water quality protection efforts. While expensive these costs can be significantly lowered with research and development with funding available from the 2012 Farm Bill.

This quick overview points out the necessity to protect Central Valley waters to protect health, support agricultural production, and to protect a number of other beneficial uses. The 2012 Farm Bill can provide critical funding and other legislative measures necessary to keep this Valley healthy and productive. These funding and legislative issues can be critical in the research necessary to develop best management practices and to better and more cost effectively irrigate the Valley's lands and monitor water quality.

Sustainable agriculture in the Central Valley assisted by the 2012 Farm Bill is able to locally provide healthy communities with safe drinking water for all residents, a life style treasured by many and, very importantly, a vigorous and sustainable Valley economy capable of continuing to supply the agricultural product needs for the United States and many elsewhere in this world.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF ADAM LOOMIS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 4:38 p.m.

City, State: Locke, NY

Occupation: Student

Comment: I believe the farm bill should be a tool for the positive change of the food system in our country. We need healthier and more sustainably produced food. With that in mind I think the food bill should:

- Support new farmers, particularly organic farmers, so that our rich farming heritage will safely be ushered into the future.
- Support innovation in areas that will help farmers grow our food more sustainably and protect the environment.
- Cut funding to corporate farms that don't produce the healthy foods that we need more of. Instead fund farms that grow fruits and vegetables to make those healthy foods easier for us all to afford.

COMMENT OF JENNIFER LOOS

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:50 a.m.

City, State: Los Angeles, CA

Occupation: Director of Operations, Marketing

Comment: Stop subsidizing filler crops! Corn, soy, etc are in all processed food and are probably why we have a major obesity epidemic in our country. Why can't we focus on diversity in our crops and organic options? Heath over scale is what's important.

COMMENT OF LOREN LOPES

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 10:12 a.m.

City, State: Turlock, CA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Dairy

Size: 151–300 acres

Comment: We need the cost of production factored into the pricing of raw milk in the United States. Most all other crops have fared well dairy has been hijacked by the global buying power of dairy food companies and it has to stop or the corporate investor dairies will take out the family dairy farm. Many of these dairy clusters are claiming to be family owned but in reality are investor owned with a individual spokes person. These dairy clusters have access to big money and make their profits from tax right off not milk production. However the majority is still in the hands of the independent family dairy operator so we need to protect this for the future generations. The S. 1640 the Milk Marketing Improvement Act of 2012 is the prime example of achieving this.

COMMENT OF ELLERI LOPEZ

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:58 p.m.

City, State: Sparks, NV

Occupation: WIC Staff

Comment: I would like to know for myself and my family what I'm eating. All this genetic engineering is so bad and never been tested. We deserve to know where our foods coming from. Organic food is real food!

COMMENT OF LAURA LOPEZ

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:30 a.m.

City, State: Mt. Sinai, NY

Occupation: Information Technology

Comment: Protecting farmland against urban sprawl is very important in protecting our farmland which is dwindling. In my home town, there were beautiful farms everywhere, not they are all condominiums and the traffic is out of control, it ruined our town.

Factory farmers must be held accountable for their actions in polluting our waters and for providing torture chambers for farm animals. We must grow up as a race and begin to be more compassionate about how our farm animals are raised and slaughtered. Let's get real.

COMMENT OF STACIA LOPEZ

Date Submitted: Saturday, April 28, 2012, 6:28 p.m.

City, State: Gilbert, AZ

Occupation: Homemaker

Comment: My name is Stacia Lopez. I am a resident of Gilbert Arizona. I am writing as a mother and a concerned citizen. My main concerns are providing healthy nutritious food to my family and our communities. I am also a supporter of Feeding America and my local food bank. This next farm bill should make feeding vulnerable children, seniors, and low-income families a priority. I also believe we need to concentrate on more local sustainable farms to provide nutritious fruits and vegetables to our communities.

After reading testimonies given to your committee, I have concerns regarding the feed and livestock industries. Their representatives keep quoting the predicted increasing world population of 30% by 2050 and the corresponding demand for more food. A large portion of the crops grown, however, are for non-consumable goods. They support feed products for meat production but also corn products for processed food, and other corn byproducts and biofuels. While the latter is a noble endeavor, if it is taking the majority of our farming lands I say we look elsewhere for fuel. I do not believe this is our best option just the most convenient for now, but it is not worth the effect on food production.

As I understand it, in the 2008 Farm Bill a whopping 60% of EQIP funds were guaranteed to the livestock industry. I am not against eating meat. I personally eat beef, pork and chicken. I am also aware, as the vast majority of Americans are, that we as a nation have a nutritionally poor diet and obesity and diabetes are becoming the norm. The feed and livestock representatives also brag of their increase in exports of meats over the past 15 years. I see this as just spreading our "wealthy", unhealthy diet. At the same time as guaranteeing 60% of funds to livestock the previous bill has put a cap of \$20k on organic farms. I do not believe that the USDA recommends a diet consisting of 60% meat products.

I also read of their complaints that the CSP has not kept up with "their" new technologies and should release more of the conservation land. (To them I presume.) I am not sure I am exactly thrilled with their new technologies or the pesticide com-

pany's control of the industry. This however is too big of an issue to address fully here.

I discovered during my reading that the majority of the areas of conservation that these cooperatives are using to qualify for funds are vastly directed towards preventing their waste and their large amounts of chemicals from reaching our waterways. The top of the list should be to maintain healthy lands not protecting the healthy from the contaminated.

As to the ideas that I support I will refer you to testimonies from Mr. Carl Homan, Homan Family Dairy Farms, on behalf of National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition, Centre Hall, Pennsylvania and Mr. David Bell, Executive Director, Wild Blueberry Commission of Maine, on behalf of Specialty Crop Farm Bill Alliance, Orono, Maine.

In conclusion, I believe our entire food chain is in crisis. Our land is corrupted, our food is poisoned, and here in America people are starving. I believe we need to look at more natural healthy ways of producing food. We can look for working models such as Carl Homans' dairy farm and find ways to increase production. We need to promote real conservation activities and more organic farms. We cannot just look at output but rather long term outcomes.

Thank you for your time,

STACIA LOPEZ.

COMMENT OF THOMAS LOPEZ

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:52 p.m.

City, State: Northville, MI

Occupation: Social Worker

Comment: I want a farm bill that favors local farmers, NOT corporations! I want transparency and fairness to be expected of all farmers and their farming practices. And I believe small producers deserve more protection under the law that huge corporations, who honestly monopolize the market. Also, end the subsidies for certain crops (*i.e.*, corn and soybeans)! The Monsantos didn't need the assistance and they push the smaller farmer out of the market. I appreciate your listening to my input.

COMMENT OF APRIL L'ORANGE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:26 p.m.

City, State: Binghamton, NY

Occupation: Unemployed

Comment: We support our local farmers and ranchers and would appreciate it if the U.S. government did the same. Studies show that there is no gain in efficiency when farming and ranching operations grow above a certain size, and we are currently seeing exactly what kind of ill effects (Roundup resistant weeds, a move back toward the components of Agent Orange) we can expect from haphazardly trying to genetically modify crops to avoid extra labor, rather than buying seed that doesn't include any intellectual property fee and putting the money back into jobs that make those modifications unnecessary. The way we eat is making a whole lot of us sick, and it stems from the way we grow food in a country dedicated to rooting out any alternatives. It's time to stop subsidizing agribusiness and put our backing into small and midsized farming and ranching operations, where it belongs.

COMMENT OF WEN LOREN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:10 p.m.

City, State: Eugene, OR

Occupation: Instructor and Licensed Massage Therapist

Comment: I fully support all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286). This will be a start in adopting best agricultural practices for the health of citizens, the land and the livelihood of farmers and farm workers.

By fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, we make sure that enrollment in new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs & our farmland will be protected.

The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236) will assist in long term goals for Food, Farms and Jobs. Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative is necessary for health and well-being of us all.

COMMENT OF LLOYD LORING

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:42 p.m.

City, State: South Bend, IN

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Agribusiness methods are changing the value of foods they offer. Farmers who reject the brute force methods now urged by chemical firms to control weeds and pests are being victimized by rules that deny them the opportunity to create healthful and nutritious food. I need better food on my table, not bigger profits for a handful of investors.

COMMENT OF JOE LORIO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:59 p.m.

City, State: Ossining, NY

Occupation: Journalist

Comment: Stop subsidizing corporate farms. Stop subsidizing commodity crops like corn. Corporate agriculture is poisoning the American food supply, creating obesity, and driving health-care costs through the roof. It's time to stand up to these entrenched interests and tilt the scales in favor of smaller, organic, sustainable producers.

COMMENT OF SABRINA LOUISE

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 6:59 p.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Whole Foods Consultant

Comment: It is incredibly important to realize the magnitude of the farm bill as it relates to the permanency of our choices. We need to do whatever we can to preserve our right to seed heritage and food security, nutritionally and organically. This means less GMO's and more plant diversity . . . This also means more food going to feed humans than livestock, because meat and dairy long term is not going to be sustainable for 9 billion on one planet. Please rethink your decisions and take into account future generations. If we do not halt the planting and spraying of poisons, we risk global bee collapse, resource depletion, and potentially the end of all food systems, and thus, civilization.

COMMENT OF KATHRYN LOVE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:19 p.m.

City, State: Columbia, MO

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Dry Beans & Peas, Livestock, Specialty Crops, Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Agricultural subsidies for corn have led to the country's obesity epidemic. It is time to subsidize **Healthy** food, not the crops that have the most clout in Congress due to their lobbyists' influence. Please keep soil and water conservation and the health of U.S. citizens your foremost concerns when drafting the new farm bill.

Sincerely,

KATHRYN LOVE.

COMMENT OF ARLENE LOVE LIPPMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:26 p.m.

City, State: Philadelphia, PA

Occupation: Artist/Photographer

Comment: We are like the growing number of people who have stopped buying meat and poultry in supermarkets. Food safety is below par. Turning it over to private companies will only increase the climate for corruption.

COMMENT OF GEORGE LOVEDAY

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 12, 2012, 1:33 p.m.

City, State: Grass Valley, CA

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: We are under control by the monopolistic farm industry, and they are poisoning America. How excited can one get about products full of pesticides, corn,

antibiotics, growth hormones, untested chemicals, GMO, and products full of fat, salt, and sugar that can stay on the shelf for 20 years? The bees are dying, super weeds are now spreading everywhere, poisons are allowed to travel downstream into water supply of communities, and we have a dead zone in the gulf that continues to grow.

Yet, you do nothing. You kick the can farther down the road rather than stand up and be responsible.

The change is simple if you are willing to take a swallow of integrity and courage. Money for organic farming only, and stop giving money away to the corn industry.

More cancers, birth defects, diseases, allergies, hormone imbalances, infertility, and on and on and on.

COMMENT OF SHEILA LOW-BEER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:59 p.m.

City, State: Charleston, SC

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Our health and the planet do not benefit from subsidies to industrial agriculture! We desperately need a food system based on local and organic food! Please **Think**, and do the right thing. **Please!**

COMMENT OF STEPHAN LOWER

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 10, 2012, 2:21 p.m.

City, State: Reno, NV

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Our community has been hit especially hard by the recession. Providing enough healthy food for our neighbors is an enormous effort. Cutting Federal assistance, such as SNAP, simply means somebody is going to go hungry. That somebody is most likely to be children or seniors. You have duty, as do we, to be sure Americans have enough to eat.

COMMENT OF REBECCA LOWERY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:06 p.m.

City, State: Eldersburg, MD

Occupation: Educator

Comment: As a consumer of pure, sustainably-produced, organic foods, I am tired of Big Agriculture lobbies ruling the food production in this country. My children have health conditions that require them to eat only pesticide- and GMO-free foods. We rely on several small local farmers to provide us with the nourishment we need. Big Agriculture lobbies are trying to put my farmers out of business and leave us with only toxic food. It is time that you honor the will of the people and not those seeking to profit from the destruction of sustainable, nutrient-rich food choices. Thank you for your consideration of this very important issue.

COMMENTS OF SANNA LOWRANCE

Date Submitted: Friday, April 27, 2012 6:05 p.m.

City, State: Hattiesburg, MS

Comment: I'd like to see more support for small farmers, some effort to end the massive environmental contamination of genetically modified crops that are devastating the nation and threatening the health of all those who consume them. I'd also like to see mandatory labeling of all genetically modified produce, meat, and processed foods . . . until then, I will not buy anything that I cannot source as local. It's simply too dangerous.

I'd also like to see some controls on the massive use of fertilizers, weed killers and pesticides that are producing super weeds, poisoning our air, water and the foods we eat, and quite possibly killing off the bees we need to continue to produce food at all.

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 3:28 p.m.

Comment: Provide more support to family farmers, to organic producers, and begin to phase out the GMO debacle that is ruining our health, our food supply and our faith in American food products. By requiring ever more pesticides—and more dangerous ones as well—genetically engineered crops are threatening our very survival by poisoning the environment, creating adverse health impacts from ingesting these pesticides, and promoting the growth of superweeds, which threaten all agricultural producing.

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:00 p.m.

Comment: I would like shopping to be easy again. I want to be able to trust the foods on the grocer's shelves. Instead, I have been forced to abandon any and all meat products, processed foods, most cooking oils and shortenings, dairy products, fresh, frozen and canned vegetables in order to avoid genetically engineered foods and ingredients that our ruining our health and our environment. It's time to return to common sense agriculture and to healthy, life giving foods.

"The USDA surveyed 43 foods and compared their nutritional content in 1999 to original testing that took place in 1950. Half of the nutrients measured declined by 6 to 38%."—The Cornucopia Institute

"Micronutrients such as iron, manganese and zinc can be reduced by as much as 80–90 percent in GE plants!"—Stingray

For a healthy America, our citizens must has healthy foods. To have access to healthy foods, producers must produce healthy foods, and food labeling must enable consumers to make the healthy choices when they shop.

COMMENT OF EMMA LOWREY

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 5:06 a.m.

City, State: Hilo, HI

Occupation: Curves Employee, Freelance Writer and Proofreader

Comment: Food policy is one of the most important political issues, though many people do not realize government substantially shapes our food economy. As you consider our next farm bill, I urge you to:

End subsidies (aka direct payments and countercyclical commodity programs)! Current subsidies favor crops such as corn and soybeans that end up as highly processed food products largely devoid of fiber and nutrients. Research is showing that consumption of processed grains leads to an increased risk for obesity. If anything, our taxpayer dollars should be going towards helping local farmers who provide fresh food farmed in a sustainable manner.

I sincerely hope you take my points into consideration. I am only one of many citizens who share this view.

Thank you for your time.

COMMENT OF LYN LOWRY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:38 p.m.

City, State: Takoma Park, MD

Occupation: Editor

Comment: We need real reform of our farm policies, from food safety and inspection to humane treatment and living conditions of animals. The situation regarding both these issues is abysmal and alarming. We can and should do better as a nation, and you should do far better as our Representatives.

COMMENT OF SARAH LOWRY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:00 p.m.

City, State: Deerfield, OH

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: The industrial agriculture system is one that is ruining the health of U.S. citizens and the environment we all live in. We need to make sweeping changes in order to live better lives in the future. Please reform farm policy; if not for your own health, than for your children's.

COMMENT OF CAROL LUBETKIN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:23 p.m.

City, State: Moore Haven, FL

Occupation: Retired Teacher

Comment: We must have an organic farm bill—accurate labeling and info for the public consumer. It is of grave importance to our health and the health of our planet Earth. Thank you very much.

COMMENT OF JILL LUBIN

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 1:19 p.m.

City, State: Spotswood, NJ

Occupation: Chemist

Comment: Organic agriculture should be highly funded above all other agriculture. It is the only way the future of our land and agriculture will succeed. Genetically modified crops are rendering America's soil infertile and is not doing what it promised it would do.

COMMENT OF MICHAEL LUCA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:03 p.m.

City, State: Shrewsbury, NJ

Occupation: Computer Consultant

Comment: I am concerned about what is going on in the food industry. We have lost our way and I am horrified at the level of influence the current Agribusiness has over our elected officials. I did not vote for Monsanto et al., and this needs to change.

COMMENT OF KRISTA LUCCHESI

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 3:59 p.m.

City, State: Oakland, CA

Occupation: Director of Nonprofit

Comment: Please consider those with no other resources to get food when you consider cuts to programs like the commodities program or SNAP. These folks have no other options for food and programs like mine cannot keep up with the need. We need your help. Please do not cut these programs.

COMMENT OF BARBARA LUCE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:37 p.m.

City, State: Clinton, ME

Occupation: CS

Comment: I think that local food and small farms are a better value than large agribusiness. Food should be labeled so the consumer can make informed decisions.

COMMENT OF URSULA LUCKERT

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 15, 2012, 6:41 p.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Accounting/Operations Executive

Comment: The SNAP and TEFAP programs are critical to our nation's mission that no one in our country should be hungry. These are effective programs with high efficiency and returns and such be supported by our legislature.

COMMENT OF NANCY LUEDERS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:42 p.m.

City, State: Covington, GA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Family gardens are great for harmonizing with each other, the Earth and God. We were meant to eat real food, not food containing chemicals. The GMO, chemicals, and techniques for raising gardens, livestock and human children are poison for all humans, gardens and livestock. We are destroying our home, Mother Earth, with all of these poisons. It is on your conscience how you vote, not mine, so good luck and do the right thing.

COMMENT OF DR. CATHERINE LUIB

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 4:52 p.m.

City, State: Moreno Valley, CA

Occupation: Chiropractor, Acupuncturist, Clinical Hypnotherapist

Comment: We deserve a right to know what is in our food and if they are GMOs! GMO are horrible and detrimental, affecting and changing human DNA! We need to know about our food sources and have better quality of it. Protect organic farm lands and treat organic farmers better! Monsanto needs to go down, stop any support for this terrible money hungry company!

COMMENT OF CAROLINE LULEY

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 13, 2012, 10:48 a.m.

City, State: Cape Canaveral, FL

Occupation: Retail Sales

Comment: Please see that the farm bill is strong and protects our food supply. We need an end to farm subsidies with a strong labeling process. We need to support locally grown organic foods. We need to protect programs like SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP so that poor children don't go hungry. Oversight and strong regulations on disease and farm animal treatment. All of these things needs to be considered and included in this bill. Our farm industry predicts the health and well being of all Americans.

COMMENT OF NEIL LUMBARD

Date Submitted: Monday, March 19, 2012, 6:20 p.m.

City, State: Waco, TX

Occupation: Student

Comment: Please consider the importance of nutrition programs and do not consider cutting funds helping these necessary health-related and hunger-related issues.

It would significantly affect our country, it's people, and not in a good or positive way. We must remember to help those in need. Hunger is never an acceptable option to even consider so far as possible budget cuts.

Please support all Hunger related bills to help the struggling and under-served members of our population. It helps everyone. It is the best and only option.

COMMENT OF KIRK LUMPKIN

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 2:00 p.m.

City, State: El Cerrito, CA

Occupation: Farmers' Market Special Event Coordinator

Comment: Historically most of the money in the farm bill has gone to conventionally produced commodity crops, but these are the things that now need the least support. We need to support small organic farms—they represent the healthy future that will benefit the most people. We need to facilitate access to healthy food by increasing support for EBT (Food Stamps).

COMMENT OF RHONDA LUNDIN

Date Submitted: Tuesday, April 24, 2012, 1:18 p.m.

City, State: Reno, NV

Occupation: Public Relations

Comment: Mr. Amodei:

The cuts that the House Agriculture Committee has recommended making to the SNAP program would be absolutely disastrous to Northern Nevada. Need at the Food Bank of Northern Nevada has doubled in the last year and a half and more than one in four children in Nevada is food insecure. Losing access to SNAP benefits would be devastating to these families, and the Food Bank and other charities would never be able to fill the need created by these cuts.

I know cuts must be made, but please reconsider such dramatic cuts to SNAP. We are still dealing with double-digit unemployment in Nevada, and this kind of move would exacerbate the struggles that our state and communities are going through.

Sincerely,

RHONDA LUNDIN,

[Redacted],

Reno, NV.

COMMENT OF KATHLEEN L. LUNDY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:20 p.m.

City, State: Salt Lake City, UT

Occupation: Self-Employed

Comment: There is much wrong with the proposed farm bill—it is doing nothing to help the long range development of farming as a way of life; healthy farming; and small local farms. It seems to promote more industrialization of farms . . . this practice leads to unhealthy for people crops . . . this bill undermines the very

things that would help our people . . . help us be healthy and more secure. More later . . .

COMMENT OF PATRICK LUNEMANN

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 10:56 p.m.

City, State: Clarissa, MN

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Dairy

Size: 500–999 acres

Comment: As the President of the Minnesota Milk Producers Association (MMPA) and as a constituent of Congressman Peterson, I thought I should provide feedback regarding the dairy provisions of the proposed farm bill. MMPA's Board of Directors has voted to oppose the dairy provisions contained in the draft 2012 Farm Bill. MMPA, which represents Minnesota dairy farmers, believes the bill does not adequately address the challenges facing Minnesota's dairy farmers.

We ask that the language referring to "Milk Stabilization" be decoupled from the Dairy Producer Margin Protection Program. Or, another option would be to keep the existing language and then make Livestock Gross Margin—Dairy (LGM-Dairy) a permanent program and provide some additional funding. Therefore, producers could still choose to have a Federal supported safety net without being forced into a supply management program. They could choose LGM-Dairy or the Dairy Producer Margin Protection Program that includes Milk Stabilization.

MMPA's first priority is the long-term success of Minnesota dairy farmers. One major component of achieving this priority is to ensure that our dairy farmers have a solid infrastructure. Analysis of the current Senate language would force Minnesota dairy farmers to cut up to 6% of milk production—Today.

Certain regions are currently producing milk in excess of their processing capacity. Here in Minnesota, we are dangerously close to losing some of our processing plants due to lack of locally produced milk. A cut in other regions would just balance their supply to plant capacity. Here, with a production cut, our Minnesota dairy farmers could lose infrastructure, leading to further decline in an industry that adds over 40,000 jobs and over \$11.6 billion of economic impact to Minnesota alone.

Dairy farmers also deserve promised market reform. The United States dairy industry must move toward a two class pricing system and it must move toward a competitive pay price.

I also ask to please include California under the Federal Milk Market Order system. And, we should increase our solids non-fat standards up to the same level as California.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our feedback on the proposed dairy provisions of the current draft of the farm bill.

PATRICK LUNEMANN,
President, Minnesota Milk Producers,
 Clarissa, MN.

COMMENT OF JAMES LUNG

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012 2:20 p.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Graphic Designer and Avid Gardener/Food Grower

Comment: I am writing to voice my support for the following:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

We need to build resilience in our food system by supporting policies other than large mechanized big agribusiness. Our soils are getting salted by fertilizers and poisoned by pesticides. Our infrastructure is entirely based on a fossil fuel paradigm as we enter the 6th year of peak oil according to the International Energy Agency. Wes Jackson is an example of someone pioneering a more sustainable system that is resilient: he uses a perennial polyculture to withstand drought and hail without using pesticides and fertilizers. Please look at the risks of agribusinesses that are analogously 'too big to fail' and know that our food and soils are more precious than

money. True wealth is a healthy, productive land and we have farm lands that are desert equivalents that insects can't live on. We are making it so that even plants can't live on the land unless we bioengineer them to resist the poison we apply. We are at risk—make no mistake.

COMMENT OF CHRISTOPHER LUNN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:25 p.m.

City, State: Genoa, NV

Occupation: Technology Executive

Comment: As you gentlemen and gentlewomen take care of and seek the best for your families, so should our laws seek to nurture what is best for the Earth that sustains humanity.

It is an obvious point of logic that replenishing Earth's soil with just 3 basic chemicals and then relying upon herbicides, pesticides and fungicides defies basic human and soil health needs.

Soil becomes too 'hot' for natural microbe and enzyme activity to thrive. Those nutrient releasers die and the cycle of replenishing with artificial chemicals takes over.

Organic farming research and implementation MUST be sustained and enhanced for the well being of present and future generations.

I urge you to **Please** look beyond the presentations of vested, corporate agriculture presents you.

GMO's **Be Gone!**

COMMENT OF JOANNE LUONGO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:27 a.m.

City, State: Kettle Falls, WA

Occupation: Home Gardener/Writer

Comment: It is imperative that the small farm receive every consideration that industrial farming is offered. What is meant by "every consideration" is fairness, respect & economic advantages that large industrial farms are given.

COMMENT OF GRANT LUPHER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:09 p.m.

City, State: Los Angeles, CA

Occupation: Unemployed

Comment: I believe that given the growing problem with hunger in this country, due to a still uncertain economy, that our Congress needs to put strong support behind farm aid bills.

COMMENT OF MAYRA LURIA

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 10, 2012, 3:08 p.m.

City, State: Ft. Lauderdale, FL

Occupation: Herbalist

Comment: We have lived the failure of corporate farms and it is time to help the individual small farmer again. Monsanto is not a farmer it is a corporation with Nazi ideals of ruling the world through food control. We need to encourage and support organic and non GMO food sources. The U.S. with all its knowledge is falling and failing the People in its agricultural policies.

COMMENT OF DEBORAH LUSCOMB

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 1:24 p.m.

City, State: Boulder, CO

Occupation: Seamstress, Gardener, Nutrition Coach, Food Activist

Comment: In the name of sanity, compassion and health, it is time to discontinue subsidies to industries that are destroying the planet, like big agriculture, and increase subsidies to small, community, organic farmers. Let's put people and the planet before profit for a change. It's high time.

COMMENT OF MARC LUSSIER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:28 a.m.

City, State: Florence, MA

Occupation: Restaurant Server/Milk Courier/Father

Comment: The support of smaller community based, family oriented farms is a key piece of our democracy. Our country was based on such things, and the “American Spirit” evolved from the independence created by small farms. The world changes, but a return to the past allows for a model that maintains an individual’s ability to work and see the results of the work. It moves us away from the large amounts of petroleum that now pervade our food sources in the form of fertilizers, and the need for petrol to ship products thousands of miles. Please take any GMO supporting provisions out—they are a dark path fraught with peril.

COMMENT OF ESSIE LUTES

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:48 p.m.
City, State: Indianapolis, IN
Occupation: Retired
Comment: Honorable Carson,

We need to stop funding for large industrial farmers and support our local as well as organic family farms. This is the heart land of America . . .

Regards,
 ESSIE LUTES.

COMMENT OF HARRY LUTON

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 4:01 p.m.
City, State: Bloomington, IN
Occupation: Biologist, Indiana University

Comment: As a biologist and someone literate in the science of our times as well as in world issues, I must stand up strongly for a farm bill that would encourage small-scale, organic farming rather than large-scale commodity farming. “Factory farms” rely heavily on synthetic fertilizers and pesticides, with a huge cost to our environment. In my hometown in Louisiana, the agricultural runoff coming down the Mississippi has numerous ill effects on the wildlife in the wetlands and coast, and also hurts our fishing industry. Similar issues occur all over the country, and ultimately the American people will suffer the cost of faltering ecosystems.

I also want to point out the unhealthy food systems that are tied to large monoculture operations. At a time when the rate of diabetes is steadily increasing, our stores are flooded with high fructose corn-syrup and refined wheat products rather than local greens.

The farms that should be subsidized are not those who are willing to stress our environment and our health in order to ensure their crops success and turn a dollar. Rather, I want my tax dollars going to those who are willing to take risks using natural growing techniques. For me this is a moral issue, as well as a common-sense issue. Those taking the big risks involved in small operations are the ones who really need the money.

For all of the reasons above, and many more I recommend a farm bill with the following features:

- Full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

COMMENT OF LAURA LUTTRELL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:06 p.m.
City, State: Milwaukee, WI
Occupation: Student—Future Farmer
Comment: I support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).

- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

I currently work with a nonprofit organization that daily encounters hundreds of individuals that are utilizing the SNAP program and vitally need it. How will they meet their basic needs without at least the same support?

I also plan to have a small organic farm in the future, but some of the suggestions on the table make me second guess whether you will make it too hard for me to do that.

I believe the only way forward for our country is to reduce the size of farms and increase the variety. Please help me to be able to be part of this.

COMMENT OF PATRICIA LUX

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 13, 2012, 9:23 a.m.

City, State: Oak Park, IL

Occupation: Self-Employed

Comment: Even families who receive food stamps sometimes need to come to our food pantry. Cutting SNAP will mean even less food for people already in poverty. Please don't cut SNAP.

COMMENT OF LYNNEA LUX-KOSIEWICZ

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:55 p.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Illuminated Calligrapher

Comment: We need real reform that supports a healthy, long term, bodiverse crop rotation that emphasizes organics and sustainable farming practices. Big ag fulfills none of these necessary requirements.

COMMENT OF AIMEE LUZWICK

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 08, 2012, 5:09 p.m.

City, State: Griffith, IN

Occupation: Database Analyst

Comment: I recently read that the committee has approved cutting the Food Stamp Program that I believe is now called SNAP. I am personally appalled by this decision and I hoping what I read was wrong. I can honestly say that my family has been truly blessed during what I call a depression. However, the number of people that are struggling are far greater than any political poll can even gage. I have never seen so many people desperate for food on street corners, parking lots, and even children heading for school. My family has been trying to help as many families as much as possible through these horrible times. I cannot believe you now want to take food from these people when they've already lost everything. **Does Anyone On The Committee Know What It's Like Out Here In The Real World?** I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP. Too many people in my town will suffer greatly if you cut these programs.

COMMENT OF DEBORAH LYLE

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 2:07 p.m.

City, State: Edgewater, MD

Occupation: Housewife

Comment: I am offended by the idea you want to further Monsanto and their unsafe gardening practices and round-up in the seed corn. The unsafe practices of these so called organized big businesses are what is killing our country. Killing the bees that pollinate our crops and wondering what has happened? We need safe practices in organic small farms to keep us eating healthy foods. Don't cave to big business and support our local farms instead. Thank you.

COMMENT OF DAVID LYNCH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:01 p.m.

City, State: Lexington, KY

Occupation: Homemaker

Comment: Our country is turning into McDonalds, it is shameful that we give school children Roundup pesticide chips, but can't give them organic apples. If you want the USA to die continue supporting the McDonaldization of America. We need to double organic funding and farming, stop subsidizing Monsanto.

COMMENT OF JILL LYNCH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:59 p.m.

City, State: Viroqua, WI

Occupation: Clinical Mental Health Counselor

Comment: Dear House Committee on Agriculture,

We really do need to wake up . . . we've needed to for a very long time, but we can **No Longer** continue on this path of unsustainable agriculture which contributes to unsustainable health & well-being, at home and around the world.

I grew up on an Iowa farm and know corn and soybeans, and worked in the fields. I loved being on the family farm. However, "factory farming" has taken over, aided by the agenda of agribusiness (which should not be synonymous with agriculture and farming) and the way we, the government, have subsidized corn for decades.

Also, I became sick from the commonplace and casual use of herbicides and pesticides. There is a problem here, and we need to stop dismissing or downplaying the problem. It is not going to go away through ignorance or dismissal of the problems.

My undergraduate degree is in home economics and I taught high school level in Iowa before teaching as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Sierra Leone, West Africa. I want you to know that the Beef, Dairy, Pork Councils wrote out curriculum materials for teachers to use for cooking and nutrition classes. Let me tell you, this was biased information and clearly inappropriate. As a young teacher I didn't know better, and many continue today not knowing any better.

Also, when I went to Sierra Leone (1977-79) shops were selling DTD that the USA shipped there because it was banned here in our country because it was a health risk. I was appalled and ashamed that my country did this. I also saw clearly how the local Sierra Leonans did not know how to read the labels or use such toxic materials.

These stories are about my direct experience, and just are small examples of the monolithic problem. Perhaps they sound unrelated to each other, but they are not. Perhaps they sound exaggerated, but they are not. The kind of industrial and chemical farming we are engaged in and supporting is dead wrong—as in killing us and throwing things way, way out of nature's balance—affecting our food, our water, our soil, our bodies, our wildlife. These pieces are all interconnected and impact locally and globally.

Please, I ask you to look closely and deeply into the farm bill. I am aware how complex this situation is with agribusiness lobbying, the history of subsidy, the impact on informed and uninformed REAL farmers, and the distasteful politics that gets played out to the detriment of our health.

You have no small task on your hands. This is a huge issue about personal, family, community, national and international well-being; including the health and safety of our water, our soil, our air, our plants, our livestock.

May you approach this new farm bill with wisdom!

Kindly,

JILL.

COMMENT OF MARTHA LYNCH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:41 p.m.

City, State: East Lansing MI

Occupation: Spiritual Director & Pastoral Care Coordinator

Comment: Food is not a 'commodity', it is the gift that sustains life for the whole Earth. With the health and welfare of that precious ecosystem precariously hanging in the balance, we must be mindful always of generations to come. May you find the courage to release the power grip that industrial agriculture has on our food, and begin to let in the light of science and moral understanding. Seeds must remain in pure form—without chemical additive or genetic modification. Animals must be treated humanely—able to live a life of dignity and comfort. 'You are what you eat' is not only a catchy slogan, it speaks the truth of how we are making ourselves and the planet sicker and sicker. To continue to subsidize poisons and maltreatment of animals is unconscionable! It's time to subsidize and lift up small, local, sustainable, healthy farming practices that are organic and biodynamic—for the sake of our children and grandchildren!

COMMENT OF MEGAN LYNCH

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 9:06 a.m.

City, State: Prairie Village, KS

Occupation: Hospital Admitting Representative

Comment: We need food to live. Why wouldn't the government want to make sure that we and our kids have access to healthy foods? I hope they take more of an interest in the issue.

COMMENT OF MARCY LYNN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:23 p.m.

City, State: Brooklyn, NY

Occupation: Parent

Comment: Any farm bill should subsidize and support organic agriculture and organic farming practices (even where full organic certification isn't affordable). Organic vegetable crops should be subsidized so as to make organic local vegetables more affordable for all. Our govt. should not be subsidizing junk crops like soy or corn or potatoes or even wheat. They are used to make junk foods and flours that make . . . more junk foods. They are cheap (because they are subsidized) and that lines the pockets of statin makers but frankly most of us are having trouble affording \$5 bunches of organic broccoli. So subsidize vegetables, not junk starch crops. Do not support any GMO crops. And work to eliminate pesticides over all so we keep our bees—which are indeed needed to keep crops growing and maintain food supply. Also would request:

1. The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
2. Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
3. The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
4. Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

COMMENT OF MATTHEW LYNN

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 11:08 p.m.

City, State: Venice, CA

Occupation: Film/TV

Comment: Please support a healthy farm bill that puts organic farming and free-range livestock as a priority.

Why can't we STOP subsidizing corn, which just leads to obesity, and **Start** subsidizing organic and healthy farming practices?

After all, we are what we eat, and Americans are growing tired of eating factory farmed subpar food!

Please help make a difference in the right direction!

Thanks!

COMMENT OF MEGHAN LYNN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 1:31 p.m.

City, State: Antioch, IL

Occupation: Education

Comment: I am a supporter of Organics as they are much healthier with all the chemicals that are being put into people's foods. It is important that people are educated on the facts of what is going into their foods so they can make more informed decisions on the products they consume. As Americans, we should be supporting healthier lifestyles with no GMOs. The number of people with diseases such as cancer and diabetes rising at an alarming rate.

COMMENT OF BRENDA LYON

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 12, 2012, 3:41 p.m.

City, State: Branchport, NY

Occupation: Unemployed

Comment: Our counties backpack program feeds over 400 children each weekend. Children who otherwise would not have food to eat. Cuts to the SNAP Program will put these children in jeopardy.

You may want to visit Milly's Pantry in Penn Yan and meet with the director of this program Becky Holder, to get the specifics and needs of our children. Becky's mother Milly, a retired lunch lady, started this program.

COMMENT OF JANET LYON

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 1:28 a.m.

City, State: Missoula, MT

Occupation: Land Owner/Social Worker

Comment: As a family descendent of Montana homesteaders, I know the importance of protecting our country's family farms and preventing them, through education and legislation, from becoming sources of pollution of our land and water. Let the farm bill pave the way for helping Americans become healthier and protect our land and water through the use of environmentally sound best management practices. The organic food movement is an idea whose time has come. Let the new farm bill provide the support to this movement that we all deserve.

The Whole World Is Watching.

COMMENT OF CURT LYONS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:08 p.m.

City, State: Fort Collins, CO

Occupation: Construction

Comment: I am so tired of big agribusiness that only cares about the bottom line of making money wining out over farms trying to grow the best most healthy food, that I would actually feed my child.

COMMENT OF SHANNON LYONS

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:27 a.m.

City, State: Sarasota, FL

Occupation: Yoga Instructor

Comment: No farms, no food. The people are exclaiming that they do not want mass produced, processed, and shipped food. See the opportunity to thrive as a well-nourished country fed on local family farms. Support local economy and enrich the lives of humans, animals, and soil with humane and sustainable practices.

COMMENT OF CHARLES MA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:25 a.m.

City, State: Magnesia, MA

Occupation: Engineer

Comment: Please support our local farmer. Stop subsidizes to big farmers & the production of food that is making us and our planet sick. Please support feeding the hungry!

JOINT COMMENT OF JOAN AND WALLACE MACDONALD

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:41 p.m.

City, State: Mountain View, CA

Occupation: Retired Teacher and Management Analyst

Comment: We feel strongly that subsidies to agribus should stop. That is wasted dollars that should be given to authentic small family farms, especially organic farms. Subsidies to huge corn producers for ethanol is totally unrelated to food production.

Further, we want more inspectors to protect consumers from tainted or diseased food. The instances of food that has had to be recalled have risen. Clearly, more efforts in prevention are needed.

And GMO foods need clear labeling now.

COMMENT OF JOANN MACDONALD

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:12 a.m.

City, State: Joppa, MD

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I'm an "eater", and I want my food safe from farms to my table. Organic should mean **No** pesticides, no antibiotics, and only preservatives that have been approved safe for consumption. Salt is one!

We have come so far in protecting the health of our citizens. Don't stop now!

COMMENT OF LEO MACDONALD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:46 p.m.

City, State: Erwinna, PA

Occupation: Chemistry Teacher

Comment: Our food is healthier when organic and natural and humane methods of food production are used. Large doses of toxic chemicals are bad for the plants (pesticides) and bad for animals (hormones and antibiotics) and finally bad for the end consumer (the people who eat, which includes ALL people. Big corporate agri-chembusiness wants everyone to think these “lots of chemicals” are essential to food success. Nothing is further from the truth. My family eats healthy organic local food and are healthier and my little kids (2 & 4) will grow up stronger without chemical toxins in their bodies. Please enact a farm bill that supports small healthy farms and discourages large factory farms dependent on chemicals.

COMMENT OF MYRA MACDONALD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:02 p.m.

City, State: Berkley, MI

Occupation: Educator

Comment: I want my food to be organically grown and not genetically modified. I also want it clearly labeled so I know what I am buying. Please make sure any legislation that passes includes these two important considerations. Thank you.

COMMENT OF SHAUN MACDONALD HAWKE

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 1:16 a.m.

City, State: Angelus Oaks, CA

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: Safety of our food production should be one of our nation’s highest priorities. The safety of our food production depends on diversity—in seed resources, ideas, and people in farming. Small farms and organic practices have had centuries to prove their safety. Corporate giants do not protect our nation’s food supplies—except in ways it helps their bottom line.

COMMENT OF MARIE MACDOUGALL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:13 p.m.

City, State: Lovelock, NV

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Field Crops, Poultry/poultry products

Size: 50–150 acres

Comment: I am completely against tax money being used to pay subsidies to agricultural corporations, under any guise including crop insurance. Enough already—we are hurting in this country, even those of us with jobs. It angers me to see my hard-earned dollars being handed over to corporations.

COMMENT OF ADAM MACGREGOR

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:49 p.m.

City, State: Pittsburgh, PA

Occupation: Communications Specialist

Comment: I urge the committee to oppose any measure that would weaken or dismantle SNAP by cutting its funding or changing it to a block grant program. SNAP is a vital safety net program that must be protected and strengthened to meet the still-growing need from families who are reeling from the effects of the economy. Reducing its funding, altering its structure, or otherwise artificially contracting the program in spite of this need spells trouble for hungry households across our country. I call upon you to please also protect and strengthen important anti-hunger programs like TEFAP and CSFP in the 2012 Farm Bill reauthorization.

COMMENT OF SUSANNA MACGREGOR

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:04 p.m.

City, State: Fairfield, IA

Occupation: Architectural Designer

Comment: I am very concerned that corporate agriculture interests are controlling and co-opting most of the Agriculture legislation. I want subsidies to big corn and soy and similar commodity producers to be cut, so that the least healthful food no longer is the cheapest for consumers. I support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
 - Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
 - The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
 - Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.
- For the sake of the health of our people and the well-being of our environment, we must move toward sustainable agriculture—more conversion to organic practices.

COMMENT OF THERESE MACKENZIE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:38 p.m.
City, State: Chicago, IL
Occupation: Education
Comment: Food safety concerns affect more than food. The future of our soil, air, and water are involved. Please do anything possible to stop wasting money on agribusiness and everything possible to support organic farming.
 Thanks!

COMMENT OF DEB MACLEOD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:11 p.m.
City, State: Nantucket, MA
Occupation: Small Elegant Space Designer
Comment: Should be obvious to everyone by now that 3 generations migration away from the land & local food production has changed the country's overall health. Food comes from soil. Not labs. Health comes from food. We are what we eat. What's working is honoring the land & the true stewards of that land. Stand up for this country. People will help you carry the banner! Thank you!

COMMENT OF DIANNA MACLEOD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:54 p.m.
City, State: Langley, WA
Occupation: Writer
Comment: We need real reform that places the health of consumers above the profits of agribusiness. Support organics, family farms, and agricultural practices that enhance, not destroy, the land and water.

COMMENT OF MARGARET MACIBORKA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:39 p.m.
City, State: San Francisco, CA
Occupation: Commercial Insurance Underwriter
Comment: Just as food sustains us, we must sustain the producers of quality, chemical-free food not "Big Ag", but those that care about the land and the air and water quality that result from their operations. We must also support methods to get good quality food to those less fortunate. These methods could be funded by eliminating subsidies to "Big Ag". It's time to cut the purse strings!

COMMENT OF CHRISTINE MACIEL

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 10:07 p.m.
City, State: New Windsor, NY
Occupation: Retired
Comment: Food is the most important, basic necessity for every one of us. To neglect to protect our food producers and encourage them to use safe sustainable methods is unthinkable. And to refuse to provide food aid for those of our most vulnerable citizens, our children and our elders, is a crime.
 We must double our efforts to protect the young for hunger! They are our future!

COMMENT OF NANCY MACY

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 12, 2012, 5:52 p.m.
City, State: Boulder Creek, CA
Occupation: Director of Recycling

Comment: Eliminate subsidies to industrial agriculture (corn, soybeans, canola or rape seed, wheat and rice) in favor of vegetables and fruit (encourages health eating and can reduce obesity), and **Expand** policies which encourage and foster organic agriculture, long since proven to yield as much as industrial agriculture, without poisoning the land with herbicides and pesticides (thus eventually eliminating the huge dead zone in the Gulf of Mexico). **Retain And Fully Fund** programs that benefit women with children (Food Stamps and WIC).

COMMENT OF TIA MADDOX

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 1:44 p.m.

City, State: Bend, OR

Occupation: Chef

Comment: As a restaurant chef and manager, it is of absolute importance the quality of food. Genetically modified foods are so prevalent now, and mandatory labeling of these foods at the very least is a must. I only choose organic foods for consumption out of fear of what is hiding in conventional products. Most people are not aware of GMOS and the toxic side effects they have on human health, no matter what Monsanto and other people may claim. Food is meant to be pure, organic, and real, not created in a laboratory or a factory. what are the Monsanto, the government and all the top people eating? are they poisoning themselves with toxic conventional foods? Highly unlikely. Changes need to be made now.

COMMENT OF MONICA MADER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:26 p.m.

City, State: Pasadena, CA

Occupation: Sales Representative

Comment: To Whom It May Concern:

As a concerned citizen, I am writing to propose reasonable ideas. Please do not cut funding to vital programs such as nutrition, conservation and support for organic and sustainable agriculture. Also, consider and take action to protect and assist small and beginning farmers. Stop subsidizing corporate agribusiness. Focus on and implement adopting best agricultural practices that put the health of the citizens, animals, the land and the livelihood of farmers and farm workers over the interests of giant agribusiness owners, insurance companies and industrial agriculture lobbyists.

I support the following:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

COMMENT OF CARLEEN MADIGAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:39 a.m.

City, State: Cummington, MA

Occupation: Book Editor

Comment: I would like to see more financial support for small farms and beginning farmers, and a decrease in funding for corporate farms. The future security of America's food supply rests with diversified small farms. Thanks!

COMMENT OF REBECCA MADSEN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:27 a.m.

City, State: New York, NY

Occupation: Attorney

Comment: With respect, some of your constituents have found that the health of our children is affected by the food that is most readily available to them. Please help us create a healthy environment!

COMMENT OF JEFF MAEHR

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:04 p.m.

City, State: Pagosa Springs, CO

Occupation: Health Care

Comment: The House Agriculture Committee must surely be aware of the rapidly expanding demand for organic foods and products. Locally grown is “the” next step in this movement. This issue involves health, environmental safety, and national security for Americans. The damage done by complying with megafarming corporations which are attempting to control food and distribution is well established. The threat of GMO foods to human and animal health is well settled science. Please do the right thing and support organic farming in every possible. It will happen and is happening through other major efforts, so don’t be left behind the “8” ball.

COMMENT OF RACHEL MAEROFF

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:57 p.m.

City, State: Plantation, FL

Occupation: Health Counselor

Comment: The farm bill has become a piece of legislature that supports large corporations more than the small farmer and supports crops that turn into junk food. The farm bill should provide a safety net in **Emergencies** (like droughts and natural disasters) and if it supports **Any** crops, it should support fresh fruits and vegetables, the type of foods people need to eat more of.

COMMENT OF JON MAGEE

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 10:26 p.m.

City, State: Greenfield, MA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Dear Chairman Lucas,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony to the House Committee on Agriculture on the next farm bill. My district representative is being copied on this testimony. I am a young farmer myself and I have benefited from the few programs already extant to support new growers. Under the NRCS EQIP program our farm has built high tunnels and improved drainage on our small acreage. From the ATTRA/NCAT program, I received a wealth of information as well as referrals to my first two full-time jobs in agriculture. We enjoy all the shared knowledge brought about by the SARE program’s farmer grants and partnership grants, as well as its valuable publications. Our local extension provides active support for small-scale farmers, in spite of a lack of funding. Small scale farmers are admittedly not a large source of income for the large funders of agricultural education and research, the conglomerates of agribusiness. So it is all the more critical, if this way of life is to continue, that we as a society stand up and make it continue. This can only be done through deliberate action, through real funding of the programs which support new and small farmers. I’d like to share my support for programs that help the next generation of growers build strong farm businesses. As it’s estimated that 125,000 farmers will retire in the next 5 years, it’s absolutely critical that farm bill programs help citizens get started in this challenging field. I ask that the Committee endorse all of the provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236), including:

- Mandatory funding for Individual Development Accounts at \$5 million per year. This program helps new farmers raise capital to start farm businesses and is tested and proven by organizations like Practical Farmers of Iowa and the California Farmlink.
- Mandatory funding for the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program at \$25 million a year. This program funds essential education for new farmers around the country.
- Authorize a new microloan program, to enable young and beginning farmers to better access FSA loan programs.
- Revise FSA rules to make loan programs more accessible to more young and beginning farmers.
- Reaffirm the existing cost share differential for BFRs within EQIP. Also, reaffirm the advance payment option allowing beginning and socially disadvantaged producers to receive an advance payment for the project’s costs for purchasing materials or contracting services, but increase the limit on the advance payment from 30 percent to 50 percent of costs.

- Amend the Farm and Ranch Land Protection Program (FRPP) to make farm viability part of the purpose of the program and to give discretionary authority to the eligible entities that implement the program to give priority to easements with an option to purchase at the agricultural use value, deals that transfer the land to beginning and farmers and ranchers, applicants with farm succession plans, and other similar mechanisms to maintain the affordability of protected land.

These and other provisions within the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act will help new growers succeed and I urge you to include them in the next farm bill.

Sincerely,

JON MAGEE,
{Redacted},
Greenfield, MA.

COMMENT OF JIMMY MAGIASIS

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 12:38 p.m.

City, State: Seattle, WA

Occupation: Naturopathic Doctor

Comment: Lower subsidies by 25% and use that money to support schools to feed children more organic vegetables and fruits. Take the rest of the subsidies and divide it among all farms, including small organic farms.

COMMENT OF JENNIFER MAGLIONE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:57 p.m.

City, State: Mineola, NY

Occupation: Nurse

Comment: I want my tax dollars to go towards good nutrition. Stop with the GMO's and stop denying that good nutrition is not a right in this country. Listen to the people not the corporations.

COMMENT OF ANGELA MAGNUSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:11 p.m.

City, State: Louisville, KY

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: Our congress must defer to the wisdom of both small and large organic farmers. They and I believe in hard work that sustains the land and is meant to healthfully affect the lives of people who rely on their knowledge and toil. The greed that drives agribusiness is out of control! Our legislative bodies should be the defense against such insatiable operators who care little about the land and product they put out beyond their profitability. Please, carefully consider the details of the next farm bill and fight to ensure the protection of the land, the water and the good women and men who put their hands in both and sew the seeds of love and life.

COMMENT OF JEANNE MAGUIRE

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 11:36 a.m.

City, State: Long Beach, CA

Occupation: Doctor

Comment: How long can you live without clean **Food, Water & Air**, the way **Nature** intended? Make the moral and ethical choice. Give us an organic farm bill protecting sustainable farming. The future of our lives and Mother Earth depend on **You**.

COMMENT OF CYNTHIA MAHAMDI

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 6:11 p.m.

City, State: Boulder Creek, CA

Occupation: Professor

Comment: To be denying the needs and will of the American people in favor of the profit margins of agribusiness is not only anti-democratic, it's stupid. It is jeopardizing the health of the economy and the health of the nation by favoring cheap, toxic, and nutritionally dubious products over organic, sustainably farmed, nutritious food. Will 2012 go down in U.S. history as the year that democracy died in America? Will we remember this administration as the government that sold its

people to big business interests? If legislators would simply take the time to inform themselves instead of behaving like paranoid sheep, following whatever they are told, ignoring any information that does not adhere to the official line of corporate power, we might have a chance. There is **So Much** on the line—please, think carefully about what you are doing.

COMMENT OF MARGARET MAHLER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:07 p.m.

City, State: Tonganoxie, KS

Occupation: Retired Kansas Educator

Comment: Dear Rep. Lynn Jenkins,

Per Sen. Dole's *Tell The Truth* 1996 Presidential campaign ad—Kansas homesteaders and small family-owned farms have been the foundation for employing and feeding livestock and people.

I support legislation for sound conservation practices and avoiding GMO's, big corporations including Monsanto's practices and greed.

I support buying local products and educating youth through 4-H and FFA.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF KATE MAHONEY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:38 p.m.

City, State: Dartmouth, MA

Occupation: Caretaker/Organic Gardener/Innkeeper

Comment: It is time for a drastic overhaul in our food industry. Every day I read about foods that are actually poisoning our bodies and making us sick. GMO's and pesticides are prevalent at unhealthy levels in the food we buy in our grocery stores. Anyone voting against this bill is voting based on ignorance. Wake up. Our representatives need to do some extra homework and reading so that they are aware of the bigger picture here. It is absolute and utter **Ignorance** that keeps a bill like this from passing. It is a **Common Sense** bill. Please support it.

COMMENT OF VALERIE MAILLE

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 10, 2012, 6:50 p.m.

City, State: Hudson Falls, NY

Occupation: Unemployed

Comment: As what is supposed to be richest country in the world I think it is time we held our senior citizens with a much higher regard than we do. We need to make sure they want for nothing especially food. No senior citizen should have to make the choice of food, bills or medicine it should all be easily accessible to them financially.

COMMENT OF CLAUDETTE MAIN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:59 p.m.

City, State: Foster City, CA

Occupation: Travel Agent

Comment: As a non-smoker who was diagnosed with Lung Cancer 6 months ago, I am extremely concerned with all of the pesticides and chemicals that are used on our Agricultural products. I only buy organic now and will not expose myself to these dangerous pesticides and chemicals ever again. Life is too precious to waste it on cheap poisonous fruits and vegetables!

COMMENT OF GRETCHEN MAINE

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 11:52 p.m.

City, State: Waterville, NY

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Dairy

Size: 500-999 acres

Comment: To the members of the House Ag Committee:

We are dairy farmers in central NY state. We are third generation farmers on this 500 acre farm. "We" have been here for over 100 years. It's looking more and more like the end is near. We simply cannot survive on \$16 milk. Our feed is now almost \$400 per ton and rising. Fuel is \$4 a gallon. Fertilizer is up \$80 a ton over last year. Everything else that we need is up.

We figured today that we get \$16 per cwt for our milk. When that same milk is sold in the store, it fetches \$44 in Wal-Mart, more in other stores. In other stores it can fetch up to \$48+. That is just not right. Our milk is robbed from us. We have to pay hauling to the processor's and then to the store. Since when should we have to pay "freight" on what we sell? The buyer should be paying the "freight".

If the Dairy Security Act gets into the farm bill, nothing will change. We will still be at the mercy of the processors.

I am a member of the National Family Farm Coalition as well as Progressive Agriculture Organization and get no respect. We support S. 1640, the *Federal Milk Marketing Improvement Act*, or the Cost of Production Bill. We have tried to get support for it, but we have been shut out of everything. Whenever there is a hearing of any kind, the only ones who can speak are handpicked by the co-ops, and the independent farmers have no say. Politicians have been bought by the big co-ops, lobbyists, and big processor money.

Someone Needs To Listen!

No industry can survive without their cost of production. **We Need A Cost Of Production!**

At the same time we need a supply management program. With the Dairy Security Act supply management would be "voluntary." What would keep the oversupply of milk from being balanced on the "volunteers" backs while the big guys just kept cranking out more milk? If the DSA were in effect now, "volunteers" would receive a payment only if they purchased enough insurance to cover their losses and would still be penalized if they did not cut their production 2% below their bases.

We Cannot Survive This BS.

Please, please take a look at S. 1640 and its merits. If the Dairy Security Act is passed, we are done. Yes, the major co-ops support it, but that doesn't mean that their individual members do. They really don't have anything to say. The masterminds of the co-ops do pretty much as they please as long as their pockets are being filled.

I applaud Senator Gillibrand for standing up for her farmers and wish that other politicians would follow suit.

Sincerely,

GRETCHEN MAINE.

COMMENT OF DONNA MAINS

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 10, 2012, 11:34 a.m.

City, State: Oak Park, IL

Occupation: Executive

Comment: There are many Americans in dire straits these days. I see it every day on my commute to and from downtown Chicago. Please ensure that these people who are in very unfortunate circumstances can continue to feed themselves and their families. **Don't Cut SNAP.** Many, many people need this benefit.

Thanks.

COMMENT OF CHRISTOPHER MAIURRO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:40 p.m.

City, State: Brooklyn, NY

Occupation: Small Business Owner

Comment: When is it our turn? When will our elected officials represent our interests instead of those who can afford to hire lobbyists? Is it the fancy dinners? The escorts? What do you guys want? Just do your jobs . . . for once.

COMMENT OF JUDY MAJOR

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:25 a.m.

City, State: Yorktown, VA

Occupation: Retired Teacher

Comment: I would like the government to stop subsidizing corporate farms and start supporting the farmers who produce healthy, non-GMO foods and who treat animals grown for food with respect. Our obesity and diabetes epidemics are a direct result of our chemical-laden food, and you have the responsibility and the power to change that.

COMMENT OF IGGY MAKAREVICH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:54 a.m.

City, State: Cos Cob, CT

Occupation: Artist

Comment: It's simple. Human beings require healthy food. Human beings do not require genetically altered toxic junk passed off as "food" by corrupt corporations and government. These things must be disallowed, unless your goal is to kill us all slowly, which seems to be the case. I must say that I do not trust any of you to do the right thing as you so rarely do, but hope that this plea will nudge you into protecting us in this matter. Farms should be natural. Not toxic. Can you not understand this?

COMMENT OF JANET MAKER

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 02, 2012, 7:40 p.m.

City, State: Los Angeles, CA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Please protect programs vital to people struggling with hunger. Cutting programs that help feed our hungry neighbors is unacceptable! Please help save things like SNAP (food stamps) and our Emergency Food Programs! This is not just for farmers. This impacts all of our Food Pantries who are struggling to help the hungry.

COMMENT OF ANNE MALCORE

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 16, 2012, 7:11 a.m.

City, State: Green Bay, WI

Occupation: Membership Services Representative

Comment: I am a huge advocate of healthy eating initiatives. I have recently taken on gardening, and I hope to assist with some of the school gardens in Green Bay this summer. With the obesity issues our state and nation are facing we need to connect schools to local farms for healthier, more nutritious lunch programs and supporting organic farming is essential. We are poisoning ourselves with pesticides and only setting ourselves up for increased health issues in the future if we continue to contaminate our ground water, air, and soil. We need sustainable, environmentally conscious agricultural ingenuity that awards farmers for producing our nation's food conscientiously. Please be a leader in creating a new food and farm bill that will consider the issues we face in regards to health and nutrition; as well as, sustainability and environmental awareness for our future and the future generations to come!

COMMENT OF EDITH MALIN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:25 p.m.

City, State: Hatfield, PA

Occupation: Wellness Consultant

Comment: U.S. food and agricultural policy must focus on adopting best agricultural practices that put the health of its citizens, the land and the livelihood of (small) farmers and farm workers **Over** the interests of industrial agriculture lobbyists. Agribusiness is destroying too much of the quality of our food, destroying the land, the small local farmers, the quality of water, and their pesticides are killing the honeybees, *etc., etc., etc.* GMO producers are using far too many chemicals on the land, and crushing local farmers for patent infringement when their plants 'infect' the neighbors fields. Agribusiness is not the future.

COMMENT OF ROBIN MALLERY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:57 a.m.

City, State: Grass Valley, CA

Occupation: Professional

Comment: From this day forward, our decisions must be made with the environment in mind. We can no longer let Big Farm/Ag Industry rule, we need to support small, local farms and farmers. Think about your children and grandchildren as you make recommendations for the future. Thank you.

COMMENT OF JANIE MALLOY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:12 p.m.

City, State: Canby, OR

Occupation: Designer

Comment: Please stop subsidizing a system that is too big to fail. Sustainable agriculture does not include GMO seeds, monoculture, or rendering the soil impotent for seven generations. Be responsible, and do the right thing. Humanity may depend on it.

COMMENT OF PEGGY MALNATI

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:41 p.m.

City, State: Farmington Hills, MI

Occupation: Writer/Journalist

Comment: As the daughter of farmer who grew up on a multi-generation family dairy farm, the farm bill is something that I always keep an eye on, as I know that it can have a big impact on the already difficult lives of small family farmers. For too long, the farm bill has been written for Big Ag and has failed to address the needs of smaller family farms and more sustainable farming practices. It's time we changed that and created a saner and fairer method of producing the foods this country and much of the rest of the world relies on for its needs.

COMMENT OF ANN MALONE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:05 p.m.

City, State: Sugar Grove, VA

Occupation: Home Health Aide

Comment: Subsidies need to be cut to the huge producers and CAFO farms, and help given to the family farmers. Here in the 9th, I have many neighbors who have dairy and meat cows, or raise crops for market. They have to compete with the "too big to fail" welfare farms. Time to give that subsidy money to producers who are actually living and working on the farms, not to huge corporations.

I do not want to eat pesticides or GMO food. Special consideration needs to be given to those farmers who are caring for the land, and not putting poison into the food chain. Organic standards need to be respected and treated fairly. It is the agri-business sector who needs to be regulated and closely watched, the organic farmers need to be able to sell their crops without spending huge amounts of money to the government.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

COMMENT OF BARBARA MANALILI

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 9:09 a.m.

City, State: Baiting Hollow, NY

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: I have a family food garden. This garden provides food for 4 to 6 people all season. The reason for this garden is that I do not trust the food at our chain food stores. England pulls yellow dye #6 from all foods. But our government doesn't think that it's "That" harmful to the people in the USA! **Shame** on us. I hope that your vote is **Yes** to help our Organic Farmers/ranchers and to support the acts/bills that help our producers!

Thank you,

BJM.

COMMENT OF PAULA MANALO

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 03, 2012, 11:42 p.m.

City, State: Redwood Valley, CA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Dry Beans & Peas, Field Crops, Fruits, Livestock, Poultry/poultry products, Specialty Crops, Vegetables

Size: 50-150 acres

Comment: I am a first-generation beginning farmer and part of the next generation of American farmers. At 30 years old, my fiancé and I lease over 100 tillable acres and roughly 1,000 acres of rangeland. We are a diverse farm selling primarily direct-to-consumer. The challenges we have faced and continue to face are access to land and lack of capital. This farm bill needs to provide solutions to these problems if more young people are going to enter farming. We have benefitted from NRCS EQIP cost-share assistance and BFRDP-funded educational programs. Please allocate more funding to these important programs; we are a testament to their success. Support for small- and medium-size farms, diverse sustainable farms, and beginning farmers is an investment in the future of American agriculture and food security.

COMMENT OF FLORIE MANASIA

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:55 a.m.

City, State: Simsbury, CT

Occupation: Retired

Comment: We the people need to have laws protecting our food production. There is so much garbage put in today's foods and so much chemicals and this needs to be stopped. I know the population is getting out of control, but let's not fill our food with chemicals so people get sick. There are other things that should be cut that are draining our taxes and that is benefits to all government employees. Cut health and retirement benefits and see how much money we save. Pass laws to stop food from coming from China and encourage farmers to grow healthy food and safe and humane animal production for food right here in our country. That is what you should be doing. That is your job.

COMMENT OF WILLIAM MANCUSO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:23 p.m.

City, State: Ada, OH

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: I live in the middle of a food desert, surrounded by thousands of acres of corn and soy that is unfit for human consumption and is actually turned into "foodstuff", like high fructose corn syrup, that is killing the American public one soda at a time. With so much scientific research indicating the link to obesity, *etc.*, how can our "Representatives" continue to kill the American public by providing subsidies and protection for what, in effect, is state sanctioned genocide one mouthful at a time? And actually obstruct access to information about the quality of the food and free choice about what an individual decides to eat. Is it truly about life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness for the majority? Or is it all about perpetuating the entrenched bureaucracy, about making money at any cost, even if it means the ultimate elimination of the consumer and American public? Are there no genuine representatives for the majority of voting and working people left? Representatives concerned about authentic pursuit of life, liberty and happiness for all? I'm afraid Jefferson would be ashamed to see that what he, and so many others, worked so diligently to create had degenerated to such a mean spirited form of government based more upon economics than human rights.

COMMENT OF MELISSA MANDEL

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 1:14 p.m.

City, State: Oakland, CA

Occupation: Retired Computer Programmer

Comment: We have been supporting organic agriculture for over 20 years. It's about time for the U.S. to step up to this plate and move off the deadly and dead-ended chemical agribusiness position. The people and the planet require this change for survival and we all know it in this day.

COMMENT OF BONNIE MANDELL-RICE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:13 p.m.

City, State: Broomfield, CO

Occupation: Retired Attorney

Comment: Our government's policy for farmers has for too long padded the wallets of agribusiness, encouraged destructive farming practices, and made the most unhealthy foods the most affordable. We have an obesity crisis in this country. We have sky-rocketing medical costs, many (if not most) of which are attributable to obesity-related disease. Factors in obesity, diabetes, heart disease and cancer include too many fats, meat, dairy, processed foods—which typically are loaded with sugar, fat, corn and/or wheat. These are all the foods that our farm policy supports and subsidizes. When people eliminate these foods, many of their health issues resolve. We need to stop subsidizing those foods and begin to subsidize or incentivize growing organic fruits and vegetables. In doing so, we also will help to repair soils and water quality. While we are at it the farm policy also should encourage humane animal husbandry, allowing the animals free range and humane care, all of which helps people by providing healthier animal products and a cleaner environment. Thank you.

COMMENT OF NIAL MANGAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:12 p.m.

City, State: Cambridge, MA

Occupation: Graduate Student

Comment: I feel it is very important to support small family farms as well as large corporate farms. Additionally, all incentives, including any tax or insurance incentives, need to be tied to sustainability and conservation requirements. We need to continue to support organic and sustainable farming research, so that farms of all sizes continue to improve in their farming techniques. The goal should be healthy, sustainable food which is profitably produced, not just more profits for large agricultural producers.

I do not support any farm bill which reduces these efforts, and support one which improves such programs.

COMMENT OF MICHELLE MANN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 3:34 a.m.

City, State: Encinitas, CA

Occupation: Homemaker

Comment: No more big gov't./corporate America in my food. Let people do what they do best, work on their corner of the world on small local level. It's the key to greatness.

COMMENT OF PATTI MANN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:57 a.m.

City, State: Nederland, TX

Occupation: Disabled

Comment: I have MS and to keep my condition from declining further I need food that has been grown without chemicals. I am against chemicals in growing food, yes, I am aware that there will be higher prices but for my health it will be worth the cost.

COMMENT OF SARAH MANNO

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 2:49 p.m.

City, State: Ft. Collins, CO

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Please protect the interests of small farmers, organic farmers and healthy sustainable practices in this farm bill. These are the wave of a sustainable future which needs to supplement if not replace the destructive fallout from the giant farming corporations.

COMMENT OF CALLISTA MANSELL

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 3:27 p.m.

City, State: Greensboro, NC

Occupation: Consultant

Comment: I am in favor of supporting our local farmers and their efforts to provide fresh local foods in our community. One of the farmers at our local market even takes donations of fresh food and shares it with an after school program in a needy neighborhood. Our local farmers care about us. Let's show them that we care about them too.

COMMENT OF STEVEN MANSFIELD

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 8:53 p.m.

City, State: Miami, FL

Occupation: Paramedic

Comment: I believe we should fully support this organic farming initiative. I believe America must get away from it's addiction to insecticides, herbicides and all forms of poisons that we're spraying on our farms every year. America needs to shift to a more natural, renewable form of farming now. I believe all the extra money we can afford to allocate to this organic movement, we must do it now. Right now, I'm a paramedic. But I'm taking courses to transfer to the University of Florida to major in Plant Sciences and I think this bill needs to be passed ten times more than I think we need to be in the Middle East.

- Fully fund the Organic Research and Extension Initiative (OREI) at the 2008 level.
- Endorse all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Support all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintain EQIP Organic Initiative and do NOT cut the Conservation Stewardship Program.

COMMENT OF DEBORAH MANUS

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 10, 2012, 1:53 p.m.

City, State: Oak Park, IL

Occupation: Doctor.

Comment: Please adopt the Bowles-Simpson principle of protecting the disadvantaged and avoiding measures that would increase hunger, poverty and hardship. Increase both TEFAP and SNAP. As a volunteer at my local food pantry, I have witnessed an increase in need for food from the pantry, in working poor, those on food stamps, in families and in the mentally ill. Cutting SNAP will cause more hunger and suffering.

COMMENT OF AL FRANCIS MAQUILAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:28 p.m.

City, State: Alameda, CA

Occupation: Student

Comment: Dear Mr. Stark,

Please push towards the Organic agriculture bill. I believe that as a nation with an increasing number of people with obesity, this is a step in the right direction. We must catch up with the rest of the world in terms of food regulation.

COMMENT OF NATHANIEL MARAM

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 2:22 p.m.

City, State: Boone, NC

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Greenhouse/nursery

Size: 50–150 acres

Comment: It is farmers—not housing or industrial developments that feed us. What the corporate farms produce cannot be called food, rather an exotic blend of chemicals. As costs escalate the small farm cannot keep up.

COMMENT OF MARC MARCHIOLI

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:19 p.m.

City, State: Pittsburgh, PA

Occupation: Physician Assistant

Comment: We need clean, healthy and wholesome food to support a healthy America. It's time we said no as citizens of the U.S. to conglomerates that have only a profit motive while using every dirty hand trick in the book to produce what appears to be food but is in fact poison.

Let's support the small farmers and independents of American. We care and we vote!

COMMENT OF MERLE ZIPORAH MARCUS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:51 p.m.

City, State: Second Mesa, AZ

Occupation: Seamstress, Organic Cook

Comment: Please take our food safety seriously. Pesticides, toxins from overcrowding in commercial feedlots & chicken factories, widespread use of antibiotics because of the poor sanitary conditions are important considerations.

COMMENT OF JEAN MARGOLIS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:23 p.m.

City, State: Grants Pass, OR

Occupation: Retired

Comment: We need to empower our small farms and rein in the use of pesticides, GMOs and artificial fertilizers which are killing the soil and impacting the environment negatively.

COMMENT OF JENNIFER MARIANO

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 9, 2012, 3:48 p.m.

City, State: Fountain, CO

Occupation: Director of Programs, Food Bank

Comment: Please do not make cuts to the farm bill. Our local food pantries continue to see a rise in the number of people seeking assistance. These are families and individuals that are working and truly trying to make ends meet, but they simply don't make enough to cover all of their expenses. If you make cuts to vital programs like SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP, these folks will be forced to make decisions between paying bills and feeding their families. They will spend less, which will in turn affect the economy.

Please consider going to a local food pantry and taking some time to meet those that are struggling to make it work.

COMMENT OF LORRAINE MARIE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 10:46 a.m.

City, State: Colville, WA

Occupation: Self-Employed Writer, Craftswoman

Comment: With record-high autism and childhood obesity rates, *etc.*, and the accompanying tax expense, we cannot afford to keep cranking out poison-grown foods. We need to support organic ag to the highest degree. That should include organic foods for all school lunch programs and for food assistance recipients.

Sincerely,

LORRAINE MARIE.

COMMENT OF MART MARINKOVICH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:35 p.m.

City, State: Port Townsend, WA

Occupation: Retired Corporate Executive from United Airlines

Comment: Dear Norm, always good to have an opportunity to chat with you. We all know that cuts have to be made. But we need to prioritize cuts by keeping programs/funding in areas that are "green" and that provide solutions to eco-bombs, and offer options for sustainability.

I have concerns about the farm bill.

This is no time to be cutting funding to vital programs such as nutrition, conservation and support for organic and sustainable agriculture.

Please use your influence to ensure that the farm bill is forward looking, and does not simply continue the support of old guard corporate agribusinesses.

I wish you a healthy and successful summer, and thank you for your service to the 6th congressional district.

COMMENT OF CAROLE MARK

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:59 a.m.

City, State: Evanston, IL

Occupation: Retired

Comment: While we suffer as a nation from major health issues, the connection to food availability and farming becomes more and more significant. Healthy food leads to healthy citizens. Time is now to eliminate toxins in the food supply.

COMMENT OF LYNNE MARKO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 10:31 a.m.

City, State: Kalispell, MT

Occupation: Hospitality Industry

Comment: It is time for a sensible bill that protects organic and small farm production. Subsidies going to commercially large agriculture is not right when it is squeezing out the small farm operations. A free and just society allows for diversity. Thank you.

COMMENT OF BERTHA MARKOWICZ

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:29 p.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Clothing Designer

Comment: We need local, organic produce that is healthy for the planet as well as our bodies. When people eat produce that has not been treated by chemicals, they use less health care, they are more productive and the planet can keep producing healthy food. Preserve this for your children and grandchildren.

Supporting smaller, and organic farms helps communities on non organic farms, all of the chemicals that are used create health problems to the workers, who do not have health insurance, and end up in emergency care. You can correct some of this by increasing support to the organic farms and eliminating support for the corporate farms.

COMMENT OF LAURA MARKOWITZ

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:27 p.m.

City, State: Oak Creek, WI

Occupation: Marketing Associate

Comment: The health of our nation's people as well as environment is dependent upon good food that is clean of toxins. The future of our children is dependent upon proper nutrition, so they can grow and learn and realize their full potential as the next generation. Local commerce and many families' livelihoods are dependent upon smaller local farms. As you write the next farm bill, please put the best interests of our country—its lands and people and long-term future—above that of industrial agricultural corporations. Programs supporting nutrition, conservation, and organic and sustainable farming are essential, not luxuries. Given a real chance, these are the programs that can lead us to a sustainable future of good health, lowering national healthcare costs and improving our quality of life from multiple angles. Please think of the big picture. Thank you.

COMMENT OF JOAN MARKS

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 5:02 p.m.

City, State: Tehachapi, CA

Occupation: Unemployed

Comment: Bottom line seniors need to eat and pay bills too . . . it is time that attention is paid to the senior citizens needs and make sure that they have what is necessary to survive and forget about paying attention to the illegals that are in this country and draining the taxpayers.

COMMENT OF EUGENE MARNER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 10:52 a.m.

City, State: Franklin, NY

Occupation: Retired Filmmaker & Theatre Director

Comment: In the now commencing age of energy descent, many more people will need to be engaged in agricultural production than in the now expiring age of fossil-fueled industrial agriculture. The farm bill should encourage education in scientifically based organic methods that respect the environment and preserve our remaining topsoil and other resources.

The farm bill should also protect agricultural lands and precious water from the insanity of hydraulic fracturing for yet more fossil fuels that are destroying the biosphere.

COMMENT OF MARY MARSH

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 7:58 p.m.

City, State: Atlanta, GA

Occupation: Public Relations

Comment: Please support local economies and small-scale farmers.

End subsidies to those who grow large amounts of corn and soy. Obesity is killing our country, literally and figuratively. Encourage the production of fruits and vegetables!

COMMENT OF NANCY MARSH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:13 p.m.

City, State: Rancho Cordova, CA

Occupation: Grant Writer, Parent, Volunteer

Comment: We need healthier food for our children and ourselves—please support subsidies to organic farms and reduce the subsidies to corn/soy farmers who are at the source of creating unhealthy food for our nation.

I support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

I am quite aware that you do not support these initiatives, but as always, my vote goes to those who do.

Take a look at the positive things that the small organic, urban farm is doing in your neighborhood—Soil Born Farms is educating, feeding, growing, restoring. It is a small drop in the bucket. There is so much wasted land (really **Wasteland**) in Rancho Cordova that could be put to great use in our city by making healthy food available to the poorer residents, creating jobs and viable job skills and teaching the children who live here that they can have a beautiful and productive place in which to live . . . not just a place where gangs will soon reign.

COMMENT OF CAROLYN MARSHALL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:30 p.m.

City, State: Mercer Island, WA

Occupation: Clinical Psychology Candidate

Comment: My sister is a veterinarian epidemiologist. She has worked for the USDA on issues such as bird flu, swine flu and mad cow disease. Unfortunately, the funding was cut and now she works internationally, helping other countries to develop plans to prevent and combat these potential epidemics. When funding is cut from our own programs, it's no wonder that there are recent incidents of mad cow disease. Do you know that their brains look like Swiss cheese?

As your constituent, I ask that you support the following:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

COMMENT OF LISA MARSHALL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:46 p.m.

City, State: Spring Mills, PA

Occupation: Executive Coach

Comment: Industrial agriculture puts the safety of our food at risk. Please do not continue to subsidize big agriculture at the expense of smaller, safer farmers.

COMMENT OF THOMAS MARSHALL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:27 p.m.

City, State: Seattle, WA

Occupation: Web Analyst

Comment: Specialty crops are better for our health than the big five. The farm bill should encourage the production of specialty crops more than corn, wheat, soybeans, *etc.*

Also, school lunches should be controlled by Education not by Agriculture. Today school lunches aren't part of children's education, but rather a dumping ground for cheap food.

COMMENT OF AMY MARSMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:53 p.m.

City, State: Madison, WI

Occupation: Civil Service

Comment: Please revamp the farm bill. It is an economic and health imperative that we encourage organic family farms, not corporate owned factory farms. While a 20th century economy may have benefited from industrialized farm system, the 21st century economy cannot sustain that system. It must be reformed. I do not want my tax dollars to be sent to subsidize corporate farms.

COMMENT OF BRIAN MARTENS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:35 p.m.

City, State: Forestville, CA

Occupation: Consultant, Winery Worker

Comment: I grew up in a small Midwestern town in Iowa. My father sold International Harvester farm machinery and I know how important farming is to our communities and country. Back then there were many small farmers and they tried to grow the best crops they could. Now the Big Agribusiness farms are more concerned with profits than what food is best for families. Because of all the chemicals used on crops today the soils and foods are less healthy than they were. I am now involved in the Organic trend to bring back the health of the soils and foods coming from our farms. We need more diversity on our farms and more organic. European countries and Japan are listening to their families who want healthy farms and healthy foods. Please listen to the new voices that are asking for more organic produce and better farming practices so that the United States can become a leader in the world for change in our food Production. We can change by listening to the small farmers and those interested in changing our antiquated farming practices. Please get the Monsanto's and other big interests to listen to what the people really want.

BRIAN.

COMMENT OF KLAAS MARTENS

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 10:57 p.m.

City, State: Penn Yan, NY

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Dairy, Dry Beans & Peas, Field Crops, Forestry, Fruits, Greenhouse/nursery, Livestock

Size: 1,000+ acres

Comment: I am an organic farmer and also operate an organic feed and seed business in Penn Yan. Organic farming is a major factor in the economy of Yates County and throughout the United States. The demand for organic food is one of the few bright spots in American agriculture. Federal support for research and development of organic farming as a percentage of the total money spent on agriculture is far less than the percentage of farming in this country that is certified organic. Organic agriculture has thrived despite this lack of financial support from USDA. As a strong supporter of organic farming, I ask that you:

- Fully fund the Organic Research and Extension Initiative (OREI) at the 2008 level.
- Endorse all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Support all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintain EQIP Organic Initiative and do NOT cut the Conservation Stewardship Program.

COMMENT OF AMY MARTIN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:26 p.m.

City, State: Abington, PA

Occupation: Chef/Mommy

Comment: As a former executive chef, now mom of two young children, I want the opportunity to feed my children the best quality food possible. I primarily buy organic foods whenever possible, it would be great if more of those foods were from U.S. soil as opposed to Mexico! Please take this into consideration in the writing of the next farm bill. Let's give our children; our future, and our farmer's the support that they need to live healthy, prosperous lives.

COMMENT OF AVRIL MARTIN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:53 a.m.

City, State: Los Angeles, CA

Occupation: Interior Designer

Comment: I am tired of Big Ag getting ahead. It's time to help the small, organic, family farmers of this country. I purchase organic as much as possible and get produce from a local CSA. I want the farmers that are protecting my health and the environment to be supported, not the ones that are spraying carcinogens and planting genetically modified crops.

COMMENT OF BARBARA MARTIN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:20 p.m.

City, State: Albany, NY

Occupation: Teaching Assistant in residential placement for troubled teenage girls

Comment: I am requesting that you keep all funding for vital programs such as nutrition, conservation, and support for organic and sustainable agriculture. U.S. food and agricultural policy must focus on adopting best agricultural practices that put the health of its citizens, the land and the livelihood of farmers and farm workers over the interests of industrial agriculture lobbyists.

Points:

- Do not slash \$33 billion from the food stamp program, leaving farm subsidies unscathed.
- Don't pass a \$33 billion new entitlement program that guarantees the income of profitable farm businesses—on top of \$90 billion in subsidies for crop and revenue insurance policies. The proposed subsidized insurance program will allow giant commodity farmers and insurance companies to walk away with billions in taxpayer dollars while putting the land, soil and environment at greater risk. Place limitations on crop insurance subsidies. Re-attach soil erosion and wetland conservation requirements to crop insurance programs.
- Don't cut \$4 million from organic research funding.
- Don't cut funding to support Beginning Farmers in half.

I support:

- the full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286),
- fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs,
- the implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236), and
- maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

In sum, I support a farm bill that protects and enhances family farmers and promotes environmental health and agricultural sustainability.

We all live on a single planet; let's protect it and each other.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF BARBARA MARTIN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:22 p.m.

City, State: Newton, MA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: We must care for those in our nation who need support in this time of economic distress. Those companies who are making profits for shareholders while poisoning our land, air and water, should not receive any monetary support of any kind.

COMMENT OF BYRON MARTIN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:04 p.m.

City, State: Danielson, CT

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Greenhouse/nursery

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: The people of this country and future generations desperately need a farm bill that supports the majority and not the minority. The present system of

agricultural production is not sustainable and creating a farm bill that supports the long term sustainability of our agricultural resources is the responsibility of our leaders. Please in the creation of the next farm bill give credence to the land and its resources of life and the people and future generations of our country rather than a few large corporations who primary goal is profit. We need a balanced approach of health, public welfare, resource preservation, economic stability and profit.

BYRON MARTIN.

COMMENT OF CODY MARTIN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:24 p.m.

City, State: Burbank, WA

Occupation: Harley Davidson Tech/Self-Sustaining Farmer

Comment: Why would you cut funding for Small start up farmers is it because big agriculture has its tentacles so deep into our Federal government that you no longer have our best interest in mind? Is it so big corporations can destroy the land and feed the American public toxic food that causes cancer and new allergies? Your right organic sustainable production of foods is a waste of money let's just burn this one and only world we have down! You people disgust me!

Sincerely,

CODY MARTIN.

COMMENT OF EMILIE MARTIN

Date Submitted: Monday, May 14, 2012, 1:13 p.m.

City, State: Alturas, CA

Occupation: Social Worker

Comment: I work with senior citizens and I see how difficult it is for some of them to make ends meet. Often, food is the item that goes in order to pay other bills. I urge you to maintain the programs that make it easier for low income senior citizens to procure food so they eat a healthy diet.

COMMENT OF HOLLY MARTIN

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 12:50 p.m.

City, State: Bristow, VA

Occupation: Freelance Writer

Comment: I believe we need to reduce subsidies that are making it impossible for small family, organic farmers to compete with corporate Giants, such as Monsanto. I also believe we need to **Slow Down** the genetic engineering of crops until we get a lot more data. For example, the bee colonies may be dying off due to genetic engineering of crops. And small farmers' lands are being contaminated with GMO seeds, leading to huge legal entanglements that are caused by the giant agricultural firms and which are killing small farmers.

COMMENT OF JEFF MARTIN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:14 p.m.

City, State: Knoxville, TN

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Specialty Crops

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: I would like the farm bill to cater towards smaller farms that put money back into their local economy.

When you make changes that benefit large farms contracted by companies/corporations, the money is in a tight group that never benefits the local economy. I understand food subsidies, but you are subsidizing foods that may cause obesity, diabetes and unhealthy eating habits.

Our goal as a country should be to provide nutritious, whole foods to consumers at a reasonable price without bias.

COMMENT OF KATHERINE MARTIN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:55 p.m.

City, State: Manchester Center, VT

Occupation: Cook

Comment: Dear Committee Members,

I believe our agricultural funding and laws should be structured to favor smaller farms and organics. I oppose GMO crops and animals and as a consumer am horrified that the GMO crops are not labeled. I believe that no animal should be raised in an industrial setting. I see the job of your committee as protecting small farmers and farms, which should receive the bulk of any subsidies. I would like to see a reversal of funding to emphasize smaller and organic operations.

COMMENT OF GAYLA MARTINDALE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:10 a.m.

City, State: East Peoria, IL

Occupation: Librarian

Comment: Please consider the consumer and the small farms (instead of corporate farms) when deciding who and what is important. Don't continue putting money into farms that harm our health (remember the obesity epidemic?) and our environment. It's time to give the "small guy" a hand-up instead of giving the "big guy" a hand-out. Thanks.

COMMENT OF RENA MARTIN-ERRICK

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:47 p.m.

City, State: Louisa, VA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: **Think** about the poor people in your district! Support local, small farmers in VA and in USA. If poor people can't afford to buy fresh, healthy produce, obesity & poor health & emergency room costs will continue to rise. The wealthy, of course can continue to buy healthy organic food no matter what it costs. Since you & your family never, ever have to worry about good food, I think I understand how hard it is for you to see the huge problem for us. **We Need You To Support The Small Local Farmers.**

COMMENT OF LISA MARTINO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:56 p.m.

City, State: San Rafael, CA

Occupation: Homemaker

Comment: I hope this year's farm bill is more focused on promoting good, clean food, also that it addresses the horrible inequality between agribusiness and private farmers.

COMMENT OF LISA MARTINOVIC

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:54 p.m.

City, State: Berkeley, CA

Occupation: Wellness Coach

Comment: It's time to wean Big Ag off govt subsidies. We must stop underwriting GMOs and monocropping. Start subsidizing family farms and organic farms. This will both create more jobs and make for a less toxic environment.

COMMENT OF JANET MARTUCCI

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:18 p.m.

City, State: Roanoke, VA

Occupation: Student

Comment: I fully support efforts that encourage organic farming. Agribusiness has gone too far, to the extent that it is the cause of many farmer suicides. The welfare of animals, people, and this Earth should be top priority.

COMMENT OF TAMAR MARVIN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:43 p.m.

City, State: East Brunswick, NJ

Occupation: Ph.D. Student

Comment: I am the mother of a preschooler and expectant mother of twins. Every trip to the grocery store is a source of intellectual, ethical, and financial strain for me, and I do not think it should be so difficult to buy food for my family that will not harm the health of humans, animals, and the environment. I hope you will use the farm bill to legislate against using harmful chemicals in food produc-

tion, including pesticides, animal hormones and antibiotics, food additives, and chemically extracted and altered oils. All “conventional” products should free of these, and consumers should not be subjected to “premium” prices for a product that won’t harm them. Producers who make responsible products should be rewarded, while those who use unhealthy means to produce cheap food should be penalized. I look forward to the day when I can be assured that every product in my local grocery store—including those targeted to my preschooler—has been healthfully and ethically produced.

COMMENT OF TIMOTHY MASANZ

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 4:47 p.m.

City, State: Clearwater, FL

Occupation: Retired

Comment: First, the farm bill should support fruits and vegetables, the foods most Americans do not get enough of.

Second, the farm bill should start weaning the industry off oil and both support local farming and local delivery of food as well as natural (non-chemical) fertilizing methods (manure).

Third, the farm bill should begin securing the nation’s future by limiting soil erosion and promoting manageable farms with sustainable farm practices.

Finally, the farm bill should limit all crop supports and all payments of any kind to those with incomes below \$150,000 as well as limiting total awards to those individuals.

COMMENT OF MICHAEL MASILKO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:12 p.m.

City, State: O’Fallon, MO

Occupation: Unemployed

Comment: Only Privately owned farms should be subsidized not corporate owned and all food that is or has any component of GMOs should be labeled. Privately owned farms/farmers should have more say than they do with what and how they grow food products.

COMMENT OF KATHRYN MASON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:05 p.m.

City, State: Philadelphia, PA

Occupation: Educator

Comment: We need a bill to protect and promote the production of food that is healthy (produced organically and humanely) and that protects the environment that produces our food, our air, our water, everything we need to live.

COMMENT OF KIRBY MASON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:51 p.m.

City, State: Austin, TX

Occupation: Writer

Comment: The future of America’s food production must be met by numerous, caring, small farms committed to healthy, natural foods not by heartless slime factories whose products create disease.

COMMENTS OF MARILYN MASON

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 12, 2012, 1:19 p.m.

City, State: Evanston, IL

Occupation: Social Worker, Semi-Retired

Comment: I’d like to see the end to farm subsidies especially to big farmers who don’t need it. I believe in smaller farmers, especially if they use sustainable processes in growing food, especially not adding a lot of fertilizer and pesticides that make the food dangerous to eat.

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 12, 2012, 1:22 p.m.

Comment: In addition to previous comments, I ask that you protect SNAP, TEFAP and CSFP. I am 76 years old and thus am one of those “seniors” who need affordable food sources protected.

COMMENT OF RICHARD MASON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:23 p.m.

City, State: Laredo, TX

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Our current agricultural policy and its priorities are an embarrassment. Like our energy policy, there is little or no support for an agricultural policy that is actually sustainable for the generations that will follow us. From what I have read about the deliberations of this committee, its short-sighted priorities continue to destroy the quality of our farmland, disenfranchise the family farmer, and distribute increasingly unhealthy food to our already sick and obese population.

In the interests of a healthier, more sustainable future, I support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

COMMENT OF BARBARA MASONER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:58 p.m.

City, State: Denver, CO

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: The Food and Farm Bill needs to reflect the current movement in food production in our country. More and more Americans are looking to small farmers and local producers from whom to purchase their food from. Help this growing number of food producers by leveling the playing field.

COMMENT OF ARETA MASTERS

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 6:53 p.m.

City, State: Marlton, NJ

Occupation: Engineer

Comment: Organic food producers have spent many decades building a customer base and demonstrating that their methods are not only sustainable and healthful (to both human beings and our environment) but are also scalable and adequate for meeting the needs of American consumers.

Industrial agricultural practices have been shown to damage the environment, pose health risks to consumers, and place the nation at grave risk due to vulnerabilities of a monocultural food system. It is time to stop subsidizing bad practices and begin supporting organic methods food production for the sake of each and every American citizen.

COMMENT OF JIM MASTRO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:40 p.m.

City, State: Dover, NH

Occupation: Writer

Comment: Family farms have been the backbone of this nation since its inception. It is very important to me that any farm legislation be primarily focused on supporting family farms. I think it's also very important that we support sustainable and organic farming to the greatest degree possible. Industrial agriculture does not need government help.

I am also very concerned about the volume of toxic compounds industrial agriculture is introducing into the environment, and I am absolutely opposed to genetically modified crops. As a biologist, I am very concerned about the health and environmental effects of these products.

COMMENT OF CASSANDRA MASTROSTEFANO

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 02, 2012, 2:40 p.m.

City, State: McLean, VA

Occupation: Student

Comment: Disagreement and the stalling that has accompanied the 2012 Farm Bill indicate that there is a need to review and (hopefully) restructure the methods by which farming is legislated in America. Currently, the farm bill acts as all-encompassing legislation which hits upon anything that has something to do with farming. This coverage is too wide and there are too many varying interests for the farm bill to adequately address regional concerns. Instead, there should be a series of farm bills covering different regions of the United States.

COMMENTS OF HANEEFA MATEEN

Date Submitted: Friday, April 27, 2012, 10:59 a.m.

City, State: Chicago, IL

Occupation: Case Worker Counselor (Retired)

Comment: Please support local and commercial farmers in providing safe and healthy foods in enough abundance that everyone in the United States is fed. Keep in place the Food Depositories but also TANF and WIC so that families have some choice of healthy foods to eat.

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 5:27 p.m.

Comment: Many seniors worked hard and long yet their social security or pension checks are still lower than a young person who becomes disabled after 10 years employment history. In addition, there was discrimination against women's and other groups' jobs so that social security was not taken out for years. Their menial incomes leaves them without both food and housing.

COMMENT OF LYNNE MATEJCEK

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 5:18 p.m.

City, State: Ashland, OR

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: Please shift to heavily regulating and taxing the use of toxic pesticides and GMO technologies on our crops and seeds until these businesses go extinct. Write into law that these corporations must pay for the damages to humans, animals, water sources, ecosystems and farms from their savage business practices.

A promotion of Organic, sustainable and non-toxic farming practices needs to once again be the policy of our National Agriculture work and policies.

My great mother said it best, "The elderly and children of the world need to have access to the healthiest food, water and air available", and I agree.

Thank you for your time and consideration of my vote for a healthy, and sustainable farming future.

COMMENTS OF BEATRIZ IVELISSE MATEO

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 02, 2012, 7:02 p.m.

City, State: Flushing, NY

Occupation: Mom/Sales Executive/Economist

Comment: Dear Representative:

This message it is to ask anyone in this matter to be part of helping our farmers and hunger children in our food distribution and quality. Our agriculture is so necessary and new plans are there to supplement our country needs. The new machineries and labor and sanitations are primordial to our subsistence. The Agriculture.

It is a vital part in our economy. Many farmer are looking to expand and present a better produce and services to our consumers.

And linking the needs to the primordial distention, which is our children, they need your support!

Please take part of this petition and show us your concern and caring!

Help our farmers and help Feeding American Children!

Thank you very much for your kindness again!

Sincerely,

BEATRIZ IVELISSE MATEO.

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 5:39 p.m.

Comment: Dear Representative:

Please review my previous letter where I express the need to help our farmers in productivity and sanitation. This way they can provide a better result and increase our economy. Our children need a lot of assistance in their health. Nutrition

and feeding America cares among other for our children better health and a balance meals! Please support Feeding America! Thank you very much!

Sincerely,

BEATRIZ IVELISSE MATEO,
Flushing, NY.

COMMENT OF ADAM MATHEWS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:29 p.m.

City, State: Elverson, PA

Occupation: Furniture Maker

Comment: Organic small farms are essential to the health of the planet and to human beings. I have been really ill for many years, traditional medicine unable to help me after spending a small fortune. It was not until I started eating local organic produce and eschewing big Pharma that I started to regain my health. Commercial farming is toxic with it's use of GMO's, herbicides, pesticides, petro-chemical fertilizers, lack of crop rotation, lack of letting fields go fallow to restore vital minerals. All this in the name of profit before all else. It's easier to farm this way but the resulting food has very little nutritive value. Small farms are integral to the beauty of this corner of PA. There is nothing pretty or healthy about commercial large scale farming.

COMMENT OF CHRISTINE MATHEWS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:40 p.m.

City, State: Holliston, MA

Occupation: Admin.

Comment: Please support small, locally grown, organically grown food products, as well as conservation efforts for a sustainable future. Thank you for your time!

COMMENT OF JENNIFER MATHEWS

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 1:34 a.m.

City, State: Spokane, WA

Occupation: Registered Nurse

Comment: Please do not cut funding to support local and beginning farmers. Please do not cut funding for research on organics. Please consider the ethics behind labeling genetically engineered foods. Consumers deserve the right to know what is in our food. Thank you.

COMMENT OF LILLIAN MATHEWS

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 02, 2012, 10:49 a.m.

City, State: Providence, RI

Occupation: Student

Comment: There are a couple of priorities I would like to see in the upcoming farm bill.

First, I want to see much more support for young farmer assistance and training. Right now most farmers are over 65 years of age and the threat of losing their land and knowledge is threatening our country's agricultural base. We absolutely need more funding to help new farmers—particularly those focusing on organic production and ecologically diverse production—to survive.

Additionally, crop insurance needs to be **Affordable** for small scale producers. With an increase in natural disaster and weather-related problems, there will be more issues ahead for the agricultural sector. Small scale and organic producers rarely opt in for this insurance program because of the lack of affordability.

Additionally, nutritional assistance must remain a priority. Funding for low-income food stamps cannot be cut, especially in this time of economic need.

COMMENT OF MILLARD MATHEWS

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 2:41 p.m.

City, State: Waynesboro, VA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I've farmed all my life and much of my health problems are a result bad practices of the farms I worked on. It time to start supporting practices that protect people, the land, water and life in general instead of industries who could care less about these things as long as they keep getting richer. I've watched what

happens to land when the farmer stops dumping the chemicals on it, it won't grow anything Do the honorable thing.

COMMENT OF BRUCE MATHIS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:58 p.m.

City, State: Chipley, FL

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Please stop the farm payment programs, they are killing small farms. By subsidizing some farms and not others you are putting me at a great disadvantage. Let the market decide who is a good farmer, don't keep propping up bad farmers with payments that only serves to keep bad farmers farming. Currently my tax dollars are allowing marginal farmers to stay in business and making it hard for me to make a living.

SUBMITTED STATEMENT BY RICHARD MATOIAN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, AMERICAN PISTACHIO GROWERS

The American Pistachio Growers (APG) is pleased to have the opportunity to submit our views for the 2012 Farm Bill. Over the duration of the new farm bill, the U.S. pistachio industry will significantly increase in production, sales and capital investment. The new farm bill will be of great interest to the industry.

Since 1976, the U.S. pistachio industry has moved from producing 1 million pounds of pistachios to a high of 528 million pounds in 2010. At the end of this decade we expect to have a 1 billion pound crop. In 2011, approximately 153,000 acres were in production with 83,000 acres non-bearing, for a total of 245,000 total pistachio acres. We are projecting at least 70 percent of the production will be exported. Our current production is in the States of California, Arizona, and New Mexico.

The APG is the grower trade association representing the interests of the entire U.S. pistachio industry. We are governed by a democratically elected board that is comprised of 18 members. The mission of our organization includes nutrition and health research, food safety, marketing (domestic and international), and government relations.

Today we want to share with you our industry's thoughts on some of the specialty crop programs in the existing 2008 Farm Bill.

Market Access Program

The Market Access Program (MAP) has proven to be a very helpful resource to our industry. Because of our trade competition with Iran, we have found it difficult to break into many markets that Iran already dominates. An example would be the European market where MAP, plus industry dollars assisted in promoting and marketing our pistachios throughout Europe. Currently, Europe is one of our industry's strongest markets and continues to grow. In Asia, MAP funds assisted in opening up the markets of Japan and China, which ultimately lead to market access throughout Asia. In Japan, California pistachios are sold in cities such as Tokyo, Kansai, and Fukuoka as well as in new areas such as Tohoku and Nagoya. In 2009, a California pistachio grower, and his orchards, was featured on Japanese television. MAP funds made this possible. In addition, MAP funds allowed the industry to promote our product to the Japanese food industry as well as to consumers through in-store tastings and displays.

We understand the budgetary limitations of the Congress, but we see this program as an important tool in achieving President Obama's National Export Initiative (NEI). The President intends to see U.S. exports doubled over the next 5 years; the agriculture community, specifically the specialty crop industry, can help to make this happen with MAP and U.S. backing in opening key markets for U.S. grown goods. We recommend that the MAP remain intact, and that the funding continues at the current level, \$200 million each year.

Foreign Market Development Cooperator Program

The Foreign Market Development Program (FMD) aids to the U.S. agriculture industry in creating, promoting and expanding long-term export markets. We encourage the House Committee on Agriculture to continue to support this program, which is essential to specialty crop businesses. The FMD program is vastly different than MAP, and therefore we also encourage the Committee to keep these programs intact and separate.

Technical Assistance for Specialty Crops

The U.S. pistachio industry has encountered various trade barriers to our exports. Our pistachio industry has been able to use Technical Assistance for Specialty Crops (TASC) for problems encountered in the new European Commission's countries with regard to food safety. We have worked diligently throughout the years to eliminate these barriers, and TASC has proved to be helpful in defraying many of the costs that amass when dealing with these issues. We encourage the continued support by the House Committee on Agriculture of this very important program for the specialty crop industry.

Emerging Markets

In the last decade, China, Brazil, and India have emerged to offer new trade opportunities for specialty crops. In these countries, there is a strong middle income consumer class that has the ability to purchase our products. These consumers are health conscious buyers prepared to purchase quality U.S. products. Additionally, export credit and insurance programs is a necessity if specialty crops are to participate and benefit from NEI. We greatly appreciate the Administration's renewed efforts in removing foreign sanitary and phytosanitary barriers, but if small and medium size exporters are to benefit from the success of the NEI, new export programs are and will be necessary.

Specialty Crop Export Credit Program

The new farm bill is predicted to end many program crop payments. We learned in the past decade that in states where specialty crops can be planted, program crop land is being planted with fruits, vegetables and tree nuts. California's specialty crop production is increasing in crops such as almonds, blueberries and pistachios. We need to export.

The NEI was created to assist small and medium size farmers and processors to export. Yes, MAP, FMD, TASC, and emerging markets are important, but our small and medium size businesses need export financing and insurance. The GSM-102 program finances in excess of \$3 billion each year, but little finance is provided to the produce industry.

Furthermore, until 2008, the produce industry had the benefit of the Fruit and Vegetable Supplier Credit Guarantee Program, but this was repealed because of a fraudulent grain shipment. We recommend the re-instatement of the Supplier Credit Guarantee Program solely for the produce industry. This program would be beneficial to the small and medium size specialty crop businesses that are increasing their exports in new and old markets.

Sanitary & Phytosanitary and Quality Export Insurance Program Study

As mentioned above, the fruit, vegetable and tree nut industry is now exporting in excess of \$10 billion. For most exports, the shipments are delivered to the foreign buyer without any problem. Occasionally, a container is prevented from entering the foreign country because of an alleged Sanitary or Phytosanitary issues or quality problem, despite being cleared for export by the various U.S. Government inspections. If the container is prevented from entering the country, this can amount to a serious financial problem. A container being destroyed could bankrupt a business, and since the Federal Government is recommending small and medium sized businesses to export, these businesses need an insurance program. We envision a study that would determine the extent of SPS or quality problems, a self-funding export insurance program and its premium.

Conclusion

In conclusion, we strongly encourage the continuation of these programs through the 2012 Farm Bill. The specialty crop industry is a significant U.S. crop and our challenges are vastly different than those of program crops. Fruit, vegetable and tree nut producers work without the same safety net of program crops, and yet our competition continues to increase annually with more imports reaching U.S. shores. Any edge in research or market access aids our farms and therefore our livelihoods. We thank you for this opportunity to present our thoughts on farm bill programs, and we look forward to working with you further as this process moves toward completion.

COMMENT OF LAUREL MATSUDA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:11 p.m.

City, State: Kamuela, HI

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: Healthy and sustainable agriculture are absolutely **Essential!**

COMMENT OF JANUS MATTHES

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012 6:34 p.m.

City, State: Sebastopol, CA

Occupation: Domestic Engineer

Comment: It's time to stop big agribusiness from getting all the subsidies. They pollute and destroy our environment with bad farming practices. Let them stand on their own 2 feet. It's time to help the people who actually use sustainable farming practices and do not pollute or slowly kill us with their pesticides, fungicides and GMO's.

Local farmers deserve the respect and help, not large multi-national corporations that do very little to help local economies.

You are either a corporatist or a patriot, do the right thing and say no to big agribusiness. Thanks.

COMMENT OF THOMAS MATTHEWS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:43 p.m.

City, State: Boulder Creek, CA

Occupation: Sales Trainer

Comment: The hidden agenda of inequity and manipulation by Big Ag is transparent now, and the sham can no longer continue. How much longer will we let corporate greed destroy our biosystems and ultimately the health of the sentient beings on our planet. The lives of future generations are in your hands.

COMMENT OF JUDITH MATTSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 10:52 a.m.

City, State: Tucson, AZ

Occupation: Publisher and Advocate of Local Food

Comment: I have invested thousands of hours and miles to expand my knowledge through local food producer friendships and business relationships. These experiences, including helping with the harvest days on the farm, and writing a successful VAPG grant for a colleague farmer/rancher, have educated me in the multiplicity of factors that shape food production, distribution and marketing in southern Arizona. It is my intent to be involved even more broadly in this movement in the months and years ahead. I also publish a biweekly email newsletter, *Tucson Local Food News*. Tucson also has a strong leadership alliance for promotion of local food for the future. A primary goal of both of these local food advocacy activities is to increase the sustainability of our local food supply here in the Sonoran Desert and southern Arizona through programs to strengthen the very small and small farms we have and also through programs to bring new younger farmers to this area. We look to the farm bill, the Value Added Producer Program, the Farmers Market Promotion Program, and others to help provide support for this goal. Please keep these programs in the farm bill and Budget so that we can continue to expand local food production in southern Arizona. Thank you.

COMMENT OF SCOTT MAURER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:27 p.m.

City, State: Leander, TX

Occupation: Manager of Limited Partnership

Comment: Organic and sustainable agriculture is the **Only** agriculture that will support you and your family's health. Industrial agriculture is killing this world. GMO's are an abomination. Insecticides and other toxic materials used in industrial farming are unacceptable to a healthy person and a healthy environment. Did you know that a 100 square mile blue-green algae farm in each country will nutritionally sustain 1 billion people on the algae alone. Write the farm bill as if the health of you and your kids and their kids depends on it—because it does. Organic and sustainable is the only way.

COMMENT OF YEVETTE MAURER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:19 p.m.

City, State: Lake Elsinore, CA

Occupation: IT Manager

Comment: We want an Organic Farm bill. In order to meet the serious challenges of the 21st century, U.S. agricultural policy in the farm bill must shift from its focus of creating cheap commodities and artificially propping up income for farm-

ers, toward implementing best agricultural practices for sustainable and organic production methods. America can no longer afford to continue to blindly stumble down the toxic and costly path that industrial agriculture has paved for far too long. It's time for wise solutions posed by our nation's leading sustainable and organic farmers that work with nature and prioritize human health and environmental stewardship.

Implement a \$25 billion plan to transition to organic food and farming production, to make sure that 75 percent of U.S. farms are U.S.D.A. organic certified by 2025. Feed organic food to all children enrolled in public school lunch programs by the year 2020. Pass a Beginning Farmer and Rancher Bill to place a million new farmers on the land by 2020. Link conservation compliance with government-subsidized insurance programs and create a cutoff so each farm receives government funds for land only up to 1,000 acres.

Please offer more support for Organic Farmers and small farmers in general. No more loop holes for big agriculture. No more favors for big Ag! The American people know how powerful their lobby is, how much money is in it for members of congress and the government, and we are watching you! Quit taking payoffs for big agriculture at the expense of the American people. Stand up for the American people, stand up for the small farmer, stand against big agriculture and their efforts to monopolize everything and shut down the little guy. Remember you, your children and your grandchildren will be eating this stuff too!

COMMENT OF DEBORA MAWJI

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 2:44 p.m.

City, State: Sunset Beach, NC

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Other

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: I would like to see our gov't subsidize fresh foods and small farms, to reduce wholesome food costs and encourage local farm markets; instead of subsidizing huge agribusiness, corn syrup and other cheap processed foods. People buy what they can afford, even if it makes them sick (and forces healthy people to pay higher health care premiums due to many preventable diseases). The whole system is insane. Wholesome ingredients and/or unprocessed foods should be the new standard for any food subsidy (including food stamps and schools) and the American public should be heavily encouraged to support local farm markets.

COMMENT OF DAWN MAXON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:14 p.m.

City, State: Waterford, VA

Occupation: Engineer

Comment: As a working mom, I want to feed my family organic produce but am time-constrained so in addition to my own little organic veggie plot I purchase veggies at grocery stores/farmer markets also. Because of this, I am troubled by the decision to cut \$4 million from organic research funding and to cut funding to support Beginning Farmers. Small farmers preserve genetic diversity in our crops and usually manage to do it organically without petrochemicals or pesticides. We need more of them, not less. I have no problem with reforming the farm subsidy program, especially as it impacts large corporate factory farms . . . but want to make sure that these cuts don't impact small farmers growing genetically diverse crops. We have wonderful growing conditions and soil in the U.S., and we must be good custodians of the soil and genetic crop diversity.

COMMENT OF ANDREW MAY

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 10:40 p.m.

City, State: Emmetsburg, MD

Occupation: Contractor

Comment: It is time for legislation that specifically enables the development of 100% organic agriculture, featuring crops raised without industrial fertilizers and protected with methods such as integrated pest management, while banning all industrial pesticides.

COMMENT OF EMILY MAY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 10:43 a.m.

City, State: Hickory Corners, MI
Occupation: Student
Comment: Dear House Agriculture Committee:

I would like to express my support for continued mandatory funding for the conservation, beginning farmer, and research programs contained in the 2012 Farm Bill. I have lived in several rural areas around the country (Michigan, Washington State, Vermont, Maryland), and have seen that the importance of farm bill programs in these areas cannot be overstated.

I urge you to continue funding for the conservation programs like CSP, WRP, EQIP, WHIP, *etc.*, that conserve soil for future generations, keep water and air clean, and create habitat for wildlife—and perhaps more importantly, make rural areas beautiful and healthy places to live! These programs also create habitat for important agricultural pollinators, ensuring a secure food supply as honeybees become less stable in their delivery of pollination services.

I can see just by looking at the faces of our Michigan fruit growers that the average age of farmers is close to retirement age. Now that family farms are less common and farming is seen as a difficult financial venture with the upfront capital required as well as the risk involved with variable weather in most parts of the country (just take this spring as an example—many fruit crops in Michigan were heavily damaged), it's important that the farm bill include funding to support beginning farmers and ranchers (and farmer-veteran programs, if possible). We need an infusion of youth and energy on our nation's farms, not to mention a guarantee of continuity of the food supply as our current farmers retire.

Finally, as a graduate student in agriculture, I hope that you will continue support for research programs (AFRI, OREI, *etc.*) that help us continue to make strides in making agriculture more productive, safer, and more sustainable.

Thank you.

EMILY.

COMMENT OF TAMMY MAY

Date Submitted: Thursday, March 29, 2012, 11:05 p.m.

City, State: Paragould, AR

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Field Crops, Livestock

Size: 500–999 acres

Comment: I know we should of had a good year income wise because we got a better price but input costs went up more than the commodity prices. I just almost went under this year and the weeds becoming resistant didn't help.

COMMENT OF SHEILA MAYBERRY

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 1:58 a.m.

City, State: Decatur, IL

Occupation: Customer Service Manager

Comment: Its time to get back to real food. Not GMO pesticide riddle food. We need a fair and healthy food bill. One that does not penalize small local farmers. We need to get back to taking care of our farm land not killing it with glyphosate.

COMMENT OF COREY MAYER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:59 p.m.

City, State: Olympia, WA

Occupation: Food Retailer

Comment: The customers visiting our two stores in Olympia, WA want the cleanest, most local fresh food they can find. We prioritize supporting local organic farms and want to make sure that they are not run out of business by larger agribusinesses that don't always focus on the health of the consumer. We need to support small local agriculture as much as possible and not only cater to the larger food producing corporations.

COMMENT OF GLENNA MAYER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 10:02 a.m.

City, State: Jupiter, FL

Occupation: Homemaker

Comment: To keep subsidizing in this way, even though it is with insurance instead of direct payments, will be more damaging to our economy and to the health

of our lands. The subsidized insurance program it proposes to replace it with will allow giant commodity farmers and insurance companies to walk away with billions in taxpayer dollars while putting the land, soil and environment at greater risk.

Meanwhile, the small farmer still suffers from unfair restrictions and demands and our economy and lands suffers as well. Please have a real solution, not this one. Please offer real reform and not just alternate funding.

COMMENT OF ROBIN MAYERAT

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 9:52 a.m.

City, State: Hamburg, NY

Occupation: Piano Teacher/Blues Singer

Comment: It's so important to take care of the land we farm on and to be feeding our children with safe & nutritional produce. Please help keep us all healthy.

COMMENT OF LISA MAYNARD-BIBLE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:48 p.m.

City, State: Asheville, NC

Occupation: Gardener

Comment: Farm Bill needs to support small, local, organic, and non-monoculture farms. Safety and health are key, not blind support of large corporations.

COMMENT OF NANCY MAYO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:14 p.m.

City, State: Needham Heights, MA

Occupation: Retired MSW

Comment: Have you noticed that as the absolute numbers of small family farms decreases the general quality of life in the U.S. also has gone down? Just take infant mortality in the U.S. as one indicator. Or juvenile crime. Or the amount of pollutants in our food.

COMMENT OF LINDA MAYS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:50 a.m.

City, State: Conyers, GA

Occupation: Housewife

Comment: We need an organic farm bill, we as citizens of America have the right to choose what to eat. We want to support our local farmers, please help support our local farms for organic food.

COMMENT OF ROCHELLE A. MAZER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:28 p.m.

City, State: Granada Hills, CA

Occupation: Business Owner

Comment: As a business person, parent and consumer, I am very concerned about the direction agriculture has gone in this country. As a country, we need to support small businesses, specifically the family farms. And as a parent, I need to have unadulterated, organic food available for my growing children. And for all of us consumers, we need the huge diversity of food that is only grown by these smaller farms.

By limiting what produce is grown to a just a handful of different fruits, vegetables, and grains, and by specializing in only one strain of each, we are leaving ourselves in a precarious situation, setting ourselves up for disaster when a shift in the weather or an insect or a new disease can wipe out that entire species.

COMMENT OF HEATHER MAZEROLL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:34 p.m.

City, State: Augusta, ME

Occupation: Stay-at-Home Mom

Comment: Please support the organic farming industry. Our lives depend on it. The thought of any more harmful and unnecessary pesticides continuing to be allowed to be used on what is suppose to be natural, healthy food is dangerous and frightening.

COMMENT OF DEB MAZZAFERRO

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 7:39 a.m.

City, State: Sarasota, FL

Occupation: Consultant-Specialty Foods

Comment: I believe all subsidies to agricultural businesses doing over \$1,000,000 in revenue per year should end.

We should reward farmers with tax rebates for using renewable energy, for protecting the environment (by not polluting) and for creating jobs with a living wage (a minimum of \$40,000/year).

We should also police existing food safety issues more heavily, especially in meat, chicken and produce producers.

COMMENT OF JOHN MAZZITELLO, M.S.W., L.I.C.S.W.

Date Submitted: Tuesday, April 03, 2012, 1:09 p.m.

City, State: St. Cloud, MN

Occupation: Clinical Program Therapist 4, DOC

Comment: Dear Senators Klobachar and Franken:

I work as a therapist in Stearns County and Chisago County State Prisons and strongly urge you to support existing funding levels for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) within the farm bill.

One in 9 Minnesota citizens struggles to put food on the table. In Stearns County at least 20 percent of the population is food insecure. SNAP is critical to maintaining good nutrition and health among our population. Since 2008, SNAP's caseload has risen in the face of the on-going recession.

Economic studies in Minnesota show that people who lack access to adequate nutrition are more often chronically ill; children don't fully develop physically and cognitively and are more prone to fail courses, repeat grades and drop out of school before graduation which often leads to criminal activities on the street. The cost of hunger's impact—also as uninsured medical care—is conservatively estimated at \$1.6 billion annually. Cutting SNAP or limiting access to it will increase charity care caseloads for the counties, which will be borne by local property taxes.

Last but not least, every dollar of SNAP purchases goes into the local economy and generates \$1.73 in economic activity. This is not a net expense; it is a net gain of 73% that supports jobs on Main Street. In a time of high unemployment, we cannot afford to add to the unemployed by reducing community economic assets of which SNAP is one.

As a constituent and as a public servant, I strongly oppose cuts to critical anti-hunger programs SNAP, TEFAP as well as the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) for seniors and Women, Infants and Children (WIC)

For the sake of our neighbors who can't earn enough to get the food they need, it is important to maintain funding for programs that provide basic food assistance programs.

Sincerely,

JOHN ALLAN MAZZITELLO, M.S.W., L.I.C.S.W.,

Clinical Program Therapist 4,

Release and Reintegration Specialist,

Dept. of Corrections, St. Cloud and Rush City Prisons.

COMMENT OF GLORIA MCADAM

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 03, 2012, 11:52 a.m.

City, State: Windsor, CT

Occupation: Executive

Comment: It is critical that the farm bill protect the programs like SNAP and TEFAP which provide the food that helps people in need survive and thrive. And the need remains high despite a slightly improved economy. Here in Connecticut, even though it's a wealthy state, 1 in 8 of our residents rely on private charities for part of their food needs.

But private charities cannot do this alone! Currently in CT, only about 6% of the food given to people in need comes from private charities, the balance is from Federal nutrition programs like SNAP and TEFAP. Yet still, all of the needs are not being met. We estimate that the private charities only meet about 1/2 of the needs that are over and above what the Federal programs provide. Cuts to Federal nutrition programs will just put us that much further behind!

SNAP and TEFAP are some of the most efficient and effective programs the Federal government provides, with most benefits going to children, seniors, and disabled people.

Investing in hunger-relief is an investment in the future health and education of our citizenry and workforce. Kids who are not hungry will do better in school. Adults who are not hungry will be better able to find and hold a job.

Pass a Farm bill that protects and strengthens SNAP and TEFAP.

COMMENT OF DR. PHILIP MCANDREW

Date Submitted: Monday, May 14, 2012, 3:05 p.m.

City, State: Oak Park, IL

Occupation: Physician

Comment: Please support food for the hungry in the next farm bill. I volunteer for the food pantry in Oak Park and there is a tremendous need for food for the food insecure.

Thanks,

DR. PHIL MCANDREW.

COMMENT OF KRIS MCARTHUR

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 4:34 p.m.

City, State: Lynnwood, WA

Occupation: Environmental Engineer

Comment: I want America to produce healthy, organic, sustainable, non-GMO food. I want to invest in local farmers and ranchers, and preserving habitat. I want to see soil, air, groundwater, surface waters and marine waters all protected for future generations use and ecological benefit. I want to see a nation that eats healthy, lowering insurance costs, lowering medical costs, increasing lifespans and generally increasing America's (and the worlds) ability to live healthy, productive, joyful lives.

I want this for our today, our tomorrow, and for the future beyond all of our finite lives.

COMMENT OF CYNTHIA MCAULIFFE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:57 p.m.

City, State: Saint Augustine, FL

Occupation: Retired

Comment:

- (1) Please reinstate \$4 million for organic farming and reinstate full funding for "Beginning farmers".
- (2) Please place limitations on crop insurance subsidies and re-attach soil erosion and wetland conservation requirements to crop insurance programs.

Protect our environment first and foremost.

COMMENT OF LYNNE MCBRIDE

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 10:37 a.m.

City, State: Lafayette, CA

Occupation: Executive Director, California Dairy Campaign

Comment: If the dairy support purchase program is eliminated, as called for under both the House and Senate farm bills, dairy producers will have little ability to negotiate a fair price for the milk they produce and there will be even less competition than the limited competition that exists today. Without an adequate price safety net, producers will be forced into forward contracts, which will increase consolidation of the dairy industry, lower prices paid to producers and significant numbers of producers will be forced out of business as processors dictate forward contracting terms.

The dairy inventory management program in both the House and Senate bills would penalize all producers regardless of whether they have increased production or not. The Senate bill will allow dairy operation to update its production base for the supplemental insurance lessening the effectiveness of the inventory management program in the bill. We strongly support the legislation you introduced, "The Dairy Price Stabilization Act" which would establish an inventory management program to balance milk supply with market demand. Instead of penalizing producers the "Dairy Price Stabilization Act" would provide financial incentives for producers to manage their growth.

Two recent analysis of the Senate passed dairy title provide the necessary economic data to show that the bill would need to be improved substantially in order to be effective in California. The Food and Agriculture Policy Research Institute (FAPRI) study concludes that in just 5 years, dairy producers will likely be asked to pay 23¢ per hundredweight for margin insurance and receive just 15¢ in return, a losing proposition. The analysis completed by Mark Stephenson at the University of Wisconsin and Andrew Novakovic of Cornell University concluded that the decrease in the feed cost calculation by 10 percent in the Senate bill will have a substantial impact on the program and make it even less likely that the margin insurance program will be activated in the future.

An increasing number of dairy farms throughout California are going out of business or on the brink of bankruptcy due to low producer prices that do not cover rising production costs. The next dairy title must provide an effective safety net for periods of chronic low prices such as today and establish an inventory management system as outlined in the "The Dairy Price Stabilization Act" that is fair to all producers. We call on lawmakers to support elements included in the "Federal Milk Marketing Order Improvement Act" S.1640 introduced by Senator Bob Casey, D-Penn. S. 1640 which would pay dairy producers based upon their cost of production, manage milk inventories to meet market demand and address the impact of unregulated concentrated dairy imports which are now on the rise. We look forward to working with you and your staff to reform Federal dairy policies so that dairy producer can receive a fair return for the milk they produce.

COMMENT OF M. McBRIDE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:21 p.m.

City, State: Atlanta, GA

Comment: More affordable organics, grass fed beef and natural pork. All GMO food must be labeled! Quit expecting us to eat crap so large companies can make absurd profits. Quit subsidizing tobacco and large corps. Support the small farmers. Stop animal cruelty!

COMMENT OF VIRGINIA McBRIDE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:40 p.m.

City, State: St. Paul, MN

Occupation: Retail Manager and Parent

Comment: We must have a bill that encourages and supports organic farming practices and small farms. Furthermore, we should not be enabling or subsidizing chemical use or big agriculture? I think it is a big mistake to allow GMO crops to continue. It is destructive to soil, water, human and animal health.

COMMENT OF JEFF McCABE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:38 p.m.

City, State: Ann Arbor, MI

Occupation: Hoophouse Manufacturer and Installer

Comment: We have a historic chance to break from the status quo and support programs, through the farm bill, that will improve the health of farmers, Americans, and the economy. Please, cut subsidies to commodity crops that are simply making corporations and Americans fat and invest in programs that produce fresh foods that people eat: EQIP, Beginning Farmer and Rancher, *etc.* We must act now to re-direct farming to grow healthy foods before we bankrupt our country with diabetes treatment for 50% of our population. We have an amazing cadre of young farmers that are eager to go in to business growing the food that we need. Please shift the incentives to this important new segment of farming, for all of our good.

COMMENT OF JODY McCABE

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 15, 2012, 10:40 a.m.

City, State: Rio, WV

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Fruits, Specialty Crops, Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: I realize the committee has the difficult job of ensuring funding for various projects, but, as a farmer, I believe we need a farm bill that makes fresh, healthy, local, food available to all Americans, including schoolchildren. We also need to invest in the next generation of farmers and ranchers by guaranteeing the

\$25M per year in mandatory funding for the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program to support and encourage beginning farmers and ranchers entering agriculture. The investment in Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative at \$30M per year is vital to continued productivity and innovation in growing and diverse sectors of American agriculture, such as organic agriculture, which I am a part of with my farm. Further, by keeping the Value-Added Producer Grants Program at \$30M per year provides seed money to help farmers innovate in agriculture and create jobs while securing a sustainable path to market-based farm profitability. I believe America is at a pivotal point in time where it is of extreme importance to bring Americans back to organic and sustainable food products, and away from GMO, fat producing food processes, thus helping Americans become healthier and less obese. That can be accomplished by a better 2012 Food & Farm Bill that assists local farmers and ranchers in helping all Americans.

Thank you for your consideration.

COMMENT OF MICHELLE MCCABE

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 7:25 a.m.

City, State: Fairfield, CT

Occupation: Research Assistant, Public Policy

Comment: Divert subsidies for corn and soy to support local food sheds, fruit and vegetable crops, research and development, humane animal raising and slaughter.

COMMENT OF MARIE MCCAFFREY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:52 p.m.

City, State: Landenberg, DE

Occupation: Web Designer

Comment: I know that the squeaky wheel gets the grease but U.S. food and agricultural policy **Must** focus on adopting best agricultural practices that put the health of its citizens, the land and the livelihood of farmers over the interests of industrial agriculture lobbyists.

I am FOR:

1. GMO Labeling
2. Free Speech being reinstated regarding the health benefits of food and which foods best fight specific diseases. Foods must not be allowed to be classified as drugs just because they can have the same effect. It's just wrong.
3. Placing the burden of proof on the government before censorship is allowed . . . Stripping the FDA of its power to regulate free speech as it pertains to the above . . . and of its powers of search and seize without a warrant.
4. Getting Government out of the marketplace and allowing free-enterprise and honest competition to reign. No more favoring big Agra. Leave the Amish alone. Get out of the raw milk debate. Label it and allow the American public to decide what's on their dinner plate.
5. A cessation of copyright lawsuits from Monsanto regarding their seeds blowing into organic farmers' fields. This ruins the field and creates hardship for organic farmers. Companies should be required to pay organic farmers for the land that becomes infected with GMO seeds.

COMMENT OF AUDREY MCCAGUE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:44 p.m.

City, State: Royse City, TX

Occupation: Oil Industry

Comment: The purity of our food and protecting our farmers is first and foremost. Big companies must not be allowed to harass our farmers with bogus lawsuits and they must not be allowed to produce GMO food that is not labeled as GMO or any other unnatural process or ingredients. They must not be allowed to monopolize. There must be fair and equal treatment.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF NANCY MCCAMMON-HANSEN

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 7:19 p.m.

City, State: Fort Wayne, IN

Occupation: Marketing Coordinator at the History Center

Comment: As convener of the Fort Wayne area League of Women Voters, I personally support the state League's position on the farm bill in regard to SNAP.

The FY 2013 Agriculture Appropriations bill should:

- Oppose funding cuts and harmful policy proposals to SNAP, including efforts to block grant, cap, or cut funding;
- impose restrictive work requirements; or otherwise reduce benefits or restrict participation.

The 2012 Farm Bill should:

- Maintain funding to support current eligibility and benefit levels and oppose harmful policy changes.

Thank you!

COMMENT OF ANNIKA MCCANN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:24 p.m.

City, State: St. Johnsbury, VT

Occupation: Registered Nurse

Comment: Please increase funding for small family farms, farmers markets, and sustainable/organic practices. Please reduce subsidies to big corn and soy producers; these crops are used to make processed foods which harm the health of citizens. I support Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).

COMMENT OF SHERI MCCANN

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 4:30 p.m.

City, State: Marshalltown, IA

Occupation: Controller

Comment: Please create a bill that allows my granddaughter to receive health meals in school. One that is based on a sustainable, chemical-free future.

COMMENT OF ANDY MCCARRON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:35 p.m.

City, State: Keene, NH

Occupation: Mechanical Engineer

Comment: I support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

The current agricultural subsidization leads to mass production of “cash crop” (ex. corn) grown with chemicals and without regard for the conservation of land on which it is grown, typically grown on large mega farms. This type of farming results in more pollution (more chemicals are made, transportation of goods, operation of machinery, *etc.*), and crops (specifically corn) are driving health care cost up (look at the obesity rates resulting from an excess of corn intake in most Americans). The government needs to take care of its people—and corporation are not people (I don’t care what the supreme court says about that).

COMMENT OF MAUREEN MCCARTER

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 11:54 p.m.

City, State: St. Cloud, MN

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: Our policies should support family farms, not corporate giants. Stop subsidizing corn and start subsidizing foods that are healthier for Americans, including vegetables. Reward farmers who use little or no pesticides. Stop Monsanto from taking complete control of the seed market. Stop CAFOs.

COMMENT OF CALY MCCARTHY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:41 p.m.

City, State: Port Murray, NJ

Occupation: High-School Student

Comment: The farm bill has great potential to help those who honor the Earth: small-scale, organic farmers. We must **Stop** pouring money into agro-businesses which profit off the demise of the Earth and those who inhabit it (animals, plants, and humans). The farm bill should support diverse farms that follow traditional practices of crop rotation and seed saving. What with GMOs, pesticides, fertilizers, and oil-intensive agriculture, our food system is great peril. We have an obligation to protect consumers, but even more importantly, the Earth from which all life comes.

Please use the power entrusted in you to honor the Earth!

COMMENT OF JAMES MCCARTHY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:54 a.m.

City, State: Fort Myers, FL

Comment: Less funding for huge farming companies. Make sure food stamps stay in the Bill. More money for urban, small and black farms. Real food not generic corn.

COMMENT OF SUZANNE MCCARTHY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:28 p.m.

City, State: Port Murray, NJ

Occupation: College Academic Advisor

Comment: I wish to see support for local, non GMO agriculture. Please provide support for farm preservation and support for those you want to be part of a sustainable food system. Feedlots and mono-cultures are destroying our environment and ultimately our food supply.

COMMENT OF KIM MCCARTNEY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:17 p.m.

City, State: Santa Rosa, CA

Occupation: Engineering Professor

Comment: We know now that durable, resilient action plans are the only option offering life-sustaining potential for the common good of humanity. What species would willfully eliminate itself? And yet, if we continue in the same delusional mind set, this is what we would do. Please act in time.

COMMENT OF RACHEL MCCAUSLAND

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:13 p.m.

City, State: Bellingham, WA

Occupation: Art Team at Premier Graphics

Comment: Since the way our food is produced affects everyone, I'm glad for this opportunity to share what I think is most important.

We need to focus on healthy and organic plant foods. The production of organic plant foods is more ecologically sound in a lot of ways. It takes less water and land to produce plant foods than livestock or eggs or poultry, and if the plant foods are grown organically there is far less toxicity to the food. With commercial animal agriculture, grain and corn must be grown to feed the animals, and the animals create a great deal of waste which is very polluting to the environment, never mind the antibiotics and hormones which are routinely fed to the animals and which help encourage the development of antibiotic-resistant illnesses. Livestock also create a lot of CO₂ emissions.

Please find ways to encourage and support the growth of healthy and organic plant foods so that our air, water, land, and food, can be free of harmful chemicals and pesticides. Invest in more local farms and find a way to discourage outsourcing. Emphasize the dignity of the farmer, the producer.

COMMENT OF LARRY MCCHESENEY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:26 p.m.

City, State: Warren, CT

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Let's give people first thought rather than corporations. Corporations don't vote. People DO, and we will! Do what is right and what the majority of folks want, not what will line your own pockets fastest.

COMMENT OF MIKEL MCCLAIN

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 15, 2012, 7:12 p.m.
City, State: Portland, OR
Occupation: Retired Clergy
Comment: Please don't stop SNAP! I help a family of three who needs all the food stamps possible. This working mother has two teenage boys with hearty appetites. The \$142 a month does not currently cover all the food costs, but things would be a lot worse without it or if it is reduced.

COMMENT OF LOIS M. MCCLAVE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:59 p.m.
City, State: Albuquerque, NM
Occupation: Registered Nurse
Comment: Please support local farmers AND provide subsidies for fruits and vegetables.

I do **Not** want further subsidies for CORN and SOY because most of those products are from GMO seeds which have detrimental health benefits to the body (genetic material of bacteria and pesticides packed into the seed!)

I want to be informed that the products I eat are not GMO and that as a nation we are feeding our children fruits and vegetables, not just products with high fructose corn syrup and other corn derivatives, which are cheaper because it is subsidized!

I am appalled by factory farming and the horrible conditions animals are kept in. It is incredibly unhealthy and unjust.

Please support local farmers and stop the big agricultural subsidies! We will not starve if you weigh in on the side of local farmers and healthy food! If anything it will reduce our health care costs from all the problems associated with obesity that itself is associated with corn derivatives in particular (how they affect appetite and have an addictive activating mechanism in the brain).

Do the right thing! We really are what we eat!

LOIS M. MCCLAVE,
 1st District—Martin Heinrich.

COMMENT OF RICHARD MCCLAVE

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 10:51 a.m.
City, State: Albuquerque, NM
Occupation: Dentist
Comment: Please put some incentives in this farm bill to encourage the growth of local and organic producers. Both small, local and big, corporate farms have a place in our world.

COMMENT OF ROBIN MCCLAVE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:34 p.m.
City, State: Columbia, MD
Occupation: Public Health
Comment: I would like the farm bill to give greater consideration to the quality of foods produced and the subsidies that support specific commodities. The farm bill is not just about food, it is about the health of our nation. Food is the currency that connects us all and will allow America to grow strong both economically and culturally. Though certain investments seem to be larger on the front end, they inevitably cover their costs on the back end. This is a pivotal time in the history of American health. If our congressional representatives do not look at this from the long-term perspective of the health of current and future generations, you will be costing America any chance it has at taking care of its citizens and providing a healthy future.

COMMENT OF SCOTT MCCLAVE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:04 p.m.
City, State: Costa Mesa, CA
Occupation: Insurance Consultant
Comment: Get rid of farm subsidies. This is just pure silliness and archaic. Control the problem of excessively cheap imported ag by tariffs, but quit wasting taxpayer money on subsidizing our own farms. Let competition have its way and let

voters vote by making choices at the grocery store instead of government thinking they know what's best.

COMMENT OF JEFF MCCLEAVE

Date Submitted: Sunday, March 18, 2012, 2:21 p.m.

City, State: Olney, IL

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Please don't use poor people as a political football when acting on this bill. Their already has been used in ads calling Obama the food stamp president. If not for the safety net we would be calling him the starvation president. Kicking the poor people is easy they don't have lobbyists looking out for them. That's what the elected Representatives used to do now they are for sale to the highest bidder.

COMMENT OF MICHAEL MCCLELLAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 2:12 p.m.

City, State: Bowling Green, KY

Occupation: Government

Comment: Honorable Mr. Guthrie,

As a Kentuckian and health-conscious American from a rural background, I am very concerned about the state of America's agriculture on many levels, not the least of which are the following:

- (a) sustainability of rural communities
- (b) sustainability of our soils and farmland
- (c) availability of organic meats and produce at prices all can afford
- (d) viability of small farms for local markets in the face of unrelenting pressures from industrial ag companies
- (e) non-interference by the Federal government with the work of small farmers who are working on smaller scales and catering to local markets.

Please ensure that the upcoming farm bill reflects policies that will promote small farms, local food production, organic agriculture (REAL organics, not the pseudo-organics of Monsanto and other large ag concerns), and the sustainability of rural communities. A good farm bill will create many "jobs" by promoting the small business of farming, improve the nation's health with better quality foods, and help our environment by improving our soils, using more solar energy the natural way, and reducing our dependence on chemicals and artificial inputs.

We need your support! The family farm depends on it! Thanks.

MICHAEL MCCLELLAN.

COMMENT OF FRANCES MCCLELLAND

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 11:55 p.m.

City, State: Ojai, CA

Occupation: Retired-Biointensive Gardener at our Church

Comment: I help grow food for the hungry in Ojai by using some of the land at our church, St. Andrew's Episcopal Church in Ojai, CA to grow food for the Community Assistance Program. I felt that it was wrong to use our land and water for grass and trees only. I would like to see all common land used to grow food but it is a lot of work and people are not aware of what they could have. We grow organic and "Biointensively" which is very good use of the space.

FRANNA MCCLELLAND.

COMMENT OF B.A. MCCLINTOCK

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:27 p.m.

City, State: Honolulu, HI

Occupation: Disabled with MCS

Comment: Because I and millions of others world-wide are disabled with MCS we rely on you, our government, to protect us, especially our food & water supply. More & more chemicals are being added into our environment and on our food & water. For us this is tantamount to murder. If our food is contaminated and we have a reaction to it, we can die, plain and simple. We look to you to help us. The farm bill is the first important step to doing so. Everyone deserves healthy foods.

JOINT COMMENT OF SUE AND BRIAN MCCLUSKEY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:39 p.m.

City, State: Carbonado, WA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I don't think that huge agribusiness is the way to grow healthy food for America. As a onetime dairy farm operator we know that if 1 or 2 dairies bought up all the family owned farms we would have costs the only concern. I resent tax dollars going to large corporations while they lower the quality of our foods and fill the environment with pesticides, herbicides and other chemicals. Help the small farmer not big agribusiness.

COMMENT OF KARL MCCONNELL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:32 p.m.

City, State: Whitefish, MT

Occupation: Disabled

Comment: Please put the health and safety of American consumers over the financial interests of big ag. I am 24 and have spent almost ½ my life extremely ill with an inflammatory bowel disorder and food allergies, and GMO foods cause allergic reaction and pain and inflammation even if they are "safe" foods for me. Please don't condemn people like me to a worse more painful life than we already have by allowing GMOs to continue polluting our organic food sources.

COMMENT OF MELISSA MCCOOL

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 5:39 p.m.

City, State: Selah, WA

Occupation: Self-Employed

Comment: I support the following and hope you will consider these points:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).

The Senate Ag Committee has voted to get rid of wasteful subsidy payments, and it has proposed to replace it with a new subsidized insurance program that leading sustainable agriculture advocates are calling rife with opportunities for fraud and abuse.

While Congress is looking to get rid of direct payments to commodity farmers, the subsidized insurance program it proposes to replace it with will allow giant commodity farmers and insurance companies to walk away with billions in taxpayer dollars while putting the land, soil and environment at greater risk.

According to the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition's Ferd Hoefner, "By failing to place limitations on crop insurance subsidies and to re-attach soil erosion and wetland conservation requirements to crop insurance programs, the Committee has failed to do the full reform that is needed".

Thank you for your consideration.

Most sincerely,

MELISSA MCCOOL.

COMMENT OF KIM MCCORMACK

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:32 p.m.

City, State: Boulder, CO

Occupation: Nutrition Consultant

Comment: The farming practices being promoted and used nationwide are unsustainable. Not only that, they are undermining the general health of our nations people. There must be a substantial shift away from the use of hormones, pesticides, animal cruelty and genetic modifications if we are going to heal ourselves and our agriculture.

COMMENT OF SARAH MCCORMICK

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 10, 2012, 2:19 p.m.

City, State: Loveland OH

Occupation: Research Consultant

Comment: Cutting assistance to food-insecure families is not the answer to our budget crisis. Reductions in benefits would hit nearly all of the 44 million Americans (more than 10% of our fellow citizens!) who receive SNAP benefits. It is not right to balance our budget on the backs of children and elderly, who make up more than 90% of SNAP recipients. As well, the purchasing power that SNAP benefits provide to the rest of the economy will further hurt our financial situation as a country. Please strengthen the SNAP program, don't undermine it.

COMMENT OF GLORIA MCCRACKEN

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 3:44 p.m.

City, State: Chiloquin, OR

Occupation: Student

Comment: If we're really serious about debt, we don't need to make those with less pay for the tax benefits those with so much get. We can't afford to cut benefits for the SNAP program. We're talking about children who will be adults, and hopefully they'll be healthy, and therefore not a drain on society, but this cannot happen if they don't have access to food! A fundamental idea, I admit, but one that seems beyond many individuals in Congress.

In addition, Congress should include the following in any bill that is supposed to help agriculture:

- Community Food Projects Program—\$10 million per year to help communities build food self-reliance.
- Farmers Market and Local Food Promotion Program—\$20 million per year to develop farmers market capacity and create food hubs to connect farmers with schools, hospitals, grocery stores and other markets.
- Hunger-Free Community Incentive Grants—An average of \$20 million per year for a new SNAP local fruit and vegetable incentive grant program at farmers markets and other healthy food retailers.

COMMENT OF GRANT MCCRACKEN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:40 a.m.

City, State: Cincinnati, OH

Occupation: Brewer

Comment: I would like the farm bill to reflect my family's beliefs in good, clean and fair food. Stop subsidization of food that is making my family and planet sick. GMO/non-GMO should be a required label on every food. We should be testing these GMOs for long term implications and not relying on the producers of pesticides *etc.*, to provide their own findings (short term). Colony collapse in bees has been noted by Harvard as a direct link to an imidacloprid pesticide and should be banned to prevent the destruction of our country's natural pollinators. Please change our system for the better, not for the giant companies like Monsanto and Dow, who's best interest is to keep producing these toxic chemicals.

COMMENT OF CONNIE MCCULLAH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:24 p.m.

City, State: Berkeley, CA

Occupation: Project Manager, Food Explorer Program and Farmers' Market Education

Comment: It is imperative that you ensure a secure, healthy and safe local food supply that supports local regionally grown food *versus* agrafarming and central distribution. That truth in labeling is required and people are empowered to make their own health decisions. This has truly become an issue of national security! The power to feed our local communities with locally grown food, secures a more healthy future for our population and our communities.

COMMENT OF DENNIS MCCULLAH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:19 p.m.

City, State: Berkeley, CA

Occupation: Facilities

Comment: Please pay attention to the small organic farmer and the health of our children. We have a right to know if our food is a GMO. We should have the right to choose what we eat and drink. It is time that we do not support greed over health and education. We need to pay attention to our children.

COMMENT OF KAREN McCULLEY

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 1:01 p.m.

City, State: Laguna Beach, CA

Occupation: Retired Landscape Architect and Banker

Comment: Please support truth in labeling foods so that we, the consumers and your constituents, know if GMO foods are in the products. Such legislation is common in Europe and hasn't harmed their economy, but rather made corporations responsive to their consumers. Please do not cave—like VT and CT—to the litigious corporations and PAC's like Monsanto and put your constituents needs first. Thank you.

COMMENT OF MARTHA McCULLOCH

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 9:10 a.m.

City, State: Gardiner, NY

Occupation: Self-Employed

Comment: Our food subsidy program up to now has only served to increase the profits of the large industrial farming operations, with dire results for public health and nutrition. **Now** is the time to support sustainable agriculture and small, independent farmers who produce healthy food with humane and sustainable methods.

COMMENT OF ABBI MCDANIEL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:13 p.m.

City, State: Newburgh, IN

Occupation: Homemaker

Comment: I want to know that my family is getting the best nutrition possible. Every day I learn more and more how our current model of agriculture is doing nothing to improve the health of the people. We need to get back to the best way to raise crops and feed our families.

COMMENT OF COLLEEN MCDANIEL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:10 a.m.

City, State: Kannapolis, NC

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Specialty Crops

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: I have participated in an Incubator Farm program with Cabarrus county and will take the skills I have learned there to begin a small farm operation. Though it is difficult to enter this as an occupation, I have found that markets are demanding sustainable, organic produce, meat and poultry. People want to know their farmer personally. I am also a member of the Food Policy Council of Cabarrus County and we see the absolute need for healthier food in our schools. This means we, as a society must ensure that healthy foods are more competitively priced so that schools can afford them. Subsidies for non sustainable agriculture must be diminished, *i.e.*, GMO corn, GMO soy, GMO cotton, and other subsidized products that encourage herbicide and pesticide use that is now at an all time high worldwide. This farming is not sustainable and our health suffers from eating these products with chemical (and sometimes biological as in BT corn) inputs, the healthy microbes in our soil suffer, the skills of farming more than a handful of items is nearly wiped out as the average farmer is nearing 60 years old and with 2% of the U.S. population farming, this means we have very few educated farmers to take their place. Mono crops should become a thing of the past as we look to sustainability and we must re-learn how to work with nature in a balance of plant animal and microbe to create a healthier future.

COMMENT OF PAMELA MCDERMOTT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:00 p.m.

City, State: Colorado Springs, CO

Occupation: Educator

Comment: Organic GMO-free small farm agriculture is a better investment than big corporate GMO-filled agriculture, and agricultural subsidies should reflect that but they currently do not. The FDA and USDA, charged with regulating the agricultural sector, are also failing to enforce the agricultural laws we already have and all too often side with the interests of big corporate agriculture instead of holding them accountable for dangers to public health, watershed pollution, destruction of

living soil (it's dead now), and their dependence on fossil fuels leaving a huge carbon footprint. GMO pollen is an environmental pollutant that can devastate neighboring organic farms; pollen drift can cause an organic farmer to lose organic certification, forcing that farmer to desist from farming for at least 3 years before becoming eligible for recertification (providing his or her farm is not continuously polluted by GMO pollen drift) and I think they deserve to be financially compensated for the entirety of that process by the polluter(s) around them. There are so many issues in agriculture that I could point to that are harming our lands, waters, air, food system, economy, and the future of our country. I call on the Agriculture Committee and all Congressmen to educate themselves on the issues (free of corporate ag propaganda and marketing).

COMMENT OF MARGARET McDONNELL

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 2:18 p.m.

City, State: Bettendorf, IA

Occupation: Exec. Assistant

Comment: Elected representatives job is to see that his/her constituents are provided the best possible opportunities. It is **Not** to support a few large businesses. Natural, organic, farming practices support a cleaner environment for our families. And locally produced food is allowed to mature in the field and is not artificially ripened, hence is healthier. Also local food sources support local economy and can reach the consumer without subsidized transportation. It is a win win for all but chemical and oil companies who like you to assist them in building their monopolies. America was not formed to support monopolies.

COMMENT OF MIRIAM MCFADDEN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:49 p.m.

City, State: Waverly, NE

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Please read the following and others you can find by googling "obesogens": <http://www.doctoroz.com/videos/understanding-obesogens>

Our current mega farmers assisted by companies like Monsanto, are killing us! Please write a farm bill that will assist organic farmers, will get healthy and safe foods into our schools, and will eliminate poisons from our food and water systems.

COMMENT OF STEVEN MCFADDEN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:57 p.m.

City, State: Lincoln, NE

Comment: Dear House Agriculture Committee—I urge you to support and to fund the sustainable, organic pathways to food production that are the true 'tradition' of American Agriculture, and to cease support of the kind of industrial agriculture that has dispossessed so many American farm families and caused so much environmental destruction, and serious chronic health problems.

I urge Congress to support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Sincerely,

STEVEN MCFADDEN.

COMMENT OF PAT MCFARLAND

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 11:07 a.m.

City, State: Point Arena, CA

Occupation: Horse Rancher

Comment: Don't let corporate agribusiness highjack the farm bill! Endorse Local Foods, Farms and Jobs H.R. 3286. Implement all provisions of the Beginning Farmers and Ranchers Opportunity Act H.R. 3236. **Increase** funding for Organic Research and Sustainable Agriculture. Don't let your constituents go hungry, support

existing food stamp program. Stay out of the insurance business. Stop subsidizing profitable agribusiness. Maintain strict soil erosion and wetland conservation requirements. LABEL genetically modified foods and STOP supporting **Any** farmer or corporation that is promoting them.

COMMENT OF MELISSA MCGILL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:48 p.m.

City, State: Las Vegas, NV

Occupation: Commercial Illustrator

Comment: If we would subsidize sustainable food production and organic foods we would have a healthier population with lower food related illnesses. Without constant spraying of chemical pesticides we would have lower rates of Cancer, ADD and Autism. Food is supposed to nourish and provide health, not just for those who can afford organics. We now have food that **Causes** illness. You have the opportunity to make a huge difference in the quality of life of many by providing low cost, healthy, whole food for the people whose interests you have pledged to serve.

COMMENT OF M. MCGILLIVARY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:30 p.m.

City, State: Eugene, OR

Occupation: Self-Employed

Comment: My ancestors were Farmers & they would be and I am appalled at the **Animal Cruelty, Drugs, Crates, Torture, Doped Up Animals Making Us All Fat & Unhealthy, Genetic Fake Food, Cloning, Mankind Is A Mess for Messing With Animals & Agriculture . . . Down with Big Corporate Farming** I have stopping eating at **All Fast Food Restaurants & Regular Restaurants** that are supplied by **Tyson** & others. My nose actually itches from some unknown ingredient **Only** when I eat in franchised restaurants that buy from **Big Ag Corps** . . . My family & I wonder **What Are You Doing To Our Food Supply?**

COMMENT OF KRISTINE MCGINLEY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:19 p.m.

City, State: Ridgefield, WA

Occupation: Manager of Boutique Wine Shop

Comment: Nothing is more important than protecting the land that feeds the people of this country. Without proper nutrition we are all (democrat or republican) doomed to a life of poor health and chronic illness. This problem will only compound with each subsequent generation. We must take measures now to guarantee a healthy future for our country and the world.

COMMENT OF MARIE MCGLASHAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:47 p.m.

City, State: Mill Valley CA

Occupation: Mother/Acupuncturist

Comment: We need to have our tax dollars go to help put healthy real whole food on our tables—**No** GMO's, **No** heavy synthetic fertilizers, **No** heavy pesticide use!

COMMENT OF RICHARD MCGLYNN

Date Submitted: Tuesday, March 20, 2012, 1:30 a.m.

City, State: Chicago, IL

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I am in favor of cutting spending on agriculture and reversing the government takeover of this important segment of our economy. Let the farmers and ranchers decide for themselves without Washington's money or advice.

COMMENT OF KATHERINE MCGOWAN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 7:18 a.m.

City, State: Carmel, NY

Occupation: Paralegal

Comment: We need small local organic farms and safe food. Food that does not have BST growth hormone or food that is not genetically modified (GMO foods should be banned as it is in France). We need to ban the growing of crops with ge-

netically modified seeds before the genetically modified seeds totally ruin heirloom or organic seeds. We need the FDA to protect the consumers not promote big business' unhealthy interests.

COMMENT OF LAURA MCGOWAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 4:18 p.m.

City, State: Lothian, MD

Occupation: Administrative Assistant/Retired Registered Nurse

Comment: I would love to see more local, small farms that care about the animals, the land and water. Massive industrial farming is killing our planet with pesticides and misuse of land and water. I also no longer eat meat now because I refuse to be part of **Any** animal cruelty, and factory farming is notorious for cruelty, torture and inhumane treatment of animals who sacrifice their lives for humans. Unless we make a real commitment to making real changes to our present farming techniques, we can expect human overpopulation to destroy this precious and beautiful planet.

COMMENT OF ELISABETH ANN MCGRATH

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 7:55 a.m.

City, State: McArath, NJ

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: Please support farmers who produce our food supply. Do everything possible to enable them to grow what they produce in a healthy environment free of toxic chemicals while still allowing them to make a living. We cannot survive without the valuable contribution farmers make.

COMMENT OF MICHELLE MCGRATH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:17 p.m.

City, State: Underwood, WA

Occupation: Agricultural Nonprofit

Comment: I work with beginning farmers and ranchers and I see the importance of the farm bill on their livelihoods. Protecting programs that allow small, beginning farms access to resource is **Vital**. The majority of Federal programs are geared toward multigenerational mega-farms. With the farming population 'greying out', supporting small family farms is not just economic sense, but homeland security for the future of our nation.

As the committee considers the 2012 Food and Farm Bill, I urge you to:

- Support our fight against hunger by maintaining and strengthening critical nutrition programs in this time of unprecedented need. We must not solve our budget problems on the backs of those experiencing food insecurity, including our most vulnerable—our children, the elderly, and the disabled;
- Provide an even “plowing” field by fully funding programs that support beginning and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, organic farming, regional farm and food economies, and rural development. We need more farmers and ranchers, more sustainable food production, and more economic opportunity in our food system;
- Support family farmers that really need help, not the biggest farms that don't: End subsidies (aka direct payments and countercyclical commodity programs), and replace them with loophole-free agriculture risk coverage. Additionally, implement a cap on crop insurance premium subsidies;
- Ensure that limited conservation funding maximizes lasting environmental benefits: Limit funds to Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) for animal waste management infrastructure by eliminating the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) Livestock Set-aside and protect the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) from disproportionate cuts, and improve it by ranking applications solely on their conservation benefits.

COMMENT OF SARAH MCGRAW

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:29 a.m.

City, State: Owens Crossroads, AL

Occupation: Electrical Engineer/Program Manager

Comment: U.S. food and agricultural policy must focus on adopting best agricultural practices that put the health of its citizens, the land and the livelihood of farmers and farm workers over the interests of industrial agriculture lobbyists.

Americans are becoming more obese and are eating food that has been rushed to market, thus contain fewer vitamins and minerals than organic foods. We are the only country that insists upon genetically altering everything from plants to fish for the sake of producing more for less money.

We are being poisoned with pesticides, and our bodies are not as healthy as they could be because “natural” is no longer natural; it is altered in many ways. We are the only country that allows high fructose corn syrup in foods and beverages—therefore, I only buy Mexican Coca-Cola, **Not** American Coca-Cola! I only drink sodas that have real sugar; never diet sodas!

Our animals are injected with hormones and antibiotics, even when they do not need them! Stop this practice, please.

COMMENT OF DONNA MCGREEVY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:15 p.m.

City, State: Columbia, SC

Occupation: Registered Nurse (Retired)

Comment: We as a nation should be more concerned about the health of our citizens than the huge profits of the giant Ag corporations! Let's get some honest and forthright input from health care professionals in the mix before legislation is enacted that hurts our people and only help corporations **Which Are Not People**.

COMMENT OF MOLLE MCGREGOR

Date Submitted: Friday, April 27, 2012, 3:01 p.m.

City, State: Biltmore Lake, NC

Occupation: Realtor

Comment: Please consider the importance of small farmers and their needs as you write the next farm bill. Small farmers are a wonderful resource for their communities and should have their interests supported as much as the larger conglomerates.

Thank you!

COMMENT OF DONNA-CHRISTINE MCGUIRE

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 1:07 a.m.

City, State: Santa Barbara, CA

Occupation: Neuroscientist

Comment: Please do all you can to encourage small, family farmers committed to feeding Americans organic food, using sustainable methods.

Thank you,

D.C. McGuire.

COMMENT OF MARY MCGUIRE

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 3:42 p.m.

City, State: Wheat Ridge, CO

Occupation: Herbalist and Nutritionist

Comment: It's critical to main the EQIP Organic Initiative. And, we need to provide healthy, non-GMO foods for U.S. citizens which will cut down on healthcare costs. Additionally, the Food Stamp program is imperative for many of our citizens—streamlining the program and putting systems in place to detect and eliminate fraud is very important. Also, please implement all the provision of H.R. 3236.

COMMENT OF RUSSELL MCGUIRE

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 4:39 a.m.

City, State: Honolulu, HI

Occupation: Restaurant Manager

Comment: End all farm subsidies. Mandate GMO foods labeled as such. Free farmers from regulatory burdens that larger corporate farmers are able to afford. Allow dairy farmers to sell raw milk to willing buyers.

COMMENT OF SHARON MCHOLD

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 9:34 a.m.

City, State: Yarmouth, ME

Occupation: Mediator/Lawyer

Comment: My land trust works to protect farm land so that local food production, which includes energy savings by avoiding long distance transportation. This bill will enable us to be much more effective.

COMMENTS OF PATRICIA MCHUGH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 3:07 p.m.

City, State: Saint Louis, MO

Occupation: Teacher, Retired

Comment: New farm bill? **Subsidize** family farmers NOT agribusiness's profits from artificial oil-based fertilizers, pesticides & GMO seeds: **Other Countries Forbid** these to protest **Health**. Provide all of U.S. healthy, nutritious food. **Ignore** agribusiness's lobbyists. Thanks.

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012 8:27 p.m.

Comment: Support **Family Farms** and **Not** fat-cat agribusiness's obscene profits!

COMMENT OF RACHAEL MCINDOO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:04 p.m.

City, State: Carbondale, IL

Occupation: Student

Comment: Make it mandatory to label foods that have GMOs and/or label foods that are non-GMO.

Help fund and support family and smaller farms rather monopolizing the industry under a few major profitable farms.

Allow farmers the right and power to save seeds and grow varieties outside of Monsanto—do not let Monsanto control the farming industry just because it has governmental ties, wealth, and power.

SUBMITTED STATEMENT BY MATT MCINERNEY, EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT,
WESTERN GROWERS

Thank you Congressman Costa and Congressman Cardoza for facilitating this Farm Bill Forum today. My name is Matt McInerney, Executive Vice President of Western Growers, and on behalf of our 2,500 members who grow and ship fresh fruits, vegetables and nuts, I appreciate the opportunity to provide comments and observations relevant to specialty crop priorities in the 2012 Farm Bill.

First, let me thank you both for your leadership in the 2008 Farm Bill that created a new paradigm in the U.S. agriculture policy that provided, for the first time, a meaningful investment in special crops to enhance the competitiveness and profitability in this strategic area of U.S. agriculture.

The highlighted programs in the 2008 Farm Bill included School Fruit and Vegetable Snack, State Block Grant, Pest and Plant Disease, SCRI (Specialty Crop Research Initiative), and Market Access Program. These targeted initiatives have been invaluable to our industry and have provided the foundation by which to build the 2012 Farm Bill.

(1) Block Grants

One of the signature achievements in the 2008 FB was the creation of the Specialty Crop Block Grants program. We strongly urge you to continue this innovative approach that establishes a Federal-state partnership designed to enhance the competitiveness of the industry through funding to address immediate research needs, pest and disease, food safety, resource efficiency, and marketing. Over the years our state has benefited greatly from this funding. An example of the targeted use of these dollars is in terms of research dollars to help address the emergence of food safety concerns. The Center for Produce Safety at UC Davis, a recipient of such dollars and is a model for ongoing research needs to validate and improve on-farm practices to continuously improve food safety.

(2) Nutrition

The 2012 FB must renew a commitment between specialty crop growers and America's children and those less fortunate via the purchase and then distribution of our produce through the nutrition programs. I know you will have witnesses later that discuss the importance of nutrition programs to the residents of our great state, but I want to emphasize that our growers view those programs as critical to provide healthy choices. These programs are critical to feeding our less fortunate and our nation's children who need assistance. Our growers are proud to be part of those efforts and we want to maintain the increased role we have had in nutrition programs since the 2008 FB as we move forward in 2012. Western Growers has said

for years that “fresh fruit, vegetables and nuts provide the best medicine” and ensuring that all Americans can share in that medicine in these difficult economic times we think is important.

(3) Pest and Disease

For specialty crop producers Federal dollars spent on pest and disease prevention, detection and eradication represent vital opportunities to strengthen our industry, protect farmer’s livelihoods and preserve jobs. Tens of millions of dollars nationally flow annually for this activity which is critical here in California especially with the state resources difficulties. We remain uncertain of the funds the state might be able to provide. The Senate bill provides a new version of the existing Plant Pest and Disease Program [the new one absorbs the Clean Plant Network program] funded at \$60 million in FY13–16 and \$65 million in FY17 which is an increase of \$109 million over 10 years. We encouraged the adoption of this provision in the House version that will duplicate or improve on the monies in the Senate.

(4) Resource Management

FB dollars assist producers across the state to better and more efficiently use resources. For our growers that represents many resource concerns however in our state clearly water is among our highest priorities. FB programs such as the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) provide critical resources to upgrade irrigation systems and improve on-farm water use efficiency through other techniques. Research dollar spending then helps our industry plan for the longer-term by working on creating the next generation of crops that will use less water. Ensuring that FB spending continues to fund these priorities is critical in our state in which competition for resources is intense and growing.

(5) Crop Insurance for Specialty Crops

This is an emerging topic in this farm bill, and I would suggest that Western Growers board of directors has discussed this issue more over the last few months than we have over the last 10 years. We know that crop insurance beyond the traditional catastrophic coverage is the new trend in agricultural policy and we want to first understand it, then ensure that implementation of any program not create unintended consequences. We also want to explore how crop insurance could be more beneficial to us. Why do we have concerns? We are worried about insuring for speculation and make sure insurance products do not distort the sensitive supply/demand marketplace. The watermelon pilot program of 1999 by RMA is a perfect example. With that said we know crop insurance has come a long way since 1999 so we are open to learning more. Indeed, we are interested in seeing how crop insurance might be shaped with input from growers to deal with the new catastrophic dilemmas of the 21st century food safety and quarantine issues.

In closing, the 2008 Farm Bill established new programs that recognized the importance of the specialty crop sector and its role in the economic well being of individual states and in improving the health of consumers across the land.

We look forward to working with you both on these beneficial programs to the specialty crop sector. Thank you.

COMMENT OF LEAH MCINTOSH

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 11:26 a.m.

City, State: Austin, TX

Occupation: 9–1–1 Dispatcher

Comment: I support the full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act—H.R. 3286.

I support fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies is tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.

I support the implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).

I support maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

I do not support cuts to funding of organic research.

I do not support subsidies to already-profitable farm businesses or subsidies for crop and revenue insurance policies.

I do not support direct payments to commodity farmers, nor do I support the proposed subsidized insurance program that is proposed to replace direct payments, but will allow giant commodity farmers and insurance companies to take billions of tax dollars while putting the land, soil and environment at greater risk.

I ask you to place limitations on crop insurance subsidies and to re-attach soil erosion and wetland conservation requirements to crop insurance programs.

I want real reform, and a healthy organic future!

COMMENT OF RENE MCINTYRE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:06 p.m.

City, State: San Francisco, CA

Occupation: Music Teacher

Comment: Can we all agree that we need to do something about our attitude about the farming industry? Farmers and consumers need assistance and support: most farmers don't get enough assistance and support in producing food in the "best of ways," and a good deal of the nation's poor live in "Food Desserts." We need to change this if our nation is going to continue to be the "best" in the world and for the sake of our future generations.

COMMENT OF KATHERINE MCKEEN

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 02, 2012, 10:52 a.m.

City, State: Oakland, CA

Occupation: Student

Comment: Hello,

I am writing to voice my support for maintaining funding for the National Organic Certification Cost-Share Program. By helping organic farmers offset the costs of certification, the Program helps support both individual family farms through small payments (no more than \$750 annually per farm) while also advancing organic agriculture nationwide. Organic agriculture is a highly important part of America's economic future; the sector has continued to grow by almost 20% per year, even during the current economic downturn, and contributes \$29 billion annually to our economy. If we do not maintain or increase funds for the Program in the next farm bill, we risk compromising a vital part of the American agricultural economy. In addition, organic farming has indispensable benefits for human health and environmental concerns.

Although the farm bill has the express goal of "supporting" farm "both big and small", I would urge increased discretion over what really constitutes a "farm" in the farm bill. Can large agro-food businesses which do not promote environmental sustainability or community health really be considered farms? I would consider re-examining the farm bill to support **Actual** farms, not huge agricultural machines trying to disguise themselves as farms in order to grab government subsidies.

Thanks you for your consideration,

KATHERINE MCKEEN.

COMMENT OF MARY MCKEOWN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:34 p.m.

City, State: Black Mountain, NC

Occupation: Retired Real Estate Agent

Comment: Farm subsidy payments must be reined in, especially payments made to large corporations and people who no longer farm. Closing loopholes is of the greatest importance.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF GENESIS MCKIERNAN-ALLEN

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 11:22 p.m.

City, State: Indianapolis, IN

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Dear Chairman Lucas,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony to the House Committee on Agriculture on the next farm bill. My district representative is being copied on this testimony. My name is Genesis McKiernan-Allen and I am 28 years old. My husband and I recently moved back to our home state of Indiana to start a small business—a vegetable farm. Just this morning we harvested over 100 pounds of produce for our local Saturday morning Farmers' Market. If we are to succeed at this entrepreneurial effort, we need more support! I am one of hundreds (thousands?) of young farmers across the country trying to get started producing food and revitalizing rural communities. I'd like to share my support for programs that help the next generation of growers build strong farm businesses. As it's estimated that 125,000 farmers will retire in the next 5 years, it's absolutely critical that farm bill programs help citizens get started in this challenging field. I ask that the Com-

mittee endorse all of the provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236), including:

- Mandatory funding for Individual Development Accounts at \$5 million per year. This program helps new farmers raise capital to start farm businesses and is tested and proven by organizations like Practical Farmers of Iowa and the California Farmlink.
- Mandatory funding for the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program at \$25 million a year. This program funds essential education for new farmers around the country.
- Authorize a new microloan program, to enable young and beginning farmers to better access FSA loan programs.
- Revise FSA rules to make loan programs more accessible to more young and beginning farmers.
- Reaffirm the existing cost share differential for BFRs within EQIP. Also, reaffirm the advance payment option allowing beginning and socially disadvantaged producers to receive an advance payment for the project's costs for purchasing materials or contracting services, but increase the limit on the advance payment from 30 percent to 50 percent of costs.
- Amend the Farm and Ranch Land Protection Program (FRPP) to make farm viability part of the purpose of the program and to give discretionary authority to the eligible entities that implement the program to give priority to easements with an option to purchase at the agricultural use value, deals that transfer the land to beginning and farmers and ranchers, applicants with farm succession plans, and other similar mechanisms to maintain the affordability of protected land.

These and other provisions within the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act will help new growers succeed and I urge you to include them in the next farm bill.

Sincerely,

GENESIS MCKIERNAN-ALLEN,
Full Hand Farm.

COMMENT OF MARK MCKIM

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 4:26 p.m.

City, State: Austin, TX

Occupation: AmeriCorps Member

Comment: Dear Members of the House Committee on Agriculture,

I am writing today in support of the following policies. The current food bill being discussed lacks many of the vital components to address the nation's food problems such as obesity, soil erosion, excess run-off, and other public health related issues.

I support the full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).

I support fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.

I support the implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).

I support maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Please consider these recommendations when discussing the current food bill.

Thanks.

COMMENT OF MARTHA MCKINNEY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:35 p.m.

City, State: Kodiak, AK

Occupation: Physical Therapist

Comment: I urge you to fully support the following:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Alaskan's particularly need these protections. Please support and protect your constituency, not agribusiness. While I'm at it, I urge you and your staff to view all four movies of HBO's *The Weight of the Nation*. It will inform you of the critical need to stop harming the health of our children. Thank you and sincerely.

COMMENT OF PAT MCKNIGHT, M.S., R.D., L.D.

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 10, 2012, 6:06 a.m.

City, State: Columbus, OH

Occupation: Dietitian

Comment: It is important to assure that the many nutrition components of the farm bill remain funded and increased where possible. SNAP, SNAP-ed, WIC, Senior Farmers Market are all very important to Ohioans as well as to other Americans.

COMMENT OF MARIELLA MCLACHLIN

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 2:54 p.m.

City, State: Brooklyn, NY

Occupation: Social Worker

Comment: This country is in need of agricultural reform. Fresh fruits and vegetables must be available to everyone. Please make healthy food more affordable!

COMMENT OF ALEX MCLEAN

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 10, 2012, 7:28 a.m.

City, State: Swannanoa, NC

Occupation: Pastor

Comment: Please protect SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP in the upcoming farm bill. Hunger is rampant in Western North Carolina. We need the government's help. The charitable sector can only do so much.

COMMENT OF L. MCLEAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:21 p.m.

City, State: Seattle, WA

Comment: I write today to voice my strong support of the following:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.
- Ending the stranglehold that BigAg has on our regulatory system and you, our political leaders. Immediately. The proposal to replace subsidy payments with a new subsidized insurance program is, quite frankly, cynical at best and criminal at worst. Stop the madness now.

Thank you for your attention to these comments.

COMMENT OF DR. R.G. MCLELLAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:15 p.m.

City, State: Marietta, GA

Occupation: Doctor

Comment: Value the health and well-being of the people rather than corporate agribusiness. Beautiful concept and must be put into practice in this country!

COMMENT OF ROBERT MCLINDEN

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 8:22 p.m.

City, State: Germantown, MD

Occupation: Scientist

Comment: It has been proven, scientifically, time and again that biological diversity is the key to sustainable agriculture. By squeezing out the small farmer and supporting (unnecessarily) big agribusiness, we are flying in the face of this fact.

I will not vote for anyone who supports big agribusiness at the expense of the small farmer.

COMMENT OF BETSY MCMAHON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:03 p.m.

City, State: Manzanita, OR

Occupation: Teacher at Community College

Comment: Please take away subsidies from **Huge Corporate Farms** and support the small farmer in any way possible.

Stop supporting all the chemicals that are killing our soils and instead support organic (what farming is supposed to be) farming.

We need to stop these **Huge** beef, pork and chicken factories where animals are grown for profit and are fed chemicals, never see the sun and are crammed into these monstrous buildings. Creates very bad pollution of soil and air.

COMMENT OF DENNIS MCMANUS

Date Submitted: Monday, April 09, 2012, 10:27 a.m.

City, State: Pittsburgh, PA.

Occupation: Government Relations Manager.

Comment: Congress should do its part by continuing to strongly support anti-hunger programs like the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), and the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP), all of which are authorized in the farm bill.

Cutting anti-hunger programs will increase hunger in America. Given the associated health care and educational costs of hunger and poor nutrition, cuts to anti-hunger programs will hurt both those struggling with hunger and those who must contend with the impact of hunger on government services and economic productivity. Fighting hunger is not only the morally right thing to do, it is the economically smart thing to do as well. Please protect and strengthen important anti-hunger programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP in the 2012 Farm Bill reauthorization. Thank you.

COMMENT OF MEGAN MCMANUS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:29 a.m.

City, State: Woodbridge, VA

Occupation: High School English Teacher

Comment: Please lend your support to the small family farmers who grow diverse plants and animals. Subsidize the carrot and eggplant, not **Corn!** Support the health of Americans by encouraging these small, local farms and not by encouraging biodiversity and not products (corn, soy) that contribute to junk food. Show that you care about healthy lives and not big business!

COMMENT OF RYAN MCMICHAEL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:11 p.m.

City, State: Canton, OH

Occupation: Physician

Comment: We need dramatic reform of the current farm bill regulations that clearly subsidize the production of food products that have the most devastating impact on our health. This needs to change and we need to find ways to incentivize the production and sale of nutritious foods—organic is a great place to start. As a physician, I see the side effects of the current policy everyday on the front lines, and it is extremely detrimental.

I support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

COMMENT OF MARNIE McMULLIN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 1:55 p.m.

City, State: Olympia, WA

Occupation: Agriculture Student, Farm Aide

Comment: This is a time to ensure food security and stop ignoring the blatantly obvious problems in our current agricultural system. The current system will inevitable fail and the people of this country, the people that you represent, will suffer. It is time to stop being bullied by mega-corporations and allowing them token organic and sustainable standards. It is clear that this will not work anymore. Open your eyes and see that these decisions destroy our people, land and country. Please support programs that aid small, diverse farms that practice truly sustainable methods of farming.

COMMENT OF JEAN G. McMURRAY

Date Submitted: Wednesday, March 21, 2012, 11:52 a.m.

City, State: Shrewsbury MA

Occupation: Executive Director, Worcester County Food Bank

Comment:

March 21, 2012

House Committee on Agriculture
Washington, D.C.

Dear Chairman Lucas, Ranking Member Peterson, and members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on the upcoming farm bill reauthorization. Given the need for food assistance in our state and the declining supply of Federal commodity support, I strongly urge you protect and strengthen nutrition programs in the 2012 Farm Bill.

Every day, the Worcester County Food Bank and its network partners of 94 emergency food pantries, see how important Federal nutrition programs are in our community and how effectively they are working to ensure that struggling Massachusetts residents can provide enough food for their families. Currently, the Worcester County Food Bank and its network serve 83,145 different people annually, including over 32,000 children under the age of 18.

Over the last 3 years, the Worcester County Food Bank and its network have been challenged by unprecedented demand and uncertainty over available food resources. Throughout the region, we have seen a 12 percent increase in the number of people helped since 2008. Food is a fundamental need that people are struggling to meet because they are unemployed or underemployed. Many are asking for help with feeding their families for the first time in their lives. When the Worcester County Food Bank network provides emergency assistance to households, we also connect them to a range of Federal nutrition programs that provide a lifeline, like the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.

Without strong farm bill nutrition programs like The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP), the Worcester County Food Bank and food banks across the country will struggle to fill the gap for food.

We recognize the challenge you face drafting a farm bill in a time of deficit reduction, but we are also sensitive to the tremendous, ongoing need in our state. As such, we have two key priorities for the farm bill.

First, we urge you to strengthen TEFAP to help us keep up with demand. TEFAP supplies about 25 percent of the food moving through Feeding America's national network of over 200 food banks, including 28 percent for Worcester County Food Bank. But because of strong commodity prices, TEFAP food declined 30 percent last year, and it is challenging for our food bank to make up the difference. We urge you to make TEFAP more responsive during times of high need by tying increases in mandatory funding to a trigger based on unemployment levels. We also propose to enhance the Secretary of Agriculture's authority to make TEFAP bonus purchases at times when the need for emergency food assistance is high—for example high unemployment—in addition to times of weak agriculture markets so that the program can respond to both excess supply and excess demand.

Second, we also strongly urge you to protect SNAP from harmful funding cuts or policy proposals that would restrict eligibility or reduce benefits. SNAP has responded effectively to growing need in the recession with benefits that are timely, targeted, and temporary. The average SNAP household has an income of only 57 percent of the Federal poverty guideline, and 84 percent of benefits go to households with a child, senior, or disabled person. The program is working to support vulner-

able families in Massachusetts, and our food bank network would not be able to meet the increased need for food assistance if SNAP were cut.

These programs have a real impact on your constituents, many of whom must rely on food banks and their partner food pantries as well as Federal nutrition programs to meet their basic food needs. I encourage you to visit the food banks serving your district before the Committee marks up a farm bill so you can meet our neighbors in need and see firsthand how Federal nutrition programs are working to protect vulnerable Americans from hunger.

The Worcester County Food Bank believes that feeding our neighbors is a shared responsibility, and food banks like ours rely on a variety of food sources to support our communities, including generous support from partners in retail, manufacturing, and agriculture. However, the Federal government is an equally critical partner through programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP, and with tremendous, ongoing need in our state, continued Federal support is more important than ever.

As the House Agriculture Committee moves forward with farm bill reauthorization, it is imperative that you do not take food away from Americans in need. Investing in anti-hunger programs is not only the right thing to do but also makes fiscal sense, as these programs allow us to care for our neighbors, build our communities and lead to savings in healthcare and education down the road. Worcester County Food Bank urges you to protect the nutrition safety net and offers the specific recommendations below as a member of the Feeding America national network of food banks.

Sincerely,

JEAN G. MCMURRAY,
Executive Director.

Feeding America 2012 Farm Bill Priorities

The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP): TEFAP is a means-tested Federal program that provides food commodities at no cost to Americans in need of short-term hunger relief through organizations like food banks, pantries, soup kitchens, and emergency shelters. Nutritious food commodities provided through TEFAP are an essential resource for Feeding America food banks. As the demand for food remains high at food banks across the country, a continuous stream of TEFAP is necessary for the provision of a steady emergency food supply.

- TEFAP commodities account for approximately 25% of the food moving through Feeding America food banks. Food banks combine TEFAP with private donations to maximize TEFAP benefits far beyond the budgeted amount for the program. In this way, food banks exemplify an optimum model of public-private partnership.
- TEFAP has a strong impact on the farm economy. According to USDA's Economic Research Service, producers of commodities provided as bonus TEFAP (those purchased by USDA to intervene in weak agricultural markets) receive an estimated 85¢ per dollar of Federal expenditure. Producers of other commodities provided through TEFAP receive about 27¢ per dollar. By contrast, only about 16¢ of every retail food dollar goes back to the farmer.
- Declines in Section 32 funding and strong agriculture markets resulted in a 30% decline in TEFAP purchases during FY2011. This decline is expected to continue in FY2012 as food banks continue struggling to meet increased need. The shortfall between supply and demand will only worsen when the SNAP ARRA benefit boost expires, as many participants turn to food banks to make up for the reduction in benefit levels.

Farm Bill Priorities for TEFAP:

- Make mandatory funding for TEFAP food more responsive to changes in need by providing a trigger that ties funding to unemployment levels
- Enhance Secretary of Agriculture's authority to purchase bonus commodities in times of high need for emergency food relief in addition to times of low commodity prices so the program is responsive both to excess supply and excess demand
- Reauthorize funding for TEFAP Storage and Distribution Funds at \$100 million per year
- Reauthorize funding for TEFAP Infrastructure Grants at \$15 million per year

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP): SNAP is the cornerstone of the nutrition safety net, providing over 46 million low-income participants with monthly benefits via a grocery debit card. Eligibility is based on household income and assets and is subject to work and citizenship requirements. SNAP is one of the most responsive safety net programs, expanding quickly to meet rising need

during the recession. The program is targeted at our most vulnerable; 76% of SNAP households contain a child, senior, or disabled member, and 84% of all benefits go to these households.

- As the number of people unemployed grew 110% from 2007 to 2010, SNAP responded with a 53% increase in participation over the same period. As the economy slowly recovers and unemployment begins to fall, SNAP participation and costs too can be expected to decline.
- The SNAP accuracy rate of 96.19% (FY10) is an all-time program high. SNAP error rates declined by 61% from FY1999 to FY2010, from 9.86% to a record low of 3.81%.
- SNAP benefits supplement a household's food budget but are insufficient to last most participants through the month, causing many participants to rely regularly on food banks. Among food pantry clients receiving SNAP benefits, over ½ (58%) reported having visited a food pantry at least 6 months or more during the prior year.
- The average SNAP household has a gross monthly income of \$731 and countable resources of \$333, consists of 2.2 persons, and participates in the program for 9 months. The average household receives a monthly benefit of \$287, or about \$1.49 per person per meal.

Farm Bill Priorities for SNAP:

- Protect SNAP by opposing proposals to cap or reduce funding, restrict eligibility, reduce benefits, or otherwise impede access or benefit adequacy. Recent proposals to block grant the program would prevent it from responding effectively to fluctuations in need, and efforts to limit broad based categorical eligibility would increase administrative costs and access barriers.
- Restore the cut to the SNAP ARRA benefit boost used to pay for the 2010 child nutrition bill and phase out the boost in a way that protects families from a cliff in benefit levels.
- Encourage better nutrition by maintaining nutrition education, incentivizing the purchase of healthy foods, and ensuring that retailer standards balance adequate access to stores with access to a range of healthy foods and moderate prices.
- Build on SNAP's strong record of integrity and payment accuracy by issuing guidance to states on the eligibility of lottery winners and college students and upgrading resources and technology for trafficking prevention.

Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP): CSFP leverages government buying power to provide nutritious food packages to approximately 599,000 low income people each month. Nearly 97 percent of program participants are seniors with incomes of less than 130% of the poverty line (approximately \$14,000 for a senior living alone). Currently, 39 states and the District of Columbia participate in CSFP. Another 6 states (CT, HI, ID, MD, MA, & RI) have USDA-approved plans, but have not yet received appropriations to begin service.

- CSFP is an efficient and effective program. While the cost to USDA to purchase commodities for this package of food is about \$20 per month, the average retail value of the foods in the package is \$50.
- CSFP helps to combat the poor health conditions often found in seniors who are experiencing food insecurity and at risk of hunger. CSFP food packages, specifically designed to supplement nutrients typically lacking in participants' diets like protein, iron, and zinc, can play an important role in addressing the nutrition needs of low-income seniors.
- Many seniors participating in CSFP are able to have their food boxes delivered directly to their homes or to seniors' centers nearby, an important benefit for those who are homebound, have limited mobility or do not have convenient access to a grocery store.

Farm Bill Priorities for CSFP:

- Transition CSFP to a seniors-only program by phasing out eligibility of women, infants, and children while grandfathering in current participants.

COMMENT OF PATRICIA MCNABB

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:33 p.m.

City, State: New Brighton, MN

Occupation: Retired

Comment: To Large Commercial Farmers: I am terribly concerned about the current farming practices of large commercial farming companies. Your continuing use

of pesticides and “Agent Orange”-type chemicals makes me want to live off the grid by buying only locally produced food through cooperatives or local farmers. As you know bee colonies are falling apart and suffering badly. Furthermore, genetically altering seeds, especially when we consumers are not notified, is especially dangerous.

You (and I) have no idea what the end result of such dangerous practices may be. Please take these ideas to heart and put them above your concern for your bottom line!

COMMENT OF AMY MCNAIR

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:19 a.m.

City, State: Hilliard, OH

Occupation: Mom and Nurse Practitioner

Comment: Dear Members of the House:

You can judge a society based on the way they treat their most vulnerable populations. If we look at our children and our elderly, what would people say about our philosophy of life? It is time to step up and support farms that produce healthy foods, foods for all of us, but especially for our vulnerable populations. It is time to make healthier food affordable and accessible to these populations. It is time to raise our animals used for food with respect and dignity. As both a mother and a health care provider, I urge you to support this bill to make healthy foods more readily available to all of us.

Thank you,

AMY MCNAIR.

COMMENT OF CLAIRE MCNEELY

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 11:59 p.m.

City, State: Westbrook, ME

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Agribusiness has taken over the food supply to the detriment of our farmers and those who prefer to eat locally. In the process they are poisoning our land, air and water and endangering our lives with GMO foods, monocultures and other dangerous practices. We the People need an organic farm bill **Now**.

COMMENT OF TRISH MCPeAK-LARocCA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:16 p.m.

City, State: Amherst, MA

Occupation: Nurse Educator

Comment: As a health care provider I urge you to support best agricultural practices that supply our communities of people with real, unadulterated, health-promoting foods. Do not continue to subsidize commodity crops which have contributed toward our nation's decline in health. Please stand behind healthful food policies, not industrial food supports.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF TRISTIAN MCPHAIL

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:39 a.m.

City, State: Austin, TX

Occupation: IT Engineer

Comment: Please support organic farmer including local and nationwide to grow healthy and organic crops, not allow corporate control our farmers' crops. I want to eat healthy produce.

COMMENT OF MARNIE MCPHEE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:16 p.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Writer and Former Farmer

Comment: As a former organic farmer and co-founder of National Organic Harvest Month, I am well aware of how farm policy shapes land, lives, communities, and economies. Farm policies that support **Family** farms and the communities those farmers support, and standards that protect local and global environment are good for everyone, in the short- and long-term.

COMMENT OF HOLLY MCPHERSON

Date Submitted: Monday, March 19, 2012, 6:36 p.m.

City, State: Denver City, TX

Occupation: Teacher/Rancher

Comment: Make sure that politicians support farmers—they are the backbone of American exports.

Please remember in your deliberations that government jobs do not create wealth for the United States they take money from the nation and that 1 farmer creates more than 11 jobs in support for the creation of exports to the world in food/fiber for the U.S. Private Industry makes !\$\$ for the nation NOT more govt. job or regulation.

HOLLY MCPHERSON, Denver City, TX.

COMMENT OF PAT MCQUADE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:50 p.m.

City, State: Carmel, NY

Occupation: Housewife and Gardener

Comment: When are politicians going to start representing the **People** of this country, instead of your own selfish interests and corrupt corporations? Don't you realize your children's families will have to live in this mess you're creating long after you're gone? Do the job you were voted for . . . for a change.

COMMENT OF SUSAN MCSHERRY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:21 p.m.

City, State: Dayton, OH

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: Current industrial agribusiness policies are a threat to American health. It is time to put the health of the American public before the interests of the monied agribusiness lobbies. It is time to move away from chemical and GMO contamination of our food supply and move toward a healthier organic or permacultural means of supplying the food we eat.

COMMENT OF WINSTON MCTAGUE

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 2:55 p.m.

City, State: Newport, ME

Occupation: Machine Operator

Comment: Every farmer in America is going under and hunger is coming on strong and poor, disabled, homeless, shelters, food banks, veterans all cannot buy food now and republican screwballs are taking it all away **And Needs To Stop Damit!**

COMMENT OF ELIZABETH MCTEER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:16 p.m.

City, State: Sarasota, FL

Occupation: Operations Manager

Comment: Please don't subsidize GMOs! Please work against GMOs. They are not yet proven safe and are banned virtually in every other country for this reason!

We as a nation are suffering the terrible health consequences including rapidly rising obesity, diabetes and heart disease that are directly linked to the over consumption of sweet and fatty foods that have been subsidized by farm bills in the past. The health of our citizens and the medical system would greatly benefit in the promotion of whole plant based foods (not GMO corn grown for cattle and GMO soy and beets for sugar and junk-food fillers). A healthy farm bill can encourage people to eat whole foods and resolve many of our budget/health care cost problems. Please phase out all agricultural subsidies while boosting support for farmer's markets, land conservation and organic farming which protects farm workers against dangerous pesticides.

Thank you!

COMMENT OF JAN MCVEY

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 7:33 a.m.

City, State: Harper Woods, MI

Occupation: Sales

Comment: I have several health issues which I truly rely on **Organic** foods for myself and my family. Our bodies are on over-load from all the chemicals we are ingesting already. It is absolutely imperative that farmers are allowed to grow food without more chemicals added.

Look at the amount of sickness already, please take time to re-think these decisions, and save our families from further illnesses. Our Food needs to be protected! God intended for our food to be naturally grown and not tampered with.

COMMENT OF TRISHA MCWATERS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:02 p.m.

City, State: Wimberley, TX

Occupation: Artist

Comment: I think the food industry is a sham. I feel mainstream public has no idea what they are eating, and how many deadly chemicals are in food today. Please do away with GMO foods and please allow local farmers and local organic farmers to just grow their food without government stepping on them.

COMMENT OF MORGAN MEAD

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:23 p.m.

City, State: Marblehead, MA

Occupation: Student

Comment: Many of us, such as those required to have meal plans on campuses, are not able to choose the food that we eat. Requirements need to be stricter on places like these to ensure the health of students. They can basically feed us anything they want since we have to have it.

COMMENT OF NATHANIEL P. MEAD

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 3:39 a.m.

City, State: Spring Valley, NY

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Dairy, Field Crops, Fruits, Greenhouse/nursery, Vegetables

Size: 50–150 acres

Comment: Ecological diversity is what has created and will continue to create the foundation we have for our existence. Profit oriented endeavors leading to deterioration of our social and ecological networks need be seriously analyzed and hindered in favor of initiatives that encourage social and ecological diversity.

Please give room for the future generations to have a meaningful, respectful and healthy relationship to the land.

COMMENT OF PAO MEADER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:13 p.m.

City, State: Westbrook, ME

Occupation: Information Technologies—MLTI Tech Leader

Comment: I believe we need to adjust farm bill policies to support small, local agriculture. Too often, subsidies and policy favor large farms which cause further damage to our food supply both in quality and in reliability. Having discovered from personal experience how much a healthy diet can reduce health issues and generally improve a person's life. Please consider supporting local small agriculture.

COMMENT OF ANNE MEADOWS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:03 p.m.

City, State: Washington, D.C.

Occupation: Retired

Comment: One of the reasons the nutrition programs were started in the first place was to support the agriculture industry. It's more than just a "handout" to the poor. Poor nutrition leads to poor students and workers. We need healthy, locally grown food in our schools and grocery stores.

COMMENT OF CLAIRE MEADOWS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:11 p.m.

City, State: Lafayette, CO

Occupation: Gardener/Cook

Comment: Please keep corporate agribusiness out of the American Farm. Help us keep our food production at a local level and observing healthy, sustainable farming techniques.

COMMENT OF TERI MEADOWS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:37 p.m.

City, State: Fairfax, CA

Occupation: Homemaker

Comment: We need separate regulations for small farmers! Do not treat small farms like large AG! Let small farmers sell raw milk! Talk to small farms and understand their needs. People drank raw milk for thousands of years—it is normal and natural. We need local, organic produce as a means of national security. We need reform now.

COMMENT OF A.E. MEDINA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:46 p.m.

City, State: Paterson, NJ

Occupation: Retired Educator

Comment: Do the right thing please before we eat ourselves into nonexistence with the polluted food that is prevalent in our supermarkets. We all want and deserve good, clean, wholesome food. The wave has arrived, the farm bill needs to get onboard for the good of **All** of us. Go organic, everywhere!

COMMENT OF HALE MEDNICK

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 9:23 p.m.

City, State: Gresham, OR

Occupation: Teacher, Former Farmer

Comment: As a former organic farmer for 8 years, I can guarantee you that you cannot cave into the unreasonable demands of corporate agriculture and expect people's health and welfare not to continue to deteriorate. You need to support small, local organic farmers to have a strong food supply. Period. Make a stand now against corruption from corporate agriculture who only want profits.

COMMENT OF LEX MEDVED

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:44 p.m.

City, State: Rahway, NJ

Occupation: Architectural Draftsman

Comment: Preserve the small farms. If not we will need bailouts to protect the large mega corporation which will then be deemed "too large to fail" Small and varied farming protects the environment, encourages diversity, and stimulated competition for the best food at the best prices. Isn't that the America we grew up with? Large firms will sell you "what they got", whether you want that or not.

Thanks for reading this.

LEX.

COMMENT OF LEONOR MEEK

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 02, 2012, 7:42 p.m.

City, State: San Antonio, TX

Occupation: Homemaker

Comment: Please put necessary funds towards needy children first. It is so important to feed the future not putting more cash into rich people's pockets. Put all of yourselves in the position of individuals bringing in low wages or out of work. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

LEONOR MEEK.

COMMENT OF HUMERA MEGHANI

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:15 p.m.

City, State: Killeen, TX

Occupation: Retail Sales

Comment: I would like to have taxpayer-derived government subsidies be designated to local and organic farmers, as well as denying patents on genetically engineered seeds/plants/produce.

COMMENT OF DIANE P. MEIER

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 1:20 p.m.

City, State: Palo Alto CA

Occupation: Partnership & Business Strategist; Local/Sustainable Food Advocate

Comment: Dear members of the House Agriculture Committee:

I am a partnership and business strategist committed to local/real food and sustainable agriculture. I am particularly passionate about edible education and connecting children to the food they eat, including the consequences of their food choices for themselves and the planet.

We need a farm bill that:

- creates jobs and spurs economic growth;
- makes healthy food widely available to all Americans, especially schoolchildren;
- protects our natural resources;
- invests in the next generation of farmers and ranchers; and
- drives innovation for tomorrow's farmers and food entrepreneurs.

Please, invest our money in a farm policy that really matters!

Thank you,

DIANE P. MEIER.

COMMENT OF JANE MEIGS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:45 p.m.

City, State: Millerton, NY

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: For too long, large agribusiness interests have received the lion's share of Federal agricultural support. It is time to reverse that trend and support local, small family farms and protect the environment and our natural resources. More support should be given to small farmers and organic farmers. We need to move away from a system that is overly dependent on harmful pesticides and overly reliant on huge fossil fuel inputs. Please do all that you can to strengthen the small farming communities and increase support of organic agriculture.

COMMENT OF MIRIAM MEISLER

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 7:05 p.m.

City, State: Ann Arbor, MI.

Occupation: Professor.

Comment: I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP. Our community cannot afford cuts to these programs.

COMMENT OF DEBRA MELLENTINE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:24 p.m.

City, State: Bannister, MI

Occupation: Housewife, Hobby Gardener, Mom, Grandma, Oil Painter, Avid Organic Advocate

Comment: I personally don't want Monsanto controlling my food supply. I was raised on canned produce and my parents purchased locally grass fed, free to graze beef as well as free range chickens for meat and eggs. I can tell you from experience there is no comparison when it comes to flavor from then to today's store fodder. Plus, who really wants a corn product that's been GMO produced so it can withstand having more poison (herbicides) added to it. Enough to kill anything else and probably us farther on down the road. I had a cousin who worked in a field that would know the dangers of this stuff who would constantly tell everyone that herbicides and pesticides would be the end of us.

COMMENT OF ROSEMARY MELLI

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:18 p.m.

City, State: Westport, MA

Occupation: Speech Language Pathologist

Comment: We need a **Food** and farm bill that supports sustainable agriculture and works to fix our present broken food system by discouraging the practices that have created 'industrial agriculture', 'factory farms', and food production that is non-nutritious, unhealthy, and harmful to our environment.

COMMENTS OF GWENN MELTZER

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 02, 2012, 8:56 p.m.

City, State: Woodlyn, PA

Occupation: Advocate Advisor

Comment: Farming is the backbone of our culture . . . if nothing else, they are the soul of our country and it's hard working people . . . as the Native American Indian is the soul of our nation of our land and the wildlife.

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012 2:49 p.m.

Comment: Farmers, as well as The Native American Indian, are the caregivers and caretakers of the land . . . ! . . . Do Not Disturb the Protector or the Provider . . . It **Is** part of a 'Sacred Trust' that should be respected . . . and kept safe . . . !

COMMENT OF NANCY MELVIN

Date Submitted: Sunday, April 22, 2012, 5:51 p.m.

City, State: Chicago, IL

Occupation: Gardening Teacher

Comment: Food freedom is important. Now that the state of Michigan has passed a law that makes it illegal for a farmer to raise heritage pigs, calling them feral even when they are well cared for with good husbandry practices, it is most important that all of us consumers stand up for our rights. We should be able to eat what small farmers want to sell us. That means being able to buy raw milk, healthier by far than antibiotic laden pasteurized milk. I am forbidden by the state of Wisconsin from buying raw milk from a perfectly clean and responsible farmer. This broke his heart and he died of heart failure and his wife went insane with grief. Governments should have no right to bend to agribusiness by legislating what small farmers can and can grow and sell. Why should one large business be allowed to sell what it wants and another small business be forbidden? Healthy pork and healthy milk are now forbidden to us in the Midwest. It is insane that the state of Michigan can send police to a farm to shoot pigs and arrest farmers! It is unbelievable that the state of Wisconsin can close down a dairy, put the farmers in jail and force the sale of all their healthy cows! Protect the small farmers. Yes, I want the member of the house committee to hear this!

COMMENT OF JOANNE MEMHARDT

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 11:21 a.m.

City, State: Schaumburg, IL

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Please oppose any proposals that would change SNAPs structure or funding restrict eligibility or reduce benefits. I am volunteer at our church food pantry.

COMMENT OF PATRICIA MENA

Date Submitted: Friday, March 16, 2012, 4:56 p.m.

City, State: Oswego, NY

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Please do not allow the expiration of the portion of the farm bill that pays farmers whose land has gotten too wet to profitably farm to allow it to return to wetland. This only sounds counterproductive. Much farmland was "forced" out of original wetlands. To allow the return, we keep land that filters our drinking water, cleans toxins out of the air, and allows the balance of wildlife to return. Each part is needed.

COMMENT OF MARCY MENARD

Date Submitted: Tuesday, April 10, 2012, 9:28 p.m.

City, State: Zebulon, NC

Occupation: Student

Comment: My name is Marcy Menard and as a Dietetic Intern at Meredith College in Raleigh, NC, I would like to express my concern for the upcoming farm bill

renewal. I am originally from Long Island, NY, and have grown up with a wide variety of crops in my backyard: potatoes, apples, and vineyards just to name a few. Not only are these fields and farmlands pleasing to the eye, but they are also essential to the farmer's lives and the sustainability of our local food system. I feel the same way about the food system here in Raleigh. Though the food may travel slightly farther within the state to get to me, the production of North Carolina grown produce is vital to sustain the local economy. In addition, such locally sourced and sustainably grown crops can promote improved nutritional status of our society. It is estimated that to meet the 2010 Dietary Guidelines recommendations for fruit and vegetable intake, the U.S. must dedicate an additional 13 million acres of farmland, which illustrates the necessity of farmland conservation and development. I am in support of the upcoming farm bill. In particular, I believe that Title X (Horticulture and Organic Agriculture) deserves great consideration to help encourage and promote the production of fruits and vegetables among U.S. farmers to help improve the intake of fruits and vegetables among Americans.

COMMENT OF JOSEPH MENDOZA

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 5:57 p.m.

City, State: Denver, CO

Occupation: Unemployed

Comment: Every half-hour a farmer commits suicide in the third-world for having to abide impossible to obey ultimatums. And the American senior citizens, themselves, are fed up with any merit-less obedience.

COMMENT OF MAX MENSING

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:35 p.m.

City, State: Yachats, OR

Occupation: Business

Comment: As a consumer I want to have the ability to buy food that is produced in ethical and wholesome ways , grass fed beef, non GM alfalfa, soy, and corn.

We have allowed a few agricultural companies to monopolize the food production in this country.

Small independent producers are being criminalized so the big agribusiness can monopolize what I and my family can eat.

I urge you to cut subsidizes to large producers and give aid to the small family farmer.

Also do not allow any more consolidation of farm resources like seeds.

Best land management practices also need to be the law. Every river needs a greenbelt, and the soil needs to be protected.

The knowledge that was painfully learned in the Dust Bowl of the 1930's should not be repeated.

Also pesticide and antibiotic use needs to be brought back down to levels used in the 1960's.

Thanks for hearing me.

Don't let agriculture be controlled by a few large corporations.

For the banks to fail you borrowed and loaned and brought things back for food to fail, starvation in America could be the result.

It happened in Ireland, don't let it happen here.

COMMENT OF ELIZABETH MERCADO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:50 p.m.

City, State: Lutz, FL

Occupation: Homemaker and Small Business Owner

Comment: It's all about having all natural foods with no chemical . . . I'm healthy and want to remain that way also for my future generation . . . thank you . . . p.s. I will start suing companies for using chemicals in my food.

COMMENT OF LEONE MERCHANT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:33 a.m.

City, State: San Francisco, CA

Occupation: Marketing Manager

Comment: End subsidies to big business agriculture on corn and soy. Support local, organic family farms. Label all GMO food products s as so. End funding to CAFO's.

COMMENT OF ROBERT MERHAR

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:55 p.m.

City, State: Hudson, WI

Occupation: Insurance Agent

Comment: We need farming on a much smaller scale i.e.; regional farming, organic farming and of course the rapidly vanishing family farm. Our existing corporate farming model is not working and will only lead to more outbreaks of deadly diseases and fatter Americans with more diabetes and many other illnesses. Put the money where it can do the most good—in the regional local farms and encourage organic farming. For quite a few weeks now I have been going to my local chain grocery store looking for 1% organic milk and they have posted signs saying there is a shortage and they cannot adequately stock their shelves. Also stop supporting huge chemical corporations like Monsanto who do nothing but pressure and attack small farmers to by their genetically altered seed, with weed retardant and insect resistance genetically inserted into the seed. Thanks for your consideration.

COMMENT OF LAWRENCE MERLINO

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 3:27 p.m.

City, State: Shady, NY

Occupation: Internet Sales

Comment: The dismal failure of biotech crops *i.e.*, producing super-weeds and super bugs, and the poisoning of the land and water by big agriculture companies shows the need for a sustainable farm bill which helps preserve family farms and common-sense rules and support for organic farming. As more and more people become aware of the state of our food supply the demand for healthy foods is increasing. Congress can prove their leadership by taking the lead in a movement which will be for the future good of our nation. Congress needs to stop pandering to these companies which almost assuredly will become dinosaurs and recognize the sustainable agriculture movement as the way of the future.

COMMENT OF ROBYN MEROOK

Date Submitted: Thursday, April 26, 2012, 11:46 a.m.

City, State: Morristown, TN

Occupation: Medical Field

Comment: Please support the farmers of American and encourage them to grow more crops instead of paying them not to. Our food supply is growing increasingly dependent on other countries when we have the capability to grow what we need. The safety of the food we eat is also getting more unstable—why are we bringing meat to the U.S. from other countries—are you people crazy? Our country and our citizens future is riding on the decisions you are making in Washington, please take time to think about and also **Consider** the people who put you in office and how these things will affect them before you make these decisions.

COMMENT OF EDWARD MERRIMAN

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 7:12 p.m.

City, State: Villanova, PA

Occupation: Librarian

Comment: I favor an immediate investigation (by an independent agency with no possible conflicts of interest or links to any biotechnology firms) be made into the linking of BT and other pesticides in the massive honeybee deaths that have occurred over the past several years.

COMMENT OF TIMOTHY MERTON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:59 a.m.

City, State: Putney, VT

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Forestry, Other

Size: 50–150 acres

Comment: It is only a matter of time before the Members of the House Committee on Agriculture are going to have to deal with and accept labeling of Genetically Modified foods for consumers. I suggest that anyone on the Committee who has affiliations with Monsanto Corporation be removed from the committee in the name of “conflict of interest”.

COMMENT OF GENE MESSICK

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 5:45 p.m.

City, State: Christiansburg, VA

Comment: U.S. food and agricultural policy must focus on adopting best agricultural practices that put the health of our citizens, the land and the livelihood of farmers and farm workers over the interests of industrial agriculture lobbyists.

I fully support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Federal assistance to family and organic farmers in equivalent amounts as agribusiness farms are supported.

Please do **Not** attempt to balance any budgets by cutting Food Stamp funding. Because of my age, I for one could not survive without Food Stamps, much as I would prefer not needing them.

I do as much as I can to raise my own food with my victory gardening, which has grown in size and production each of the past 4 years.

COMMENT OF JOHN METZ

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 9:34 p.m.

City, State: Cincinnati, OH

Occupation: Professor

Comment: Dear Committee members,

I urge you to support H.R. 3236, Local Foods, Farms, and Jobs bill. Our food system needs fundamental reform. Whether we look at the farmers, who are must grow larger and larger and specialize on a few crops and whom have been going bankrupt at very high rates over the last 60 year, or if we look at the meat production system with its recurring contamination and recalls, or the obesity epidemic, which is driving our medical costs out of reach—the system is broken. HR 3236 will begin to address these critical questions. I urge you to consider this bill carefully and vote for it.

Sincerely,

JOHN METZ.

COMMENT OF KAREN B. MEYER

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 11:39 a.m.

City, State: St. Louis, MO

Occupation: Accounts Payable Senior Specialist

Comment: Dear House Agriculture Committee:

I urge language in the farm bill that will ensure sustainable practices for our soils and protection of our waters.

Taxpayers have supported a safety net for farmers for nearly 30 years with a guarantee that subsidized farmers will follow basic conservation practices in their fields to protect soil and water. Farmers provide an important commodity to the American public, and have an urgent need to employ conservation practices in order to preserve the economic health and productivity of our farmlands and resources for the future.

As the House Agriculture Committee prepares your draft of the farm bill, I urge you to restore the link between taxpayer-supported subsidies for crop insurance and conservation compliance protections that will protect our water and land.

This action is especially important as Congress considers eliminating direct payments, the major subsidy program that is linked to conservation compliance, and moving some of those funds to support increased subsidies for crop insurance, which lacks compliance requirements. Unless you help to reconnect crop insurance subsidies to conservation compliance, farmers will no longer have incentive to follow conservation plans.

Farmers need crop insurance and the public needs basic conservation practices on farms to make sure that quality farmland and water can support future generations as well as the current needs of our country. It's not acceptable to sacrifice long-term

economic and environmental sustainability for short-sighted and short-term economic profits.

Connecting eligibility for crop insurance subsidies to conservation compliance is fiscally responsible and ensures public subsidies for farmers' insurance premium payments align with the public's interest in basic conservation of our soil and water. Since Missouri consistently ranks in the top five for soil loss, losing more than 5 tons per acre per year, we must make soil conservation a priority.

Sincerely,

KAREN B. MEYER,
[Redacted],
St. Louis, MO.

COMMENT OF MELANIE MEYER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:05 p.m.

City, State: Springfield, VA

Occupation: Translator

Comment: My family and I are extremely concerned about the current practice of wide-spread factory farming and about all the damage it does to people's health (antibiotic overuse, pesticide and other toxin exposure) to the environment and the often needless suffering inflicted on animals.

We would like to strongly urge decision makers to put more emphasis on supporting small local farmers instead, especially organic farmers and to make organically produced food more readily available to the American people. Please stop the subsidies for large scale industrial farming and for junk food production and let those funds flow into local farming!

The health benefits of natural food (and the lower foot print on the environment) will pay off in the long run in lower health care costs (both through healthier food and through cleaner air, water, *etc.*).

COMMENT OF PATRICIA MEYER

Date Submitted: Friday, April 20, 2012, 8:47 p.m.

City, State: Albuquerque, NM

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: Please vote for the farm bill. The money is used in all our schools and for those kids who have no food at home. The subsidy programs feeds many hungry people who would have to go without. I have seen many parents choose to not eat so that their kids can. Cereal for all meals is very common. The cheapest foods are not always the most nutritious. In fact they are high carbohydrate and fruit is too expensive to eat. The programs that the Farm bill funds do make nutrition a priority.

COMMENT OF RONALD MEYER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:53 a.m.

City, State: Fresno, OH

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: 151-300 acres

Comment: We have a surplus of corn and soybeans. It's time to stop subsidizing huge farms and change the farm bill to support small farmers, especially organic farmers, who supply the vegetables, fruits, and healthy meats that people want!

COMMENT OF BEN MICEK

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 4:15 p.m.

City, State: Evergreen, CO

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Bioenergy, Greenhouse/nursery

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: It's time to think locally about food and to reallocate current subsidies to diverse farms replacing monocultures and ranches. We need to restore our soils, heal the land, and take care of the vital needs of one another.

COMMENT OF ALEXIS MICHAELS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:07 p.m.

City, State: Dearborn Heights, MI

Occupation: Physician

Comment: There can be nothing more important after defense than allowing people who are now trapped in cities with no other means than grocery stores, to choose to eat organic safe and nutritious foods from local farmers that contribute to the environment in a safe and thoughtful way. How can I tell my patients to make healthy food choices when Washington is collaborating with food industry to wipe out the local organic farmer. Has the bee crisis taught us nothing?

We need to support local organic farming and reverse the damage done to our health, our local farmers, and our environment with corrupt policies that only support big farm business. What Washington finds expedient today for their own personal political needs, the country and the world will suffer with poor health and an environment that will no longer support healthy life.

COMMENT OF DALE EKAHI MICHAELS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:42 p.m.

City, State: Honolulu, HI

Occupation: Healthcare Professional

Comment: I am in support of an Organic Farm Bill. Organics are currently our only guarantee of foods being free of GMO.

I support organics, I'm opposed to GMO, If anything does contain GMO, it must be clearly labeled as such.

The health of the population that particularly of our children is all at stake here. Thank you for listening.

DM.

COMMENT OF NANCY MICHELLI

Date Submitted: Friday, May 04, 2012, 2:22 p.m.

City, State: Hercules, CA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I strongly urge the House Agriculture Committee to support small family farms. Large corporate ranching and farming has brought the citizen's of this country to poor health and disease. We need family farms more than ever.

I personally only purchase organic produce from local farms through farmer's markets. I do grow much of my own as well. I also only purchase meat, eggs and dairy from a local meat CSA where the animals are grass fed and pasture raised. I refuse to buy the diseased and poisoned factory farmed meat predominant in the market today. Not to mention the disgusting and inhumane conditions in which they are kept, treated and slaughtered. Nor do I wish to purchase or consume GMO raised produce that has been treated with chemical fertilizers and pesticides and shipped across the country.

In order for this country to survive there needs to be a return to the family farms and the end to corporate dominance when it comes to our food. We all need healthy unadulterated food to thrive as a nation. The citizens of this country deserve nothing less.

I urge the House Committee on Agriculture to support the following amendments:

- Family Farms First and Training for Beginning Farmers—put forward by Senators Brown (D-OH) and Nelson (D-NE)
- Affordable Land for Farmers, Forever—put forward by Senator Leahy (D-VT)
- Non-GMO Plant and Animal Breeding—put forward by Senator Gillibrand (D-NY)
- Crop Insurance for Organics—put forward by Senator Casey (D-PA)
- Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act—put forward by Congressman Walz (DFL-MN) and Congressman Fortenberry (R-NE)
- The Local Farms, Food, and Jobs Act—put forward by Congresswoman Pingree (D-ME) and Senator Brown (D-OH)

Thank you for taking the time to read my comments. Please give this serious consideration and do the right thing.

COMMENT OF KATHY MICKEL

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 3:04 p.m.

City, State: Johnstown, NY

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Please pass a strong Farm bill that protects programs like SNAP, TEFAP & CSFP which help provide food for millions of America's most vulnerable seniors. My husband and I have been running a food pantry for 5 years and each month, the numbers go up for people that are in need of providing food for their families.

This should also do away with subsidies that are for crops that are not grown.

COMMENT OF CHARLES MICKELSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:22 p.m.

City, State: Laramie, WY

Occupation: Retired

Comment: 90% of our health problems come from our food supply and our bad air. What we eat and breath is killing us. Stop thinking about your hip pocket and start thinking about the American people.

COMMENT OF MELISSA MIDDLEBROOK

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:08 p.m.

City, State: Seattle, WA

Occupation: Yoga Teacher, Full-Time Mother, Designer

Comment: We need a farm bill that supports small, local farmers and not big industrial agriculture. Big ag is poisoning our food and water supply, depleting farmland and has been on very dangerous course for too long. For our children and our planet, we need fundamental change towards sustainable agricultural. Thank you for your thoughtful consideration.

COMMENT OF DAVID MIDDLETON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:53 p.m.

City, State: Skaneateles, NY

Occupation: Industrial Design

Comment: Please consider the following:

1. eliminate subsidies for bio-fuel feed-stocks that involve food crops or land used (or could be used) for growing food crops.
2. eliminate use of antibiotics in farm animals.
3. label GMOs
4. The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
5. Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
6. The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
7. Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

COMMENT OF CLARE MIPLIN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:52 p.m.

City, State: Brooklyn, NY

Occupation: Architect

Comment: Agriculture uses most of the planets fresh water and is the biggest polluter. We must reform the agriculture of the USA and promote local and organic foods from smaller farms which have an immensely smaller carbon footprint.

COMMENT OF CHRISTINE MIGEOT

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 16, 2012, 8:44 p.m.

City, State: Clementon, NJ

Occupation: Web Designer

Comment: Why would a humane country cut food stamps for the desperately poor and struggling at a time when unemployment is at 9% and so many can't find work that pays a living wage? I guess too many Congressional Reps feel a real need to punish those who already suffer so much. Food banks cannot make up for this. I've never protested for the hungry but perhaps it's time to start.

COMMENT OF JARED MIKE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:18 p.m.

City, State: College Station, TX

Occupation: Postdoctoral Research Associate in Chemical Engineering

Comment: I support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

We need healthy food, and right now, industrial farming practices are not—for both the environment (look at the state of wetlands, the huge subsidies for corn, algal blooms, water contamination, overuse of chemicals, *etc.*) and for people (overuse of chemicals, again, and decrease of nutrient content). Most of the chemicals we use pose significant risks to both health and environment and many do not decompose in a reasonable time-span, eventually contaminating the water supply. In addition, the overuse of chemicals leads to resistance, which, in turn, requires the development of new, sometimes harsher chemicals. We need to focus on alternative, sustainable farming practices.

COMMENT OF THOMAS MILCAREK

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:46 p.m.

City, State: Santa Cruz, CA

Occupation: Disabled Railroad Trainman

Comment: The truth of the matter is all great Civilizations fall because they abuse their soil thereby have less healthy food less healthy people less healthy brains and lose the ability to do what it takes to solve the problems to save the civilization. **We Are Doing This To Ourselves And If We Don't Turn It Around With Healthy Soil And Real Healthy Food We Are Doomed To The Same Fall. It Is Not Rocket Science.** Read the book, *Topsoil and Civilization*, and you will see why we must go back to healthy soil and healthy food for people Not profit if we are to survive. Do you have enough clarity to see this? I hope so for our nations sake . . .

COMMENT OF ROBIN MILCOWITZ

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:16 p.m.

City, State: Tampa, FL

Occupation: Local Food Advocate/Graphic Designer

Comment: A considerable restructuring of the subsidy formula and support structure for small farms, sustainable and organic farms needs to be made. The system now forces the hand of farmers to raise their product conventionally and in effect an inefficient, environmentally hazardous, inhumane, human-health deficient and fiscally irresponsible way. Retrofitting our food system to support the farmer, environment and physical and fiscal health of the population is what needs to occur. Please examine this bill in order to serve more than just “big ag”—their money means nothing if it overrides your constituents’ environmental, economic and physical health.

COMMENT OF MICHAEL MILLARD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:43 p.m.

City, State: Chelsea, VT

Occupation: Woodworker

Comment: Regulations which support and encourage small family farms and meaningful support of true organic agriculture are essential. Agribusiness is **Not** serving either the health and nutritional needs of this nation, though it **Is** damaging the long-term health of our soil and land. Family farms, **Not** Monsanto, please. Thank you.

COMMENT OF ANTOINETTE MILLER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:46 p.m.

City, State: Sioux Falls, SD

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I would love to see farming in our country return to more sustainable permaculture practices with more food crop diversity and much less chemical usage. I would love to see us move away from damaging monoculture.

The corporate factory farm practices damage the soil, pollute our air and water and are making it ever more difficult to grow conventional and organic crops that don't rely on such heavy chemical usage and are more nutritious.

Factory farms are becoming a huge source of health problems in our country, IMO, as are the CAFOs.

GMOs that require the use of toxic herbicides & pesticides are a threat to our health, the health of our planet and its inhabitants. The overuse of these chemicals has created super weeds and resistant insects which the bio-tech industry claims can be handled with **More** toxic chemicals. That's **Insane!**

It's no surprise to more Americans than you seem to be aware of that our food quality has fallen so far below standard and so many more health problems now plague us from womb to grave.

I would love to see subsidies go to smaller, more sustainable farms and ended for corporate factory farms. Their profits are high enough that they shouldn't need to be subsidized any longer. Studies have shown that we can feed America and share with other countries using more sustainable farming practices. The bio-tech and chemical companies have our government, from top to bottom, in a choke hold. They are only concerned with their bottom line and "profits before people" has become the norm. It's shameful.

Corporate factory farms, the bio-tech industry and pharmaceutical industries are influencing lawmakers and slowly but surely destroying our small, sustainable farmers. For example, the feral hog hype that has caused farmers to kill their pigs to avoid charges. Factory farm pigs can also escape and become feral. There was no legitimate reason to outlaw the breeds of pigs the small farmers were raising. It was intended to eliminate competition for the corporate factory farms.

People have wakened and are seeking local small farmers knowing the food they buy is healthier, safer and more nutritious. They want to avoid buying GMOs, factory farm produced food and animal products from CAFOs.

Don't let corporate money and the power that goes with it destroy the only home we have, Earth, and all of us with it for the sake of higher profits now and no regard for our future.

We **Can** feed ourselves using more sustainable farming practices if we are not held back from doing it.

Put political party aside.

Think carefully and with an eye toward our future.

You can protect us from greed fueled harm or you can allow our destruction.

You decide which is the RIGHT way to go.

Hopefully yours,

ANTOINETTE MILLER.

COMMENT OF AUGUST MILLER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:26 a.m.

City, State: Longmont, CO

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables, Other

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Our agricultural product is informed educated organic grower producing food on their own property. Please consider the inefficiency and vulnerability of our current food system that wastes resources (jobs, money, ecological degradation through chemical inputs). If you or any other political service member need a crutch (advertisement dollars for your position) to stand, then your service lacks meaning and purpose. Please do your volunteer job and teach your constituents what the issues are and how they affect our economy, health, and most importantly our attitude towards our own capacity to provide for ourselves.

COMMENT OF BEN MILLER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 11:39 a.m.

City, State: Montague, MA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Livestock

Size: 50-150 acres

Comment: Allowing food production in this country to be dominated by industrial concerns for the last fifty years has been environmentally devastating. Food producers are innovative and dynamic, but cannot change to sustainable practices under the current system. Moving away from commodities crop subsidies and back to a system of price floors will liberate the food producers of this country in a truly competitive system. Let's begin the shift to a saner agriculture.

COMMENT OF DAVID MILLER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:25 p.m.

City, State: Berkeley, CA

Occupation: Food and Beverage Quality Control Supervisor

Comment: "Non-producer" but former organic farmer and always organic gardener also raising chickens and tree crops in small urban (Berkeley) front & backyard. Co-founder of 1st organic producers wholesale warehouse in SW Washington

Essential to further fund and support industry standards for organic GMO free farm products and support sensible and humane programs for low income food and nutritional programming.

COMMENT OF DEBRA MILLER

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 10:30 a.m.

City, State: Shingletown, CA

Occupation: Dog Trainer

Comment: I have taken an active interest in where my food comes from in the last 6 months. I no longer am interested in buying or supporting the factory farm industry. I am prepared to pay the extra or go without to support organic or natural methods of farming. I was appalled to learn how the meat animals are kept and am not interested in eating genetically modified produce.

COMMENT OF JENNIFER MILLER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:28 a.m.

City, State: Delmont, PA

Occupation: Development Director

Comment: I would like to make a statement in regards to the House Agriculture Committee as they develop the Farm Bill 2012. In Westmoreland County we feed over 15,000 people each month; it is a struggle year after year with continuing cuts to both our state and Federal funding. We have become more reliant upon fundraising; in fact in 2000 our budget relied upon 10% from fundraising and this year we are at 60%. In this economy that statistic is very frightening. Cutting anti-hunger programs will do nothing but **Increase** hunger in America, as well as the costs associated with health care, education, *etc.* It will also increase the amount of crime as people will do anything to feed their families and if help is not there I worry about the end results. Please remember the families, who are struggling in our community and protect & strengthen the anti-hunger programs like TEFAP, CSFP and SNAP in the 2012 Farm Bill reauthorization. We need your help to end hunger here at home . . . make it start with you! Thank you.

COMMENT OF JERRE MILLER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:07 p.m.

City, State: Willow Springs, MO

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I am disheartened that Congress always seems to side with , protect and pass over reality in favor of large agribusiness to the detriment of nutrition, support for organic farming (or any small size farming) and sustainable agriculture. If you are run only by the big agriculture industry and not the people then our food will always be in jeopardy. If you only care about the money you receive from big agriculture then maybe you should call yourselves lobbyists. That has been what has evolved. Maybe you might have a chance to be ethical for a change. Hoping!

COMMENT OF JESSICA MILLER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:29 p.m.

City, State: Jensen Beach, FL

Comment: Stop the heavy use of pesticides which are now known to be causing colony collapse disorder in bees and poisoning our food, land and water. Encourage

turning to organic methods and reject Monsanto and other unethical and environmentally unsound companies.

COMMENT OF JOAN MILLER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 5:13 p.m.

City, State: Danville, IN

Occupation: Masonry Contractor, Small Farm, Retail Establishment

Comment: Please consider using common sense.

We the people must take care of this Earth, the air we breathe and food we eat.
By food

I mean real food. Not split into this and that so the stalk can stand higher and the bugs won't eat. The GMO corn looks terrible. Our animals were not made to eat yellow stuff, corn yes, what is in a supposedly corn seed now? What kind of nutrition does it have? What is it doing to the fertility of our cows?

Are you creating more loop holes in the new laws you are creating. Why don't you work with the laws you have and modify them? Create bills or laws the common person can read and understand. We shouldn't need a lawyer for interpretation. Our society keeps talking about obesity, look back in history, where did it really start. With artificial sweetener! You allow our food to be spliced and diced, our body's were not made that way. Do what is right for we the people and not the big those that call themselves ag producers, they are not producing good food. You are trusted by millions—earn it!

COMMENT OF KATHRYN MILLER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 05, 2012, 7:03 p.m.

City, State: Providence, RI

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: To the Members of the House Committee on Agriculture,

I am a young, small-scale organic CSA farmer in Rhode Island. Policies that support the production of cheap food at the cost of the environment and the health of farm workers hurt small scale producers by making it difficult for us to compete with cheap food. We are the future of agriculture in the U.S., please pay attention to our needs. Here are my thoughts.

- I am glad that there is funding for CSAs and farmers markets to accept SNAP benefits. I suggest that the funding be used to buy CSA farmers and market managers Snap card swipe machines, as well as provide matching funds for Snap dollars spent on CSAs and at markets.
- The EQIP High tunnel program has been wonderful for me. We have increased our winter production because of it. However, the structure of EQIP funding needs to be changed. As it stands, farms get EQIP funding if there is an existing conservation concern, and are paid to correct it, paying farmers for bad behavior. The practices that cause these conservation concerns should be controlled through regulation and fines, and farmers who are practicing sustainable farming methods should be paid to continue doing things well.
- Regulations should always be scale appropriate
- Research conducted by farmers is always more useful to me as a beginning farmer than research done by extension agents, grad students, or professors. Please cut funding for academic agricultural research, and fund more on-farm research.
- Cap subsidy amounts on a per-farm basis and reinstate mandatory funding for 2501 under Title XIV (Miscellaneous) in order to support disadvantaged farmers and continue the standing fund for farm worker disaster relief.
- Shift funding away from ethanol and commodity production and towards sustainable agriculture and rural development research and training in Title VI (Rural Development) and Title X (Horticulture and Organic Agriculture).
- Although there has been a great deal of positive press regarding the shifts in Title I (Commodities) to reduce direct crop subsidy payments and shift towards crop insurance support, in reality, the tax payer resources will be directed to the same large-scale, conventional production, monocrop operations, that have harmful environmental and social consequences. With no conservation require-

ments within the new Revenue Insurance Scheme we fear production will be pushed onto marginalized land causing adverse affects on our natural resources.

Thanks,

KATIE, Scratch Farm,
www.scratchfarm.com.

COMMENT OF KIERU MILLER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 9:54 a.m.

City, State: Austin, TX

Occupation: Educator/Therapist

Comment: Michael T McCaul,

Cutting funding for the farm bill is a **Bad** idea! Our food supply in the country is Horrible and cutting funds will make it worst. If you give a damn about your kids, grandkids, their friends, and the future of our kids please WAKE up! Go rent the movie *Food Ink*. **I Dare You To See This Movie!** We originally were a country of wholesome farmers eating wholesome food from the land. Most of our health problems starts with the quality of food we eat. We are becoming a nation of obese, poor nourish, diabetic, cardiac citizen. **We Must Change This Now!** You are in the unique time and place to make a change in a bill that will impact the health of your family, cousins, kids, and gr and kids. **Hurry** you must act now. I am **Begging You.**

U.S. food and agricultural policy must focus on adopting best agricultural practices that put the health of its citizens, the land and the livelihood of farmers and farm workers over the interests of industrial agriculture lobbyists. We need to increase funding to vital programs such as nutrition, conservation and support for organic and sustainable agriculture. Are you my superhero are you going to try to correct this terrible bill? Do you even give a damn?

COMMENT OF LEAH MILLER

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 10:52 p.m.

City, State: Cassel, CA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Livestock

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Hello,

I started a small livestock production business 3 years ago, which is supported by working another full time job. I lease land and pasture wherever I can find it. My only hope is that I will someday qualify for a beginning or young farmers loan, such as an FSA loan, and that there will be funds available if I do qualify. I have a B.S. degree in Agriculture, but without these types of grants and loans, I could never dream of owning my own farm or ranch, despite my education and experience. I hope that you can continue to support young and beginning farmers and ranchers like me, because our agriculture is and will continue to be profitable and vital, and food and fiber is what makes my home state of California as well as our nation such an amazing place!

COMMENT OF LINDA MILLER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:59 a.m.

City, State: Buckeye, AZ

Occupation: Substitute Teacher and Small Business Owner

Comment: It is time to liberate farmers to be able to grow food by using sustainable agriculture, which includes the right to grow organic foods, and to leave the government out of the family farming business. We must protect consumer's right to have freedom of choice when purchasing their foods. To have GMO foods require labels indicating they are GMO's.

COMMENT OF LISSA MILLER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:34 p.m.

City, State: Martinez, CA

Occupation: Educator

Comment: Please consider the health of your constituents; we want our agricultural model to produce food to feed us, but also to be sustainable. Subsidizing agri-

business is leading to the obesity epidemic and contributing to the pollution of air, water, and soil. Please support the work of organic farmers.

COMMENT OF MARK J. MILLER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:50 p.m.
City, State: Alpharetta, GA
Occupation: Commercial Real Estate
Comment: Financially and legislatively support small to medium size organic farming. End subsidies for CAFOs and large GMO cop production. Require labeling.

COMMENT OF NANCY MILLER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:04 p.m.
City, State: Del Mar, CA
Occupation: Financial Sector
Comment: We need to have healthy foods by organic farmers . . . my health depends on it! Please don't let large corporations run the food industry . . . Your children and grandchildren's health will depend on the decisions you make today.

COMMENT OF PAM MILLER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:47 p.m.
City, State: Meriden, NH
Producer/Non-producer: Producer
Type: Livestock
Size: Less than 50 acres
Comment: While some may think Thomas Jefferson's agrarian ideal is a myth, I believe his understanding of the relationship between farming and democracy still holds true today. The small family farm is an ideal expression of democratic values, self-sufficiency, and productivity.
 The farm bill has done more to support Corporate Agriculture than it has done to support family farms and individuals. By catering to the desires of Big Ag lobbyists, the farm bill has lost both its integrity, and more importantly, its contract with the American people to provide safe, healthy alternatives to the destructive agricultural and food production practices of Corporate Agriculture. I fear that the House Committee will only 'listen' to lobbyists, leaving the needs of true working farmers off the table.
 How sad to see that Jefferson was right—where do we see democratic values being exhibited in Agriculture policy? Certainly not in the farm bill.
 Please, for the sake of this country, and those of us who don't have lobbyists to represent us (the majority), listen to ordinary Americans and create a farm bill for the people, not for Corporate Agriculture.
 Thank you for taking the time to read this.
 Sincerely yours,
 PAM MILLER,
 Main Street Farm.

COMMENT OF PATRICIA MILLER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 10:57 a.m.
City, State: Spokane, WA
Occupation: Retired
Comment: It's about time we in the U.S. stop poisoning our food supply. To many chemicals on Vegetables as well as to many hormones and antibiotics in our meat. No labeling on our produce to tell us if it's been altered and not enough inspectors at meat packing plants. We need to catch up to Europe whose government seems to care about the health of their people and not profits. We have unhealthy children and it's not just from their life style, but from additives. If things don't change I suggest we change the name of this Country to **The United States Of Greed.s**

COMMENT OF ROBERT MILLER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:32 a.m.
City, State: Connellsville, PA
Occupation: Design Associate
Comment: I would like to make a statement in regards to the House Agriculture Committee as they develop the Farm Bill 2012. In Fayette County over 3,000 fami-

lies (over 7,000 people) rely upon the Food Bank and their Food Pantries each month; it is a struggle year after year with continuing cuts to both state and Federal funding. Cutting anti-hunger programs will do nothing but **Increase** hunger in America, as well as the costs associated with health care, education, *etc.* It will also increase the amount of crime as people will do anything to feed their families and if help is not there I worry about the end results. Please remember the families who are struggling in our community and protect & strengthen the anti-hunger programs like TEFAP, CSFP and SNAP in the 2012 Farm Bill reauthorization. We need your help to end hunger here at home . . . make it start with you! Thank you.

COMMENT OF STEVE MILLER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:11 p.m.

City, State: Orwell, VT

Occupation: Small Business Owner

Comment: We are concerned about the forced use of proven poisons (GMO) in food and livestock production. We are also concerned that the committee has been corrupted by their past associations with Monsanto and the like. We are also concerned by the present weather manipulation (chemtrail) that we see almost daily and which has been admitted publicly.

COMMENT OF TAMRA MILLER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:58 p.m.

City, State: San Diego, CA

Occupation: Singer Songwriter

Comment: It is my belief that access to organically grown meats and produce from small farms is the saving grace of our people and our planet. Please stop placing corporate greed and alliances over what is best for humankind and all the beautiful creatures we inhabit the Earth with. Large scale industrial monoculture is leaving our soil in ruin and is deriving us of nutrient dense food to nourish ourselves. Stop the madness!

COMMENT OF TARA MILLER

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 9:50 a.m.

City, State: Lexington, VA

Occupation: Owner, Local Foods Retail Shop

Comment: Americans are (finally) waking up to the terrifying reality of our food system. It's time for Congress to do the same. It is not viable or sensible for our government to continue to support agribusinesses whose aim is to effectively own our (and the world's) food supply. We need a farm bill that will assist in the development of community-based food systems. Community systems (unlike our current agribusiness system) are transparent, safe and self-regulated (because the consumers know the producers). Community systems produce healthful, nutritious, unprocessed and very delicious foods. Agribusiness produces "food-like substances" that many Americans have, sadly, come to think of as "food". Agribusiness foods have spawned obesity and diabetes epidemics—look around and take notice of all the overweight kids in your district; then visit their schools and see what your government (thanks to you) is feeding them. Congress can change all of this in a heartbeat if you put the health and well-being of your constituents above the monetary support (direct and indirect) of agribusiness. It's time to step up to the plate!

COMMENT OF EHREN MILLER-NOGUEIRA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:48 p.m.

City, State: E. Calais, VT

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: A couple of important points.

- (1) Require labeling of foods containing GMOs
- (2) Stop the spread of GMO cross-contamination
- (3) Support humane food practices and support small scale production instead of large scale.
- (4) Diversify crop production. Support only sustainable agriculture including fish farming.

If the government invests as much money in sustainable production as we do now in large corporate operations food we will all be in way better shape.

COMMENT OF SUSAN MILLER-STIGLER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:13 a.m.

City, State: Cincinnati, OH

Occupation: Homemaker

Comment: I am very interested in family scale agriculture and supporting people not industry in farming. I am concerned about the health of my family and community and want access to high quality foods. I am saddened to see the disease our people are suffering as a direct result of the cheap junk they are eating and urge you to end subsidies for wheat, corn and soy, especially GMO varieties. Thank you.

COMMENT OF KARI MILLETE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:55 p.m.

City, State: Sacramento, CA

Occupation: Personal Chef

Comment: As a chef and mother, I want the best possible ingredients I can find. I do not want my food supply to be decided by giant agri-corporations who only care about the bottom line. In this day and age of persistent mad cow, *Salmonella*, *Listeria*, etc. outbreaks, the right thing to do is to protect the small farmers and try to ensure the population's safety from massive outbreaks. Please do the right thing.

COMMENT OF PAT MILLIREN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:16 p.m.

City, State: Port Angeles, WA

Occupation: Retired Park Ranger

Comment: I **Do** produce some of my own food. Partly because I love to work out of doors in direct relationship with the Earth and partly because I want organic, local produce. Our Farmers' Market is critical to me and our county. We **Must** provide support for small, organic and becoming-organic farmers to grow local food. It is part of our national security. Large agribusinesses do **Not** need Federal support, no matter what they tell you. They are ruining our land with their mono-cultures, GMO products, vast plantings and equipment that separate people from the land, and practices that do not work with wildlife and weather. We are losing our soil for the second time (can't we learn from our mistakes?), and we are losing our souls as we separate ourselves from the land.

I endorse all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).

I beg for full funding of conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.

Our nation desperately needs implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236), and we must maintain the EQIP Organic Initiative.

COMMENT OF HENRY MILLIS

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 9:14 a.m.

City, State: Charleston, SC

Occupation: Long Shore

Comment: I know you people are religious, so do you not think your **God** made the Earth and its food perfect. Monsanto is not god and I do not like eating chemicals that **God** did not plan on us eating. The only thing we have on this Earth is '**Clean Food**' **Water** and **Air** but now you have let the corporations destroy the only pure thing left on this planet, and yes that includes your children and grand children and if you think they are immune to what you have let happen why don't you get them tested and see how many of these great toxins you can find in their bodies. **Stop The Madness** all the **Money** in the world can't save you or your families from this.

COMMENT OF ANDREA MILLS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:00 p.m.

City, State: Websterville, VT

Occupation: Co-Op Sales Person

Comment: Please do not cut \$4 million from organic research funding. Please do not cut in half funding to support Beginning Farmers. Please support organics. Agribusiness like monoculture farming and antibiotic stuffed meats is killing the environment. We really have to change direction to support the environment so that it

can support us. No matter who is putting money in your pocket to have you vote otherwise if you do that will be wrong for everyone you represent. Please consider the consequences.

COMMENT OF BEVERLY MILLS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:49 p.m.

City, State: San Francisco, CA

Occupation: Communications

Comment: Agricultural policy has contributed substantially to the obesity problem in America. We are going to be paying huge amounts of money in the future to deal with it so **Stop Subsidizing Sugar And Other Unhealthy Food Programs.**

COMMENT OF IGALIOUS MILLS

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 10:24 p.m.

City, State: Port Arthur, TX

Occupation: Legislative Liaison/Farmer

Comment:

1. Why is there so much red tape just trying to get information from the State and Federal USDA agencies in a timely manner regarding the historical disparities of information, access to funding (public and commercial financial institutions) grants, research and development pilot projects, *etc.*

2. Will Members of the House Committee on Agriculture support an Interim Study for Historically Underrepresented farmers and Ranchers in the State of Texas? If not why not? The Texas Small Farmers and Ranchers/CBO has requested this study by the Texas House Speaker, but has not been considered.

3. Why has the House Committee on Agriculture refuse to hear from the Black farmers and ranchers in the State of Texas? Having one "Field Hearing" located in Lubbock, Texas in 2010 is "unacceptable" unless the intention was not to get diverse feedback in an open honest manner.

4. What agency or agencies are responsible for monitoring land grant colleges in the State of Texas? Funding disparities? Student agriculture graduation impact?

Closing Statement: It is our hope that this House Committee on Agriculture does not overlook the contributions Black farmers and ranchers has made and continue to make for a stronger country where we all should be treated equally and given the opportunity to fulfill the American Dream, one Nation Under God with Liberty and Justice for all.

God Bless the United States of America,
IGALIOUS MILLS, LEGISLATIVE LIASION,
Texas Small Farmers and Ranchers/CBO,
Port Arthur, Texas.

COMMENT OF KERRY MILLS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:38 a.m.

City, State: Richmond, VA

Occupation: Art Historian

Comment: Please put an end to corporate food production! Support local and sustainable farming practices for safer and more healthy food and to save the environment from CO₂.

COMMENT OF MICHAEL MILLS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:45 a.m.

City, State: San Francisco, CA

Occupation: Nonprofit Administrator

Comment: It is time to stop subsidizing sugar and corn which is causing people to eat unhealthy foods costing the country billions in unnecessary and preventable health care costs. Support organic, sustainable farming and stop supporting factory farms and pesticide laden agriculture. Farm workers and consumers continue to be hurt every day by the subsidization of unhealthy foods, pesticides, and companies that care only about profit and not the public health.

COMMENT OF SASKIA MILLS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:41 a.m.

City, State: Davis, CA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Field Crops, Specialty Crops

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Please end subsidies to large corporate farms in America, in favor of support for small and new farmers. Please maintain programs to support better nutrition and environmental conversation in agriculture, and put caps on subsidies of crop insurance premiums. Please focus on what's good for the people of America, not the corporate agribusiness community.

COMMENT OF WANDA MILLS

Date Submitted: Monday, April 09, 2012, 3:22 p.m.

City, State: Austin, TX

Occupation: Retired Administrator

Comment: Committee Members: I am so concerned about the large number of children that each day go to bed and to school hungry. The situation with adults is dire too. Please make sure that adequate funding is provided to those agencies that attempt to address hungry. It is essential we feed especially our small children so they can learn and be of future benefit to society. Even one child going to bed with an empty stomach is **Too Many!** We are a compassionate nation and we should show it in ways that benefit our children. Please fund hunger programs.

COMMENT OF KARLA MILOSEVICH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:39 p.m.

City, State: San Francisco, CA

Occupation: Artist

Comment: No more money for environmentally damaging crops such as GMO corn. Long term environmental health is in the best interest of everyone ultimately, way more important than short term financial gain. Just say no to Monsanto and yes to small family farms.

Thank you for all you do,

KARLA MILOSEVICH.

COMMENT OF PETER MINDE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:08 p.m.

City, State: Dover, NJ

Occupation: Self-Employed

Comment: Farm policy should ban genetically modified organisms and irradiation of food. If you intend to allow these practices, food manufacturers should be legally compelled to inform consumers on the label. You should be supporting small farms and organic agriculture, NOT factory farms.

COMMENT OF MARILYN MINDER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:35 p.m.

City, State: Charlotte, NC

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I am an organic vegetable gardener. I hope you don't realize too late that we are poisoning ourselves and our children with current farming practices. Many health conditions are related to the pesticide-laden foods we eat. Or do you eat organic veggies already for yourself and your family? Can you afford the best?

COMMENT OF MADELINE MIOTTO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:25 p.m.

City, State: Southgate, MI

Occupation: Retired—American Airlines

Comment: A healthy nation would far benefit our future . . . not money hungry industrial agriculture lobbyists. Consider what's best for the nations people as a whole.

COMMENT OF TESS MIRABAL

Date Submitted: Thursday, April 12, 2012, 4:54 p.m.

City, State: Albuquerque, NM

Occupation: Director of Resident Services, YES Housing, Inc. Nonprofit Organization

Comment: Please increase funding to the farm bill. These funds help us to provide food through partnership with our local food bank to the residents of the affordable housing communities we develop and rehab across the state of New Mexico. Several counties still go without services due to lack of funding. Very low income elderly, disabled and families with children are having to make tough choices between food on the table or shelter, meds, utilities, *etc.*

COMMENT OF RICH MIRES

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:58 p.m.

City, State: Prineville, OR

Occupation: Local School Board Member (Retired)

Comment: We need to insure that small farms and organic farms are protected. It is important that a safe, nutritious and edible food supply is made available to our schools—let alone all other citizens. Corporate America has too much freedom to give us whatever they want and expect us to eat it.

COMMENT OF TERESA MITCHEL

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 6:46 p.m.

City, State: Ashland, OR

Occupation: Public Health Educator around Food

Comment: I am extremely disappointed at the continuance of policies that support an unsustainable food system, while disregarding and under-supporting those methods that sustain healthy people and a healthy environment. Healthy small family farms are a vital and necessary commodity in our world, and need additional resources and favorable policy decisions directed towards making these entities strong.

COMMENT OF ALEXANDER MITCHELL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:31 a.m.

City, State: Napa, CA

Occupation: Machinist

Comment: Please implement policy that promotes small local agriculture, and limits the use of fossil based fertilizers. We need to steer away from huge monocultures and give the helping hand to forms of agriculture and food that work towards a more diverse and natural product.

COMMENT OF BRENT MITCHELL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:41 p.m.

City, State: Carlsbad, CA

Occupation: Real Estate Developer

Comment: Please label GMO crops, purge government incest with Monsanto. Decrease the use of harmful pesticides/fertilizers to protect our lives and water supplies. Stop giving subsidies to large profitable agribusiness.
Please!

COMMENT OF CLINT MITCHELL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:57 p.m.

City, State: Fort Collins, CO

Occupation: Trail Maintenance Crew Member

Comment: The support of organic agriculture could stimulate economic growth by giving farmers the opportunity to enter niche organic markets that could not be attainable without Federal support.

COMMENT OF EDWARD MITCHELL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:23 p.m.

City, State: Barnesville, GA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Livestock
Size: 1,000+ acres

Comment: Please for the love of all that America pretends to stand for, break ranks from your corporate sponsors, vote against this fascist agenda, vote in favor of local communities, economies and support the plight of small farmers.

COMMENT OF JOAN MITCHELL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:35 p.m.
City, State: Bushkill, PA
Occupation: Pastor

Comment: How our food is grown is vital to the health and welfare of all our citizens. Huge "factory" farms pay less attention to quality than to profits, whereas supporting the family farms will tend to produce the best quality for all, as well as assuring a living to ordinary people. I urge you to vote in a direction that supports working families and healthy crops for all.

COMMENT OF JOHN MITCHELL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:00 p.m.
City, State: Somerset, CA
Producer/Non-producer: Producer
Type: Vegetables
Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: I am a small organic specialty vegetable farmer it is critical that the American people have a voice in the manner in which their food is grown and processed before it is consumed. At this time those decisions are being made by agribusiness concerns whose primary interest is money, and care little or nothing about the quality, or health value of their crops.

COMMENT OF ROBIN MITCHELL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:07 p.m.
City, State: El Cerrito, CA
Occupation: Building Energy Efficiency Research

Comment: Fully fund the Organic Research and Extension Initiative (OREI) at the 2008 level.

I hope that the farm bill will strongly support organic farmer and farming, as well as conservation measures. I obtain 99.9% of all my food from the local organic farmers' market or the local natural grocery store, which buys from local and non-local organic farmers. It is vital for the health of the ecosystem and our continued existence as a species that we wean ourselves off herbicides, pesticides, and fossil fuel based fertilizers, all of which organic farmers do.

I encourage you to:

- Endorse all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Support all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintain EQIP Organic Initiative and do NOT cut the Conservation Stewardship Program.

COMMENT OF EILEEN MITRO

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 11:51 a.m.
City, State: Ukiah, CA
Occupation: Retired Educator

Comment: Too much support is given to agribusiness putting out toxic fertilizers and pesticides to grow genetically modified plants. Too little support goes to small farmers growing responsibly clean food using fertilizers and pest control methods that work and do not poison our environment. It's an easy switch to a healthier farm bill. Will the money with which Big Agriculture peppers Congress work yet again to subsidize them?

COMMENT OF ALISON MITTELBERGER

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 02, 2012, 10:49 a.m.
City, State: Oakland, CA
Occupation: Student
Comment: Dear Representatives,

I want to write to you to voice a priority that I believe the 2012 Farm Bill must emphasize. As a young person with an interest in sustainable agriculture, I think there should be big emphasis on adequate support of new and coming farmers who want to begin their own farms. In theory, the farm bill provides funding for new farmers, but in practice, it should support new farmers by allowing for there to be training and network support systems as well as funding to make it possible for new farmers to survive. I hope that the real effects of the policies that this bill puts in place are kept in mind before it is passed.

Sincerely,

ALI MITTELBERGER.

COMMENT OF MIKE MITTENBERG

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:55 a.m.

City, State: Astoria, NY

Occupation: Unemployed

Comment:

- no subsidies for ethanol
- label all GMO's
- no subsidies for genetic engineering
- more money for organic farming
- no subsidies for anything ever

COMMENT OF RAYMOND MLYNCZAK

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:38 p.m.

City, State: Horsham, PA

Comment: I would like a fair bill that serves the interests of organic farms and farm workers. This bill would not favor farms that used GMO's. The people don't want to wait 50 years, like we did with tobacco, to learn that GMO's are a hazard to our health. By that time there will be no turning back, because due to the reproductive cycle in Nature, pollination will have modified all our natural crops.

There is a body of information currently, even though suppressed or ignored, to show the dangers of GMO's to human health, animal health and Nature in general to restrict the use of GMO's. The EU and other countries already recognize this and have taken actions to protect the food supply for all creatures.

You have the power to change things. Do not act like straw men (T.S. Elliot) and sell us all out. Real farmers producing real food need you now.

COMMENT OF ANTHONY MOATON

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 10, 2012, 10:44 p.m.

City, State: Oak Park, IL

Occupation: Student

Comment: Being someone who formerly had to rely on a SNAP account, and has now found themselves in the position to have to use it again, I pray that SNAP doesn't get cut. Not just for me and my family, but for the many others who need it to survive.

COMMENT OF VALEREI MOE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:33 p.m.

City, State: Palm Desert, CA

Comment: Please support Organic Farmers and put Monsanto and other GMO /GE companies through tougher regulations to keep them from further damaging the U.S. Agriculture, Organic Farmers, U.S. Waters and overall environment.

Thank you!

COMMENT OF DOUG MOELLERING, PH.D.

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:44 p.m.

City, State: Birmingham, AL

Occupation: Research Scientist/Instructor Nutrition Sciences

Comment: Dear Congress,

Please value our health and our children's and their children's children's health and well being and please seriously consider protecting our organic, sustainable agriculture and beginning farmers instead of insurance companies and large agri-

business operations which have been shown to produce less nutritional products and perform risky & harmful farming practices. I support the full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286). I also support fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to and held accountable for compliance with conservation programs. I support the implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236) and maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Please look beyond the lobbying, campaign support promises, money, political maneuvering, or whatever may prevent you from objectively looking at what is best for us the consumers, the people, the masses, and protect our farmers who are growing organic foods or beginning farmers who could increase locally available fruits and vegetables!

As a nutritional research scientist highly motivated and involved in counteracting our diabetes and obesity epidemic, I beg you to endorse protection for our farmers and strict compliance with conservation programs since we are likely victim to their demise already.

Thank you for your time and considerations,

DOUG MOELLERING, PH.D.

COMMENT OF ALEX MOHBACHER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:31 a.m.

City, State: Esko, MN

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: 50–150 acres

Comment: Dear Congress,

I would like to send you my support for organic agriculture in the upcoming farm bill. Programs like the OREI and EQIP are vital to our operation and food system. Not only do these help organic farmers, but I know many conventional farmers find use in these results as well and incorporate certain systems born out of the organic field. Thanks for thinking of us there!

Sincerely,

ALEX MOHRBACHER.

COMMENT OF ANTHONY MOHEN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:22 p.m.

City, State: Brooklyn, NY

Occupation: Legal/Nonprofit

Comment: We must focus our agricultural policy on supporting local and family-owned farms, promoting the consumption of healthy food by communities, protecting land for farming (and preventing over-development and sprawl encroaching on farmland), and empowering consumers to choose what they eat by creating labeling of genetically modified food and food grown using chemical fertilizers.

COMMENT OF KATHLEEN MOLATCH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:29 p.m.

City, State: Eastbrook, ME

Comment: Let's get our priorities straight in this country. It is **Not** big agribusiness that we need to be supporting. They're already making profits off the citizens of this country without regard for quality of produce unless the government forces regulations on them. The small and local farmers who grow organically provide top quality produce without the need for chemical pesticides or genetically-engineered crops. They are in business for themselves . . . remember when most businesses were family-run and provided not only quality goods but local employment, not to mention a person with whom you could interact who wasn't based in a foreign country by telephone? Please get it right with this bill. Thank you.

COMMENT OF SALLY MOLE

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 5:02 p.m.

City, State: Arlington, VT

Occupation: Small Farm Consultant

Comment: Our small diversified farms and locally grown foods movement is growing by leaps and bounds. This sector of our agricultural system should be en-

couraged and supported in our farm bill. It is healthful, efficient, conserves our farmland and supports our communities.

COMMENT OF PETER G. MOLLER

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 9:28 p.m.

City, State: Traverse City, MI

Occupation: Retired Professor

Comment: Dear Members of House Committee on Agriculture:

I am concerned that the food system in our country appears to be broken, both from the consumer and producer ends of the spectrum. We live in a country where quality food, especially fruits and vegetables, referred to as specialty crops, has become economically out of reach for a growing segment of our population, and consequently the health of our nation. As you consider what needs to be cut in the 2012 Farm Bill, I urge you to not let the growing poor pay for these deficit reduction measures. The Food Stamp program has overall been a success and should not be reduced in size.

I urge you to consider the interests of the small and independent farmer, who over the last few decades has not been able to compete with large agribusiness. The large farmer has been receiving Federal subsidies for commodity crops, such as corn, soy beans, rice, cotton, and wheat, while the small producer is increasingly going out of business.

Market manipulation, monopoly control over seeds, and enforcement of anti-trust laws are all issues that need to be addressed to increase competition in the food production sector of our economy. The plight of the small farmer can also be alleviated by continuing to fully fund the Conservation Reserve Program.

It is the health of our country that is at risk, and thus our national security. The profits of a small number of large corporations should not get in the way of the well being our nation.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

PETER G. MOLLER.

COMMENT OF RENEE MOLLER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:10 p.m.

City, State: Vancouver, WA

Occupation: Disabled

Comment: I am discovering, daily, that the illness I have that has placed me on disability and which Drs and Big Pharma can't "fix," nor find a cause of, can **Not** be taken care of by more and more drugs (which Big Pharma wants to shove down my throat), nor more testing (which is all the traditional medical community can offer); however, if I eat strictly organic (as well as weeding a few other dietary foods from my system), non-processed foods, I am slowly getting better. Without food labeling, better access to these foods, and an understanding that whole, healthy, pesticide-, hormone- and GMO-free food, if that is what one wishes to put in one's body, is as important as safe water and air, and should be just as vital.

COMMENT OF KATHY MOLONEY

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 7:44 a.m.

City, State: Grosse Pointe, MI

Occupation: Health Educator

Comment: I strongly urge you to provide our country with a reformed farm bill that stops providing massive subsidies to corporate farmers, and instead supports smaller local farms (H.R. 3286) true care and conservation of soil and land; support for new farmers (H.R. 3236) and assistance to organic farming. As all of you know, the farm bill has great importance to what our Food System will be in our country and the food we all will eat. You are accountable.

COMMENT OF KELLY MOLTZEN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 3:48 a.m.

City, State: Bronx, NY

Occupation: Public Health Professional/Registered Dietitian

Comment: As the Committee considers the 2012 Food and Farm Bill, I urge you to:

Preserve and expand funding for the Healthy Food Provisions Package which includes policies and programs supporting public health. These programs, which successfully help improve access to healthy food for low-income communities, include:

- Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program
- Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program
- Farmers' Market Electronic Benefits Transfer Program
- Healthy Urban Food Enterprise Development
- Community Food Projects
- SNAP Nutrition Education Program (SNAP-Ed)
- Also, the WIC Farmer's Market Nutrition Program—which promotes nutrition while successfully creating a customer base for farmers at farmer's markets—belongs under the farm bill instead of under Child Nutrition Reauthorization;
- Next, provide an even “plowing” field by fully funding programs supporting beginning and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, organic farming, regional farming and food economies, and rural development. We need more farmers and ranchers, more sustainable food production, and more economic opportunity in our food system;
- Fourth, end direct payments and countercyclical commodity programs, replacing them with loophole-free agriculture risk coverage and implement a cap on crop insurance premium subsidies. We must support farmers that really need the help, not the biggest farms that don't;
- And last, eliminate the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) livestock set-aside to limit funds granted to concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs) for waste management infrastructure and protect the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) from disproportionate cuts and improve it by ranking applications solely on their conservation benefits. We must ensure that limited conservation funding maximizes lasting environmental benefits.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF SHANNON MONDOR

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 1:28 p.m.

City, State: Arcata, CA

Occupation: College Writing Teacher

Comment: Please be aware that I propose the full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).

I encourage fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.

I desire the implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).

I also support maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

The country needs to focus more energy, money, and support on local and sustainable farming so that we achieve true food security. Industrialized food production is not healthy for the people, the animals, or the planet upon which we depend for our continued sustenance. We are seeing the dramatic negative health impact across the spectrum, a serious and violent cost of allotting public money to subsidize the wrong kinds of farming and growing practices. We need a new Victory Garden campaign for the new century, so that people are once again connected to the source and sustenance of their food systems, can identify and nurture actual foods of their own, and are free from dependence on the industrial food machine that only has profits rather than health in the forefront of its decisions and actions. GMOs **Must** be labeled, if not banned outright. Please do keep your minds on the sanctity of the American rights to true freedom to choose and be informed.

COMMENT OF CAROL MONE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:50 p.m.

City, State: Trinidad, CA

Occupation: Educator

Comment: Factory farms should be regulated as industry, not agriculture. Farms should be defined as agriculture—producing crops or animals on **Land**. We need to end subsidies and replace them with loophole-free agriculture risk coverage. Additionally, implement a cap on crop insurance premium subsidies. We need to fully fund programs that support beginning farmers and ranchers, organic farmers, and rural development. We need more farmers more sustainable food production, and more economic opportunity in our food system!

COMMENT OF BARBARA MONEY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:52 p.m.

City, State: Foster, RI

Occupation: Self-Employed

Comment: The farm bill needs to take into consideration the wishes of the American people for sustainable food production and cut back the subsidies to Big Ag corporations. Organic farming needs to be encouraged if we are ever to restore our soils. We need to make it easier for new farmers and family farms to make a living without tons of bureaucratic red tape. I support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

COMMENT OF ANN MONGOVEN

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 4:26 p.m.

City, State: Saint Paul, MN

Occupation: Self-Employed

Comment: I believe the 2012 Farm Bill must work for the health and safety of all. Support must be given to re-structure the ag system to all more local and organic production.

COMMENT OF KIM MONJOY

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 9:39 p.m.

City, State: New York, NY

Occupation: Admin. Manager

Comment: This is my most important issue. I need to know what I'm eating (label it) Is it safe not fake no genetically modified food. Allow small farmers the chance to use real seed and survive.

COMMENT OF GLORIA MONROE

Date Submitted: Friday, April 27, 2012, 7:36 p.m.

City, State: Paris, TN

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I am all in favor of families being able to have food everyday! I would like to see certain items excluded from the food stamp program, sodas, cookies, chips, sugary cereals, toaster pastries, doughnuts *etc.* basically the items that offer very little if any nutritional value! I have witnessed many times people using an EBT card in front of me in the store and the majority of their purchase is the above mentioned items! I have even seen a store decorated cake being bought with an EBT card at the cost of \$32.00! How in the world is this justified? The money being used for these items are preventing the family from having a balanced nutritional diet in my opinion! Thank you for allowing me to express my opinion!

COMMENT OF RICHARD MONROE

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 10, 2012, 10:05 a.m.

City, State: Rochester Hills, MI

Occupation: Retired Senior Citizen

Comment: The farm bill must be structured in a way which protects seniors and children from hunger. We must strive to get our priorities in order—eliminating hunger trumps making a new Star Wars Defense System on the East Coast.

COMMENT OF ARIEL MONSERRAT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:29 p.m.

City, State: Sneedville, TN

Occupation: Retired

Comment: No chemicals or pesticides, organic is always best as it has more nutrients and doesn't harm any wildlife *i.e.*, bees, *etc.* Quit harassing small farmers.

I'm for whatever helps to support our farmers in producing healthy food. The man I buy hay from had the USDA come to his house basically to harass him. **This Has To Stop!** Raw milk is highly important to our health and must be made available to all.

COMMENT OF RUTH MONSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:48 p.m.

City, State: Louisville, KY

Occupation: Social Work

Comment: Please mandate that all GMOs must be labeled! Americans have the right to know what we are eating. We have the right to decide what goes in our bodies. Huge agricultural corporations have had way too much power in deciding what we eat and the lack of healthy, quality food has contributed to our obesity epidemic and many other health problems. Also, organic farming needs as much support as possible. Please put the health of our nation before the interest of corporate America. Thank you.

COMMENT OF JULIANNE MONTANO

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 7:17 p.m.

City, State: Tucson, AZ

Occupation: Health Advisor

Comment: As a Health Advisor for a Corporate Wellness company, I have the opportunity to speak with thousands of citizens across the country. These citizens range in age from 20–65 years old, some of them are in decent health, but most are unhealthy—with either obesity and poor eating habits, or a chronic illness or disease. It is critical for our government to stop turning a blind eye to what is happening with the agriculture system and corporations like Monsanto who negligently continue to create products that harm human health. If you sit in a position of power where your vote counts towards the ability to create change and improve the health of our citizens, you are obligated to wake-up and vote with integrity for choices that will help people thrive. Stop turning a blind eye to what is happening with Farming.

COMMENT OF LISA MONTANUS

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 10:41 a.m.

City, State: Woodstock, NY

Occupation: Educator

Comment: Please support all provisions, acts and initiatives that support local, organic agriculture and the farmers that grow this food.

SUBMITTED STATEMENT BY DARRIN MONTEIRO, DIRECTOR OF MEMBER RELATIONS,
CALIFORNIA DAIRIES, INC.

Congressman Costa, Congressman Cardoza (and other members of the Listening Panel):

Good morning. My name is Darrin Monteiro and I hold the position of Director of Member Relations for California Dairies, Inc. ("California Dairies"), whom I am representing here today. California Dairies is a full-service milk processing cooperative owned by approximately 420 producer-members located throughout the State of California. Our producer-members collectively produce over 17 billion pounds of milk per year, or 43% of the milk supply in California. Our producer-members have also invested over \$500 million in large processing plants at six locations. My presentation is consistent with the direction on national dairy policy approved by the California Dairies' Board of Directors.

We appreciate your willingness to hold this listening session to gather information from a wide variety of companies that collectively represent California agriculture and hope to leave you with a sense of the topics that resonate strongly with our producer-members.

Position on Recent Announcements for National Dairy Policy Changes

In 2011, Congressmen Peterson and Simpson introduced legislation that placed National Milk Producers Federation's "Foundation for the Future" proposal into a legislative format. While the California Dairies Board of Directors have not taken a formal position on H.R. 3062, *The Dairy Security Act of 2011* (DSA), the Board did approve a position statement on Congressman Peterson's "Discussion Draft", which *largely opposes* the elements contained in the document. While the DSA cor-

rects some of the flaws from Congressman's Peterson's "Discussion Draft", it still contains provisions that would negatively impact California Dairies by imposing restrictions on its business model. Other provisions have the potential of treating the producer-members of California Dairies disproportionately worse than other dairy producers in the U.S.

Four Main Points on National Dairy Policy:

1. California Dairies is supportive of margin insurance as a stand-alone program. The dairy title of the next farm bill should include risk management tools. Dairy producers have been working toward developing some proficiency with hedging and forward contracting in milk and feed markets, both of which are characterized by extreme price volatility. In recent times, the discussion of traditional risk management has changed to discussions on "margin management" and "margin insurance". We applaud those in Congress who have taken the time to conceive alternative programs for dairy producer margin insurance. There are two aspects embedded in some of the proposed margin insurance programs that need further refinement or modification. First, the trigger mechanism for margin insurance is a milk price-to-feed cost calculation that uses national data. However, every region of the U.S. will have its own "implied margin", depending on prevailing milk prices and feed costs. With California being an area with relatively low milk prices and relatively high feed costs, there is a very good chance that the national calculation will not be activated timely enough to be helpful for California dairy producers. Second, recent proposals have offered a two-tiered premium schedule to purchase supplemental margin insurance. Basically, the lower cost premium schedule applies to the milk produced by a dairy's first 150 cows. Thus, a small dairy can expect to pay considerably less in margin insurance premiums than a large dairy under any comparable circumstances. Both of these faults should be corrected to remove the biases against large dairy farms and against dairy farms that are located in high feed cost areas.

2. We continue to support the elimination of export subsidies and correction of inequities in market access and domestic support. In the past few years, the U.S. dairy industry has been shown quite clearly how important international trade has become. Export sales have grown to represent 12% to 15% of U.S. product sales, and we must continue to grow that aspect of the U.S. dairy industry.

3. California Dairies supports the elimination of the MILC program and diverting those funds to support alternative dairy programs. During the formulation of the 2002 Farm Bill, Congress enacted the Milk Income Loss Contract (MILC), which makes direct payments to dairy producers when milk prices fall below specified levels. The 2008 Farm Bill modified the MILC slightly but not enough to change the fact that it benefits smaller dairy producers disproportionately more than larger producers. Again, biases against large dairies need to be removed.

4. Federal policies that favor fuel over food must be changed. The basic theme for dairy producers since 2009 has been one of survivability. The largest influence in recent times has been the skyrocketing cost of feed. In the last 2 years, the California dairy industry found out what happens when unanticipated influences and subtle shifts in national policy come to pass—the focus on ethanol as a fuel alternative, a weak dollar and high demand for grains from other countries. California dairying relies heavily on what used to be inexpensive feeds that were shipped in from the Midwest, and there are few tools or strategies readily available to protect dairy producers from higher costs of feed, which represents almost 60% of the cost of producing milk in California.

The national policy favoring fuel over food, particularly the Renewable Fuel Standard, must be changed. Whether or not the farm bill is the appropriate place to tackle such a weighty issue may be debatable. However, with feed costs being the most challenging aspect affecting California dairy producer viability, we must make the arguments against the Federal ethanol program whenever and wherever we can.

In the interest of time, I will just briefly mention that we would support the availability of low interest loans and tax-deferred savings accounts for dairy producers and the reauthorization of the Environmental Quality Incentives Program, which provides technical assistance and financial cost-sharing in exchange for implementing conservation practices on agricultural lands.

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to share these thoughts with you today.

COMMENT OF CHRIS ELLEN MONTGOMERY

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 9:29 p.m.

City, State: San Francisco, CA

Occupation: Gardener

Comment: I'm very concerned about the health of our soil, as well as the importance of being good stewards of the land. This is best done with a combo of organic & conventional methods with an emphasis on IMP **Not** GMO. GMOs are wreaking havoc on life itself . . . They are **Not** any part of the answer . . .
More money for conventional to organic farm conversions . . .

COMMENT OF DEBORAH MONTGOMERY

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 16, 2012, 11:05 a.m.

City, State: Champaign, IL

Comment: Please preserve funding for the Food for Peace Development at the current level. Please oppose cuts to SNAP, CSFP and TEFAP. Maintain funding for the Value-Added-Producer grants.

COMMENT OF EDITH MONTGOMERY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:27 p.m.

City, State: Ashland, OR

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I want to eat healthy food not contaminated with pesticides and chemicals. Small farmers work hard to raise healthy food. They need to be supported. Big Ag makes enough money. It doesn't need more subsidies. Cutting money for Food Stamps and other food delivery programs is just plain wrong. Please write and pass a farm bill that benefits the people, not Big Ag corporations.

COMMENT OF LANELLE MONTGOMERY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:43 p.m.

City, State: Austin, TX

Comment: Please listen to the small farmers. We deserve to have "real", unadulterated, nutritious food. There are undoubtedly many items which need to be cut, but not funding for nutrition, for supporting organic farmers and for other programs which assure high qualified, non-genetically modified foods. It doesn't matter how much money, status, big houses, *etc.* that one owns, if we are unable to get good nutritious food, we are killing ourselves and our children.

COMMENT OF LYNN MONTGOMERY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:19 p.m.

City, State: Placitas, NM

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Specialty Crops

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: I am a small organic market farmer and am a supervisor on our local soil and water conservation district. (a volunteer position) It seems that big money, in the form of big corporations and their ability to buy undue influence makes me something very expendable and worthless in your eyes. I am an American. I pay taxes. I work hard to grow good, wholesome food for my fellow Americans. Your actions have been more than grossly unfair and destructive to honest citizens like myself. Hopefully, you will tap into your basic sense of fairness and give us our fair share, and stop making it impossible for us to exist.

COMMENT OF PATTI MONTGOMERY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:08 p.m.

City, State: Fort Bragg, CA

Occupation: Retired Bodyworker

Comment: My father was a produce broker, and I worked in his office, so am somewhat familiar with the commercial food production business. As a bodyworker, a significant portion of my training involved nutrition, and I have continued this research to the present day. I can tell you this—today's food, grown by Big Ag, chemically fertilized, genetically altered, and processed beyond recognition, is not only devoid of all nutrition, but a monumental health hazard, all by itself. I have not consumed it for decades, opting for organic (and local, when possible) instead.

And guess what? I'm not plagued with any of the "diseases" typically suffered by my contemporaries. I would encourage you all to support organic agriculture with the strictest standards, to ban GMOs from our crops, stop with the chemical fertilizers. Chemical fertilizers have killed our soil, leaving our crops devoid of nutrition, since the end of WWII. I could go on and on.

COMMENT OF JANE MOODIE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:33 p.m.

City, State: Eugene, OR

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Bioenergy, Dairy, Forestry, Greenhouse/nursery, Livestock, Poultry/poultry products, Specialty Crops

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Small farms have started feeling like targets, with so many efforts being made to hamstring them, restrict them, starve them, even criminalize them. "Organic" is assigned a woo-woo status, while big bucks are thrown at the guys spreading Roundup, and now 2-4-D, on our soil, in our water, and in our food. Our priorities have been seriously misplaced and profoundly harmful. People have less access to safe, nourishing food than ever before, and the occurrence of disease gets more and more common every year. This is exactly the opposite of what should be happening. Subsidies to industrial agriculture need to be stopped. They provide nothing helpful any more, except to those getting their pockets lined. Incentive monies need to be placed where they will provide benefit for consumers, in the form of fresh, clean, safe, health-promoting foods, and modest incomes for many small farmers.

COMMENT OF ALLEN MOODY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 11:24 a.m.

City, State: Viroqua, WI

Occupation: Organic Inspector

Comment: Please fund the following programs at the highest level possible:

- National Organic Program
- Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative
- Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program
- Conservation Stewardship Program
- Value-Added Producer Grants Program

Please provide focus on HEALTHY food for our children in schools. Make It Illegal To Sell Junk Food In Our Schools!

It's about time to get the words *Family Farm* in the Food Security Act. Every **Family Farm** is a **Business** that pays taxes to its local community. The **Profits Stay In The Community. Family Farms Are As American As Apple Pie.**

Support programs that allow farmers to **Raise Their Own Fuel!**
Get It?!

COMMENT OF NATHAN MOOMAW

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:13 p.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Livestock

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Please fully fund programs that support beginning and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, organic farming, regional farm and food economies, and rural development. We need more farmers and ranchers, more sustainable food production, and more economic opportunity in our food system. As a 32 year old trying to get my own pasture-raised livestock ranch started, I feel like the deck is stacked against me in a number of ways. Financing is a really big hurdle for people like me who are trying to start from scratch. New farmers, especially those attempting to serve non-commodity markets, need easier access to small amounts of capital. I have heard of many young farmers who have been unable to receive loans from the FSA because the FSA is oriented primarily towards helping large farms that produce commodity crops. We need more new direct-to-customer, small-scale, humane, and environmentally-friendly farms, and the government should be actively supporting these types of start-ups.

Please support family farmers that actually need help, not the biggest farms that don't: End subsidies (aka direct payments and countercyclical commodity programs), and replace them with loophole-free agriculture risk coverage. Additionally, implement a cap on crop insurance premium subsidies. Subsidies have evolved into something that no longer provides the right incentives for agriculture in this country and have created a situation that isn't good for farmers, nor for consumers. We should be providing incentives for farmers to be more environmentally responsible.

Please ensure that limited conservation funding maximizes lasting environmental benefits: Limit funds to Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) for animal waste management infrastructure by eliminating the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) Livestock Set-aside and protect the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) from disproportionate cuts, and improve it by ranking applications solely on their conservation benefits. Making agriculture more environmentally-friendly should be one of our primary methods of protecting this country's ecosystem services and natural resources.

COMMENT OF ELIZABETH MOONEY

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 5:29 p.m.

City, State: Forest Hills, NY

Occupation: Housewife

Comment: As a taxpayer and food consumer, I would like the limited amount of Federal agriculture dollars available to be used wisely. First and foremost, we don't need to subsidize wealthy, conglomerate agribusinesses. They are doing just fine. We need to help and promote smaller farmers and to promote farmland conservation and farmland stewardship.

COMMENT OF LEN MOONEY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:04 p.m.

City, State: Bangor, PA

Occupation: Musician

Comment: My wife is an organic farmer so I know firsthand the importance of good healthy food. Being aware of where my food comes from and how it's grown is critical. With the influx of GMO products being slipped in to our food supply without labeling and our knowledge I believe is criminal. My question for corporations like Monsanto and Dow if GMO products are so good for us why not label them and let the consumer decide.

COMMENT OF ALISSA MOORE

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 10:22 p.m.

City, State: West Bend, WI

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Dear Chairman Lucas,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony to the House Committee on Agriculture on the next farm bill. My district representative is being copied on this testimony. My name is Alissa Moore, I am 31 years old and this will be my 6th farming season. I currently manage a nonprofit farm in Southeastern Wisconsin. I chose to manage this farm instead of attempting to start my own farming business, because of the very high price of land, and the large amount of capital needed to start a small scale (or any scale) farming operation. With all of the handouts the U.S. government provides to commodity farmers in the farm bill, I believe it's only fair that the Committee endorse all of the provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236), including:

- Mandatory funding for Individual Development Accounts at \$5 million per year. This program helps new farmers raise capital to start farm businesses and is tested and proven by organizations like Practical Farmers of Iowa and the California Farmlink.
- Mandatory funding for the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program at \$25 million a year. This program funds essential education for new farmers around the country.
- Authorize a new microloan program, to enable young and beginning farmers to better access FSA loan programs.

- Revise FSA rules to make loan programs more accessible to more young and beginning farmers.
- Reaffirm the existing cost share differential for BFRs within EQIP. Also, reaffirm the advance payment option allowing beginning and socially disadvantaged producers to receive an advance payment for the project's costs for purchasing materials or contracting services, but increase the limit on the advance payment from 30 percent to 50 percent of costs.
- Amend the Farm and Ranch Land Protection Program (FRPP) to make farm viability part of the purpose of the program and to give discretionary authority to the eligible entities that implement the program to give priority to easements with an option to purchase at the agricultural use value, deals that transfer the land to beginning and farmers and ranchers, applicants with farm succession plans, and other similar mechanisms to maintain the affordability of protected land.

These and other provisions within the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act will help new growers succeed and I urge you to include them in the next farm bill.

Sincerely,

ALISSA MOORE.

COMMENT OF BRIAN MOORE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:29 p.m.

City, State: New Hampton, IA

Occupation: County Conservation Board Director

Comment: In these days of high crop values, we need to consider conservation programs more than ever. Do not decrease the value of what will encourage farmers to enter into conservation programs. I am not sure I agree with all the subsidies farmers get, but if that is what it takes to keep them interested in conservation programs, then let's do it.

COMMENT OF CARRIE MOORE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:36 p.m.

City, State: Littleton, CO

Occupation: Stay-at-Home Mom

Comment: Decisions that are made now will affect our food supply for many years to come. As an educated consumer I would like to see the government support more small family owned farms.

COMMENT OF EMILIE MOORE

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:01 a.m.

City, State: Austin, TX

Occupation: Scientist

Comment: I would like to see subsidies directed toward practices that are both environmentally sustainable and promote good health—fruit and vegetables instead of meat, and organic/sustainable production instead of large-scale commercial agriculture.

COMMENT OF EMILY MOORE

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 02, 2012, 10:41 a.m.

City, State: San Francisco, CA

Occupation: Student

Comment: Hello,

Below are some priorities that I would like to see included in the farm bill:

- encourage environmental sustainability by increasing funding for conservation programs that help farmers manage soil and water resources.
- disincentivize environmentally harmful farming practices. Changes in agriculture practices are a cost-effective and straight-forward way to improve water quality.
- increase funding for new farmers through the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program. Five times as many American farmers are over 65 years of age than are under 35 years of age. We need more money to encourage young stewardship of the land.
- increase funding for the Farmers' Market and Local Food Production Program

- increase subsidies for “specialty crops” like fruits and vegetables.
- Thank you!

COMMENT OF LAUREN MOORE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:59 p.m.

City, State: Greenwood, IN

Occupation: Material Handler

Comment: I support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

The more I have researched, the more I see that the government’s agenda is to cut funding from the poor to fill the pockets of the rich. Put an end to the selfishness. Put an end to the unhealthy food practices. Start taking the steps to positively impact our local farmers and the everyday consumers in this country. We can make a change, but it starts with our health. Keep this country healthy by allowing us full access to organic food and ridding us of these big business agendas. Please put the people first. Thank You.

COMMENT OF LESLIE MOORE

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 11:44 p.m.

City, State: Shoshone, ID

Occupation: Nurse and Gardener, Former Goat Keeper

Comment: Organic soils perform much better in drought and flood conditions because there is a complex food web in natural soil. So organic soil is the best crop insurance, does this make sense? Please start to care about the health of soil and our children—there is an epidemic of autism and it needs to get figured out, start testing for levels of pesticides in the population even if pesticide makers don’t want it. Be for the people, not just for business as usual, please I beg you, do you want to have autistic relatives?

COMMENT OF LORRAINE MOORE

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 1:26 p.m.

City, State: San Antonio, TX

Occupation: Artist

Comment: Subsidizing industrial agriculture with its pesticides, chemical fertilizers and genetic engineering is not in the best interest of the American people. Instead of adopting policies that deplete the soil and kill bees and other insects that pollinate naturally, I urge you to support organic research and best agricultural practices. Small organic farmers need government support and encouragement so that many more people will start their own small farms near cities and suburbs and continue to make inroads toward sustainable farming.

COMMENT OF LYNN MOORE

Date Submitted: Saturday, April 28, 2012, 7:52 a.m.

City, State: Woodbine, MD

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Fruits

Size: 151–300 acres

Comment: The funding of research for fruits and vegetables has been crucial for the mid-Atlantic area farmers. The attack from the Brown Marmorated Stink bug and the Spotted Wing Drosophila have devastated many farms. The lead scientists working on the problem are at the Appalachian Fruit Research Station in West Virginia. Without farm bill funding the research would not have been done. Much more damage would have occurred and continue to occur. This would lead to bankrupt farmers. This soil is too fertile and too precious to lose to invasive insects. The development pressure is already too much. Crop losses just make it worse. These invasive insects can occur at any time. So funding needs to be available. A safe af-

fordable food supply is the basis for our modern society. Just because we have an abundant safe food supply today, don't cut the funding that will determine tomorrow's food supply. Fruit farmers need to be planning about 10 years ahead to stay in production. The scientist that support the fruit industry need to be about 20 years ahead of the farmer. So funds cut today will seriously affect today and the next 3-5 decades. We all need to eat today and tomorrow. Thanks.

COMMENT OF MICHELE MOORE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:15 p.m.

City, State: Alstead, NH

Occupation: Physician

Comment: We need a farm bill that recognizes the need for sustainable agriculture, ensuring the health of the consumer, the land, and enabling this country to have a diversified and vigorous agriculture. The bill should stop favoring agribusiness at the expense of the family farmer and should support regional agriculture so that we can all eat the freshest food, grown closest to home.

COMMENT OF TERRI MOORE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:01 p.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Meeting Planner

Comment: Please stop the subsidies to big business farms that create problems with the diets of millions of people. Provide the citizens with fresh, healthy, local food choices. No corn syrup subsidies, no pink slime subsidies. Yes to organic, yes to small farmers.

COMMENT OF RACHEL MOORMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:22 p.m.

City, State: Greenwood, IN

Occupation: Former TV News Producer, now Stay-at-Home Mother

Comment: Cutting funding for organic food research and small/beginning farmers, while propping up existing "food" magnates cannot stand! I rely on small farmers growing excellent food to feed my family . . . This is by far the majority of food we eat, and my family is healthier and rarely sick because of it. Supporting organic food creates a chain reaction of healthy living that will impact the health of the entire nation. I support:

- funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs;
- the implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236);
- maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Please do not betray the lives and health of every American!

COMMENT OF MARY ETTA MOOSE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 12:38 p.m.

City, State: San Francisco, CA

Occupation: Retired Restaurateur

Comment: The next farm bill should include encouragement and aid to organic producers; Mandatory \$30 million funding of the Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative; \$25 million/yr for the Beginning Farmer & Rancher Development Program; protect the Conservation Stewardship Program from unfair funding cuts; support VAPG; provide flexibility for states to use food procurement programs to buy from local producers.

COMMENT OF JANA MORAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:21 p.m.

City, State: Anchorage, AK

Occupation: Writer/Photographer

Comment: Please, please please listen to the people of this great country who are concerned about our farms, fields, workers and **Our Food Supply**. This choice is

so simple, we either trash the land or save and nurture the land God gave us.
WWJD?

Thank you,
JANA MORAN.

COMMENT OF PATRICA MORFORD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:34 a.m.

City, State: Logsdon, OR

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Dairy

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Small dairy producers need help. We are licensed legal producers of healthy food but we are burdened with unfair competition from huge corporations and imports.

COMMENT OF ALEXANDRA MORGAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:09 p.m.

City, State: Saratoga Springs, NY

Occupation: Landscape Architect

Comment: I believe in the small farmer who is closer to the rhythm of his land than big corporate farms. And concentrated feed lots are a hazard to everyone's health, let alone being inhumane.

COMMENT OF ANGEL MORGAN

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 2:18 p.m.

City, State: Hartford, CT

Occupation: Student

Comment: As a junior in college, I feel that the SNAP program helps plenty of families who get help with their kids. What type of human being would do such a horrible thing such as that. It's not fair to those who need SNAP to survive. I feel that instead of taking programs away you, Congress, should be adding things like jobs and more education for our youth so that they can stop killing one another.

COMMENT OF BILL MORGAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:38 p.m.

City, State: Fairfield, IA

Occupation: Software Programmer

Comment: The U.S. needs thorough biotechnology regulation that includes mandatory labeling for genetically engineered food (a requirement that 90% of Americans want and that 50 other countries, including Russia/China/EU already have).

Genetic Engineering is a subtle and powerful science, but it is also an infant science. The U.S. is currently not adhering to the Precautionary Principle, is not providing adequate oversight of the Biotech Industry, and so what is being sold as a Green Revolution is actually more like a Greed Revolution.

In addition, there should be far more legislated and enforced distance between Biotech Industry interests and the U.S. Government agencies that regulate it. The influence of Monsanto et al. on the current Administration, Congress, USDA/FDA is deplorable. We are not a Corporatocracy; we are a Democratic Republic.

Remember that we are of-by-for the People, not of-by-for Monsanto, Dow Chemical, and Dupont.

Thanks for listening . . .

BILL MORGAN,
Iowa.

COMMENT OF CHRISTOPHER MORGAN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 7:09 p.m.

City, State: Los Angeles, CA

Occupation: Hospital Admissions Rep.

Comment: I want an organic farm bill. I want a bill that's effective and that actually focuses on correcting the years of abuse we've experienced from hypocritical politicians and the bogus policies they've endorsed.

We must maintain the EQIP organic initiative.

We must ensure that any new insurance subsidies are directly tied to compliance with conservation programs.

We must provide the complete funding requirements of conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program.

We must implement all the provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act.

We must fully and endorse and support all of the provisions of the Local Foods, Farms, and Jobs Act.

There is currently a very large population of native born Americans and immigrants that are truly fat, sick, and dying from many of the choices that have been made by politicians who've chosen money over the best interest of the people. How can we continue to live in a world where people are used as road blocks, door stops, and pin cushions?

Without positive and progressive change we will fade away as a once great nation into the infinite abyss and in a matter of time humans will cease to exist anywhere on the entire planet while the cockroaches eat the organic food that nature produces after we're all gone.

COMMENT OF WILLIAM MORGAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:00 p.m.

City, State: Baker, FL

Occupation: Technology

Comment: We the people need you to be our voice concerning our health from food and sustainability in true organic food crops. This is your job—to represent our voice.

COMMENT OF RICHARD MORGESE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:09 p.m.

City, State: San Francisco, CA

Occupation: Medical Doctor

Comment: Evidence grows daily about the dangers of this unbridled and untested GMO experiment. Why is our government protecting big business instead of the populace? I'm stunned, witnessing a Sci-Fi horror story of some corrupt civilization destroying its future for some false short term gain. Toxic food as long as it's cheap?!

COMMENT OF TOOCHIS MORIN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:17 p.m.

City, State: Los Angeles, CA

Occupation: Agent

Comment: Please stop catering to big agro like Monsanto and GE and their GMO products and pesticides. You are destroying the farmers' livelihood, health and our planet. Please refuse to bend to the big money these corporations are giving you and do your job and look out for the welfare of the people. Thank you.

COMMENT OF ROBERT MORLEY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:31 p.m.

City, State: Spring Hill, FL

Occupation: Aviation

Comment: As a consumer I should have a right to know what is in my food and where it comes from and how it is grown. Companies like Monsanto should not have the last and only word concerning MY food! These corporations already have way too much power and it's time they get put in their place.

COMMENT OF GABRIEL MORNER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:50 p.m.

City, State: Rutherford, NJ

Occupation: Architect

Comment: Please end farm subsidies encouraging corporate farming and putting small farmers out of business. It is creating a hazardous condition in our food chain. An over dependence on chemicals and GMO's is killing the soil, poisoning our water and perverting our seed stock.

COMMENT OF GLORIA MOROTTI

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:10 p.m.
City, State: Bradenton, FL
Occupation: Retired
Comment: First of all, most of the food grown should be organic. There should be no GMOs. Corporate agriculture should be abolished as much as possible.

COMMENT OF ROSEMARY MORRETTA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:32 p.m.
City, State: Ridgefield, CT
Occupation: Nonprofit Executive
Comment: Please support environmental programs and local food, community supported agricultural initiatives and the policies and laws that effect the adoption of clean air and organic, local food. Thanks.

COMMENT OF MCKENNA MORRIGAN

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 3:28 p.m.
City, State: Seattle, WA
Occupation: Consultant
Comment: As the committee considers the 2012 Food and Farm Bill, I urge you to:

- (1) Strengthen critical nutrition programs. The Recession has plunged tens of thousands of families into economic vulnerability, where they must make tough choices between healthy food and keeping a roof over their heads or the lights on. These families depend on the support provided through the Food and Farm Bill nutrition programs, and they cannot afford to lose that support due to unwise budget cuts.
- (2) Provide an even "plowing" field by fully funding programs that support beginning and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, organic farming, regional farm and food economies, and rural development. We need more farmers and ranchers, more sustainable food production, and more economic opportunity in our food system;
- (3) And please finally find the political courage to make structural adjustments to the farm bill that many people acknowledge is necessary, so that it provides support to family farmers that really need help, not the biggest farms that don't. End subsidies (aka direct payments and countercyclical commodity programs), and replace them with loophole-free agriculture risk coverage; and implement a cap on crop insurance premium subsidies.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF CHRYS MORRIS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:01 p.m.
City, State: Imperial, PA
Occupation: Homemaker
Comment: It's time to put American families and family owned farms ahead of agribusiness. Agribusiness doesn't care about the preserving the land for future generations—they only care about profits today. Small farmers are caretakers of the land, not rapists. Please take the opportunity to correct this terrible situation.

COMMENT OF ELIZABETH MORRIS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:24 p.m.
City, State: Seattle, WA
Occupation: Medical Education
Comment: Support of local, organic agriculture should be the future of the farm bill. Please respectfully listen to the voices of the individuals who elected you.

COMMENT OF GARY MORRIS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:57 p.m.
City, State: Neskowin, OR
Occupation: Alternative Health
Comment: We are desperately in need of a measure that **Protects** our Organic Farmers and the culture that is supporting them! The movement to place 100%

GMO foods on the market by the Monopoly known as Monsanto is a travesty to intelligent life on the planet! We are morally obligated to **Stop** producing GMO fruits and vegetables as we are messing with what **God** has created. We do not have the consciousness to absolutely know the long-term effects of these products, but there is one clear issue here! That we are not being informed as to the condition of our food supply! This is **Criminal** and what Monsanto has done to **Organic** Farmers in the court system is a Travesty of Immense Proportions! Shame on our Judicial System and **Shame** on **Congress** for allowing Monsanto to do their immoral GMO seeds with NO legislation or registration of their products whatsoever! Enough of this! It has to **Stop Now**. Please protect Organic Farming as preserve our right to eat Whole Healthy Foods without insecticides or weed killer genetically engineered into them! Thank you for considering and allowing our Natural Way of Living to continue as Mother Nature designed it to be!

COMMENT OF JOHN MORRIS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:54 p.m.

City, State: Eugene, OR

Occupation: Designer

Comment: I write to strongly urge you to adopt policies that support small family farms, those practicing ecologically sustainable practices and organic farming methods. Too often our nation's lawmakers respond to the influence of agribusiness and related industries, including the petrochemical industry. I shouldn't need to remind you that you represent all the people, not just the entrenched special interests.

COMMENT OF MARY MORRIS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:25 a.m.

City, State: Colton, CA

Occupation: Researcher

Comment: It is time for a farm bill that supports good nutrition, and livelihoods and decreases the public health burden, not a farm bill that supports wealthy agribusinesses to produce excess unnecessary commodities. Please increase SNAP incentives to shop directly and eat produce, and remove subsidies for farms netting over \$250,000 per year while favoring small farms producing organic produce.

COMMENT OF NANCY MORRIS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:46 p.m.

City, State: Seattle, WA

Occupation: Writer

Comment: To the House Agriculture Committee:

Your allegiance is to the citizens of the United States—not industrialized GMO chemically based corporate agriculture. I demand you continue to support research into sustainable organic agriculture. Do not cut funding to this sector. I demand labeling of GMO's. Stop subsidizing the major agricultural corporations that continue to degrade the biosphere on which we are all dependent, including you.

COMMENT OF PETER MORRIS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:50 p.m.

City, State: Bradford, VT

Occupation: Photographer

Comment: Our health needs to be placed first. If we are becoming, sick, fat, and full of cancer, we can't work as hard or make good money to buy all the stuff the economy makes. Immediate profit without thought of cost is killing America. A smart and healthy economy takes good care of its workers and the rest or collapses and pays insane health care costs. Stop killing America with bad food and destruction of the family farm. Make good health profitable for the many instead of just making profit for the few.

COMMENT OF SHIRLEY MORRIS

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 10:43 a.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Realtor

Comment: Please vote to help the organic food movement that is just now really beginning in many areas of the United States! These people are helping to sustain

the land as well as provide much needed food that we depend on every day to nourish our bodies and keep healthy! Big agriculture is just that, a **Business**, and has gotten completely out of control with Congress ignoring what is going to completely tear apart our food and the land it is grown on.

Sincerely,
SHIRLEY MORRIS.

COMMENT OF CHAD MORRISON

Date Submitted: Tuesday, April 24, 2012, 11:07 a.m.

City, State: Gassaway, WV

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Livestock

Size: 301–500 acres

Comment: As an American, the farm bill is one of the most important and impactful parts of our infrastructure. Conservation and insurance set the tone for our country in the present and for the next generations as far as food supply and production. Our country is now in a place where self-sufficiency and sustainability are at the top of our priority list.

In my opinion, our entire food system as a whole in the United States is failing. The cost of foods has skyrocketed, much to the point where families and individuals cannot afford to buy healthy foods to support their families. We become reliant on cheaper processed foods, which in the long term, cost us our health tenfold more. Our children are suffering from health diseases such as diabetes and obesity.

As a resident of a rural state, West Virginia, transportation becomes a major issue. We constantly fight the battle between purchasing goods at higher prices locally or traveling to buy at a lower price. Again, traveling means less trips, and less access to perishable foods that tend to be healthier and more nutritious for our families.

As an employee of a hunger relief organization, I see on a daily basis the impact of USDA commodity program and SNAP. People are no longer able to use these programs as an emergency (unless you consider it a long-term emergency), as it has become a forced way of life for many people. They have no other choice: use the resources available or starve or freeze. In West Virginia, the TEFAP program affects over 275,000 people or more. What a huge number, considering it is 15% of our population.

As the son of a farmer who was the son of a farmer for many generations, I see farmland and the occupation slowly disappearing. Invest in a future for West Virginia and the United States. Invest in programs that provide jobs that provide food, so that individuals can afford to buy food. Our country depends on being sustainable, and cuts to the farm bill may be irreversible. Cuts to the commodity program or SNAP will devastate our food banks and destroy any hope these citizens have.

COMMENT OF CHERYL MORRISON

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 12:16 a.m.

City, State: Fairview, NC

Comment: Please help make sustainable and organic farming practices the standard in our country. This will help future generations and keep us and our Earth healthy and happy. Thank you.

COMMENT OF DANIEL MORRISON

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 11:07 a.m.

City, State: Fredericksburg, VA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: My family owns a 15 acre farm in VA. We grow heirloom tomatoes, peppers, carrots, beets, squash, *etc.* We started growing for ourselves and then found we were producing a lot more than we could eat so we expanded and are now growing for local restaurants. We do this all while having full time jobs. We don't use any chemicals or genetically modified seeds. If you spend take care of your soil and you don't overplant one crop, you can produce a lot more edible food than overplanting corn or soy. It is the over production that requires such large amounts of chemical fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides. And those chemicals have direct and indirect impacts on our bodies, health, environment and society. Please revise and rewrite the farm bill to be about food and people.

COMMENT OF LESLIE MORRISON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:14 p.m.

City, State: Passaic, NJ

Occupation: Natural Foods Chef and Culinary Instructor

Comment: As a mother and chef for families with children, it's my personal responsibility to use the safest ingredients for humans I can find. Our country needs MORE options for safe, nutritious, and affordable food free of chemicals, GMO ingredients, and pesticides. They are contributing to all kinds of diseases—cancer, ADHD, Autism, *etc.* These are costing our government and citizens way more money in health care than had we focused more on prevention in the first place! And it causes all who are touched by health problems and disease much more unnecessary heartache. Please, through legislation, put the health of our citizens first, and not big agriculture.

Thank you!

LESLIE MORRISON.

 JOINT COMMENT OF ROGER MORRISON, M.D. AND NANCY HERRICK, P.A.

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 3:55 p.m.

City, State: Nevada City, CA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Fruits

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: We support local foods and farms act (H.R. 3286).

We support fully funding conservation programs.

We support Beginning farmer and rancher Act (H.R. 3236).

We support maintaining EQUIP Organic Initiative.

Sincerely,

ROGER MORRISON, M.D.;

NANCY HERRICK, P.A.

 COMMENT OF BERNARD C. MORRISSEY

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 11:38 a.m.

City, State: Ephrata, PA

Occupation: Founder, Bernard C. Morrissey Insurance, Inc.

Comment: I am against any and all milk supply management provisions being included in the dairy title of the farm bill. Dairy producers should not have to be the only ag sector governed by arbitrary production caps as a prerequisite for access to a safety net or risk management tool (as proposed in the Dairy Security Act—being considered as the new dairy policy in the farm bill). Simply move LGM-Dairy from pilot status to regular crop insurance status and make this effective margin protection program more widely available to dairy producers.

 COMMENT OF CHRISTINE MORRISSEY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:26 p.m.

City, State: Ithaca, NY

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I rely on local organic produce to support my local farm businesspeople and to assure my healthy veggies remain a reasonably priced option without GMO pollution.

 COMMENT OF DOREDN MORRISSEY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:10 p.m.

City, State: Los Angeles, CA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Other

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: As a landscape architect by training, I can tell you that my best paying clients ask for sustainable practices and small plots for growing vegetables. It is a shift and the market dictates that we stay ahead of the curve. Please pave the way to support the shifts in market. The genie is out of the bottle and the fight against it will be just as arduous a fight, but additionally with a long-term losing proposition. Surely you are aware of this.

Many of our founding founders had a deep respect for farming, and in summer sought respite from the troubles in Washington D.C. by returning to their farms and working the land with integrity. Please support farming that does not weaken our soils, our plants, our health, and ultimately our nation. Agribusiness may be a (relatively short term) profitable business, but it is not appropriate for the food we feed our families with, nor for the rich land we have as a nation. Healthy farmed agriculture yields higher market prices locally (and eventually internationally), but for agribusiness it is an expensive shift. As elected leaders, I deeply hope you are concerned with the quality of life for both your constituents and our great and unique nation. Please be judicious and long-sighted in your decision making.

Thank you for all your efforts.

COMMENT OF SAMANTHA MORROW

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:16 p.m.

City, State: Ferndale, WA

Occupation: Teacher & Mother

Comment: I grew up in a farming family in OH. Corn and soy and cooped-up, grain-fed cattle was the only viable option for my uncles and father. As a mom, I've learned more so that I am sure to feed my children nutrition without the extra helping of pesticides, insecticides, artificial fertilizers, and excessive amounts of high fructose corn syrup. On the small plot of land, I am employing sustainable practices to help feed my family and neighbors. When I share with my father, he longs to be able to do it all over again. He regrets the choices he and his brothers made. He sees the results on the land.

I support all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286). I support fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs. I support the implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236). I hope you maintain the EQIP Organic Initiative.

COMMENT OF ANNE JUNIPER MORSE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 12:46 p.m.

City, State: Hillsboro, OR

Comment: I work for Adelante Mujeres a nonprofit organization in Oregon that supports Latino farmers. I hope that in the new farm bill their continues to be support for socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers. Outreach and Assistance for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers Program (OASDFR) is a valuable program. We would like to encourage its inclusion as another vital piece of the farm bill that is under consideration. In the past our organization was able to secure funding from this program to help underserved Latino farmers in Oregon. We hope you will consider adding it.

COMMENT OF ELIZABETH MORSE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:04 p.m.

City, State: South Bend, IN

Occupation: Self Employed and Member of Local Food Co-Op

Comment: We need to stop the usage of GMO seed. We need to focus on reducing that amount of fuel used in commercial ag. Healthy land is essential to maintaining our health as a nation.

COMMENT OF LINDA MORSE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:22 p.m.

City, State: Durango, CO

Occupation: Energy Consultant

Comment: I would like to make sure we have the right to know what is in our food by having all things labeled as to whether items are GMO or GMO-free.

COMMENT OF STACY MORSE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:39 p.m.

City, State: Nashville, TN

Occupation: Training Coordinator

Comment: I support the full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286). I also believe in fully funding conservation pro-

grams, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.

I support the implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).

We should also maintain the EQIP Organic Initiative. We should not be cutting funding for vital programs such as nutrition, conservation and support for organic and sustainable agriculture. We do need to eliminate wasteful subsidies for corporate agribusiness, but the proposition that we replace them with a new subsidized insurance program that is full of opportunities for fraud and abuse is not an improvement nor real reform. The proposed subsidized insurance program will allow giant commodity farmers and insurance companies to walk away with billions in taxpayer dollars while putting the land, soil and environment at greater risk.

COMMENTS OF VIVIANNE MOSCA-CLARK

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012 6:26 p.m.

City, State: Williams, OR

Occupation: Retired

Comment: What I can see is more farms, farming organic and sustainable food. That will create more jobs. Non GMO foods growing in our fields. GMO's kill the ground and use more pesticides, and herbicides. We need real whole food for real people.

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012 7:23 p.m.

Comment: Since eating good food is essential for healthy humans, I think good food is important. I have worked on organic farms in my life. I never got sick from working on the land. All people need to live with dignity and justice. Starving does not work with this comment.

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:17 p.m.

Comment: Life forces on our planet suffer when poisoned.

When we feed poison to the plants we eat that poison. Poison goes into the body of the plants/animals. I do not understand what is so confusing about this.

It is simple . . . stop poisoning the food and the beings that eat it will thrive.

Money is the issue for why there is so much controversial issues about it all.

Somewhere in all of this garbage is the real issue. Survival, and the quality of survival.

I vote for a healthy survival.

Date Submitted: Sunday, March 18, 2012 7:28 p.m.

Comment: Eating good well grown food is very important to have healthy citizens in our country. Being able to buy local grown foods helps local communities. Clean whole foods is important in human health, as GM foods are proving they are not good for health in people or animals. Animals are having 70% spontaneous abortions. And more women are having the same. This needs to be stopped.

COMMENT OF LINDA MOSCARELLA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:42 p.m.

City, State: El Prado, NM

Occupation: Retired

Comment: The farm bill must be reformed, to focus on healthy food rather than profits for industrial scale farmers. The current bill is wasteful, costly to the taxpayers, and rewards the wrong people.

COMMENT OF RICH MOSER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:45 p.m.

City, State: Santa Barbara, CA

Occupation: Consultant

Comment: Support sustainable practices and small farms. Eliminate subsidies for large growers. Eliminate all funding for genetically-modified items.

COMMENT OF MELANIE MOSHIER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 1:39 a.m.

City, State: Pomona, CA

Occupation: Substitute Teacher

Comment: We cannot allow agribusiness to continue to pollute our food and our land. It is a disgrace that profit is the chief motive of business in America; it should

be service to our fellows. It is your duty to stand up for the health of Americans and our land.

COMMENT OF ROBERT MOSKOWITZ

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:37 p.m.

City, State: Santa Monica, CA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: American food should be the purest in the world. We should have honest and simple labeling laws: if it's in there, label it. We should let "organic" mean no chemicals of any kind. We should stop subsidizing pesticide use and petrochemical-based farming. We should work toward more conservation of scarce resources.

Thanks for thinking of the American people rather than Agribusiness economic interests.

COMMENT OF ANDREW MOSS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:26 p.m.

City, State: Ruby, NY

Occupation: Graphic Designer

Comment: We should encourage and support small family farms, organic farms and small entrepreneur farms. Big agricultural corporations that use the most pesticides and herbicides, chemical fertilizers and genetically modified crops, are in it purely for profit, not for the quality of the product or its impact on our health. I support the following:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

I want to get my meat, dairy and produce from my local farms, not from a corporate farm across the country. I want to support my local farms and have the freshest products possible.

COMMENT OF LAURA MOSSER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 12:43 p.m.

City, State: Charlotte, NC

Occupation: Executive Assistant

Comment: I implore you to protect our seniors' ability to have access to food. Seniors should not have to choose between their necessities. Please do not cut funding for these vital services. Thank you!

COMMENT OF STEPHANIE MOTENKO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:14 p.m.

City, State: Aurora, IL

Occupation: Mother

Comment: Please stop giving help to big ag so that they can produce more and more GMO corn. **We Don't Want GMO Corn!** We want healthy, sustainable, **Real** food! Support small farmers growing real food using sustainable methods.

COMMENT OF JEROME MOTON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:12 p.m.

City, State: El Paso, TX

Occupation: Writer and Aspiring Gardener

Comment: Dear Representatives:

The U.S. agricultural system needs much improvement. So please consider encouraging the flourishing of healthy, organic farming. We are long overdue for a food renaissance, as national health continues to plummet despite the efforts at disease prevention and the promotion of exercise. Your policies in this regard must include healthy food production practices to garner physical and mental vibrancy. Clean

food and soil are key to restoring wellness. Please fund best practices agriculture programs that encourage local, organic food production and wellbeing.

Thank you,

JEROME MOTON.

COMMENT OF SATO MOUGHALIAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:40 p.m.

City, State: New York, NY

Occupation: Flutist

Comment: It is time to stop supporting giant agribusiness and the products that flow from giant agribusiness which are so detrimental to the health of our nation's people. If we are to provide any kind of farm support any more, it should go equally to small farmers who promote biodiversity and produce more healthful food. Genetic engineering has not proven itself to be of value in feeding the hungry, and the products that are produced in this manner require ever increasing loads of toxic chemicals, substances which are contributing to our chronic illnesses. Confined animal farming operations also promote illness both in the animals, and in the increasing number of antibiotic resistant strains which are developing because of these factory farming methods. It is time to stop the handouts to giant businesses and to ease conditions for a greater amount of small, diverse and sustainable farming.

Sincerely,

SATO MOUGHALIAN.

COMMENT OF LINDA MOULDER

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 5:58 p.m.

City, State: Spokane, WA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I hope the farm bill will assure everyone, regardless of income level, has access to healthy, real food. I want the bill to assure protection of our nation's soils and waters and provide encouragement of new small farmers and growers.

COMMENT OF LAURIE MOXLEY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:16 p.m.

City, State: Mountain Grove, MO

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Dairy, Livestock, Specialty Crops

Size: 151-300 acres

Comment: I am a fifth generation American farmer who is disgusted with farming and the food culture in America. We grow and feed our family as much as we can in the most natural way we can. I do not want to eat grow or feed GMO's, I don't want factory food. It is the responsibility of farmers to be stewards of the land and produce food that is good for all that is connected to it. We are not responsible for feeding the world garbage. Help other countries to be able to feed themselves real, healthy food.

COMMENT OF WAYNE MOYER

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 9:29 p.m.

City, State: Norge, VA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: We must support small scale, local producers to create sustainable communities. Big agriculture has dominated previous bills but times are changing and the new bill should shift the emphasis toward sustainability and protecting farm land.

COMMENT OF DAVID MUCKLOW

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:46 p.m.

City, State: Green, OH

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Fruits

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Everybody in this industry knows that the future is organic growing systems, which removes harmful and unnecessary chemicals from our food chain.

COMMENT OF DAWN MUELLER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:39 p.m.

City, State: Clifton, NJ

Occupation: VP in Music Publishing

Comment: Why do I have to eat tomatoes that have no taste? In Europe they don't! Why is my fruit tasteless? In the Caribbean it isn't. The reason is because my government would rather let corporations profit and sell terrible food, then let farmers sell us good, health, vitamin filled food. **Stop This Insanity And Get On The Right Track Already!**

COMMENT OF GEORGE B. MUELLER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 12, 2012, 12:13 p.m.

City, State: Clifton Springs, NY

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Dairy

Size: 1,000+ acres

Comment: Dear House Ag Committee,

We Never—Never—Never—Should Adopt The Idea Of A Government Run Quota (Supply Management) System In Our Vibrant And Expanding Dairy Industry. (115 Billion Pounds In 1965, 200 Billion Pounds Per Year Today!) Canada With Its Quotas Is Dead In The Water. We In The USA Have Great Potential If We Can Keep Quotas Out Of Our Industry.

I, and my family have been milking cows for 52 years. The dairy industry has been very good to the Mueller Family. Please don't let the age old dream of controlling supply to raise prices stagnate our industry.

Yes, I know they say the quota will be voluntary. (Not so voluntary if your banker insists you adopt a quota to gain margin insurance.)

But let us not allow the age old and foolish concept of cutting production to raise prices gain a foothold in dairy.

How would we like it if the government told the auto industry to cut back on production so as to raise the price of the cars we buy?

Exports of dairy products is booming. Let us serve that growing market. Not cut back!

Yogurt and Greek yogurt sales are booming. Let us serve that growing market. Not cut back!

Argentina, Brazil, and Eastern Europe will serve the world markets if we are slow and cut back. We have the infrastructure and head start and we know the dairy industry. **Please Don't Saddle My Industry With The Beginning Of A Foolish Quota System!**

Sincerely,

GEORGE B. MUELLER,
Willow Bend Farm, Clifton Springs, NY.

COMMENT OF MARK MUELLER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:52 p.m.

City, State: Boone, NC

Occupation: Beekeeper

Comment: H.R. 3236 and H.R. 3286 should become the law of the land. Aligning SNAP benefits and farmers markets, where funds benefit the health of all, is far preferable to more Big Business/Bad Food subsidies. Please! Americans want good food and good health for all, but we don't want private corporations to control our water, air, soil, and foods!

COMMENT OF ERNEST J.P. MUHLY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:22 p.m.

City, State: Walkersville, MD

Occupation: Consulting Ecologist and Educator

Comment: Slashing \$33 billion from the food stamp program to create a \$33 billion new entitlement program that guarantees the income of profitable farm businesses, on top of \$90 billion in subsidies for crop and revenue insurance policies is unacceptable.

I am also asking you to support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

COMMENT OF HARUKO MUKASA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:10 p.m.

City, State: Oakland, CA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Please protect organic farmers so that we consumers can get healthy food at affordable price anywhere. It is especially important that our children get safe, nutritious food to grow into strong, healthy members of our society. Don't let the monstrous agribusiness destroy our country. Help small family farmers instead.

COMMENT OF JAMES MULCARE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:46 p.m.

City, State: Clarkston, WA

Occupation: Gaming Dealer

Comment: It's time for real reform. We need programs that consider the long term health of the land and the consumer. Large agri-corporations appear to have taken over all levels of farming. They need to be reigned back in.

COMMENT OF JUNE MULLER

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 6:43 p.m.

City, State: New York, NY

Occupation: Consultant

Comment: "Where there is no vision the people perish." Current policies are detrimental to the planet's long-term ability to produce food. We need a fair and healthy farm bill.

COMMENT OF KRIS MULLER

Date Submitted: Friday, April 27, 2012, 5:25 p.m.

City, State: Berkeley, CA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: While we do produce a portion of our own food, we also support local farmers at the farmers markets and through the grocery stores that buy from local farmers. We believe future food security depends on our now nurturing soil and water conservation, sound animal husbandry that minimizes CO₂ and water pollution, and teaches farmers and ranchers how to work with natural cycles without poisons that undermine future productivity. Please protect programs that give fair attention to small family farms and small organic farms.

COMMENT OF RENEE MULLIGAN

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 6:32 p.m.

City, State: Bryson City, NC

Occupation: Health Educator

Comment: A \$36 million cut to SNAP is not the way to go. The Committee should focus on writing a farm bill that creates economic opportunity and improves access to healthy, affordable food for all Americans.

1. Community Food Projects Program—\$10 million per year to help communities build food self-reliance.
2. Farmers Market and Local Food Promotion Program—\$20 million per year to develop farmers market capacity and create food hubs to connect farmers with schools, hospitals, grocery stores and other markets.
3. Hunger-Free Community Incentive Grants—An average of \$20 million per year for a new SNAP local fruit and vegetable incentive grant program at farmers markets and other healthy food retailers.

COMMENT OF CATHLEEN MULLINS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:25 p.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Retired

Comment: We cannot afford to keep making the same mistakes year after year. Please, please, please, listen to us now, take responsible action now. We have the right to healthy food, healthy farms and healthy people. Help us achieve that. Do not cut funding to programs such as nutrition, conservation and support for organic and sustainable agriculture.

COMMENT OF M.J. MULLINS

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 4:32 p.m.

City, State: Deerfield Beach, FL

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Please do not allow cuts to SNAP, TEFAP or CSFP. I know any further cuts will hurt many of my elderly friends. Let's not desert people who are on limited incomes! Old people should not have to eat dog or cat food because they don't have sufficient money for food, medical care and shelter.

COMMENT OF BEATRIZ MUNIZ

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:40 p.m.

City, State: Sacramento, CA

Occupation: Membership Services Coordinator

Comment: Hello House Committee Members, I am writing to urge you to support the farm bill. Fairness is the bottom line and I know in your hearts you want fairness! Please do the right thing!

Thank you,

BEATRIZ MUNIZ.

COMMENT OF HIDEYUKI MURAKAMI

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:31 p.m.

City, State: San Diego, CA

Occupation: EMT

Comment: Please end subsidies to agribusinesses. These subsidies lead to over-production that result in surplus agriculture going to unhealthy products such as corn syrup. Alternatively, these foods may flood overseas markets, thus destroying rural communities globally.

COMMENT OF TERRI MURDOCH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:08 p.m.

City, State: Little Rock, AR

Occupation: Homemaker

Comment: Dear House Committee on Agriculture,

Please consider the following abbreviated comments for long term sustainable healthy land, animals and people.

Move government subsidizing from:

- large monoculture farms
- production of grains and starches (wheat, corn, soybeans)

To:

- small, polyculture, heirloom, and eco-sustainable (non-pesticide and artificial fertilizer usage) farms; where animals are pastured, and various nutrient dense vegetables and fruits are grown.

Thank you,

TERRI MURDOCH.

COMMENT OF SARA MURDOCK

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:02 p.m.

City, State: Seattle, WA

Occupation: Graduate Student, Artist, and Community Volunteer

Comment: We have the opportunity to positively impact the economy, living wages for more farmers, public health, societal perceptions about healthy food, and the environment. Let's not squander our future in favor of short-term political plays.

COMMENT OF RIAN MURNEN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 2:04 a.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Designer

Comment: Honorable Representatives,

I'm writing to express my deep concern with the current state of Federal law as it pertains to agriculture. A culture of inappropriate dependence on big dollar campaign donors has distorted past Representatives actions in regard to the farm bill—but here and now, you have the opportunity to make the decision to realign legislation with the will of The People rather than The Funders. You may become the wise leaders who set our nation on a path to a healthier food system.

During my brief lifetime Congress has allowed, and at times actively engaged, in eroding the farm bill and related legislation causing deep harm to our food systems, environment, farming families and their communities. In hopes of redressing this degradation, I petition you to fully endorse the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).

Please reorient the priorities of Congress to focus on the health of our citizens, small family farms, farming communities and environment. Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.

Here in my home town of Portland, Oregon, I am an “eater” living in an urban environment who depends on small family farmers. I volunteered with my community in 2011 to establish a neighborhood farmers market. Through this engagement with my neighbors and farmers, I've had opportunity to gain a direct connection to the food on my plate and support the professionals who make that food possible.

In doing so I've also met a number of peers who are working to enter the field of small-scale farming. Beyond providing them my encouragement and support, I call on you to implement all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236) to foster this professional field in a time when jobs are sorely needed and family farms are struggling to train up the next generation.

If you doubt the existence of these “beginners” I encourage you to contact Rep. Blumenauer. On occasion he has joined my neighbors, area farmers and my family at our monthly “InFARmation” networking event were farmers young and old join with eaters in dialog to learn more about food and farm issues. I'm confident he would be happy to share his personal experience meeting young beginning farmers who need our nation's support in engaging in this challenging field.

My own interest in farming began with my grandfather, who is now past. He was a first generation American, who farmed and raised livestock. He taught me to cultivate organically, skills I use to this day in my small urban garden. The values he instilled in me, a respect for the soil, seed and animals has made me confident that maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative a responsible act that the House should pursue with pride.

There are a number of ways that legislation could reverse the destructive trend of the last several decades, but these specific immediate actions are steps the Congress should take today.

Thank you for your service on the House Agriculture Committee and for acknowledging that individual citizens, The People, should have the strongest voice in guiding your legislative work.

COMMENT OF SANDY MURPHREE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:05 p.m.

City, State: Elgin, TX

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I don't grow but we like to eat. I work at the local Community Cupboard (food pantry) which sees new people line up every Tuesday. Lots of job loss here, **Lots**. If you're not a techie or bartender, there's not much here and people need food so they can pay for rent and utilities, and shoes, and medical. What is the matter with you people? Get out and talk to the people. Mr. McCaul, you have been the biggest disappointment from the beginning, with your nod to tax cuts for friends, ignoring children and seniors. Locked by the hip to GWB, and his wars, tax cuts and lies.

COMMENT OF BRIAN MURPHY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:20 p.m.

City, State: Paia, HI

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Poultry/poultry products

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: I am a small chicken & vegetable farmer here in Maui Hawaii, we hear all this Green Future, Green farming, Sustainable Farming on & on. But the fact is **Hemp** could be used for all types of Farm crops, Fuel Food fiber! We all know it has nothing to do with Marijuana and has everything to do with protecting the Oil, Big Ag, Big banks controlling the world food & Fuel supply! Be *Pono* and lets change the rule on Hemp & replace Sugar cane with hemp, Fuel Food Fiber & medicine!

As I write this I have to ask myself will my voice be heard? Probably not!

The America of Equal Justice is gone!

The Will of The people is Gone!

It's just a matter of time before the Corporation declare worldwide disaster & Corporation Marshal Law **Rules!**

Sad so sad. I loved what America stood for.

COMMENT OF ERICA MURPHY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:30 a.m.

City, State: New Orleans, LA

Occupation: Horticulturist

Comment: Please stop harming us with unsafe poor quality food. Don't you want everyone to be healthy, more productive citizens. Our basic everyday need is food and water let's make these two very simple things we can all be proud of.

Sincerely,

ERICA MURPHY.

COMMENT OF JOY MURPHY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:13 p.m.

City, State: Santa Rosa, CA

Occupation: Homemaker—Retired AT&T Employee

Comment: As you prepare the next farm bill, please keep in mind the desires of the American people. We want wholesome organically grown food from local vendors. We cringe at what is currently happening to the small family farmers. Please help us fight against big corporations such as Monsanto who's GMO foods are threatening our lives the lives of future generations. Do not let the big money in Washington politics sway your decision to protect the American people.

COMMENT OF MAUREEN MURPHY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:07 p.m.

City, State: Boulder, CO

Occupation: Retired Office Manager from Univ. of Colorado

Comment: Here's what I support: No GMOs, support for farmers over corporations and learning to farm without pesticides and learning to replenish the soil *versus* just take from it.

Also:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

COMMENT OF JUAN MURRAY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:03 p.m.

City, State: Hartford, CT

Comment: SNAP is important cause it helps many Americans, especially due to no one being able to get jobs. SNAP helps a lot of families eat, and eating is real important.

COMMENT OF VASU MURTI

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:29 p.m.

City, State: Oakland, CA

Occupation: Social Services

Comment: Let's transition to a plant-based economy. Veganism is direct action! "A (meat-centered) diet that can lead to heart attacks, cancer, and numerous other diseases cannot be a natural diet," writes Keith Akers in *A Vegetarian Sourcebook* (1983). "A (meat-centered) diet that pillages our resources of land, water, forests, and energy cannot be a natural diet. A (meat-centered) diet that causes the unnecessary suffering and death of billions of animals each year cannot be a natural diet."

I understand there are conservative Christians who fear vegetarianism . . . which is kind of like being afraid of nonsmoking, nondrinking, or recycling. Ronald J. Sider of Evangelicals for Social Action, in his 1977 book, *Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger*, pointed out that 220 million Americans were eating enough food (largely because of the high consumption of grain fed to livestock) to feed over one billion people in the poorer countries.

A pamphlet put out by Compassion Over Killing says raising animals for food is one of the leading causes of both pollution and resource depletion today. According to a recent United Nations report, *Livestock's Long Shadow*, raising chickens, turkeys, pigs, and other animals for food causes more greenhouse gas emissions than all the cars, trucks and other forms of transportation combined.

Researchers from the University of Chicago similarly concluded that a vegetarian diet is the most energy efficient, and the average American does more to reduce global warming emissions by not eating animal products than by switching to a hybrid car.

"Livestock are one of the most significant contributors to today's most serious environmental problems. Urgent action is required to remedy the situation."—Union Nations' Food and Agriculture Association

Nearly 75% of the grain grown and 50% of the water consumed in the U.S. are used by the meat industry. (Audubon Society)

Over 260 million acres of U.S. forest have been cleared to grow grain for livestock. (Greenpeace)

It takes nearly 1 gallon of fossil fuel and 5,200 gallons of water to produce just 1 pound of conventionally fed beef. (Mother Jones)

Farmed animals produce an estimated 1.4 billion tons of fecal waste each year in the U.S. Much of this untreated waste pollutes the land and water.

The following points and facts are excerpted from *Please Don't Eat the Animals* (2007) by the mother-daughter writing team of Jennifer Horsman and Jaime Flowers:

"A reduction in beef and other meat consumption is the most potent single act you can take to halt the destruction of our environment and preserve our natural resources. Our choices do matter: What's healthiest for each of us personally is also healthiest for the life support system of our precious, but wounded planet."—John Robbins, author, *Diet for a New America*, and President, EarthSave Foundation

One study puts animal waste in the United States to between 2.4 trillion to 3.9 trillion pounds per year. The United states produces 15,000 pounds of manure per person. This is 130 times the amount of waste produced by the entire human population of the United States.

A 1,000 cow dairy can produce approximately 120,000 pounds of waste per day. This is the functional equivalent of the amount of sanitary waste produced by a city of 20,000 people.

A 20,000 chicken factory produces about 2.4 million pounds of manure a year. Poultry factories are one of the fastest growing industries throughout Asia.

One pig excretes nearly 3 gallons of waste per day, or 2.5 times the average human's daily total. One hog farm with 50,000 pigs in France produces more waste than the entire city of Los Angeles, and some pig farms are much larger.

Factory farm pollution is the primary source of damage to coastal waters in North and South America, Europe, and Asia. Scientists report that over sixty percent of the coastal waters in the United States are moderately to severely degraded from

factory farm nutrient pollution. This pollution creates oxygen-depleted dead zones, which are huge areas of ocean devoid of aquatic life.

Meat production causes deforestation, which then contributes to global warming. Trees convert carbon dioxide into oxygen, and the destruction of forests around the globe to make room for grazing cattle furthers the greenhouse effect.

The Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations reports that the annual rate of tropical deforestation has increased from 9 million hectares in 1980 to 16.8 million hectares in 1990, and unfortunately, this destruction has accelerated since then. By 1994, a staggering 200 million hectares of rainforest had been destroyed in South America just for cattle.

“The impact of countless hooves and mouths over the years has done more to alter the type of vegetation and land forms of the West than all the water projects, strip mines, power plants, freeways, and sub-division developments combined.”—Philip Fradkin, in *Audubon*, National Audubon Society, New York

Agricultural meat production generates air pollution. As manure decomposes, it releases over 400 volatile organic compounds, many of which are extremely harmful to human health. Nitrogen, a major by-product of animal wastes, changes to ammonia as it escapes into the air, and this is a major source of acid rain. Worldwide, livestock produce over thirty million tons of ammonia. Hydrogen sulfide, another chemical released from animal waste, can cause irreversible neurological damage, even at low levels.

The World Conservation Union lists over 1,000 different fish species that are threatened or endangered. According to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) estimate, over 60 percent of the world’s fish species are either fully exploited or depleted. Commercial fish populations of cod, hake, haddock, and flounder have fallen by as much as 95 percent in the north Atlantic.

The United States and Europe lose several billion tons of topsoil each year from cropland and grazing land, and 84 percent of this erosion is caused by livestock agriculture. While this soil is theoretically a renewable resource, we are losing soil at a much faster rate than we are able to replace it. It takes 100 to 500 years to produce 1 inch of topsoil, but due to livestock grazing and feeding, farming areas can lose up to 6 inches of topsoil a year.

Livestock production affects a startling 70 to 85 percent of the land area of the United States, United Kingdom, and the European Union. That includes the public and private rangeland used for grazing, as well as the land used to produce the crops that feed the animals.

By comparison, urbanization only affects three percent of the United States land area, slightly larger for the European Union and the United Kingdom. Meat production consumes the world’s land resources.

Half of all fresh water worldwide is used for thirsty livestock. Producing 8 ounces of beef requires an unimaginable 25,000 liters of water, or the water necessary for 1 pound of steak equals the water consumption of the average household for a year.

The United States government spends \$10 million each year to kill an estimated 100,000 wild animals, including coyotes, foxes, bobcats, badgers, bears, and mountain lions just to placate ranchers who don’t want these animals killing their livestock. The cost far outweighs the damage to livestock that these predators cause.

The Worldwatch Institute estimates 1 pound of steak from a steer raised in a feedlot costs: 5 pounds of grain, a whopping 2,500 gallons of water, the energy equivalent of a gallon of gasoline, and about 34 pounds of topsoil.

Thirty-three percent of our nation’s raw materials and fossil fuels go into livestock destined for slaughter. In a vegan economy, only two percent of our resources will go to the production of food.

“It seems disingenuous for the intellectual elite of the first world to dwell on the subject of too many babies being born in the second- and third-world nations while virtually ignoring the overpopulation of cattle and the realities of a food chain that robs the poor of sustenance to feed the rich a steady diet of grain-fed meat.”—Jeremy Rifkin, pro-life **And** pro-animal author, *Beyond Beef: The Rise and Fall of the Cattle Culture*, and president of the Greenhouse Crisis Foundation

“Carl Pope could probably affect the world more by being a vegetarian than through his job as president of the Sierra Club,”—quipped Jennifer Horsman in 2007.

According to the editors of World Watch, July/August 2004:

“The human appetite for animal flesh is a driving force behind virtually every major category of environmental damage now threatening the human future—deforestation, topsoil erosion, fresh water scarcity, air and water pollution, cli-

mate change, biodiversity loss, social injustice, the destabilization of communities and the spread of disease.”

Brother David Steindl-Rast, a Benedictine monk, similarly says in the February 1995 issue of *Harmony: Voices for a Just Future* (a peace and justice periodical on the religious left):

“. . . the survival of our planet depends on our sense of belonging—to all other humans, to dolphins caught in dragnets to pigs and chickens and calves raised in animal concentration camps, to redwoods and rainforests, to kelp beds in our oceans, and to the ozone layer.”

The number of animals killed for food in the United States is nearly 75 times larger than the number of animals killed in laboratories, 30 times larger than the number killed by hunters and trappers, and 500 times larger than the number of animals killed in animal pounds.

People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) is challenging those who think they can still be “meat-eating environmentalists” to go vegan, if they really care about the planet.

peta2 is now the largest youth movement of any social change organization in the world.

peta2 has 267,000 friends on MySpace and 91,000 Facebook fans.

A few years ago, PETA was the top-ranked charity when a poll asked teenagers what nonprofit group they would most want to work for. PETA won by more than a two to one margin over the second place finisher, The American Red Cross, with more votes than the Red Cross and Habitat for Humanity combined.

“If anyone wants to save the planet,” says Paul McCartney in an interview with PETA’s *Animal Times* magazine from 2001, “all they have to do is stop eating meat. That’s the single most important thing you could do. It’s staggering when you think about it.”

“Vegetarianism takes care of so many things in one shot: ecology, famine, cruelty. Let’s do it! Linda was right. Going veggie is the single best idea for the new century.”

Les Brown of the Overseas Development Council calculates that if Americans reduced their meat consumption by only ten percent per year, it would free at least twelve million tons of grain for human consumption—or enough to feed sixty million people.

COMMENT OF CHRIS MUSELLA

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 7:56 a.m.

City, State: Brooklyn, NY

Occupation: Restaurant Manager

Comment: The importance of sustainable agriculture to our present and future food supply cannot be overstated. The relationship between our health and the food we eat is understood and indisputable. Congress must act on the behalf of the American people and maintain funding in the fields of sustainable farming, nutrition education and they must act to **End** the monopoly held by companies that do not support sustainable and organic farming.

COMMENT OF NATASHA MUSIL

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 08, 2012, 5:52 p.m.

City, State: Seattle, WA

Occupation: Housekeeper/Service

Comment:

- Reserve the term “natural” for non-GMO foods.
- Require labeling for all GMO foods.
- Require labeling for all animal products that have used growth hormones and/or antibiotics during the animals lifespan.
- Stricter guidelines for “humane” treatment of animals and regulation of the use of the word “humane” in packaging.
- Allow small family farms and back yard gardens/farms to operate without regulations, period. Gardening and farming are not only for profit but for family and community and therefore should be protected from the same laws that govern large farms and corporate farms.
- The protection of small family farms and organic farms from bullying and intimidation of corporate patent owners in the case of accidental cross contamination of GMO plants.

- Government support for farms being bullied, sued or otherwise intimidated by corporations for accidental cross contamination of patented GMO seeds/plants.
- Subsidies for small family farms and organic farms for using methane conversion for fuel.
- Subsidies or tax breaks for small family farms or organic farms and co-ops who participate in teaching sustainable agriculture to the communities they serve.
- Subsidies or tax breaks for small farms or organic farms experimenting with alternative methods of perma/aquaculture including vertical farming.
- Subsidies or tax breaks for small family farms or organic farms whose produce/products are sold and consumed within 50 miles of the farm (dis-including selling to a processor who then sells the product nationally)
- Subsidies or tax breaks for alternative agriculture programs in urban area including community pea-patches, urban gardens, rooftop gardens, vertical farming and more.
- Ending the poor diets of farm animals, including cattle, that requires the animals natural biology be altered. (*i.e.*, having holes to a cows stomach because their bodies are processing too much grain)
- Criminalizing the mutilation of chickens for confined egg operations.

COMMENT OF ALAN MUSSEN

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 6:42 p.m.

City, State: Franklin Square, NY

Occupation: Stagehand

Comment: Oil-based corporate agriculture does not produce food that is as healthy as that produced by small farmers. The health of the nation's people depends on the economic health of small farmers.

COMMENT OF MARY MUTCH

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 03, 2012, 11:21 a.m.

City, State: La Crosse, WI

Occupation: Retired Office Worker

Comment: The protections and policies contained in the farm bill are essential to continuing and maintaining the health and nourishment of **All** of the people in his country. That's a pretty hefty responsibility, so I urge you to give this issue careful and conscientious consideration. Thank You.

COMMENT OF GEORGIA MYER

Date Submitted: Monday, April 02, 2012, 8:58 p.m.

City, State: East Calais, VT

Occupation: Magazine Circulation Consultant

Comment: It is essential that the farm bill be renewed so that the hungry in Vermont and elsewhere can rely on USDA to feed their families and themselves. Such an essential necessity shouldn't be held hostage.

COMMENT OF CONNIE MYERS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:23 p.m.

City, State: Saint Charles, IL

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Please close Farm Service Agency state offices. Do Regional offices to administer programs. This could save at least \$1 million per state when you count all the administration salaries, rent, office supplies, office machines *etc.* There would be a possible savings of \$50,000,000 per year. Keep the District Directors and county offices for the hands-on for farmers.

A good Administration example is NCUA.

COMMENT OF DAVID MYERS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:46 p.m.

City, State: Framingham, MA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: If you insist on allowing people/corporations to put antibiotics, toxic chemicals, and/or GMOs in our food you should at least regulate that they **Must** mark them as such!

COMMENT OF KERMIT MYERS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:08 p.m.

City, State: Greensboro, NC

Occupation: Landscaper

Comment: End subsidies for corn and soy, give them to fruit and vegetable producers. Stop favoring GM crops and companies that produce them. Our nation's food security is at risk and our population is getting fatter and weaker.

COMMENT OF RENE MYERS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:47 a.m.

City, State: Prescott, AZ

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Greenhouse/nursery

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Sir, I am a small scale farmer, producer, and Sustainable Food Systems Consultant and Analyst. Our current national food system has been hijacked by BIG Ag and BIG Pharma, particularly with the **Corporation Monsanto**. This organization has made it **Illegal** for Professional, ethical Scientists to conduct studies on the side effects and harm that studies have shown to influence many of our current immunity health problems today. In addition, the current WAR on **Small Scale Farming**, with the FDA arresting people for having a business providing raw milk, cheeses, and heritage animal meats is against **Constitutional Rights** for a **Right To A Happy, and Productive Life**. I cannot **Urge** you **Enough** to please remember why you took your oath and what it means to **Serve** the **People**. We deserve clean, healthy, nutritious food that each individual has chosen. This means **Mandatory Labeling For Genetically Modified Organisms**. This is more dangerous than terrorism across the world, this is **Food Terrorism**, taking over our entire food system, but especially the **Natural Ecosystem** through **Bio-Pollution**. Once it's in our natural ecosystem there is **No Way To Retrieve It**.

Please support our farm bill and our right to public service to help feed the hungry, mothers and children.

Thank you very much for your valuable time and thoughtful consideration.

RENE MYERS.

COMMENT OF SHERI MYERS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:38 p.m.

City, State: McKinney, TX

Occupation: Homemaker

Comment: We support the farm bill 100% and everything it stands for. I am hoping that you will be our voice to congress to let them know this. Corporate agribusiness will continue their in their efforts to ensure that they continue to grow, making themselves wealthier at our expense and our grandchildren's. We may not experience the cumulative effects of corporate agribusiness, but if this farm bill is not passed, our children and theirs, will suffer for us. I know you will do the right thing and I thank you in advance.

COMMENT OF RENEE MYSLIWIEC

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:49 p.m.

City, State: St. George, UT

Occupation: Massage Therapist

Comment: As a massage therapist working in the health and wellness field, I recognize the connection between good health and diet. We need better nutrition in our lives and this will come primarily by having good healthy organic foods available to us. I feel that government should give farmers the freedom to farm the way they want to. We need to get rid of GMOs and allow our farmers to produce **Real** food again. The health and wellbeing of our nation depend on it.

COMMENT OF JANE NACHAZEL-RUCK

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:28 p.m.

City, State: Los Angeles, CA

Occupation: Administrative Assistant

Comment: The U.S. currently has both a deficit crisis and an obesity crisis. The latter is estimated to generate more health-related costs than smoking—further adding to the deficit. Current farm policies reward agribusiness which does not need funding and generates many dubious products laden with pesticides and fertilizers that have been shown to harm health. Other “farmers” receive funds who do not even farm. We desperately need a new farm bill that supports organic and small farmers while maintaining healthful land practices for our future and supporting good food for “food deserts.” Don’t waste our taxes! Target them where they will support healthful food and the land to grow/raise it rather than line corporate pockets. We know it’s hard to stand up against lobbyists. But you took an oath to work on behalf of the people. Those people include your own families and friends. Help them and us live healthy lives. You can do it!

COMMENT OF ULRIKE NAGEL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:02 p.m.

City, State: Lee, MA

Occupation: Fitness Trainer

Comment: It makes no sense that big agro business is being subsidized, while farms who work on a sustainable basis are not. We do need food that is affordable, but that food should also be healthy for people, farmers and the planet. Food should never really be a business, the results of current farm bills are visible in the overload on our population’s bodies (obesity and diabetes can be traced to corn subsidies), the healthcare system and the environment. We have a chance to rethink the system and I urge you to do so independently of current vested interests, in a truly democratic spirit.

Sincerely,

U. NAGEL.

COMMENT OF ALEXANDRA NAGY

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 11:52 a.m.

City, State: Irvine, CA

Occupation: Marketing Assistant

Comment: Our current food system is unsustainable. We are producing food in a system that has internal contradictions and will not continue to exist if we do not begin to prioritize the future and health of our soils, water, crops, producers, communities, consumers and the Earth.

I have talked with local farmers at OC Produce, Tanaka Farms and others, and they all agree that a sustainable food system is better for the health of our environment and communities. However, they also agree that it is difficult to enter this market because of competition worsened by the effects of the farm bill. The farm bill’s priorities are not sustainable agriculture and farming. Instead they favor large subsidies to crops such as corn, soybeans and cotton. It is not surprising that these crops are having the largest negative impact on our soils, water and overall health. The subsidies for these staples have created a market situation that ignores environmental risks. I am asking that we rethink the farm bill to support organic agriculture and food systems.

To be clear, I support the following:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Congress must:

- Implement a \$25 billion plan to transition to organic food and farming production, to make sure that 75 percent of U.S. farms are U.S.D.A. organic certified by 2025.
- Feed organic food to all children enrolled in public school lunch programs by the year 2020.

- Pass a Beginning Farmer and Rancher Bill to place a million new farmers on the land by 2020.
- Link conservation compliance with government-subsidized insurance programs and create a cutoff so each farm receives government funds for land only up to 1,000 acres.

COMMENT OF ARISTIDES NAKOS

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 02, 2012, 10:50 a.m.

City, State: Providence, RI

Occupation: University Student

Comment: Greeting dear Senator Cicilline,

I am writing to provide my sentiments on the recently passed farm bill. First, of I applaud the revisions made that ultimately limit the amount of direct payments mega farms can receive. Nonetheless, there is an ensuing need for support of smaller, but promising markets, such as Farmers' Markets and the people behind them. Farmers' Markets are on the rise nationwide and they benefit small farmers that cannot compete with multinationals, while they embrace President Obama's *Know your Farmer, Know your Food* initiative. I've volunteered in a Farmers Market and have witnessed the excitement and demand present. With the government's aid of these markets farmers can become autonomous as well as the respective states. What is more, this will promote the wholesome practices that small farms with small gross margins are trying to make mainstream.

Thank you for your time,

ARISTIDES.

COMMENT OF KATHY NANCE

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 13, 2012, 5:29 p.m.

City, State: Rutherfordton, NC

Occupation: Retired Social Work Administrator

Comment: The farm bill must protect our environment from chemicals, unwanted genetic alterations, and other human induced factors that threaten the natural cycle of things (like killing bees). It must also protect and promote the small local farmer and not subsidize huge corporate farms that ship their product everywhere.

COMMENT OF RAVEN NARAMORE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:48 a.m.

City, State: Lawrence, KS

Occupation: Caterer and Educator

Comment: I heard a comment from a republican congressman the other day that said we should not judge success in this country by the number of people receiving food benefits, but by how many people graduate out of support programs. Closing the school does not increase graduation rates, it simply floods our communities with people with real human needs that are not being met by our social welfare programs, taxing the nonprofit communities resources. I would much rather see our country provide people with healthy food, than to see our tax dollars used to destroy homes, communities and disrupt the lives of millions of people through war. Is that how we should be judged, by how much money we put into the military, or by how much we take care of our own people?

COMMENT OF LISA NARDO

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 8:49 a.m.

City, State: Delray Beach, FL

Occupation: Manager

Comment: Subsidies need to be ended. The impact on our nation's health is huge when our food supply is driven by what the govt. chooses to subsidize for our farmers.

COMMENT OF DIANE NARDONE-McDONOUGH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:58 a.m.

City, State: Kittery, ME

Occupation: Privacy Association

Comment: The time has come for us to be smarter as a nation in the way that we feed ourselves. We're completely off track from where we should be. Our "agri-

businesses” that are supposed to be producing foods to feed our country need to be re-focused on **Health** and not on profits & subsidies. Family farms must be permitted to flourish with an emphasis on **Local** production. This is the only way I can see that we can become a healthier nation and break away from the obesity (corn syrup loaded foods) now commercially produced for consumption.

COMMENT OF CHARLENE NASH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:57 p.m.

City, State: Chattanooga, TN

Occupation: Horticulturist

Comment: People in congress are not educated in food and agriculture and often depend on lobbyists to inform and make policy it would seem. People do have a right to clean food grown by farmers they know—any congressman who can study the science of GMO crops and still allow it has neither the depth nor intelligence to be in congress. Why money talks and good sense is thrown out these days should concern every congressman who cares about air, water, food that is not harmful. First do no harm—Monsanto, Dow, Syngenta can’t say that—start rewarding good stewardship and not profit from dangerous practices.

COMMENT OF JANET NASH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:54 p.m.

City, State: Springfield, OR

Occupation: Building Service Contractor

Comment: We need a fair and healthy farm bill, and we need to support the smaller farmers who grow sustainably and organically to protect our human health and the environment, which large conventional agriculturalist **Do Not Do**.

I support the local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286). Any new insurance subsidies should be tied directly to compliance with conservation programs like the Conservation Stewardship Program. I also support the implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236). It is also imperative that we maintain the EQIP Organic Initiative.

It is obvious that corporate agribusiness has a stranglehold on our regulatory system and our political leaders. It is shameful that the House Ag Committee is considering cutting out \$4 million from organic research funding and cutting funding to support beginning farmers. Going back to smaller farms is the wave of the future and one of the ways we will protect our food systems. These smaller farmers need much more support and that’s where I want my taxes to go. **Not** to large subsidies for large agribusinesses.

The committee should also make sure that it does not create a new subsidized insurance program that is packed with opportunities for fraud and abuse by large agribusiness.

I resent so much that our leaders allow large agribusiness to walk away with billions in taxpayer dollars while putting the land, soil and environment at greater risk. Our leaders are out of touch with the rest of the country and with what is required for a sustainable future in agriculture. We need “real” reform, not something that perpetuates the conventional systems that are not sustainable and which are harmful to the environment.

Our leaders need to do their job, and that is to serve the American public, and do what’s best for us—not what the large corporate agribusinesses and their lobbyists pay you to do!

COMMENT OF ROBIN NASON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:39 p.m.

City, State: Hartford, CT

Comment: I’ve been homeless time after time and on the weekends there are no places to eat. My food stamps keep me from going hungry. And when I have a chance to be inside I can cook for me. I look for work every day and can’t find work. People and companies are just not looking for a person in my age group. Thanks to SNAP, I can make it through the month and know that I’m not going to go hungry. And are there are soup kitchens and the people that help to look out for us. The American people.

COMMENT OF GRETCHEN BROOKS NASSAR

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 2:45 p.m.

City, State: Fort Collins, CO
Occupation: Health & Nutrition Coach
Comment: Dear Congressmen,

As someone who talks with clients regularly about health in terms of diet and lifestyle as well as someone who consistently reads about and studies sustainable food issues, as well as someone who teaches about these issues, I know just how important the farm bill is to our communities.

The current farm bill is doing the country and world a huge disservice by subsidizing the crops and farmers who create unhealthy food and engage in farming practices that are unhealthy, unsustainable, and abusive to land and animals. What we need now is a farm bill that supports small, family, local farms, and preferably ones that are organic or biodynamic. We need farmers that do not use GMO seeds or pesticides, and we need our animal foods to be produced on small, real farms, with attention to animal health, welfare, and care for animals and the land. The farming approach needs to be in line with the land, not against it.

Today's huge Industrialized farms are out-of-touch with the land and are hurting the land, workers, nearby residents, are abusive to animals, and ultimately are creating foods that are harming Americans and people abroad.

I hope you will take my comments seriously, and carefully consider how Congress can improve the farm bill by making it support sustainable, humane, healthy practices that do not support using harmful chemicals and harmful practices.

Thank you for this consideration!

Sincerely,

GRETCHEN BROOKS NASSAR.

COMMENT OF CHRISTY NATHER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:47 p.m.

City, State: Colorado Springs, CO

Comment: Please do not stop supporting organic farming or new farmers. Our family only buys organic because we don't want to poison ourselves with all the pesticides and GMOs found in non organic. This needs to be our future.

COMMENT OF CAMILLE NAVA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:55 p.m.

City, State: Santa Cruz, CA

Occupation: Student

Comment: Dear Congressman Farr,

The farm bill is one of the few pieces of our national legislation that touches so many people's lives so personally, in many places in the world. Respectfully, you understand the competing interests represented in the bill, and also you recognize perceived limits of change in any one bill. But I ask you to remember that unless our laws transcend the current limited adaptability to meaningful change, change done at the right time, it will be to our detriment. We can take this farm bill opportunity to be better leaders for our own country: foster diverse types of agriculture and dismantle the choke in our legal system expressed in our patents, laws toward chemical applications on soil. We can do much more—I think you know this. What the farm bill should expressly support right now are the thousands of government programs (state, Federal, local) and the non-government groups work on the public health epidemic of type 2 diabetes and obesity. Our farm bill can achieve many aims at one time, for the people. For the land, the water, the future generations, the biodiversity, the air. We can shift the foolish arguments away from questions of whether organic can feed the world: respectfully, we know that there are ample calories and nutrients to feed the world and still malnourishment and starvation persist. As you know, we have food policies which plan for and include enormous waste. And all this is the case before we even consider our growing trend of using arable land for biofuel production. When working on this farm bill, I hope you use the quiver for the people. We can take poisons, toxins, and an enormous amount of fossil fuels out of our farming systems. As you know, we have nothing to lose in trying. To not attempt to legally support* ways of farming that create less ecosystem and public health havoc is highly irresponsible. (*Remove current laws that serve nothing but corporate profit regarding gene patenting and suffocating Trade Agreements. As you know, these are a distortion of our democracy and should be outlawed.) It is not befitting of our nation.

Sincerely,

CAMILLE NAVA.

COMMENT OF KELSEY NAYLOR

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:31 a.m.

City, State: Ocala, FL

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Poultry/poultry products, Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Our country is at a crossroads economically and socially. In order to create a healthier, more productive nation, we must look to the backbone of civilization; agriculture. Not just any agriculture will do however. We must consider the harmful effects of subsidy-supported, industrial monoculture. If we want to ensure the future of Americans, we must look to more sustainable options. Small farmers across the country are making great sacrifices to do the right thing. They follow methods that increase soil fertility for future generations, provide greater animal welfare and maintain the crop diversity necessary to ensure food security. Most importantly, they provide nourishment for their community. These brave Americans must be encouraged rather than buried under corporate interests.

COMMENT OF KAREN NEAL

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 7:38 p.m.

City, State: Cherry Log, GA

Occupation: Self-Employed

Comment: I want to see future farm bills focusing on and lending much greater support to locally grown food produced by organic methods and the farmers who produce it. I am definitely against genetically modified food stuff. I am outraged that my choice of whether to knowingly eat genetically altered food has been totally taken away by big corporations & my Government. My Government is suppose to protect my right to choose, **Not Choose For Me!** Since my Government has already shoved this down the consumers throats and allowed my choice to be taken away by non-labeling of GM/GMO ingredients, **I Say Fix This Atrocity So Consumers Can Exercise Choice** between foods that have genetically modified, conventional or organic origins. **I Want A Required Labeling System As Well As A Reliable Separation Of GM And Non-GM Organisms At Production Level And Throughout The Entire Processing Chain!**

COMMENT OF KYLE NEEDHAM

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:04 p.m.

City, State: Brooklyn, NY

Occupation: Self-Employed

Comment: Please create a farm bill that supports our development in a sustainable way without having the interests of industrial lobbyists. We are a nation that needs to look toward the future with our intentions for our citizens and an organic farm bill would do just that.

COMMENT OF TAWNI NEESER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:13 p.m.

City, State: Anchorage, AK

Occupation: Nurse

Comment: America has gone from one of the greatest nations, to one of the worst. We also have one of the highest amounts of obese and sick people on Earth. I believe this is partly due to the fact that people eat what is "quick and easy". However, these "quick and easy" foods are not healthy foods and not good for our bodies. Our bodies don't recognize all these chemicals and hormones. Please make a bill helping small fresh organic farms. America needs to start fixing itself. Starting from the inside out. Thank you.

COMMENT OF MARTIA NEHER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:58 a.m.

City, State: Elgin, ND

Occupation: Housewife

Comment: I care about what I am feeding my family and big agriculture is not providing clean healthy food to choose from when will we actually get GMO foods labeled so I know which products are contaminated with pesticides and hormones? These things affect both people and the environment aka bees, weeds, and insect pests.

COMMENT OF HELGA NEHL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:46 p.m.

City, State: St. Augustine, FL

Occupation: Therapist

Comment: It angers me that small farmers, health food co-ops are under attack and on the brink of extinction. This is a threat to the well-being of our country in more ways than one. First, this is supposed to be the land of the free and free enterprise. People have the right to pursue an honest livelihood. What can be more ethical than providing people with wholesome foods? Further everyone benefits from competition. Let the people decide what they want to buy! Allow more businesses to compete. We're a nation of sick people. Obesity continues to rise as does diabetes 2 in our children, unheard of in previous generations. If we really want to heal our people we should encourage the production of healthy foods instead of trying to put those farmers out of business. These are very strange times we live in. Corruption, dishonesty, sloth are being rewarded while honesty, initiative, a strong work ethic are being punished. It is my hope that this Congress does the right thing regarding our small farmers.

COMMENT OF JENNA NEHL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:27 p.m.

City, State: Seattle, WA

Occupation: Holistic Health Practitioner, Esthetician

Comment: You must be aware that food without spray, chemicals (yes the ones you see being sprayed over our fruits and veggies with men wearing protective face & body masks), and non-GMO are **Extremely** important for our Health, our environment, our animals, water supply, and our Future. **Please** help to make sure we are all protected. You guys are the ones who were voted on by us, to protect us. Please make sure we have all we need for good, clean, pure food. **You** are eating this too, your children, your families, friends. Our people are getting sick, and chemicals **Should Not** be on/in our food!

Thank you,

JENNA N.,
Seattle, WA.

COMMENT OF TERRI NEIFERT

Date Submitted: Friday, April 27, 2012, 10:12 a.m.

City, State: Bethlehem, PA

Occupation: Disabled

Comment: I am a supporter of Feeding America and my local food bank. Despite the recent improvement of the economy, there are still many people who may not know where their next meal will come from. We need a strong farm bill to help put food on the table for vulnerable children, seniors, and low-income families. Please pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP. Cutting these programs is not the way to balance the budget. I urge you make them a priority in the next farm bill.

Also, I am on disability and need food bank every month. I don't qualify for food stamps. I am aware that pregnant women, children under 5 and senior get vouchers for fresh fruits and vegetable. I think since I qualify for medical assistance and Medicare that I should be given access to those food vouchers too. Can't you give them to all low income people on SSDI? Every month, I run out of food.

COMMENT OF CAROL NEIMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:40 p.m.

City, State: Junction, TX

Occupation: Freelance Editor, Part-Time Secretary, Semi-Retired

Comment: Dear Rep. Conaway,

I quote:

"The Agriculture Committee put forward a proposal that will make significant reforms to SNAP. Our package contains new measures designed to better catch misuse and abuse in the program and ensure that the folks who actually need SNAP benefits continue receiving them.

SNAP will continue to be an important part of the safety net for many Americans in need, however support must continue to come from the communities we live in and the friends and family that surround us."

I live in a food desert, with only one supermarket that sells overpriced staples and a limited supply of produce, much of which is hybridized for long shelf life and, even at that, looks like the remains of what other stores passed by at least a week ago. When I look around me, I also suspect I live in an epicenter of the American obesity epidemic. There are less than a handful of local restaurants, but an abundance of fast-food chains thanks to Interstate 10 on the edge of town.

Crafting a farm bill that truly begins to address these problems by supporting sustainable farming and healthier food choices for everyone would in fact be of help to my community, friends, and family. Maybe some day, we would even no longer have to drive at least an hour in the direction of I-35 to get a variety of fresh, locally grown produce.

I realize that a thoughtful approach to examine all the toxic side effects—on people’s health and on the health of the land—of our current “big agribusiness” centered policies is not easy. It’s also probably not very good for your campaign coffers. Ordinary folks and real farmers, after all, don’t have that much money to give to politicians or to pay lobbyists to represent their interests. But as I see it, this is your job—not raising money for your next campaign. If you’d like to do the job of representing all of your constituents, and not just those with big money and a vested interest in making even more of it, please consider the following:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Respectfully,

CAROL NEIMAN.

COMMENT OF ZACHARY NELMS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:57 p.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Physician

Comment: It is important that we remove subsidies for unhealthy farming practices such as meat and corn production and give subsidies to vegetable and fruit producers. This will in effect give the public incentives to consume healthier food leading to a healthier population and lower overall health care costs.

COMMENT OF DAVID NELSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:49 p.m.

City, State: Madison, WI

Occupation: Ag Researcher

Comment: Food is a policy area which often receives short shrift in deciding priorities. Please ensure a safe food system, and enable any citizen the right to participate in farming and urban agriculture. Many of the agricultural products we sell for consumption are not healthful and in some cases contain little we should consider food.

COMMENT OF GREG NELSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:36 p.m.

City, State: Ithaca, NY

Occupation: Software Engineer

Comment: I wanted to let you know that I strongly support our small farmers in NY. I would like to see subsidies for huge agribusiness curtailed so that small farmers would have a fair chance. Small farms provide far more jobs than large ones do, and as you know our country needs jobs. You don’t want to be on record as opposing job creation, right?

I strongly support the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286) and the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236). I would also like to see a continuation of the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Thank you for your consideration. We are paying attention to what you stand for.

GREG NELSON,
Ithaca, NY.

COMMENT OF JON NELSON

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 4:01 p.m.

City, State: Penn Valley, CA

Occupation: Engineer

Comment: I am very troubled to see the corporate lobbying and pressure from the likes of Monsanto so often trumps the will and benefit of citizen/voters, science and the environment. When enough people wake up to this the future of those politicians who have allowed this to happen will suffer, as it should.

COMMENT OF NANCY NESTAVAL

Date Submitted: Tuesday, March 20, 2012, 3:25 p.m.

City, State: Lubbock, TX

Occupation: Retired Communications Manager

Comment: I believe farm subsidies are misguided. If free market conditions prevailed, farmers would diversify their crops according to demand. The country should never have put a subsidy on ethanol. That skewed food supplies around the globe. We don't need to give corporate farmers any more help.

COMMENT OF JUDY NEUGER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:17 p.m.

City, State: Moreland Hills, OH

Occupation: Homemaker

Comment: The saying goes, "We are what we eat". Please consider what you are giving us and the following generations to eat. What goes in the ground today becomes the food on the shelves tomorrow. Hopefully you will not be persuaded by Monsanto money, but by the quality of life you want your constituents to have.

COMMENTS OF MARCY NEVILLE

Date Submitted: Tuesday, March 20, 2012, 9:30 p.m.

City, State: Keene Valley, NY

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Livestock, Dairy

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Please require labeling of GMO's. I am forced to buy expensive organic feed for my animals to avoid feeding "Round-Up", a known carcinogen, to them. Since the EPA approved "Round-Up ready" alfalfa, corn, and soybeans, my feed supplier has no way of knowing if their feed contains this, thus they lose me as a customer, and I am forced to pay a premium I can't afford.

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:58 a.m.

Comment: Labeling of GMO's would really help control my operation's feed costs. I cannot feed "Round-Up Ready" products and so am forced to buy organic grain which is costly and not widely available. **Please Label GMO's!**

COMMENT OF JAMES NEWBERRY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:35 p.m.

City, State: New Haven, CT

Occupation: Lighting Equipment Sales

Comment: This indebted country needs to stop subsidizing Big Oil and Big Ag. We should allow millions of Americans to start farming again through the encouragement of organic family farming, along with the educational, security and economic advantages this could provide.

COMMENT OF ARIANA NEWCOMER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:02 a.m.

City, State: Los Gatos, CA

Occupation: Voice Teacher & Coach

Comment: Our farm policy needs to be amended to promote the production of fruits and vegetables over grains, and to protect humans and environment from GMO "foods" that are destroying our soil microbiology, creating super-weeds and promoting the overuse of chemicals.

COMMENT OF DAWN NEWCOMER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:51 a.m.

City, State: Spring, TX

Occupation: Marketing Consultant

Comment: Small family farms need support, especially in organic practices. Large industrial agriculture has too much power. Help to level the playing field by supporting small organic farmers trying to compete in the marketplace.

COMMENT OF SHELLIE NEWELL

Date Submitted: Friday, April 20, 2012, 3:31 p.m.

City, State: Graniteville, SC

Occupation: Biomedical and Science Editor

Comment: Thank you for working hard on this Bill. Unfortunately, it continues to reward large agribusinesses and does not support organic farming families. Seed diversity is important, as are: support of local farmers' markets; food programs for needy children and elderly; hormone-free/slime-free/bacteria-free meats and vegetables (don't decrease the number of USDA Inspectors); and public education. Also critically important are developing nontoxic pesticides and fertilizers that preserve/create clean groundwater; collecting animal waste for methane generation; and utilizing systems (*e.g.*, Habitat for Humanity strategies) for efficient farming techniques. Please do not support the underwriting of petroleum-based agri-products. The health of our nation depends on your vote. Thank you for listening.

Ms. SHELLIE NEWELL.

COMMENT OF LEONE NEWMARK

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:34 p.m.

City, State: Davie, FL

Comment: Only support local and organic and sustainable farmers, **Not** factory farms **Bad** for animals and humans and the planet. **Stop** large agribusiness support and **No** more Round Up or GMO/GE Monsanto toxic foods!

COMMENT OF CECELIA NEWTON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:51 p.m.

City, State: Minneapolis, MN

Occupation: Retired Educator

Comment: We need a farm bill that provides for healthy food and a healthy environment. Fully fund conservation and make sure new insurance subsidies are directly tied to complying with conservation programs. Support all provisions for beginning farmers.

Thanks,

CECELIA NEWTON.

COMMENT OF HEATHER NEWTON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:26 p.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Writer/Editor

Comment: The megalithic factory farming in this country is unhealthy for people and the environment. We must change the model to focus on health and sustainability instead of huge profits for the few.

COMMENT OF JOE NEWTON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:09 p.m.

City, State: Brooklyn, NY

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: Healthy food is a critical aspect of keeping our families strong and healthy, and thus productive.

I have great concern about the tendency to favor mega-farms over independent producers, primarily because the big agribusiness companies become focused on the bottom line, rather than creating a healthy food supply.

Please ensure the laws are designed with the well being of our citizens in mind, rather than catering to the needs of giant corporations.

If you keep that idea in mind (truly and honestly) then I am sure you will make the right choices. For me that means supporting diversity, organics, local farm movements, and protecting the environment against unnecessary chemicals, *etc.*
My thanks for your time.

COMMENT OF MARILYN NEWTON

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 2:12 a.m.

City, State: Milwaukee, OR

Occupation: Retired Wallpapering Contractor

Comment: It is essential for the farm bill to increase support for programs that deliver needed nutrition to hungry children and families. The numbers in need are rising yearly, this is no time to reduce support.

Also important is aid to **Family Farms** and rural communities. Factory farms should not receive Federal dollars. There should be a cap on farm aid in order to weed out the factory farms that are well able to pay their own way. \$275,000 per family farm would be a reasonable limit for subsidies.

Look at the real needs of real people, not political posturing. Work for the common good.

COMMENT OF JEANNIE NICHOLS

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 5:30 p.m.

City, State: Tularosa, NM

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Dry Beans & Peas, Fruits, Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: I am in my first year of production at this location after many years of not. I value clean food that has not had chemical exposure.

I abhor what big business is doing to the food widely available to the general public. I endorse organic farming, and hope to produce more of those items. While

I am not a public speaker I urge those in public 'service' to listen to the intent of my words and those of others who choose to address you and produce food. Food that is clean and free of the taint of chemicals. Our bodies were not designed to process chemicals. The state of the general public's state of being is far too often way short of radiant health. Clean food can help change that.

Personally I have eradicated from my intake most additives in food. I have energy and health and perform at the level of half my years. I look forward to being able to find clean food more easily in the future.

Thank you for the opportunity to voice my opinion.

Respectfully,

JEANNIE NICHOLS, *SCCI(e)*.

COMMENT OF JENNY NICHOLS

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 5:07 a.m.

City, State: Sun Valley, NV

Occupation: Artist

Comment: We need farming policies that protect not just the corporations and producers, but the people who must consume these goods. We need to make good policy that keeps the health and welfare of our citizens in mind. Let's make good policy!

COMMENT OF WILLIAM NICHOLS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:01 p.m.

City, State: West Lebanon, NH

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: We need a farm policy that shifts subsidies from large, wealthy agribusinesses to small, sustainable growers. We need a policy that does not encourage the use of food as biofuels. In this time of unemployment we need a farm policy that doesn't drive people away from rural communities to cities. We need a farm policy that creates jobs and protect soil and water.

COMMENT OF MARGARET "KA'IMI" NICHOLSON

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 3:19 p.m.

City, State: Honolulu, HI

Occupation: Minister

Comment: My health depends upon eating food that is free of the toxins of pesticides & GMOs. Federal U.S. subsidies of agriculture are supporting toxic means of farming & corporate control by five companies over 95% of our food supply. If we are going to support agriculture, it should be to family farmers growing organic food for their communities, for the health of our land & our people.

Thank you.

Aloha,

MARGARET "KA'IMI" NICHOLSON.

COMMENT OF NORMA NICHOLSON

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 9:22 a.m.

City, State: Columbia, TN

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I was raised on a farm and know the importance of having **Real** food produced from **Non-GMO** seeds that produce healthy food for all kinds of animals (including humans)). The artificial foods produced by the GMO seeds and food industry are literally killing all life form on the planet and causing all kinds of disease.

This kind of treachery must be stopped and commercial farms must be stopped.

We need small farms that get a fair price for their work and the ability to do direct sales to the public without government interference in free commerce. The current terrorism by law enforcement in farm sales is illegal and should be treated as such. The consumer has a right to determine what they eat and where they get it, be it a grocery, home garden or from a farmer or neighbor. This is Unconstitutional restriction of commerce and has to stop.

Give freedom back to the people and stop Big Brother.

COMMENT OF JOHN NICOL

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 10, 2012, 12:25 p.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Residential Architecture

Comment: At age 72, I am still working when I can. My self-employed wife has seen her income shrink by ⅓. Social Security and her income do not support us fully, and we rely heavily on SNAP to sustain us. We are typical of many Americans who have seen bad policy and greed strip them of their incomes. I am in the street with Occupy, and I can tell you that, if you don't keep the people fed, you are looking at a revolution.

COMMENT OF NIKKI NICOLA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:48 p.m.

City, State: Davis, CA

Occupation: Integrated Pest Management Researcher

Comment: With obesity becoming more prevalent in our population, it is more important now than ever to subsidize fruits, nuts, and vegetables, and not the commodities grown to produce cheap sources of meat and corn syrup.

Not only is factory farmed meat a huge source of pollution and greenhouse gasses, it is insidiously inhumane. Smaller, diverse farms require fewer chemical inputs, are safer for the environment, buffer against wide spread crop loss, and employ more people.

I hope you will consider the health of the people and environment over the wealth of giant agro-industry.

Sincerely,

NIKKI NICOLA.

COMMENT OF ANNE NICOLSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:33 p.m.

City, State: Pleasant Hill, CA

Occupation: Retired Educator

Comment: I want sustainable agriculture so that my grandchildren and their children can also eat. Let's end monoculture and quit giving indirect subsidies to Monsanto. They don't need my money.

COMMENT OF VALERIE NIEMANN

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 6:44 p.m.
City, State: San Francisco, CA
Occupation: Gardener
Comment: Farm bill money should be spent on keeping citizens healthy, not corporate C.A.F.O.'s. School lunch programs should benefit as well as **Organic** farmers and ranchers. Not Monsanto, and Cargill.

COMMENT OF STEVEN NIENHAUS

Date Submitted: Wednesday, April 11, 2012, 6:32 p.m.
City, State: Silver City, NM
Producer/Non-producer: Producer
Type: Poultry/poultry products
Size: Less than 50 acres
Comment: Whatever you do, don't reduce the amount of food getting to the hungry. We have enough problems as it is. If food starts to go away what do think this is going to mean for people living in food deserts such as this county in southwest New Mexico. We have way too many people without resources to feed them. Don't make it worse.

COMMENT OF ROBERT NIERRERNARD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:47 p.m.
City, State: Hartford, CT
Comment: This will not be fair to those who receive SNAP food. Why tear something from those who need it, such as myself. Things are getting worse and not better and struggling with bills and hard to get food for my household and I need and rely on SNAP to help me get some food for me and my family.

COMMENT OF ALISON NIHART

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:39 p.m.
City, State: Burlington, VT
Occupation: Student
Comment: To the members of the House Agriculture Committee:
 I would like to see funding for a program that trains new farmers in low-input methods. This would highlight sun-based systems that utilize human and animal labor in place of fossil fuels and crop rotation and other agroecological methods in place of synthetic chemicals. This is a matter of national security, as future oil price increases and supply shortages will have significant negative impacts on our current food system. We need a fleet of ready-trained farmers who can produce high yields using low-input agricultural methods. This funding could be distributed to programs that are already involved in these efforts in order to increase their capacity and provide scholarships for students.
 I would like to see the conservation program budgets increased and the commodity subsidies decreased. I understand that commodity farmers are struggling to make ends meet, but I would rather see loan forgiveness programs than yearly payments through a system that artificially lowers the cost of commodities. I am tired of having my tax dollars subsidize soft drinks and other unhealthy, highly processed foods made from cheap corn.
 I would like the School Lunch and Breakfast Programs to include more provisions that allow schools to source local and organic ingredients, even if they are not the least expensive option.
 I would like to see continued support for nutrition assistance programs across the board.
 Last, I would like to see funding for programs that help farmers transition to organic and sustainable farming practices, including funding to cover the cost of training and organic certification.
 Thank you very much for your continued work.

COMMENT OF KATHERINE NIKOLAIEV

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:28 p.m.
City, State: Magnolia, TX
Occupation: Homemaker
Comment: We have had cancer in our family. I choose organic foods & do not want mass produced food laced with pesticides. I would prefer subsidies to go to

smaller, organic farms, not big business that churns out unhealthy foods made with cheap GMO foods. I want GMO food labeled. I am a Republican and want government to support business, but I also want to eat healthy foods. Government has to pay a lot of money for sick people's medications, operations and treatments. Healthy citizens are a good thing for the budget. Please care about the people and their health over big business. Thank you.

COMMENT OF JUNE NISHIHARA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:56 p.m.

City, State: West Linn, OR

Occupation: Legal Asst.

Comment: Healthier farming practices translates to healthy citizens. Our future generation depends on it. Do you really want your family, friends and neighbors to suffer from various forms of cancers, tumors and other ailments stemming from the consumption of toxic chemicals?

COMMENT OF DENISE NOBLE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:21 p.m.

City, State: Richmond, VT

Occupation: Stay-at-Home Mom

Comment: I'm writing to let you all know that I support and would like you to support the following:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative

We have got to get our country out of mega-agriculture and back to supporting local and organic farms. We are being poisoned by the genetically altered, pesticide ridden "food" that is being mass produced . . . not to mention the harm that it does to our natural resources. Please take steps in the right direction to give every American affordable, locally grown and organic whole foods. Our country will be a heck of a lot healthier and well off in so many ways.

Thank you!

DENISE NOBLE.

COMMENT OF JUNE NOBLE

Date Submitted: Monday, May 14, 2012, 10:28 p.m.

City, State: Carmel, IN

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I'm retired. I have access to a wee bit of land. I have bones with lots of slowing memory. I cannot feed myself with what I can grow. We need our farmers.

And while you are at it—would be nice to repeal the awful postal reform legislation passed many moons ago . . . shame on you.

COMMENT OF NANCY NODELL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:05 p.m.

City, State: Naples, FL

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Please don't cut funding to vital programs such as nutrition, conservation and support for organic and sustainable agriculture. Our health and the livelihood of farm workers depend on adopting the best agricultural practices.

COMMENT OF SUSAN NOEL

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 10:01 p.m.

City, State: Espanola, NM

Occupation: Retired Programmer

Comment: Fully fund programs that support beginning and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, organic farming, regional farm and food economies, and rural development. We need more farmers and ranchers, more sustainable food production, and more economic opportunity in our food system. Stop giveaways to big Ag.

Protect the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) from disproportionate cuts, and improve it by ranking applications solely on their conservation benefits.

COMMENT OF TRAVIS NOLEN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:55 p.m.

City, State: Fresno, CA

Occupation: Disabled Vet

Comment: I personally believe that organic farming is the revitalization of the country and could easily be the end to world hunger. A subject of extreme importance.

COMMENT OF KRISTOF NORDIN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 1:53 a.m.

City, State: Holmen, WI

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Other

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: The farm bill should be used to ensure the sustainability of agriculture in harmony with the natural systems that allow agricultural production to take place. Subsidies should not be given to huge corporate farming schemes, they should be used to help smaller start-up industries and to encourage new innovations in organics, alternative energies, and sustainable methods. Currently the farm bill seems to be heavily weighted towards large, unsustainable, chemically-laden, industrial approaches to food production . . . it would be nice to see the farm bill reflect policies that ensure a healthy future for people and the Earth that sustains us.

COMMENT OF KATHARINA NORDMANN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 2:48 p.m.

City, State: Carle Place, NY

Occupation: Mother

Comment: My deepest concern is the humane treatment of farm animals. I know about the cruelty that goes on factory farms and it sickens me that humans are allowed to get away with this kind of treatment of God's creatures. Animals are abused, tortured, babies taken from their mothers. The list goes on. I urge you to view these videos and you will be sickened too, and will be looking for reform. This is all passed on to us in the form of contaminated meat, and dairy products that come from cows that are forced to produce milk in a way that is not natural. We will all pay the price in the long run when the planet is ridden with cancer and disease.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bNY4Fjsdft4&list=PL43796356A6DFD781&index=1&feature=plcp>
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B-EDBdGU5fA&feature=share>
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GzS8p727gvM&feature=share>

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Mrs. KATHARINA NORDMANN.

COMMENT OF SUSAN NORDQUIST

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:01 p.m.

City, State: Salem, NY

Occupation: NYS LMT

Comment: Please get real before it's too late and help fund local organic/bio-energetic food production—stop poisoning our food supply. Look deeply into your hearts for the truth of being human.

COMMENT OF RAUN NORQUIST

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:32 a.m.

City, State: Sag Harbor, NY

Occupation: Architect

Comment: We need to stop subsidizing mega farms that use harmful practices, too much insecticide, too much fertilized, too much concentrated waste . . . and develop a farm policy that can produce **Good** from healthy farms and animals. I don't need GMOs, antibiotics or growth hormones from my food.

COMMENT OF KALEOPONO NORRIS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:50 p.m.

City, State: Holualoa, HI

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Fruits, Nuts

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Eliminate subsidies that enable huge agriculture production, processing and marketing corporations to sell product at below small farm costs of production. The playing field truly needs to be leveled! Broad public interest requires policy that guides the population into healthy eating habits, instead of the cheap industrial food lacking many important nutrients, filled with sugar and fat that promotes obesity, a cascade of medical problems . . . all of which costs the taxpayers—not the purveyors of this poison—end up paying for. The system is absolutely insane! *Ho'oponopono* it!

COMMENT OF PATRICIA NORRIS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:55 p.m.

City, State: Willits, CA

Occupation: Associate Professor of Psychology

Comment: It is time to create a farm policy that puts priority on the health and well being of the land, and the citizenry, and all of life. It is important to have a policy that features organic food, sustainability, nutritive value of the land, and that avoids, as much as possible, pesticides and toxins on the land. I trust that you will do what you can to move in this direction with farm policies, for better health and livelihood. Respectfully submitted.

COMMENT OF SCOTT NORRIS

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 6:45 p.m.

City, State: Broomfield, CO

Occupation: Computer Administrator

Comment: Please do not cut funds for nutrition, conservations and support for organic and sustainable agriculture. Our Nation's health and well-being are at stake! I know many people with horrible food allergies (including my children). I have no doubt whatsoever that pesticides, genetic modified crops and pollutants are major factors in the increasing population of people with food allergies.

COMMENT OF KIM NORTHROP

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:20 a.m.

City, State: Sarasota, FL

Occupation: Marketing Consultant

Comment: Hi,

I think fair and sustainable food production is a key defense and economic issue. Dependence on one or two U.S. food producers and key crops, or non-native food resources, puts us unnecessarily at risk or resource disruption.

Thank you,

KIM NORTHROP.

COMMENT OF DEAN NORTON

Date Submitted: Tuesday, March 20, 2012, 8:27 p.m.

City, State: Elba, NY

Occupation: President, State Board of Directors, New York Farm Burea

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Dairy

Size: 500–999 acres

Comment: On behalf of New York Farm Burea's nearly 30,000 members, thank you for allowing our organization to submit comments for the record of your Farm Bill Field Hearing in Saranac Lake, N.Y. Our farmers were thrilled that the com-

mittee selected New York State as one of four field hearing locations and I hope your time in Upstate New York allowed you to see the great diversity of agriculture that we are fortunate enough to have in the Northeast. I hope you were also able to gain a better understanding of the unique challenges our farmers face and that you could spend time thinking about how these could best be addressed in the next farm bill.

Our farmers know this farm bill will be negotiated during an extremely difficult budget environment and that there will likely be cuts to all titles of the farm bill. Farmers are prepared to do their part, but we don't want to see the core farm programs receive disproportionate cuts and that important safety nets are in place for all commodities. Similarly, we would like to see cuts taken thoughtfully as this bill will set farm and nutrition policy for the coming 5 years. This will be our policy whether the farm and general economy is good or bad, so we must take into consideration both environments, regardless of the prevailing conditions today.

Commodities

Even though many commodities are receiving strong prices now, there is no guarantee they will stay that way and the farm bill must be structured to consider all market scenarios. We cannot make excessive cuts to the core commodity programs that actually help farmers grow food if we expect them to continue feeding a growing world population with healthy, safe food. Cuts that erode the foundation of our safety nets and risk management tools place our agricultural system and our nation's food security at risk.

That said, we are supportive of cutting the direct payment program in favor of more crop insurance-type solutions that meet the needs of a broader range of agricultural producers. Enacting different programs for each commodity is a poor use of our time and Federal resources. Instead, we should focus on a broad-based solution that can be easily tailored to meet the needs of each farmer.

Dairy Policy

New York is the fourth largest dairy producing state and accounts for 1/2 of the agricultural receipts in the state, so the sustainability of dairies of all sizes is of significant importance to New York Farm Bureau.

Dairy policy needs to undergo a major change in the coming farm bill to meet the needs of today's dairy community. Outdated policy has left our farmers with safety nets that just aren't strong enough for the excessive peaks and valleys experienced in dairy and feed prices during the last 1/2 decade. Milk price and input price volatility have made farm profitability difficult to attain. Right now milk prices are projected to decline this year and fuel costs are taking off. The Federal safety net programs must be tweaked in order to help producers survive the next 5 years of uncertain market stability.

The existing safety net programs, like the Milk Income Loss Contract and Dairy Price Support Program, just aren't working. MILC did provide some relief during the 2009 pricing crisis, but was not able to sufficiently bridge the gap. Even though this has been a reasonably good program for our smaller dairies, our farmers recognize that this program is not really meeting the needs. DPSP has lost relevancy with our current economic realities and provided no assistance during the 2009 pricing crisis. Both of these programs should be replaced in the next farm bill.

Our farmers support the tenets of a dairy margin insurance program and a voluntary supply management program as included in Congressman Peterson's Dairy Security Act (H.R. 3062). We would like to see this plan move forward, but it is important to note that should this be adopted it will take time to implement by USDA. In the interim, it is important that dairies, especially smaller farms, not be left without a safety net—this is why we believe MILC must remain in force until a new program is working.

Also, on the topic of crop insurance, dairy farmers in our state are very interested in the Livestock Gross Margin for dairy program since it is the only insurance product currently available that protects the margin between dairy prices and feed costs. However, only a very limited number of producers in the state have been able to take advantage of this program because of its severe underfunding. I understand the last sign-up period closed in 20 minutes and hundreds of dairies in New York alone were shut-out. This is an important program that's working and I hope you will look at better funding this in the next farm bill as it could play an important role as a next-generation risk management tool for our farms.

Crop Insurance And Risk Management

Crop insurance and other risk management tools work well for a number of crops, but not necessarily all of the products we grow in New York, as the severe floods in New York this past fall demonstrated. As direct payments are closely scrutinized,

crop insurance will continue to evolve and become a more important risk management tool. We just need to make sure it is meeting the needs of specialty and livestock producers so they are as protected as traditional row crop farmers.

Many of our specialty crops still suffer from a lack of adequate crop insurance options and don't have the risk management tools they need to protect their farms. Diversified farms manage their risk to a large degree simply by being diversified, but as we saw this past year, these farms can't protect themselves from catastrophic losses that wash away entire farms.

There are very limited crop insurance options for our farmers, especially those growing for the fresh market—apples, potatoes, sweet corn, and in a few counties, onions and cabbage—so all other operations have to rely on the Non-Insurance Assistance Program (NAP).

NAP requires a 50 percent loss before there is any payment to farmers, and then even with a complete crop loss, farmers really only get assistance for 25 percent. This program is part of the eligibility for disaster assistance programs, but doesn't really provide catastrophic loss protection, let alone serving as a substitute for crop insurance.

Our farmers in New York are asking that Congress instruct USDA to look at crop insurance options, run the numbers, and develop crop insurance options that would adequately protect our specialty crop farmers, including multi-crop operations. Our farmers can offer feedback and assistance, but to develop an actuarially sound program that could protect these types of operations, we really need the assistance of USDA's expertise.

In addition, our specialty crop farmers would like to see the next farm bill include a buy-up option for NAP. In the absence of crop insurance options that meet their needs, this would allow farmers to better protect the key crops on their farms. Streamlined record-keeping for multi-crop farms would also help farmers with sometimes 30 or 40 different crops, remain compliant with NAP paperwork more easily.

One of the problems facing all our producers using crop insurance is that when weather events damage crops in several successive years, insurance protection begins to fail exactly when farmers need it the most. Disaster declaration years currently count against producers' production history, meaning they collect lower insurance payments the more they are hit by natural disasters. It does happen that some combination of flooding, hail, frost and severe wind damage can affect Northeast crops more than once in a 5 year period. These farmers shouldn't be penalized because of weather conditions beyond their control. Crop insurance should work to protect our farmers from these kind of losses instead of penalizing them.

In fact, our farmers believe the need for crop insurance payouts in some areas of the state could be significantly mitigated by urging the Army Corp of Engineers to dredge and shape waterways so that widespread—and in some cases, repeated—flooding resulting from sediment deposits does not destroy farms and communities. If Army Corp worked more closely with our communities, we believe everyone would benefit.

Farm savings accounts is a concept that has been around for many years and should be considered in the next farm bill as a useful risk management tool that farmers pay for themselves. Used as part of a comprehensive business strategy, FSAs could be a valuable tool for all farmers to use their own funds to better weather poor production years, poor commodity prices and years of ballooning input costs.

Disaster Assistance Programs

Permanent disaster assistance was approved in the last farm bill for the first time. This was intended to replace Ad Hoc assistance, which was unpredictable and unreliable. NYFB supports permanent disaster assistance because it provides farmers with some certainty in disaster situations. Cuts in disaster assistance programs potentially mean less protection for Northeast farmers if a more useable crop insurance program is not developed.

The Supplemental Revenue Disaster Assistance Program (SURE) was created in the last farm bill and intended to be a whole-farm disaster assistance program for crop production or quality losses. In theory this program is just what Northeast agriculture needs, but SURE's program hasn't lived up to expectations and has proven unsuccessful for farmers.

The other permanent disaster programs, such as the Tree Assistance Program (TAP), Livestock Indemnity Program (LIP) and Emergency Assistance for Livestock, Honey Bees and Farm-raised Fish (ELAP) have worked well for farmers, met an important need, and we hope they will be preserved.

Following the disasters last year, many of our farmers became familiar with the Emergency Conservation Program (ECP), which has been an important recovery tool to help our affected farmers replace conservation practices and get their farms ready

for the next planting season. After experiencing such total disasters, I urge you to maintain this program with adequate funding, along with the Emergency Watershed Protection Program (EWP), which helps our greater communities, so conservation in disaster areas can be quickly addressed.

Conservation

With growing environmental demands on farmers, we have to be careful that the farm bill is written and appropriated in a way that ensures farmers have the tools they need to comply with conservation mandates. These include the TMDL standards for the Chesapeake Bay Watershed that farmers in the Southern Tier of our state are facing and proposed changes to the scope of waters regulated by the EPA.

NYFB supports streamlining and consolidating the many conservation programs administered by USDA. This will hopefully lead to savings, as well as allowing farmers to better understand the options available. However, I caution you on any structural changes to the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). This has been widely used in New York and works very well. Without this valuable program, our farmers won't be able to adequately implement the environmental protection work they have already begun and meet the time requirements of the TMDL.

EQIP remains the most essential conservation program for our farmers. Unfortunately, even though the 2008 Farm Bill scheduled increases in funding for this program, it has faced cuts each year since the bill was passed. Despite funding cuts, the need for EQIP has only increased. While 364 EQIP contracts were funded to the tune of \$13.3 million in 2009, more than 1,650 applications and \$39 million went unfunded. This was the last year for which complete data is available. That means for every \$1 allocated in EQIP funding, there was a need for \$2+ to meet the current needs of farmers.

The formula for allocating EQIP funds to states should be reviewed so it more accurately represents the agriculture in each state. For instance, in 2010 Wyoming received slightly more in EQIP funding than New York, but our agricultural production is four times that state's. We also have three times as many farms and 4 ° times as much cropland. I don't mean to pick on Wyoming and we certainly respect their agricultural producers, and while the farms in Wyoming are generally larger than ours, this distribution still seems inequitable and should be reviewed. The formula used to allocate EQIP funds does not, for instance, account for the fact that New York farmers now have to implement the Chesapeake Bay TMDL WIP or that the farms in our water-rich state have to implement practices to prevent run-off and account for weather events to a much greater extent than other, drier states in the West.

EQIP works so well in New York because it helps to leverage state and local funds for environmental conservation, allowing Federal and local officials to really target the most needed projects in the state. Funding for EQIP is very important, but farmers still need the expertise of "boots on the ground" staffing in order to navigate the often complicated world of conservation practices. I urge you to adequately fund conservation technical assistance (TA) so NRCS can continue to deliver farm bill programs in coordination with local conservation districts. This relationship is essential to carry out the goals of the farm bill conservation programs.

NYFB also hopes the Agriculture Committee focuses its resources on the working lands programs of the conservation title, which keep productive land in operation and protect the environment at the same time. We believe a greater emphasis on these programs, rather than the land retirement programs, is the best use of our Federal conservation dollars.

In addition to EQIP, the Farm and Ranchland Protection Program has proven an important and useful tool in New York, where development pressure on farmland can be intense. Again, this program has leveraged state, local and private funds to protect vast acres of farmland in our state.

Horticulture & Specialty Crops

With the addition in the 2008 Farm Bill of a specialty crops title, we must be sure not to lose ground on recognizing specialty crops in the next farm bill and addressing their specific needs. Specialty crops make up a large portion of New York agriculture and research and education programs are essential to ensuring that this sector can compete in the global marketplace.

The Specialty Crop Block Grants have assisted in disease research for specific crops like onions and apples, and even helped our maple producers develop tools to expand their marketing capabilities. State-wide projects led by our Department of Agriculture and Markets let to education for farmer market operators and a state database for buyers and sellers of produce.

Specialty crops often have different needs than other types of agriculture and these grants speak directly to the viability of our diverse array of specialty crop farms here in the Northeast. Specialty crop-targeted research helps with disease and pests, as well meeting changing market and consumer needs.

While included under the Trade title, the Market Access Program (MAP) has proven important to several segments of New York's specialty crop industry, notably apples, grapes and wine. The assistance provided by this program helps our farmers diversify markets and develop new customers. As trade agreements become increasingly complicated, including the sanitary and phytosanitary provisions, the Technical Assistance for Specialty Crops program will become more and more essential to helping farmers comply and eliminate any sanitary or food safety barriers for agricultural exports.

Forestry and Energy

Forestry and energy programs are also used in New York and often intersect. These industries continue to rely on research and development programs. As invasive species become a larger threat to trees and biomass in the state, allowing existing programs to address these concerns would be an important change to the farm bill.

We are supportive of several programs that help maintain healthy, vibrant, productive forests in our state. Many of our farmers maintain forestland, in addition to the state having an important wood products industry. The farm bill programs most important for New York foresters are forest health and condition, conservation and energy programs.

New York forests are currently threatened by several invasive species. Forest health management provides crucial prevention, detection, and suppression of native and non-native insects, disease, and invasive plant outbreaks that are impacting our forest landscapes and the communities that depend on them.

We recommend that funding for forest health management provide the states flexibility in how to utilize these funds to adapt to the rapidly changing conditions these pests present. We need states and private industry to work together to find science-based pragmatic approaches to deal with these problems. Federal and state agencies must work with private landowners through both technical and financial assistance to accomplish these goals. The support for research and development of new approaches is crucial to this effort.

The Community Forestry and Open Space Program, authorized in the last farm bill, is just being finalized. While this program has great intentions of assisting local governments in protecting forests for community benefits, our foresters do have a concern that this effort could lead to acquisitions that do not utilize sustainable management systems and instead the land becomes no more than a park set aside for recreational users. The benefits of this program should also include sustainably managed forests that allow our communities and wood industries to thrive together. We encourage you to limit this program to projects that include sustainable forest management and have local community support and input.

New York foresters value both technical and financial assistance through forest conservation programs such as the Forest Stewardship Program. This helps private landowners develop comprehensive management plans for a variety of goals, including environmental stewardship and sustainable harvesting. Managing small tract of forests within a larger landscape is not often seen as a valuable investment of public funding, but issues such as controlling as invasive species can have devastating consequences without coordinated management plans.

In order to expand potential biomass energy production in New York, a change to the Federal definition of biomass must be made. The present definition excludes fallow or underutilized lands put back into production for biomass feedstock production and only allows currently farmed land. New York has about 2 million acres of fallow land that is perfect for biomass production.

The Biomass Crop Assistance Program (BCAP) has had mixed result in this region. Companies and local communities embraced the start-up of biomass energy facilities as a way to transition to a more diverse energy portfolio. This is an important goal and we encourage the committee to continue to shape this program into one that accomplishes those outcomes without the consequences of subsidizing existing biomass markets at the expense of existing industries.

We encourage the biomass program to focus on efforts such as technical and financial assistance to convert our schools, businesses, government facilities, and homes to the advanced biomass systems that are available today—some being built right here in New York—that improve air quality and meet emissions requirements. We want the future of energy programs in the farm bill to embrace the unique way our country benefits from woody biomass energy development.

Research and Extension

Programs that support applied research and extension education are included in a number of titles of the farm bill. Research and the technical assistance and education offered by Extension are both invaluable on the farm and as communities develop stronger food systems.

In addition, Integrated Pest Management, which involves both continued research and education to farmers, helps everyone use less inputs to save money and protect the environment while producing the same high-quality product. IPM has been targeted for cost-cutting, but provides many layers of benefits to producers and their extended communities throughout the state.

Nutrition

Nutrition programs and farming often work hand in hand and when facing difficult farm bill negotiations, it is important for our policymakers to keep this in mind. Farm and nutrition programs are each important in achieving our overall goals of a healthy population and a healthy economy and we must craft a farm bill that recognizes and takes advantage of the way these programs are interdependent.

The 2008 Farm Bill included a number of provisions to increase the amount of fresh fruits, vegetables and low-fat dairy products that are part of the school meal program and USDA nutrition programs. Even with a shrinking farm bill budget, these provisions need to be preserved so the health of our communities and the health of our farms are integrated and strengthened.

A Farm Bill for the 21st Century will continue to find new ways to more directly link our local farmers with the members of our community who need the fresh, healthy nutritious food they produce.

One such program is the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program, which provides free fresh fruits and vegetables to low-income children in schools. The last farm bill significantly expanded this program and when products for this program are sourced locally (which is still a hurdle for some of our schools and farmers) this program helps link farms with the people who really need their food.

Because this program serves children who are at a high-risk for obesity and may have limited access to nutrient-dense fresh fruits and vegetables, it really serves the need of our rural and urban communities at the same time and is an important program to preserve. Because there is no baseline funding for this program going forward, it will be discontinued unless funds are found.

The Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program is another that pairs farmers and eligible consumers well by providing coupons to eligible low-income seniors to be used at farmers' markets, roadside stands, and other community supported agriculture programs. Like the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program, this program targets a population that often has limited access to fresh produce and helps to improve their nutrition and health. This is another great way to link our farmers and the very real needs of our communities.

While not specifically targeting low-income families, several programs in the Horticulture Title help to expand distribution and access to fresh, healthy foods, which in turn helps those who do not qualify for nutrition programs but do face nutrition challenges. These programs help ensure that local foods get to local people.

The Farmers Market Promotion Program provides grants to promote and improve farmers' markets, roadside stands, and other direct producer-to-consumer marketing opportunities. This program helped expand EBT to farmers markets and we need to continue to expand this capability. Because there is no baseline funding for this program going forward, it will be discontinued unless funds are found.

Food-Based Entrepreneurship programs are important to encourage entrepreneurship and help link our agricultural and urban consumers in a mutually beneficial relationship while creating jobs and new opportunities. These beneficial programs include the Rural Development Business and Industry Loan Program, Healthy Urban Food Enterprises Development Centers and funding/loans for urban local food enterprises.

Business and Industry Loan Program provides loans to individuals, cooperatives, businesses, and other entities to establish and facilitate enterprises that process, distribute, aggregate, store, and market locally or regionally produced agricultural food products. This program helps target some of the barriers our food system in New York faces. This is a general loan program, but when funds are dedicated specifically to food-related projects, it has the potential to overcome some of problems of duality we face in New York, a food-rich state with too many food deserts.

Thank you for considering these matters important to New York Farm Bureau members. Our organization and farmers stand ready to help you in any way possible development of the farm bill advances. Please feel free to contact our office at any time if we can provide further information.

COMMENT OF ANJA NOTHDURFT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 11:37 a.m.

City, State: Greenville, NC

Occupation: College Student

Comment: Our country desperately needs to have our food produced in a more sustainable manner—economically, socially and environmentally. This cannot be done with the conventional, industrial farms that are currently being utilized. We need to support local, fresh food that is grown without pesticides and in a way that conserves our soil and water resources. Please make a Food & Farm Bill that includes protections for programs like the Conservation Stewardship Program, the Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative, and the Value Added Producer Grants Program. We also need to have more young people in the farming profession. By supporting the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program, you can allow younger generations to regain connections with the land and their food.

COMMENT OF DEBBIE NOTKIN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:40 p.m.

City, State: Oakland, CA

Occupation: Publishing

Comment: As a CSA customer, I am—extremely—concerned about the way farm policy favors agricultural farmers who would be (it seems) perfectly happy to completely destroy our food supply and the people who do the work to get our food to us in favor of quick profits.

I want clean soil, farmers who are supported for growing a variety of healthy crops for me to eat, and pressure—against—the primary goal in raising food be to make money. Specific actions include:

- Fully endorsing all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Funding the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making enrollment in new insurance subsidies tied directly to compliance with this program and related programs.
- Implementing all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Putting effort behind the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Thank you for protecting and preserving my food, and yours.

COMMENTS OF PHILLIP NOTZ

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:02 a.m.

City, State: Fort Collins, CO

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Livestock

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: The farm bill should not subsidize big farms and big corporations. It should not subsidize crops like corn, sugar and tobacco. To best serve the American People, a farm bill should assist small farmers in getting started. There should be limits per farm and per corporation on any farm aid.

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012 4:26 p.m.

Comment: The original farm support laws from the Federal government were intended to help individual small farmers. Since that time, large corporations and mega-farms have hijacked the subsidy system by contributions to Congress and cushy jobs to ex-Interior Department managers. This weakens our food system by concentrating production in the hands of a few wealthy interests. America needs to go back to the original aim of government farm support. In any case the amount of support to any individual or corporation should be strictly limited. In addition, our government needs to support sustainable agriculture of healthy food. There should be no subsidies for corn, sugar or tobacco.

COMMENT OF CHRISTINE NOVELL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:11 p.m.

City, State: Upland, CA

Occupation: Cosmetics Sales, Mother

Comment: I shop at my local farmers market so I can talk to the people growing the food I feed my family. Why do I want an avocado from Chili when I live in California? I don't—I want to support my local farms, as should every citizen. We can

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make a huge impact on our country if we get back to basics and choose to buy local. I want to not worry about chemicals in my food.

COMMENT OF RENAE NOVICK

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:36 p.m.

City, State: Marina, CA

Occupation: Care Provider/Mother

Comment: Organic Research benefits of the environment are detrimental to maintain and sustain planet health, we need to provide conclusive scientific research concurrent to the benefits and effects on human health. Removing funding is unacceptable unless GMO's, synthetic fertilizers, herbicides, and pesticides are removed from the market as well. Thank you for your time and consideration in resolving this situation, which stands as this district and overall public interests main concern for food and health safety today.

COMMENT OF HELEN NOWLIN

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 15, 2012, 11:52 a.m.

City, State: Vancouver, WA

Occupation: Attorney

Comment: Food is a basic necessity. Please, restore much needed funding to assist the most vulnerable people, especially children who lack sufficient access to this vital resource.

COMMENT OF MICHAEL NOYCE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 12:40 p.m.

City, State: Madison, WI

Occupation: Musician

Comment: I want to see a farm bill that shows strong support for local, organic, and sustainable farming. We cannot continue polluting our water supplies with concentrated feedlot operations and chemical fertilizers/insecticides. It's been shown by the Rodale institute that organic yields match with conventional over a 30 year period and outperform conventional in years of drought. Given this information it seems completely irrational to continue doing things the way we have. We need change. Sustainable farming needs to happen, and their needs to be incentive for it to happen, and we need a new generation of young farmers to bring new energy to it.

COMMENT OF ANGELICA NOYOLA

Date Submitted: Friday, March 23, 2012, 3:54 p.m.

City, State: Austin, TX

Occupation: Community Builder

Comment: I work for a nonprofit organization called Southwest Key Programs in Austin Texas, we serve over 354 families every second Friday and have been doing so for the last 15 months. These are not just the unemployed; these are the "working poor" living pay check to paycheck. They depend on the food they get from us to get by.

If people living in the Capitol of Texas (Austin) where business is booming, are waiting in line for hours to get food for their families then the House Committee must act with due diligence to help them. There are children who will go hungry tonight without the help of FOOD STAMPS and supplemental food provided by Food Banks like CAFB whom we partner with.

I implore you as our **Elected Officials** to not cut funding to these programs. I have seen these families stand in the rain for **Hours**, in the **Freezing** cold weather to get food vital to their survival. **So** I can see **No Reason** why this should not be a **Top Priority** for the people who represent this state. Do not allow Hunger to prevail in the political game of Chess. These are our children, our residents, and responsibility of us ALL. Thank you for your time.

COMMENT OF OLGA NUDELMAN

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 10:22 p.m.

City, State: Seattle, WA

Occupation: Interior Design

Comment:

- America needs a farm bill that creates jobs and spurs economic growth—support programs like the Value Added Producer Grants Program by guaranteeing \$30 million of mandatory funding per year. VAPG provides seed money to help farmers innovate in agriculture and create jobs while securing a sustainable path to market-based farm profitability.
- America needs a farm bill that makes healthy food widely available to all Americans—including schoolchildren! We must provide flexibility for states to use existing food procurement programs to purchase fresh, healthy food from local farmers and ranchers
- America needs a farm bill that protects our natural resources—protect the Conservation Stewardship Program from unfair funding cuts, and improve it by ranking applications solely on their conservation benefits. Farmers count on CSP and other conservation programs to conserve soil for future generations, keep water and air clean, and create habitat for wildlife—all while farming profitably.
- America needs a farm bill that invests in the next generation of farmers and ranchers—guarantee \$25 million per year in mandatory funding for the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program. We need a national strategy and commitment to support beginning farmer and ranchers entering agriculture. With an aging farm population, now is the time to invest in the future of American agriculture by nurturing new agriculture start-ups.
- America needs a farm bill that drives innovation for tomorrow's farmers and food entrepreneurs—fund the Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative at \$30 million per year in mandatory funding. Investment in agricultural research is vital to continued productivity and innovation in growing and diverse sectors of American agriculture, such as organic agriculture.

COMMENT OF KATHRYN NULL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:19 p.m.

City, State: Roanoke, VA

Occupation: Administrative/Clerical

Comment: As an American, I did not sign up to eat science experiments that have not been proven safe for consumption. Organic farming needs to be promoted not only as a safe and healthy product, but also as a way to keep local and small businesses alive. Keep the American spirit going!

COMMENT OF SANDY NUNES

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:14 a.m.

City, State: High Bridge, NJ

Occupation: Catering Director at a "Slow Food" Restaurant

Comment: Please eliminate genetically altered food that's being produced and return to more natural, locally sustainable agriculture as quickly as possible. There is money to be made in ways that do not adversely affect our environment. It's just as easy to put one's time, energy and intelligence to promoting safe practices than into unsafe. Thank you!

COMMENT OF GARY NUSCHLER, JR.

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:37 a.m.

City, State: Houston, TX

Occupation: Vice President—Oil & Gas Company

Comment: Good morning,

I am writing this morning to comment on the 2012 Food & Farm Bill. For many years my family has been appalled at the spread of industrial agriculture in the United States, fueled by subsidized genetically-modified corn and soybeans. This has unquestionably led to the obesity epidemic spreading across the country, as we produce lots of nutritionally deficient food, and then later figure out how to deal with rising health care costs. As an added bonus, such agricultural policies lead to environmental degradation and a dead zone on the Gulf Coast that is at times the size of New Jersey.

However, as a principled conservative, I am not going to ask you to increase funding directed at family farmers, nutrition programs, or conservation. In fact, in my opinion, the Constitution grants no power to the Federal government to spend money on any agricultural programs.

What I do ask is that Republican committee members, in particular, who give pretty campaign speeches saying they want to reduce government spending and

eliminate burdensome regulations to show the American people that they mean what they say—quit subsidizing large agricultural enterprises and quit harassing family farmers across the country.

- Industrial agriculture exported nearly \$140 billion last year . please quit subsidizing them with taxpayer money.
- Please end the collusion between the USDA, FDA, FBI, IRS and DHS that continuously harass small-scale farmers and retailers all over the country.
- No matter how many lobbyists Monsanto and Sygenta send to your offices, checkbooks in hand, please remember your campaign rhetoric promising to stop favoring well-connected businesses and unleash free markets when you consider the 2012 Food & Farm bill.

Sincerely,

GARY NUSCHLER, JR.;
[Redacted];
[Houston, TX.

COMMENT OF DONALD O'BRIEN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 1:16 p.m.

City, State: Bend, OR

Occupation: Life Coach

Comment: We need to raise the nutritional value of our food. Genetically modifying and applying tone of chemicals are not the answers. Please support sustainable and healthful practices.

COMMENT OF FLORETTA O'BRIEN

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 10, 2012, 5:27 a.m.

City, State: Bronx, NY

Occupation: Retired

Comment: At a period when the U.S. economy faces severe challenges, the last thing you should dream of is to cut programs that will provide ways for people to avoid hunger. I urge you to continue support for those programs, through the farm bill, that maintains these programs.

COMMENT OF JEN O'CONNELL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:49 p.m.

City, State: San Diego, CA

Occupation: CPA

Comment: Please stop subsidizing corn production! It contributes grossly to our nation's health problems & is counterproductive. Corn-fed animals promote unhealthy meat consumption & add large amounts of methane to the environment (polluting air & groundwater). Foods infused with corn products add unnecessary sugar to our diets. Programs to promote healthier grains & vegetables would go a long way in reducing our out-of-control healthcare expenditures.

COMMENT OF JOSEPH O'CONNOR

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:14 p.m.

City, State: Salem, OR

Occupation: Retired

Comment: It is time to start acting as caretakers of the nation's health. We, the general public are getting disgusted with the inability of our government to do what is best and right for the People. Stop the greed of the agribusinesses!

COMMENT OF COLLEEN O'BRIEN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:45 p.m.

City, State: Eldorado Springs, CO

Occupation: Registered Nurse

Comment: Hello,

As an RN who has worked in Poison Control, I have seen 1st hand the effect of Big Agri business on farm workers through exposures to toxic chemicals, pesticides and fertilizers, to the effects on young children with the contamination of well water. I learned of the dead zones in our oceans, especially in the Gulf of Mexico from farm chemical run off and I've learned about the collapse of Bee Colonies and

likely causes. I directly experienced the frustration of not being able to identify specific chemicals on products which had kept ingredients 'secret', even as an RN requesting information on an exposure of said products which were having direct and harmful effects on my patients. I've made it my goal to understand farming practices and it's impacts not only here, but with U.S. 'free trade' agreements around the world.

We have a very destructive system of farming, both for people and the environment.

We subsidize the worst practices.

We need drastic change to improve our health and give the Earth a chance to heal from overtly over-subsidized practices which destroy environments and harm people.

I call on congress to support the following:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Sincerely,

COLLEEN O'BRIEN.

COMMENT OF JAMES O'BRIEN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 2:35 p.m.

City, State: Chula Vista, CA

Occupation: Software Developer

Comment: Previous farm bills have been giveaways for huge agro-corps. With the organic movement, we have a chance to restore the small family farm and safe food. Please support this bill.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF MAUREEN O'BRIEN

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 2:04 p.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Farmer Apprentice

Comment: Please include support for small farms and organic operations. It is vital to communities all across the country to have local food and healthy agriculture. Farms can provide jobs. Local farms provide education for young children about the cycle of the food web. Healthy, locally produced, community supporting food is so very important to the future of our economies and our lives. Thank You.

COMMENT OF PATTI O'CALLAGHAN

Date Submitted: Friday, April 27, 2012, 9:13 a.m.

City, State: Lafayette, IN

Occupation: Director of Social Justice

Comment: Lafayette Urban Ministry is an organization of 40 area churches that serves as a social safety net for the poor of Tippecanoe County. But it needs to be a partnership that includes the Federal government! Please do not cut critical nutrition programs for the least among us!

PATTI O'CALLAGHAN

SUBMITTED STATEMENT BY DANIEL O'CONNELL, SAN JOAQUIN VALLEY
REPRESENTATIVE, AMERICAN FARMLAND TRUST

April 28, 2012

Congressman Cardoza, Congressman Costa and Under Secretary Schubert,

Thank you for the opportunity to offer feedback on the 2012 Farm Bill. I am the San Joaquin Valley Representative with American Farmland Trust, a private, non-profit conservation organization dedicated to saving America's farm and ranch land promoting environmentally sound farming practices and supporting a sustainable future for farms.

American Farmland Trust recognizes the importance of the San Joaquin Valley as the nation's most productive agricultural region, with six counties among the top

ten producers in the United States. Its more than 300 crops and livestock products account for almost 60 percent of the state's \$38 billion in annual farm production. Yet, the Valley is also one of the fastest growing regions of the state, with the current population expected to almost double by 2050. In addition, most of the Valley's cities were built on the region's most fertile soils and most secure water supplies. Under these circumstances, this irreplaceable farmland has been converted to non-agricultural uses at the rate of about 10 square miles a year—a trend momentarily slowed by recession but unabated by demographic trend. At this rate, the San Joaquin Valley—and everyone who depends on its agricultural economy and productivity—can expect to lose an additional 600,000 acres of farmland by the middle of this century with an impact on the regional economy and national food security that is incalculable.

The farm bill promotes a broad range of public investments targeting important concerns. For example, the Farm and Ranchland Protection Program funds working lands easements that incentivize the conservation of farm and ranch lands. In the San Joaquin Valley, a region under extraordinary threats from conversion of farmland, FRPP funding has been sparsely allocated and inadequately funded to assist its farmers seeking to conserve their farmland and access the financial benefits of doing so. Another funding priority of the farm bill has been its investments in food assistance, including programs like the Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (Cal-Fresh in California), the Commodity Supplement Food Program, The Emergency Food Assistance Program and school lunch programs. In recent years, these nutritional programs have been increasingly aligned to enable local producers to market their products to the most food insecure communities near their farms. With the Valley's high poverty rates, public health concerns and highly diverse range of farm operations, such funding has a multitude of benefits still to be fully realized.

Most importantly, the farm bill's conservation funding should be maintained as part of a compact that our nation has with its farmers. California farmers are among the most regulated in the country, a responsibility that they shoulder, but one that the public should share because it is the beneficiary of their good stewardship of the environment. Programs like the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) assist farmers in numerous ways such as promoting water conservation through more efficient irrigation and better air quality by enabling producers to replace older diesel-powered equipment. We understand that all Federal programs must be reduced in size, but funding for vital conservation programs should not be disproportionately targeted for budget cuts. Farmers want to play their part, but we need to help them achieve a cleaner environment in a way that is economically sustainable.

At this particular moment in history in the San Joaquin Valley, through the farm bill, we have an opportunity to secure the richest agricultural region in the world, enable its farmers to meet changing expectations and regulations, and address the economic and health benefits of its residents. We support the ongoing funding, through the farm bill, which invests in these and other outcomes.

Thank you once again for the opportunity to share our views.

Sincerely,

DANIEL O'CONNELL,
San Joaquin Valley Representative,
American Farmland Trust.

COMMENT OF B. O'CONNOR

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:58 p.m.

City, State: Santa Fe, NM

Occupation: Office Mgr.

Comment: Dear Congressman:

Please this is the time for reform of the Food and Agricultural policy in the U.S. I support H.R. 3286, fully funding any conservation programs, and H.R. 3236, and maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

What the big **Agri**-Business is doing to our Food System is criminal! Their actions and philosophy is perverted, over-indulgent, and exploitative of Nature! I don't know how these people can live with themselves.

Please fight for us and for this Earth (our nest that we are spoiling so badly). Pretty soon it will be inhabitable. These people are possessed with \$\$\$ dollar signs, that seems to be all they can see. Very sad.

Thanks for all you do for our State and for the Country.

I know many, many people that are just so upset and frustrated by the un-thinking people in government, that will give you support on this issue.

COMMENT OF LAURETTA O'CONNOR

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:00 p.m.

City, State: Fairfield, CT

Occupation: Retired Business Mgr.

Comment: Please let your conscience be your guide by upholding our commitment to the most vulnerable of our citizens. Support family farms and good, healthy food for all.

COMMENT OF CORNELIA O'LEARY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:26 p.m.

City, State: Yelm, WA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Field Crops

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: I urge you to ensure the health of the nations food supply, for your family and descendants by ensuring organic and sustainable farm practices are protected by law.

COMMENT OF MARGARET O'MALLEY

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 12, 2012, 12:20 p.m.

City, State: Chicago, IL

Occupation: Education

Comment: I volunteer at a local food pantry and also work in a neighborhood elementary school. I recognize the importance that food stamps play for the families on the lower end of the socioeconomic scale. Even families who receive food stamps and f/r lunches still need to come to our food pantry. Cutting SNAP will mean even less food for people already in poverty. Please don't cut SNAP.

COMMENT OF ELIZABETH O'NAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:33 p.m.

City, State: Marion, NC

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Forestry

Size: 50-150 acres

Comment: I serve as director for Protect All Children's Environment a support organization for people injured and disabled by chemicals, most often pesticides. The past lack of regulation and promotion of pesticides such as organochlorines, organophosphates and now glyphosates has without doubt caused incalculable harm to generations and millions of Americans. These innocent injured and disabled citizens now require organic food in order to avoid further injury. Organic food that is being discouraged from production through the actions of the House Committee of Agriculture. To contribute to the further injury of Americans by supporting corporate interests amounts to treason against our citizens and should be punished as such. Corporations are not people and money is not speech.

I implore you to do the right thing for America and for those injured by current policies and vote for:

- full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully fund conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- Implement all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintain the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Reports from Washington, D.C., about the farm bill negotiations have not been pretty. According to an editorial in the *San Francisco Chronicle* by Environmental Working Group's Ken Cook and Kari Hamerschlag, Republicans in the House Agricultural Committee have already "voted to slash \$33 billion from the food stamp program while leaving farm subsidies unscathed."

The editorial goes on to report on the latest agribusiness boondoggle that gladly steals food from the mouths of the hungry to create a "\$33 billion new entitlement

program that guarantees the income of profitable farm businesses. That's on top of \$90 billion in subsidies for crop and revenue insurance policies."

If this weren't bad enough, the Senate Agricultural Committee has already voted to cut \$4 million from organic research funding and cut funding to support Beginning Farmers in half. We cannot let this stand!

At the same time, the Senate Ag Committee has voted to get rid of wasteful subsidy payments. It has proposed to replace it with a new subsidized insurance program that leading sustainable agriculture advocates are calling rife with opportunities for fraud and abuse.

While Congress is looking to get rid of direct payments to commodity farmers, the subsidized insurance program it proposes to replace it with will allow giant commodity farmers and insurance companies to walk away with billions in taxpayer dollars while putting the land, soil and environment at greater risk.

According to the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition's Ferd Hoefner, "By failing to place limitations on crop insurance subsidies and to re-attach soil erosion and wetland conservation requirements to crop insurance programs, the Committee has failed to do the full reform that is needed."

No subsidies should be available for any GMO crops and use of all glyphosates (Roundup) and roundup ready crops should be overtly discouraged and banned as they are responsible for untold damages to American health and environment.

COMMENT OF JULIA O'NEAL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:14 p.m.

City, State: Ocean Springs, MS

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Forestry, Livestock

Size: 500–999 acres

Comment: If Thad Cochran wouldn't vote for the current farm bill, it's really bad. I hate the cuts in CRP programs—they save the native flora and fauna. And the emphasis on the big four "whites" (corn, wheat, soybeans, cotton) and subsidizing agribusiness that grows them, that's just stupid. The times they are a'changin.

COMMENT OF RORY O'NEIL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:38 p.m.

City, State: Carlsbad, NM

Occupation: Retired Educator

Comment: When it comes to food, quality is always better than quantity. It is time that we support our small (family) farmers. They have the knowledge and ability to bring good quality (organic) crops to the American public. I would certainly like the opportunity to choose between good quality (organic) food from our local farmers and the mass produce stuff from the corporate farms.

COMMENT OF PATRICE O'NEILL

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 10:07 a.m.

City, State: Milwaukee, WI

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: I would like to propose a plan that would help solve some of our nation's problems. It would restore the health of our country; lower health care costs, and solve many of our economic, environmental, and ecological problems. It would create jobs and a sustainable life style for many Americans. It would reduce unemployment, and could reduce the population density of our inner cities. It would provide jobs for returning veterans, the unemployed, and it could give new direction and opportunity to the formerly incarcerated, and the homeless. It would also provide a livelihood and new identity for many youth who are searching for a direction and find none in our present educational system.

The too big to fail financial institutions have been bailed out and corporate America is having its way with our government, at the expense of the American people and small independent businesses. Small scale ecological, locally owned and operated organic farms would put our agriculture practices back into a balance with nature allowing the land to recover and replenish its vital nutrients. This would provide healthy food for our nation, a more balance population distribution from urban to rural areas; and eliminate excessive pollution from factory farming operations.

This plan would open up a whole new green agriculture program in education for those who choose to learn organic ecological farming. Currently small organic farms throughout the nation are growing food for people in their nearby communities.

These farms are also taking on interns and training future farmers in ecologically sound organic farming methods. As living organisms, we all eat; the outer environment becomes our inner environment, the state of our health and strength. After World War II recycled chemical weapons were turned into fertilizer and marketed to farmers. The new enemy became the bugs, fungi and weeds that for centuries farmers coexisted with. This marked an end to traditional farming methods in America, and began a new direction in agriculture that has eroded the health of our nation. This form of agriculture is still going on today. This has to stop; we are poisoning our selves.

The United States Department of Agriculture needs a new vision, or someone to create one for them. Too much is at stake to continue agribusiness as usual. The Earth cannot continue to support life if we have agriculture policies that keep taking and not giving back. Soil erosion and the clean-up of contaminated water ways all add to the hidden cost of factory farming. Small scale local organic farms that supply local consumers are the enlightened choice of the people. This phenomenon is going on all over the nation. At some point a critical mass will be achieved and this healthy, restorative "choice of the people" will take over and change will happen. Unless, the government blocks this by continuing to choose the structuring of markets, and manipulation of ideas to secure profit upward, instead of human needs nationally and globally. The government could do so much more.

Doesn't the government want to get on board, help out, and make a difference? Or, is the government too invested in solving our global and national problems with perpetual wars, and servitude to corporations that stand to gain by this destructive addiction? Why does the government need to continue to invest in status quo agribusiness that is no longer sustainable? Can't our government create policies that are life affirming and support the health of the people? What is happening to our democracy? The people's voice is like a voice in the wilderness. Government, give life a chance! Aren't you supposed to be us, the people, for the people? If the government would facilitate a reinstatement of the "family farm", it could speed up this process and rebuild the people's confidence in a true democracy. As stated above this change in U.S agriculture could provide the following.

1. Jobs for the unemployed, returning vets, formerly incarcerated, and homeless who want to farm
2. Cleaner and healthier environment
3. Ecological balance, restoration of top soil
4. Recovery of human health, lowering health care costs
5. Recovery of our Economy, creating sustainable lifestyles
6. Balanced redistribution of population
7. Energy saving agriculture that is Green

Government implementations of these agricultural changes are many and should be given thought and time to evolve and fit our national and global needs. The U.S. government could launch a campaign to awaken Americans to the advantages of embracing this new direction for a green economy and healthier population. They could grant homesteads to those interested in the "back to the farm movement". They could buy foreclosed farms to be reconditioned as new models for American farming in the 21 century. Government could provide educational opportunity and grants for the qualified future farmers. Interns could be assigned to one of the many certified organic farms that already provide this kind of training. The government could facilitate the creation of educational programs to be taught in community colleges and high schools for those who want to learn these skills. It could do a land study to determine which factory farm lands would serve the greater good by elimination, reforestation, or division into smaller farms. For a new approach, the government could ask the small independent farmers what their ideas and needs are. The government could organize our economic system so farming is a sustainable living, rather than a subsistence living; and make it attractive to future organic farmers, farming families, and cooperatives.

Government promotion of independent small businesses in farming would turn the economy around. Currently, government supports advantages to only American corporate farming methods. This new proposed direction would create a healthier environment; therefore, a healthier population who would have the energy and will to make it work. With government assistance in the creation of local economies through this kind of agriculture, local communities could be sustained with lower cost and less energy use by curtailing long distance transport of food. America's "agriculture revolution" could be a model for the world. It would save emerging third world countries from the erroneous practice of industrial, chemical, genetic engineered, globally oil driven agriculture.

Imagine this American dream as a workable solution. Imagine it without the obvious counter argument of the disruption of big business. Oil interests, chemical companies, genetic engendering, and global trade agreements would all have to be changed for the greater good. Government's alliance and allegiances to the current factory farm is a prescription for starvation on planet Earth. Agriculture needs to be diverse, local, and small enough to sustain a local population. Every nation should feed its own people before thinking of exporting any crop. Enough small farms that are far enough apart prevent pollution by allowing the land to naturally break down animal waste. Enough land and forested areas, nature's carbon sequestrers, between farms provide natural filtration, and prevent manure from polluting water ways. If life is going to continue, life affirming changes in harmony with nature will have to happen. With the government's support, this fundamental change can happen sooner rather than maybe too late.

COMMENT OF ARTHUR OADEN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:25 p.m.

City, State: Corpus Christi, TX

Occupation: College Student

Comment: I would support a gradual reduction in subsidies combined with greater protection for family farms and small towns. Agribusiness is a blight, but the working farmer is a benefit to this country and always has been.

Agribusiness is a lifestyle of the suburbs and the city, and does little to buoy up traditional America. The farmer of the small farm of 40 acres or less must labor to extract his crops, and often lives in a community where he is intimately involved with his neighbors and his environment. Additionally, he serves as a bastion of freedom because of his separation from modern industrial society.

These farmers are small in number, but they should be the focus of government agricultural policy. They do not need subsidies, but require protection from government interference and the industrial economy's attempts to force them from their livelihoods.

COMMENT OF JOHN OAKES

Date Submitted: Friday, April 27, 2012, 9:55 a.m.

City, State: Scott Township, PA

Occupation: Luthier

Comment: Many volunteers now supplement the work that our taxes were supposed to supply for the public good. Cutting food programs essentially delivers a death sentence to those whose jobs have been sent overseas as well as those who do your jobs for you.

COMMENT OF VINNIE OAKES

Date Submitted: Monday, May 07, 2012, 6:49 p.m.

City, State: Reno, NV

Occupation: Buyer

Comment: Please consider that the farm bill should increase support for helping food insecure families in our country. The key to our future is supporting the education of children. But children need to eat before they are able to succeed in school. A brain needs nourishment. Please help those who cannot help themselves.

COMMENT OF REBECCA OBERLIN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:36 p.m.

City, State: Okmulgee, OK

Occupation: Administrative in Mental Health Field

Comment: These are important programs that should be continued for the benefit of those who are in real need. If we can afford to send Billions of dollars to Afghanistan, Iraq and other countries; we should be able to make some effort for our own citizens who are in need of our help.

COMMENT OF GRACE OEDEL

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 11:21 a.m.

City, State: Nevada City, CA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: We need a farm bill that will actually support thriving now and in the future. Heavily subsidizing huge, monocrop farms of corn and soybeans has made our people unhealthy, obliterated our once-glorious topsoil, increased our dependence on fossil fuels, and devastated entire ecosystems. We need to help support small farmers who can help remedy all these problems. We need to build new systems, resilient, local food supplies, that makes healthy food affordable. We need to question whether we truly believe pumping money on huge, monocrop farms (which, as monocrops, are completely susceptible to disease and crop failure, and by design depend on inputs of fuel-made pesticides and fertilizers) will serve our country best in the long term. Wendell Berry and Wes Jackson at The Land Institute wrote a phenomenal *Fifty Year Farm Bill* that I would urge you to read. As they write:

“Long-term food security is our issue. We begin with the knowledge that essentially all of nature’s ecosystems feature perennial plants growing in species mixtures and that they build soil. Agriculture reversed that process nearly everywhere by substituting annual monocultures. As a result, ecosystem services—including soil fertility—have been degraded. Most land available for new production is of marginal quality that declines quickly. The resulting biodiversity loss gets deserved attention, soil erosion less. [. . .] Because the change needed is systemic, we believe that USDA should take the lead.”

A new way is possible—local groups are already trying to change the agriculture system from the grassroots level. But we need USDA support to make meaningful systemic change.

COMMENT OF JENNY OEHLDRICH

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 6:53 p.m.

City, State: Waukesha, WI

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: I support small local and organic farmers. They should have the right to grow what they choose and use or not use herbicides or pesticides if they choose.

COMMENT OF CLARK OEHLER

Date Submitted: Monday, April 30, 2012, 11:56 a.m.

City, State: Thomasville, NC

Occupation: Student/Researcher

Comment: I'd wish to stand in support of the ethanolrfa.org, Advanced Ethanol Council in thanking the Senate for the restore of about \$800 million to/in funding several renewable-energy programs in The farm bill. I support the needed efforts of the American Coalition for Ethanol [Redacted]. I would be in favor to decrease corn & soybean, soybean oil exports & to use more of that for U.S. domestic biofuels productions. I believe we should cut the 2011/12 U.S. soybean exports by 475 million bushels—use that for U.S. produced bio-fuels and/or ethanol production. We need more than the (present) 29 states with ethanol facilities. I would suggest earmarking a deduction of 1 billion bushels of U.S. grown corn, subtract that out of the 2012 14.3 billion (expected) bushels of U.S. grown corn so as to yield an additional 2.8 billion more gallons of ethanol (on top of)the already established 2012 figure that 14 billion gallons will be produced. So we actually will achieve 16.8 billion gallons. Please fully fund & strengthen the Ethanol Infrastructure Grants & Loan Guarantees-USDA [Redacted]. I do feel that for (increased) Ethanol production, more independent producers are needed with (included) the best working technologies & Value-Added Producer Grants (VAPG) increased funding. [My Input] I believe that due to the real need of seeing or reaching fruition; higher usages of E15 to E85, producers should be able to apply for both planning & working capital grants—at “increased” funding availabilities. This section of my commentary I hope can be faxed to the Appropriations Committee. A point of reference document that I am very fond of & desire to show support thereof is the afdc.energy.gov/afdc/laws/laws/U.S./tech/3252_text. Please try to work to surpass the present 140 million gallons capacity under construction of Ethanol. I firmly believe we do need more U.S. produced & marketed biodiesel and ethanol. The USDA statistics that I have discovered indicate for 2011/12, soybean projections at 15 million bushels imported, U.S. production at 3,056 million bushels and a supply/total of 3,286 million bushels. With these large quantities, I want to advocate for much higher/increased U.S. bio-

diesel production. Would the honorable committee please be so kind to fax a copy of my remarks to my honorable representative Mr. Coble's office. Thank you.

Sincerely,

CLARK OEHLER.

COMMENT OF ALISON OGDEN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:12 p.m.

City, State: New York, NY

Occupation: Health Coach

Comment: Dear Members of the Agriculture Committee,

What you hold in your hands in the farm bill is the health of the citizens of this nation. What we eat determines how our bodies function, and right now, the majority of the foods subsidized under the authority of the farm bill are commodity crops that are making us as a country sick and weak. You are holding the authority to determine what kind of country we want to be—one that supports and upholds the health of its constituents so that we can become again the robust, innovative people that Americans were in the past, or one that supports the profits of mega corporations. I am writing to ask that you support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative

I believe this is the single most important piece of legislation happening this year, and I implore you to do the right thing. Thank you.

Sincerely,

ALISON OGDEN.

COMMENT OF MERLE OHLINGER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:14 p.m.

City, State: New Rochelle, NY

Occupation: Professional Health Care

Comment: It is absolutely necessary to make organic & small family farmers a priority in our production of healthy food for all American citizens. Right now the priority is large agribusiness which by necessity uses antibiotics excessively to maintain animal health in filthy environments & promote animal growth as quickly as possible for profit. This is irresponsible & must end. Please pass a Healthy farm bill. Thank you.

COMMENT OF ALEX OJEDA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:30 p.m.

City, State: Jacksonville, FL

Occupation: Web Developer/Graphic Designer

Comment: Please help us to remove the fine that organic producers have to pay to do the right thing and put a HEAVY FINE on the factory farm and commercial food production industry for all of their pollution, poison and land damage. We need to get the subsidies redirected from those damaging our lives and put them toward those doing the right thing. Thank you.

COMMENT OF LEWIS OKUN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:12 p.m.

City, State: Ann Arbor, MI

Occupation: Psychologist

Comment: I oppose any and all cuts to the SNAP program. The failed government economic policies of this entire millennium (2001 to date) should be paid for by those who have most benefited from those policies and not those who need food assistance.

Further, I oppose subsidies to large agribusinesses. We need more small farms and family farms; they should receive any subsidies, not the mega-farms. Also, no

subsidies at all is a preferable option to little taxpayers like me continuing to support very large food producing enterprises.

Along these lines, I also want to see strong support for small and organic farms. I support: the full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286); fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs; the implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236); and maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Thank you for your consideration. Please conduct yourselves as representatives of government of, by, and for the people. Please do not act like government of the money, for the money, and by the money.

COMMENT OF LANCE OLENIK

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:34 p.m.

City, State: Caldwell, ID

Occupation: Webmaster

Comment: Please think of the people's health before your checking account. We didn't vote for you so you could get rich, we voted for you to be our voice. The more organic our food gets, the healthier and more vibrant Americans will be. Vote for a strong America!

COMMENT OF EMERY OLEXA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:43 p.m.

City, State: Alexandria, VA

Occupation: GIS Editor

Comment: Please try to keep things simple for the independent farm people. Don't let Big Agriculture make their life more difficult than it already is. Please label GMO's as such. Thanks.

COMMENT OF DIANE OLIVE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:31 p.m.

City, State: Encinitas, CA

Occupation: Business Owner

Comment: I heard that the White House cafeteria serves only organic food. So why would they let us eat the other food and they only eat organic this does not make any sense. Especially they are suppose to be humble servants of the people.

The first Lady Mrs. Obama putting in a organic garden and saying she feels better eating organic. I am so happy that Mrs. Obama put a organic garden but Ms. Obama wouldn't you want to create a change by making sure we all have organic foods and the government make sure the soil has nutrients in it before we are fed the foods? We must take care of the people and especially the poorest of the poor and make sure their food is not poisoned (GMO, pesticides) and lacking nutrients. In the practice of oneness we want what we want for ourselves for others. The practice of oneness creates abundance of good food and monies for everyone.

COMMENT OF LAUREN OLIVER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:37 p.m.

City, State: Austin, TX

Occupation: Registered Dietitian

Comment: With respect to the 2012 Farm Bill, I support all of the following:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

We need any and all changes that will encourage increased production of a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables. We need any and all changes that will link people to these local/regional farm products (make them more accessible and affordable). We need any and all changes that will continue to support the most needy/vulner-

able citizens to make not just any processed food-like product, but **Real**, healthy food, a daily part of their diet. Our national health, security, and success depends upon the health and well-being of its individual citizens.

Thank you and please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions.

COMMENT OF LEESA OLIVER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:53 p.m.

City, State: Richmond, TX

Occupation: Social Worker

Comment: It is unsettling to think that the agricultural industry's profits could take precedence over food nutrition and value. The health and well-being of the consumer as well as environmentally sustainable food production should be placed at the forefront of any policies affecting the food we eat. I ask that you please support the Organic Farm Bill and allow our food production to become more sustainable for our environment and healthier for our bodies.

COMMENT OF PAULA OLIVIER

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 08, 2012, 8:49 p.m.

City, State: Houma, LA

Occupation: Retired Senior Citizen

Comment:

- (1.) (Agree) Crop insurance is a vital part of the farm safety net and has become an integral part of business life for a large majority of American farmers and ranchers. Many lenders now require crop insurance coverage in order to make operating loans to crop and livestock producers, and many producers use crop insurance as collateral for the loans.
- (2.) (Agree) a farm bill that meets the goals of food safety and security, rural prosperity, and nutritional well-being.
- (3.) (Agree) next farm bill is reducing overall spending while maintaining an effective level of support for critical programs.
- (4.) (Agree) continue to monitor progress made to ensure minority farmers receive sufficient and unbiased access to credit.
- (5.) (Agree) need assistance program Supplemental Nutrition Assurance Program (SNAP), formerly known as food stamps,
 - (a.) with caution I am not happy with the easy availability of this program: more needs to be evaluated for abuse.
- (6.) (Agree) provides assistance to eligible producers suffering crop losses during natural disasters.
- (7.) (Disagree) to make most efficient and effective use of the funds available for studies.
 - (a.) Resources should be available for land preservation and proper care of all soils for better cultivation . . . invest in quality not studies . . .
- (8.) (Agree) for producers have a dairy policy to build a strong base so dairies can continue to produce milk.
 - (a.) keep our Milk product without harmful ingredient or additives—keep it natural
- (9.) (Agree) limited Federal dollars—eliminated waste—be conservative but sufficient—it can be done—I run my household that way—it can be done.

COMMENT OF AMY OLLES

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:30 p.m.

City, State: Leonardtown, MD

Occupation: Aeronautical Engineer

Comment: I would like to see the farm bill address the issue of longevity—and by that I mean a bill that supports organic farming, small family farms, grass-fed or pastured meat, *etc.*

I understand that the current farm bill promotes and heavily subsidizes a system that grows genetically engineered commodity crops and uses lots of petroleum based fertilizers and toxic chemicals to keep those crops growing. I further know that the current system depends on CAFOs and extremely crowded “grow-em-fast-and-kill-em” farms for poultry and pork. This system does produce lots of food, but it is of inferior quality and can actually be dangerous to public health and the environment (as in top soil erosion, soil depletion, water contamination, *etc.*). Further this system

is probably lucrative to you, the government official, as big ag and the meat industry lobby, pay and bribe the government officials well to keep the system in place.

This year I'd like you to step up to the plate and make changes that, in the long term, will bring some integrity back to the food system of America.

I want to see organically grown food subsidized, not genetically engineered crops.

I want to see the inheritance tax on small family farms waived, so that the vocation of farming can be passed down from generation to generation without a terrible financial strain on the family.

I want to see a marked decrease in or elimination of the subsidizing of genetic and/or commodity crops.

I want to see more subsidizing go to farmers who use less or no chemical fertilizers or toxic chemicals for pest control.

I want Monsanto to stop calling the shots as to what gets patented, grown and sold to and for the people of the USA. It's time for the USDA to put the bridle on them. (The EU has done this to some success, you can use them as an example of where to start)

I want to see CAFOs turned into pastures (analogously, I understand that's probably not physically possible) and other concentrated animal growing facilities go unfunded and unaided by Federal dollars—directly or indirectly through cheap subsidized feed. I want the USDA to pass tougher standards on testing the meat that comes out of those CAFOs in the meantime.

I understand this is a radical departure from 'the norm', and that these changes will drive food prices up. Let me tell you though that I currently **Do** pay more than market price for my food, as I only buy from local farms or organic items. The stuff produced by the farm bill is not healthy food to ingest in my opinion (Please see obesity, diabetes and other disease historical rise in the past few decades and plot it against the rise of processed food and subsidized commodities). Further I believe that though these changes will cause price changes, the market will adjust and people will not starve in the end. I encourage you to make this the year that the farm bill actually supports a more sanity based system that grows quality, healthy food in such a way that doesn't destroy the soil and water ways of this or other nations.

Thank you for reading my comments,

AMY OLLES.

COMMENT OF K. OLSEN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:08 p.m.

City, State: Ithaca, NY

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Agra Business is Not in our best interest! We want good organic choices, not GMO, and processed garbage! Please, work toward a farm bill that supports the health of your constituents, not the bank accounts, and campaign donations of Big Ag!

COMMENT OF KAREN OLSEN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:02 a.m.

City, State: Myrtle Pt., OR

Occupation: Postmaster Retired

Comment: I encourage you to shift more funds to support smaller farms, sustainable and organic practices, wise use of water resources, and local marketing which facilitates the availability of more varieties (even those that do not travel well) and fresher products.

COMMENT OF LISA OLSEN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:41 a.m.

City, State: Centennial, CO

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: I am an apprentice with an Neighborhood Supported Agriculture program in urban Denver.

As the committee considers the 2012 Food and Farm Bill, I urge you to:

- Support our fight against hunger by maintaining and strengthening critical nutrition programs in this time of unprecedented need. We must not solve our budget problems on the backs of those experiencing food insecurity, including our most vulnerable—our children, the elderly, and the disabled;

- Provide an even “plowing” field by fully funding programs that support beginning and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, organic farming, regional farm and food economies, and rural development. We need more farmers and ranchers, more sustainable food production, and more economic opportunity in our food system;
- Support family farmers that really need help, not the biggest farms that don’t: End subsidies (aka direct payments and countercyclical commodity programs), and replace them with loophole-free agriculture risk coverage. Additionally, implement a cap on crop insurance premium subsidies;
- Ensure that limited conservation funding maximizes lasting environmental benefits: Limit funds to Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) for animal waste management infrastructure by eliminating the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) Livestock Set-aside and protect the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) from disproportionate cuts, and improve it by ranking applications solely on their conservation benefits.

Additionally, I as a consumer, I would like to see an end to GMO’s, and short of that, I would like to see accurate labeling enforced.

Regarding farm subsidies, the government must stop subsidizing the crops and industries that are contributing to the national health crisis. Hidden calories (corn/soy) will contribute to the death of many Americans in the coming years and we need to break that cycle.

COMMENT OF DIANE OLSON

Date Submitted: Friday, April 27, 2012, 1:40 p.m.

City, State: Santa Monica, CA

Occupation: Retired Librarian

Comment: I don’t want it to contain the money that has been given away to huge factory farms. As far as I can see they are doing all right. I’m tired of seeing them treated as if they are **Family Farms** when for all practical purposes they are not.

I see that today Obama has caved because of the meaningless **Family Farms** argument and will not pursue restrictions on the age that children will be allowed to perform certain tasks. There was an accept ion allowed in the bill so there was no reason not to pursue it. I would like to see those restrictions continue in the bill.

COMMENT OF JUDITH OLSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:59 p.m.

City, State: Vashon, WA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Intensive mono-crop agricultural processes that rely heavily on synthetic fertilizers and pesticides are creating myriad problems—big problems. Traces of pesticides are showing up in human breast milk. Our infants are being fed poison. The bees are dying off. Without bees to pollinate crops, we will have very little food. Our once rich farm land is being turned into nothing more than dust. The use of “Round-Up Ready” seed—GMO seed—is threatening the diverse seed bank that is necessary to withstand changes in weather patterns and climate. This is just plain **Stupid!** Our nation must make some smart decisions **Now** to change the way we are growing our food supply—if we want to continue to **Have** a food supply.

JUDITH OLSON.

COMMENT OF K. OLSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:47 p.m.

City, State: Bodega Bay, CA

Occupation: Mother/Grandmother, Manager for Nonprofit

Comment: I support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and ensuring that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Please listen to scientists without financial gain/motive (ucsusa.org) and support organic, sustainable farming. It is crucial that my children and grandchildren have

access to affordable healthy food. Government funding for corporate farms using pesticides and genetically modified crops (esp. those being banned in other countries) really ticks me off! I do not wish my tax dollars supporting this travesty!

I'm not a scientist but as a gardener I see a bleak future if we support pesticides & GMO's . . . yet if we choose to support organic sustainable farming I see a clean healthy future. It's time is overdue!

COMMENT OF KERWIN OLSON

Date Submitted: Monday, May 14, 2012, 2:24 p.m.

City, State: Indianapolis, IN

Occupation: Consumer Advocate

Comment: I urge Congress to protect against hunger and promote nutrition in the upcoming farm bill by supporting programs like SNAP, TEFAP, CSFP, and FFVP.

COMMENT OF LORI OLSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:27 a.m.

City, State: Austin, TX

Occupation: Executive Director, Texas Land Trust Council

Comment: On behalf of the Texas land trust community, we would like to make the following comments for the 2012 Farm Bill.

We hope that the House will support the Senate funding levels for Agricultural Land Easements, which advance the proven model of leveraging Federal funds through local partners to secure perpetual conservation easements that help keep farm and ranch lands in production, while conserving important natural resources.

We would like to see the existing FRPP match formula restored to encourage bargain sales and allow waivers of the match requirements for strategic projects.

We also hope that the House will consider restoring language clarifying that the Federal government is not acquiring a real property interest and has only a "contingent right of enforcement," should the cooperating entity fail to enforce its easement.

Thank you for your consideration.

COMMENT OF PAM OLSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:35 p.m.

City, State: Bruce Twp., MI

Occupation: Customer Service with a Liquor Company

Comment: Please do not cut funding to vital programs such as nutrition, conservation and support for organic and sustainable agriculture. It is the future of our food supply. Which is the future of the human race. Instead cut funding totally for Farm Subsidies that pay farmers not to grow a certain crop. This program is a racket. You also have what is called the direct payment program. Those goes to farmers of certain crops regardless of what crop prices are. And then you also have conservation payments, which pay farmers to farm their land or not farm their land for environmental purposes. And you also have crop insurance programs in which basically, the government subsidizes crop insurers that then farmers can buy policies and manage against weather risk. This could be cut, too.

And programs like subsidizing certain crops like corn, ethanol. They should not be subsidized?

COMMENT OF CAROLE ONDERDONK

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:27 a.m.

City, State: Gypsum, CO

Occupation: Gardener/Clinical Social Worker

Comment: You must address the destruction caused by GMO crops including super bugs and super weeds. No more subsidies for big ag—support small or large organic farmers and ranchers.

COMMENT OF ELIZABETH ORDONEZ

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:44 p.m.

City, State: Golden, CO

Occupation: Retired Professor

Comment: Please support small family farms, especially organic and sustainable farming. End subsidies on commodities that are overused in food production, such as corn, resulting in foods that are contributing to our nation's obesity epidemic.

COMMENT OF PENNY ORDWAY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:32 p.m.

City, State: Ardmore, PA

Occupation: Massage and Skin Therapist

Comment: I want non-GMO, non-polluting, non-toxic food in my cupboard. I want healthy farm workers. I want agribusiness to stop getting subsidies. I want small farmers to thrive. I want food to be fair and just. Please do your best to make food fair and just and safe to consume.

COMMENT OF CHRISTA ORECCHIO, C.N., H.H.C.

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:21 p.m.

City, State: Encinitas, CA

Occupation: Clinical Nutritionist

Comment: The U.S. food and agricultural policy must focus on adopting best agricultural practices that put the health of its citizens, the land and the livelihood of farmers and farm workers over the interests of industrial agriculture lobbyists. Decentralizing farming is one of the only ways toward solving the public health crisis in this country. Our food can be medicine or it can be poison. Mental illness continues to get worse in this country because there are no longer minerals in our soil and our water. As a nation, we are incredibly nutrient deficient, and masking those symptoms with pharmaceuticals is absolute insanity, which degrades quality and experience of life. Please see how very important the connection is between true health and the quality of our food supply.

CHRISTA ORECCHIO, C.N., H.H.C.;

thewholejourney.com.

COMMENT OF NICK ORFANAKIS

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:29 a.m.

City, State: Lake Oswego, OR

Occupation: Physician

Comment: Support of the corn as a farm product has led to a disaster in our national health with obesity and type 2 diabetes. This needs to be reversed with support of farming with a balanced production of foods that are clean and good for us and produced at fair market values. Corn and corn syrup are not the best for us.

COMMENT OF PAMELA ORIARD

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 1:02 p.m.

City, State: Lafayette, CA

Occupation: Counselor, Hobby Organic Gardening

Comment: We must look to organic farming for the health of our population; and get away from dangerous chemical and genetically modified type processes. I had to change the way I eat to regain my health, and I think this is becoming true for more and more people.

COMMENT OF DANA J. ORLICH

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:46 a.m.

City, State: Omaha, NE

Occupation: Housekeeper

Comment: Corporate agriculture's refusal to label foods containing GMO and bullying of organic family farmers must stop. America's current assembly line GMO approach to food production is not only dangerous, it is deadly. It is time to put the health of Americans a primary concern. Corporate agriculture profit cannot remain the priority with food production in the United States. organic family farms is a rich American tradition that needs to be revived. Thank you.

DANA J. ORLICH.

COMMENT OF PATRICIA ORLINSKI

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 8:28 p.m.

City, State: Sun City, AZ

Occupation: Retired Elementary Teacher

Comment: It is so important not to cut programs from the Agriculture funds. These cover nutrition, basic needs for people who are working (SNAP) and for the elderly (TEFAP & CSFP). Seniors and retired folks like me need these programs for basic needs. You know there are places to trim the fat from the military budget. Do that instead.

COMMENT OF MARK ORLOWSKY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:03 p.m.

City, State: Chicago, IL

Occupation: Food Scientist

Comment: There should be a greater focus on the subsidization of organic farming in an aim to keep it competitive with traditional farming. Organic farming is forced into a position with high entry costs, and then doesn't receive the traditional subsidies that major food producers do. This is an unfair market, and is keeping organic foods out of the hands of many consumers who cannot afford the price hike. In theory organic farming makes use of less pesticides, and chemicals that have become common place. The prices of these foods should be lower, there is less labor and production input. Subsidies should be redistributed, and a focus should be made to make organic prices comparable to non-organic production.

Here typically the argument for increased yields will raise its head, but research continues to show that our traditional methods of farming (heavy use of pesticides and GMO), do not have any major impact on our yields. A study by Doug Shurian exemplifies this finding with rigorous and methodical scientific research and analysis (<http://www.ucsusa.org/assets/documents/food-and-agriculture/failure-to-yield.pdf>).* Supporters of our current farming system also like to ignore the potential for environmental damage from pumping chemicals into our soil and water supplies, and the unresearched impact that pollen from these modified organisms are having on our indigenous plant populations. Today we already have dead zones in the Gulf of Mexico where large concentrations of chemical run off from our farms in the Midwest are having unforeseen consequences (<http://www.thedailygreen.com/environmental-news/latest/dead-zone-fertilizers-47082802>).*

Another major issue related to the use of GMO farming techniques is the burden placed on farmers. They are required to repurchase all of their seeds due to legal manipulation and the patenting of specific code that has been spliced into these plants. Organic farmers can have an entire field repossessed if their neighbors GMO plants happen to cross pollinate his own field. This in almost all situations is absolutely going to happen. Plants spread their seed through the air, and ultimately one or two will land across the street, and suddenly a man who is trying to make a living can lose his livelihood due to technicalities he had no control over. These are unjust practices that are aimed at taking advantage of legal proceedings that most farmers are not capable of defending themselves against. It is bullying by major corporations like Monsanto and DuPont, and it has all been sanctioned by the governmental regulations like this farm bill. Serious changes must be made if we are to preserve our farmers livelihood and the quality of our food supply.

These issues outlined above are at the root of what our farming bills need to address. It is my understanding that the writers of this bill are often eating right out of the pockets of many of the companies who push for regulation that grows GMO production and enforces its evil policies. This makes me want to draw a rule or law that says a person of industry should not have a say in developing the farming plan of America. They are too often driven by ulterior motives, and the success of the food supply from a perspective of wellness is rarely considered. But I hope we can move in a direction where the quality of our food trumps the quantity, and falsely funded studies that are aimed at proving false points of improvement can be identified for what they are, propaganda.

Thank you. Warm regards.

MARK ORLOWSKY.

COMMENT OF MARY ORR

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:59 p.m.

City, State: Velarde, NM

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Fruits

* The information referred to is retained in Committee file.

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Fruit depends on clean air, clean water, and pollinators. Please protect them and the poisons of industry and neonicotinoid containing herbicides that ARE killing bees.

Protect small farms and help them stay as farms.

COMMENT OF JERRY ORTIZ Y PIÑO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:44 p.m.

City, State: Albuquerque, NM

Occupation: Retired Social Worker

Comment: I endorse wholeheartedly the concept of locally-produced foods and protection against corporate agriculture's attempts to in any way limit growers' ability to make their own decisions about crops.

COMMENT OF JOAN ORTON

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 6:37 p.m.

City, State: Nunda, NY

Occupation: Retired Secretary

Comment: New York Farm Bill . . . First and foremost I believe we need to clean up our food supply—that is; produce more locally sustainable foods, use fresh-frozen, cut back on importing foods. Maybe the USDA or whatever branch handles inspections and verification of clean food should be given more employees and sites of inspections. Farmers also need to be paid a FAIR price for their food and dairy products. Small farmers are getting edged out by the large farm operators. The large operators are known to use inhumane practices on all kinds of farm animals—this must **Stop**. Also stop injecting anti-biotics into these animals—**Only** when necessary. This nation needs to grown enough food to handle feeding our people—**All** people, not just those who can afford to go to the store, but those living in poverty who cannot afford to buy much of any good food.

Let the farmers hire the Mexicans or Puerto Ricans or whoever, just make them have documents proving that they are paying them a fair wage and that it is not taking away a job from some other capable worker.

COMMENT OF TONY OSBORNE

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 4:20 a.m.

Occupation: Musician

Comment: I am totally opposed to GMO—and the tactics used to force it down the world's throat. I am totally in favor of Organic/Biodynamic and Free Range.

COMMENT OF ALEX OSHIRO

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 8:55 p.m.

City, State: Honolulu, HI

Occupation: Disc Jockey

Comment: Please do what you can to create a sustainable future for us all by growing more food locally so that we may feed ourselves and not be dependent on shipping food from elsewhere.

COMMENT OF RUDY OSWALD

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 4:28 p.m.

City, State: Potomac, MD

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Each week, I deliver meals on wheels, & see the difference that these food programs mean to the shut-in & also to low income elderly households. Don't cut these important programs.

COMMENT OF KATHLEEN OTT-DAVIS

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:19 a.m.

City, State: San Leandro, CA

Occupation: Artist

Comment: I am 58 years old. I eat 99.9% organic food. I do not even have to take aspirin. My other family members take meds . . . but are starting to change to organics. I am older than they are but feel better and they want to have my en-

ergy and wellness . . . not only is organics more nutritious than conventional and GMO food. Organics just might save the bees so *homo sapiens* can stay around awhile. No bees . . . no food . . . no food . . . no people! **Thank You For Listening . . . Bye The Way, What I Save Not Having Any Medical Bill Or Pharma Bills, Helps Pay For The Organics.**

COMMENT OF MARIE OVERALL

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 10:46 a.m.

City, State: Salt Lake City, UT

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: As a home gardener and advocate for healthy, locally raised food, I encourage you to vote for a farm bill that will **Support Organic, Responsibly Raised Food, And Local Farmers**. Big agribusiness practices are destroying our soil, air and water; and our food is becoming less healthy. Please add your vote to promote a healthy country.

COMMENT OF ASHLE OVERLOCK

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 2:24 p.m.

City, State: Carson City, NV

Occupation: Social Worker

Comment: The farm bill proposed will greatly reduce funding currently allocated to the SNAP program, which is the only source of food for many of my clients. As an Employment Case Manager, I work with many low-income clients, who are trying to get their lives back on track, and need to utilize food stamps until they can find work. These are people that are doing everything they can to become self-sufficient in a tough economy, and this bill would likely leave them hungry.

COMMENT OF ROMY OVERSTREET

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 10:37 a.m.

City, State: Indianapolis, IN

Occupation: Journalist

Comment: Please keep in mind vital programs which ensure that no one goes hungry especially seniors. Hunger in America is a problem in the same way that obesity also plagues us. American farmers are the backbone of America and any farm bill must ensure they stay strong as economic contributors.

COMMENT OF BARBARA OVERTON

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 10, 2012, 5:07 p.m.

City, State: Atlanta, GA

Occupation: Nonprofit Administrator

Comment: Billions of dollars in cuts to food stamps would be devastating to the vast numbers of Americans who need this assistance to weather the storm of job loss or underemployment.

COMMENT OF SHEILA OWENS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:15 p.m.

City, State: luka, MS

Occupation: Disabled Registered Nurse

Comment: I am sick and tired of our government giving breaks to the rich and taking away from those who desperately need it. What has happened to this country? Millions of children go hungry while big companies like Monsanto get tax breaks. Food stamps to be cut? I guess if you can't find a job, the government will starve you out. Check that one off the list. Small farmers get no help, their farms go under and that's ok. Maybe they'll get so depressed they commit suicide. Check that one off. If I seem cynical and sound disrespectful, I am. I want to see members of our government work for Americans, the Americans who voted for YOU. Do your job and help those who need it, tax big business like you tax us.

COMMENT OF JENNIFER OXBOROUGH

Date Submitted: Monday, April 02, 2012, 5:54 p.m.

City, State: New Prague, MN

Occupation: Social Work

Comment: I strongly urge you to support existing funding levels for the SNAP within the farm bill. One in nine Minnesotans struggle to put food on the table. In Scott County, 8.3% of the population is food insecure. SNAP is critical to maintaining good nutrition and health among our population. Economic studies in MN show that people who lack access to proper nutrition are more often chronically ill; children don't fully develop physically and cognitively and are more prone to fail courses, repeat grades, and drop out of school before graduation. The cost of hunger's impact—largely as uninsured medical care—is conservatively estimated at 1.6 billion annually. Cutting SNAP or limiting access to it will increase charity case-loads for the counties, which will be borne by local property taxes. As a Constituent and as a public servant, I strongly oppose cuts to critical anti-hunger programs SNAP, TEFAP as well as Commodity Food Program for seniors and Women, Infants, and Children.

For our sake and the sake of our neighbors who can't earn enough to get the food they need, it is important to maintain funding programs that provide basic food assistance programs.

COMMENT OF MIRANDA P.

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:25 p.m.

City, State: Bellingham, WA

Occupation: Financial Services

Comment: Healthy food leads to healthier, more productive, less sick people, and it also provides jobs. So we get more jobs, less healthcare costs, and a better environment. Organic foods have more nutritional value than non, and it's more sustainable.

COMMENT OF KIMBERLY PACIFICO

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:17 a.m.

City, State: Chesterland, OH

Occupation: Childcare

Comment: I am greatly disheartened that this is happening to us . . . and to our children. Stop messing with the balance of nature! Profit means nothing! Especially when we are dealing with malnourished humans (and insects). We are losing our muscle tone and our brain power as well as our ability to resist illness, there can be no real question that this is directly related to the modified "food" we have been tricked into eating . . . and even planting. No more GMO . . . please. It is not too late to make this right.

COMMENT OF MONICA PADILLA

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 9:00 p.m.

City, State: La Mesa, CA

Occupation: Medical Technologist

Comment: It is so important to support our family farms because they are the places that truly care about the quality and integrity of the products they distribute to the public. They are invested in their land and the produce they grow. Agribusiness is not the only source for our food supply. Unfortunately, they cannot always be depended upon to be ethical, because of their profit motives. They are not connected to the land in the way that the family farmer is.

COMMENT OF ALICE PAGE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:40 a.m.

City, State: Kingsport, TN

Occupation: Independent Business Owner

Comment: GMO needs to stop—consumers need all packaging on food items to be transparent. I want to know what I am buying always! Do people stop and think? "Why is this nation so rich but is so sick?" Well hello look to Monsanto and thank them.

COMMENT OF C. JAY PAGE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:34 p.m.

City, State: Reedley, CA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Livestock, Poultry/poultry products

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Please remember that you serve the local small farmer serving your community with healthy food. Small farms provide more jobs per acre and we therefore need less regulation as we don't have the resources to handle lots of paperwork. We need government's help in rebuilding the local harvest facilities for beef that are USDA. I shouldn't have to drive to Los Banos to butcher my beef to then have it hauled back to Fresno to be cut up and packaged and then hauled back to my farm. Vermont solved this problem by purchasing mobile equipment and then leased it out to the butchers and processors. Even Forbes reported that 20% of the food for cities will be produced locally by 2015. Do we want to be on the front of the movement or trailing behind? Buying locally means more jobs locally. I have a very small farm and I employ 3 people full time and one to two persons part time.

COMMENT OF NICK PAGE

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 12, 2012, 3:45 p.m.

City, State: Ferndale, WA.

Occupation: Teacher.

Comment: We need a strong farm bill—one that protects and strengthens programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP—to help put food on the table for vulnerable children, seniors, and low-income families.

COMMENT OF KATHERINE PAINTER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:05 p.m.

City, State: West Hartford, CT

Comment: SNAP benefits are really important to me because I have a lot of mental, emotional and other problems that makes it very difficult to live. I'm in the process of trying my social security. If I hadn't gotten help by the state, I'd have nothing. Please don't cut the SNAP funding. It's the only thing keeping my head above water.

COMMENT OF LORNA PAISLEY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:49 p.m.

City, State: Joliet, IL

Occupation: Retired Teacher and Home Gardener

Comment: My son just got back from France where people only eat organic food. They won't even take our antibiotic feed meat. What the hell is wrong with this country? It is time for our congress to catch up with the rest of the world and to protect its citizens.

COMMENT OF JENNIE PAKRADOONI

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:43 p.m.

City, State: Jamaica Plain, MA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: I have just been made aware that the Senate Agricultural Committee voted to cut \$4 million from organic research funding and has cut funding to support Beginning Farmers in half.

As a small scale grower of fruit and vegetable crops, I am writing today in support of the full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286), full funding of conservation programs such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and ensuring that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.

I ask that all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236) be implemented, and that the EQIP Organic Initiative be maintained.

Farmers and consumers require and deserve a fair, healthy, and sound farm bill. I most strongly urge to see that this comes to pass as soon as possible.

COMMENT OF LAURA PALM

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:44 a.m.

City, State: Sedona, AZ

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Dear Representative Gosar,

Please support the growth of small organic farms in this year's farm bill. Subsidies for commodity crops, and chemical inputs do not make healthier soil, healthier citizens, or a more secure food supply.

Thank you,

LAURA PALM.

COMMENT OF DEBORAH PALMER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:03 p.m.

City, State: Lakewood, CA

Occupation: Realtor

Comment: As a cancer survivor and vegan, I believe we need to rid our planet of GMO's and invest in organic, sustainable produce instead of subsidizing big agribusiness who do not have the health of the country at heart. California is getting shafted in this bill as well.

COMMENT OF PAULETTE PALMER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:15 p.m.

City, State: Omaha, NE

Occupation: Retired Educator

Comment: I have been following recent changes to farm bills. I am in favor of H.R. 3286.

However, when reading about insurance subsidies in your new proposal, I can see huge problems if limitations are **Not** put on crop insurance subsidized programs. You are opening the door to extreme fraud. For example, make the cutoff (for subsidy) at 1,000 acres. This would even the playing field for all. (When my kids complained about their low subsidy [allowance], I told them if they didn't like it, they could give it back to me. They learned to be economical and self-sufficient. Limitations are not a bad thing!)

Also any new insurance subsidy should be tied to compliance with the Conservation Stewardship Program. Our country is in a lot of financial trouble on many fronts. Let's try to keep agriculture out of that group.

Take care of the soil, take care of the small family farms/ranches, and they will take care of the nation.

COMMENT OF REED PALMER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 1:14 p.m.

City, State: Carrboro, NC

Occupation: Environmental Engineer

Comment: I am concerned that our nation's food production system has been hijacked by large corporations whose primary interest (profit) is at odds with the well-being of the vast majority of our citizens. While making a profit is a valid and important motivation for any business, the externalities (*i.e.*, failures of the free market to achieve a competitive and fair system of commerce) that agribusiness place on the rest of our society are too great to continue to ignore. These market failures of our commercial agriculture system are many and include information asymmetry (a lack of information on food nutritional quality, GMO labeling, location of production) and severe pollution. The costs we all bear for this are too high to continue on with business as usual. Some proposed measures that will make incremental improvements in this system include:

1. The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
2. Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
3. The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
4. Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

COMMENT OF TIM PALMER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:46 a.m.

City, State: Truro, IA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Field Crops, Livestock

Size: 500-999 acres

Comment: I agree with most that a time has come to end the direct payment subsidies for farmers. However, this is taking away the primary way that conservationists have of keeping farmers with bad farming practices from damaging our farmland.

I think all should do our best to protect that farmland and I believe that any entity receiving taxpayer monies in the forms of subsidies and grants should be held to definite levels compliance and use of best management practices.

Even the programs for beginning farmers should be written so that those grants are accompanied by expectations that young producers should be held to at least minimum standards for environmental protection.

I feel that if we are doing the best we can with these grant and loan programs in the ag sector, we can reasonably argue that other departments of Federal government should follow the same high standards.

Thank you,

TIM PALMER.

COMMENT OF NIMAI PALO

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 3:24 p.m.

City, State: New York, NY

Occupation: Administrative

Comment: We must take care of our parents and their generation which have laboriously and steadfastly built the great country we now enjoy the fruits of. If we fail to take care of them, I am sure we will not enjoy for long.

COMMENT OF BRITA PALOMINO, R.N.

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:06 p.m.

City, State: Irvine, CA

Occupation: Registered Nurse

Comment: As a nurse I have come to the realization that our nation's industrialized food system is making the American people sick. We are not getting the nutrients necessary to maintain a healthy immune system which is the fundamental groundwork to fighting disease. Adding insult to injury, we are consistently asking our bodies to deal with chemicals that further tax our immune system. I've always been of the mindset that prevention is the best medicine, however, the way our present industrialized food system has evolved, our children don't even have a chance. If we are going to subsidize anyone, it should be local organic farmers not multimillion/multibillion dollar agribusinesses. To me it's as simple as that. As representatives of the people, I plead with you not bend to the wills (and pocketbooks) of the corporations who clearly, clearly do not have the best interest of the American people as their priority.

BRITA PALOMINO, R.N.

COMMENT OF PENNI PALTHE

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 3:53 p.m.

City, State: Grand Junction, CO

Occupation: Grandmother

Comment: There are many ranchers and farmers here in Colorado who have owned and run their own farms for generations. Big AG corporations are the worst possible answer to food shortages, they pollute and destroy land. They foul our water resources with massive amounts of pesticides and bring down the health of our citizens with the overuse of antibiotics because of bad ranching policies. These companies do **Not** care about the land, the people, the communities nor the health of the food they are producing. The bottom line \$\$\$profit\$\$\$ is all that is important to them. If we are to have a sustainable future that insures the best possible food, the best use of land and resources which are sustainable, we very much need to ensure that our local ranchers and farmers are given a priority as far as subsidies and laws which protect **Their** lands and futures. We Coloradans, love our state and the diversity of agriculture and ranching here. We love the beauty of our state and are

thankful for the water in all its forms that is available to us. We do not want CON-AGRA to take over the land from our farmers or our ranchers, we want clean air, water, land and the food that is grown with these so that our health and the health of generations to come may live healthy, happy lives in beautiful surroundings in our communities.

COMMENT OF SHARON PALTIN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 2:40 a.m.

City, State: Laytonville, CA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Field Crops, Fruits, Livestock, Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Time to modernize ecologically, support Organic farming, support family and small farms, support diverse and local food production. End Genetically Engineered crop contamination of conventional/heritage genes/seeds and the breeding of super weeds, and the heavy pesticide burdens those GMOs require. End subsidies to push GMOs. Build the soil, reduce erosion and water waste. Explore cogeneration of fuels from ag waste for running farm machinery. Feed the poor.

COMMENT OF COLLEEN PANCAKE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:45 p.m.

City, State: Fayetteville, AR

Occupation: Video Producer

Comment: It is time to support, local, sustainable, organic agriculture and not time to cut the funding that supports it. It is time that big business was removed from the equation of who controls our food production. The concentration of power is unhealthy for our nation and world. Stop the subsidies of non-organic farming and hold companies that risk the future of our soils health accountable. It is time for the health of the consumer to be first and foremost in the process of food production.

COMMENT OF JEFFREY PANCIERA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 12:39 p.m.

City, State: Seattle, WA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: We American consumers walk around with over 80 toxic compounds in our blood stream. We need you to reduce that by giving tax credits to small farmers who do not use pesticides, and who do not practice mono-culture (which necessitates pesticides). The reduction of pesticides (especially those used by ordinary homeowners) will also save our bees (and \$90 billion if bees are eliminated).

COMMENT OF DELLA PANGBORN

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 4:51 p.m.

City, State: Beaverton, PA

Occupation: Clerical

Comment: Being able to access truly organic and healthy food is extremely important to me and everyone in my family. This should be a right and not compromised by big-agribusinesses.

COMMENT OF VICTOR PAPALE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:49 p.m.

City, State: Pittsburgh, PA

Occupation: Social Service Administrator

Comment: Please preserve and strengthen all food assistance programs in the farm bill, especially the SNAP program, which serves hundreds of thousands of adults and children in our region and helps them to maintain a decent standard of living in the face of long-term unemployment and underemployment. Until such time as working families can bring home an income that meets their needs, and until such time as unemployed families can find decent paying jobs, SNAP and other food assistance programs in the farm bill, are literally essential to their health and well-being. A better way to move the Federal budget to balance is to greatly reduce military spending, which far exceeds anything we need to protect our national security.

COMMENT OF JOHN PAPANDREA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:36 a.m.

City, State: New York, NY

Occupation: Electrician

Comment: **We Need To Break** the hold of corporate agriculture and encourage/protect smaller family farms and their diversification. We can't allow GMO's to contaminate our food supply and we can't continue to bathe our crops in toxic chemicals simply to avoid using safer more traditional methods to maximize yields. Farms have become too big to fail when a crop's contamination can affect almost fifty states—we must not allow ourselves to be so vulnerable.

COMMENT OF TOM PAPELL

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 7:53 a.m.

City, State: Northport, NY

Occupation: Carpenter

Comment: Please stop subsidies to corn and soy so vegetable farming can become more competitive. I am against all genetically-modified crops and if you insist on allowing them they must be accurately labeled so those of us who choose to avoid them are respected. Your policies should be favoring the small farmer who is producing food for local consumption because that is the inevitable future for our country given the growing scarcity and expense of fossil fuels and the climate consequences to burning so much oil. **Please Remember That Government's Job Is To Represent The Many People, Not The Few In Big Business.**

TOM.

COMMENT OF NICHOLAS PAPPAS

Date Submitted: Friday, March 16, 2012, 7:18 p.m.

City, State: Delray Beach, FL

Occupation: Retired

Comment: We have to continue feeding those in tremendous need. Our country is falling apart from the seams with such sheer neglect imposed upon the American people by corporates and their ever greedy CEO's.

COMMENT OF DAVID PAPROCKI

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:49 p.m.

City, State: Washington, D.C.

Occupation: Trainer—Global Health

Comment: Please help pass a robust organic farm bill. Please consider the health of the land and the people over the wishes of the corporations. Think of the bigger picture here.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF ELIZABETH PAPSDORF

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 11:45 p.m.

City, State: Spring Lake Hts., NJ

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I would be happy to pay higher prices for better foods. I want GMO foods labeled, because I would prefer not to buy them.

I want cage free hens to be the norm. Why can't we have Cruelty free animal husbandry—no confinement and better feed.

No BGH in my meats. No antibiotics either.

No hiding the dangers of GMO and roundup ready seeds.

If the U.S. really cares about its farmers and its citizens, then we should Protect organic farmers and Protect small farms from the big agribusiness interests.

COMMENT OF WAYNE M. PAQUETTE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:55 a.m.

City, State: Brooklyn, CT

Occupation: Green Ornamental Nursery Owner

Comment: All of us deserve clean food, water and air. We all must know what it is we are opting for when we shop whether it be honest-to-goodness organic,

chemically induced or GMO. Do what you're there to do for we, the people. Industry is going to do just fine. Get it right or get out of our way.

Sincerely,

WAYNE M. PAQUETTE.

COMMENT OF TERRA PARCHEN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:32 p.m.

City, State: Missoula, MT

Occupation: Retail Associate

Comment: As a citizen of this nation I am writing to urge congress to fully support the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286), the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236), as well as funding for conservation programs like the Conservation Stewardship Program and maintain the EQIP Organic Initiative. As a developed western nation I also believe that Genetically Modified foods need to be **Labeled!** The arguments against labeling are ridiculous and everyone should have the right to know what they're eating and make their own decisions in regards to their food and their health. It's time congress did its **Job**—to maintain the integrity of the constitution for the well-being of the citizens of this nation—not Corporate America. Look deep down inside and find that conscience that still exists in there.

COMMENT OF LAURA PARFREY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:07 p.m.

City, State: Boulder, CO

Occupation: Biologist

Comment: There is a rich agricultural tradition in the United States that built the foundation of our communities and country. However, we are now in danger of losing farming communities and good agricultural jobs across the country because of the rise of agribusiness and the focus on a very small number of commodity crops. Supporting small farmers with diversified operations has myriad benefits to the economy (with the only exception being giant agribusiness and chemical corporations), our communities, and will indirectly promote better policies for the environment and our health. There is every reason to fight hard to reform the farm bill.

COMMENT OF BRUNO PARIS

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 10:45 a.m.

City, State: Jersey City, NJ

Occupation: Food Service Specialist

Comment: I like to see more wholesome food available and more support for those that are taking the lead and working hard to achieve this goal for humanity.
BRUNO PARIS.

COMMENT OF DANETTE PARIS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:24 p.m.

City, State: Moon Township, PA

Occupation: Registered Nurse

Comment: Shame on those choosing money over people.

As agribusiness has grown, as GMO's have become more common, as plants are hybridized into something completely different from the original components or donors, as animals pumped with hormones and antibiotics have become the norm, our country's health has plummeted.

The people with all the money are not necessarily looking out for the best interest of the whole. They are looking out for the best interest of their bottom line and their stockholders.

Progress is not a bad thing. In terms of farming and our food supply, progress means returning to nature and a natural way of raising plants and animals. Stop adding chemicals to our food and telling us how good they are.

We are obese because our food is no longer nutritious. We are eating more calories in an attempt to consume the nutrients that are no longer there. We are fat and undernourished. And the people we rely upon for our daily bread fatten their check-books and remain apathetic.

Do the right thing by those who voted you in office, not by those who bought and are keeping you.

COMMENT OF ELEANOR PARISI-SHAW

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:36 p.m.

City, State: St. Petersburg, FL

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Our agricultural system is in need of drastic reform. Do not cut food stamps instead of subsidies; support organic farming; factory farms are killing us!

COMMENT OF DEBORA PARISOT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:01 p.m.

City, State: Earlville, IL

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: Please support H.R. 3286. I am very concerned about GMOs in food and my right to organic food. I live in a rural area and have been sprayed with aerial and ground pesticides. They are applied without regard to wind direction or the presence of humans. More and more research is showing the harm in GMO crops and pesticide use. The factory farm lobby should not be allowed to monopolize the debate.

COMMENT OF SOOHYEN PARK

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 10:55 p.m.

City, State: Brooklyn, NY

Occupation: Gardener

Comment: Dear Chairman Lucas,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony to the House Committee on Agriculture on the next farm bill. My district representative is being copied on this testimony. My name is Soohyen, and I had my first garden in Williamsburg, Brooklyn about 7 years ago. I have never gardened before, but soon realized that it was a blessing to come home after a tough job in the advertising industry, and be able to enjoy the garden bathed in setting sunlight and watch my tomatoes grow. It was a revelation when I bit into my first home-grown tomato. We've all forgotten what a real tomato should taste like. Now, I am trying to tend a quietly suffering Greenpoint garden back to health. As you may well know, Greenpoint soil is not recommended for growing food—as with many other areas of urban Brooklyn. Still, I feel it my duty to nurse the garden back to health, as much as I can, so that in time it would become a healthier place. This is good for me, for the next tenant, and ultimately it's crucial for our Mother Earth. I ask that the Committee endorse all of the provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236), including:

- Mandatory funding for Individual Development Accounts at \$5 million per year. This program helps new farmers raise capital to start farm businesses and is tested and proven by organizations like Practical Farmers of Iowa and the California Farmlink.
- Mandatory funding for the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program at \$25 million a year. This program funds essential education for new farmers around the country.
- Authorize a new microloan program, to enable young and beginning farmers to better access FSA loan programs.
- Revise FSA rules to make loan programs more accessible to more young and beginning farmers.
- Reaffirm the existing cost share differential for BFRs within EQIP. Also, reaffirm the advance payment option allowing beginning and socially disadvantaged producers to receive an advance payment for the project's costs for purchasing materials or contracting services, but increase the limit on the advance payment from 30 percent to 50 percent of costs.
- Amend the Farm and Ranch Land Protection Program (FRPP) to make farm viability part of the purpose of the program and to give discretionary authority to the eligible entities that implement the program to give priority to easements with an option to purchase at the agricultural use value, deals that transfer the land to beginning and farmers and ranchers, applicants with farm succession plans, and other similar mechanisms to maintain the affordability of protected land.

These and other provisions within the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act will help new growers succeed and I urge you to include them in the next farm bill.

Sincerely, and with Warmest Regards,
SOOHYEN PARK.

COMMENTS OF DEBORAH PARKER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:04 p.m.

City, State: Peekskill, NY

Occupation: GIS Specialist

Comment: U.S. food and agricultural policy must focus on adopting agricultural practices that best protect the health of American citizens, American farmland, air and waterways, and the livelihood of farmers and farm workers. These must be our top priorities, rather than the short-sighted profiteering and self-interest of industrial agriculture lobbyists and corporate agribusiness. Farmers and families everywhere need a fair and healthy farm bill. Congress also must not cut funding for vital nutrition and conservation programs, and must strengthen support for organic and sustainable agriculture programs and practices. America's health depends on clean, safe, wholesome foods, grown with our grandchildren in mind.

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 11:55 a.m.

Comment: U.S. food and agricultural policy must implement agricultural practices that protect the health of Americans, our land, water & air, and the livelihood of farmers and farm workers.

Corporate agribusiness must not be allowed to dictate our agricultural policy.

Farmers and families across the U.S. need a farm bill that does continues to fully fund vital nutrition and conservation programs, and supports organic and sustainable agriculture.

COMMENT OF JENNIFER PARKER

Date Submitted: Friday, March 16, 2012, 5:47 p.m.

City, State: Las Vegas, NV

Occupation: Administrative

Comment: We need any help we can possibly get to help people have food & fresh food. Please support any programs or bills to assist in this effort. No one should go hungry especially in our own country.

COMMENT OF MARY JO PARKER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:47 p.m.

City, State: Saint Paul, MN

Occupation: Market Research Analyst

Comment: To House Agriculture Committee Members:

I am an Iowa farm girl who has moved to the city of St. Paul, MN. I am a strong supporter of organic food for health reasons, and I purchase my food from sources I trust, including—my local coop, the local Farmers Market, and a CSA from a local organic farmer. My health has benefited greatly from the support I've found in this area of the country.

I understand that you are considering cutting funds for organic farming, and slashing funding for food stamps (I especially don't understand how slashing support for the most needy among us helps us as a nation). I want to make it clear about the aspects of the bill I do support. They include:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

I ask that you support these measures. Food is such an incredibly important aspect to health, and as a nation, we are in need of eating healthier foods. Support for organic farming will move us in the right direction . . . It may even help lower

health costs if you begin now to change farm policies away from “cheap food (unhealthy)” to “sustainable food (healthy)”. We need to move in this direction now.

Sincerely,

MARY JO PARKER.

COMMENT OF RANA PARKER

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 11:21 p.m.

City, State: Los Angeles, CA

Occupation: Dietitian

Comment: As a registered dietitian, I am concerned about the discrepancy between what crops our government subsidizes and the nutritional recommendations. If all Americans ate the recommended amount of fruits and vegetables, there wouldn't be enough to provide for them. The farm bill should better coincide with the nutritional recommendations to **Save** our country from the ruin of obesity & its consequences.

I also would like to see more support for small, organic farmers.

COMMENT OF RICHARD PARKER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:22 a.m.

City, State: Fresno, CA

Occupation: Hearing Reporter

Comment: We need a farm bill that supports safe, nutritious food from organic, sustainable agriculture. There is no place for over-medicating animals with antibiotics, sick, downer cows being fed genetically modified and heavily pesticide ridden grains in a sustainable, healthy food supply. This only adds to making an unhealthy population.

COMMENT OF STEVE PARKER

Date Submitted: Wednesday, April 25, 2012, 9:48 p.m.

City, State: Greenfield, NH

Occupation: Student

Comment: In order to understand the need for sustainable concepts being integrated into our lives we need to firstly understand the problem. Climate change, failing supplies of carbon based fuels and food supply to populations are three of the large issues we need consider. A target date of 2050 will be used to illustrate changes to come, though changes will not stop there.

Climate change is a well documented phenomenon. The tipping point for greenhouse gas based extinction is estimated at 350 ppm carbon dioxide. Our planet is presently at 393 ppm carbon dioxide. Here are some estimates of what this one factor will look like in 2050. Temperatures are expected to rise 5.4°. 70% of U.S. counties face water supply risks. World fisheries will have collapsed, both from over-fishing and changes to the ocean circulation and temperature. The ocean is forecast to rise by 20 inches; this will place over \$7 trillion in U.S. assets in jeopardy. More than one million species of plants and animals will be extinct. 50% of the permafrost is estimated to be melted, releasing large amounts of methane further warming the climate and rendering these areas uninhabitable. The ice caps are mostly gone. These factors will all combine to cause a change in the way we will be living.

It is hard to understand how deeply our present civilization relies upon petroleum. Medicine, technology and all economies need it for survival. Oil has allowed our population to grow and flourish. Oil production has been linked to population growth by allowing us to grow food, provide heat and cooling and develop economies based upon it. It in effect determines our carrying capacity as a species. The “Green Revolution” in the 1970's and 1980's allowed us to fend off a global crisis in food supply with oil based fertilizers and pesticides. As oil production decreases so will our population. Oil production will be around 20% of today's numbers by 2050. Depending on which of the variety of scenarios you look at for the year 2050 the carrying capacity of our planet will be between 2 and 3.5 billion. Losing cheap energy from oil will change the way we get our food and produce our products. No longer will we be able to transport our goods long distances.

Economies will become more local because it will no longer be possible or profitable to travel long distances. It is ironic that the discovery of plentiful oil has led to such growth in culture and populations. The same discovery created the pollution levels that will plague our planet for thousands of years and as the supply diminishes the culture and population will also. So though you don't hear about it much global warming, the population boom and oil use are really all the same subject.

Estimating food supply for future generations brings up an area of contention amongst scientists. What will our population be by 2050? Population scientists say it will grow to 9 billion by 2050. Global warming scientists estimate we will lose $\frac{1}{3}$ of our population in that time due to loss of farming land, disease and famine. The scientists that study oil impacts think our population will drop by $\frac{2}{3}$ just from the decline of oil in our society. It is hard to believe this kind of change can occur but somewhere in the future, most estimates locate the big die off around 2030, growing populations, falling energy reserves and food shortages will bring about a change in our population. How many can survive depends on how many people we can feed locally. The Dark ages, the little ice age and the great wars are all examples of population losses. This is the first time we are looking at the implications of this kind of population loss where we can choose to do something about it beforehand.

What kind of change can we expect in economies by 2050? Financial studies show China outgrowing the United States by 2030 and India passing our country by 2050 from an economic viewpoint. These reports are based on limitless resources and cannot be considered accurate representations of a business market. This helps illustrate an issue with business models. They have yet to incorporate factors that involve world issues. If only 20% of fossil fuels remain in 2050 then there must be a similar impact upon manufacturing, transportation and economies but today's future models seem blind to the any facts about changes. If world supply of petroleum products is at 20% of today's levels it is logical to assume most of that product will be used by the world's militaries to control the remaining supplies. Add to this the affects of global warming on our ability to conduct our lives and what do you have? Lessened populations and more local economies will become the trend for our near future. No longer will growth be the norm in future business. Growth will be the adversary. These are some of the reasons we need to start thinking about sustainable lifestyles and now we know what to design our sustainable systems around, the decline of petroleum products.

Roughly $\frac{2}{3}$ of petroleum products in industrialized nations are used for transportation. The bulk of the remainder is used in industrial processes. If the remaining 20% of oil production is used by militaries, governments and law enforcement there is not much left for public use. Transportation in the near future is our first issue whether it is in business or food production. Present trends in local agriculture to help feed people are not going to change. Sustainable food production is one area of our future that shows great promise. Most rural areas will be able to provide their own food. This will in time require towns to produce their own commodities like corn and wheat as well as vegetables and meat. The urban areas present a different problem. There are not enough land areas to feed the numbers of people. Without the ability to transport food into these areas people will need to move to other areas with more available land for producing their food.

Today's sustainable food systems are building local food hubs just outside these urban areas to give local farmers the capability to gather their food products for distribution, however as time progresses these lands will become needed to grow commodities, meat and crops for the people who live there. The urban areas will need to spread out their populations in order to be able to provide for themselves. The carrying capacity of the United States is estimated around 200 million, so right now we have 110 million people who we won't be able to feed. Densely populated nations like China and India face much worse population losses. Third world countries face greater challenges from global warming than oil depletion. Most of these areas are more sensitive to climate change because they are already much closer to water and crop heat stresses than they are dependent on oil for resources.

Transportation issues in the field of businesses become much harder to estimate. Importation of raw materials needed to produce our products becomes expensive in the near future. Indeed even importing manufactured goods soon becomes too costly. It is possible that large ocean going transports will become nuclear but the issue of transportation turns our present business model on its ear. It becomes an issue of what you need to manufacture more than what want to manufacture. The production of electricity relies upon bio-mass, coal and nuclear for the most part. Though the cost of electricity will soon go up we can at least count on a supply to manufacture our needed products. We can grow cotton and raise wool for production of textiles and manufacturing of clothing and blankets, though these businesses will need to be small and local because you will need produce, manufacture and distribute in the same areas. What else can we manufacture without the ability to transport over long distances? If we grow our own food and clothing and have a supply of electricity what else do we need?

Education has evolved along with our population. There have been great adjustments to today's schools as educators try to prepare students for the changing land-

scape. Luckily education can be refocused easily as events unfold in the future. This is another area of our culture that is preparing for our future. Virtual campuses will continue to grow. After all who should best be able to anticipate the upcoming events but our teachers? Schools will remain open and the next thirty years should be an exciting time to teach and learn.

Medical practices are necessary and will need to be redesigned as our lives change. The insurance industry will have collapsed somewhere along the road to 2050 as well as the ability to mass produce medicine for the public. Again we will have to rely on local sources to produce medicinal herbs. The concept of eating and living healthy will become more of a solution to health issues than today's expensive operations and healthcare.

Technology production uses huge amounts of oil and the raw materials are widely scattered on the planet so this field will be restricted to recycling of present materials with most products being used to maintain government and state institutions. Phones and One and two way radio service will likely replace expensive televisions and computers for our means of communication.

Fossil fuel cars will soon become a part of the past. Hydrogen fuel cells are about 30 to 40 years from practical service. Electric cars and trucks will most likely soon dominate the transportation field though in much reduced fashion. Without cheap energy these vehicles will be too expensive to be affordable for general use. Walking, bicycling and horses will be much more practical.

In looking at today's stock market the entire system relies upon trading over long distance. As our world changes so will the stock market. This system will break up and making money this way will be obsolete. It is likely that the industrialized nations will return to much more local stock markets as seen in earlier centuries. Trading of commodities like salt, lime and recycled products is likely to grow while other markets diminish. The trading of seeds, animals and other food products will replace higher tech items.

These types of forced lifestyle changes have huge impacts on economies. The concept of making what we need in local areas will consume most of our efforts. Money starts to become an issue. What do communities as groups produce to sell? Some type of cash crop or local business. We no longer travel out to our jobs. We make our money in areas near home. Do tax systems survive? What happens to the national debt? The huge budgets that operate our present countries will no longer be available. The countries may still exist they just won't exist in the same fashion. The organizations of today all base their design on growth. From town structure to the largest organizations and governments all based on growth. If population declines the revenues decline, the remaining population inherits this debt either in the form of taxes or cost to purchase a product. This can continue for a short time but will eventually lead to collapse of the associated systems. This is what I call, "The Chicken Little hypothesis".

Today's organizations can use organizational thought to streamline the inputs and outputs of the product lines. Conceptual thought will dissolve unions, cut pay and trim insurance packages. As the cost of transportation rises we use conceptual thought to build industry first near the market, then near the raw resource. The same cycle of organizational thought and conceptual thought occurs at each step. Streamline operations then cut pay, insurance and automate industry. It is easy to think there will be some great breakthrough in energy or technology that will allow us to grant future generations access to comforts we have without the pollution costs; however there is not enough nuclear fuel to power the world for very long and Nuclear, Solar, wind, hydrogen and water power cannot scale up before fossil fuels collapse. We will still end up at "The Chicken Little hypothesis".

We need a solution beyond today's concepts of sustainability. Conceptual thought would say, think further outside the box. We are working with a finite resource, so it needs to be conserved enough to scale up replacement energy sources. Here Organizational thought can help us develop these industries. Our first and only priority is to slow the present use of petroleum products until we can replace it with other energy sources. This should be good for economies, new industry, streamlining existing structures, focusing on local agriculture and business when possible to conserve fuels. The world needs to at least agree upon this one issue.

If every human went outside and yelled "stop" we may hear it said worldwide but probably things would not change. To wait for the "burning platform" style of business reform really doesn't work because the sky falls. There may be some galvanizing event similar to a "burning platform" that would galvanize organizations to act in unison. This could also occur with the general population as things get tougher all around the planet. There certainly are a lot of uprisings this year. Conceptual thought demands a quick response while organizational thought is busy streamlining. However it occurs, it will occur.

COMMENT OF SUSAN PARKER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:15 p.m.
City, State: Port Townsend, WA
Occupation: Herbalist/Natural Products
Comment: Without the health of the whole; Earth, people, soil, wildlife and farm animals there will only be death and disease. Put health first then all that is good will follow.

COMMENTS OF TAMMY PARKER

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 16, 2012 12:10 a.m.
Occupation: Academic/Researcher
City, State: Pullman, WA
Comment: I am a community food security researcher. We must fund small and beginning farmers and SNAP programs if we are to improve food security for all. Big Ag can fund itself; let's put our scarce money where it will do the most good and make the most difference.
Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:31 a.m.
Comment: The farm bill needs to support more small and local producers, not big ag who has all the money they could ever need to push their nefarious products on farmers and obese Americans. It makes no sense at all to subsidize commodity crops that either don't produce food or is used to produce food-like substances that are the primary cause of the obesity epidemic we face, which has created the health care crisis. The farm bill should allocate money only to organizations that will ultimately make our country more food secure by making healthy, nutritious food available to more people. SNAP programs deserve funding, these are the types of programs that will enhance American food security.

COMMENTS OF ROBERT PARKER STELLATO

Date Submitted: Friday, April 27, 2012, 4:07 p.m.
City, State: Redwood City, CA
Occupation: Unemployed Aircraft Mechanic
Comment: Family Farms are the backbone of this nation and has been since before the U.S. Revolution. Family Farms need the financial support of our nation to continue to put necessary food on our table and keep the U.S. economy healthy and vibrant. This is not so with Corporate, and Big Agra farms. They destroy the land, pollute our waterways, and drive the Family Farmer out of business. If any cuts to our budget in Agriculture must be made, it must be made from the subsidies made to Big Agra and Corporate Farming, not the Family Farmers!
Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 2:52 p.m.
Comment: Farm subsidies should only be offered to family farm, farmed by their owner farmers, not agricultural corporations! Family farms must be preserved even at the expense of corporate farms!
Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:04 p.m.
Comment: Subsidies for family farmer only, not for corporate agriculture!

COMMENT OF EMMY PARKES

Date Submitted: Thursday, April 26, 2012, 12:05 p.m.
City, State: Oxford, MS
Occupation: Registered Dietitian
Comment: Dear Congressmen,
 I am greatly concerned about your recent proposal for the farm bill, particular the cuts to SNAP and NSLP. These are programs that help millions of people every day. They are not free "handouts". Many of these people work and work very hard, long hours, but because of the types of jobs, medical problems, or other family situations are unable to afford good, healthy food without SNAP.
 I am also concerned about the cuts to the conservation programs. I think these programs are important in order to preserve our future food supply.
 Yes, I realize there is a deficit and I do support efforts to cut costs. I would like to see the amount of money given to corn, wheat, and soy growers decreased or possibly even cut completely. If a farm is consistently making >\$150,000 a year, it should not need to rely on Federal support. Furthermore, Federal support of corn, wheat, and soy are one reason that "junk foods" can be sold so cheaply but fresh fruits and vegetables often cost much more. We are also facing a health crisis in this nation and if people don't have access to inexpensive, healthy foods, we will

only increase the number of people who are obese, have high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes, and other health problems.

I believe that Federal money should go to those who need it the most—people on SNAP, small farmers, and farmers of what is usually termed “specialty crops”. Please consider improving the quality of life for millions of Americans instead of rewarding large corporations that contribute to the making of cheap junk food and thus decrease the quality of life for millions of Americans.

Sincerely,

EMMY PARKES.

COMMENT OF NANCY PARMAN

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 10, 2012, 12:41 p.m.

City, State: Oak Park, IL

Occupation: Spanish Teacher and Food Shelter Volunteer

Comment: I've served a lot in many food pantries. There are so many people in need. There are so many people who can barely feed their families and themselves. Please **Don't Cut SNAP!** Many people need food shelters **On Top Of** what they get in food stamps. Please don't cut SNAP!

COMMENT OF PINITO PARRA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:13 p.m.

City, State: Torrance, CA

Occupation: Medical Student

Comment: We don't need or want artificial foods! We want what is grown naturally and are organic! You people in the house committee are our watch dogs to make sure we are not only getting food that are safe, but are best in quality. You know perfectly well that foods that have been altered in some way are not healthy. So foods that are slimed, made with preservatives, food coloring, emulsifiers, or bleached need not be sold to us. The bottom line is: nature's organic made products will lead to a healthy nation.

COMMENT OF JOE PARRETTE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:31 p.m.

City, State: Saco, ME

Occupation: Engineer

Comment: Please add a tax to GMO producer products so we can know what foods contain GMO's. I call this the Bailey tax. This tax will require all foods that contain GMO products to have a tax stamp. Ms. Pingree, I know you work hard for your constituents.

JOE.

COMMENT OF JACK PARRIS

Date Submitted: Monday, May 07, 2012, 8:32 p.m.

City, State: Tucson, AZ

Occupation: Public Relations Manager

Comment: Please support the farm bill—I see families in need every day and we cannot afford to abandon these people who no fault of their own need help.

COMMENT OF MICHAEL PARRY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:19 p.m.

City, State: Holland, PA

Occupation: Retired Teacher

Comment: Please restore funding for sustainable agriculture and end subsidies for factory farms. America needs organically farmed foods for its survival.

COMMENT OF PATRICIA PARSONS

Date Submitted: Saturday, April 28, 2012, 9:17 a.m.

City, State: Chicago, IL

Occupation: Unemployed Accountant

Comment: I encourage the House Committee on Agriculture to strengthen funding for TEFAP, a critical source of emergency food for the most vulnerable, and sup-

port SNAP in the farm bill. Please oppose proposals that would change SNAP's structure or reduce funding, restrict eligibility or reduce benefits.
Thank You.

COMMENT OF DEENA PARTY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:19 p.m.
City, State: Oak Park, CA
Comment: Please Do not cut money from organic farming or from nutrition. Cut it from big agricultural companies who could stop wasting their excessive lobbying money and invest in their companies so us tax payers can put the money where it is truly needed.

COMMENT OF DORENE PASEKOFF

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 16, 2012, 9:05 a.m.
City, State: Phoenixville, PA
Producer/Non-producer: Producer
Type: Specialty Crops
Size: Less than 50 acres
Comment: As a new farmer, I have really benefited from the Outreach and Technical Assistance for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers Program—please increase the funding of this program so that new farmers such as myself can get the help we need to be successful in farming and help feed our communities.
Speaking of feeding our communities, the following programs should be supported as follows:

- Community Food Projects Program—\$10 million per year to help communities build food self-reliance.
- Farmers Market and Local Food Promotion Program—\$20 million per year to develop farmers market capacity and create food hubs to connect farmers with schools, hospitals, grocery stores and other markets.(This would help farmers such as myself gain access to institutional markets)
- Hunger-Free Community Incentive Grants—An average of \$20 million per year for a new SNAP local fruit and vegetable incentive grant program at farmers markets and other healthy food retailers.

Meanwhile, please do not cut SNAP funding—there are too many hungry people in Southeastern PA who depend on this funding.

COMMENT OF RICHARD PASICHNYK

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 8:35 p.m.
City, State: Eugene, OR
Occupation: President of Nonprofit
Comment: Organic farmers need to be protected from GMO contamination. There should be a focus on organic farming as it requires less energy expenditure than chemical agriculture, and therefore, it has less of a carbon footprint. Also it requires less resources, such as those used to produce chemicals (*i.e.*, minerals, petroleum, *etc.*). Therefore, the farm bill should include funding for organic farming.

COMMENT OF DAWN PASKOWICZ

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 3:45 p.m.
City, State: Watton, MI
Occupation: Retired Teacher, Social Worker
Comment: The replacing of family farms with agribusiness has turned out to be a nightmare. The business has lowered the quality and safety of food. The farming chemicals used and the loss of fertile top soil is diminishing rapidly under this system. Family farmers are trustworthy and willing to work with consumer's preferences. Agribusiness is neither.
DAWN PASKOWICZ.

COMMENT OF JAMES PASQUARIELLO

Date Submitted: Monday, April 30, 2012, 10:57 a.m.
City, State: Boston, MA
Occupation: Executive Director
Comment: Please protect SNAP. Children's HealthWatch (*childrenshealthwatch.org*) research demonstrates that continuing to fund SNAP at

the ARRA-stimulus level increases the rate of children being well. Heat/eat provisions also make an important difference in cash-strapped states that would give people more needed heating assistance funding if more were available. Categorical eligibility brings SNAP benefits to many populations with high need, while reducing administrative costs. SNAP and other family food assistance programs are critical investments in our nation's future.

COMMENT OF JOANNE PASSMORE

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 12:40 p.m.

City, State: Allegan, MI

Occupation: Retired Nurse Aide

Comment: Please stop with all the genetically made foods and stop the pesticides. You are letting other **Kill** all of us. I try to grow my own vegetables and I buy locally from farmers, but **Only** if they aren't using poison on the crops. Organic and true organic foods, nothing with pesticides on them . . . Please, you are letting big farms damage us and our children, to say nothing of our soil and air.

COMMENT OF JOANN W. PASTERNAK

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 4:10 p.m.

City, State: Mendota Heights, MN

Occupation: Veterinarian

Comment: Provide sound and robust funding for voluntary conservation programs. An investment in farm bill conservation delivers positive outcomes that benefit everyone. Protecting soil and enhancing water quality are long-term investments in food security and health that ultimately act as cost-saving measures as well as an economic stimulus. Prioritize the Conservation Title by funding it at the current baseline average of \$6 billion a year.

Re-establish the stewardship compact that ensures basic soil and water conservation on American farmland receiving farm bill subsidies. The Federal crop insurance program has evolved to become the largest farm bill subsidy provided to agricultural producers. Subsidizing risk can create an incentive for taking serious risks with our natural resources. Re-attach the same basic stewardship obligations that apply to other farm bill subsidies (provisions known as "Conservation Compliance") to combat unintended destructive consequences of taxpayer-subsidized crop insurance.

Please also consider sourcing our food donations to needy countries in the same geographic area, instead of shipping American grains, *etc.* half-way across the world, which is wasteful and inefficient.

Thank you,

JOANN W. PASTERNAK.

COMMENT OF SUSAN S. PASTIN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 4:45 p.m.

City, State: Chicago, IL

Occupation: Knowledge Worker

Comment: Will You Please Stop Undermining Our Nation? We need a farm bill that promotes organic and sustainable agriculture. We need enough Food Stamps funding that no child goes hungry. What we do **Not** need is subsidies to huge agribusiness interests! Do that and you'll prove any talk about fiscal responsibility is fraudulent on your part!

COMMENT OF GREG PATENT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:53 a.m.

City, State: Missoula, MT

Occupation: Writer

Comment: The food farm bill should have as its top priority a system to produce healthful, organically grown food for the entire U.S. population. End the corn subsidy which drains enormous funds for a crop of dubious value.

COMMENT OF ANGELA PATNODE

Date Submitted: Monday, May 14, 2012, 10:37 a.m.

City, State: Madison, WI

Occupation: Engineer

Comment: I support organic farming, local, small-scale, and start-up farming, and land, air, and water conservation. I want a farm bill that includes financial and policy support for chemical-free agriculture and environmental stewardship. Thank you.

COMMENT OF CYNTHIA PATRICK

Date Submitted: Friday, April 13, 2012, 5:29 p.m.

City, State: Albuquerque, NM

Occupation: Special Education Teacher

Comment: I am a Special Education Teacher in a Title I school. 100% of our students receive free breakfast and lunch at our school. Many of my students do not have enough food in their homes.

As a staff we donate food for food baskets to some of our more hungry students for holiday breaks. My take-home pay has decreased so much in the last 5 years, that I couldn't afford to help this year.

Before Winter Break, I called CYFD about a family because I was concerned that the kids would not eat during that 17 days.

It is really hard in these economic times for more and more families. Please give as much money as you can to these programs that help our most needy children.

We don't want other world leading countries to start sending money to our starving children right here in the United States of America!

Thank you,

CYNTHIA PATRICK.

COMMENT OF DONNYL PATTERSON

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:33 p.m.

City, State: Augusta, GA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Do not cut funding for the vital programs such as nutrition, conservation and support for organic and sustainable agriculture. This is vital for all people including yourselves. You have been elected to represent the people!

COMMENT OF JONA PATTERSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:53 p.m.

City, State: Washougal, WA

Occupation: Teacher and Clean Food Advocate

Comment: The time has come to level the playing field for Big Ag and the regular farmers who started this industry.

It's time to get rid of the subsidies that are no longer needed. Big Ag is doing just fine on its own. If anyone needs subsidies, it's small community-based farmers who are trying to eke out a living by tending the land, the crops that grow in it and the animals that graze on it. These farmers are the true heroes of our times. The ones who are still in this business even when their rights are being infringed upon through corporate bureaucracy and unfair rules, designed to make them fail or become so infuriated or fed up that they want to quit. We need these farmers who are committed to providing healthy, clean food to the growing population that is demanding that farming "get back to its roots."

There is a very large contingent of people who are beyond frustrated with the direction our food system is going. We need a turn-around. Much has been said about Americans becoming some of the most overweight, most unhealthy and most sick people on Earth. Is that really how we want to represent our country? Weight and health are influenced by many factors, but the most important factors involve food and activity. It is common sense to understand that healthy food choices and an active lifestyle lead to healthy people who do not require medications for an array of weight-induced issues or medical services that are already strained. Small, community-based farmers need to be given the opportunity and support to grow organic, healthy food, keeping money in the local community, keeping the environment cleaner, keeping food options sustainable, and keeping people healthier. They can't do that the way the system is set up now.

I fully endorse all of the provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).

I fully support funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.

I fully back the implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).

And I demand maintenance of the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Profits and personal gain, which is what our current food system is based on, do not buy health or longevity. Nor do they equal a clear conscience. Get rid of Big Ag subsidies, support the programs which seek to do good in this country, and get America back on track, for the sake of our future.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF SKYE PATTERSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:55 a.m.

City, State: Lovettsville, VA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Healthy, organic, **Non-GMO** foods are very important to me. We cannot sustain the practices of commercial farms. And our world cannot survive GMO crops . . . they are poisoning our Earth and our bodies. Congress needs to step up and educate themselves—they are too deep in the “pockets” of commercial farming and all their propaganda.

COMMENT OF ERIK PATTISON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:39 p.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Information and Referral

Comment: I support the movement to local food providers and believe it is of the utmost importance that we support these vital local community resources. Not only does this movement provide the community with jobs and relationships but it feels like the real American way! This farm bill needs to support the sustainable future and not the massive agribusiness that has dominated our food policy for so long. As a young man thinking (and very doubtful/worried) about the future and starting a family I hope that my FDA, USDA and government can stop regurgitating our tax money into the hands of massive companies and begin supporting the little people.

I would like to ask for:

- The full edorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

I would like to ask for this in solidarity with the many groups that consistently fight for the rights our grandparents had and we have lost.

COMMENT OF CHRIS PATTON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:16 a.m.

City, State: Minneapolis, MN

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Specialty Crops

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: At 62 I cannot retire, so I have borrowed money to start a new business in farming specialty berries and marketing products produced from them. My grandfather lost his farm in 1929, and I am trying to get one back into the family, though much smaller. Capital assistance at start-up is crucial and creates many more jobs than unemployment extensions. Pleas support the new farmer and organic farming initiatives—especially those through NRCS.

COMMENT OF MARLENE PATTON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:07 p.m.

City, State: Woodbridge, VA

Occupation: Trainer of Property Software Systems

Comment: Locally grown organic foods are so important to me and my family. I am a young professional and I lost both of my parents too early to cardiac disease

and cancer. We decided as a family to try to reduce the amount of toxicity in the foods we eat. Local farms allow us to do that. We don't just want healthier food for us. We want it for the whole community! Please use your congressional power to help us keep farmers markets and local farms alive. Thank you so much for your help.

COMMENT OF ROBERT PATTON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:18 p.m.

City, State: Louisville, KY

Comment: It would be so refreshing to see our elected officials to start voting on issues that are **Good** for the country and stop voting on what is best for the party.

Are you listening John Yarmuth?

What Is At Stake? In 1985, American taxpayers and farmers entered into a compact to provide a safety net for the country's food producers in return for protection of critical natural resources. Known as "conservation compliance," this policy requires farmers to follow conservation plans that limit soil erosion on highly erodible land as well as preventing destruction of wetlands and native grasslands. Farmers who willfully violate their conservation plans risk losing taxpayer funded benefits.

Today, this important connection is at risk. Taxpayer-funded subsidies for crop insurance are not currently linked to conservation compliance as they once were. In the current farm bill debate, Congress is considering eliminating Direct Payments, the major subsidy program that is linked to conservation compliance, and move some of those funds to support increased subsidies for crop insurance, which currently lacks compliance requirements. Unless Congress connects crop insurance subsidies to conservation compliance, a significant part of farmers' incentive to follow conservation plans will disappear this year.

In order to ensure that the agricultural safety net works in harmony with conservation programs and responsible land uses, conservation compliance provisions must be strengthened and enforced.

COMMENT OF MORGAINE PAUKER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:37 p.m.

City, State: Westport, CT

Occupation: Parent

Comment: In order to meet the serious challenges of the 21st century, U.S. agricultural policy the farm bill must shift its focus from creating cheap commodities and artificially propping up income for farmers, toward implementing the best agricultural practices for sustainable and organic production methods.

Too much of mainstream agriculture has focused on an increasing reliance on chemicals and biotech engineered seeds. The people don't want this laboratory food evidenced by the majority of the public who want GMO food labeled.

If Congress and the current Administration are serious about the health of America's citizens, our environment and the economic viability of independently owned family farms, they will support organic farming and sustainable agriculture not big business because of their lobbying power.

Let's implement a \$25 billion plan to transition to organic food and farming production, to make sure that 75 percent of U.S. farms are U.S.D.A. organic certified by 2025.

- Create school farms and feed organic food to all children enrolled in public school lunch programs by the year 2020.
- Pass a Beginning Farmer and Rancher Bill to place a million new farmers on the land by 2020.
- Link conservation compliance with government-subsidized insurance programs and create a cutoff so each farm receives government funds for land only up to 1,000 acres.

The implementation of these proposals will ensure that our nation's children are fed the healthiest meals, our environment is preserved for future generations and farmers make a sustainable living.

COMMENT OF DIANA PAUKSTA

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 8:34 p.m.

City, State: Warner Robins, GA

Occupation: USAF Program Manager

Comment: I fully support and urge you to support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

This is supposed to be a capitalist democratic society, is it not? Only by allowing citizens to know and have a part in where their food comes from, as well as giving them their God-given right to choose what they eat and thus put in their bodies, will we ever move past the hypocrisy that plagues our Government now. Congress has no approval now, and it's because the electorate feels that you have all sold out to the highest bidder. Please do the right thing and support food quality and public health. Thank you.

COMMENT OF BRITTANY PAUL

Date Submitted: Friday, March 30, 2012, 7:27 p.m.

City, State: Fayetteville, AR

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: I'm a small farmer getting an online degree in environmental law and policy and am concerned about the privatization of our food systems. In order to ensure that we have a diversified food market and maintain our local economies, we must take measures to do so through this bill. You need to be supporting the Local Farms, Food, and Jobs Act, the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act and conservation programs (especially research for seed-saving/heirloom/climate-change resistant crops!).

- Farmers depend on quality, cutting-edge research to stay successful—how will the farm bill invest in this crucial work?
- Working lands conservation programs help farmers maintain productivity while protecting our air, water, and soil. Will you protect these programs from unfair funding cuts?

COMMENT OF CHERIE PAUL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:06 p.m.

City, State: Houston, TX

Occupation: Clothing Designer

Comment: Please:

- Don't let Congress cut \$4 million from organic research funding and cut in half funding to support Beginning Farmers.
- Support in every way possible true **Organic** farming practices, farmers and labeling
- **The Labeling Of All GMO content foods—All!** We know Monsanto is buying everyone off in their global domination efforts—don't let them! It's BAD for business, people and the economy long-term.

Thank you!

CHERIE PAUL.

COMMENT OF ROSALIE PAUL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:17 p.m.

City, State: Georgetown, ME

Occupation: Retired Teacher

Comment: We need to focus on sustainable practices around food production and marketing. We need to stop GMO's, promote organics and permaculture, and avoid all chemicals that pollute the soil, the water table, the air and the food itself.

COMMENT OF STEPHEN PAULEY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 2:21 p.m.

City, State: Ketchum, ID

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I oppose CAFO's—beef and poultry industries. Manure is entering the water tables. Hormones and antibiotics are in the water that becomes drinking water for humans. I oppose fracking that allows chemicals into water tables. I oppose the massive subsidies that go to corn growers who grow corn to make high fructose corn syrup that is the primary cause of obesity. Why subsidize illnesses like diabetes and heart disease? We're killing Americans with farm subsidies like these. I favor aggressive testing of water supplies for cities. We must test for **All** chemicals in the water. I think that autism and birth defects can be traced to such contamination, but only if we test for **All** chemicals—drugs, hormones, *etc.* The public's health is more important than the farm vote. I oppose all big AG PAC contributions to politicians. Please work for the public, not for your re-election.

COMMENT OF DEBORAH PAULS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:57 p.m.

City, State: Stamford, CT

Occupation: Social Worker

Comment: There are two aspects of the farm bill that I am concerned about. I want support for the poor and unemployed to continue in the form of Food Stamps, school lunches and the various programs that support the well being of the most vulnerable among us. I also want to support programs that encourage eating locally such as CSA's and small farmers. I am very concerned for the poor quality food that is being produced by agribusiness and typically the beginning of over-processed foods that are expensive and unhealthy.

COMMENT OF JERRY PAULSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:54 a.m.

City, State: Caledonia, IL

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Field Crops, Greenhouse/nursery

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Please support the funding levels for Agricultural land easements in the Senate bill, and restore the existing match formula for the FRPP to encourage bargain sales and allow waivers of the match requirements for strategic projects.

COMMENT OF LAURA PAWLACYK

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 9:51 a.m.

City, State: Minneapolis, MN

Occupation: Professional Fire Fighter/EMT

Comment: I am a full believer in organic, sustainable, local agriculture. I harvest wild rice in the state of MN, I also have been making real maple syrup from real maple trees every spring for the past 18 years. I grow some of my own food in my own garden. I shop at local farmers markets all summer. I want to buy healthy, non-GMO food **Every** time I shop.

I fully endorse all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R.3286). I believe in small farmers, small farms, producing healthy food without the use of environmentally damaging chemicals. I am asking you to maintain the EQIP Organic Initiative and fully fund conservation programs and make sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs. I ask you to implement all of the provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).

This land that we live on is a gift to us and it needs to be respected. We need to honor and protect the Earth for future generations. We also need to allow small farmers the opportunity to grow and earn a living from their produce and animals.

Respectfully submitted,

LAURA PAWLACYK.

COMMENT OF DR. JACK PAXTON

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 1:40 p.m.

City, State: Urbana, IL

Occupation: Professor University of Illinois

Comment: I did research in Agriculture for 32 years at the University of Illinois. During that time I was dismayed that no progress was made in creating a sustainable agriculture system for our vulnerable food system. It is now time to revive

LISA and create a truly sustainable food production system that addresses the multiple problems created by our present Ag system. I am aware of the intensive lobbying by Agribusiness that works against this effort. Our survival, in my humble opinion, depends on weaning Congress from the corrosive effects of special interests guiding important policy decisions.

Sincerely,

DR. JACK PAXTON.

COMMENT OF LARAMIE PAXTON

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 2:22 a.m.

City, State: Trinidad, CA

Occupation: Educator

Comment: As an organic, local, and sustainable agriculture supporter, I am writing to voice my concern regarding the influence of large-scale, corporate agriculture to the detriment of healthy food, land, air, and waterways and independent local farms. Therefore, please ensure that this year's farm bill includes the full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286) and requires conservation program fulfillment and compliance for any insurance subsidies programs. There can be no such thing as free money for irresponsible agricultural practices.

Furthermore, it is essential that America feed its people and not turn away starving citizens in exchange for protected profits through generous subsidies to large corporate agriculture. Please investigate splitting the necessary spending reductions equally between crop/insurance subsidies and safety net programs like WIC/food stamps.

Please support the implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236) as well, and perhaps most importantly, maintain the EQIP Organic Initiative in order to provide long term research and sustainable alternatives in agricultural practices that replenish and nurture the land, people and waterways, as opposed to damaging and poisoning them with reckless soil management and dangerous chemicals.

COMMENT OF CAROL PAYNE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:13 p.m.

City, State: Hot Springs Village, AR

Occupation: Artist

Comment: Please, please vote for everything that protects our food supply and our choices of food—even as far as choosing raw milk. Let us keep our freedoms and quit telling us that you know best. This also includes marking GMO products and choosing not to have our children stuck 35 or so times with what are really untested vaccines.

Think about your own children ingesting all those chemicals and pesticides.

Sincerely,

CAROL PAYNE.

COMMENT OF LIA PAYNE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:31 p.m.

City, State: Missoula, MT

Occupation: Elementary Teacher

Comment: Dear Representatives of the people of the United States,

In your crafting of the farm bill, please maintain the EQIP Organic Initiative and endorse all provisions of the local Foods, Farms, and Jobs Act (H.R. 3236). In addition, please fully fund conservation programs such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies is directly tied to compliance with such conservation programs. Additionally, please implement all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).

We want the farm bill to represent the well-being of the people of this nation, assuring healthy food, the ability of small and new farmers to make a living by farming, the preservation of our nation's soil, its waters, its wildlife, and the genetic diversity of its agricultural and natural resources.

Thank you,

LIA PAYNE.

COMMENT OF COLLEEN PEA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:31 p.m.

City, State: Indianapolis, IN

Occupation: Legal Secretary

Comment: It is past time that the government stop using taxpayers hard earned money to subsidize GMOs. The scientific evidence concerning GMOs clearly demonstrates the health concerns presented by these “innovative” and irresponsible means of production. Organic farming is better for the consumer **And** better for the environment. It is unethical that real, pesticide free, organic produce suffer such a mark-up at the market and is hardly available. People are realizing that organic goods are what they need and want but, often times, cannot afford. Provide farmers an incentive to go organic; to lower greenhouse gases; to stop killing bees and butterflies; to stop assisting in creating super bacteria and pesticide-immune insects and so on. Stop poisoning the population by injecting inexpensive foods with subsidized, GMO corn. Take responsibility for the obesity epidemic in America. Exercise some foresight in crop production so that the longevity of the Earth’s fertility can span beyond just the end of your lifespan. Get out of bed with big agricultural business. Stop heading the FDA and USDA with former Monsanto lobbyists and affiliates. Encourage food producers to practice ecologically responsible and ethical farming. Growth hormones and antibiotics are **Huge** contributors to disease in the United States. There truly is a simple solution to so many health and environmental issues in this nation: **Organic Farming**. Make this farm bill reform part of your legacy. Regain worldwide respect. I plead with you insistently, please support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

COMMENT OF SUE PEACHEY

Date Submitted: Monday, April 23, 2012, 2:32 p.m.

City, State: Pratt, KS

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Field Crops

Size: 1,000+ acres

Comment: A good argument can be made that since the crop insurance program will serve as the foundation for the 2012 Farm Bill and beyond, that foundation should be strengthened, not weakened. As we have heard over and over from bankers, producers, agents, and also every Ag related business, do no further harm to the crop insurance program. After the devastating year that we just lived through, it is evident that crop insurance works and works well. The Congress did not hear thousands of calls for a disaster assistance program because their crop policy is working well for the farmer and with the banker for the operating loan collateral today for the producer to stay in business again this year.

We as agents and as companies have given over \$12 billion in cuts to our program since the 2008 farm bill and thru the SRA agreement last year. We have given our fair share from the Ag business community. We also believe in being fiscally sound and under the magnitude of the budget crisis in this country, we are not the big ticket item in the farm bill. SNAP are food stamps program makes up the largest part of the budget and everyone should be giving at the table. We do believe in helping the children and families in our country that truly need the assistance. Why should farmers and the rural communities always be the only place that Congress is looking to cut? We know a lot of urban people do not find the farm bill discussions important but this country has always had an abundance of food and farmers and ranchers are the reason that it is possible in our country.

As a person who has always been involved in farming as a child growing up on a farm, to being a landowner and wife of a farmer today and also as a crop insurance agent since 1988, we do understand we are in difficult times but don’t ruin what works. We work hard as insurance agents and are 24/7 to our producers to help with all aspects of their risk management decisions. We are their trusted choice and the 2012 farm bill should continue to utilize the experience and expertise of independent insurance agents that are the small businesses in all the small rural communities in Kansas and across the United States. FSA (Nascoe union) had the

program in the past and it did not work and at a higher price than what we were paid to take over the public-private government program. This past year we had the largest amount of acres ever covered with the MPCl programs. Waiting until 2013 will only increase pressure to slash spending and lower our baseline for the farm bill. Please take action this session and remember the Ag community is not the only group at the table.

Thank you for the consideration.

SUE PEACHEY,
Insurance Agent and Farmer,
Pratt KS.

COMMENT OF HANNAH PEALSTROM

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:13 a.m.

City, State: Bellingham, WA

Occupation: Student

Comment: Subsidies are promoting large commodity crops when the government needs to be promoting grass roots, organic, small and local farming. I frequent my city's farmers market to avoid buying into this government run system that is obviously flawed, as millions go hungry each day. More resources should be going towards those making sustainable efforts in farming, who will keep our ecosystem from failing and reduce pollution and pesticide runoff. I feel that the FDA and the government are still looking for the cheapest and most convenient way of feeding people. With how important food and nutrition is to very person's health, this economic way of handling food and food sources is grossly elementary and needs to evolve. A lack of promotion by the government towards big-agriculture alternatives is hurting local farmers who could do so much more with a small amount of government help. Stop subsidizing and start caring about making the people in United States healthy for many many years.

COMMENT OF PATRICIA PEARLMAN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 1:06 p.m.

City, State: Honaunau, HI

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Fruits

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: We are overdue to demand quality food, as opposed to cheap quantity food. Let's get rid of GMO and have proper labeling. And let's support our local producers!

COMMENT OF DONNA PEARSON

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 4:54 p.m.

City, State: Boston, MA

Occupation: Disabled

Comment: Please protect programs like SNAP, TEFAP and CSFP. Do not allow any cuts to these programs. Please don't balance the budget on the backs of the hungry. Support farm bills such as SNAP, *etc.*

COMMENT OF ELLEN PEARSON

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 1:59 p.m.

City, State: N. Bethesda, MD

Occupation: Housewife/Mom/Volunteer

Comment: Please make sure the farm subsidies do not go to large corporate farms. Small family farms need the support. That's who it's for. Not corporations.

COMMENT OF MICHELLE PEARSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:10 p.m.

City, State: Jacksonville, FL

Occupation: Organic Home Gardener, Housewife

Comment: Please stop taxpayer subsidization of Big Agriculture, which is poisoning us and our children! Locally produced, organic family farms are the responsible, sustainable choice for our future. Welfare for corporations is a pattern that needs to be stopped. We need healthy choices for ALL of our children.

COMMENT OF RAE PEARSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:49 p.m.
City, State: Seattle, WA
Occupation: Retired
Comment: Please cut subsidies to **Big-Ag** . . . they don't need them! Consider compulsory humane practices and non toxic methods of agriculture with lots of oversight! And label all products of GMO origin.

COMMENT OF ROBYN PEARSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:22 p.m.
City, State: Santa Cruz, CA
Occupation: Website Programmer
Comment: My father has worked in the farming industry my whole life. First running a cotton gin for 35 years then in almonds. I've seen small farmers go under. I've seen corporations take over and run people off their farms. I've seen excuses for why pesticides are OK and then years later backpedaling for poisoning water supplies.

We need to think of the people involved and all the families who are trying to put good food and healthy products onto the tables and into the homes of Americans. We need to stop subsidizing factory farms which are poisoning our land, water and citizens.

Make a thoughtful choice.

COMMENT OF ANGELA PECK

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 7:17 p.m.
City, State: Felton, CA
Occupation: Skin Care Specialist
Comment: Food is Medicine—it must be protected with everything in our power. Without access to healthy food, we fail as a nation. Most Americans don't realize, but are starting to, that we are more than what we eat; but more importantly, we are what we eat—what the animals eat and what the soil is fed. This is what organic is—animals are fed their natural diets and are out in the sunshine and are treated humanely; vegetables & fruit are full of nutrition because the soil in which they are grown is nourished rather than stripped with toxic pesticides & many other dangerous chemicals.

COMMENT OF GLORIA PECK

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 8:02 a.m.
City, State: Golden Valley, MN
Producer/Non-producer: Producer
Type: Field Crops
Size: 50–150 acres
Comment: I live in the city, but my sisters and I own a conventional corn farm in Iowa. I believe that our farm policy should not lean so heavily on huge production of corn and soy and I am willing to see a reduction in my income if it results in a more environmentally friendly farm program.

COMMENT OF KEVIN PECK

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:42 p.m.
City, State: Fresno, CA
Occupation: Community Service
Comment: Please vote to label all foods correctly. If something is GMO, or non natural—it should be clearly labeled on packaging. We won't be able to afford the health ramifications of not labeling all foods.

Thank you,

KEVIN.

COMMENT OF VICTORIA PECORARO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:35 p.m.
City, State: Wellfleet, MA
Producer/Non-producer: Producer
Type: Poultry/poultry products, Specialty Crops, Vegetables, Other

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: We as a people and country need a real farm bill that is fair and healthy in it's support of organics, local foods and small family farms. Organic research funding and funding to support beginning farmers is where the future of sustainable agriculture lies. Sustainability is the legacy we should be leaving for the generations to come. It is imperative that the House Agricultural Committee and members of congress recognize that it is time for real reform. As an American citizen, organic farmer, mother and wife, I am extremely concerned about our country's present and future agricultural practices. I fully support maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative; the implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236); full funding of conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and insure that all insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs; and lastly the full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286). Now is the time for Congress to truly represent their constituents and fellow Americans.

Thank you,

VICTORIA PECORARO,
10th congressional district,
Wellfleet, MA.

COMMENT OF DONNA PEEL

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 10, 2012, 3:18 p.m.

City, State: Oak Park, IL

Occupation: Attorney

Comment: I work at our food bank once a month and, to my surprise, have seen two people I know (one of whom works as a lunch room supervisor at my son's school) and meet many veterans. I leave so humbled and embarrassed that even the working poor and vets need food. And try to be callous when children pick out their pasta. Please continue to support the poorest among us.

COMMENT OF RANDY PEELE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:53 p.m.

City, State: Seneca, SC

Occupation: Horticulturist Retired

Comment: I have been involved with agriculture/horticulture all my life of almost 65 years, and I've witnessed all of the various farm bills and USDA programs come and go, but now it seems you in government are so caught up in trying to keep the players in big agribusiness happy that you are oblivious to what's actually happening back home on what little farm land is left. Your USDA programs are designed to fit the needs and desires of agribusiness, and the rapid dismantling of the Extension Service and Land Grant Universities' support of small farmers in our communities, has resulted in the loss of much of our local "real food" producers, and left us with these artificial, chemically-processed foods which totally dominate our American food supply. Even those of us who are trying to eat natural foods and maintain a healthy lifestyle must search locally for producers or grow our own, because you in Washington will not require proper labeling of genetically or chemically-modified foods, so that we can know what we're buying at our supermarkets. Many of my friends and family here in South Carolina and throughout the country would challenge all lawmakers, politicians and government officials to remember that you work for the taxpaying citizens of this country and not for the corporate giants who seem to always have loopholes or subsidies so that they pay little to no taxes, and in some cases, actually get refunds, even in years where they show substantial profits. We would hope that all of you would take a long look at what independent and very credible research shows what the on-going agricultural system is destroying our topsoil, polluting our air and water supplies, disrupting our weather and climatic patterns and last, but certainly not least, completely jeopardizing our good health and democratic lifestyle guaranteed us by the U.S. Constitution, just so these corporations can add to their already bulging profit portfolios. There has always come a time in American history when the people have realized that their democratic way of life was being threatened, and they responded appropriately to keep what those generations before us have died to defend. We would like to let all of you in Washington know that we are very aware of the threat, and a time for appropriate response is now upon us. We're depending on you to work for "us," not

for “them.” We will be watching to see how you respond, and In November, we get our chance to respond to you.

Sincerely,

RANDY PEELE.

COMMENT OF PATRICIA PEELER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:10 p.m.

City, State: Cordova, AL

Occupation: Nurse

Comment: Please support the “healthy farm bill”. It’s past time we support good ag practices & healthy non-modified, poison-free foods for our families & children. Thank you.

COMMENT OF JOAN PEET

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:57 p.m.

City, State: The Villages, FL

Occupation: Retired Registered Nurse

Comment: Please focus on healthy foods—organics and farmers who produce foods using soil nurturing methods. We do not need to subsidize big agriculture which emphasize GMOs and soy and corn. Including these foods in almost everything processed has led to an increase in obesity and is not good for our health.

I am very distressed that President Obama is sending Monsanto to help undeveloped countries. It is like sending the fox to the chicken coop.

COMMENT OF ROBERT PEHLKE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:52 a.m.

City, State: Brookline, MA

Occupation: Artist

Comment: Support for organic food is essential for our nation’s food supply quality and long-term sustainability. The more we learn about the use of chemicals in farming, the more it is apparent that we need to support organic farming. Please do so!

COMMENT OF CLARE PELKEY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:07 p.m.

City, State: Windsor, NY

Occupation: Sister of St. Joseph

Comment: Agribusiness is not a personal entity. **People** are in need of safe food. It is your responsibility not only to ensure people have safe food, but that agribusiness does not corrupt our government.

COMMENT OF JOHN PELLETIER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:22 p.m.

City, State: Dover, NH

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Fruits, Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: The U.S. Government must support small local agriculture that respects the Earth and our health. We must stop the subsidies to factory farms and chemical fertilizers. We need a farm bill that creates incentives for small farms to start up and continue. We need a farm bill that supports local markets and local distribution. I should not have to buy a tomato from México when they can be grown in greenhouses in the U.S. We need to break up the giant farms which are harming this country and bring our food production back to a human scale. Congress must act.

Thank you,

JOHN.

COMMENT OF JONI PENNINGTON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:07 p.m.

City, State: Traverse City, MI

Occupation: Business Manager

Comment: It is imperative that you protect our small farmers at all costs. No more subsidies for big agriculture, especially those using GMO seeds destroying land and killing people. Small farmers will save our country one day, mark my words. The farm bill **Must** support the family farms!

COMMENT OF SHARLA PENNINGTON

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 15, 2012, 9:09 p.m.

City, State: Columbia, PA

Occupation: Speech-Language Pathologist

Comment: I think farmers should be encouraged to use organic methods of sustainable farming through the use of subsidies and/or tax deductions. People deserve to eat healthy, non-toxic food at an affordable price. Educate farmers on organic farming methods by learning from other farmers who have been successful. Pesticides and herbicides are ruining our soil, polluting our water and who knows what else! It needs to change now.

Thank you,

SHARLA PENNINGTON.

COMMENT OF LEAH PEREZ

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:25 p.m.

City, State: Brighton, MA

Occupation: Student

Comment: As a social work student, I work with urban, low-income families who struggle to put food on their tables, and who often suffer from both food insecurity and from obesity and food-related illness. Too many Americans are suffering from illnesses relating to poor nutrition. It is time for us to take serious steps towards making healthy food more accessible to low-income families, and to stop using tax dollars to subsidize the production of junk food.

COMMENT OF LILIA PEREZ

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 3:22 p.m.

City, State: Laredo, TX

Occupation: Food Pantry Coordinator

Comment:

May 14, 2012

House Committee on Agriculture
Washington, D.C.

Dear Chairman Lucas, Ranking Member Peterson, and members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on the upcoming farm bill reauthorization. Given the increasing need for food assistance in our state and the declining supply of Federal commodity support, I strongly urge you protect and strengthen nutrition programs in the 2012 Farm Bill.

At the South Texas Food Bank, we see every day how important Federal nutrition programs are in our community and how effectively they are working to ensure that struggling South Texans can provide enough food for their families. Currently, the South Texas Food Bank serves 700,000 people annually.

Nationally, the Feeding America network of more than 200 food banks has seen a 46 percent increase in food bank clients from 2006 to 2010, and we are struggling to keep up with increased demand. Without strong farm bill nutrition programs like The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CFSP), food banks across the country would be struggling even more to meet the increased need.

We recognize the challenge you face drafting a farm bill in a time of deficit reduction, but we are also sensitive to the tremendous, ongoing need in our state. As such, we have two key priorities for the farm bill.

First, we urge you to strengthen TEFAP to help us keep up with increased demand. TEFAP supplies about 25 percent of the food moving through Feeding America's national network of food banks. But because of strong commodity prices, TEFAP food declined 30 percent last year, and our food bank is struggling to make up the difference. We urge you to make TEFAP more responsive during times of high need by tying increases in mandatory funding to a trigger based on unemployment levels. We also propose to enhance the Secretary of Agriculture's authority to

make TEFAP bonus purchases at times when the need for emergency food assistance is high—for example high unemployment—in addition to times of weak agriculture markets so that the program can respond to both excess supply and excess demand.

Second, we also strongly urge you to protect SNAP from harmful funding cuts or policy proposals that would restrict eligibility or reduce benefits. SNAP has responded effectively to growing need in the recession with benefits that are timely, targeted, and temporary. The average SNAP household has an income of only 57 percent of the Federal poverty guideline, and 84 percent of benefits go to households with a child, senior, or disabled person. The program is working to support vulnerable Texas families, and our food bank or local agency partners would not be able to meet the increased need for food assistance if SNAP were cut.

These programs have a real impact on your constituents, many of whom must rely on the food bank and Federal nutrition programs to meet their basic food needs. I would encourage you to visit the food banks serving your district before the Committee marks up a farm bill so you can meet our clients and see firsthand how Federal nutrition programs are working to protect vulnerable Americans from hunger.

The South Texas Food Bank believes that feeding our neighbors is a shared responsibility, and food banks like ours rely on a variety of food streams to support our communities, including generous support from partners in retail, manufacturing, and agriculture. However, the Federal government is an equally critical partner through programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP, and with tremendous, ongoing need in our state, ongoing Federal support is more important than ever.

As the House Agriculture Committee moves forward with farm bill reauthorization, our food bank urges you to protect the nutrition safety net and offers the specific recommendations below.

Sincerely,

LILIA PEREZ, *Coordinator*,
Holy Redeemer Food Pantry.

Feeding America Farm Bill Priorities

The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP): TEFAP is a means-tested Federal program that provides food commodities at no cost to Americans in need of short-term hunger relief through organizations like food banks, pantries, soup kitchens, and emergency shelters. Nutritious food commodities provided through TEFAP are an essential resource for Feeding America food banks. As the demand for food remains high at food banks across the country, a continuous stream of TEFAP is necessary for the provision of a steady emergency food supply.

- TEFAP commodities account for approximately 25% of the food moving through Feeding America food banks. Food banks combine TEFAP with private donations to maximize TEFAP benefits far beyond the budgeted amount for the program. In this way, food banks exemplify an optimum model of public-private partnership.
- TEFAP has a strong impact on the farm economy. According to USDA's Economic Research Service, producers of commodities provided as bonus TEFAP (those purchased by USDA to intervene in weak agricultural markets) receive an estimated 85¢ per dollar of Federal expenditure. Producers of other commodities provided through TEFAP receive about 27¢ per dollar. By contrast, only about 16¢ of every retail food dollar goes back to the farmer.
- Declines in Section 32 funding and strong agriculture markets resulted in a 30% decline in TEFAP purchases during FY 2011. This decline is expected to continue in FY2012 as food banks continue struggling to meet increased need. The shortfall between supply and demand will only worsen when the SNAP ARRA benefit boost expires, as many participants turn to food banks to make up for the reduction in benefit levels.

Farm Bill Priorities for TEFAP:

- Make mandatory funding for TEFAP food more responsive to changes in need by providing a trigger that ties funding to unemployment levels
- Enhance Secretary of Agriculture's authority to purchase bonus commodities in times of high need for emergency food relief in addition to times of low commodity prices so the program is responsive both to excess supply and excess demand
- Reauthorize funding for TEFAP Storage and Distribution Funds at \$100 million per year
- Reauthorize funding for TEFAP Infrastructure Grants at \$15 million per year

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP): SNAP is the cornerstone of the nutrition safety net, providing over 46 million low-income participants with monthly benefits via a grocery debit card. Eligibility is based on household income and assets and is subject to work and citizenship requirements. SNAP is one of the most responsive safety net programs, expanding quickly to meet rising need during the recession. The program is targeted at our most vulnerable; 76% of SNAP households contain a child, senior, or disabled member, and 84% of all benefits go to these households.

- As the number of people unemployed grew 110% from 2007 to 2010, SNAP responded with a 53% increase in participation over the same period. As the economy slowly recovers and unemployment begins to fall, SNAP participation and costs too can be expected to decline.
- The SNAP accuracy rate of 96.19% (FY10) is an all-time program high. SNAP error rates declined by 61% from FY 1999 to FY2010, from 9.86% to a record low of 3.81%.
- SNAP benefits supplement a household's food budget but are insufficient to last most participants through the month, causing many participants to rely regularly on food banks. Among Feeding America food pantry clients receiving SNAP benefits, over ½ (58%) reported having visited a food pantry at least 6 months or more during the prior year.
- The average SNAP household has a gross monthly income of \$731 and countable resources of \$333, consists of 2.2 persons, and participates in the program for 9 months. The average household receives a monthly benefit of \$287, or about \$1.49 per person per meal.

Farm Bill Priorities for SNAP:

- Protect SNAP by opposing proposals to cap or reduce funding, restrict eligibility, reduce benefits, or otherwise impede access or benefit adequacy. Recent proposals to block grant the program would prevent it from responding effectively to fluctuations in need, and efforts to limit broad based categorical eligibility would increase administrative costs and access barriers.
- Restore the cut to the SNAP ARRA benefit boost used to pay for the 2010 child nutrition bill and phase out the boost in a way that protects families from a cliff in benefit levels.
- Encourage better nutrition by maintaining nutrition education, incentivizing the purchase of healthy foods, and ensuring that retailer standards balance adequate access to stores with access to a range of healthy foods and moderate prices.
- Build on SNAP's strong record of integrity and payment accuracy by issuing guidance to states on the eligibility of lottery winners and college students and upgrading resources and technology for trafficking prevention.

Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP): CSFP leverages government buying power to provide nutritious food packages to approximately 599,000 low income people each month. Nearly 97 percent of program participants are seniors with incomes of less than 130% of the poverty line (approximately \$14,000 for a senior living alone). Currently, 39 states and the District of Columbia participate in CSFP. Another 6 states (CT, HI, ID, MD, MA, & RI) have USDA-approved plans, but have not yet received appropriations to begin service.

- CSFP is an efficient and effective program. While the cost to USDA to purchase commodities for this package of food is about \$20 per month, the average retail value of the foods in the package is \$50.
- CSFP helps to combat the poor health conditions often found in seniors who are experiencing food insecurity and at risk of hunger. CSFP food packages, specifically designed to supplement nutrients typically lacking in participants' diets like protein, iron, and zinc, can play an important role in addressing the nutrition needs of low-income seniors.
- Many seniors participating in CSFP are able to have their food boxes delivered directly to their homes or to seniors' centers nearby, an important benefit for those who are homebound, have limited mobility or do not have convenient access to a grocery store.

Farm Bill Priorities for CSFP:

- Transition CSFP to a seniors-only program by phasing out eligibility of women, infants, and children while grandfathering in current participants.

COMMENTS OF MARTHA PEREZ

Date Submitted: Friday, April 27, 2012, 2:06 p.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: General Political Activist

Comment: I am concerned that food banks are running out of resources, due to a growing demand by economically displaced families with children, homeless veterans, and other vulnerable groups. Second, I am concerned that certain organizations or groups that help to feed the poor & hungry, are being harshly penalized for doing so. These small community groups are reporting that some people have not eaten in as many as 4 days, or more. Third, it is unfair to charge Monsanto corporation with the huge responsibility of growing and providing food resources for over 1/2 of the planet's population. It is too taxing, and this huge task, needs to be broken down into smaller, localized, organic cooperatives, and a restoration of family owned & operated farms. I refer to Kraft foods, for doing the right thing, and creating subsidiaries, in the way they run business, in order to be more sustainable. Fourth, I advocate for more humane methods of raising and slaughtering meat products (chicken, beef, fish, *etc.*) and refer to Burger King, for choosing to switch to cage free eggs in their menu items. Cage free eggs are far from perfect, but it is a great improvement to start with. Fifth, I would like to see CAFO's transitioned into smaller units that are more manageable, and green friendlier. Sixth, I am concerned that as the price of food increases, more people will be susceptible to becoming addicted to pills, supplements, and pharmacy O-T-C medications/illegal drugs (when you don't eat, you will eat anything). Seventh, I receive SNAP food stamps, and want to thank USDA for continuing to provide these amazing programs. Take care.

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 02, 2012, 7:16 p.m.

Comment: I worry that as the price of food increases, the drug addiction rates will skyrocket, if not already the case. If children do not have access to healthy food, they will resort to energy drinks or supplements, which is unsafe in my mind. I appreciate your timely response to my concerns. Thank you.

COMMENT OF VERONICA PEREZ

Date Submitted: Wednesday, April 11, 2012, 11:22 a.m.

City, State: Albuquerque, NM

Occupation: Counselor

Comment: Our monthly Roadrunner Food Bank budget is \$40.00. Our staff members stock up our vehicles with expired produce and dairy and free grains to help feed 100 women and their families. Sometimes, this is the only food they have. Please keep Roadrunner stocked fully as it directly affects the lives of our disempowered downtown community. Thank you.

COMMENT OF JOSEPH PERKINS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:02 p.m.

City, State: Indianapolis, IN

Occupation: Carpenter

Comment: How can anyone not see the blatant corruption here. Cutting money for natural food production to force mutant foods on America. Supporting companies like a Monsanto to pad the pockets of the %1. It's shameful the way this country is fueled by greed and excess. It's disgusting. Cutting money to honest people trying to make an honest living while give breaks and high status positions in government to those who don't want people to know what they're putting in their mouth. All for more money to support their campaign of lies and empty promises. Support organic. Support natural foods. Make a difference for the better. Do something for the country not yourself or your fellow congress. You're there for us not for yourselves.

COMMENT OF KAREN PERKINS

Date Submitted: Sunday, April 22, 2012, 7:03 p.m.

City, State: Aspinwall, PA

Occupation: Graphic Design, Marketing Communications

Comment: I hope government will do its part to make sure all our citizens have access to nutritious and healthy foods. Hunger is a problem for ALL of us. Failing to support hunger programs will not only increase the economic costs of food insecurity and poor nutrition, but it will also undercut efforts to reduce poverty and health care inequity. Families in our communities are struggling. Please strengthen anti-hunger programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP in the 2012 Farm Bill reauthorization.

COMMENT OF MARIE PERKINS

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 9:36 p.m.
City, State: Oak Park, IL
Occupation: Security
Comment: I would like to see the Federal government stop subsidizing ranchers and dairy farms. I think eating meat and consuming dairy products are cruel and inhumane and are destroying our environment.

COMMENT OF JOE PERNYESZI

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:33 p.m.
City, State: Gardnerville, NV
Occupation: Retired
Comment: I don't want to eat all the insecticides and herbicides so we must have an organic farm bill supporting the organic farmers so that their fields could remain free of all the harmful chemicals.

COMMENT OF JOSEPH PERO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:58 a.m.
City, State: Asheville, NC
Occupation: EMT
Comment: Please encourage food production on a local level. It creates jobs and stimulates local economies. Local food production also builds communities, which we have gotten out of the habit of associating with food. Thank you for your effort to write a bill that is fair to all growers, big and small.

COMMENT OF JULIEN YANNICK PERRETTE

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 11:54 p.m.
City, State: Cambridge, MA
Occupation: Mental Health Specialist
Comment: We would like to promote sustainable and organic farms in the United States that feed our population with as much regionally grown food as possible and continue to grow the number of small and medium sized farms. Agriculture in this country should be focused on the new generation of young farmers who are looking to farm in an ecologically sound way and money needs to be spent on organic research as well.

COMMENT OF CLAIRE PERRICELLI

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:31 p.m.
City, State: Eureka, CA
Occupation: Homemaker
Comment: We need to be supporting small and smaller family farmers, especially favoring those who adopt or use sustainable and organic methods. We need to eliminate subsidies of agribusiness and corporate ag.

COMMENT OF ANNE PERRIN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:44 p.m.
City, State: Salem, VA
Occupation: Retired Teacher
Comment: The U.S. farm bill has to include organic farming. Organic farming is at the heart of the health of Americans. If the United States government is truly interested in the well-being of its citizens, it will require the elimination of pesticides and chemicals in our foods.

COMMENT OF NANCY PERRINE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 11:59 a.m.
City, State: Doylestown, PA
Occupation: Administrative Assistant
Comment: Good Morning,
 I come from a long line of home gardeners, ever since my ancestors came in the 1600's. I am used to homegrown produce that wasn't manipulated with chemicals and big companies.

I practice organics in both my garden and purchases. It is better for all things, health, soil and water runoff, *etc.* Well maybe the Big Chemical companies don't think it's better!

The problem is that it is very expensive and it is hard to maintain this lifestyle. I can pay \$2.99 for non organic berries but have to pay \$4.99 for organic?

What I want is organic farming, with benefits to the farmers who go organic and not to the big farms that pollute all things with chemicals. The chemical farms get enough benefits from Big Chemical and they don't need the governments help.

More affordable organic fruits and vegetables and organic farming being the norm not the exception.

Thank you for your time.

NANCY PERRINE.

COMMENT OF HEATH PERRY

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 9:29 p.m.

City, State: Los Angeles, CA

Occupation: Dietitian, Health Educator

Comment: Dear House Agriculture Committee,

I believe we are in a sad state where the burden of proof is put on the people showing that the chemicals and genetic modification of our foods are harmful, when the burden of proof for safety should be put on the corporations that profit from these chemicals and genetic modifications. The potential human health and environmental impact of patenting seeds that can cross pollinate with natural species and then owned by said company is very disheartening. The very sanctity of people being able to grow their own food is at risk here. There are plenty of scientists, including Dr. Don Huber, who have evidence of clear warning signs for major environmental impact of the GMO crops, but the current policy is introducing these new engineered 'plants' into our ecosystem with only the research given from the companies with vested interest in these plants as burden of proof. We've seen it many times before, when these companies make huge profits from the sale of poorly researched chemically/genetically altered foods only later to be proven to be cancer causing agents, at which point they just switch to the next in a long list of additives or alterations that are great for production, price and shelf life, but poor on health. Water and food policy needs to be get back to the basics. There is nothing more important for our survival than, clean, wholesome organic food. Organic farmers should be receiving government subsidies and the industrial chemical "food producers should be paying fees to support independent research to prove their efficacy and safety", not the other way around. There are amazing new simple systems that use environmentally-friendly technology and good old fashioned nature that can compete in production with these energy and chemical dominant industrial food systems we have now. Aquaponics is just one such example. Please help bring back our farm policies to represent what is best for the health of our people and the planet. This is one of the most critical issues we are facing for our future. Please go forth with the gravity of your decision's affect in mind.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF LINDA PERRY

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 10:13 a.m.

City, State: Randolph, MN

Occupation: Retired

Comment: It's time to cut subsidies (and Insurance) to the big corporation farmers—they are doing just fine. We do need stronger conservation policies, help or at least not harm for new/small farmers and organic *versus* chemical food producers.

COMMENT OF NANCY PETERS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:19 a.m.

City, State: Yellow Springs, OH

Occupation: Massage Therapy

Comment: Please support the Slow Food USA farm bill principles. Those principles support clean air and water, and fair farm practices for all—so that we may be healthy, happy and free!

COMMENT OF HALEY PETERSEN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:17 p.m.

City, State: New York, NY

Occupation: Musician

Comment: I think it is imperative that this country start taking responsibility for the health of this country. Corporations need to stop taking advantage of the way that this country is run but we all know they won't, it's not in their interest. So, it's time for the country, which has mostly been left in the dark, to stand up for itself. We are going to destroy what our forefathers built for us simply because we're too ill or obese to do anything about it.

We want healthy food. We don't want to be poisoned by the lettuce we buy at the grocery store.

This seems like a no-brainer to me. Why not everyone else?

COMMENT OF KELLY PETERSEN

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 8:38 p.m.

City, State: Stoughton, WI

Comment: Please pass a strong farm bill that protects programs like SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP. We need to make sure that our senior citizens (and all people) have enough to eat. Have you ever skipped a meal? Imagine if you didn't know where your next meal was coming from. We need to take better care of our friends, family, and neighbors.

COMMENT OF SARAH PETERSEN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:35 p.m.

City, State: Los Angeles, CA

Occupation: Multi-Media Environmental Education Producer, Artist, Cook

Comment: As someone whose work has been directly tied to the farming and food industry for many years (and whose life ISN'T tied to these concerns, I'd like to know!), I support, and urge you to support, the following provisions of this year's farm bill:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

The farm bill is one of the major legislative levers for sound judgment and stewardship to rule over industry money. Please use it for its highest purposes, rather than its lowest.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF ANDREW PETERSON

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 1:05 a.m.

City, State: Malibu, CA

Occupation: Student

Comment: Organic agriculture is one of the fastest growing sectors in America. It's responsible for creating jobs, and providing healthy options for consumers. I already eat organic, and as America becomes more health conscious the demand will rise. Organic is a buzz term in cities and I've already convinced 10 of my friends and several of my neighbors to start buying organic produce. A healthy economy is one where money flows in an ecosystem between consumer and producer. Keep money in Organic Research, give farmers the opportunity to grow their business, and I guarantee that the consumers will respond.

COMMENT OF ELIZABETH PETERSON

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 2:28 p.m.

City, State: Huntsville, AL

Occupation: Retired

Comment: We need an agriculture bill that will support the increasing use of organic agriculture, give state and local agencies flexibility to choose local, healthy foods for their school lunchrooms, encourage innovation in farming, protect the environment while promoting sustainable farming practices, and encourage a new gen-

eration to enter farming. Programs to be supported include the Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Program, the Conservation Stewardship Program, the Value Added Producer Grant Program, and the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program. As a consumer and home gardener, I appreciate the availability of good, organically grown foods and want to see their availability increased.

COMMENT OF HEATHER PETERSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:48 p.m.

City, State: Downers Grove, IL

Occupation: Homemaker

Comment: It is increasingly hard to find healthy choices for my family. I refuse to buy GMO foods as we are the lab rats on that. Organic is the best choice and government is getting too involved and sticking their nose where it doesn't belong. Organic farming is the way of the future.

COMMENT OF KELLY PETERSON

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 9:50 a.m.

City, State: Pacific Palisades, CA

Occupation: Stay-at-Home Mom

Comment: Please stop subsidizing food that makes people unhealthy and start shifting to more generous subsidies of organic food.

Please stop creating a system that overproduces corn and start subsidizing more healthful, green veggies.

COMMENT OF LAURI PETERSON

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:22 a.m.

City, State: Church Hill, TN

Occupation: Cook (Small Home Garden)

Comment: So, you want to cut our deficit? How about going department by department and slice the programs that are no longer in the best interest of the people. Let's start with "A". "A" is for Agriculture. For many years I've been saying that this is one, if not **The**, biggest waste of taxpayers' dollars. Why can't people just farm? Why does the Government need to stomp it's big feet in the soil? Let the people drive the market. If you can't produce what the people want, then find a career other than farming! Agribusiness' don't need tax breaks to make ends meet. If they do not like not receiving the breaks, then do something else. I, like **Many** others, am getting so tired of the Government interfering In **Everything** I say or do.

COMMENT OF LINDA PETERSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:30 p.m.

City, State: Sebastopol, CA

Occupation: Coordinator of Beginning Farmer/Rancher Training Program

Comment: We need more money to grow more farmers (200,000 new farmers needed per Secretary Vilsack). We need support for small farms and ranches farming sustainably, including environmentally safe, regulatory & permitting processes that are not onerous and expensive for small operators, and more funding for regional food system efforts (like the efforts currently underway in CA on a state level).

COMMENT OF LINDA PETERSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:11 p.m.

City, State: Greenville, OH

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Field Crops, Livestock, Poultry/poultry products, Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: We need true agriculture needs met. Not mega farmers and those ag companies trying to make big money and ruining the environment with their costly products. It's time the congress become for us the producers and not the big name companies. Organic not only will keep our kids healthy but will help with a lot of medical costs and problems for others as well. Get government out of where it shouldn't be and let the American people do what they know do to keep us healthy.

COMMENT OF MARK PETERSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:05 a.m.

City, State: Clementon, NJ

Occupation: Engineer

Comment: Promote/incentivize:

- Development of digesters on farms/CFOs to produce methane from animal excrement to burn on the farm for heat or power generation.
- Re-establishment of family organic or non-organic farms and more farmer's markets.
- Healthy food for school lunch and breakfast programs
- Healthier and more humane CFOs and reduction of prophylactic use of antibiotics.

Outlaw suits by Monsanto/Cargill and other GM seed producers against farmers whose crops are contaminated with the GM seed/pollen, and instead: Promote, through law, the ability of farmers to sue the GM seed manufacturers when their crops are contaminated with GM seed/pollen.

COMMENT OF RONALD PETERSON

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 7:11 p.m.

City, State: Carmichael, CA

Occupation: Part-Time Retail Employee

Comment: If it was not for the food that I receive from the SNAP program, I would be hurting. For the amount of income from my part-time retail job just covers the cost of my health insurance and my monthly pension income just covers the my housing cost. If it was not for the SNAP program, I would not be eating because I don't have the money to buy food.

COMMENT OF ALEXANDER PETRUSZAK

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 10:12 p.m.

City, State: Olympia, WA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Dear Chairman Lucas,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony to the House Committee on Agriculture on the next farm bill. My district representative is being copied on this testimony. My name is Alexander Petruszak and I am a young farmer in the state of Washington. Originally coming to Washington from the Midwest, I grew up on the south side of Chicago—a food desert. There and in much of Illinois, the only available produce is conventional produce grown out of state and many-a-times out of this country. It was in my freshmen year of college that I realized the dire need for local food production in the city that raised me. From then until now, I have been working on small Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) vegetable farms. Maple Rock Farm, where I currently work, feeds 60 families alone through its CSA program which is now in its tenth ongoing year. Farms like this one are needed and demanded all over the country but the farm bill often leaves them overlooked, neglecting funding for research on and the practice of small-scale organic agriculture. Furthermore, the loss of agricultural land in the face of urban sprawl has always appeared a major threat to farmers. The cost of ½ an acre in Manhattan, IL (45 minutes from Chicago) is now easily upwards of \$100,000. All of my family is from rural northern Illinois, my father grew up across the road from a grain farm in Monee, IL. When my father was young, Monee was a town of under 3,000 people and the sun could be seen setting on the western horizon. In my grandmother's words, "heaven is where that sun reaches the horizon." In 2004, the same year my grandmother died, the grain farm was bought, torn up, and a model home community was built on the property. I can no longer see my grandmother's heaven from her house. This story is not a singular occurrence, despite the conservation of 800,000 acres of farmland a year, more than that is lost every year to urban sprawl and unsafe farming practices. An area the size of Indiana is lost in American topsoil each year. I have relocated to Washington so that I could have some opportunity to learn about small scale integrated farming, an ideology commonly underrepresented—and ridiculed—in highly subsidized Midwest commercial agriculture. What the farm bill needs is more attention, support, and funding for programs like ATTRA (the National Sustainable Agriculture Information Service), Sustainable Ag-

riculture Research and Education (SARE), and the Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program (FRPP). Not only should these programs receive heavier support, but it should be acknowledged that farming is not merely a commercial interest! The ideal farmer is driven by honesty and respect for health, that of the planet, their customers and their workers. A farmer **Is** a civil servant and also highly dependent on self funding their business ventures. The farm bill should look to forgive student debt of farmers as a means of spreading small scale agriculture and ultimately allowing better resource management and homeland security across this country. For myself, it was the realization that I would be able to farm the day I had as much savings as I currently have in school loan debt that forced me to leave the classroom. I hope that doesn't continue to be the case. I hope I can one day see Illinois vegetables in stores without them being hyper processed as food additives. I hope someone in Chicago will have the access to agricultural education and nutrition that I nor any of my family members ever did. I hope the fact that our food is one of our largest political decisions becomes more respected in the years to come.

Sincerely,

ALEXANDER PETRUSZAK.

COMMENT OF CARLENE PETTY

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 2:52 p.m.

City, State: Shepherdsville, KY

Occupation: Executive Secretary

Comment: This year I would like to see a better Food and Farm Bill that addresses our agricultural needs. **First:** we need **Healthy** food to nourish us, which means continuing the VAPGP at \$30 million funding but designating it **Only For Organic Farming Operations**—not Agribusiness! which means providing school-children with actual food like organic fruits, vegetables, and nuts in meals and snacks and eliminating “pink slime,” and GMO-tainted products from consumption by children! Which means continuing the Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative at \$30 million funding! Which means eliminating subsidies for Agribusiness and transferring subsidies to small operations and family farms! **Second:** We need to promote the preservation of nature in our agricultural activities, which means full funding for the Conservation Stewardship Program! **Third:***

COMMENT OF IRENE PHAM

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:18 p.m.

City, State: Santa Ana, CA

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: I want you to align farm policy with our nutrition standards and our environmental policies.

If subsidies and regulations are going to be the business of the Federal government, which I am not sure they should, at least they should be supporting, not countering, the known science of health and disease prevention. And, the long-term productivity of the land and water resources should not be endangered by those subsidies and regulations. This overall principle, not the welfare of farmers, should govern our farm policy.

COMMENT OF WILLIAM PHELAN

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 9:02 p.m.

City, State: Tallahassee, FL

Occupation: Physician Assistant

Comment: Please protect food stamps (SNAP), TEFAP and CSFP in the farm bill. People need to eat. Seniors, especially. Don't sell out to the ethanol people or the megaproducers. Keep America fed. Protect food stamps.

COMMENT OF BENNETH PHELPS

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 03, 2012, 4:50 p.m.

City, State: Easthampton, MA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Fruits, Poultry/poultry products, Specialty Crops, Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

* Editor's note: the comment was incomplete as submitted.

Comment: Please maintain existing conservation agriculture programs and funding towards beginning farmer programs.

The food stamp dollar matching trial programs (3 to 1 match) at farmer's markets in our area in our are simple and work well. I would love to see food stamp value everywhere matched 3 to 1 at the farmer's market.

COMMENT OF LUELLEN PHELPS

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 4:19 p.m.

City, State: Peterson, IA

Occupation: Assistant Manager Health Food Store

Comment: Organic farming is very important to me. We must stop poisoning the Earth because by doing so we are harming ourselves as well as other living things. We must conserve and enrich the soil as much like Mother Nature as possible. Present farming methods are not sustainable.

COMMENT OF JAMES PHILLIPS

Date Submitted: Wednesday, April 18, 2012, 11:13 a.m.

City, State: Crocketts Bluff, AR

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Field Crops

Size: 301-500 acres

Comment: We urge you to re-instate the Outreach and Assistance for our Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers Program (2501 program) back into the 2012 Farm Bill. This educational program has been very helpful to many farmers in our operations with all the USDA Programs.

Thanks you for your time.

God Bless,

JAMES PHILLIPS.

COMMENT OF SUSAN PHILLIPS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:43 p.m.

City, State: Cottage Grove, WI

Occupation: Retired

Comment: We need a healthy farm bill. We need to support the organic farms in our country. We need to stop supporting big agriculture. Con-Agra and Monsanto do not need our tax dollars. Small farmers do!

COMMENT OF CYNTHIA PHINNEY

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 2:59 p.m.

City, State: Livermore Falls, ME

Occupation: Electric Utility Meter Reader

Comment: I hope that you will support a farm bill that supports family farms, supports organic farming, supports nutritious whole food, and encourages the health of the soil, the people, and the environment. Increasing evidence ties health issues including obesity, food allergies, heart disease and cancer to things like food additives, genetically engineered plants, animals raised in feedlots, and processed foods. I want my tax dollars to support farmers who are caring for the land in a sustainable way and bringing nutritious food to the market. I understand that we can't make this change all at once, but we need to be steadily moving toward it on many fronts. What the Ag Bill supports or doesn't support makes a tremendous difference in what people eat, and in whether family farmers can survive. It also makes a huge difference in what kinds of foods are available to school children and lower income citizens. All of this affects the health of our country on many levels.

COMMENT OF HOLLY PHIPPS

Date Submitted: Friday, March 16, 2012, 4:15 p.m.

City, State: Lake Oswego, OR

Occupation: Property Management

Comment: Our food source is in real danger, mostly because the independent farmer has been pushed out, bought out by corporations and subsidized. Just look at where we are today, it isn't going to get any better. Please make this issue a priority.

COMMENT OF JOANNA M. PHIPPS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:18 p.m.

City, State: Grand Rapids, MI

Occupation: Freelance Proofreader

Comment: Dear Mr. Amash,

As a Republican myself and having grown up in rural Michigan on a small farm, I have grave concerns over the current system of farm subsidies. This system clearly favors huge industrial agricultural companies over smaller family farms and produces nothing but inferior, perhaps even dangerous, food and fewer job opportunities. Stability and safety in the food supply and local economies is best accomplished by smaller, and more numerous, local farms. I am not interested in a cheap food supply or lining the pockets of huge ag companies. I want to ensure access to safe, nutrient dense foods and to support local farmers and future farmers to grow them. Therefore I support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- And Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

I ask you to support these initiatives as well. I believe that true and good reform in the agricultural system will carry our country a long way toward safety, stability, and economic growth for its citizens.

Sincerely,

JOANNA M. PHIPPS.

COMMENT OF LEANA PHIPPS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:35 p.m.

City, State: New York, NY

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: This issue is of the **Utmost** importance to me and many others. I am praying that you will heed the will of the people rather than bend to the will of a few lobbyists. Please do the right thing!

COMMENT OF CHAD PHYLE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 9:39 p.m.

City, State: Aurora, CO

Occupation: Installation Technician

Comment: I want to see the FDA get rid of pesticides. There are more than enough facts and studies showing extreme negative effects on unborn babies. How much is too much when it comes to the future of our world and children.

COMMENT OF SEBASTIANO PICCIUCA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:08 p.m.

City, State: Holland, MI

Occupation: Retired

Comment: We have been subsidizing corn & sugar for over 40 years. Now we are an obese diabetic nation. Corporate industrial mono-crop agriculture has depleted the soil and perhaps been responsible for the disappearance of the bees. Remember you can't eat money!

COMMENT OF JANA PICKARD-RICHARDSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:57 p.m.

City, State: Boston, MA

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: It is unconscionable to continue to subsidize corn and soy leading to underpriced junk food, while fresh, organic fruits and vegetables are out of reach for most working families. This has dire health and economic consequences for our nation.

I support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

COMMENT OF REBECCA PICTON

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 1:55 a.m.

City, State: Corvallis, OR

Occupation: Retail Sales

Comment: Industrial agriculture is destroying our soils, our water, and our small farms and communities. It is time for a different paradigm. Subsidies to large agricultural corporations must stop. If they are such great businesses, why do they need welfare? Smaller, localized producers will also contribute to food security, which is a huge issue when only a few corporations control all the seed and production.

There are better ways to guide agriculture than has been done in the past decades. Now is the time to create a long-term plan that will truly benefit the planet and the people who rely on it.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF CHRISTINE PIEPER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 10:17 a.m.

City, State: Vienna, VA

Occupation: Nonprofit Executive

Comment: America needs a farm bill that invests in the next generation of farmers and ranchers. I grew up on a family farm, and both of my brothers remain in the dairy business. Please help young men and women like them, who want to farm our nation's food, to get a successful start in farming.

I believe that we need \$25 million per year in mandatory funding for the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program. We need a national strategy and commitment to support beginning farmer and ranchers entering agriculture. With an aging farm population, now is the time to invest in the future of American agriculture by nurturing new agriculture start-ups.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF MEGAN PIERCE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:54 p.m.

City, State: Gays Mills, WI

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Specialty Crops

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: As a small farmer producing medicinal and culinary herbs, a farm bill that promotes the viability of small farms is very important to me. I ask that you fully endorse all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286), fully fund the conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and make sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs. Please implement all of the provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236) and maintain the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Before the industrial revolution, small farmers were the backbone of America, providing nourishing, organically grown food for U.S. citizens. They are what is needed to bring this country away from the health crisis that it is now in, with raising rates of obesity, diabetes, and cancers.

The health of this nation is tied to the health of its' citizens. And the health of the citizens rely on their access to healthful food grown by farmers of all sizes.

COMMENT OF DOROTHY PIERRET

Date Submitted: Friday, April 27, 2012, 2:46 p.m.

City, State: Maple Grove, MN

Occupation: Retired

Comment: It is unacceptable for children to not get good healthy food. Either is it for seniors or low income people. Please don't make cuts to SNAP or the Farm bill.

COMMENT OF ANNA MARIE PIERSIMONI

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 2:38 p.m.

City, State: Los Angeles, CA

Occupation: Web Development

Comment: We want to know that the food we are buying is good for our families, our communities, and our local farmers and ranchers. Strong, fair farm and food policies help make this possible. Now is the time to put these new rules into practice.

COMMENT OF SUZANNA PIESLAK

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:30 p.m.

City, State: Laurel, MD

Occupation: Architect and Mom

Comment: We get weekly deliveries from a CSA and have an Organic Farm share all summer. Besides education, I believe that access to healthy non-GMO and organic food is the most important issue for our children's future. The obesity and type 2 diabetes problem in our country is out of control and we need to make healthy food a priority again.

COMMENT OF CHERYL PIETRO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:45 p.m.

City, State: Seattle, WA

Occupation: Efficiency Consultant

Comment: We need government that is looking out for our best interests. We need to have protection for organic farmers, for grass fed, free range and organic farming. We also need protection and informed consumption where GMO's are concerned. We want the right to eat what is healthy. It is up to everyone, including the representatives of this country, to make sure we are all protected.

COMMENT OF EDWARD PILE

Date Submitted: Friday, April 27, 2012, 7:36 p.m.

City, State: Abingdon, VA

Occupation: Private Industry

Comment: Southwestern Virginia is afflicted not only by the pain of drug abuse, child abuse and neglect, malnutrition, and poor health, it is an area where hunger is of pandemic proportions. We need the farm bill to bring funds into these communities to buy basic sustenance for residents. Please help!

COMMENT OF KILLEEN PILON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:07 p.m.

City, State: Santa Monica, CA

Occupation: Retired Social Services Director

Comment: I have been involved in slow foods and small farms for the last 15 years. I am concerned about the direction agriculture in the U.S. has taken—GMO, pesticides, eroding of farm land, overplanting, abuse of animals raised for food, and subsidies to agri-industry. I want my food to be clean, healthy, and tasty.

COMMENT OF LUCILLE PINCINCE

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 11:54 a.m.

City, State: Lincolnville, ME

Occupation: Office Work

Comment: I fully endorse all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act and support conservation programs that will preserve and make farmland affordable, particularly for beginning farmers and ranchers.

I abhor big business's control and destructive use of our soils and seeds.

COMMENT OF MELISA PINEDA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:03 p.m.

City, State: Fremont, CA

Occupation: Mom

Comment: The quality of the food we put into our bodies should not be so hard to get. We need to get back to basics and nourish our bodies without pesticides, toxins, sugars and other substitutes for what we can get naturally from our Earth . . . and let's not start on that subject, our Earth . . . the green lush lands that are getting covered with concrete.

COMMENT OF DAMARIS PINEDO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:48 p.m.

City, State: Rochester, NY

Occupation: Cytotechnologist and Owner of Organic Juicing Business

Comment: We need to go back to the basics in what we eat and how we farm. Let's work together to regain our land and grow food the way God intended.

COMMENT OF MARTHA PINGS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:25 p.m.

City, State: Madison, WI

Occupation: Social Services and Parent

Comment: The farm bill is our 1-in-5 year chance to aid "real" farmers—not soy and corn agribusiness. What about promoting farmers who raise broccoli, tomatoes, pears, and the rest of our necessary diet? It impacts our nation's obesity epidemic, health care costs, and quality of life. Agribusiness doesn't need support. Healthful, varied, fresh food does.

COMMENT OF CAROLYN PINKHAM

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:42 p.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Retired Social Worker, Homemaker, Volunteer

Comment: We need to save our country from being victimized by politics as usual. We need to dig deep and undo the damaging legislative acts that have been done and create new ones that will rebalance our system for the benefit of all. This means producing food in a way that is most healthful even if it costs more as it will benefit health costs . . . invest in new energies to offset future oil and gas shortages . . . support our vulnerable peoples so that we create a more stable population . . . pay a living wage to all so that people don't have to rely on welfare . . . on and on. Bring sensibility back into the equation.

COMMENT OF CHARLOTTE PINSKY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:02 p.m.

City, State: New Port Richey, FL

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Too many lawmakers are depending on Monsanto and corporate farms for their information. Go to scientists and real farmers to understand nutrition and healthy farming. My grandfather was a dairy farmer and lived to be one hundred and 2 years old. I wonder how long Monsanto executives and corporate farmer will live. Of course they may secretly be eating organic food.

COMMENT OF MATTHEW PINTAR

Date Submitted: Monday, March 19, 2012, 9:14 p.m.

City, State: Lubbock, TX

Occupation: Biologist

Comment: Our current food system is broken, and it didn't happen by accident. It's time for a new farm bill that creates a healthy food system. Please support these actions in the next farm bill:

- Level the playing field for farmers
- Make markets fair for farmers and consumers
- Ensure food security by restoring the grain reserve
- Make healthy food accessible for all people
- Rebuild local infrastructure for regional food systems
- Make smart government food purchases
- Support new sustainable farming programs

- Promote environmental stewardship
 - Require full safety reviews and labeling of GE foods
 - Stop subsidizing factory farms and dangerous technologies
- Thank you for your consideration.

COMMENT OF REYNOLDS PIP

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 10, 2012, 2:13 a.m.
City, State: San Francisco, CA
Occupation: Caretaker/Homemaker
Comment: What will seniors do if they no longer have access to these vital programs? We support SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP and want them protected!

COMMENT OF AMANDA PIPER-MCCLURE

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 8:11 p.m.
City, State: Idaho Falls, ID
Occupation: Bookseller
Comment: I work both in and out of my home. I am a wife and mother who cares about local organic farming. Due to the fact that I live in Idaho, I have made use of national co-ops such as Bountiful Baskets, in order to get better variety and pricing on organic food. Please do not make it harder on the local smaller farmers to grow food that is healthier for us and sustainable.

COMMENT OF TONY PISANO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:26 p.m.
City, State: North Adams, MA
Producer/Non-producer: Producer
Type: Other
Size: Less than 50 acres
Comment: I believe our food is our future, which means the source of our food, the land, must be nurtured and protected. We are finally seeing a rise in new young farmers using age old, tried and true practices of sustainable agriculture. Big AG practices are not sustainable. Now is not the time to cut funding for start-up young farmers using organic and naturally grown processes. Please don't let the money of big Agriculture lobbyists influence decisions made that will affect the lives of your children, grand children and generations to come. There is a growing movement to produce healthy food using best practices for the welfare of the animals and consumers. This movement is the small CSAs, market farms, and local food production and consumption.

COMMENT OF PATTI PITCHER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:11 a.m.
City, State: Snoqualmie, WA
Producer/Non-producer: Producer
Type: Fruits
Size: Less than 50 acres
Comment: We need the farm bill to support small farmers and stop subsidies on commodities to level the playing field. Consumers need **Real** food, not GMO enhanced crops that hurt the Earth and its inhabitants.

COMMENT OF CATHIE PITTS

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 1:16 p.m.
City, State: Buckeye, AZ
Occupation: Retired
Comment: Please help regulate our food production. Many diseases have been linked to human consumption of harmful chemicals. I try to buy organic products when possible, but they are expensive and sometimes hard to find (have to drive further, using more gas, *etc.*). Please support organic farmers.

COMMENT OF JUDY PIZARRO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 1:52 p.m.
City, State: Maple Shade, NJ
Occupation: Laboratory Worker

Comment: I would like to see more financial help directed to farmers who raise organic foods, and raise animals with humane treatment rather than favoring agri-business giants who run CAFO's and factory farming.

COMMENT OF HOPE PIESKY

Date Submitted: Sunday, April 22, 2012, 11:56 p.m.

City, State: Goltry, OK

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Field Crops, Livestock

Size: 1,000+ acres

Comment: My name is Hope Pjesky. My husband Ryan and I are average sized full-time farmers/ranchers in northern Oklahoma. We produce wheat and beef cattle. We are also fiscal conservatives. Here are my views on the next farm bill:

- Government farm programs should focus on providing farmers with downside risk protection.
- Direct Payments, Counter-cyclical payments, the Marketing Loan Program, ACRE and SURE should be eliminated.
- In the future we should rely less on government and increasingly more on free markets.
- The best way to spend government dollars is crop insurance and a deep revenue loss safety net program.
- Crop insurance coverage should be improved, made less expensive to producers and expanded to include revenue based crop insurance options for all crops.
- A catastrophic or "deep" revenue loss program such as the one proposed by the American Farm Bureau Federation is the best way to go with future farm programs. This is much better than any of the shallow loss proposals.
- All crops should be treated equally in government farm programs.
- Planting flexibility should be a priority. A target price program will distort planting decisions and should be opposed.
- Farmer Savings Accounts should be created, allowing farmers to create tax free saving accounts on good years for use in later bad years.
- Market Access and Foreign Market Development Programs are important trade tools and should receive strong funding.
- Agricultural research is vitally important and should receive strong levels of funding.

HOPE PIESKY,

[Redacted],

Goltry, OK,

[Redacted].

COMMENT OF MICHELLE PLAIN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:17 a.m.

City, State: Duncan, WA

Occupation: Server, Caterer

Comment: We need to go back to the old way of doing things as clearly our chemical world is killing us. GMO and pesticides are killing us. That saying don't fix what ain't broke is what are crops are today. We have dressed things up and our bodies don't recognize the dress! How can you not see this. Is money and drugs that much more important? Soon there won't be enough people to feed these horrible things to and then all your money won't matter anyway! Please think about how simple this can all be and just go back to the basics. Thank you.

COMMENT OF DESIREE PLAISANCE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:54 p.m.

City, State: New Orleans, LA

Occupation: Public Records Researcher, Licensed Massage Therapist

Comment: I am writing in support of organic farming and animal husbandry, labeling of GMOs and their exclusion from anything labeled organic or all-natural, and the development and maintenance of ethically and environmentally sound food practices. This includes:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).

- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

COMMENT OF MONICA PLOURDE

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 16, 2012, 5:53 p.m.

City, State: Biddeford, ME

Occupation: Homemaker

Comment: Citizens want and need locally grown—preferably organic—produce. There should be no such thing as a “food desert” and big grocery chains aren’t the solution to this problem. Urban farms, small farms and farmers markets are a real solution to the serious issue of malnutrition and hunger in the United States.

Focusing support on smaller, more diverse, especially organic farms, reduces pollution by using less petroleum for pesticides, fertilizer, and fuel for transportation. Local farms also let produce have a chance to become more nutritious instead of being shipped unripe to prevent spoiling over long distances.

The financial security of smaller farms would create new jobs and bring healthier food to everyone’s table for an affordable price. The problems with obesity and health and the healthcare cost they bring with them would be dramatically reduced once it’s cheaper to buy vegetables than a double cheeseburger.

Please keep smaller farms, public health and pollution in mind while you contemplate the Farm bill.

COMMENT OF KATE PLUMB

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:15 p.m.

City, State: Sag Harbor, NY

Occupation: Consultant

Comment: Please take the first step and get on board with a better food program for the country—let go of the subsidies for the food that is making us sick and start subsidizing the food that makes and keeps us healthy.

COMMENT OF DONNA PLUMMER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 7:33 a.m.

City, State: Harrisburg, PA

Occupation: Educator

Comment: I am writing to ask you for full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).

Also, I am asking that the farm bill supports funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.

Also, include the implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).

And most importantly maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative. Organics don’t make people sick. Organics help students with ADD and ADHD to calm their hyperactivity.

As you well know, I have been an advocate of nutrition, since I teach this, and want the best for our children and Americans alike. Please make fresh produce initiatives in schools mandatory and pizza is not a vegetable. It is actually a junk food.

I am also asking Congress to go a step further by regulating government subsidies that enter schools. The food is processed and laden with chemicals which affect people. Every time I eat the ice cream, I start to cough. I stopped getting it. It also has salicylates which are known to affect ADD children. Clean up the foods that are given to our students in schools and you will change the behavior problems as well as increase test scores.

Thanks for your time. We’ll miss you in Harrisburg office come Nov.

COMMENT OF FELICIA POCIUS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:57 p.m.

City, State: McHenry, IL

Occupation: Administration

Comment: The world is beginning the shift to truly organic, non-chemical, non-franken-farmed produce and meat products. Either we are on the bandwagon or we get left behind. Let's choose to be ahead of the wave rather than washed up.

COMMENT OF THERESA PODOLL

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 11:57 p.m.

City, State: Fullerton, ND

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Specialty Crops

Size: 500–999 acres

Comment: I am an organic farmer and a strong supporter of organic farming, I ask that you . . .

- Fully fund the Organic Research and Extension Initiative (OREI) at the 2008 level.
- Endorse all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Support all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintain the EQIP Organic Initiative
- And do **Not** cut the Conservation Stewardship Program.

Organic farming, food production, and food distribution systems produce multiple benefits ecologically, socially, and economically. These multiple benefits provide services to our local communities and our state much beyond production agriculture, including increasing agricultural biodiversity, enhancing soil and water quality, reducing pesticide exposure, and increasing native pollinators and beneficial insects.

COMMENT OF MARGIE POHLSCHNEIDER

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 9:35 a.m.

City, State: Piqua, OH

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I urge you to support the EQIP organic initiative so we may have access to healthy food without more damage to our agricultural land. The increasing use of GMO crops and pesticides are damaging to us and the land.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF JEFF POKORNY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:40 p.m.

City, State: Bend, OR

Occupation: Reseller of Non-Perishable Goods

Comment: Please support a farm bill that takes the consideration of a healthy people and environment in mind. This is critical to sustain a high quality of life from now to well into the future.

Please remember that the primary reason for the scarcity of food is the ignorance of how to produce sustainably and efficiently, without the use of corporate agriculture and pesticides. It is only through ignorance, greed and blatant disregard for the environment that we continue to utilize these methods. Let the independent farmer feed Americas bodies and souls . . . not Big Ag!

COMMENT OF MARTHA POLIQUIN

Date Submitted: Thursday, April 12, 2012, 5:31 p.m.

City, State: Lisbon Falls, ME

Occupation: School Food Service Director

Comment: The small farm and food producer are the cornerstone of Maine's local food movement. Local food and farms are important assets here. Schools desperately want access to more local farm food to provide healthy nutritious meals to our students. Current commodity funds support large farms that are far away from Maine and don't support our local economy. Please allow schools to use some commodity money to buy locally.

COMMENT OF LISA POLLARD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:07 p.m.

City, State: Mokena, IL

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: As a teacher and a mother, I stand beside our farmers. Farmers are the backbone of our nation—and all civilization. Think about where we will be without farmers or with a greatly reduced/unsupported farming community! I am also a huge supporter of any initiative that supports organic farming. We are paying known and yet to be known costs for the chemicals we are putting into our food—our children deserve a healthy chance.

I support H.R. 3286 and H.R. 3236. I also support the full funding of conservation programs and the EQIP Organic Initiative.

What we spend in pennies today will save us many, many dollars down the road with health care issues, insurance costs, and educational reforms to deal with the consequences of substandard food supplies.

We are a nation of plenty . . . let's stand by the farmers who helped us be that way.

COMMENT OF ALAINA POMEROY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:57 p.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Program Associate, Policy, Klamath & Rangelands, Sustainable Northwest

Comment: These comments are submitted on behalf of the Rural Voices for Conservation Coalition (RVCC). RVCC is comprised of rural, western, regional and national organizations, landowners and businesses that have joined together to promote balanced conservation-based approaches to the ecological and economic problems facing the West.

Rural Voices for Conservation Coalition Recommendations for Increasing Community Capacity to Deliver Farm Bill Conservation Programs

Congress must do more than allocate financial assistance to each program in the Conservation Title of the farm bill; it must provide sufficient technical assistance or 'boots on the ground' to help farmers, ranchers and forest landowners implement conservation practices. Effective delivery of farm bill programs depends on partnerships among the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), other Federal agencies, and strong community-based, local and regional organizations to provide landowner outreach and education, collaboration assistance and landscape scale strategic planning, landowner and community skill building, on the ground technical assistance, and connection to larger support networks. We refer to this as a community's capacity to deliver farm bill and other conservation programs.

In a tight budget environment, it is essential that limited dollars are well spent to achieve multiple benefits. NRCS and community-based, local and regional organizations must work in coordination to provide access to and delivery of programs that help conserve and steward farms, ranches and forestlands, ensure long-term ecological health, build local economic stability, and enhance productivity and delivery of products to market.

As participants in the Rural Voices for Conservation Coalition (RVCC) and partnering land owners, organizations and businesses, we strongly support the work of the NRCS and other Federal agencies, and stand willing and able to work in partnership with the Department to achieve strong and lasting program outcomes.

Key Recommendations to Support and Maintain Capacity for Effective Conservation

1. Designate collaboration and capacity building outcomes as priority preference criteria for allocation of grants, loans and cost share for partnership programs.
2. Direct the agencies to increase their use of cooperative, contribution and technical service provider agreements to achieve farm bill program outcomes.
3. Formalize the role of community-based, local and regional organizations as strategic agency partners in farm bill program delivery.
4. Direct NRCS to develop and report on performance measures that would allow Congress and the public to fully understand the impact of technical assistance and partnership investments.
5. Expand NRCS's ability to use Conservation Technical Assistance (CTA) funding to support partnerships between NRCS staff and community-based and regional organizations and other non-Federal conservation partners and specialists, and continue to increase CTA funding annual appropriations.
6. Encourage a higher percentage of program funding be directed to Technical Assistance (TA) and expand its range of use for outreach, collaborative planning, skill building, and increased partnership with community-based, local and regional organizations.

7. Prioritize funding to programs that support landscape-scale conservation and dedicate funding to the community-based, local and regional organizations that spearhead planning efforts.
8. Direct a percentage of Regional Conservation Partnership Program funds to capacity building and technical assistance for program implementation partners and organizations.
9. Establish reimbursements for the transaction costs and services provided by community-based, local and regional organizations that enable landowners to participate in working lands easement programs.
10. Expand funding for Technical Service Providers (TSPs) and encourage NRCS to simplify the application process, increasing the ability of non-Federal partners, especially community-based, locally-led and regional organizations to become a TSP.

Strong Intermediaries Can Provide Essential Functions for Effective Conservation:

Congress and the agencies can increase the effectiveness of the Farm Bill Conservation Title by partnering, engaging and supporting community-based, local and regional organizations to fulfill the following roles and activities:

- Improve outreach, marketing and access to farm bill conservation programs.
Landowner education is the first step to providing access to farm bill conservation programs. Before a landowner is willing to participate in a voluntary program, he or she must be fully aware of all requirements and incentives, as well as the impact program participation will have on the management of their own property and possibly their neighbor's property. Community-based, local and regional organizations and networks are well suited to provide outreach and marketing services to landowners. In fact, there are many organizations across the country already doing this. To improve outreach and marketing, Congress should formalize the roles of community-based, local and regional organizations and increase partnership with and funding to these entities to ensure their success. Congress should direct the agencies to develop performance measures and require reporting on accomplishments related to the use of community-based, local and regional organizations to improve program outreach, marketing and access.
- Provide on the ground project-specific technical assistance, including planning, to ensure delivery of conservation programs at the landowner level.
We need more 'boots on the ground' and rural communities have boots to offer. Often, the landowner demand for project-specific technical assistance is far greater than the ability to provide such assistance. Congress and the agency must prioritize funding for technical assistance to implement effective conservation and restoration activities (*e.g.*, wetland or riparian restoration project design, change in irrigation delivery, conservation planning, *etc.*) ensuring the enhancement and protection of our natural resources. To increase 'boots on the ground' Congress should encourage the Executive branch to allocate enough funding to support the staff needed to provide technical assistance. This includes technical assistance provided by on the ground agency personnel as well as non-Federal conservation partners and specialists (including biologists, ecologists, foresters and rangeland specialists) who can work with agency staff to assist landowners and managers.
- Implement strategic and collaborative conservation planning at a landscape-scale.
Landscape-scale conservation planning and implementation is an efficient and comprehensive means to protect the productivity of multiple natural resources, recognize relationships between ecological processes within a landscape, and incorporate multiple stakeholders into decision-making processes. Community-based, local and regional groups are critical to building agreement among stakeholders around land management and economic development goals. They reach agreement through community and landowner engagement, collaborative planning processes, and the use of pilot projects and facilitated dialogue to build trust before scaling up efforts. Congress should prioritize and fund programs that support landscape-scale conservation and dedicate funding to the community-based, local and regional organizations that spearhead these planning efforts.
- Build and strengthen networks of landowners and community-based, local and regional organizations to advance effective program outreach, planning and implementation.

Networks promote the use and effectiveness of conservation programs by catalyzing landowner outreach and education and providing access to 'boots on the ground' technical assistance. They help advance the learning and problem solving needed for effective program design and implementation. It is through these networks that many landowners learn about the mechanics of farm bill programs, get connected with technical assistance providers and resources, and share their experiences. Congress should support existing networks of community-based, local and regional organizations (including general operations and staffing) that undertake many of the activities listed above.

- Provide the organizational infrastructure needed to staff and organize collaboration, community and landowner engagement, and conservation project planning and implementation.

Strong and stable community-based, local and regional organizations are essential to farm bill program delivery. Supporting organizational infrastructure means building strong foundations for community-based organizations, intermediary groups and networks by providing small amounts of tailored financial and technical assistance to promote 'back of office' systems and processes that lead to effective, efficient, and lasting organizations. These are essential functions such as financial management systems, strategic planning, human resources, communications tools and other elements that underpin effective organizations. Congress should support the organizational infrastructure needs of these community-based organizations, as they relate to farm bill conservation programs.

- Provide educational and skill building opportunities for technical assistance providers and recipients.

Community-based, local and regional organizations provide trainings and workshops to improve the skills and knowledge of local landowners and groups. Farm bill conservation programs will reach more landowners and produce better long-term results if Congress allocates funding for education and skill building opportunities in areas such as sustainable grazing systems, ecological function and monitoring, effective conflict resolution, financial management and grant-writing. Congress can also provide funding for peer to peer learning among community leaders, organizations and practitioners to facilitate the transfer of successful models between communities in different regions of the country.

Farm Bill Conservation Program Delivery is Provided by a Wide Array of Entities

Many different types of organizations and individuals work with Federal agencies to support delivery of farm bill conservation programs. The farm bill should allocate funding to grow and maintain the capacity of these entities. They vary by region and type of landowner, but may include:

- Community-based locally-led or regional organizations,
- Landowner organizations,
- Local and regional networks,
- Soil and water conservation districts,
- Watershed councils,
- Land trusts,
- Contractors,
- State foresters,
- Rangeland specialists, and
- Other local conservation professionals.

Expanded Recommendations to Support and Maintain Capacity for Effective Conservation

Congress and/or the agencies should:

1. Designate collaboration and capacity building outcomes as priority preference criteria for allocation of grants, loans, and cost share for partnership programs in the Conservation Title.

Collaboration and partnerships create a strong new model for doing business in rural America. To support this model Congress should draft and approve a farm bill that will prioritize funding for projects and activities that strengthen community capacity by supporting strong community-based, local and regional organizations and networks and the array of entities that support farm bill program delivery. This can be accomplished by improving criteria to reward and support projects that can show evidence of collaboration and partnerships and that focus on capacity building.

2. Direct the agencies to increase their use of cooperative, contribution and technical service provider agreements to achieve farm bill conservation program outcomes.

Congress and the Secretaries of USDA and USDI should provide direction and training to increase the use of cooperative and contribution agreements for conservation and capacity building. These tools are an effective means by which NRCS can partner with intermediaries to provide technical assistance to landowners. The NRCS Chief should direct staff to use agreements to support community-based, local and regional partners in providing technical assistance, outreach and community engagement for conservation programs.

3. Formalize the role of community-based, local and regional organizations as strategic agency partners in farm bill program delivery.

All partnership programs within the farm bill must provide formal funding for non-Federal partners that contribute staff, organizational infrastructure, knowledge and training to support the delivery of conservation programs. This may include the explicit provision of reimbursements for administrative costs of partners or a stand-alone provision establishing an education and outreach program within the farm bill. Congress must work with NRCS and partners to determine the most appropriate method for formalizing the role of community, local and regional partners.

4. Direct NRCS to develop and report on performance measures that would allow Congress and the public to more fully understand the impact of technical assistance and partnership investments.

There must be more accountability for farm bill conservation program outcomes resulting from the outlay of technical assistance funding. The responsibility for reporting on technical assistance funding spent and outcomes achieved can and should be shared by both the NRCS and community-based, local and regional organizations. NRCS should develop performance measures that would allow Congress and the public to more fully understand the impact of technical assistance and partnership investments.

5. Expand NRCS's ability to use Conservation Technical Assistance (CTA) funding to support partnerships between NRCS staff and community-based and regional organizations and other non-Federal conservation partners and specialists, and continue to increase CTA funding in the annual appropriations process for this purpose.

Conservation Technical Assistance (CTA) funding is necessary for effective outreach, delivery, and implementation of conservation programs. CTA funding supports NRCS representatives in the field, but it also supports the ability of the agency to partner with community-based and regional organizations through cooperative, contribution, and technical service provider agreements and contracts. The use of partnerships through these agreements can build delivery capacity, create local benefit, and leverage private resources for greater impact. There is a need for additional CTA funding to support existing conservation programs. If additional funds are unavailable, we recommend increasing the percentage of total conservation program allocations that go to TA, to grow the effectiveness of Financial Assistance cost-share dollars.

6. Encourage a higher percentage of program funding be directed to Technical Assistance (TA) and expand its range of use for outreach, collaborative planning, and skill building activities, and increased partnership with community-based, local and regional organizations.

Technical Assistance (TA) is the essential vehicle for delivery of farm bill conservation programs. However, TA is consistently underfunded. Even in the years when Congress allocates additional funding for on the ground conservation, the Executive branch neglects to provide the TA funding necessary to get the project dollars on the ground. Further, TA funding is only permitted for a limited category of activities performed in furthering the delivery of farm bill conservation programs. We strongly support the expanded use of TA funding for essential capacity building activities such as: (a) community engagement and collaborative watershed planning; (b) program marketing and outreach; (c) support of community-based, local and regional organizations serving as intermediaries between Federal staff and landowners; and (d) skill building and education exercises for landowners and community members. This will ensure that there are TA funds available for functions that are currently being ignored due to lack of money.

7. Prioritize funding to programs that support landscape-scale conservation and dedicate funding to the community-based, local and regional organizations that spearhead these planning efforts.

Conservation practices are most effective and provide the most significant results when implemented on a landscape scale. Further, meaningful partnerships among government agencies and community-based, local and regional organizations can produce long-lasting conservation projects that transform local thinking and practice around land management. These two elements—landscape-scale and local leadership—are necessary to achieve the ultimate goals of the Farm Bill Conservation Title. Congress should direct NRCS to prioritize funding for programs and projects that incorporate these essential characteristics.

8. Direct a percentage of the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (CCPI and AWEP merged program) funds to capacity building and technical assistance for program implementation partners and organizations.

The Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCP) depends on 'boots on the ground' delivery by third party partners and organizations. While this program supports partnerships and collaborative efforts in the design stages, there is a lack of funding to support other crucial activities such as outreach. The impact of RCP to local communities would be amplified if the farm bill directed a portion of program funding to be used to increase the organizational capacity of community-based organizations that contribute to program delivery. Often, the small local entities best suited to engage in the outreach and education of landowners cannot cover their own administrative costs or other costs of providing these services. These entities should be eligible to use a portion of RCP TA to cover these costs, especially in the first year of the program, when they are building their accomplishments and track record to apply for additional private sources of funding.

9. Establish reimbursements for the transaction costs and services provided by community-based, local and regional groups that enable landowners to participate in working lands easement programs.

For easement programs like the Farm and Ranchlands Protection Program (FRPP) and the Grasslands Reserve Program (GRP), Congress should allow reimbursement of transaction costs incurred by cooperating entities. This would include costs for appraisals, surveys, environmental assessments, title searches, geologist reports, and legal fees, and should be covered for up to 5% of the appraised value of the conservation easement. There is also an ongoing need for funds to ensure long-term monitoring and compliance with terms of conservation easements. By providing funding for these transaction costs and services, Congress will encourage participation and increase the capacity of locally-led community-based organizations that provide the coordination of these services, thereby ensuring their continued participation.

10. Expand funding for Technical Service Providers (TSP) and encourage NRCS to simplify the application process, thereby increasing the ability of a larger subset of non-Federal partners, especially community-based, local and regional organizations to become a TSP.

Technical service providers—third parties that are hired to provide technical assistance—are an important component of the conservation program delivery system. Currently, the TSP program is used to develop conservation plans and perform limited compliance duties, and to plan, design and outline conservation practices. The TSP program should be expanded beyond these roles to help meet the significant workload needed to deliver and implement farm bill conservation programs. This is particularly important in states lacking sufficient NRCS personnel to fully apply the conservation program resources available to them. Another method to expand the TSP program is to enhance accessibility for applicants. Many potential applicants find the application process burdensome; streamlining the process would increase the number of applicants able to successfully enter the TSP program, thereby increasing the pool of intermediaries providing farm bill conservation program delivery.

Importance and Role of Community-Based Organizations in the West

Community-based organizations (CBOs) are community-focused and locally-led groups uniquely positioned to play a significant role in the delivery of farm bill programs in the West. These groups are strategically situated and capable of aligning the goals, objectives and resources of 'outside' entities—including the Federal government—with the activities of local conservation-oriented landowners and businesses. Over the past 15 years, we have witnessed the success of these groups that occupy the space between agencies and landowners and leverage public and private dollars for conservation, both at the local and regional scales.

Although there is no set formula for effective CBOs, there are a number of general commonalities:

- A locally-focused mission that includes an integrated approach to ecological conservation and restoration, natural resource-based economic development, and retention and promotion of local cultures;
- A commitment to the use of collaborative processes to define, implement and monitor conservation and sustainability goals and activities on the landscape;
- Governance and advisory structures that include significant local leadership, complemented by diverse expertise and representation that often includes conservation organizations, Federal and state agencies, recreationists, and out-of-area interests;
- A business and markets orientation—driven by local and regional expertise—that finds a role for Federal conservation investments inside broader business models or economic development plans that leverage public and private capital and “sweat equity,” for lowest cost, highest value conservation outcomes that retain jobs and wealth in the local economy; and
- The ability to leverage small amounts of funding to accomplish significant conservation goals by utilizing multiple funding streams and capitalizing on local knowledge and labor.

Developing and funding CBOs is an investment that pays dividends in the medium and long-term. In the short-term, building the capacity of organizations, training staff, engaging in collaborative planning and fostering relationships between landowners and Federal agencies utilizes resources that may not immediately lead to restoration activities. However, once these initial investments have been made, conservation implementation accelerates greatly and the ratio of funding for capacity building vs. funding for on the ground programs becomes very small. On the other hand, failing to support adequate CBO capacity can condemn an area to “creeping” restoration and conservation implementation, with large amounts of funding going underutilized or unused.

The following entities signed-on in support of the above comments:

Alaska

Sitka Conservation Society

Arizona

Flavors Without Borders Foodways Alliance

California

Alliance of Forest Workers and Harvesters

Canyon Creek Ranch—Robert H. Mackey & Sons, Inc.

Watershed Research and Training Center

Idaho

Framing Our Community

Lemhi Regional Land Trust

National Association of Forest Service Retirees

Salmon Valley Stewardship

Iowa

National Catholic Rural Life Conference

Kentucky

Center for Rural Strategies

Kentuckians for the Commonwealth, Letcher County Chapter

Massachusetts

YouthBuild USA

Minnesota

League of Rural Voters

Missouri

Oregon County Food Producers and Artisans Co-Op

Montana

Bad Goat Forest Products

Big Hole Watershed Committee

Blackfoot Challenge

Center for Large Landscape Conservation

Flathead Economic Policy Center

Northwest Connections

Rolling Stone Ranch

Sonoran Institute

Swan Ecosystem Center

Watershed Consulting, LLC

Nevada

Boies Ranches, Inc.
New Hampshire
Northern Forest Center
The Carsey Institute
New Mexico
Cottonwood Gulch Foundation
Forest Guild
New York
Seneca Trail RC&D Council, Inc.
Oregon
Applegate Partnership and Watershed Council
Ecosystem Workforce Program
Harney County Watershed Council
Institute for Culture and Ecology
Josephine County Stewardship Group
Klamath Basin Rangeland Trust
Lake County Resources Initiative
Mid Klamath Watershed Council
Oregon Rural Action
Savory Institute, LLC
Siuslaw Institute
Southern Oregon Forest Restoration Collaborative
Sustainable Northwest
Wallowa Resources
Washington
Conservation Northwest
Mt. Adams Resource Stewards
Pinchot Institute
Washington, D.C.
American Forests

ATTACHED REPORT



RVCC Issue Paper

May 2012

Rural Voices for Conservation Coalition Recommendations for Increasing Community Capacity to Deliver Farm Bill Conservation Programs

Congress must do more than allocate financial assistance to each program in the Conservation Title of the Farm Bill; it must provide sufficient technical assistance or 'boots on the ground' to help farmers, ranchers and forest landowners implement conservation practices. Effective delivery of Farm Bill programs depends on partnerships among the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), other Federal agencies, and strong community-based, local and regional organizations to provide landowner outreach and education, collaboration assistance and landscape-scale strategic planning, landowner and community skill building, on the ground technical

assistance, and connection to larger support networks. We refer to this as a community's *capacity* to deliver Farm Bill and other conservation programs.

In a tight budget environment, it is essential that limited dollars are well spent to achieve multiple benefits. NRCS and community-based, local and regional organizations must work in coordination to provide access to and delivery of programs that help conserve and steward farms, ranches and forestlands, ensure long-term ecological health, build local economic stability, and enhance productivity and delivery of products to market.

Key Recommendations to Support and Maintain Capacity for Effective Conservation

1. Designate collaboration and capacity building outcomes as priority preference criteria for allocation of grants, loans and cost share for partnership programs.
2. Direct the agencies to increase their use of cooperative, contribution and technical service provider agreements to achieve Farm Bill program outcomes.
3. Formalize the role of community-based, local and regional organizations as strategic agency partners in Farm Bill program delivery.
4. Direct NRCS to develop and report on performance measures that would allow Congress and the public to fully understand the impact of technical assistance and partnership investments.
5. Expand NRCS's ability to use Conservation Technical Assistance (CTA) funding to support partnerships between NRCS staff and community-based and regional organizations and other non-federal conservation partners and specialists, and continue to increase CTA funding in annual appropriations.
6. Encourage a higher percentage of program funding be directed to Technical Assistance (TA) and expand its range of use for outreach, collaborative planning, skill building, and increased partnership with community-based, local and regional organizations.
7. Prioritize funding to programs that support landscape-scale conservation and dedicate funding to the community-based, local and regional organizations that spearhead planning efforts.
8. Direct a percentage of Regional Conservation Partnership Program funds to capacity building and technical assistance for program implementation partners and organizations.
9. Establish reimbursements for the transaction costs and services provided by community-based, local and regional organizations that enable landowners to participate in working lands easement programs.
10. Expand funding for Technical Service Providers (TSPs) and encourage NRCS to simplify the application process, increasing the ability of non-federal partners, especially community-based, local and regional organizations to become a TSP.

Working together to find policy solutions to the ecological and economic challenges of the rural West

RVCC is comprised of rural western, regional, and national organizations that have joined together to promote balanced conservation-based approaches to the ecological and economic problems facing the West. We are committed to finding and promoting solutions through collaborative, place-based work that recognizes the inextricable link between the long-term health of the land and well-being of rural communities. We come from Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon and Washington.





As participants in the Rural Voices for Conservation Coalition (RVCC) and partnering landowners, organizations and businesses, we strongly support the work of the NRCS and other Federal agencies, and stand willing and able to work in partnership with the Department to achieve strong and lasting program outcomes.

Strong Intermediaries Can Provide Essential Functions for Effective Conservation:

Congress and the agencies can increase the effectiveness of the Farm Bill Conservation Title by partnering, engaging and supporting community-based, local and regional organizations to fulfill the following roles and activities:

• **Improve outreach, marketing and access to Farm Bill conservation programs.**

Landowner education is the first step to providing access to Farm Bill conservation programs. Before a landowner is willing to participate in a voluntary program, he or she must be fully aware of all requirements and incentives, as well as the impact program participation will have on the management of their own property and possibly their neighbor's property. Community-based, local and regional organizations and networks are well suited to provide outreach and marketing services to landowners. In fact, there are many organizations across the country already doing this. To improve outreach and marketing, Congress should formalize the roles of community-based, local and regional organizations and increase partnership with and funding to these entities to ensure their success. Congress should direct the agencies to develop performance measures and require reporting on accomplishments related to the use of community-based, local and regional organizations to improve program outreach, marketing and access.

• **Provide on the ground project-specific technical assistance, including planning, to ensure delivery of conservation programs at the landowner level.**

We need more 'boots on the ground' and rural communities have boots to offer. Often, the landowner demand for project-specific technical assistance is far greater than the ability to provide such assistance. Congress and the agency must prioritize funding for technical assistance to implement effective conservation and restoration

activities (e.g., wetland or riparian restoration project design, change in irrigation delivery, conservation planning, etc.) ensuring the enhancement and protection of our natural resources. To increase 'boots on the ground' Congress should encourage the Executive branch to allocate enough funding to support the staff needed to provide technical assistance. This includes technical assistance provided by on the ground agency personnel as well as non-federal conservation partners and specialists (including biologists, ecologists, foresters and rangeland specialists) who can work with agency staff to assist landowners and managers.

• **Implement strategic and collaborative conservation planning at a landscape-scale.**

Landscape-scale conservation planning and implementation is an efficient and comprehensive means to protect the productivity of multiple natural resources, recognize relationships between ecological processes within a landscape, and incorporate multiple stakeholders into decision-making processes. Community-based, local and regional groups are critical to building agreement among stakeholders around land management and economic development goals. They reach agreement through community and landowner engagement, collaborative planning processes, and the use of pilot projects and facilitated dialogue to build trust before scaling up efforts. Congress should prioritize and fund programs that support landscape-scale conservation and dedicate funding to the community-based, local and regional organizations that spearhead these planning efforts.

• **Build and strengthen networks of landowners and community-based, local and regional organizations to advance effective program outreach, planning and implementation.**

Networks promote the use and effectiveness of conservation programs by catalyzing landowner outreach and education and providing access to 'boots on the ground' technical assistance. They help advance the learning and problem solving needed for effective program design and implementation. It is through these networks that many landowners learn about the mechanics of Farm Bill programs, get connected with technical assistance providers and resources, and share their experiences. Congress should support existing networks of landowners

and community-based, local and regional organizations (including general operations and staffing) that undertake many of the activities listed above.

• **Provide the organizational infrastructure needed to staff and organize collaboration, community and landowner engagement, and conservation project planning and implementation.**

Strong and stable community-based, local and regional organizations are essential to Farm Bill program delivery. Supporting organizational infrastructure means building strong foundations for community-based organizations, intermediary groups and networks by providing small amounts of tailored financial and technical assistance to promote 'back of office' systems and processes that lead to effective, efficient, and lasting organizations. These are essential functions such as financial management systems, strategic planning, human resources, communications tools and other elements that underpin effective organizations. Congress should support the organizational infrastructure needs of these community-based organizations, as they relate to Farm Bill conservation programs.

Farm Bill Conservation Program Delivery is Provided by a Wide Array of Entities

Many different types of organizations and individuals work with Federal agencies to support delivery of Farm Bill conservation programs. The Farm Bill should allocate funding to grow and maintain the capacity of these entities. They vary by region and type of landowner, but may include:

- Community-based, local and regional organizations,
- Landowner organizations,
- Local and regional networks,
- Soil and water conservation districts,
- Watershed councils,
- Land trusts,
- Contractors,
- State foresters,
- Rangeland specialists, and
- Other local conservation professionals.

• **Provide educational and skill building opportunities for technical assistance providers and recipients.**



Community-based, local and regional organizations provide trainings and workshops to improve the skills and knowledge of local landowners and groups. Farm Bill conservation programs will reach more landowners and produce better long-term results if Congress allocates funding for education and skill building opportunities in areas such as sustainable grazing systems, ecological function and monitoring, effective conflict resolution, financial management and grant-writing. Congress can also provide funding for peer-to-peer learning among community leaders, organizations and practitioners to facilitate the transfer of successful models between communities in different regions of the country.

Expanded Recommendations to Support and Maintain Capacity for Effective Conservation

Congress and/or the agencies should:

1. Designate collaboration and capacity building outcomes as priority preference criteria for allocation of grants, loans, and cost share for partnership programs in the Conservation Title.

Collaboration and partnerships create a strong new model for doing business in rural America. To support this model Congress should draft and approve a Farm Bill that will prioritize funding for projects and activities that strengthen community capacity by supporting strong community-based, local and regional organizations and networks and the array of entities that support Farm Bill program delivery. This can be accomplished by improving criteria to reward and support projects that can show evidence of collaboration and partnerships and that focus on capacity building.

2. Direct the agencies to increase their use of cooperative, contribution and technical service provider agreements to achieve Farm Bill conservation program outcomes.

Congress and the Secretaries of USDA and USDI should provide direction and training to increase the use of cooperative and contribution agreements for conservation and capacity building. These tools are an effective means by which NRCS can partner with intermediaries to provide technical assistance to landowners. The NRCS Chief should



direct staff to use agreements to support community-based, local and regional organizations in providing technical assistance, outreach and community engagement for conservation programs.

3. Formalize the role of community-based, local and regional organizations as strategic agency partners in Farm Bill program delivery.

All partnership programs within the Farm Bill must provide

formal funding for non-federal partners that contribute staff, organizational infrastructure, knowledge and training to support the delivery of conservation programs. This may include the explicit provision of reimbursements for administrative costs of partners or a stand-alone provision establishing an education and outreach program within the Farm Bill. Congress must work with NRCS and partners to determine the most appropriate method for formalizing the role of community-based, local and regional organizations.

Importance and Role of Community-Based Organizations in the West

Community-based organizations (CBOs) are community-focused and/or locally-led groups uniquely positioned to play a significant role in the delivery of Farm Bill programs in the West.

These groups are strategically situated and capable of aligning the goals and resources of 'outside' entities – including the federal government – with the activities of conservation-oriented landowners and businesses.

Over the past 15 years, we have witnessed the success of these groups that occupy the space between agencies and landowners and leverage public and private dollars for conservation, both at the local and regional scales.

Although there is no set formula for effective CBOs, there are a number of general commonalities:

- A locally-focused mission that includes an integrated approach to ecological conservation and restoration, natural resource-based economic development, and retention and promotion of local cultures;
- A commitment to the use of collaborative processes to define, implement and monitor conservation and sustainability goals and activities on the landscape;
- Governance and advisory structures that include significant local leadership, complemented by diverse expertise and representation that often includes conservation organizations, federal and state agencies, recreationists, and out-of-area interests;

- A business and markets orientation – driven by local and regional expertise – that finds a role for federal conservation investments inside broader business models or economic development plans that leverage public and private capital and "sweat equity," for lowest cost, highest value conservation outcomes that retain jobs and wealth in the local economy; and

- The ability to leverage small amounts of funding to accomplish significant conservation goals by utilizing multiple funding streams and capitalizing on local knowledge and labor.

Developing and funding CBOs is an investment that pays dividends in the medium and long-term. In the short-term, building the capacity of organizations, training staff, engaging in collaborative planning and fostering relationships between landowners and federal agencies utilizes resources that may not immediately lead to restoration activities.

However, once these initial investments have been made, conservation implementation accelerates greatly and the ratio of funding for capacity building vs. funding for on the ground programs becomes very small. On the other hand, failing to support adequate CBO capacity can condemn an area to "creeping" restoration and conservation implementation, with large amounts of funding going underutilized or unused.

4. Direct NRCS to develop and report on performance measures that would allow Congress and the public to more fully understand the impact of technical assistance and partnership investments.

There must be more accountability for Farm Bill conservation program outcomes resulting from the outlay of technical assistance funding. The responsibility for reporting on technical assistance funding spent and outcomes achieved can and should be shared by both the NRCS and community-based, local and regional organizations. NRCS should develop performance measures that would allow Congress and the public to more fully understand the impact of technical assistance and partnership investments.

5. Expand NRCS's ability to use Conservation Technical Assistance (CTA) funding to support partnerships between NRCS staff and community-based and regional organizations and other non-federal conservation partners and specialists, and continue to increase CTA funding in the annual appropriations process for this purpose.

Conservation Technical Assistance (CTA) funding is necessary for effective outreach, delivery, and implementation of conservation programs. CTA funding supports NRCS representatives in the field, but it also supports the ability of the agency to partner with community-based and regional organizations through cooperative, contribution, and technical service provider agreements and contracts. The use of partnerships through these agreements can build delivery capacity, create local benefit, and leverage private resources for greater impact. There is a need for additional CTA funding to support existing conservation programs. If additional funds are unavailable, we recommend increasing the percentage of total conservation program allocations that go to TA, to grow the effectiveness of Financial Assistance cost-share dollars.

6. Encourage a higher percentage of program funding be directed to Technical Assistance (TA) and expand its range of use for outreach, collaborative planning, and skill building activities, and increased partnership with community-based, local and regional organizations.

Technical Assistance (TA) is the essential vehicle for delivery of Farm Bill conservation programs. However, TA is consistently underfunded. Even in the years when Congress allocates additional funding for on the ground

conservation, the Executive branch neglects to provide the TA funding necessary to get the project dollars on the ground. Further, TA funding is only permitted for a limited category of activities performed in furthering the delivery of Farm Bill conservation programs. We strongly support the expanded use of TA funding for essential capacity building activities such as: (a) community engagement and collaborative watershed planning; (b) program marketing and outreach; (c) support of community-based, local and regional organizations serving as intermediaries between federal staff and landowners; and (d) skill building and educational activities for landowners and community members. This will ensure that there are TA funds available for functions that are currently being ignored due to lack of money.



7. Prioritize funding to programs that support landscape-scale conservation and dedicate funding to the community-based, local and regional organizations that spearhead these planning efforts.

Conservation practices are most effective and provide the most significant results when implemented on a landscape-scale. Further, meaningful partnerships among government agencies and community-based, local and regional organizations can produce long-lasting conservation projects that transform local thinking and practice around land management. These two elements – landscape-scale and local leadership – are necessary to achieve the ultimate goals of the Farm Bill Conservation Title. Congress should direct NRCS to prioritize funding for programs and projects that incorporate these essential characteristics.

8. Direct a percentage of the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (CCPI and AWEP merged program) funds to capacity building and technical assistance for program implementation partners and organizations.

The Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) depends on 'boots on the ground' delivery by third party partners and organizations. While this program supports partnerships and collaborative efforts in the design stages, there is a lack of funding to support other crucial activities such as outreach. The impact of RCPP to local communities would be amplified if the Farm Bill directed a portion of program funding to be used to increase the organizational capacity of community-based organizations



that contribute to program delivery. Often, the small local entities best suited to engage in the outreach and education of landowners cannot cover their own administrative costs or other costs of providing these services. These entities should be eligible to use a portion of RCPP TA to cover these costs, especially in the first year of the program, when they are building their accomplishments and track record to apply for additional private sources of funding.

9. Establish reimbursements for the transaction costs and services provided by community-based, local and regional groups that enable landowners to participate in working lands easement programs.

For easement programs like the Farm and Ranchlands Protection Program (FRPP) and the Grasslands Reserve Program (GRP), Congress should allow reimbursement of transaction costs incurred by cooperating entities. This would include costs for appraisals, surveys, environmental assessments, title searches, geologist reports, and legal fees, and should be covered for up to 5% of the appraised value of the conservation easement. There is also an ongoing need for funds to ensure long-term monitoring and compliance with terms of conservation easements. By providing funding for these transaction costs and services, Congress will encourage participation and increase the capacity of community-based organizations that provide the coordination of these services, thereby ensuring their continued participation.

10. Expand funding for Technical Service Providers (TSP) and encourage NRCS to simplify the application process, thereby increasing the ability of a larger subset of non-federal partners, especially community-based, local and regional organizations to become a TSP.

Technical service providers – third parties that are hired to provide technical assistance – are an important component of the conservation program delivery system. Currently, the TSP program is used to develop conservation plans and perform limited compliance duties, and to plan, design and outline conservation practices. The TSP program should be expanded beyond these roles to help meet the significant workload needed to deliver and implement Farm Bill conservation programs. This is particularly important in states lacking sufficient NRCS personnel to fully apply the conservation program resources available to them. Another method to expand the TSP program is to enhance

accessibility for applicants. Many potential applicants find the application process burdensome; streamlining the process would increase the number of applicants able to successfully enter the TSP program, thereby increasing the pool of intermediaries providing Farm Bill conservation program delivery.

Additional Resources:

RVCC. "Capacity for Conservation and Rural Job Creation." (2011) (<http://www.sustainableinthewest.org/resources/rvcc-issue-papers>).

Cassandra Moseley, et al. "Community-Based Natural Resource Management in the Western United States: A Pilot Study of Capacity" (2011). (http://ewp.uoregon.edu/sites/ewp.uoregon.edu/files/WP_27.pdf)



Please see the back cover for a list of coalition partners.



Alaska
Sitka Conservation Society

Arizona
Flavors Without Borders
Foodways Alliance

California
Alliance of Forest Workers and Harvesters
Canyon Creek Ranch – Robert H. Mackey & Sons, Inc.
Watershed Research and Training Center

Idaho
Framing Our Community
Lemhi Regional Land Trust
National Association of Forest Service Retirees
Salmon Valley Stewardship

Iowa
National Catholic Rural Life Conference

Kentucky
Center for Rural Strategies
Kentuckians for the Commonwealth, Letcher County Chapter

Massachusetts
YouthBuild USA

Minnesota
League of Rural Voters

Missouri
Oregon County Food Producers and Artisans Co-Op

Montana
Bad Goat Forest Products
Big Hole Watershed Committee
Blackfoot Challenge
Center for Large Landscape Conservation
Flathead Economic Policy Center
Northwest Connections
Rolling Stone Ranch
Sonoran Institute
Swan Ecosystem Center
Watershed Consulting, LLC

Nevada
Boies Ranches, Inc.

New Hampshire
The Carsey Institute
Northern Forest Center

New Mexico
Cottonwood Gulch Foundation
Forest Guild

New York
Seneca Trail RC&D Council, Inc.

Oregon
Applegate Partnership and Watershed Council
Ecosystem Workforce Program
Harney County Watershed Council
Institute for Culture and Ecology
Josephine County Stewardship Group
Klamath Basin Rangeland Trust
Lake County Resources Initiative
Mid Klamath Watershed Council
Oregon Rural Action
Savory Institute, LLC
Siustlaw Institute
Southern Oregon Forest Restoration Collaborative
Sustainable Northwest
Wallowa Resources

Washington
Conservation Northwest
Mt. Adams Resource Stewards
Pinchot Institute

Washington, DC
American Forests

For more information contact the RVCC Issue Experts:
Sustainable Northwest
Alice Williamson, (503) 221-6911 x103, awilliamson@sustainablenorthwest.org
Alaina Pomeroy, (503) 221-6911 x109, apomeroy@sustainablenorthwest.org
Learn more about RVCC here: www.SustainableNorthwest.org/rvcc



COMMENT OF STEFAN POMRENKE, M.D., M.P.H., M.A.T.S.

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 9:12 p.m.
City, State: Saint Paul, MN
Occupation: Family Physician
Comment: As a family physician I am deeply concerned with the direction of the U.S. farm bill. All efforts need to be exhausted to create a **Healthy** farm bill that has fresh fruits and vegetables at its cornerstone. The reliance of corn and soy as the chief commodity has made my patients sick. Create a local, decentralized food system that Minnesotans remember from their grandparent's era.

COMMENT OF LOUIS PONTILLO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:10 a.m.
City, State: Montville, ME
Occupation: Acupuncturist/Instructor
Comment: Our farm bill should embrace small farms and encourage organic farming. We need to place a leash and muzzle on Monsanto and other companies that engage in "industrial" farming. Humanity must start acting their part as stewards of The Earth.

COMMENT OF CAROL POOLE

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 10:08 a.m.
City, State: Napa, CA
Producer/Non-producer: Producer
Type: Fruits
Size: Less than 50 acres
Comment: Cut the subsidies to corn producers and help the people of the United States get healthy vegetables, fruit and whole grains into their diets! Stop undercutting prices of produce from small family farmers within their own countries.

COMMENT OF ANNE POPE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:17 p.m.
City, State: Friday Harbor, WA
Occupation: Retired
Comment: I am the daughter of a farmer and farmed myself for years. Locally I have been heavily involved in a growers coop and mobile slaughter unit. We need to support small farms and organic practices if we are to save agriculture and insure that future generations have access to healthy, affordable food.

COMMENT OF ROBERT POPOLOW

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 9:47 p.m.
City, State: New York, NY
Occupation: IT Manager, Fitness Trainer
Comment: I am developing a nonprofit www.worldwideconcerns.org. As time goes on more and more people are realizing how important it is to eat healthy & protect the Earth from harm so we can have a bright future for ourselves and our children. We can't just live in the moment we must pay attention to what is healthy and what is right for us and the Earth for the future. In the end there will be no choice why not start now before it becomes a problem which may not be reversible?

COMMENT OF DONALD J. PORTER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:50 a.m.
City, State: Sarasota, FL
Occupation: Retired Investment Banker
Comment: Organic is **Critical** in this Sick country **Due To Chemicals** & Payoff to politicians. **Stop** overuse of **All** chemicals Promote small organic farms.

COMMENT OF KAREN PORTER

Date Submitted: Monday, May 14, 2012, 3:25 p.m.
City, State: Lubbock, TX
Occupation: Homemaker

Comment: No cuts to food stamps. Improve crop insurance plans. Stop subsidizing cheap, unhealthy crops/food. Replace cotton crops with hemp, which is profitable, versatile and sustainable.

COMMENT OF MAYA PORTER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:59 a.m.

City, State: Fayetteville, AR

Occupation: Retired Editor and Gardener

Comment: Please stop giving big subsidies to big industrial agriculture and put more into small, especially organic, farming. We need to make our food nutritious again and help the small farmer make a living.

Thank you.

MAYA.

COMMENT OF ANNE PORTMAN

Date Submitted: Thursday, April 12, 2012, 6:12 p.m.

City, State: Albuquerque, NM

Occupation: Professional Elementary School Counselor

Comment: The elementary school I work in has a very high population of economically-disadvantaged children and families. Many of them can only sustain themselves through benefits such as TEFAP, WIC, and SNAP. The Roadrunner Food Bank (RRFB) has provided many of these families with an Emergency Family Food Box this year. Other New Mexico schools with low SES populations participate in the RRFB Food Backpack program, which supports them in getting adequate food supplies. Please authorize appropriate funding to continue and to increase these necessary resources for New Mexico children and families.

COMMENT OF NATALIE POSEVER

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 03, 2012, 12:35 p.m.

City, State: Amherst, MA

Occupation: Student

Comment: To Whom This May Concern,

I hope this finds you doing well. I am writing to express my opinion regarding the future of our nation's farmers. The newly proposed Farm Bill of 2012 has many exciting and necessary provisions in it, such as directing food production away from calorically dense foods to nutritionally rich foods and restructuring crop insurance programs. However, I would like to suggest that all of these progressive reforms will not be possible without the people necessary to implement them. The average age of farmers in our country is well over 50, and each year more farmers leave the profession than enter it. Because of this, it is absolutely crucial that we incentivize young, educated people to enter the farming profession. This could be achieved through subsidized agricultural education and loans to beginning farmers so that they can afford to start a new farm, or transition a family farm into organic production. Additionally, incentives for new farmers should not be directed at just any means of production, but specifically for biointensive and organic production. By creating more, ecologically and socially responsible farmers, we can build the infrastructure necessary to implement the new farm bill. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

NATALIE POSEVER.

COMMENT OF EDYE POSEY

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:59 a.m.

City, State: Meeker, CO

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: This country has to get the control of the farming industry back in the hands of the true American citizen and out of the hands of greedy politicians, corporate agribusiness, Monsanto, and others whose only goal is money. Government entities have to start truly caring about those whom they are working for, the American citizen. Please put into action a farm bill that is healthy for the land and the health of We the People.

COMMENT OF KATHERINE POTAMITES

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 10, 2012, 8:36 p.m.
City, State: Chicago, IL
Occupation: Teacher Aide
Comment: Please adopt the Bowles-Simpson and increase TEFAP as well as SNAP. It is important and necessary to protect the disadvantaged. Please avoid measures that would increase hunger, poverty and hardship in a nation as abundant as ours.

COMMENT OF ERIN POTTER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:25 a.m.
City, State: Virginia Beach, VA
Occupation: Beekeeper, Gardener and USCG Reservist
Comment: America deserves healthy choices in our Constitutional right to freedom in the pursuit of happiness. In order to keep healthy, Americans should have plenty of fruit and vegetables affordable for purchase. Corn should not be subsidized as it is very difficult to digest. High fructose corn syrup is more chemical than natural sweetener which means it should not be subsidized either. Our future depends on smart land use which means thinking in terms of life cycles and water cycles. Pesticides and genetically modified agriculture are killing honeybees which are necessary to pollination. Americans are not free to pursue happiness if their land is polluted and honeybees are all dead because we rely on the majority of our fruits and vegetables being pollinated by honeybees. Please subsidize fruit and vegetable farmers who do not use pesticides or GMOs.

COMMENT OF NANCY POTTER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:17 a.m.
City, State: Traverse City, MI
Occupation: Educator
Comment: In the next farm bill, please stop subsidizing the large corporate farm companies that don't need help. Give all subsidies to the small farmer, organic farms, local growers, and support and help feed those who are going hungry in America.

COMMENT OF CLIFTON POTTS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:03 p.m.
City, State: Topanga, CA
Occupation: Consultant in Computer Technology
Comment: It time to change our agriculture from one that is vulnerable to one that is robust. There is enough scientific literature proving that local agriculture is on that benefits the society as a whole and not just corporations. Please make your policies benefit the greatest number of people and the community at large.

COMMENT OF REBECCA POULSEN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 4:01 a.m.
City, State: Layton, UT
Occupation: CDL/Office Manager
Comment: Seriously? Is this not the most important issue? The health, safety and proper development of our legacy? Our hearts? our loves? Our children **Are** our future . . . How the heck could we not place the utmost importance on them and their welfare, on all levels.

COMMENT OF MICHAEL POWELL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:22 p.m.
City, State: Sacramento, CA
Occupation: Medical Doctor
Comment: I am a medical professional. Organic farming produces better food which means healthier patients. Lets empower organic farms to help feed people food with fewer toxins and higher nutrient content.

COMMENT OF WILLIAM POWELL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 3:11 p.m.

City, State: Port Orange, FL
Occupation: Hospitality Sales Management

Comment: I support the movement to attach TEFAP funding to the rate of national, state and local unemployment. As a family of five with three young children, I have been one of the many victims of economic downturn of the past few years, and the SNAP program was vital in helping me feed my children when they would have otherwise gone hungry. Please don't allow congress to cut the SNAP program; this is a vital lifeline for honest, taxpaying and registered voting Americans.

COMMENT OF ANN POWERS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:23 p.m.

City, State: Chino Valley, AZ

Occupation: Housewife

Comment: Please do not allow any cuts on SNAP program. My husband works part time and I am unable to work if it wasn't for our food stamps every month we would have nothing to spend on food. What little we do get I make stretch as best I can. I am not the only one in this area. This could cause a drastic problem in this country with unemployment being up and cuts in other programs. It will become a third world nation where other nations will be sending us food to help stop starvation **In This Country.**

COMMENT OF BRUCE POWERS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:11 p.m.

City, State: Chelan, WA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I am concerned that manufacturers are pushing legislature to grant approvals to products that may have dangerous attributes.

They seem in such a hurry to legalize their creations of seeds or chemicals, perhaps before the potential consequences of the product or practice are thoroughly tested in real world circumstances.

The reasons they present to justify quick action seem more aligned with competition, grabbing market share, and gaining dominance, including reducing options for the grower.

We know about canaries in the coal mines, but maybe the bee is the messenger in our fields. There is some evidence, that bee colonies are being decimated by minute quantities of pesticide ingredients in corn syrup fed to bees to facilitate overwintering.

These kinds of things take time to resolve. We should not rush the legislative process to appease the lobbyists.

If **Bees** could vote, they might survive.

COMMENT OF HEATHER POWERS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:09 p.m.

City, State: Charleston, SC

Occupation: Professional Organizer

Comment: Dear Mr. Scott,

I'm writing to tell you about my concerns to pending changes to the farm policy. Below are some of the issues I support and hope to hear that you do as well. I am a new constituent to your district and feel that it is vitally important to national security, our local and national economy and health of American's to be able to eat healthy, sustainable foods from locally produced farms.

- Full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Full funding of conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

As a supporter of local farms in several states over the last 10 years I have learned first hand about local food production. It can bring communities together,

forge economic opportunities and create healthier citizens. I hope you will keep my concerns in mind as you cast your vote.

Sincerely,

HEATHER.

COMMENT OF JANET POWERS

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 10:39 p.m.

City, State: Gettysburg, PA

Occupation: College Professor

Comment: I live in an agricultural area, where all types of fruit are grown on family farms or by small producers. Thus everyone in our area has a stake in a better farm bill that will support organic farming as well as healthy nutrition for those on the SNAP program. Cutting funding for those programs at such a crucial time would be a terrible mistake! I urge you to pass a farm bill that is sensitive to the needs of the American people and not to the demands of agribusiness.

COMMENT OF ROBIN POWIS

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 5:00 p.m.

City, State: Alachua, FL

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Specialty Crops

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Please support sustainable agricultural policy that encourages small farms and the preservation of natural resources.

ROBIN POWIS.

COMMENT OF ANDREW POYANT

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 5:33 p.m.

City, State: Cambridge, MA

Occupation: Environmental Scientist

Comment: As a soil scientist and biologist it is important that we change the way that government funds agriculture. Funding should only be provided to organic, sustainable practices. The farm bill is a way that if written correctly can increase the health of our environment including water and soil, and increase the health of Americans by subsidizing fruits and vegetables instead of higher caloric foods such as meats and grains.

COMMENT OF JIM PRADO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:40 p.m.

City, State: Roxbury, CT

Occupation: Chiropractor

Comment: I see firsthand on a daily basis the damage done to the health of American's which takes the form of diseases related to chronic inflammation. Chronic inflammation is initiated and exacerbated by a diet high in corn and grain. If you are serious about making people healthy then try subsidizing organic vegetable farmers and not corn and grain growers!

COMMENT OF BETH PRATHER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:38 p.m.

City, State: Robert Lee, TX

Occupation: Librarian

Comment: Please, as a first priority, consider the environment and the 99% who actually purchase super market food to feed to their families. The lobbying by corporations is never in the interest of the 99% . . . nor the environment.

COMMENT OF CHRISTINE PRATT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:52 p.m.

City, State: Spokane Valley, WA

Occupation: Esthetician

Comment: Please, support organics more now than ever. We need good healthy whole food for our families. I choose No genetically modified food. We need labeling for the genetically modified food so consumers have a choice.

COMMENT OF SHANNAH PRAUS

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 4:54 p.m.
City, State: Portland, OR
Occupation: Unemployed
Comment: Please protect any all nutritional programs for seniors. Many need all the assistance afforded them. They deserve this much for all they have contributed. Thank you.

COMMENT OF STEWART PRAVDA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:41 a.m.
City, State: Brooklyn, NY
Comment: We try to buy local and organic as often as possible from the Park Slope Food Co-op and the Farmers Market at Prospect Park (GreenMarket). These are important issues for us and society. Please consider supporting it.

COMMENT OF DONNA PRECOPIO

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 2:55 p.m.
City, State: Novato, CA
Producer/Non-producer: Producer
Type: Vegetables
Size: Less than 50 acres
Comment: Please protect our small farms. It is from local small farms that most of the people of California get their produce.
DONNA PRECOPIO.

COMMENT OF WILL PRESTON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 3:59 p.m.
City, State: Seattle, WA
Occupation: Network Administrator
Comment: Please align the farm subsidies more closely with encouraging healthy fruits and vegetables, and discouraging unhealthy foods such as meat, dairy, corn and soybeans. Thank you.

COMMENT OF CAITLIN PRICE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:13 p.m.
City, State: Mount Vernon, WA
Occupation: Agriculture Research
Comment: We need a farm bill that supports diverse crops, small and medium sized farms, and access to fresh, nutritious food for those on food assistance programs.

The following is needed:

- Place limitations on crop insurance subsidies and to re-attach soil erosion and wetland conservation requirements to crop insurance programs.
- A strong Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development program to ensure we continue to have farms producing food.
- Strong support of research into new and innovative production practices that reduce chemical inputs, protect soil and water resources, and promote biologically diverse farms.
- Use the farm bill to support job creation in rural areas!
- Significantly reduce subsidies for commodity growers. This system promotes over-use of fertilizers, contamination of ground water, soil loss, and over reliance on GMOS, chemicals, and fossil fuels. The funds would be much better spent promoting rural development, small to medium sized farms, and diverse crops.

COMMENT OF JENNIFER PRICE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:07 a.m.
City, State: Louisville, KY
Occupation: Administrative
Comment: Dear representative,
Any reform that can be made to aid farmers who produce various crops instead of one singular crop should be made. Also I would like to see the bill to include re-

quirements of farmers to preserve natural wetlands and use proper techniques to prevent soil erosion to protect our waterways!

Thank you,

JENNIFER PRICE.

COMMENT OF JOHN PRICE, PH.D.

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 2:54 p.m.

City, State: Vero Beach, FL

Occupation: Retired Scientist—Organic Chemistry, Ph.D.

Comment: Dear Members of House Committee on Agriculture;

I am in favor of scrapping the current drafts of the House Agriculture farm bill and replacing those drafts with legislation which would benefit the real producers of safe organically grown produce,—the small, family-owned farm workers who grow organic foods and who are in need of rules and laws which would help sustain these healthy food practices. An organic, and healthy food bill would, hopefully, provide the impetus to these beneficial actions—not the currently drafted bill currently before the House AG Committee.

Thank you kindly for considering the welfare of ordinary citizens and family owned farms.

COMMENT OF JUDY PRICE

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 3:21 p.m.

City, State: Tulalip, WA

Occupation: Writer, Artist, Musician

Comment: We have to pay attention to our future needs.

Now is the time to begin labeling our foods and stopping the control a few have over us. GMOs are completely taking over our land. The organic farmers are stopped from growing what they want by law suits from Monsanto suing because their seeds blew over into neighboring farm land.

This is **Not** a complex request. It is essential to our health, our families health and the health of our land. If you like peeing Round-up, as you are now, than ignore this and make your money voting against a clean healthy world.

The numbers are startling. 70% of our food is already GMO and up to 90% corn and soy are GMO. This is frightening.

It may be too late for you and your children to be healthy already.

Sincerely,

JUDY PRICE.

COMMENT OF KENT PRICE

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 4:07 p.m.

City, State: Orland, ME

Occupation: Retired

Comment: As a former staff member of the National Center for Food and Agricultural Policy and a hobby farmer in retirement, I am familiar with both the promise and the problems of the nation's productive lands and waters. Chief among the set of problems is the malign influence of industrial agriculture. In ag, too, small can be beautiful.

COMMENT OF LAURIE PRICE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:10 p.m.

City, State: New York, NY

Occupation: Editor, Translator

Comment: Conservation, organic farming and sustainable agriculture (non-GMO) are **So** important if we're to preserve our health and the livelihoods of our farmers. This is absolutely **Not** the moment to cut funding to these programs. It's already hard enough out there without losing basic rights to eat healthy, nutritious food that supports the livelihood of farmers and sustainable agricultural practices.

COMMENT OF TRAEER PRICE

Date Submitted: Friday, March 16, 2012, 8:35 a.m.

City, State: St. Petersburg, FL

Occupation: Freelance Designer

Comment: An article was published in the *St. Petersburg Times* not long ago detailing the need for food assistance in our community (<http://www.tampabay.com/news/humaninterest/huge-food-giveaway-in-st-petersburg-underscores-new-face-of-the-poor/1205247>,* now the *Tampa Bay Times*). The restaurants in our more affluent areas are full of tourists and yet 1,900 people (4 times the number expected) stood in line for free food—a revelation to many of us that so many of our neighbors are living with hunger.

Please pass a farm bill that provides ample support to all of the programs that assist folks in need of nutrition—SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP. These difficult times require a lean, organized and effective approach to any assistance the government provides America's citizens, but it is in the worst of times that we must make sure those hit hardest have help. Families who have never had to contend with hunger are standing alongside people who have struggled with homelessness for years—there are many and varied needs, but America knows who to produce and supply food and even in the midst of this stubborn recession we can and should continue to provide assistance to people facing this most basic need.

COMMENT OF WAYNE PRICE

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 6:57 a.m.

City, State: Kansas City, MO

Occupation: Factory Worker

Comment: We want our God given rights to make our own choices about unadulterated foods. We need protection from the overzealous FDA and Big Agribusiness, not organic farmers and raw milk.

COMMENT OF ELIZABETH PRIEBE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:58 p.m.

City, State: Mansfield, TX

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Specialty Crops

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: We only make a small amount from raising our angora and do not intend to be living on our farming. We just enjoy our land and this is what we want for America, to know that they come from the land. Our very life is dependent on what the land brings forth. Please support local farmers, sustainable practices and healthy standards that will not rape our land.

COMMENT OF WANDA PRIEST

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:53 a.m.

City, State: Estill Springs, TN

Occupation: Retail

Comment: I am 46, a mom of 3, cancer patient concerned about the health of future generations. We understand more today about how nutrition plays a role in health and studies have **Proven** GMO's, pesticides and monocultures based on singular species are detrimental to our environment and cause diseases such cancer, diabetes and heart disease. The farm bill can sway the future of American health and lower the epic cost of health care by steering our food production on a new course. Providing funding for closed loop agriculture whereby farmers use livestock to return nutrients to the land on which they produce crops would be the incentive to put nutrition back into the foods we eat. Additionally, this type of agriculture would increase rural jobs while allowing our lands to heal and reducing toxins in our water system. These are just a few of the positive aspects of returning food production to the people as opposed to corporate farming. Won't you consider how you can lessen the suffering of your grandchildren by acting now on the main source of disease? Please contact me with questions or ideas.

WANDA,

[Redacted].

COMMENT OF ERIC PRILESON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:27 p.m.

City, State: Tucson, AZ

Occupation: Policy Writer

*The information referred to is included in Committee file.

Comment: Please consider the immediate and far reaching benefits of vital nutrition programs. While maintaining a current healthy fiscal balance may seem more important, the future ability to rise up economically will sustain our economy and workforce better with an investment in our future. Thank you.

COMMENT OF H. BRUCE PRILLAMAN

Date Submitted: Monday, May 14, 2012, 4:18 p.m.

City, State: Roanoke, VA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: From USDA statistics this presents a huge tax saving opportunity. Large Farm companies should be able to do business like any other. Provide or not provide their own insurance, Hedge or not hedge crop prices with futures, *etc.* Since 1932 or earlier we have subsidized this activity. Will they ever grow or stand on their own?—Not as long as we provide support! If this is to protect the small farm then **Make It For Small Farms.**

Note—according to USDA.

- 62% percent of farms in United States did not collect subsidy payments
- 10% percent collected 74% percent of all subsidies. Amounting to \$261.9 billion over 16 years.

COMMENT OF PAMELA PRINDLE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:43 p.m.

City, State: Albany, CA

Occupation: Student

Comment: Dear Committee Members,

I'm a concerned Citizen and member of the Organic Consumer Assn. I'm writing to ask that the Committee Please do not cut \$4 million from the organic research funding or cut in half funding to support Beginning Farmers.

I come from a long line of small farmers from the CA Central Valley. The food my family grew and continues to grow feeds Americans healthy, nourishing food.

I have worked at the local farmer's market in my community for my friend's who are small farmers and have an organic farm in Santa Cruz, CA. I know the value of small farmer's to the health and wellness of our communities across America.

Please cut funding to support large Agri-Business instead of America's small farmers. Small farmers create jobs and bring truly high quality food to our fellow Citizens.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF BRUCE PRINGLE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:01 p.m.

City, State: Normandy Park, WA

Occupation: Sociologist

Comment: Please cut out subsidies for large corporations and help small farmers. Label genetically altered foods. Protect the public from toxic substances.

COMMENT OF STACY PRINGLE

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 10, 2012, 10:43 a.m.

City, State: Springfield, MA

Occupation: Graduate Student/Administrative Assistant

Comment: Congress protect Hungry Families!

“The King will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.’” Matthew 25:40 (NIV)

Please protect funding for critical Federal nutrition programs, including the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) as you work to re-authorize the farm bill.

My vote counts!

COMMENT OF JOHN PRINZ

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:18 p.m.

City, State: Ocean Shores, WA

Occupation: Disabled

Comment: Cutting funding to vital programs such as nutrition, conservation and support for organic and sustainable agriculture is not helpful. As a once middle class woman, I am now 63, poor and nutrition is in the forefront of my needs. After all, who can afford health care? Certainly not me. So allow me to take care of myself.

COMMENT OF GRALIN PRITCHARD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:52 p.m.

City, State: Houston, TX

Occupation: Healthcare

Comment: Do not facilitate the monopolization of the agriculture industry via this NDAA, it's like regulating oxygen. Industrialized farming, especially GMO farming, is the worst idea since the concentration camp, but actually does more damage in the long run. Anything that subsidizes it in the form of regulations against its competition is **Not** good for a person who eats food to stay alive. The question is, do you consider yourself an "eater"?

COMMENT OF BRENDA P. PROBASCO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:45 p.m.

City, State: Kill Devil Hills, NC

Occupation: Restaurant Server

Comment: Our healthcare crisis will only be ameliorated when people have access to healthy foods . . . not the GMO, oil-based pesticide and fertilized processed garbage that subsidized agribusinesses sell to supermarkets. Stop the wrong subsidies and give us safe, healthy food.

COMMENT OF KELLY PROBST

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:28 p.m.

City, State: Sequim, WA

Occupation: Ranch Animal Care-Giver

Comment: Dear House Agriculture Committee,

As a resident of Washington State, I support the full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).

I request that you Fully fund conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and make sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.

I also support the implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236). You must maintain the EQIP Organic Initiative.

I ask that you put forth special consideration for organic food research and support all funding for America's organic farmers. Our food is becoming poisoned through big Ag's over use of pesticides, insecticides, antibiotics, hormones and genetically modified foods. Enough is enough. I want healthy food from healthy soil free of big ag's corporate special interests.

COMMENT OF TOM PROCHASKA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:41 p.m.

City, State: Cleveland Heights, OH

Occupation: Writer

Comment: Please stop trying to slash the budget for the SNAP program and instead use money from the excessive grain subsidies that no longer make sense for our nation. We should still support our farmers, but we should stop incentivizing the overproduction of corn and other grains. Instead we should be subsidizing the foods our nations needs, like fruits and vegetables.

COMMENT OF CHRIS PROCTOR

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 4:54 p.m.

City, State: St. Louis, MO

Occupation: Sales Rep.

Comment: It is well past time for the farm bill to actually focus mainly on **Food**, not food ingredients. Very few of us eat soybeans directly, and no one eats field corn which both get the lion's share of the funding. We need to be supporting our farmers that provide **Fresh** fruits and vegetables, especially our small farmers. Processed

food is killing our citizens, and low income Americans can't afford as much fresh, unprocessed food as they need.

COMMENT OF GERALDINE PROCTOR

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 3:32 p.m.

City, State: St. Louis, MO

Occupation: Ordained Minister

Comment: Please protect funding for critical Federal nutrition programs, including the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) as you work to re-authorize the farm bill. Cutting here is not the way to balance the budget. Please cut corporate entitlements instead. There is no way hard-pressed churches can feed all the hungry if the nutrition programs are cut.

COMMENT OF JOHN PROCTOR

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:33 p.m.

City, State: Eugene, OR

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Give us a farm bill with real reform that encourages the best, most healthful practices like organic, non-GMO farming. End subsidies for large absentee owner chemical using farms.

Thank you,

JOHN PROCTOR.

COMMENT OF DENNIS PROFFITT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:44 p.m.

City, State: Ann Arbor, MI

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I think that the organic farmers of this country need more support as it is the best food while poisons and GMOS are funded and protected under rogue laws for debatable controversial reasons! I demand as a citizen and a taxpayer that my taxes go to Organic farmers not death dealers in poisons and mutated foods! No to Frankenfoods yes to natural organic foods! Thank you.

COMMENT OF ROBIN PROFFITT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 4:38 p.m.

City, State: Ellinwood, KS

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Livestock, Other

Size: 1,000+ acres

Comment: Our main concern is it appears to be a mirror image of the 1980's Country's when land values skyrocketed and landowners were encouraged to borrow more to operate under low interest rates. Many lost farms & ranches when land values dropped and interest rates rose. Our own government encouraged spend, spend, spend. Don't let this happen again please.

COMMENT OF DIANE PROPSTER

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 5:00 p.m.

City, State: Los Angeles, CA

Occupation: Retired Teacher

Comment: I have seen too many friends and acquaintances who after retirement have lost their condos, have very little to live on, and in three cases were homeless or have had to go to live with relatives. These are people with college degrees and professions. On the streets of West Los Angeles, an affluent area there are often seniors who are homeless. It is horrifying to see so many people unable to have a decent standard of living who have been professional. This does not even touch on the working and poor. It is even more tragic. These people need food and shelter. They are not alcoholics or drug addicts. Their sin is that often they have changed professions mid-life. For women it is often a divorce that leaves them financially vulnerable.

COMMENT OF JEAN PUBLIC

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:11 p.m.

City, State: Flemington, NJ

Occupation: Retired

Comment: No extra money to corn. No use of corn for fuel at any time—ethanol is a terrible waste of tax dollars. No subsidies to big corporations. Help produce safe and healthy plants. Shut down abuse of animals with the beatings, the tail dockings, the pulling out of their teeth, the dehorning, the drowning in antibiotics.

COMMENT OF DEBBIE PUCH

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:05 a.m.

City, State: Key Largo, FL

Occupation: Aesthetician

Comment: Please protect our small organic farmers in this country.

Protect us from the toxic GMO seeds. I use only organic skin care products in my business. In eat only

Organic fresh foods, grass fed beef, free roaming chicken and eggs. Please think of the family farmers instead of companies like Monsanto & Dow.

COMMENT OF SUSAN LANG PUCKETT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:06 p.m.

City, State: Nashville, TN

Occupation: Author, Health Coach

Comment: I support organic farming. I am against Monsanto and the genetic modification of foods. Monsanto is killing Americans with unhealthy foods, ruining the soils and tampering with nature. Stop Monsanto and support the organic farmers. Fire Michael Taylor as FDA Food Safety Czar. He is a Monsanto guy—that is a conflict of interest. Do something to save the organic farmer!

COMMENT OF MARTHA PUENTE

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 16, 2012, 8:33 p.m.

City, State: Santa Rosa, CA

Occupation: Planner/Land Acquisition Specialist

Comment: I work for the Sonoma County Agricultural Preservation and Open Space District. In 2005, we received a \$500,000 grant from the Farm and Ranchland Protection Program for an 875 acre livestock grazing operation which now has a perpetual agricultural conservation easement over the land. Development rights were extinguished, total price of the easement \$3,150,000, so the \$500,000 FRPP grant was essential. Sonoma County farmland is at high risk for conversion to non-agricultural uses. Sonoma County is adjacent to Napa & Marin counties, two very wealthy counties, and development of farmland in Sonoma is on the rise. These grants are essential if we want to produce safe and locally grown and raised food. I urge you to continue these very important Federal grant programs.

With sincere thanks,

MARTHA PUENTE.

COMMENT OF RENE PUGH

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 7:41 p.m.

City, State: Downingtown, PA

Comment: Factory Farms are the bane of agriculture . . . huge operations that are inhumane, abusive, unfriendly and hurtful to animals and humans . . . these FF's breed filth, contamination in despicable conditions that any of the animals need hefty doses of antibiotics. It is a sick, unhealthy, gross way to operate. The focus should be on supporting sustainable agriculture . . . local farms/farmers; organic production and organic farms . . . these are the farms that the Dept of Ag. should be supporting vs. the greedy arrogance of Factory Farms who are too big and who do not give a crap about raising healthy uncontaminated animals or plants. These ag corporations only care about themselves and their bottom line.

COMMENT OF DEBBIE PUHL

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:42 p.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Housewife

Comment: Please give us real farm bill reform. Crop insurance of some kind, but not huge and constant subsidies of the commodity crops, to agribusiness corpora-

tions. Promote sustainable and organic practices in farming, and family farms. Label GMO foods. Aid the transfer of family farms from the baby boomer generation to this new generation of farmer-want-to-be's—I know there are lots of young people in Oregon who would like to farm—I've met plenty while helping out at a local CSA. Encourage the poor to buy fresh food and cook it. Encourage regional self-sufficiency of food production.

COMMENT OF ANDREA PURDON

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 1:26 p.m.

City, State: Grand Island, FL

Occupation: Artist/Semi-Retired

Comment: I have multiple chemical sensitivities and have reached the point that about 95% of what I eat has to be organic, non-GMO, and hormone/antibiotic free. I have to drive an hour to get to a decent selection of organic food. I am the proverbial canary in the coal mine and I am meeting more and more people like me that are displaying the symptoms I had 15 years ago.

I am now growing as much vegetable and fruit as I can and I now realize that we are handicapping our population by not teaching the basics of farming to future generations. If we ever have a national disaster that disrupts our ability to access food we will have public uproar. WE know who they will blame. Money needs to be spent on the organic farmer, not the big corporation. Our health and the health of our nation is at stake.

COMMENT OF BARBARA PUTNAM

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 15, 2012, 7:17 a.m.

City, State: Litchfield, CT

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Forestry, Fruits, Greenhouse/nursery, Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: As a small organic farmer, I want to see a farm bill that helps us produce healthy food and protect the fertility of the soil and the purity of our water. As a 64 year old farmer, I want to see a younger generation of farmers ready to build on what I have worked hard to create. As a Master Gardener trained by the Cooperative Extension, I want a farm bill that supports ongoing research. Please keep these principles in mind when creating a farm bill.

COMMENTS OF HERBERT PUTZ, PH.D.

Date Submitted: Friday, March 23, 2012, 2:48 p.m.

City, State: Orange, VA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Field Crops

Size: 1,000+ acres

Comment: The most important issue for the new farm bill is crop insurance. The present mandated deductible is way too large as multiple weather related crop losses will amount to losing one full crop. That is financially difficult for farmers to digest. Second, the RMA regulations/handbooks are favoring the AIP to the detriment of the insured.

Most of the crop insurance regulations issued by USDA RMA are very difficult to understand for a non bureaucrat. Matter of fact a Circuit Judge in VA ask who was dreaming up these terms they are crazy! Reduce the insurance terms to more farmer friendly terms and not the AIP and RMS.

Respectfully,

DR. H. PUTZ.

Date Submitted: Friday, April 20, 2012, 12:44 p.m.

Comment:

- (1) crop insurance is imperative
- (2) a 30 to 35% deductible is not a "safety net" as multiple disaster season can amount out one or more total crops
- (3) forget ACRE Sure are any new gimmicks—they are expensive to administer and complicated—it is simpler to reduce the deductible
- (4) RMA handbook regulations favor insurance providers to the detriment of the insured. AIP use the handbooks to find loopholes to cheat insured of their claims

(5) move the crop insurance program to FSA which will save \$1.7 b in administrative contributions to the AIP.

(6) provide legal support that insured can find and hire an adjuster who represents the insured interests and is no longer subject to a unilateral AIP hired adjuster

(7) if you want to hear more of our experience and expertise as farmers please invite me to your next hearing

Respectfully,

DR. H. PUTZ.

COMMENT OF PENNIE PYLE

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:41 p.m.

City, State: Conway, SC

Occupation: Eldercare Worker

Comment: I urge congress, in the strongest terms possible to pass a bill to protect the Organic Farmers and the American public from The Ag-Business bullies like Monsanto. The Ag-Business has put profits above lives for too long and we need to return to natural farming and antique seed and safe, farm raised food animals instead of factory raised livestock now before the medical costs of the GMO foods skyrocket. There is enough clinical evidence to prove that the GMOs cause medical problems to make this issue a "no-brainer". If you care at all about what you put in your own bodies and what you feed your own children, to stop the rape and poisoning of our food supply.

Please, please protect our food from the Ag-Business now!

COMMENT OF CHARLIE QU Aid

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:00 a.m.

City, State: Richmond, CA

Occupation: CFO

Comment: The farm bill should support sustainable agriculture, especially small, family operated, non-monoculture, non-petroleum based, clean, and fair farming. The benefactors of the farm bill should be the consuming public as well as the producing farmers and it should not support large agribusiness concerns.

COMMENT OF SUSANNE QUATTRO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:58 p.m.

City, State: Saint James City, FL

Occupation: CPA

Comment: I would like the health of each end user, with the Earth included as an end user, to be considered by promotion of organic natural practices and disregarding the impact of big AG and big money. I need to be able to choose what goes into my body with my food purchases and that means no GMO and no pesticides and humane treatment for farm animals. With the mass media and internet research available, the end user is becoming more of an educated consumer. As such, the choice of what to purchase will ultimately be the determinant in all of these issues. This includes who to vote as a representative of those issues.

COMMENT OF GINA QUATTROCHI

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 15, 2012, 1:24 p.m.

City, State: Los Angeles, CA

Occupation: Nonprofit Outreach

Comment: Please take obesity and public health as a serious matter; we need more food safety guidelines, nutrition education in public schooling, and support of small, local farmers and food systems.

COMMENT OF LISA QUATTROCHI

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:48 a.m.

City, State: Aliso Viejo, CA

Occupation: Property Management

Comment: We want organic food—absolutely no pesticides or herbicides, these get into our water, air, and ocean. Look to other countries for ideas! Thanks!

1212

COMMENT OF M.A. QUEST

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:48 p.m.

City, State: Ekalaka, MT

Occupation: Proofreader/Graphic Artist

Comment: It is time to consider **All** Americans who eat food from producers. We have the **Right** to whole food, unadulterated by chemicals and genetically modified materials of who knows what creature/bug. Consider your children and grandchildren's future when making your decisions that affect all of us.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF JAMES QUICK

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 9:23 a.m.

City, State: Green Lake, WI

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Livestock, Vegetables

Size: 50-150 acres

Comment: My biggest concern is the need for protection for the food producer of non GMO plant and animal products. Currently, most of the power lies with the large chemical producers and their patents to the detriment of the anyone wishing to produce or propagate food not influenced by GMO plants or the chemicals these plants were designed to work with.

The integrity of our food supply is at stake and we cannot allow large commercial interests to dictate our future for the sake of their profits.

COMMENT OF SUSAN QUILLIO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:06 a.m.

City, State: Greenwich, NY

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Other

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: We prepare foods sourced from local and regional vegetable, meat, dairy and grain farms for our catering company. Helping to create stronger regional economic viability and good quality clean food is our focus. Please help us in this fundamental effort.

Yours,

SUSAN QUILLIO.

COMMENT OF JENNIFER QUINN

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 8:59 p.m.

City, State: Allentown, PA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I understand that budget cuts are needed at this time, but it is unfair to cut programs that provide vital support to sustainable, consumer-friendly farming, while retaining subsidies that benefit corporate agriculture at the expense of the small farmer and our natural resources. Any farm subsidies should be tied to responsible stewardship of the land.

COMMENT OF LAURIE QUINTAL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:54 a.m.

City, State: New Bedford, MA

Occupation: Psychotherapist

Comment: I have 2 sons with autism. Their brains have continually progressed due in large part by good nutrition. Organic foods (non-GMO!) Are imperative to their development and health.

COMMENT OF NINU-ALEXANDRI QUIRK, M.D.

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:44 p.m.

City, State: Pahoa, HI

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Fruits

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Farm subsidy should stop supporting grain and start promoting the healthy fruits and vegetables that Americans need to eat to improve their health.

Additionally, a movement away from subsidizing agribusiness and towards supporting small farmers would be good for our country. I'm a farmer and a medical doctor and very aware of the connections between farm policy, food, nutrition and health.

COMMENT OF YVONNE R. DE MIRANDA, PH.D.

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012 8:29 p.m.

City, State: Deadwood, OR

Comment: I am desolate at again finding that agribusiness is rewarded for its poor practices and that small farmers who produce the best and healthiest of nourishment are punished. It is shocking.

I strongly support the following:

- full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

It is high time to place the priorities of food consumers at the top. Agribusiness is literally killing people and abusing animals and the land.

There must be a way stop an ongoing inequity. Please listen to those who are negatively impacted. It is time to **Wake Up!**

COMMENT OF SETH RAABE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:55 p.m.

City, State: Hana, HI

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Field Crops, Forestry, Fruits, Greenhouse/nursery, Specialty Crops, Vegetables

Size: 151–300 acres

Comment:

- Small-scale sustainable and diverse farming **Must Be Top Priority!**
- Support **Localized** agriculture.
- End subsidies for factory farming.
- End subsidies for herbicides, insecticides, and all other poisons.
- End subsidies for fuel.
- End subsidies for biotechnology products.

Listen to the weather reports! Read the science articles about global warming. Ag is the #1 contributor to climate change! Use your conscience!

This is my comment.

Thank You.

COMMENT OF JOHN RABEY

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 3:17 p.m.

City, State: Wesley Chapel, FL

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Being a senior myself I find it difficult to obtain housing, medications, and food. At least I receive my social security if nothing else. Please provide a safety net for those less fortunate than I.

COMMENT OF SARAH RABKIN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:50 p.m.

City, State: Soquel, CA

Occupation: Teacher, Writer

Comment: As an oral-history interviewer and editor involved in documenting the past 40 years of agriculture in my ag-rich region—and as an informed consumer of agricultural products—I have come to know all too well how much damage has been done to the health of people and land by ag that emphasizes heavy applications of chemical pesticides and fertilizers. Organic farmers proffer solutions we've barely begun to tap in this country. We need a healthy farm bill.

COMMENT OF ADAM RACE

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 15, 2012, 10:46 p.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Student

Comment: A \$36 million cut to SNAP is not the way to go. The Committee should focus on writing a farm bill that creates economic opportunity and improves access to healthy, affordable food for all Americans.

COMMENT OF RAYMUR RACHELS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:43 p.m.

City, State: Jacksonville, FL

Occupation: Homemaker

Comment: I am a mother of four and am extremely conscientious when it comes to trying to feed my family truly healthy food. Please don't allow any watering down of the organic standards, and absolutely don't allow any genetically modified ingredients to somehow creep into the organic label. Farm subsidies should go to the small farmers practicing sustainable agriculture. The major conventional agricultural producers are causing untold damage to our soil, our minds and what should be healthy bodies.

COMMENT OF SEAN RACKLEY

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:40 p.m.

City, State: Martindale, TX

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: It is currently required that food be labeled appropriately for nutrition. Why is its source, natural or genetically grown, not also labeled legal requirement? It is imperative that people know where their food comes from. Please support a bill to require the labeling of GMO or GME foods by the FDA and manufacturers. Thank you!

COMMENT OF ESTHER RACOOSIN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:49 p.m.

City, State: Ithaca, NY

Occupation: Mom

Comment: The farm bill must continue to help smaller farmers who can provide food to consumers in their areas. Organic farms and sustainability in farming must be encouraged! I want to purchase produce from my local farmers!

COMMENT OF ALISON RADEI

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:56 p.m.

City, State: Tucson, AZ

Occupation: Volunteer

Comment: Our food system is broken! The Tucson Community as do many others, need a system that makes everyone healthy. Let our local farmers (and small farmers all over) make good food for us to eat! Stop consolidating! Let farmers in our hometowns work to bring down prices, have a fair marketplace. It would greatly reduce traffic and gas expenses. Letting small farmers back into the equation means good/healthy/diverse food for everyone, lowering prices by enforcing things like agricultural reserves, stronger infrastructure, stronger communities, reducing pollution and improving biodiversity and conservation.

I am a supporter of the Community Food Bank of Southern Arizona. Right now, many families in our community are struggling. With increased demand for emergency food assistance, high food and gas prices, and declines in TEFAP commodities—a major source of the food we distribute—our food bank is having difficulty meeting the needs of our community. We need a strong farm bill to make sure that struggling families can put food on the table. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP. Our community cannot afford cuts to these programs. Please make some good decisions to help the people of America. Set an example for the rest of the world. Our community needs you to make the right decisions and make food healthy and affordable again. There are so many benefits to letting the independent farmers back into the system, but at least keep the programs SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP. Thank you for your consideration.

1215

COMMENT OF CAROL RAHBARI

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:56 a.m.
City, State: Ypsilanti, MI
Occupation: Small Business Owner
Comment: It's very important to me that our food be free of pesticides, hormones, and GMO's. This does not fit with big ag whose main focus is mass production and their bottom line. This has been horribly detrimental to our food supply.

COMMENT OF PAT RAINS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:48 p.m.
City, State: Trenton, MO
Occupation: Landowner/Homemaker
Comment: Attention needs to be given to cleaning up food production, by giving more assistance and less harassment to organic farming. Big Ag and Monsanto are jeopardizing our health to line their own pockets, and it needs to stop!

COMMENT OF A. LYNN RAISER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:14 a.m.
City, State: Saint Johns, FL
Occupation: Senior Information Developer
Comment: I want **Healthy** food for my family that is grown using sustainable, eco-friendly methods. The farm bill should be supporting local farmers using these methods, not helping Big Ag and their Frankenfoods!

COMMENT OF KELLY RAISOR

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:14 p.m.
City, State: Clarksville, IN
Occupation: Unemployed
Comment: Please consider the impact of not labeling GMO foods. Please indicate that all foods be labeled as organic or non organic, GMO or non GMO in the next farm bill. Please keep in mind that every man, woman & child has a birthright to choose what they consume, regardless of any law put into place regarding food safety. It is imperative that the people be allowed to decide for themselves if GMO or non organic foods will be a part of their diet. It is equally important that you each remember that you have the power to allow or deny the people of their voice in this matter. The people have trusted upon you to carry their voices to the farthest extent so that they may be heard & the people have spoken: label all GMO & non-organic foods. Thank you for your kind consideration.

COMMENT OF RAVI RAJAGOPALAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:29 p.m.
City, State: San Francisco, CA
Occupation: Software Sales Engineering
Comment: It is ridiculous that the farm bill continues to subsidize corporate mega-farms that make huge profits for unsustainable crop production. More money should be directed to small farmers and organic, local farming. This is an issue that is critical to the health of America. Do not let big farm lobbyists control the farm bill.

COMMENT OF SUZANNA RAKER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:59 a.m.
City, State: Calumet, MI
Producer/Non-producer: Producer
Type: Field Crops
Size: 151-300 acres
Comment: As a (certified) organic farmer, I believe strongly that healthy, accessible, affordable food should be available to all citizens. Most packaged products in our grocery and "convenience" stores have packaging worth more than the contents and are full of additives and other chemical components. Worse yet, toxic pesticides are allowed in increasing amounts in food products such as high fructose corn syrup and meats. Time to wake up and stop serving industrial agriculture.

COMMENT OF KATHERINE RAKOWSKI

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:33 p.m.

City, State: Dousman, WI

Occupation: Student

Comment: It is absolutely crucial to protect our small farms and farmers. We need to protect families, children, elderly, and people of low-incomes. No more subsidies and loop-holes for the largest companies in this country and around the world.

COMMENT OF LISA RAMACI

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:28 p.m.

City, State: New York, NY

Occupation: Self-Employed

Comment: I have watched in dismay as over the years corporate agribusiness has gotten more and more of a stranglehold on our regulatory system and our political leaders, while receiving billions in subsidies for crop and revenue insurance policies. I have watched a corporate thug entity like Monsanto genetically engineer seed into growing Frankenfoods, and then pursue in court hundreds of lawsuits against farmers to force them to stop saving seeds (a common practice used for thousands of years, but Monsanto forbids it, requiring farmers to buy new seed from the company every year). I have read the ever-growing list of chemicals added to the "foods" we ate expected to eat. And I realize that for those of us who do not want to ingest these poisons, a stronger stance on organic farming must be taken.

Therefore, I am asking you to please vote to support the following:

- (1) the full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286);
- (2) Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs;
- (3) The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236);
- (4) Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

While organic farming will never have the clout or power of corporate agribusiness, the playing field should at least be a bit more level. Thank you.

COMMENT OF JULIANNE RAMAKER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:37 p.m.

City, State: Bend, OR

Occupation: Office Manager

Comment: I support the full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286)

For Congress to consider cutting funding to vital programs such as nutrition, conservation and support for organic and sustainable agriculture is absolutely wrong and totally out of touch with what the American people want. I'm also certain that it is right in step with the desires of the commercial agribusinesses.

I'm asking that you stand for the American people, sustainable organic farming and that you fund conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, while making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.

COMMENT OF MAJA RAMIREZ

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:14 a.m.

City, State: Chicago, IL

Occupation: Master Food Preserver Intern

Comment: I was a Master Gardener for 14 years, and a Master Food Preserver intern. I happen to know of the research showing that more densely planted corn and soybeans has contributed to changing the climate, making our area more humid. I loathe the runoff of agricultural fertilizers into the Gulf, and the leaching of pesticides into groundwater everywhere. Agribusiness and CAFOs have to be stopped, and small and new farmers helped. We deserve safe food!

COMMENT OF PATRICIA RAMOS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012 12:33 p.m.

City, State: Ware, MA

Occupation: EMT

Comment: Please help us U.S. citizens and hear our voices. We need our agricultural laws to have our health held first and foremost before anything else is considered.

COMMENT OF SYLVIA RAMSAY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:39 p.m.

City, State: Chicago, IL

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Please act in the interest of the taxpayer and the smaller farms. Do not just give money away needlessly as it is not your money. Scrutinize every subsidy and insurance payment to ensure it is appropriate and necessary.

COMMENT OF JOHN RAMSBURGH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:38 p.m.

City, State: Ann Arbor, MI

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: First, consumers should have the right to know whether the ingredients in their foods have been genetically modified. If the agriculture industry is confident in the safety of genetically modified products, they should have no qualms sharing that information.

Second, farmers who do not use patented or genetically modified seeds in their production should not face lawsuits or intimidation from the big ag industries. On the contrary, it is the big ag companies that should face penalties for the indiscriminate dispersal of their seeds.

Finally, more needs to be done to develop local food economies, since this is clearly where customers increasingly want to go. Without the infrastructure (processing plants, delivery mechanisms, distribution and consumer information), these local job creators will not be able to grow their businesses. The USDA and our Federal agencies are missing a great opportunity to spur investments, and create jobs, in our local economies.

COMMENT OF BRANDON RANAURO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:12 p.m.

City, State: Lakeland, FL

Comment: Hi there. I believe that small and local farmers who bring us truly healthy food are the ones that should be supported with the farm bill. I believe money should be put into sustainable farming practices that will make America thrive and improve our health. Many other Americans want this. The small scale and sustainable farmers are the ones that need this program. Not big agriculture practices who don't need the money and that's practices harm our health and the environment. It really alarms me to see that they get all the help when the small scale and family farmers are the ones that need it the most. It doesn't make sense to continue on with practices that are doing us any good. Congress needs to get in touch with the values of the American people. The real farmers of the country who want to provide us with good and healthy foods. It's about time to support what should be supported.

COMMENT OF KATHERINE RAND

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 03, 2012, 5:44 p.m.

City, State: Providence, RI

Occupation: Student, Research Assistant

Comment: To whom this may concern,

I am writing to express my interest in your involvement in the 2012 Farm Bill. I believe your support of certain decisions in the creation of this bill is critical. First, there needs to be a focus on de-incentivizing the large, economically and environmentally unsustainable industrial farming practices. There needs to be a greater focus on regional and local farming development and better connecting farmers with their community. We need to incentivize younger people to become farmers and/or become more involved with how their food is produced, otherwise the profession will give way to machine dominated plantation production.

I also believe it is very important to improve the School Lunch system, emphasizing nutrition. The families who largely participate in this program are those that

are on food stamps and thus only have access to cheap food. With our current agricultural system in which cheap food is often least nutritional, these children are already usually exposed to less healthy food. Currently, with the School Lunch program as a dumping group for food, children lack access to the nutrition that they need to experience proper development and lead healthy lives.

I hope that you will support these parts of the farm bill that I find to be most critical. Thank you.

KATIE RAND.

COMMENT OF ELIZA RANDALL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:22 p.m.

City, State: Los Angeles, CA

Occupation: VFX Supervisor

Comment: I maintain a small organic farm for my own food in mid-city Los Angeles. I am strongly in support of fostering more small and mid scale farmers who provide organic and non-agronomy scale food as this is the cleaner and healthier route as well as a more sustainable food model for the health of both people and our economy. Make farming a livable wage for the common person, not only a corporate scale farm model which compromises health and safety of all.

COMMENT OF CRYSTAL RANDALLO

Date Submitted: Tuesday, April 03, 2012, 8:56 a.m.

City, State: Cloquet, MN

Occupation: Eligibility Specialist

Comment: The SNAP program does not currently have an asset test/limit. I determine eligibility for this program and I taken many applications for single adults who are not employed and have over \$75,000.00 in the bank. They either live with their parents for free or a significant other. Most are eligible for \$200 in benefits. While someone trying to make a living on minimum wage may be lucky if they are eligible for \$16 a month. If you make any changes to the program, please address this issue. Thanks!

COMMENT OF EARL RANNEY

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 12, 2012, 3:20 a.m.

City, State: Upland, CA

Occupation: Retired Steel Worker

Comment: I've lost all hope that this will sway any member of Congress, but I like to have my say, so I want help for the little farmer, and no help for the big farmer. They are rich and do not need any help.

Thanks,

E.R.

COMMENT OF NEVILLE RAPP

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 11:25 a.m.

City, State: St. Louis, MO

Occupation: Biochemist

Comment: Dear House Agriculture Committee:

We want a safety net for farmers, **But** we want to restore the link between taxpayer-supported subsidies for crop insurance and conservation compliance protections. This is what we want you to do:

- Require Conservation Compliance for Taxpayer Subsidized Crop Insurance Programs in the 2012 Farm Bill to restore the link between soil and water conservation and taxpayer benefits to farmers. This would ensure that all new crop and revenue insurance or other risk management programs that make up a safety-net for farmers do not incentivize environmental destruction and it helps protect America's investment in our farmland and farmers.
- Set reasonable limits on taxpayer-funded crop insurance subsidies to help keep costs from continuing their upward spiral.
- Help grow jobs by retaining programs like the Value-Added Producer Grants Program. Guarantee \$30 million of mandatory funding per year. VAPG provides seed money to help farmers innovate in agriculture and create jobs while securing a sustainable path to market-based farm profitability.

- Help grow local farm economies and support healthy food in schools by providing flexibility for states to use existing food procurement programs to purchase fresh, healthy food from local farmers and ranchers.
- Retain effective conservation programs in the farm bill that deliver clean water and wildlife benefits.
- Grow farmers through mandatory funding for the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program. The National Sustainable Agriculture Campaign recommends \$30 million in mandatory funding. With an aging farm population, now is the time to invest in the future of American agriculture by nurturing new agriculture start-ups.
- Secure our food future and fund the Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative at \$30 million per year in mandatory funding. Investment in agricultural research is vital to continued productivity and innovation in growing and diverse sectors of American agriculture, such as organic agriculture.

Sincerely yours,

NEVILLE RAPP.

COMMENT OF LISA RASCHKE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:31 a.m.

City, State: Raleigh, NC

Occupation: Mother, Wife, and Writer

Comment: Please, please stop the subsidies for corn. This is just like tobacco. Yes, it does cause serious health and environmental problems. Please stop making it about money, and choose the welfare of the American people. Thank you.

COMMENT OF JUDITH RASKIN ROSENTHAL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:54 p.m.

City, State: New York, NY

Occupation: Art Director/Art Therapist

Comment: 100 years ago my father became an organic farmer. He and my mother designed a house with coal heating. My mother and father designed an organic compost can. I admire farmers.

COMMENT OF SARAH RATHER

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 10, 2012, 3:31 a.m.

City, State: Capitola, CA

Occupation: Disabled

Comment: Support small farm and family farming. Local farming too. Please spread the money around—we need to get back to healthy farming and allowing programs such as food stamps to help our struggling Americans.

Farm bills should not support industrialized corporate farming, but rather the local farmers whom help keep our planet healthy by using methods that are Earth friendly.

COMMENT OF DONNA RATLIFF

Date Submitted: Sunday, March 18, 2012, 9:13 p.m.

City, State: Lithia, FL

Comment: I have grown my own food. That is the best way to live. I believe in organic natural foods even milk products. People since the beginning of time have survived on this forever. I oppose the use of additives in all foods. This is unhealthy and causes illness. I think you should leave Amish people alone! They are living like humans should! I support Amish and whole natural foods even dairy! The human race has survived on these foods forever!

COMMENT OF TERESA RAULERSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:05 p.m.

City, State: Canton, NC

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Fruits, Poultry/poultry products, Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Please keep the small farmer in mind when drafting this bill. The huge ag companies may produce much of the food in this country, but the smaller farms produce the best quality food.

COMMENT OF MAUREEN RAWLINGS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:12 p.m.

City, State: Olympia, WA

Occupation: Retired Teacher

Comment: I want to eat organic. I want everyone to be able to feed their children organic food at reasonable cost. I support sustainable, organic agriculture where farmers are safe as they work and consumers have the right and opportunity to eat healthy food. I support family farms. Produce from non-organic farms does not even have a taste, not to mention little food value nutritionally and big health risks. Please support organic, sustainable healthy farming practices.

COMMENT OF CINDY RAY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:48 p.m.

City, State: Soap Lake, WA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Field Crops

Size: 151–300 acres

Comment: Please redo the farm bill. I am a mid to small farmer in Central Washington. We see our neighbors with thousands of acres buying up the smaller farms. They were able to build wealth with the current farm subsidy programs. We need to change those programs to benefit small producers to stay in business. The food supply will be much safer with smaller producers.

COMMENT OF DARRYL RAY

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 10:22 a.m.

City, State: Castro Valley, CA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Poultry/poultry products, Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Phase out subsidies especially for large factory farms and for corn and ethanol. Be more supportive of small farms and organic farms. Support permaculture, biodiversity and conservation practices.

COMMENT OF HILARY RAY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:18 p.m.

City, State: Klondike, TX

Occupation: Homemaker

Comment: Don't cut \$4 million from organic research funding or funding to support Beginning Farmers. I support **Organics** and expect you to as well! We are poisoning ourselves and our environment which will lead to unsustainable lifestyles. Please make a positive impact and urge an increase in organic productions!

COMMENT OF KATRINA RAY

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 9:53 p.m.

City, State: Austin, TX

Occupation: Stay-at-Home Mom

Comment: Our food source is vital to the well-being of all of us and the world we all share. Without our health and our planets health we are nothing. It is crucial to take the actions necessary to use organic, sustainable farming. For ourselves and our children and the generations to follow.

COMMENT OF LINDA RAY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:15 p.m.

City, State: Gresham, OR

Occupation: Retired School Employee

Comment: This country needs its family owned and operated farms across America. These farms take pride in the job they do and in their contribution to the nation's food supply. My uncle became an Idaho potato farmer after he returned from World War II. He spent his entire life providing a quality product for America's tables. Too many of the big agribusiness conglomerates are only interested in the bottom line and are willing to cut corners in order to increase profits. Their bottom line is money and **Not Food Safety**. Consumers have a **Right** to know that the food products they put on their tables **Will Not Harm** their family's health!

If large agribusinesses are allowed to be run with no expectations of safe practices and quality, our food supply will be in great peril! Large companies do **Not Mean Quality**, it means more room for error in pursuing "cheap production!" **Be Sure To Keep** our smaller, independent farmers an important part of our local food supply!

COMMENT OF SUSAN RAY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:30 p.m.

City, State: Saugerties, NY

Occupation: Writer/Film Director

Comment: In the best of all worlds we'd be aiming towards 100% organic farming. We need small local farms to be supported, for the quality of the produce, for the savings in avoiding fuel-consuming long-distance transport, in order to help nurture a strong middle class and strong local communities.

COMMENT OF TURNER RAY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:39 p.m.

City, State: Pueblo, CO

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Please listen to these folks. They really know what they're talking about. Corporate health can no longer be at the expense of the land, water and the people's health. **Now** is the time to create meaningful legislation. Please bless America with a sound set of policies.

Thank you,

TURNER.

COMMENT OF CARL RAZZA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:47 a.m.

City, State: Flemington, NJ

Occupation: Regional Sales Manager

Comment: It's time to end subsidies on mega farms growing commodities. No more support for corn ethanol and soybean biodiesel. More support is needed for the small family farm. More support is needed for fresh locally produced foods in inner cities.

COMMENT OF PATRICIA REARDIB

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 01, 2012, 6:28 p.m.

City, State: Worcester, MA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: As the manager of an inner city food pantry I see the number of people seeking help increasing each month. We will make the trips to the food bank, store it, distribute it to those who come to us for help, and complete all the necessary paper work, but we need you to make the food available. Sad to say, there is hunger in Central Massachusetts.

COMMENT OF SANDY REAVEY

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 1:52 p.m.

City, State: Denver, CO

Occupation: Unemployed

Comment: To protect our future health, we need to stop GMO's in our food production! We need cleaner air, water, and land. Stop fracking as well and do not put the pipeline across our precious farmlands.

COMMENT OF LAURA RECORD

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 5:29 a.m.

City, State: Sacramento, CA

Occupation: Student

Comment: I am 28 yrs. old, and I am a dancer, a marathon runner, a Montessori preschool teacher and art student at UC Davis. I cannot express the importance to me of this bill and the future investment in and sustainment of the local, organic

agriculture in my area of No. CA. As a conscious consumer and educated individual I care about not only what I eat but how it was grown and the impact of it's production on the soil and environment. Support for a farm bill that protects our natural resources while investing in the local economies and providing quality, untreated (organic) foods will in the long run prove most beneficial to the general health and well being of our nation's people and our natural resources. Please allow for these small but monumental strides in western agriculture to take place by granting funding and freedom to local, organic, and sustainable agricultural movements. This is the hope for our future, and as a young American, I speak from my heart when I say I care about the future of the natural environment and the health of our people. Good health comes from good nutrition, which cannot be grown through monocropping. Please consider these logical and meaningful points when writing the new bill. The future generations of young Americans, and myself, thank you.

Sincerely,
LAURA RECORD,
Student, UCD.

COMMENT OF CARMEN REDDING

Date Submitted: Friday, April 27, 2012, 12:53 p.m.
City, State: Baltimore, MD
Occupation: Lab Manager/Research Assistant in a University Neuroscience Lab
Comment: Our planet is slowly being poisoned by agribusiness. We need more organic and sustainable farming. Corporate farming is destroying our world, slowly, bit by bit.
Profit without considering consequences is destructive ultimately.

COMMENT OF ANN REDIG

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:44 p.m.
City, State: Rochester, MN
Occupation: Religious Ministry
Comment: Support, subsidize the family farmer, beginning farmers and rural communities. Support, subsidize organic farming and use of local grown in school and other institutions. Put a limit on subsidies and subsidies for crop insurance to corn, soybean and other cash crop farmers who don't need it. Find ways to help small and beginning farmers to have genuine assistance (not just dollars) to succeed. Do not cut school food or other food programs in order that every child continues to have good nutrition to grow into productive contributing citizens who are the future of our country.

JOINT COMMENT OF ROBERT & KATHY REDIG

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 9:28 a.m.
City, State: Winona, MN
Producer/Non-producer: Producer
Type: Field Crops, Forestry
Size: 50-150 acres
Comment: Don't allow insurance to be used as guaranteed profit for corn, soybean, and cotton. Extend it to other crops. Concentrate on food for needy and conservation. No insurance for farmers not following best conservation practices or destroying those already in place.

COMMENT OF MONIQUE REDMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:23 p.m.
City, State: McDonough, GA
Occupation: Independent Contractor
Comment: It is time for **Real Reform:**

- We need incentives to preserve and increase regional healthy food production;
- Fund education and provide financial support to generate growth and employment in the healthy food retail sector that enables store owners to stock stores with better choices;
- Also funding for pilot programs that bring together community groups, schools, non-profits and health care providers that focus on reducing childhood obesity and hospitalization related to diabetes.

This is one of America's biggest environmental issues and this now upside down food system needs reformation. Help our farmers improve the environmental condition of their farms so they can sustain our future.

COMMENT OF MARILYN REDWINE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:16 p.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Agribusiness is big business and needs no more assistance from the American public. The American public needs assistance to purchase their food. This is a disgrace.

COMMENT OF NANCY REECK

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:30 p.m.

City, State: St. Paul, MN

Occupation: Farmer's Daughter

Comment: The majority of my concerns with taxpayer funded programs like the farm bill is that so much of the public money is given to giant corporations instead of benefiting individuals on the ground. Crop insurance companies should not benefit from taxpayer subsidies while at the same time influencing laws that protect them from paying settlements. Likewise energy/utilities conglomerates ought to pay for their investments instead of getting tax credits and tax windfalls that zap public revenue. In short, consider serving the actual farmers and don't give money to multinational corporations.

COMMENT OF ANITA REED

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:52 a.m.

City, State: Clear Lake Shores, TX

Occupation: Business Owner

Comment: We must change the direction of food and health now. I eat primarily organic food because of my great distrust of corporate products in our food supply.

COMMENT OF GEOFFREY REED

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:08 p.m.

City, State: Bridgeport, CT

Occupation: Electronic Tech

Comment: The health and Welfare of the United States,(and the world) rely on a healthy small farms, and family farming sector in the United States and an end to the abuses of Huge Agribusinesses (especially multinationals that insist on developing unsafe GMOs and controlling world markets!

COMMENT OF JANE REED

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:03 p.m.

City, State: Hotchkiss, CO

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Livestock

Size: 1,000+ acres

Comment: The health of the people should be put before that of corporations, which were originally formed to protect the people. Have you ever seen anyone up close die of cancer? I have, from benzene poisoning due to fracking polluting the person's drinking water. We need environmental regulations big time. Genetic engineering has no long term studies, therefore should at least be labeled so we have a choice of whether to eat something we know nothing about or not. Please at least label, if not get rid of it.

COMMENT OF LOIS REED

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 08, 2012, 8:17 a.m.

City, State: Haskell, OK

Occupation: Retired—Full-Time Volunteer with Ezra House

Comment: I grew up on a farm in eastern OK. We had cattle, hogs, a broiler house, strawberries, a hay crop, *etc.* I know the hard work and dedication it takes to grow food for America. I also worked in a grocery store for 15 years and wit-

nessed firsthand families struggling to budget their food dollars. The elderly broke my heart. Some would pick up food and look at it and then put it back over and over. As a Christian I did everything I could to help them make wise choices pointing out sales and helping mothers with recipes for inexpensive cuts of meat. I also saw the waste that every grocery store produces. This inspired my husband and I to open More than Bread pantry in Haskell, OK. We serve approximately 150 needy families each month in our area. Without the USDA commodities we would not be able to continue with our mission to make sure everyone has food in our area. We have seen the need double and the available food decrease. Please help however you can to continue providing support for farmers and for the USDA food program. These food items are just filling basic needs of real Americans. We have been an agency with the Food Bank of Eastern Oklahoma for 20 years and have never seen as much need as we have now. With your help pantries all over eastern OK will have something to give those who ask for our help. God Bless.

COMMENT OF REBECCA REED

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 7:02 p.m.

City, State: Wellesley, MA

Occupation: Nurse Practitioner

Comment: I am a family nurse practitioner who sees the consequences of poor nutritional practices daily. We need to support organic and sustainable farmers, and **Not** support industrial agriculture as usual with the farm bill.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF ROBIN REED

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:18 a.m.

City, State: Irvine, KY

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Bioenergy, Field Crops, Specialty Crops, Vegetables, Other

Size: 50–150 acres

Comment: I have been selected for a grant to build a greenhouse this year to extend the growing season in KY and will build it when the time allows this season. What I really need is an upgrade to the internet or high speed broadband in my area. BELK and Altius are supposedly bringing high speed to my area but I have not seen any improvements or notifications lately. High speed Internet is necessary for my farming business and multi-farm CSA to succeed in this day of information. And I would surely like to see it for myself and other farmers in my area. I have always been on dial up (it is affordable) and at 24 KB/second download speed it is not possible to access some sites for my farming operation in real time. Informational video and streaming clips are impossible to access.

Thank you for your time.

ROBIN REED.

COMMENT OF MICHELLE REERS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:51 p.m.

City, State: Tigard, OR

Occupation: Student—Botany/Horticulture

Comment: I share the concerns of many of the people of this nation. Our concerns are over the safety of our food. They are around how the land is managed and the continued availability of fresh healthy food being available to everyone.

As representatives of our nation I ask you to support safe sustainable farming. Please do not allow pressures from large corporations who have only profit in mind to make choices that are vital to the health of every person in our nation.

Your decision will have long lasting consequences. Consequences that eventually will affect us all, you, me, and our neighbors.

Please support farmers; please support the people of this nation.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF REBECCA REHORN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:59 p.m.

City, State: Port Jervis, NY

Occupation: Health Practitioner

Comment: The people of this nation want **Real** food with **Real** nutrients (organic) and we want farmers to be able to make a fair living wage for growing it!

COMMENT OF CHRISTINE REICHERT

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 5:32 p.m.
City, State: Milwaukee, WI
Occupation: Wellness Coach
Comment: Absolute protections of conservation measures and organic farming must happen. Which means subsidies to large scale chemical agriculture, commodities distribution to schools, food pantries, *etc.* must stop. National security depends on clean water, air, soil and real food. CSA family farms are the way to go! Aldo Leopolds' land ethic must be internalized and taught to everyone!

COMMENT OF DEBRA REID

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:24 p.m.
City, State: San Diego, CA
Occupation: Social Work
Comment: Stop farm subsidies; protect small farmers; protect the environment by banning harmful pesticides, only using ones that have been thoroughly tested; support organic farming; eliminate genetically engineered foods.

COMMENT OF AUDREY REIDA

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 7:35 p.m.
City, State: Arivaca, AZ
Occupation: Teacher
Comment: Working with children in a Title I school allows me to see first-hand how hunger is managed by low-income families and much of our school community depends on the local food bank. These are good programs helping good people. They should not be cut.

COMMENT OF THOMAS REIDY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:19 p.m.
City, State: Seattle, WA
Occupation: Disabled
Comment: With the world hunger crisis and overpopulation out of control, isn't it time we started paying more attention to the distant future, the fertile lands at our disposal, and management of the longevity of These processes?

COMMENT OF CHERYL REIFF

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:40 p.m.
City, State: Jamul, CA
Producer/Non-producer: Producer
Type: Poultry/poultry products
Size: Less than 50 acres
Comment: Protect the people, not corporate greed. It's your job. People elected you. If you keep destroying us in favor of your pockets there won't be any economy. Subsidies to oil and other mega wealthy corporations are the ones that need to be cut. It is nothing short of evil to cut things that protect our health while subsidizing things that hurt or health.

COMMENT OF JEANNE REILAND

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:54 p.m.
City, State: Eden Prairie, MN
Occupation: Sales
Comment: I had the privilege of growing up on a small family farm. My father followed best practices of rotating his crops, leaving one or two fields to rest, using composting and other natural resources to give back to the fields. We grew up with fresh eggs, grass fed beef, pastured pork, fresh vegetables and fruits in season—exactly what we want people to eat now. My father was an honest man and at that time in his life would talk about larger farmers taking monies that weren't due them, because it is there when you need it.
 Our government needs to support the small farmer, the farmer that is nurturing the soil, protecting the environment, and growing food that will improve the health of our residents, not fill them with chemicals. And, we need to stop wasting money on subsidies for those who do not need nor deserve that money. Please, pass this farm bill, and do not take away food stamps for the needy.

COMMENT OF NICK REILINGH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:11 p.m.

City, State: Kingston, NY

Occupation: Box Office Manager

Comment: As a concerned citizen with interest in promoting healthy and sustainable agricultural practices, I fully endorse all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286), The Conservation Stewardship Program, The Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236), and the EQIP Organic Initiative.

The last few farm bills, I believe, have been detrimental to the health and prosperity of our country. By subsidizing corn and other industrial crops, we are helping to support gigantic industrial farms and chemical corporations who litigate against the small family farms our farm bill should be supporting.

There's more. The immense corn surplus drives down the cost of high fructose corn syrup which makes sweeteners **Much** less expensive than natural cane sugar. The surplus of sugars in our food supply contributes to the obesity epidemic. Many other unhealthy surpluses exist similarly. When comparing our food supply with those of more healthy countries overseas, surpluses of unhealthy food is a key differentiating factor.

COMMENT OF DONNA SEGRETI REILLY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:53 p.m.

City, State: Winthrop, MA

Occupation: Retired Social Worker

Comment: I'm sick about worrying about GMO's and processed foods. In Europe they keep the GMO's out of the country. There is far less cancer, obesity, diabetes. Big Agriculture is **Killing** us with their Round Up and all the other things they put in our soil.

DONNA SEGRETI REILLY,
Winthrop, MA.

COMMENT OF ERICA REILLY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:53 p.m.

City, State: Medfield, MA

Occupation: Mother

Comment: Please keep our food safe for our families. Keep chemicals and genetic modification away from our food. It is imperative for our families well-being!

COMMENT OF JOANNE REILLY

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 2:44 p.m.

City, State: New Smyrna Beach, FL

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: There is a great need for this country to return to smaller farms run by families using healthy practices to insure that the products grown have the necessary natural nutrients needed to sustain healthy populations and to use practices that do not destroy the environment and all the natural species that are required for a healthy ecosystem. Using organic methods of farming would reduce the costs of chemical fertilizers & insecticides as well as herbicides. Long term use of chemicals have a negative impact on the environment and on the humans in contact with them. The health benefits of eating organically grown produce is of great importance. Thank you for hearing my suggestions. Now make it happen.

COMMENT OF JACKIE REIS

Date Submitted: Tuesday, April 24, 2012, 10:57 a.m.

City, State: White Bear Lake, MN

Occupation: Philanthropy Consultant

Comment: We **Must** have a strong nutrition title in the farm bill—**Please** protect the SNAP and TEFAP programs! Our local food shelf and people in our community rely on these programs!

COMMENT OF MATTHEW REIS

Date Submitted: Thursday, April 19, 2012, 3:11 p.m.

City, State: Los Angeles, CA

Occupation: Office Manager

Comment: The benefits of Organic farming, including better human health, better planet health, and better economic health, far outweigh the need to support industrial farming. I want my tax dollars going toward clean, sustainable, Organic agriculture.

COMMENT OF SHIRLEY REISCHMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:35 p.m.

City, State: Cincinnati, OH

Occupation: Homeopath

Comment: It's time the government put the health and freedom needs ahead of those of agribusiness. The student lunch program needs a drastic overall so our children grow up healthy, and farm subsidies need to go to the small family farms that struggle to keep going rather than the largest and wealthiest land holders. Factory farms and mono cultures are ruining our land and ruining our health. It's time for a major change.

COMMENT OF AMY REMPAS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:56 a.m.

City, State: Chicago, IL

Occupation: Office Manager

Comment: You are what you eat. Would you rather be a product of an assembly line manipulated by machinery or would you rather be from the Earth as nature intended. Genetically modified = mutant. What happened to all of the bees? How's that genetically modified corn and soybeans working out for humans? When does greed take a back seat to doing what is right in this country? All the money in the world can't save your ass from dying a horrible death from poisonous food.

COMMENT OF STEPHANIE RENEA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:08 p.m.

City, State: Austin, TX

Occupation: Real Estate Investor

Comment: It is time for real reform that puts consumers instead of big business interest first. Our government was not formed by our forefathers to represent big business. But that is what it has turned into. You as a representative can be the change to fulfill that intention of those great beings that started our country and offered service to government. Like George Washington, Benjamin Franklin. It is your duty to change the course for future generation may never exist if big business continues to move toward the demise of freedom of simple things in life like clean air and water and food that isn't augmented to serve Monsanto and other careless organizations. Do the right thing and forget about chasing money. Otherwise Freedom will no longer be an option. This country will be owned and run by dictators. Thank you for taking your time to hear my cry and my greatest wish.

COMMENT OF ANN RENNACKER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:58 p.m.

City, State: Ft. Bragg, CA

Occupation: Library Tech

Comment: We need more local food security, and less big agribusiness that puts local food at risk. No GMOs and fewer pesticides. More organics, and better food labeling.

COMMENT OF SHARON REPP

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:19 p.m.

City, State: Novato, CA

Occupation: Entrepreneur

Comment: It's about the health of our nation. Period.

Let us know! Period.

We are allowing our universe to be completely polluted. Watch the icky trickle down for your fellow man. Manipulated crops . . . poor food . . . poor health . . . sky rocketing health cost . . . *We Are Not On This Earth To Be A Science Project For Greed*. There is enough for need . . . but not enough for greed in this precious world of ours.

COMMENT OF TERRI RESPALJE

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 03, 2012, 4:33 p.m.

City, State: Waupun, WI

Occupation: Food Pantry Manager

Comment: I manage a food pantry and we are indebted to the people who decided or were born into the wonderful and hard work of farming. I see the need every day as to why we need to support and keep programs up and running that help feed those who are struggling, many will fall by the wayside if pressed between food or rent, the goal is to keep people from having to make this choice. The ones who come to food pantries are not evil monsters looking for any excuse to abuse the system they are people in a time of confusion and sadness that need more encouragement and help than ever.

COMMENT OF LINDA REX

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:41 a.m.

City, State: Boynton Beach, MI

Occupation: Retired

Comment: You must stop giving my money to the filthy industrial, so called, food companies. They are giving us food with zero nutrition, covered in chemicals and processed to death. You are killing us and must be stopped. We want to help organic, clean, healthy farms. Only. Stop taking money from the industrial farms for your campaigns and do the right thing for once.

COMMENT OF DAVID REYHER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:03 p.m.

City, State: Delavan, WI

Occupation: Retail Sales and Support

Comment: We need support for small organic farmers, not the massive farms using biotech seeds and chemicals. These large biotech farms are destroying our land with chemicals and our crops are being contaminated with genetically engineered seed. This is not sustainable farming.

COMMENT OF PILAR REYNALDO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:20 a.m.

City, State: Los Angeles, CA

Occupation: Decorator

Comment: I feel strongly we must support our organic farmers, food is the main component to our health. Too much money is spend on items which are labeled food but are really just fillers, they are contributing to the decline to this countries health.

COMMENT OF GARY REYNOLDS

Date Submitted: Sunday, April 29, 2012, 8:56 a.m.

City, State: Edmond, WV

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Specialty Crops

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Big Ag does not need taxpayer support. Small farms give people a way to purchase locally grown and healthier food. In food "deserts"—Detroit being the biggest example—for many consumers, local produce is the **Only** choice, as the big-box food retailers are pulling out. This means that it's either locally-grown, or what's available in liquor & convenience stores. When will you people decide that the people's welfare is paramount, that the small farm provides a vital service? And stop throwing money where it is not needed? By all appearances, Big Ag has Congress in its back pocket. Your institution is creating a nation of cynics. Please, do the right thing, stop acting like hostages to those that can afford to throw the most money at you, and support locally grown food and the family farms that provide it. Thank you.

COMMENT OF LISA REYNOLDS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:02 p.m.

City, State: Pahoa, HI

Occupation: EMT

Comment: We're long overdue to returning to the kind of food my grandparents and their parents used to eat. Real food. The kind of food that actually nourishes the body and maintains health, and is the best preventative against sickness and disease. Lets go organic **Now**.

COMMENT OF PETER REYNOLDS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:22 p.m.

City, State: Durham, NC

Occupation: Scientist

Comment: Subsidies are no longer necessary, especially for crops like corn and soy. The original motivation is gone, and now all they do is support already thriving areas of agriculture, that are in fact over-represented in production over areas that are more important for the economy and consumer's health.

COMMENT OF ABAGAIL RHEA

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 5:12 p.m.

City, State: Mt. Carmel, TN

Occupation: Grocery Store Worker

Comment: Please reform the farm bill to **include** organic growing methods and protection for organic farmers. In the future I hope to have my own organic farm, but the big corporations that continually get their way don't want that happening—it's pretty obvious they only care about money and **Not** the health and safety of the plants and creatures under their "care".

COMMENT OF JENNIFER RHOADS

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 10, 2012, 1:32 p.m.

City, State: Chicago, IL

Occupation: Office Administrator

Comment: Older Americans' struggles with hunger are often invisible. It's too easy for most people to overlook how many seniors have serious trouble accessing the food and nutrition they need to survive and thrive. Often, they are forced to make difficult decisions between food, medicine, or paying their utilities or rent.

We simply cannot allow one of our most vulnerable populations to suffer in silence any longer! Therefore, I urge you to pass a strong farm bill that protects programs like SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP, which help provide food for millions of America's most vulnerable seniors.

COMMENT OF KEVIN RHOADS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:22 p.m.

City, State: Lyme, NH

Occupation: Engineer

Comment: Factory farming is killing us. Poor nutritional value, antibiotic resistant germ breeding, toxic waste concentrations—**Why Are We Subsidizing This Crazyness.** I grew up in a farming area. With a real County Fair, chickens, pigs, corn, & more—where is the encouragement of that? Nowhere in your last few bills—enough with the Tyson, Archer Daniels Midland, Monsanto farm bills—we don't want that cruff.

Support real farming, especially organic farming, and leave the toxic crap in the laboratories where it belongs.

COMMENT OF HARRY RHODES

Date Submitted: Tuesday, March 20, 2012, 11:45 a.m.

City, State: Chicago, IL

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Growing Home operates 3 USDA certified organic urban farms on the south side of Chicago (1.5 acres total), and 1 certified organic farm in Marseilles, IL (10 acres).

We use these farms as a vehicle for job training, employment and community and economic development. Local and regional food systems help create jobs and spur economic growth in rural and urban communities. Please support investment in this growing sector by including the Local Farms, Food, and Jobs Act in the next farm bill.

While we have found some USDA programs that support our work, most focus on rural development, and thus exclude urban farming. This is a growing field, one that creates job opportunities in an urban setting, and makes more good, fresh produce available in food deserts. I urge the USDA to create new programs that support urban agriculture.

The future of family farming and ranching in America depends upon ensuring that would-be new farmers have access to land, capital, and markets. Please support beginning farmers and ranchers by including Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act in the next farm bill.

COMMENT OF DALIA RHULE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:20 a.m.
City, State: Long Beach, CA
Occupation: Program Manager
Comment: Dear Government,

Please take consideration of the people you don't give subsidies. These organic and disadvantage farmers are not out on their own while government supports slaughter houses treat animals in horrible ways. Please support something that gives lives. Don't just give our tax dollars to companies like Tyson who are sooo sooo cruel to so many animals. My prayer is that you have the power to encourage a more humane America and that you take action towards a more humane future to our children.

Take Care,

DALIA.

COMMENT OF FRANK RICCIO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:34 p.m.
City, State: Charlottesville, VA
Occupation: Commercial Artist
Comment: Legislation should shift subsidies away from giant agribusiness, and toward the small family farm. Particular emphasis should be placed on supporting organic practices.

COMMENT OF DAVID RICE

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 5:38 p.m.
City, State: Lynnwood, WA
Occupation: Natural Foods Grocery Employee
Comment: Please enact the following:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

As a citizen, a taxpayer and an eater I implore the Congress to put the health of the American people in front of the health of corporate profits. If taxpayer dollars are going to be spent on food, then this money should go toward making our domestic food supply as safe, profitable and local as possible. Put taxpayer money back into the hands of family farmers, young farmers and sustainable food producers. Do your research like real adults and get off our bed with the corporate lobbyists. Please do what is best for America, not simply what gets you the most kick-backs.

DAVID RICE,
 Lynnwood, WA.

COMMENT OF RONDA RICE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:49 p.m.
City, State: Santa Cruz, CA
Occupation: Caregiver, Natural Birth Consultant, Home Gardener, Environmentalist
Comment: As long as we are dictated by ignorance and the destructive farming techniques perpetuated by corporate bottom lines, we will continue to destroy our

home Earth and our own bodies. The wisdom is not be found in the realms of corporation but in the realms of those who are truly connected with Earth intelligence. You are invited to join us.

COMMENT OF ANDRUS RICHARD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 3:28 p.m.

City, State: Binghamton, NY

Occupation: College Professor

Comment: Recent farm bills have almost exclusively supported large scale agriculture and provided less than acceptable funds for conservation. American industrial ag is eroding soil at least 10 times the rate it is forming. We desperately need the government to help beginning, organic and small farmers while not subsidizing big agribusiness. Our future actually depends more on this than on energy and chemical intensive farms.

COMMENT OF LESTER RICHARD

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 3:17 p.m.

City, State: Springfield, MA

Comment: Each day we see the lines getting long and the food get less. It hard to understand why you want to keep food out of anyone mouth and you never had a problem eating. So why is it so easy for you to cut fund?

COMMENT OF VANESSA RICHARDS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:51 p.m.

City, State: Rockland, ME

Occupation: Adult Education Instructor (Biology and Mathematics)

Comment: Please do whatever you can to undo the damage the new laws have done to small farms and producers—particularly organic. Corporate farms are destroying our precious resources, our health, **And** taking away the traditional roles farmers have played since the invention of agriculture. Quality food that will improve the health of our nation's citizens should obviously be the primary mission of the agriculture industry: **Profits Should Be The Least Important. Please**, do whatever you can to change our broken system.

COMMENT OF DEBRA RICHARDSON

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 9:37 p.m.

City, State: Utica, NY

Occupation: Program Director

Comment: I find it most interesting that this Comment Form offers "Producer" and "Non Producer". There is **No Such** thing as a Non Producer. We are either Producers or Co-Producers. When I buy food, I am co-producing through my demand. I support with my dollar thus becoming co-producer . . . and I choose to co-produce good, clean, fair food.

For the last 4 years I have taken time to learn quite a bit about the farm bill. And now I spend much of my time working with the healthcare community, local government and universities sharing the importance of the farm bill. And we share a common concern: The farm bill does not fairly support the sectors of Agriculture that produce what the USDA recommends and requires of their Federal Feeding programs: a diet of 50% 'Specialty Crop' Fruits and Vegetables.

Our farm bill structure of subsidizing Commodity Crops is nutritionally irresponsible.

As a nation facing pandemics of diet related disease and the resulting healthcare costs that will break our nation faster than Wall Street, I ask that you take this into consideration from the standpoint of common sense: something not so common today.

It's time to climb out of the sandbox in Washington, vote the issue, not the party line.

Warmest Regards,

DEBRA RICHARDSON,
Mohawk Valley, New York.

COMMENT OF JOHN RICHARDSON

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 11:30 p.m.

City, State: West Bloomfield, MI
Occupation: Engineer
Comment: Organic farming must be protected. Factory farming must be better examined for violations. Monsanto must be investigated and prosecuted to the full extent of the law.

COMMENT OF KEVIN RICHARDSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:47 a.m.
City, State: Marshfield, MA
Occupation: Managing Member, Organic Plant Magic LLC
Comment: This is critical to support the diversity of scale and types of farming. Diversification strengthens our country, food supply and health. I welcome an opportunity to discuss further.
 KEVIN,
 [Redacted].

COMMENT OF TAMARA RICHEL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:21 p.m.
City, State: Rangeley, ME
Occupation: Self-Employed Artist
Comment: Organic farms and farming need to be subsidized so they can grow enough organic produce and meats to feed the people who want it. Right now it is too expensive and that makes it hard for everyone who wants it to be able to afford it.

COMMENTS OF SUSAN RICHISON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012 4:04 p.m.
City, State: Point, TX
Occupation: Landscaper/Greenhouse Worker
Comment: The new farm bill needs to have funding for:

1. Beginning Farmer Programs (who is going to feed my grandchildren?)
2. Conservation Programs
3. Keep the SNAP program and don't cut the budget for Defense Spending.
4. Cut monies to **Big** Agriculture Businesses.
5. **No** GMO's. Good Healthy Food.
6. Support and give funding to Organic Farmers.
7. Support and give funding to **Sustainable Agriculture Practices**.
8. Put agriculture back in the hands of non-gmo farmers.
9. End Monsanto and others reign in American Agriculture.
10. Label GMO's that are already being used in our food supply at this time.

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:18 p.m.
Comment: We need all provisions set forth in H.R. 3286 and H.R. 3236. We need all funding for EQIP.

Why would you even think about cutting in ½ monies for the beginning farmer programs? I do not want to have all my food in the future coming from foreign lands. And the \$33 billion you are cutting from the (SNAP) food stamp program is unbelievable even for you people. The number one thing all of us here on Earth has to have daily is food and water. And to cut low income, disabled, out-of-work **Americans** out of food is very cruel. Do something smart like cutting farm subsidies.

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012 12:34 p.m.
Comment: As is stated above, I live in Point (Rains County) Texas. For all of those that do not know—this is the birthplace of the National Farmers Union. All states are represented here at the monument. By taking away our Beginning Farmers funding and others topics on the chopping block, how many of those states will be represented in the future? Farmers have to have a safety net that works for them. They need insurance and price regulations that help them. We need local foods, Farms and the Job Act (H.R. 3286). We need monies going towards healthy foods—no GMO's. No large corporations—like Monsanto and others. We (the people you represent) need fresh, healthy foods—meaning **Organic**.

COMMENT OF SHEA RICHLAND

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:57 p.m.

City, State: Prescott, AZ

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I am concerned that the health of American citizens, American soil, American farms and all life that supports American's healthy nutrition is in grave jeopardy and that current practices are not only not sustainable, but ineffective and dangerous. We need to move to non-monoculture, organic, non-GMO farm practices immediately if we are going to see an improvement in our citizen's health and if we are going to protect our future food supply.

COMMENT OF EILEEN RICHMOND

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:19 p.m.

City, State: Medford, MA

Occupation: Retail Sales Clerk

Comment: The health of the citizens of the USA is highly dependent on quality food production. You're probably already aware that certain farming practices have undermined the safety of our food as well as water supply. Please express concern during the Committee's farm bill field hearing. Please work to insure that this generation and future generations have access to healthy foods. Thank You!

COMMENT OF SALLY RIDDELL

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 9:09 p.m.

City, State: Glastonbury, CT

Occupation: Nurse

Comment: I have served as a volunteer for the Foodshare mobile food distribution truck over the past 3 years. The truck brings fresh produce to families, adults, seniors in need in the surrounding Glastonbury community. We started with 36 clients and are now seeing over 100 every 2 weeks. There are new faces each time, all in need of food. Most of these folks receive SNAP support as well. Those I have talked to are newly unemployed, single mothers or seniors trying to feed themselves and their families. They depend on these programs to supplement whatever salary they have. I urge you NOT to cut funding for these programs.

SALLY RIDDELL.

COMMENT OF ANDREA RIDGARD

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 16, 2012, 1:32 p.m.

City, State: Ann Arbor, MI

Occupation: Nonprofit Farm Business Incubator Manager

Comment: Dear Members of Congress,

I agree that America needs a farm bill that makes healthy food widely available to all Americans—including, and perhaps especially, schoolchildren! We must provide flexibility for states to use existing food procurement programs to purchase fresh, healthy food from local farmers and ranchers. These children are our future. Instilling in them ideas and beliefs about healthy food is not enough, they must experience its goodness and find it personally enjoyable in order to form long lasting healthy decisions about what they put into their bodies to remain healthy and become strong and effective leaders for our country's future and for their personal future as leaders of their own families and communities.

Likewise, America needs a farm bill that invests in the next generation of farmers and ranchers—guarantee \$25 million per year in mandatory funding for the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program. We need a national strategy and commitment to support beginning farmer and ranchers entering agriculture. With an aging farm population, now is the time to invest in the future of American agriculture by nurturing new agriculture start-ups. The biggest hurdle or barrier to entry for new farm business owners is land and infrastructure. A bill that supports emerging localized farm businesses will provide more ways for new farmers to become successful and feed their communities. It will promote farm business development, education, and provide access to need resources such as land, hoop houses, electricity, storage, and large tools and equipment as well.

These new farmers are creative entrepreneurs! America needs a farm bill that drives innovation for tomorrow's farmers and food entrepreneurs—fund the Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative at \$30 million per year in mandatory funding. Investment in agricultural research is vital to continued productivity and innovation in growing and diverse sectors of American agriculture, such as organic agriculture. A farm bill like this will show farmers that we value their work, and

value our own lives by investing in the food we grow, consume and feed to our loved one.

In great appreciation of your work and commitment to growing a healthy nation,
ANDREA RIDGARD.

COMMENT OF LOUISE RIERSEN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:36 p.m.

City, State: Anacortes, WA

Occupation: Cashier for Food Co-Op

Comment: We need a fair and healthy organic farm bill that focuses on the best agricultural practices for the health of its citizens, as well as, protecting the land and the livelihood of farms and farm workers. We need reform. Please pass an Organic Farm Bill.

COMMENT OF DANIEL RIES

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:56 p.m.

City, State: Mason City, IA

Occupation: Public Health

Comment: Strict conservation practices must be at the heart of any farm bill. Not only is it important from an environmental and public health standpoint, it makes sense financially considering the cost of cleaning up as a result of bad conservation practices. What has it cost the Mississippi Delta area? What does it cost water supplies to clean-up contaminated waters? How does it affect the recreation and tourism industry? Please vote for strong conservation protections in the upcoming farm bill. Thank you!

COMMENT OF SHELLEY RIES

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:13 p.m.

City, State: Corvallis, OR

Occupation: Registered Nurse

Comment: We need to support independent farmers and producers. Our soil is depleted, our oceans are toxic waste zones from ag run-off. We need to get Americans eating healthy food, not cram produced meats and corn-fed corn. Stop polluting our waters and air, and wasting resources. We can do far more to improve life on this planet with an organic based farm culture, so please stop the waste and ruin today.

COMMENT OF MARIE RIETMANN

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 02, 2012, 6:13 p.m.

City, State: Condon, OR

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Field Crops

Size: 1,000+ acres

Comment: I believe the conservation compact between farmers and taxpayers should be maintained. All income support programs should be brought under its umbrella, including eligibility for crop and revenue insurance premium subsidies. Richard Riger Wednesday, May 09, 2012 2:50 p.m. Albuquerque NM Retired We need to end *2All* farm subsidies to Agribusinesses. All ethanol subsidies need to end also. We are unbalancing supply and demand markets with these and the result is killing small farms that **Care** for the Land, not *2Rape* it.

COMMENT OF PATRICIA RIGGINS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:36 p.m.

City, State: Cleburne, TX

Occupation: Accountant

Comment: Please make it your priority to maintain critical nutrition programs. We need more farmers and ranchers, more sustainable food production, and more economic opportunity in our food system. Help provide for our future!

COMMENT OF DAVID RILEY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:19 p.m.

City, State: Bronson, FL

Occupation: Registered Nurse

Comment: Please do not allow corporations such as Monsanto to monopolize and corrupt our food supplies, and at the very least if they win their battle to do so, make them label these products so those of us who find their foods a threat to the health of our children can avoid eating them.

The most logical decision our government can make should protect our citizens and local farmers above corporate greed and profit.

COMMENT OF DIANE RILEY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 3:33 p.m.

City, State: Hillside, NJ

Occupation: Director of Advocacy, Community FoodBank of New Jersey

Comment:

House Committee on Agriculture,
Washington, D.C.

Dear Chairman Lucas, Ranking Member Peterson, and members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on the upcoming farm bill reauthorization. Given the increasing need for food assistance in our state and the declining supply of Federal commodity support, I strongly urge you protect and strengthen nutrition programs in the 2012 Farm Bill.

At the Community FoodBank of New Jersey, we see every day how important Federal nutrition programs are in our community and how effectively they are working to ensure that struggling New Jerseyans can provide enough food for their families. Currently, the Community FoodBank of New Jersey serves 830,000 people annually.

Nationally, the Feeding America network of more than 200 food banks has seen a 46 percent increase in food bank clients from 2006 to 2010, and we are struggling to keep up with increased demand. Without strong farm bill nutrition programs like The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CFSP), food banks across the country would be struggling even more to meet the increased need.

We recognize the challenge you face drafting a farm bill in a time of deficit reduction, but we are also sensitive to the tremendous, ongoing need in our state. As such, we have two key priorities for the farm bill.

First, we urge you to strengthen TEFAP to help us keep up with increased demand. TEFAP supplies about 25 percent of the food moving through Feeding America's national network of food banks and at times during the last few years TEFAP has provided the food banks throughout the State of New Jersey between 35%—55% of the food we are able to distribute. But because of strong commodity prices, TEFAP food declined 30 percent last year, and our food bank is struggling to make up the difference. We urge you to make TEFAP more responsive during times of high need by tying increases in mandatory funding to a trigger based on unemployment levels. We also propose to enhance the Secretary of Agriculture's authority to make TEFAP bonus purchases at times when the need for emergency food assistance is high—for example high unemployment—in addition to times of weak agriculture markets so that the program can respond to both excess supply and excess demand.

Second, we also strongly urge you to protect SNAP from harmful funding cuts or policy proposals that would restrict eligibility or reduce benefits. SNAP has responded effectively to growing need in the recession with benefits that are timely, targeted, and temporary. The average SNAP household has an income of only 57 percent of the Federal poverty guideline, and 84 percent of benefits go to households with a child, senior, or disabled person. The program is working to support vulnerable New Jersey families, and our food bank or local agency partners would not be able to meet the increased need for food assistance if SNAP were cut.

These programs have a real impact on your constituents, many of whom must rely on the food bank and Federal nutrition programs to meet their basic food needs. I would encourage you to visit the food banks serving your district before the Committee marks up a farm bill so you can meet our clients and see firsthand how Federal nutrition programs are working to protect vulnerable Americans from hunger.

The Community FoodBank of New Jersey believes that feeding our neighbors is a shared responsibility, and food banks like ours rely on a variety of food streams to support our communities, including generous support from partners in retail, manufacturing, and agriculture. However, the Federal government is an equally

critical partner through programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP, and with tremendous, ongoing need in our state, ongoing Federal support is more important than ever.

As the House Agriculture Committee moves forward with farm bill reauthorization, our food bank urges you to protect the nutrition safety net and offers the specific recommendations below.

Sincerely,

DIANE RILEY,
Director of Advocacy.

Feeding America Farm Bill Priorities

The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP): TEFAP is a means-tested Federal program that provides food commodities at no cost to Americans in need of short-term hunger relief through organizations like food banks, pantries, soup kitchens, and emergency shelters. Nutritious food commodities provided through TEFAP are an essential resource for Feeding America food banks. As the demand for food remains high at food banks across the country, a continuous stream of TEFAP is necessary for the provision of a steady emergency food supply.

- TEFAP commodities account for approximately 25% of the food moving through Feeding America food banks. Food banks combine TEFAP with private donations to maximize TEFAP benefits far beyond the budgeted amount for the program. In this way, food banks exemplify an optimum model of public-private partnership.
- TEFAP has a strong impact on the farm economy. According to USDA's Economic Research Service, producers of commodities provided as bonus TEFAP (those purchased by USDA to intervene in weak agricultural markets) receive an estimated 85¢ per dollar of Federal expenditure. Producers of other commodities provided through TEFAP receive about 27¢ per dollar. By contrast, only about 16¢ of every retail food dollar goes back to the farmer.
- Declines in Section 32 funding and strong agriculture markets resulted in a 30% decline in TEFAP purchases during FY2011. This decline is expected to continue in FY2012 as food banks continue struggling to meet increased need. The shortfall between supply and demand will only worsen when the SNAP ARRA benefit boost expires, as many participants turn to food banks to make up for the reduction in benefit levels.

Farm Bill Priorities for TEFAP:

- Make mandatory funding for TEFAP food more responsive to changes in need by providing a trigger that ties funding to unemployment levels
- Enhance Secretary of Agriculture's authority to purchase bonus commodities in times of high need for emergency food relief in addition to times of low commodity prices so the program is responsive both to excess supply and excess demand
- Reauthorize funding for TEFAP Storage and Distribution Funds at \$100 million per year
- Reauthorize funding for TEFAP Infrastructure Grants at \$15 million per year

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP): SNAP is the cornerstone of the nutrition safety net, providing over 46 million low-income participants with monthly benefits via a grocery debit card. Eligibility is based on household income and assets and is subject to work and citizenship requirements. SNAP is one of the most responsive safety net programs, expanding quickly to meet rising need during the recession. The program is targeted at our most vulnerable; 76% of SNAP households contain a child, senior, or disabled member, and 84% of all benefits go to these households.

- As the number of people unemployed grew 110% from 2007 to 2010, SNAP responded with a 53% increase in participation over the same period. As the economy slowly recovers and unemployment begins to fall, SNAP participation and costs too can be expected to decline.
- The SNAP accuracy rate of 96.19% (FY10) is an all-time program high. SNAP error rates declined by 61% from FY 1999 to FY 2010, from 9.86% to a record low of 3.81%.
- SNAP benefits supplement a household's food budget but are insufficient to last most participants through the month, causing many participants to rely regularly on food banks. Among Feeding America food pantry clients receiving SNAP benefits, over ½ (58%) reported having visited a food pantry at least 6 months or more during the prior year.

- The average SNAP household has a gross monthly income of \$731 and countable resources of \$333, consists of 2.2 persons, and participates in the program for 9 months. The average household receives a monthly benefit of \$287, or about \$1.49 per person per meal.

Farm Bill Priorities for SNAP:

- Protect SNAP by opposing proposals to cap or reduce funding, restrict eligibility, reduce benefits, or otherwise impede access or benefit adequacy. Recent proposals to block grant the program would prevent it from responding effectively to fluctuations in need, and efforts to limit broad based categorical eligibility would increase administrative costs and access barriers.
- Restore the cut to the SNAP ARRA benefit boost used to pay for the 2010 child nutrition bill and phase out the boost in a way that protects families from a cliff in benefit levels.
- Encourage better nutrition by maintaining nutrition education, incentivizing the purchase of healthy foods, and ensuring that retailer standards balance adequate access to stores with access to a range of healthy foods and moderate prices.
- Build on SNAP's strong record of integrity and payment accuracy by issuing guidance to states on the eligibility of lottery winners and college students and upgrading resources and technology for trafficking prevention.

Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP): CSFP leverages government buying power to provide nutritious food packages to approximately 599,000 low income people each month. Nearly 97 percent of program participants are seniors with incomes of less than 130% of the poverty line (approximately \$14,000 for a senior living alone). Currently, 39 states and the District of Columbia participate in CSFP. Another 6 states (CT, HI, ID, MD, MA, & RI) have USDA-approved plans, but have not yet received appropriations to begin service.

- CSFP is an efficient and effective program. While the cost to USDA to purchase commodities for this package of food is about \$20 per month, the average retail value of the foods in the package is \$50.
- CSFP helps to combat the poor health conditions often found in seniors who are experiencing food insecurity and at risk of hunger. CSFP food packages, specifically designed to supplement nutrients typically lacking in participants' diets like protein, iron, and zinc, can play an important role in addressing the nutrition needs of low-income seniors.
- Many seniors participating in CSFP are able to have their food boxes delivered directly to their homes or to seniors' centers nearby, an important benefit for those who are homebound, have limited mobility or do not have convenient access to a grocery store.

Farm Bill Priorities for CSFP:

- Transition CSFP to a seniors-only program by phasing out eligibility of women, infants, and children while grandfathering in current participants.

COMMENT OF MICHELLE RILEY

Date Submitted: Monday, May 07, 2012, 3:15 p.m.

City, State: Dayton, OH

Occupation: Chief Executive Officer, The Foodbank, Dayton

Comment: On behalf of The Foodbank Dayton, Inc., the 87 nonprofits we serve and hungry citizens, we ask the House Agriculture Committee to protect hunger relief programs. The Foodbank does not consider politics, conservative or liberal, when addressing the very real issue of hunger. According to the Census Bureau, 17.8% of Montgomery Co. and 14.4% of Greene Co. residents have incomes below the poverty line. For a family of four, with two children under the age of 18, the annual household income is less than \$21,970 at the poverty line. These individuals qualify for food assistance. For those served by our member agencies—pantries, prepared meal sites and shelters—hunger is a stark and painful reality. We ask that you preserve the current funding levels so we can continue to do this vital work.

MICHELLE RILEY,

CEO,

The Foodbank Dayton, Inc.

COMMENT OF RUSSELL RILEY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:46 p.m.

City, State: Pensacola, FL

Occupation: Retired Military—U.S. Army

Comment: Lets go back to the time when American farms were great; they used natural fertilizers not this junk/poison from Monsanto or Dow Chemicals. The fed Americans and Americans should be fed first, forget all “good aid” to developing countries. Stop buying from NAFTA, used American food products first, then IF there is an shortage used NAFTA. American farmers are hurting and POTUS and Congress is behind this, why? Aren’t American food products good enough for you so-called “elite”. Americans are wondering why Congress and the President has turned their back on us. Please House Ag Committee, **Support** American farmers, do not cut their money or turn your backs on them!

COMMENT OF INGER K. RILEY, PYS. D.

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:30 p.m.

City, State: Acton, MA

Occupation: Clinician

Comment: Dear House Committee Members,

I am writing to urgently request you to consider full funding for the programs you have already decided are for the betterment of our nation! This means the full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286). Also to fully fund conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs. The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236) you already adopted is needed to help the survival of our local farms. Also I hope that you will maintain the EQIP Organic Initiative, as the more we as communities eat healthy, locally grown foods, the better your electorate will be and the cheaper it will be in the long run for the nation.

I also implore you not to cut the food stamp program, as those with the least in this country should be the first that are helped by our government. You will make already hungry children in our country starve. This can’t be what the United States of America is doing to our people. Let other committees figure out budgetary cuts, this is one of the most important places where funding needs to be maintained and supported for all that you’ve already tried to do.

Thank you for your time in considering these enormously important issue.

Sincerely,

INGER K. RILEY, PYS. D.

COMMENT OF MICHAEL RION

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 7:03 p.m.

City, State: West Hartford, CT

Occupation: Retired Business Ethics Consultant

Comment: I volunteer in Hartford helping people apply for SNAP. These are good people of all ages who face hard times and SNAP is frankly the least we can do to support a basic need in the midst of our still sluggish economy. It also, by the way, helps the economy as folks spend the money locally for food. Please do **Not** cut this vital program, thank you.

COMMENT OF JULIE RIST

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 7:08 p.m.

City, State: Phoenix, AZ

Occupation: Full-Time Working Artist

Comment: While it may be SOP these days to ignore the deafening preferences of the people, surely congress would be expected to heed commerce. And, clearly, there is a robust—and ever growing—market for locally grown, unadulterated, nutritious, organic foods throughout the country.

Hasn’t Big Ag taken enough? Polluted enough? Eroded enough? Poisoned us enough? Crushed enough independent farmers? Taken enough of our jobs? Skewed food prices enough? Caused enough obesity and diabetes?

It is time for real reform—not more lip service, winks and nods.

COMMENT OF STEVEN RITCHIE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:35 p.m.

City, State: Tampa, FL

Occupation: Retired

Comment: We need an organic farm bill and need to encourage sustainable agriculture. We do not need to promote giant agribusiness. GMOs need to be labeled! Give consumers a choice! Research is showing some disturbing facts about GMOs. Beginning farmer program should be fully funded.

COMMENT OF JESSICA RITLAND

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 3:24 a.m.

City, State: Albany, CA

Occupation: Research Technician

Comment: I would like to see less aide to mega-farms, and for fair livestock marketing rules to be implemented. Food should not be a business that puts profit over quality. We need healthy, whole foods to survive, not corn and high-fructose corn syrup. More healthy food in our country would help children grow and learn better. We need healthy people if this country is going to survive.

COMMENT OF CATHY RITTER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:42 p.m.

City, State: Denver, CO

Occupation: Customer Service, Denver Botanic Gardens

Comment: I grow my own food, buy at farmer's markets, a member of a CSA and have a son who is self-sufficient by growing his own food and raising farm animals. I could not imagine not being able to feel safe with the food/produce I choose to buy/raise without the farm bill being passed. Please do what is right by your constituents and their grandchildren and great-grandchildren of tomorrow.

COMMENT OF WENDY RITTMAYER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:34 a.m.

City, State: Pittsburgh, PA

Occupation: Massage Therapist

Comment: I want to be able to buy reasonably priced, in season, local produce including raw milk, fresh, cage free and organic eggs, raw milk and other small farm made/produced dairy products, and local, hormone and antibiotic free, grass fed beef and other meats including pork and chicken at either the farms themselves or at local farmers markets.

COMMENT OF KRISTIN RITZAU

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:32 p.m.

City, State: Monrovia, CA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: My husband and I have committed to living off of our small homestead in order to protect our health and future. We are doing this because we have given up hope in a government that believes it is for the people and by the people. Instead it would appear, at least where food and farming is concerned, that sustainability in ways that are healthy is of the least concern.

We understand there are many "issues" on the table you must contend with every day. But we are not necessarily concerned with today. We want to provide a healthy world for our great great grandkids. Progress without responsibility, accountability and research of other possible organic ways is scary.

My husband and I grow 500 lbs of produce a year on 1/5 of an acre. This country survived wars by doing the same. We need to remember what home is and bring back the soil of this rich land by using its natural resources instead of toxic chemicals.

Please congressperson, be a representative of a valley that used to be one of the richest citrus valleys in the world. Look to the heritage of this land and the legacy you want to leave. Check out what your neighbors are doing in Altadena and in the growing farmer's markets in South Pasadena and Monrovia.

Supporting small farmers put people back to work. Additionally, incentivizing suburban neighborhoods to plant local plants, vegetables, and to shop at farmer's markets greatly helps improve communities as well.

The subsidies of corn and soybean and other one crop farms are not sustainable—please turn to farmers and educators instead of money and Monsanto.

COMMENT OF CONSTANCE RIZOLI

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 15, 2012, 9:47 a.m.

City, State: Westwood, MA

Occupation: Public Policy

Comment: Working for the state's largest anti-hunger organization, I see firsthand the daily benefits of SNAP for children, families, the elderly and so many others. Please do not cut this program. It helps people in times of their greatest need. It is flexible, helping people when they need it. It is an economic stimulus. SNAP funds are quickly put to use in the economy. Its incidence of fraud is noticeably small. SNAP keeps families out of poverty and directly impacts their health in positive ways.

COMMENT OF CAROL ROBBEN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 1:56 p.m.

City, State: Belleville, IL

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I am asking that you not cut funding to vital programs such as nutrition, conservation and support for organic and sustainable agriculture. We can't keep putting the land, soil, environment, and our health at risk. U.S. Food and agricultural policy must focus on adopting the best agricultural practices that put the health of its citizens, the land and the livelihood of farmers and farm workers over the interests of industrial agriculture. Farmers and eaters across the U.S. benefit from a fair and healthy farm bill. I have found that it's getting harder and harder to find healthy food in the U.S. and that just doesn't make sense. We need foods that nourish our bodies, not foods that cause disease.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF BOZ ROBBINS

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 16, 2012, 8:10 a.m.

City, State: Bloomsburg, PA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Dairy

Size: 1,000+ acres

Comment: Please support the Bennett amendment to the dairy bill, we also need a tool to control how MPC's come into this country, we are the balancer for the world.

COMMENT OF RUTH ROBERSON

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 8:06 p.m.

City, State: Sonoma, CA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: We need food that is safe. We need to know if it is genetically modified or not. Local organic farms are the answer to this problem. Subsidized agriculture to Monsanto, Cargill, *etc.* must stop. Local farms should be supported because they provide fresh food with less travel time and use less fossil fuels. We also need to improve school food. We need more fresh fruits and vegetables in school lunches. This can be provided locally in many communities. Instead of subsidizing corn, soy beans, *etc.* we can help local farmers with grants to States to support local agriculture supplying food to school districts.

RUTH ROBERSON.

COMMENT OF WILLIAM ROBERSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 4:21 p.m.

City, State: Brooklyn, NY

Occupation: Retired

Comment: My family, friends and I would like to see a farm bill that supports present and future farmers, particularly those smaller-scale farmers who grow organic, sustainably and responsibly. We are concerned about the health risks, lower nutritional content, environmental damage and susceptibility to failure from superpests of large-scale, mono-agriculture that increasingly depends on stronger pesticides and genetically modified crops. We would support tax breaks, incentives and

development restrictions to encourage keeping and expanding local farmers. We urge you to end subsidies for ethanol and high-fructose corn syrup as it uses much valuable farmland to grow crops harmful to the environment and human health.

COMMENT OF LISA ROBERT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:10 p.m.

City, State: Coral Springs, FL

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: We need to give all families a **True** choice between healthy food and junk. The current subsidies make junk food less expensive to families. I am in favor of **No** subsidies for farmers OR subsidies for small, organic farms, only.

COMMENT OF DAWN ROBERTS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:00 p.m.

City, State: York, SC

Occupation: Personal Trainer

Comment: As the government it is your job to watch out for the safety & health of the people. You are all failing! You are the reasons that America is unhealthy and has developed the diseases Americans are developing. Now it is time to stop what you are doing, redirect your focus, and start making decisions to help Americans to be healthy. Nutrition is 90%!

COMMENT OF DIANNE ROBERTS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:08 p.m.

City, State: Seattle, WA

Occupation: Unemployed

Comment: I support the full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).

I support fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.

I support the implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236,) as well as maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Getting rid of the direct payments to commodity farmers, while replacing it with the subsidized insurance program will allow giant commodity farmers and insurance companies to walk away with billions in taxpayer dollars while putting the land, soil and environment at greater risk.

I agree with leading sustainable agriculture advocates which are this calling rife with opportunities for fraud and abuse.

It's bad enough that Republicans in the House Agriculture Committee have already "voted to slash \$33 billion from the food stamp program while leaving farm subsidies unscathed."

COMMENT OF KATHERINE ROBERTS

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 5:36 p.m.

City, State: San Francisco, CA

Occupation: Educator

Comment: Please stop subsidies to big ag that are wrecking the planet and support small local sustainable farming practices so everyone has access to a decent healthy food supply, and small farmers who are doing the right thing are able to survive. The current system is sheer madness! It's high time for a change—not just meaningless incremental changes but a real radical overhaul of the whole bloated system.

COMMENT OF MASON ROBERTS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:35 p.m.

City, State: Walnut Creek, CA

Occupation: Workplace Occupancy Planner

Comment: Hello—please keep in mind that there are many Americans (myself included) that want the American government to support incorporating safe, organic and non GMO foods and do not support the current farm policy. We want food grown without pesticides that is safe for the dirt it is grown in as well as the wild-

life and humans that eat it. Your current farm policy is not what mainstream Americans want. Please take a good hard look at which policy's you are supporting and who is benefiting.

Thank you,

MASON ROBERTS.

COMMENT OF RACHEL ROBERTS

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 1:37 p.m.

City, State: Fort Worth, TX

Occupation: City Planner

Comment: As a Conservative, I am opposed to farm subsidies, specifically subsidies to large-scale agricultural operations. I support assistance to small, local producers. As a Conservative, I prefer support for local farmers and am opposed to big government spending on Big Ag. My representative, Mr. Burgess, is supposedly a Conservative, and I would like to see him practice what he says he believes.

Further, I support the following:

- the full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286);
- fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs;
- the implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236); and
- maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

COMMENT OF TERESA ROBERTS

Date Submitted: Saturday, March 17, 2012, 9:46 a.m.

City, State: Mansfield, MA

Occupation: Author

Comment:

(1) I support my local food bank, and I know they are struggling right now to meet the needs of my community. I ask that you pass a strong farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP. These programs are a lifeline to the millions of Americans struggling with hunger, and I urge you make them a priority in the next farm bill.

(2) I also support small-scale, localized agriculture and urge a farm bill that supports small family farms that market their products through farmers' markets, CSAs and/or direct sales. The farmers of America are aging. We need new farmers—and need to encourage young people to venture into small-scale farming!

COMMENT OF PATRICIA ROBERTSON

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 1:45 p.m.

City, State: Plymouth, MI

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Congress needs to start considering the health of our nation above the special interests of those who can donate big money. The people want healthy, local food available for their families. I am appalled at some of the decisions made by our Representatives who are supposed to protect the people. It is time for a change.

COMMENTS OF VICKI ROBIN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:05 a.m.

City, State: Langley, WA

Occupation: Writer, Speaker, Author

Comment: Strong regional food systems insure national security, local prosperity, decreased obesity and other diet related illnesses and increased community self reliance. As a member of a semi rural island with small farmers and many professionals and retirees—and as the author of an upcoming book on local food—I understand that we urgently need to make the farm bill regional food system friendly. We need to support young people and disadvantaged people in choosing to farm, and succeeding. They need the barriers removed and supports put in place: support for education, land acquisition, first 5 year support to offset differential between the highly subsidized cost of industrial food and the honest price of local food. They

need to be excluded from some of the regulations that protect the public from the toxicity of industrial farming and be unleashed from the licensing and inspection fees that make local meats, milks and cheeses expensive. They need to be free to sell milk and meat in small quantities to neighbors without risk of fines or jail. I am not asking for huge subsidies—simply small supports and freedoms that will allow local and regional producers to feed their neighbors. I am not asking for any policies that endanger the fertility of the soil, the purity of water or the integrity of forests. Indeed, small local producers embedded in strong communities are natural stewards of our shared resources. Also, while you are eloquent, I am a writer and am willing to help frame these issues with language that touches the heart and satisfies the mind.

I concur with these words from Slow Food, of which I am a member:

As the committee considers the 2012 Food and Farm Bill, I urge you to:

- Support our fight against hunger by maintaining and strengthening critical nutrition programs in this time of unprecedented need. We must not solve our budget problems on the backs of those experiencing food insecurity, including our most vulnerable—our children, the elderly, and the disabled;
- Provide an even “plowing” field by fully funding programs that support beginning and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, organic farming, regional farm and food economies, and rural development. We need more farmers and ranchers, more sustainable food production, and more economic opportunity in our food system;
- Support family farmers that really need help, not the biggest farms that don’t: End subsidies (aka direct payments and countercyclical commodity programs), and replace them with loophole-free agriculture risk coverage. Additionally, implement a cap on crop insurance premium subsidies;
- Ensure that limited conservation funding maximizes lasting environmental benefits: Limit funds to Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) for animal waste management infrastructure by eliminating the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) Livestock Set-aside and protect the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) from disproportionate cuts, and improve it by ranking applications solely on their conservation benefits.

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 7:22 p.m.

Comment: Dear Chairman Lucas,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony to the House Committee on Agriculture on the next farm bill. My district representative is being copied on this testimony. I have lived on Whidbey Island in Washington for 7 years and have eaten the fresh healthy food our farmers produce—even though the price is higher than the industrial farming outlets called grocery stores. Now I am writing a book about it called, *Blessing The Hands That Feed Us* and, as a *NY Times* and *Business Week* best selling author of, *Your Money Or Your Life*, I have high hopes of my message going far and wide. One part of my message is that we need a “Marshall Plan for Young Farmers”—meaning less than 2% of our population farms, the average age of farmers is nearly 60 and our national security and food safety depends on domestic food production. Young farmers face huge obstacles—I know because I feature some in my book. They need training, land and financial support:

- training in growing regionally appropriate crops and marketing them successfully . . . and this needs to be free or low cost.
- land, either that they own or have secure tenure on for enough years to merit their dedication.
- Mechanisms to level the \$\$ playing field between industrial and local/organic food; price supports, rebates, tax credits . . . And those who choose to start small farms, sell at local markets, feed their regions fresh, affordable, accessible, organic and yummy food need to be our heroes and heroines.

So . . . As it’s estimated that 125,000 farmers will retire in the next 5 years, it’s absolutely critical that farm bill programs help citizens get started in this challenging field. I ask that the Committee endorse all of the provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236), including:

- Mandatory funding for Individual Development Accounts at \$5 million per year. This program helps new farmers raise capital to start farm businesses and is tested and proven by organizations like Practical Farmers of Iowa and the California Farmlink.
- Mandatory funding for the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program at \$25 million a year. This program funds essential education for new farmers around the country.

- Authorize a new microloan program, to enable young and beginning farmers to better access FSA loan programs.
- Revise FSA rules to make loan programs more accessible to more young and beginning farmers.
- Reaffirm the existing cost share differential for BFRs within EQIP. Also, reaffirm the advance payment option allowing beginning and socially disadvantaged producers to receive an advance payment for the project's costs for purchasing materials or contracting services, but increase the limit on the advance payment from 30 percent to 50 percent of costs.
- Amend the Farm and Ranch Land Protection Program (FRPP) to make farm viability part of the purpose of the program and to give discretionary authority to the eligible entities that implement the program to give priority to easements with an option to purchase at the agricultural use value, deals that transfer the land to beginning and farmers and ranchers, applicants with farm succession plans, and other similar mechanisms to maintain the affordability of protected land.

These and other provisions within the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act will help new growers succeed and I urge you to include them in the next farm bill.

Sincerely,

VICKI ROBIN.

COMMENT OF RICK ROBINS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:36 p.m.

City, State: Grass Valley, CA

Occupation: Manager

Comment: The farm bill should not subsidize large scale farming at the expense of small farmers. It should not subsidize environmentally damaging crops and practices, rather the opposite. That includes corn for ethanol. It should encourage and subsidize the reduction of pesticide use and pharmacological additives to animal feed.

COMMENT OF ALLIE ROBINSON

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 2:12 p.m.

City, State: Toronto, CA

Comment: Please support natural and organic farming. We do **Not** want Genetically Modified Organisms, Radiation, Pesticides, Fungicides, Herbicides, Sewage Sludge. We want pesticide free, GMO free, radiation free food that is safe for the Earth and our families!

COMMENT OF CAROL ROBINSON

Date Submitted: Thursday, April 19, 2012, 11:54 a.m.

City, State: Pittsburgh, PA

Occupation: Business Management

Comment: Please do not put low asset limits into the SNAP program as they will further limit the usage. The nonprofit sector addressing hunger cannot possibly fill the void when many families have no other gov't. assistance. SNAP and most other food programs benefit children who suffer in school when not receiving adequate nutrition.

COMMENT OF D. ROBINSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:00 p.m.

City, State: Curlew, WA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Livestock

Size: 50-150 acres

Comment: Organic farming should be a priority. Eliminate farm subsidies except for crop insurance. Eliminate the corn ethanol subsidy and its practice. Recognize that climate change will and is an emergency that needs to be addressed. I also want to stress these points as well:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).

- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Thank you for accepting my comments.

COMMENT OF FRANCES ROBINSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:06 p.m.

City, State: Tacoma, WA

Occupation: Self-Employed

Comment: The Federal government has done a terrible job overseeing this country's food system. Quit supporting profits for big ag and help Americans eat healthy again by supporting small, non-CAFO farms.

COMMENT OF GAIL ROBINSON

Date Submitted: Friday, March 16, 2012, 2:01 p.m.

City, State: Fort Mill, SC

Occupation: Licensed Therapist

Comment: I support the farm bill.

We as a "civilized" society need to drop the politics and be sure **No One** in this country goes hungry, especially since we throw away enough food to make this happen.

Thank you for doing the **Right** thing.

GAIL ROBINSON.

COMMENT OF JEREMIAH ROBINSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 2:29 p.m.

City, State: Madison, WI

Occupation: Engineer

Comment: I'm e-mailing on behalf of a number of farmer and large animal veterinarian friends of mine who don't have time to e-mail themselves.

They don't receive subsidies because they don't want to use Round-Up and RBGH because it kills their soil and makes their cows sick. One in particular almost died from overexposure to Round-Up. With milk prices where they are, my friends can't compete with large CAFOs who both receive subsidies and let their soil run off into the river, or with international milk imports who are even worse.

This is also a national security and economic issue, because of Food and Mouth and Mad Cow diseases, which only ever happen on large CAFO farms. Small farms don't have this issue.

Please change the farm bill this year to remove requirements for herbicide/pesticide use and RBGH to get subsidies. We need provisions that encourage small farmers. Small farmers need a break, not big companies.

Another issue they care about is labeling. Customers want RBGH-free milk. My friends don't use RBGH, but they're not allowed to test their cows and label their products RBGH-free.

Please change the labeling rules to allow labels for farms which don't use hormones.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

JEREMIAH ROBINSON.

COMMENT OF KATHLEEN ROBINSON

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 9:48 a.m.

City, State: Smyrna, GA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Mr. David Scott: Please support the Organic Farm Bill so GMO products, pesticides, and other chemicals are not allowed to further harm the health of American citizens through the food we eat. Thank you.

COMMENT OF LUETTA ROBINSON

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 8:50 p.m.

City, State: Anchorage, AK
Occupation: Material Handler

Comment: I feel one of the biggest threats to our food is misleading labels and Monsanto. Genetically Modified Food is dangerous and we should have a right to know what we are eating. Organic Food is food grown without chemicals and should not take a small fortune to verify.

COMMENT OF LYNN ROBINSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:39 p.m.

City, State: Merrimack, NH

Occupation: Work in Health Insurance Industry

Comment: It really is about time that our elected officials do what is right. Americans will never get healthy if government does not change some of these policies. We need policies that will help produce high quality food not the low to no quality food currently being produced; not to mention the huge environmental impact. Things need to change!

COMMENT OF SEAN ROBINSON

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 7:13 a.m.

City, State: Claremore, OK

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Dry Beans & Peas, Fruits, Greenhouse/nursery, Specialty Crops, Vegetables, Other

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: I am a beginning farmer who is trying to get a new way of growing crops started in our great state of Oklahoma. I am also part of a larger organization which will take this idea across the USA, but we need your help. We grow food aquaponically, meaning we raise fish, such as Tilapia, Freshwater Prawns, Perch, catfish, *etc.* which provides the nutrients to our greenhouse crops. The water is recirculated and not wasted like it is in field grown crops. Did you know that 60% of the water used in the world is used by agriculture? We grow our crops locally so that we can provide the freshest produce to our citizens, year round, without the need to import from long distances (*i.e.*, Mexico, California, Florida, China, Japan, *etc.* "Two hours from Harvest to table." We also help support our local schools by providing funding, from our profits, in the form of grants and scholarships. We are not greedy like most business owners, we want to help! But we need your help too!

Please consider us and the following with regards to the 2012 Food and Farm Bill:

- Support our fight against hunger by maintaining and strengthening critical nutrition programs in this time of unprecedented need. We must not solve our budget problems on the backs of those experiencing food insecurity, including our most vulnerable—our children, the elderly, and the disabled.
- Provide an even "plowing" field by fully funding programs that support beginning and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, organic farming, regional farm and food economies, and rural development. We need more farmers and ranchers, more sustainable food production, and more economic opportunity in our food system.
- Support family farmers that really need help, not the biggest farms that don't: End subsidies (aka direct payments and countercyclical commodity programs), and replace them with loophole-free agriculture risk coverage. Additionally, implement a cap on crop insurance premium subsidies.
- Ensure that limited conservation funding maximizes lasting environmental benefits: Limit funds to Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) for animal waste management infrastructure by eliminating the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) Livestock Set-aside and protect the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) from disproportionate cuts, and improve it by ranking applications solely on their conservation benefits.

Thank you for all you have done for us in the past and please continue to do the same for us in the future. Though my voice may not be heard in congress directly, I hope that you will be my voice for me and help me to give to our community the fresh food that it so badly deserves. Let's keep Oklahoman's healthy and our students educated.

Thank you for your time!

SEAN ROBINSON,
 Greenhouse 4 The Arts & Education, LLC,
 Claremore, OK,

[Redacted].

 COMMENT OF KENDRA ROCAP
Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:15 p.m.**City, State:** Durham, NC**Occupation:** Artist**Comment:** Not only should we be supporting organic, we should be figuring out how to transition everything to organic. Chemicals are killing us and our soil!

 COMMENT OF ABBY ROCHE
Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:51 p.m.**City, State:** Chico, CA**Occupation:** Student**Comment:** What is America miss? Better non-commodity food in our schools, protection of funding for farmers' markets, local foods, beginning farmers & ranchers, organic farming, and food safety. Please subsidize local small scale farmers! Don't be afraid to use other countries formula for sustainable foods as a protocol. We need this!

 COMMENT OF KEN ROCHE
Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:59 p.m.**City, State:** Lincoln, NE**Producer/Non-producer:** Producer**Type:** Specialty Crops**Size:** Less than 50 acres**Comment:** High input fossil fuel based conventional agriculture is not sustainable. Please support organic beginner farmers searching for sustainable alternatives.

 COMMENT OF GREG RODEN
Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:00 a.m.**City, State:** Berkeley, CA**Occupation:** TV Producer—*www.foodforward.tv***Comment:** Most Americans have no idea what the farm bill is or how it works. We are hoping to change that with an episode titled 'The farm bill'. Small family farmers have all but ceased to exist yet Farmers Markets have increased 50% in the past 4 years. Still, just 2% of Americans shop at Farmer's markets.

Please help us maintain and grow support for family farmers and for younger generations of Americans to continue in the tradition that built this country by:

- Fully fund the Organic Research and Extension Initiative (OREI) at the 2008 level.
- Endorse all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Support all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintain EQIP Organic Initiative and do **Not** cut the Conservation Stewardship Program.

Local organic produce is a huge economic development opportunity and matters to me!

Sincerely,

GREG RODEN.

 COMMENT OF LAURA RODGERS
Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 7:00 p.m.**City, State:** Hot Springs, AR**Occupation:** Unemployed**Comment:** Farm subsidies are part of the problem. We need lots of small farms, growing a wide variety of food crops—not a handful of huge companies scamming the system for subsidy dollars. The crop insurance bill is too similar to the old game to be a help to the public.

Conservation of our soil and safe water must be tied to any money farmers receive from the government, so we will continue to have enough food and safe water in the future.

Growing crops with organic methods has been proven to protect the soil and water more effectively than conventional farming. With organic farming research programs, we can probably still equal, or even surpass the amount of food produced by chemical farming methods.

COMMENT OF MARTHA RODGERS

Date Submitted: Tuesday, March 27, 2012, 4:31 p.m.
City, State: Buchanan, VA
Occupation: U.S. Navy Retired/Mom/Food Pantry Coordinator
Comment: We live in a rural area and the number of people we help in our pantry has tripled in the past 4 years. Our local farmers give excess food to our pantry to help offset our costs to feed our neighbors.

COMMENT OF BETHANY RODGERS-CLARK

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 16, 2012, 11:56 a.m.
City, State: Mt. Vernon, WA
Occupation: Operation Assistant for WSFFN
Comment: America needs a farm bill that:

1. creates jobs and stimulates economic growth,
2. makes healthy food widely available to all Americans (I have personal experience with this as my husband is unemployed and we are on food stamps and it is hard to get healthy food with \$136 per month for a family of 3)
3. protects our natural resources,
4. invests in the next generation of farmers and ranchers by making it economically viable for young people to go into these professions,
5. supports creativity for tomorrow's farmers and food entrepreneurs.

COMMENT OF HEATHER RODMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:35 p.m.
City, State: Boise, ID
Occupation: Administrative Assistant
Comment: I would like to see the farm bill supporting more of a diversity of farming types—family-owned farming needs more support, and ConAgra and other mega-farming corporations do not need the financial help that they receive. We need to be supporting more sustainable farming. Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

COMMENT OF MICHAEL RODRIGUEZ

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:00 p.m.
City, State: Washington, D.C.
Occupation: Teacher
Comment: Especially for non-producers, it is detrimental that farms, farmers and the food that they produce be funded without concessions to big corporations. Food needs to remain food.

COMMENT OF IDERAH ROECK-AKARKARASU

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:19 p.m.
City, State: Glen Allen, VA
Occupation: Yoga Teacher
Comment: Please really think about where your food is coming from. Take the time to learn about food and your body and how they work together. Think about your children.

COMMENT OF CLARISSA ROEWE

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 3:05 p.m.
City, State: San Benito, TX
Occupation: Manager San Benito Food Pantry
Comment: Food Security! In a small town of 25,000 over 16,000 people have presented themselves to receive free food. Their avg. income is \$690.00 average snap benefit \$120.00. Last week there was a break in at the food pantry, though unsuccessful. They were stealing wieners. Retail 100 lbs of wieners is about \$82.00. We need to do more, not less. As one client said, "Forget about healthcare, Dying is an

option as I cannot afford to live.” Think about who you really represent. Poor people may now be so beat up they no longer care to vote, but when they really don’t have any food they are going to steal it from you and your compadrs.

COMMENT OF BRIANNA ROGERS

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 02, 2012, 10:45 a.m.
City, State: Vineyard Haven, MA
Occupation: Student—Brown University 2012
Comment: Dear Mr. Keating,

I live in Vineyard Haven, and I am a member of your district. I am a senior at Brown University, and I had some concerns regarding the upcoming farm bill. Two specific areas that I would like to see addressed are Title IV and Title X. Title IV is especially important for the residents of Martha’s Vineyard, many of which are heavily reliant on food assistance and nutrition programs. Also, Title X will aid in addressing the health needs of many individuals on the island. Though food assistance programs are beneficial, if the food is not healthy and nutritious then the point of the program is missed. I believe an increase in funding for Title X to increase specialty crops along with continued support for Title IV is the best way to create a farm bill that will have the most benefit for the people of Martha’s Vineyard. Good luck in the upcoming negotiations, and I hope you will take my comments into consideration.

Sincerely,

BRIANNA ROGERS.

COMMENT OF TERRY ROGERS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:57 a.m.
City, State: East Alton, IL
Occupation: Professional Musician

Comment: I **Only** buy organically grown food . . . vegetables, fruit, nuts . . . free range, organically fed chickens . . . yogurt and cheese made from farm animals that are **Not** given numerous additives and chemicals. This is the movement of the entire country. Do **Not** ignore us! Make sure organic farms are protected and subsidized!

COMMENT OF THOMAS ROGERS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:16 p.m.
City, State: Eagle, ID
Occupation: Teacher and Legal Researcher
Comment: Dear Agriculture Committee,

Agriculture policy needs to accommodate and support small scale and sustainable family agriculture as well as the corporate mode that has come too much to dominate American agriculture.

There needs to be concern about the land and its care and preservation as well as just production of commodities.

COMMENT OF NINA ROGOWSKY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:22 p.m.
City, State: Watertown, MA
Producer/Non-producer: Producer
Type: Other
Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: I am an intern on a 27 acre community farm in Natick, MA. Many of the agricultural laws do not apply to a small, organic, integrated farm like the one I work on, yet it is clear to me that the way we farm uses best practice agricultural methods. I want to see the law support more farms like the one I work on.

COMMENT OF KWANHO ROH

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 11:26 a.m.
City, State: Gaithersburg, MD
Occupation: Researcher

Comment: Small local organic farms are precious for people. They produce healthy fresh foods to local people so they should be protected.

COMMENT OF CHERYL ROHRER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:55 a.m.
City, State: Pittsford, NY
Occupation: Stay-at-Home Mom
Comment: It sucks that our generation and future generations' health is risk because of money, power and greed. Politicians, Lobbyists, Monsanto . . . you suck!

COMMENT OF CARMEN ROJACK

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 2:05 p.m.
City, State: Hamburg, NJ
Occupation: Dental Hygienist
Comment: I want ethical organic standards I want to see genetically engineered foods labeled and mandatory testing by outside agencies required for GMOs. God created our seeds and their blueprint should be held as sacred, not subject to change . . . **Amen**

COMMENT OF TANYA ROLAND

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:53 a.m.
City, State: Falls Church, VA
Occupation: Teacher
Comment: Since our ecology is suffering greatly from toxification, much of which is originated on farms, use of chemicals needs to be greatly reduced in farming and agriculture by law. In the meantime, those who protect our land, water and air by strident organic practices should be benefitted by subsidies and tax breaks, those of which huge agribusiness have materially benefitted for so long and at huge ecological cost. Anyone in any industry who continues to put all of us, all of life at risk need to be punished. Our priorities as a nation need to be put in order. Life itself, protecting and purifying nature as we know it has to be at the top of the list. Anything else is suicide.

COMMENT OF SHERYL ROLLER

Date Submitted: Tuesday, March 20, 2012, 4:09 p.m.
City, State: Albuquerque, NM
Occupation: Caring For Elderly Parent
Comment: I want to support parts of the farm bill that help to feed hungry people, that have fallen on hard times, *etc.* Programs such as: SNAP, TEFAP, *etc.*
 Thank you,
 SHERYL ROLLER.

COMMENT OF NORA ROMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:33 p.m.
City, State: San Francisco, CA
Occupation: Registered Nurse
Comment: I want a farm bill that supports non toxic, organic sustainable food.
Close All Factory Farms And Especially Factory Animal Farms. Outlaw All Poisons In Agriculture And All Food Additives. No More Preservatives That Kill Us Later. No More Lab Made Colors That Kill Us Later. No More Processed Foods That Kill Us Sooner . . .
 Our food policies are destroying our planet and pretty soon you won't be able to eat all that cheap crap . . . **Wake Up . . .**

COMMENT OF JULIET ROMANO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:34 p.m.
City, State: Seattle, WA
Producer/Non-producer: Producer
Type: Field Crops
Size: 1,000+ acres
Comment: I am part of a family that owns/manages 15,000+ acres in NE Arkansas. Currently, we still practice conventional farming methods because the laws that are currently in place overwhelmingly support these practices. It would be much easier to becoming more 'green' and healthful if the government subsidized crops that are grown in such a way that encourages good health and environmental sustainability—farming for the future and not just today.

COMMENT OF LYNNE ROMANS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:14 p.m.

City, State: Eugene, OR

Occupation: Education and Home Gardening

Comment: I support the independent family farmer, not for-profit agribusiness. Farmers overwhelmingly steward the land. Agribusiness, unhappily and overwhelmingly, poison the land and the resources.

Support the farmer!

Do it now.

COMMENT OF JONATHAN ROME

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:55 p.m.

City, State: Hartford, CT

Comment: I am just getting clean and it helps my girlfriend and I to concentrate on saving money so we can build a better life for ourselves. Please understand just the little many things that may seem insignificant actually help many lives so much! The little things that people take for granted happen to be the SNAP program. Thanks a lot!

COMMENT OF CHRISTINA ROMERO

Date Submitted: Saturday, April 14, 2012, 3:59 a.m.

City, State: Montebello, CA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Local, sustainable, and organic farming and food production are essential to the future of this country. Small farmers and potential farmers should be given adequate funding and resources to maintain their business and to grow the agriculture business. I think the farm bill should be taken as serious as any other legislation that is vital to this country.

COMMENT OF ANNA RONK

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 1:49 p.m.

City, State: Paw Paw, MI

Occupation: Health Care Worker/Educator

Comment: Please don't allow cuts in the farm bill that promote safe food production. This statement applies to many facets in the farm bill GMO crops are not safe for us to eat. Many other countries have banned GMO's.

COMMENT OF HOWARD RONTAL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:57 a.m.

City, State: Potomac, MD

Occupation: Massage Therapist and Teacher

Comment: Really, this is very important. I believe that big business has an important role to play in the national economy, including agribusiness but I do want food stamp money, research on organic farming, and other such programs sacrificed so that they can make a another dime a share in profits.

COMMENT OF THOMAS ROTH

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 11:38 a.m.

City, State: Hollister, CA

Occupation: High School Teacher

Comment: Dear Mr. Farr,

It is imperative to support the Local Food, Farms, and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286), the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236), and the Conservation Stewardship Program, as well as provisions to protect organic farmers, for clear and present reasons: local food has more nutrients, fewer additives, better flavor, and contributes to local economies; beginning agricultural businesses need subsidies far more than large, established agribusinesses; and the quality of food must be promoted to battle the ever-growing problems of American reliance on processed foods and its inevitable result, obesity, which is becoming so prevalent that it threatens to squish quality health care as well as quality life styles with its increasing weight

on our society. Do the right thing and hold Republican fat cats' feet to the fire. Settle for no less than to ensure better quality food, and thus a better life, for everyone.

COMMENT OF AMMATHYST ROSE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:45 p.m.

City, State: Austin, TX

Occupation: Massage Therapist

Comment: There should be greater limits to crop insurance subsidies. There also needs to be top priority consideration for land, soil, and our environment. Please re-attach the soil erosion and wetland conservation requirements to crop insurance programs.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF GAIL ROSE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:49 p.m.

City, State: North Hills, CA

Occupation: Retired Elementary Teacher

Comment: Be sure to treat all animals humanely, none in cages, feed their natural types of food, no chemicals. Give fair wages to farm workers, provide housing and healthy living conditions for all who work on farms. Get off this money addiction; treat others as you would want your family to be treated.

All this persecution will only come back to haunt you; you get what you give, Karma or the law of physics tell us that.

Wake up! You're not fooling anyone but **Yourselves!**

COMMENT OF HOLLIS ROSE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:35 p.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Retired

Comment: In this time of obesity and out of imagination medical costs to individuals and government, I believe one of our highest priorities should be to support individual health (including nutrition, education and poverty). With this in mind the Farm bill should support local, small farmer's, organic farmers, limit control and takeover by the large corporations. Support of organic and pesticide free foods supports the environment and general health. The administrators, designers/planners of programs need to be qualified in the most up to date organic and pesticide free farming, on local community growth and development and on ways to support and create revitalized environment and land development. Our soil damage is huge and growing in rotation on farms, preserving our land for future generations is imperative.

It is no longer feasible to live short sighted. We must think and develop, planning for many future generations.

Sincerely,

HOLLIS ROSE.

COMMENT OF SARAH ROSE

Date Submitted: Thursday, April 05, 2012, 9:49 p.m.

City, State: Durham, NC

Occupation: Nutritionist

Comment: I am writing to express my concerns for the 2012 Farm Bill. As a future Registered Dietitian I see the farm bill as an important part of the United States health in many ways.

The farm bill helps to protect the job of farming and insure that a farmer can make a fair wage. The farm bill also allows farmers to grow fresh fruits and vegetables for our citizens to eat. With healthcare reform in limbo and budget cuts continually debated I feel it is important to fund health in the most basic sense, through the access to healthy foods like fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. The farm bill allows crops to be sold at a fair price to farmers and consumers thus allowing disease prevention to be affordable. Additionally the farm bill helps to fund nutrition assistance programs such as SNAP (formerly Food Stamps). This and other programs provide access to healthy foods to prevent food insecurity which ultimately promotes health and well-being and the economic security of families.

As we move toward times of excelling population growth and increasing food costs I would like to take the time to express the importance of adequate funding of the

farm bill. This provides job security to farmers, allows them to pass their land on to their families while practicing sustainable conservation methods, and provides food and food assistance to needy families. Please make sure that the farm bill is adequately funded for future generations.

COMMENT OF SHERYL ROSE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:31 p.m.

City, State: Berkeley, CA

Occupation: Freelance Editor

Comment: I would like the House Agriculture Committee to fully fund conservation programs and to maintain strong reliance on organic, local food production. I would also like the committee to defund corporate agribusiness completely and to take a strong stand against the use of toxins and poisons in farming in our country. Thank you for considering my views.

COMMENT OF VICTORIA ROSE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:08 p.m.

City, State: Snohomish, WA

Comment: We support H.R. 3286 & H.R. 3236 vehemently! People have the inalienable right to good, healthy food and totally oppose **Any** more funding for BigAG, just to line their greedy pockets knowing that they do not care at all about healthy, good nutrition for our nation's population. We are sick of the dishonest, immoral people in this administration and in BigAg. Do you think that Monsanto's executives families eat food that is saturated with chemicals? I think not—they probably have their own special gardens bought with taxpayer monies. We will not allow this, we will stand up and fight and do whatever it takes to bring them down to the dirt that they pollute, period!

COMMENT OF LAWRENCE ROSE, M.D.

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:29 p.m.

City, State: Mill Valley, CA

Occupation: Public Health Physician

Comment: Supporting Organic food production is a very important public health issue. The high prices of organic fruit and vegetables and the lack of availability to most of our low income population is contributing to the mortality and morbidity disease rates nationally. Obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular events, and strokes are caused by national dietary and nutritional patterns.

COMMENT OF ADELE ROSEN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:42 p.m.

City, State: Tesuque, NM

Occupation: Wrangler

Comment: I depend on the farmers' market to buy my food. It is the greatest gift when you don't grow your own. I believe that small farms are at the core of true American values and certainly the most healthy lifestyle. It is of great benefit to this whole country to support organic farming. I don't support chemical pesticides which have proven to be detrimental to humans and to the Earth.

COMMENT OF ANDREA ROSEN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 9:18 p.m.

City, State: Washington, D.C.

Occupation: Retired Fundraiser

Comment: First and foremost, I urge you to pass a farm bill that reduces (on the way to eliminating) subsidies for corn and soy. They are overproduced to the detriment of other healthful crops, and in the case of corn, to the detriment of the health of Americans, overweight and obese on corn sweeteners and corn-fattened beef. A farm bill should invest in innovation around organic farming. It should invest in future farmers. Those are my priorities.

COMMENT OF BARBARA ROSEN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:50 a.m.

City, State: Brooklyn, NY

Occupation: Retired Teacher

Comment: I am dismayed that so much of our food supply is in the hands of big business and that the result is the steady degradation of our water, soil and diet. And that so much cruelty to animals is condoned. It must stop.

COMMENT OF DIANE ROSENBERG

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:47 p.m.

City, State: Fairfield, IA

Occupation: Writer and Event Organizer

Comment: I support a farm bill that supports the development and expansion of organic food production. I support:

1. The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
2. Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
3. The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
4. Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

I do not support the \$4 million in cuts to the organic research development nor cuts the Beginning Farmers Program.

I absolutely do not support cuts to the Farm Stamp program or any other nutrition program. That is purely immoral. Do not take food out of the mouths of hungry people to hand it over to profitable industrial agribusiness. That is just wrong. Do you know how many people are hungry in our country? Would you like to experience that yourself? I don't think so.

Please do the right thing and design a farm bill that makes the health of Americans and our environment and the livelihood of farmers and farmer workers come first over the interests of corporate agriculture lobbyists.

Thank you.

DIANE ROSENBERG.

COMMENT OF JEFF ROSENBERG

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 9:23 p.m.

City, State: Arlington, VA

Occupation: Psychologist

Comment: Dear Madame or Sir:

My comments are twofold:

- (1) The cost of a product should reflect all of its costs (*i.e.*, externalities). If there are runoffs that affect water quality, that should be reflected in cost for example. My strong hunch (*e.g.*, sugar with all its health implications) is that often not only is the full cost of an item not reflected in its price but that it is the reverse—it is subsidized.
- (2) There should be full disclosure for consumers regarding the products they buy. This should include how products are produced and prepared. "Conventional" production does not necessarily equate with no need for disclosure. Let consumers make decisions with at least the opportunity to have knowledge of what they are buying and at a price that fully reflects its costs and health implications.

Best,

JEFF ROSENBERG,
Arlington, VA.

COMMENT OF LISA ROSENBERG

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:50 p.m.

City, State: Orangeburg, NY

Occupation: Registered Nurse

Comment: Please help the farmers and stop genetically modifying food. All the processed foods are increasing the cost of health care because they are very bad for the body after years of ingesting these poisons we are seeing increased diabetics and heart disease. Promote the natural farmers.

COMMENT OF ELEANOR ROSENTHAL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:29 p.m.

City, State: San Francisco, CA

Occupation: Alexander Teacher

Comment: Please stop subsidizing big, corporate agriculture and encourage growers of fruits, vegetables, *etc.*, instead. The farm bill is very important to the nation's health and economy, and it's been slanted all wrong for many years.

COMMENT OF GREGORY ROSENTHAL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:40 p.m.

City, State: Schenectady, NY

Occupation: University Instructor/Doctoral Student

Comment: Dear House Agriculture Committee members,

I am a consumer with great worries about the health and safety of our food supply. One of the big problems is the role of huge agricultural corporations, like Monsanto, for example, setting state policy; instead, we should be focused on supporting local and small-scale organic farmers, not giving away perks to huge corporations.

Specifically, I call on you to fully endorse all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286). I call on you to fully fund conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and to make sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs. I call on you to implement all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236). And I call on you to maintain the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Thank you for your consideration on this important matter.

COMMENT OF CARLA ROSIN

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 12:25 a.m.

City, State: Santa Barbara, CA

Occupation: Board of Trustees, SB Food Bank

Comment: I just spoke with Wes Roe regarding a project I am working on through the new food bank Grow Your Own Way program. We both thought you would be interested in this. I have included a brief outline of the program below. I am also working on an extension of the program to include an Eco Village project with the support of the FoodBank, Fairview Gardens, SBCC Sustainability Program and ultimately UCSB to have an alternative ag and building site to research the possibilities of a working urban agricultural model on the Bishop Ranch property. The idea being that if we have a model in place. Santa Barbara County has more control of what happens with future development.

I would be very grateful to be able to speak with you in depth about the potentials of a project like this and to get your feedback and insight into the logistics of implementing a project like this as an extension to UCSB. very much like what is happening at UC Santa Cruz and UC Davis.

I look forward to hearing from you. Thank you for your consideration.

All the Best,

CARLA ROSIN,
Board of Trustees,
FoodBank of Santa Barbara,
[Redacted].

I got together with the Santa Barbara Permaculture Network to put on a benefit for an exciting new program for the FoodBank of Santa Barbara, Grow Your Own Way. The program's mission is to teach underserved individuals how to grow some of their own food. Currently, as a member of the Board of Trustees for the FoodBank of Santa Barbara, I have been working with Fairview Gardens to fund an organic farming internship program to allow those individuals who would like to grow food for a living the opportunity to learn the skills needed to farm for profit. The guide lines of the internship and the monitoring of the interns will be as determined by Mark Tolefson, Director of Fairview Gardens. This program will be working in cooperation with local farmers. With grant money, we hope to take the burden off the farmers participating in the program. With the completion of the internship, the beginning farmer has the opportunity to then lease some land from the farmer and with guidance and as prescribed by a list of guaranteed cash crops to be grown for Farmer Direct and the FoodBank for a fair market value. This program will be a flagship program for food banks across the country. I think it is very important for everyone to realize the importance of the local food banks and that

there is an effort, here in Santa Barbara to make changes in the way the local food systems operate. After all, is it not more sustainable for an organization to be able to offer the individuals it serves not just a hand out but a hand up, therefore empowering them to become a contributing member of their community.

What the program will provide to the community:

- a resurgence of farmers in the work force . . . currently the average age of farmers across the country is 50.
- in doing so, we increase the chance of saving local farms from developers.
- job training and job opportunities for the underserved
- it will create a stronger awareness as to how important sustainable agriculture is to the survival of this community.
- it will create a stronger relationship between the food bank and local farmers therefore making local produce more accessible.
- it will create an opportunity for farm research projects to increase the productivity of farms in the area.
- it will provide educational programs for the interns as well as the public to introduce sustainable growing methods.
- it will provide access to locally grown organic seed for the program and the local seed bank.
- it will host a weekly farmers market with farmers participating in the internship program.

COMMENT OF ANGELA ROSS

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 03, 2012, 10:35 a.m.

City, State: Riverside, CA

Occupation: Sales Associate

Comment: We must protect those in hunger—people needing SNAP, TEFAP, CSFP and other aid programs.

Corporations will always find their footing—they pay millions of dollars every year to economists, lawyers, CPAs and lobbyists to make sure they do.

The hungry only have citizens and the programs citizens have created to protect widows, orphans, the homeless, the stranger—those in need.

Please do the job we need done to protect the least protected. Let corporations do their own job of protecting themselves.

Thank you for your patient attention to this vital need.

COMMENT OF CHRISTY ROSS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:14 p.m.

City, State: Washington, D.C.

Occupation: Educator

Comment: I want healthier, more nutritious food. I want more organic food. I want the government to be subsidizing real vegetables and fruits, and not just corn, dairy, and factory farming. This is critical to our personal health, and to our nation's health, and to our environment. Please listen!

Thank you,

CHRISTY ROSS.

COMMENT OF DOUGLAS ROSS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:31 p.m.

City, State: Locke, NY

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Dry Beans & Peas, Livestock, Poultry/poultry products, Specialty Crops, Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: To cut funding for organic and sustainable farming and nutrition education at a time when America faces an obesity epidemic and a cancer rate of 1-in-4 seems totally absurd. Consider that no universal health care coverage exists in our country and Medicare and Medicaid are both facing cuts as well, and it appears we may well be setting the stage for a future nation-wide health crisis the likes of which we cannot fathom. Please educate yourselves and the public at large as to the importance of sustainable, organic foods in a nutritionally balanced diet.

COMMENT OF JODI ROSS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:07 p.m.

City, State: New Salem, MA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: We need to support organic methods and small farms. The economy and ecosystem health depend on it! With the bees dying off, where will we be? Hand-pollinating every single plant? With superweeds being created by Round up, we'll wind up worse off than we started. It's time to adopt a sensible farm policy that doesn't create more problems than it solves.

COMMENT OF OLLIE ROSS

Date Submitted: Friday, April 13, 2012, 8:30 a.m.

City, State: Millican, TX

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Livestock, Vegetables

Size: 151-300 acres

Comment: I am a member of the Texas Small Farmers and Ranchers/Community Based Organization.

We would like the Committee to assist us in outreach to minority youth in ways to get them to consider agriculture and ag-related fields and industries a life-pathway choices. We would also like help/suggestions on how we can better partner with others (retail/wholesale, *etc.*) to market our livestock and good.

COMMENT OF ROBERT ROSS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:23 p.m.

City, State: Staten Island, NY

Occupation: Musician/Educator

Comment: Industrial agriculture and toxic chemicals are killing the soil and the organisms that live in it that make it fertile. Monoculture is also killing the soil. These practices are not found anywhere in nature and simply do not work. Monoculture requires larger and larger doses of toxic chemicals an ever escalating war on pests. The soil gets weaker and the crops get more fragile and makes them vulnerable to pesticide resistant pests. We **Must** adopt a national campaign of organic agricultural practices for the benefit of the soil, crops, our own health, and the health of the planet.

COMMENT OF KAREN ROSSI

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:06 p.m.

City, State: Richmond, KY

Occupation: Recently Graduated Disabled Student

Comment: I support these things:

- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.
- No cuts to the food stamp program.
 - more intelligent qualifications for the food stamp program food-wise. I should not be able to buy Easter candy/full-sugar soda with them while I cannot buy an infinitely more nutritious meal replacement. It's one thing if I try to buy a bottle of vitamin pills (not covered for good reason), while it's another if I buy something with macronutrients (protein powder, meal replacements, *etc.*) that is in either liquid or powder form.
 - In addition, the standards for what "supplements" qualify should be clearer, and readily available to **All** grocery store managers.

COMMENTS OF J. RONALD ROTH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:24 a.m.

City, State: Towson, MD

Occupation: Retired

Comment: We must clean up the food we are feeding our citizens! No

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:50 p.m.

Comment: I cannot believe you would cut funding for Organic farming, which is so much better for the land and citizens of the U.S. It is time to cut funding to big Ag which does little more than to feed us unhealthy foods. 90% of what I eat is Organic, free range and grass fed and I will not be spending many Medicare dollars. We need healthy food to have healthy citizens!

COMMENT OF STAN ROTH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:55 p.m.

City, State: Jenison, MI

Occupation: Community Organizer for Older Americans

Comment: Monsanto is not a food company. It is a chemical company ruining the land and now going abroad to spread their toxicity. This is not sustainable agriculture. Sustainable agriculture is done by real farmers growing real food. End the stranglehold they have on our bad food policy. Ever wonder why we have such a high rate of cancer?

COMMENT OF JANICE ROTHROCK

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 15, 2012, 12:51 p.m.

City, State: Arcata, CA

Occupation: Retired Farm Owner

Comment: We do not need to be subsidizing GMO crops and corporate farming with their high use of herbicide, insecticide, and chemical fertilizers . . . crops which often are used for fuel for machines without concern for human food. We do not need to be subsidizing Texas brain surgeons who build second homes and call them farms—**We Do Need** safe, pesticide-free (or the choice) of food grown closer to 'home' and the economic benefits that accompany.

COMMENT OF JENNIFER ROTHSTEIN

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 11:21 p.m.

City, State: Mequon, WI

Occupation: Ozaukee County Board Supervisor, District 26, Chair Land Preservation Board of Ozaukee County

Comment: Dear House Agriculture Committee,

I respectfully request that you fund the PACE program for the preservation of the future of Agricultural soils. Once the soils are lost to residential or commercial development, they are gone forever. Our citizens spoke when they chose a cow, an ear of corn and a wheel of cheese to represent our state on the Wisconsin quarter. By purchasing agricultural conservation easements, we ensure the future of agriculture and farming in our state. May this coin never become historic for lack of forethought in preserving our farming soils.

Please consider ways to support and assist young people who would become our future farmers.

It would be a real move forward if a way could be found to allow farm fresh foods in our schools and senior centers.

Finally, please look carefully at any legislation that would possibly compromise our waters, whether they be surface or ground waters. As we have discovered from the sad situation regarding the Fox River, remediation costs are astronomical. Precious, potable water is lost, people's health are adversely affected and the quality of life is tremendously diminished when water is not safe to drink. We are blessed in this state with a precious resource—water. It is important now and will continue to grow in importance in the decades to come. Let us lead the way in setting standards for this resource. Our financial future and our health will depend greatly on how we treat this resource.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

JENNIFER ROTHSTEIN,
Ozaukee County Board Supervisor.

COMMENT OF PAT ROUGEAU

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 9:01 p.m.

City, State: Oakland, CA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: We need a fair and smart bill—that promotes the health of the nation, that encourages organic produce, that doesn't pick winners and losers, that doesn't

continue legacy of entrenched subsidies and barriers to entry for new producers, that prevents fraud and abuse. We need a bill worthy of our nation and the idealism of the coming generation.

Thank you,

PAT ROUGEAU.

COMMENT OF CATHY ROWAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:46 p.m.

City, State: Bronx, NY

Occupation: Director, Socially Responsible Investments

Comment: Strengthen food aid programs by purchasing food on local and regional levels. This would get food to those in need more quickly and would be a more efficient use of taxpayers' dollars. It would also improve the capacity of local, small farmers in the countries most needing to improve their food production.

COMMENT OF THOMAS ROWAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:05 p.m.

City, State: Bronx, NY

Occupation: Chaplain

Comment: I am also a member of a CSA in the Bronx where we got organic vegetables every week starting in June. It is also a way to assist the farmer to remain an independent farmer.

COMMENT OF SOPHIA ROWIN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:46 p.m.

City, State: Castaic, CA

Occupation: Self-Employed

Comment: Please do not cut the funding for organics. We need our food to be clean, simple and healthy. Organics can be a start to educating people on how to eat healthy, has the potential to reduce obesity and can bring medical costs down, so our government would not have to subsidize medical care.

COMMENT OF KAREN ROWLAND

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:53 p.m.

City, State: Papaalooa, HI

Occupation: Business Consultant

Comment: Our country needs to bring back small farms as a means to earn a living—our health and economy are depending on it. We need to take the government out of food regulation so people can buy what they want from local farms and get the quality they deserve and demand. Until stop using chemicals to grow our food cancer and other illnesses will continue to rise unlike many other nations. Corporate profits in the production of toxic chemicals and GMO seeds have no place in our food supply and are causing most of the current problems we have—when will we come together and do the right thing for our land, health and economy of our country?

COMMENT OF KIMBERLY ROWLETT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:52 a.m.

City, State: Cleveland, TN

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: We badly need to preserve rural, quiet, backwoods, historic and natural America for future growth in the farming industry! We do not need more ex/sub/urbanization or (spot) rezoning, or metro annexation of any kind that is oppressing environmental needs of farmers and their families. The biggest thing is to give long-term preservation and protection for all rural areas, to preserve independent (identities and Gov) cities/townships, and counties everywhere! Preserve the rural, natural landscape of rural America everywhere so farmers can concentrate while working with livestock, managing their farms, its resources, and more.

COMMENT OF GENNY ROWLEY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:39 a.m.

City, State: Dallas, TX

Occupation: Operations Personnel, Urban Acres Market

Comment: I work as a part-time employee at Urban Acres, a small business in the southern part of Dallas. There is very little access to fresh, local produce in our neighborhood, and our store works with small-scale family farms to bring beautiful, fresh food into our neighborhood. There is more demand than we can supply—in part because there are not enough organic farms in our area to help meet the nutritional needs of our community. I support the initiatives of Slow Food USA listed below, and am asking for policies that benefit the members of my community, and our family farmers, who work hard all year at a job that is financially very challenging. They need our support, far more than large-scale agriculture. Thanks for listening to the issues raised below.

As the committee considers the 2012 Food and Farm Bill, I urge you to:

- Support our fight against hunger by maintaining and strengthening critical nutrition programs in this time of unprecedented need. We must not solve our budget problems on the backs of those experiencing food insecurity, including our most vulnerable—our children, the elderly, and the disabled;
- Provide an even “plowing” field by fully funding programs that support beginning and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, organic farming, regional farm and food economies, and rural development. We need more farmers and ranchers, more sustainable food production, and more economic opportunity in our food system;
- Support family farmers that really need help, not the biggest farms that don’t: End subsidies (aka direct payments and countercyclical commodity programs), and replace them with loophole-free agriculture risk coverage. Additionally, implement a cap on crop insurance premium subsidies;
- Ensure that limited conservation funding maximizes lasting environmental benefits: Limit funds to Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) for animal waste management infrastructure by eliminating the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) Livestock Set-aside and protect the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) from disproportionate cuts, and improve it by ranking applications solely on their conservation benefits.

COMMENT OF MARJORIE ROWLEY

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 2:30 a.m.

City, State: San Diego, CA

Occupation: Retired Educator

Comment: Please support organic research. Also, I am greatly concerned about genetically modified foods. Please support all legislation to require labeling and especially stop this harmful modification of foods.

COMMENT OF MONIKA ROY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:32 p.m.

City, State: Sacramento, CA

Occupation: Program Assistant, Ecological Sanitation Organization

Comment: As someone not directly farming commercially, but working in the Ecological Sanitation (EcoSan) field producing compost derived from human feces, I am linked to the farming world and help produce a product that farmers are buying. Our values are based on small-scale and organic agriculture, and the compost that we produce is meant to be reintegrated into the land. I would like to see a farm bill that supports the practices of small-scale agriculture in particular, and as organic as possible.

I would like to see more funding that increases the learning opportunities and exchanges between students of all academic levels with small-scale farmers. I want to see cultural gatherings with communities around the country, sharing knowledge and promoting healthy eating habits and lifestyles.

I want to see less agro-business in control of the food supply and less food subsidies sent to countries outside of the U.S. Thank you.

COMMENT OF PAM ROY

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 15, 2012, 1:35 p.m.

City, State: Santa Fe, NM

Occupation: Executive Director of Farm to Table, NM

Comment: Dear Congressman,

We look forward to your support of the following programs:

- Specialty Crop Grant Program increases.
- Community Food Projects Program—\$10 million per year to help communities build food self-reliance.
- Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program level funding at \$20 million.
- Farmers Market and Local Food Promotion Program—\$20 million per year to develop farmers market capacity and create food hubs to connect farmers with schools, hospitals, grocery stores and other markets.
- Hunger-Free Community Incentive Grants—An average of \$20 million per year for a new SNAP local fruit and vegetable incentive grant program at farmers markets and other healthy food retailers.
- Outreach and Technical Assistance for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers Program (Section 2501).

Thank you very much for your continued support of these programs.

Sincerely,

PAM ROY,
Farm to Table and the NM Food & Ag Policy Council,
[Redacted],
Santa Fe, NM.
[Redacted].

COMMENT OF SHARON ROYAL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:53 p.m.

City, State: Seattle, WA

Occupation: Psychotherapist/Mom

Comment: This is one of the very most important movements today.

Well-considered legislation regarding all aspects of the nation's food supply is essential for everyone, including the life of our planet. We need more, rather than less, education about the well researched ways in which the foods we eat impact human and other animal health, growth and IQ. We need immediate laws governing decisions made in the food industry with the sole goal of producing healthy, real, nutritional food free of altered genes and toxins. Laws that hold the industry accountable by exacting extreme penalties for ignoring evidence and producing toxic food. Laws that well-reward companies who do produce clean and healthy products in sustainable ways. It astounds me how we can let the ignorant and powerful remain so. Thank you for all that you do on our behalf!

COMMENT OF ROXANNE ROYSE-FLORA

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 15, 2012, 7:51 p.m.

City, State: Albany, OR

Occupation: Student

Comment: Hi,

Please do not reduce or cut the Snap or any programs that help feed the poor, I am one of those people unfortunately who rely on this. I am a student at OSU and am working hard to make good money to help support me and my family and these programs make it so we do not have to go hungry.

Thank you for your time!

ROXANNE ROYSE-FLORA.

COMMENT OF DEBORAH RUBIN

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 12:25 a.m.

City, State: Tampa, FL

Occupation: Parent

Comment: Please support family farms, organic methods, integrated pest management over GMO' and increasing pesticide usage. Give us real, wholesome food, revamp school lunches, ban color dyes in food and carcinogenic ingredients. Support a diet of whole foods. Support local eating where possible. Don't attach a bunch of riders that have nothing to do with healthy food. Stop funding GMO's and their pesticide dependent and laden crops. We should not be eating Roundup—we all know it is an endocrine disruptor. Definitely ban the new Bayer corn. And stop using steroids and unnecessary antibiotics in farm animals. Look around—see the

unhealthy Americans the most recent farm bills are producing—we are more like bulky farm animals than humans. Can't you figure out why—can't you see the connection. Please do the right thing.

COMMENT OF MARY-BETH RUBIN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:02 p.m.

City, State: Joshua Tree, CA

Occupation: Professional Cook, Nutritional Coach

Comment: It is important to me that any farm bill support environmental sustainability of agriculture, natural resources, and rural communities. In short, I do not want to see my tax dollars subsidize corporate agriculture industry that produce contaminated foods in dead soil for big profits. I want family farmers, organic farmers, who are better stewards of the environment be better subsidized.

COMMENT OF MELISSA RUBIN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:25 p.m.

City, State: Santa Rosa, CA

Occupation: Holistic Cook and Food Educator

Comment: Organic! Sustainable! Hemp! Get rid of factory Animal Farms! No GMO! Label GMO! Get rid of unfair subsidies! Plant other vegetables in Iowa besides corn! Diversity in growing! Get rid of Mono crops, Go back to the land cows and other animals eating grass as they should be!

Listen to Joel Salatin!

COMMENT OF GAIL RUBIO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 11:51 a.m.

City, State: Springville, CA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I don't want to see the Federal government's fingerprints anywhere on agricultural grain, row crops, sugar cane, silage, dairy, cattle/swine/poultry raising, viticulture or orchards; I want the Federal government out of farming, dairy and all other means identified as "rural/farming occupations"!

COMMENT OF RUBY RUBLEY

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 3:34 p.m.

City, State: Bellevue, MI

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Greenhouse/nursery, Nuts, Specialty Crops, Other

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: I simply ask that as you are considering revisions to the farm bill that you remember the small farms, families, and conservation districts struggling not only to make ends meet, but to do so in ecologically conscious ways. Everything we do, or allow to be done to our land, affects not only our health, but that of our children and grandchildren. Please do not vote for financial reasons alone. Please do not cut our conservation programs and organic farming incentives. The land is what we and our neighbors survive on. Big agribusinesses are not the backbone of our nation; we, the people with calloused hands and muddy boots, are—and we are depending on you. Thank you.

COMMENT OF CLAUDIA RUCK

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 6:57 a.m.

City, State: Canaan, CT

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: I'm concerned that Monsanto will own agriculture and the consumer will not have healthy food choices as a result. We need independent farmers growing food in our communities.

COMMENT OF KELLY RUCKER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:02 p.m.

City, State: Lexington, SC

Occupation: Mother

Comment: Families have a right to a healthy food supply. Organic foods that are cost efficient and readily available to consumers is imperative. The health of our nations children is at risk.

COMMENT OF DONNA RUDIGER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:18 p.m.

City, State: Arlington, WA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: This legislation is important to the very survival of every food grower in the U.S. And, if the immigration laws continue to be pressed, there won't be harvesters available for getting the product to market. This is a crisis and it is time for someone in government to **Think** about all the cross-functional ramifications of NOT passing this bill? What are you gonna eat?

COMMENT OF LUAN RUDNICK

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:56 p.m.

City, State: Anamoose, ND

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Livestock

Size: 500-999 acres

Comment: We are not willing to eat GMO products or do we want to plant these products. Please get them off of the American food chain. Other Countries have recognized the dangers of these products and we want our government not the Chemical Industry to run our farm bill and get these foods off the market.

COMMENT OF SUSAN RUDNICKI

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:02 p.m.

City, State: Manhattan Beach, CA

Occupation: Home Gardener, Botanist, Beekeeper, Dental Hygienist, Mother

Comment: Commodity crops **Must** be stricken from the privileged status they have enjoyed with regard to price supports and subsidization! Vegetable and fruit and directly consumed crops have struggled with uneven competition from corporate Ag and Big Business, in a way the program from the 1930's Depression Era **Was Never Meant To Work**. Taxpayers are sick of giving money to big business Ag while our food supply is dominated by these players and the health and obesity problem of our country mushrooms with junk food made from cheapened commodity productions.

COMMENT OF JOHN RUEB

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 10, 2012, 10:39 a.m.

City, State: Amado, AZ

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Please support local hunger/food programs such as SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP. Also support small, local producers such as myself. If you need to save money, cut subsidies to commodities.

COMMENT OF JONATHAN RUF

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:44 p.m.

City, State: Decorah, IA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Specialty Crops

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: With the upcoming farm bill, politicians in Washington (both democratic and republican) are about to again give away massive amounts of subsidies, mostly to go to big agribusinesses.

This needs to stop. Large scale industrialized Agriculture has greatly contributed to the loss of soil, air and water pollution, as well as causing problems for the utter important honey bee.

I want a new way forward for the planet's future. Please level the playing field so that small farmers can succeed. Local food systems are of utmost importance at a time when there are billions of humans scampering for the last oil reserves.

Thank you for considering my comments.

JONATHAN RUF.

COMMENT OF VICTORIA RUFF

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 7:51 a.m.

City, State: Cambridge, MA

Occupation: Office Manager

Comment: I watched a horrible, horrible video this a.m. about how the animals are being treated at a farm that Tyson Foods get their animals from. Something needs to happen to those individuals who are torturing those animals as I type this. Please send someone to investigate—here is the link to the video—see for yourself the horrible conditions they are “living” in: <http://youtube/bNY4Fjsdft4>.

COMMENT OF LISA RUFO

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 10:48 a.m.

City, State: Sarasota, FL

Occupation: Artist

Comment: We need to foster a better agricultural policy in this country. We need to rethink how we grow our food and how we raise our livestock. Local diverse farming is cheaper and more healthy. In our own community we have one small local market and it is packed with people who want local and healthy tasty food. People want the changes to a healthier way of life.

COMMENT OF CHRIS RUIZ

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 4:24 p.m.

City, State: Austin, TX

Occupation: Bartender

Comment: We need to encourage local urban farmers to continue to produce high quality products that can be used in local establishments and discourage subsidizing huge factory farms.

COMMENT OF COLTER RULE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:19 p.m.

City, State: Falls Village, MA

Occupation: Actor

Comment: We were once an Honest Agrarian Democracy built on Truth and Hard Work. Don't let me say that those Values and Qualities are a Thing of The Past. Pass a sensible Bill that supports Independent Organic Farmers and Rids us of these Insane Subsidies that promote Abuse and Unfair market dominance by Large Corporations. Tell The Truth and Vote Fairly!

COMMENT OF RACHEL LYN RUMSON

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 11:28 p.m.

City, State: South Portland, ME

Comment: Dear Chairman Lucas,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony to the House Committee on Agriculture on the next farm bill. My district representative is being copied on this testimony. Rep. Pingree's work on this is appreciated by a lot of Maine People for sustainable food system. I am a mother, and occupier, a trainer and a discerning farm product consumer. I'd like to share my support for programs that help the next generation of growers build strong farm businesses. **It Is Essential That The Food Supply Chain Get Shorter.** As it's estimated that 125,000 farmers will retire in the next 5 years, it's absolutely critical that farm bill programs help citizens get started in this challenging field. The only hope I can imagine for our youth facing staggering unemployment and economic depression is that they become engines in their own local economies. That means producing. I ask that the Committee endorse all of the provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236), including:

- Mandatory funding for Individual Development Accounts at \$5 million per year. This program helps new farmers raise capital to start farm businesses and is

tested and proven by organizations like Practical Farmers of Iowa and the California Farmlink.

- Mandatory funding for the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program at \$25 million a year. This program funds essential education for new farmers around the country.
- Authorize a new microloan program, to enable young and beginning farmers to better access FSA loan programs.
- Revise FSA rules to make loan programs more accessible to more young and beginning farmers.
- Reaffirm the existing cost share differential for BFRs within EQIP. Also, reaffirm the advance payment option allowing beginning and socially disadvantaged producers to receive an advance payment for the project's costs for purchasing materials or contracting services, but increase the limit on the advance payment from 30 percent to 50 percent of costs.
- Amend the Farm and Ranch Land Protection Program (FRPP) to make farm viability part of the purpose of the program and to give discretionary authority to the eligible entities that implement the program to give priority to easements with an option to purchase at the agricultural use value, deals that transfer the land to beginning and farmers and ranchers, applicants with farm succession plans, and other similar mechanisms to maintain the affordability of protected land.

These and other provisions within the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act will help new growers succeed and I urge you to include them in the next farm bill.

Sincerely,

RACHEL LYN RUMSON.

COMMENT OF MARYE RUNNELS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:07 p.m.

City, State: Petal, MS

Occupation: Homemaker and Homeschooler

Comment: I support Local Foods and Farmers and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).

I support the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).

I support maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

We need organic research! Companies like Monsanto are not only putting farmers out of business, they are feeding poison to our children. We have to stop money making companies from destroying organic farmers. What good does it do to put food on the plates of Americans when that food is causing allergies and cancers. Show us that you hear the informed voters cry for change by not placing limitations on crop insurance subsidies. We need to plan for our futures and re-attach the soil erosion and wetland conservation requirements to crop insurance programs. This committee has failed to do the full reform that is needed. This is your chance to show us that you care about the American and stop lining your pockets with big businesses money.

COMMENT OF SHELLY RUNNING

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:39 p.m.

City, State: Okarche, OK

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Its wrong to cave in to the corporate agricultural business that thrive on what amounts to the destruction of our environment, our health, and the well-being of those farm families who prefer to grow food and feed the people in a more sustainable way. There are several countries who ban what **You**, our politicians are allowing. You are a politician in office because people voted for you with the understanding that you would do what is in the best interest of the people you represent. It's time to put the money, the lobbyists, the power and the greed aside and do what needs to be done for the people, and for the farmers who want to grow non-GMO foods. **Stop** funding big agriculture and instead fund the family farmer who wants to grow organic. **Stop** allowing toxic chemicals into our food chain. **Stop** the practices that have led to the need to petition **You**. You already know what the people want.

JOINT COMMENT OF SHANNON & KIM RUNYAN

Date Submitted: Wednesday, April 18, 2012, 11:28 a.m.

City, State: McAlister NM
Producer/Non-producer: Producer
Type: Field Crops
Size: 500–999 acres

Comment: First, we want to say thank you for taking input on the new farm bill. Our comments are minute but we appreciate your consideration on the matter. We would like to see the food stamp program (SNAP) removed from the Agriculture Department and put into another agency. It needs to be in the Health & Human Services Department. The amount of money spent in the SNAP program makes average Joe American think farmers are over compensated. We are less than 2% of the population and we feed all of America and part of the world. We are **Not** rich and our job is **Not** easy. We are not asking for a hand out. This agency needs to be moved out of the Department of Ag.

Second, it would be better for farmers to have more realistic insurance dates. A farmer must insure Milo by March 15. On March 15 we do not know if we are going to have enough rain to plant Milo (in June) or not. Another example of this type of absurdity is on January 30 you have to insure your hay grazer (not planted until June). Once again how do you know if it is going to rain in June? These are small common sense things that truly would help farmers.

Thank you for your time,

SHANNON & KIM RUNYAN.

COMMENT OF JOHN RUPRECHT

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 15, 2012, 2:09 p.m.
City, State: Avon, MN
Producer/Non-producer: Producer
Type: Livestock
Size: 50–150 acres

Comment: I have been committed to sustainable ag long before the recent flair in popularity. Please ensure that sustainable ag is incorporated into the new version of the farm bill.

COMMENT OF MACKENZIE RUSH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:42 a.m.
City, State: Louisville, KY
Occupation: Chef

Comment: Please keep traditional foods available to patrons who wish to consume these products, *i.e.*, raw milk and limit regulations on small scale farmers who are selling to a loyal local market. These people are keeping our agrarian culture alive and our food safe. They need to be protected and cherished, not regulated and screwed around with. They are good people doing the noblest work on Earth, not to mention back breaking. These farmers don't get paid big money for their products but they do the work because they love it and we love them for it, truly. The founders of our country would be appalled if they knew our government was trying to keep one neighbor from selling **Food** to another neighbor, think about it that way! Thank you for your time and consideration.

COMMENT OF JEREMY RUSS

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 12, 2012, 2:15 p.m.
City, State: Tempe, AZ
Occupation: Handyman

Comment: Please think in a larger picture. Our land is over used and we need to move back toward more sustainable agriculture which does not have such strong negative impacts to our environment. The dead zones in the ocean at the mouths of the rivers are caused by fertilizer runoff and manure. We need to solve this and other crisis. Animal agriculture is ruining our planet at its current scale. Most of our farmland is producing food for animals. This should not be subsidized. We need to move the subsidies away from animal agriculture and toward organic and more sustainable types of agriculture. As a tax payer, I have no interest in having my tax money support the deaths of animals so that they can be food for someone. I am certain that you and your fellow lawmakers can see the big picture and start to remove subsidies from programs which are detrimental to our environment. The subsidies need to be moved away from standard farms to certified organic farms. Please stop subsidizing animal agriculture altogether. If we had an even subsidy for all organic farms per pound of produce of any sort, the market would dictate what

foods need to be produced in a more fair way. As it is now it is more costly for a person to eat a healthier diet. The subsidies which are set up for corn, cotton, wheat, rice, soybeans, and others are unfair and detrimental to our land. These subsidies are also helping cause unhealthy lifestyles. We need to be good stewards of our land and help others be good stewards of their land. Please consider my statements and help to ensure all people can live healthier in a healthy environment.

COMMENT OF MARK RUSS

Date Submitted: Monday, May 14, 2012, 12:37 p.m.

City, State: Orlando, FL

Occupation: Nonprofit Organization

Comment: As a leading representative of The TBS Goodwill Center in cooperation with Children's Agriculture and Science Adventures, we would like to make a request.

We need to pass a farm bill that takes into consideration the current needs of the people in our communities. Many of the families and individuals that we assist are in a position of need because the monies they get on a weekly, biweekly or monthly basis just doesn't quite go far enough to carry them without the need for some help. We unfortunately do to the slow economy are seeing new recipients sign up every week for food assistance. With TEFAP being one of the integral parts of us getting out needed food, it certainly doesn't need to be cut or reduced. We hate having to turn people away, and that happens even now because of the growing demand. If we were too loose the TEFAP that we are currently receiving if would greatly reduce our ability to continue distributing needed nutritious food. Many of our recipients are seniors who are on fixed incomes and working mothers with children. Some of families receive food stamps (SNAP) but let us know that it just isn't enough to make it through the month.

Do pass a farm bill that will help us to help strengthen our communities, which makes for a stronger, safer environment for all. We are doing our part to give something back, we need you in congress to do it as well.

COMMENT OF JAMES RUSSELL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:19 p.m.

City, State: Signal Mountain, TN

Occupation: Retired College Professor

Comment: I am a volunteer at a local farmers' market and buy almost all my food (meat, vegetables, *etc.*) there. It tastes better and is better for the environment. No long distance trucking. An article I saw in a reliable source stated the only 1.8% of American food came such local sources. That is disgraceful. We can do better.

COMMENT OF JULIA RUSSELL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:30 p.m.

City, State: Meridian, ID

Occupation: Retired

Comment: We are living in freedom country where we can voice and do what we want to support local farms, have our own vegetable and fruit gardening, can access to buy organic seeds and even save our own seeds for planting next year, *etc.* We must obtain our freedom. We do not live in socialism country! Thanks!

COMMENT OF TREVOR RUSSELL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:02 a.m.

City, State: Minneapolis, MN

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Please honor the stewardship compact and tie access to crop insurance to basic conservation stewardship. Farm bill conservation compliance is essential to protecting our land and water and should be a prerequisite for access to publicly subsidized insurance programs.

Thank you.

TREVOR.

COMMENT OF ANNE RYAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 10:13 a.m.

City, State: Susquehanna, PA

Occupation: Retired Teacher (Rural)

Comment: Please consider the serious necessity of sustainable, quality food for national security.

When people and environment are threatened again and again by greedy and dangerous self interest, we all suffer. We need to protect and sustain our farmland and water and the families who work tirelessly to provide quality food. This is no place to scrimp.

COMMENT OF DONNA RYAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:00 p.m.

City, State: Cotati, CA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I live in one of the best farming areas in the world We have the cleanest freshest food . . . keep our organic and local family farmers safe from **Agribusiness** pollutants, Monsanto Seeds and Pesticides. Recognize the health benefits of good soil, untouched seed stock, grass fed beef, pure water resources for the salmon industry and feed that comes from unpolluted sources.

COMMENT OF KATE RYAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:16 p.m.

City, State: Delhi, NY

Occupation: Secretary for the Board of a Nonprofit Farm Catskills

Comment: I also think regulations regarding how money given to schools can be used to purchase certain products such as meat and eggs should be changed. Schools should be allowed more flexibility to use Federal money to purchase local meat and eggs.

COMMENT OF PETER RYAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:13 p.m.

City, State: North Bend, OR

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I'd like to think that the next farm bill will reflect the interests of producers and consumers who are aware of and care about health of the land and of people.

COMMENT OF FRANCOISE RYCKEBUSCH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:30 p.m.

City, State: Highland, MD

Occupation: Retired

Comment: No bill should be more carefully conceived that a farm bill, as everybody should be conscious of the importance of safe policies on the products of an industry which feeds millions of people.

COMMENT OF KIMBERLY SAARIKOSKI

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:40 p.m.

City, State: Huntersville, NC

Occupation: Technical Writer

Comment: I support and want to see my political representatives also support the following:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.
- Support small local farming—legalize the production, sale, purchase, distribution, and consumption of raw milk and raw milk products.

- Support the individual's right (Here in the state of North Carolina and the rest of the country) to decide for themselves and their children, whether or not to produce, purchase, sell, and/or consume Raw Milk and raw milk products, and whole, locally grown foods.
- Support the existence of local organic farming practices as prescribed by local organic farmers.
- Support the development and creation of intelligent and common-sense laws & regulations, which are designed to work with and support the existence of farms of various sizes.
- the abolishment of regulatory practices that create one-size-fits-all laws and regulations, which apply to various sized farms.

I support the idea that I would like to see politicians remind themselves and one another that they are elected to **Serve** the public, and **Not** to Dictate laws to the public. Politicians and government workers are public servants paid by taxpayer money.

COMMENT OF THERESA SABATINI

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:02 a.m.

City, State: Cheswick, PA

Occupation: Professor

Comment: The farm bill as it stands supports mega agribusiness and not small and medium farmers. And by supporting commodity crops and not freshly consumable vegetables and fruits, it damages the health of Americans by making processed foods cheaper than fresh. Use some common sense. Get your hands out of the corporate tills and back to work for the people!

COMMENT OF PAUL SABOL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:36 p.m.

City, State: New Hampton, NH

Occupation: Retired Telecommunications Technician

Comment:

1. Shut down Monsanto—close all GMO controlling activities and producing facilities.
2. Shut down round-up/collect and destroy all stockpiles.
3. Fine Monsanto for all damages caused to small farmers for destroying seed stocks and family farms.
4. Require FDA/USDA/CDC/other Gov't entities divest themselves of all employees with Monsanto/Big Pharma based work experience.
5. Restrict all State Agencies that control farm production in the same manner.
6. Tell gov't to take their head out of where the sun don't shine and learn common sense!

COMMENT OF LAURIE SACKLER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:59 a.m.

City, State: Brooklyn, NY

Occupation: Homemaker

Comment: Nothing could be more important to the health of our families than a consistent source of quality food, raised by farmers who use non-GMO seeds and practice sustainable and preferably organic farming methods. The large agribusinesses and chemical companies such as Monsanto, which have been supported by government programs, have tried their best to drive out small family farms where sustainable farming is possible. They have repeatedly and successfully been able to obscure the fact that a large profit is their only goal and that healthy and humane practices are neither necessary or profitable. I support the labeling of all GMO foods because I heartily wish to avoid consuming them. Please think carefully about what the majority of the country is deeply concerned about—the health of our families and a source of uncontaminated food which has been raised humanely and sustainably.

COMMENT OF JIM SADLER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:33 p.m.

City, State: Granby, MA

Occupation: Designer

Comment: 20th century agricultural practices focused on quantity over quality using petroleum and chemistry in an attempt to cheat nature. We've succeeded in producing a lot of food and making a few people very wealthy, but we are destroying our natural resources and the health of our people as a result. It's time to change direction. Organic growers are proving that there is a better way feeding our nation. A farm bill should slam the door on our arrogant, greedy agribusiness instead favoring anyone from home gardeners to small and large farmers who are willing to commit to healthy, chemical-free soil and food products rich in nutrition.

COMMENT OF JESSE SADOWSKY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:42 p.m.

City, State: Dickinson, ND

Occupation: Graduate Student/Research Assistant

Comment: Creating an environment to foster growth of organic farming is crucial to ensure food security and economic sustainability of agriculture. Continued investment in research will aid organic farmers to overcome production problems, improve production efficiency, and adapt lessons learned from successful organic and low-input farming operations for use by a broader cohort of producers.

These provisions to the farm bill will help achieve the above-listed objectives:

- Fully fund the Organic Research and Extension Initiative (OREI) at the 2008 level.
- Endorse all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Support all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintain EQIP Organic Initiative and do NOT cut the Conservation Stewardship Program.

Thank you for seriously considering these suggestions.

Sincerely,

JESSE SADOWSKY.

COMMENT OF THOMAS SAGER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:35 a.m.

City, State: Rolla, MO

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Please:

1. Require Conservation Compliance for Taxpayer Subsidized Crop Insurance Programs in the 2012 Farm Bill.
2. Set reasonable limits on taxpayer-funded crop insurance subsidies to help keep costs from continuing their upward spiral.
3. Help grow jobs by retaining programs like the Value Added Producer Grants Program.
4. Help grow local farm economies and support healthy food in schools by providing flexibility for states to use existing food procurement programs to purchase fresh, healthy food from local farmers and ranchers.
5. Retain effective conservation programs in the farm bill that deliver clean water and wildlife benefits.
6. Grow farmers through mandatory funding for the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program.

COMMENT OF DON SAITO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:58 p.m.

City, State: Oakland, CA

Occupation: Unemployed

Comment: Organic farming is essential to the future health of everyone, everywhere. Please put greed in check, and do what's best for people, and the environment.

COMMENT OF STEVE SAKALA

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 1:09 a.m.

City, State: Kona, HI

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Dairy

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: As a small scale agriculture producer I feel it urgent to convey the need for a healthy and just farm bill. I, as well as most small scale producers I know, are just making it by barely covering our basic costs and needs. We can not compete against the subsidies of corporate agriculture nor compare to the political influence. As an independent family farmer I suggest the following;

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

These are but a small step to maintaining our nations family farming roots.

COMMENT OF MARK SALAMON

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 6:28 p.m.

City, State: San Mateo, CA

Occupation: Library Technician

Comment: Stop subsidizing unhealthy and injurious corporate agribusiness producing wheat, corn, and factory farmed animals that are all sustained with pesticides, genetic modification, growth hormones, and antibiotics. Switch government funding support to small family owned farms, organic agriculture, and the production of fruits and vegetables.

COMMENT OF JOSH SALANS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:36 p.m.

City, State: San Jose, CA

Comment: Dear Zoe,

You need to know GMO Corn effects my health directly upon consumption. DO not allow the shills of Monsanto money tell you that GMO's are safe. My butt takes on hemorrhoids the size of golf balls for up to 24 hours after consuming a product with non-organic **American Corn**. This is because 90% of American non organic corn is grown with Monsanto's GMO seed which contains the Cauliflower Mosaic Virus which is implicated in Irritable Bowel Syndrome—just in case you did not know these facts. The Virus manufactures or turns on the pesticide gene in every cell of the corn plant, and every cell in each corn seed of the ear of corn. This virus and pesticide remains viable through the life cycle of the corn as it makes it's way into the thousands of corn based products that fill our grocery shelves, you know ALL soda pop, all candy from American suppliers, all processed food of any kind all contain some form of corn starch, corn sugar, corn syrup, baking powder! All cause my symptoms and therefore 2/3 of American food I cannot eat—it also effects my restaurant choices and food there. I am being threatened in my homeland with poisoning by Monsanto and those who support the growing of poisonous American corn. Please do something to stop this. An Organic farm Bill, that outlaws Genetically Modified Organisms in our soil and our food products. Its poison Zoe—that means the perpetrators of this food stuff should be arrested and convicted of poisoning the American people. My bloody bowels not withstanding there are a whole slew of other GMO products that contain man made virus and such or are impervious to Roundup. And FYI all of these are being increased in strength as the bugs get used to the poison. And don't get me started on the deterioration of American soils. We are so bloody destructive in our farm policy today. Tear it up and rebuild without the poison makers having a word edgewise.

Thank you Zoe for all you can do!

COMMENT OF RAYANN SALAZAT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:06 p.m.

City, State: Houston, TX

Occupation: IT Specialist

Comment: I am a mother of 3 children and I have had to learn that the foods on the shelf are not good food, the hard way. It is discouraging that I have to start at ground zero to teach my children, what is **Good For Your Body** (healthy) food and what is not. I have a child with Autism, that is so limited in his food selection

due to food sensitivities. For our future, please provide the *Best—Good For Our Body Foods*. Thanks.

COMMENT OF TERESA SALEEM

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 5:57 p.m.

City, State: Austin, TX

Occupation: Computer Technician

Comment: Food is a basic necessity for all people. Some people are not able to provide for themselves (children and the elderly). Therefore, there is a need for programs like SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP. The food programs listed help protect many children and elderly American from starvation. Please ensure food programs such as SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP receive substantial funding.

COMMENT OF MARY SALOMON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:18 p.m.

City, State: Ballston Spa, NY

Occupation: Speech Language Pathologist

Comment: Dear Members of the House Committee on Agriculture,

It is time to even the playing field. Support small organic farms. The people of the United States of America have the right to non-GMO, chemical free, locally grown food. Supporting our local organic farmers is good for our communities, our personal health, and the health of our planet. Pesticides and GMOs are scientifically linked to the death of our important bees, and to the development of superweeds and super bugs.

COMMENT OF PENNY SALUS

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 11:46 p.m.

City, State: Eugene, OR

Occupation: LMT, Hearing Impaired Interpreter, Mom

Comment: I buy only organic. When and if we eat, we pay very close attention to how the animal was treated, what kind of life it lived and what kind of food it ate. I feel this is personal politics at its best. Where we choose to spend our money and the kind of agriculture we choose to support with that money is the best way to proclaim what is important to us. Food is so central to our being and to our long term health as people and as a race. We are so short sighted in so many ways. Food is a way that gives us sustenance in the present and affects our well being for our whole lives.

COMMENT OF DR. JOYCE SALVAGE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:04 p.m.

City, State: St. Petersburg, FL

Occupation: Retired Teacher & Adjunct Professor

Comment: The way animal food products is produced in this country is disgusting and immoral. Beyond that, it is not natural to add all kinds of hormones, antibiotics to unsanitary conditions.

Re: plant products, it's almost impossible to avoid genetically modified foods, like high fructose corn syrup and pesticides, since they seem to be in almost everything. Not everyone can afford to buy their food at health food stores or Whole foods type stores. This farm bill will help to rectify the situation and ensure healthier foods for Americans to eat. We need to prevent disease, which will end up reducing costs to taxpayers, as well. This is supposed to be a "developed" country! Use science and medicine to inform agriculture!

Dr. JOYCE SALVAGE,
St. Petersburg, FL.

COMMENT OF DEBORAH SALZ

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 1:13 p.m.

City, State: Boynton Beach, FL

Occupation: Licensed Physical Therapist

Comment: I am part of a growing number of people who feel that protecting our health and having the freedom to make sensible choices for our health is our most important right. We cannot do that if our choices (*i.e.*, organic food choices) are restricted or limited in anyway. Please protect this **Most** important freedom and do

not cave to the special interests (\$\$\$\$) of agribusiness *i.e.*, Monsanto. We are counting on **You** to protect our families (and yours) with regards to the decisions you make today, impacting many generations to come!

The one area of healthcare reform that appears not to be addressed enough is personal responsibility and healthy lifestyle choices. You can help promote that by supporting Americans' rights to watch what they put into their bodies. We need **You** in this battle of health interests of individuals *versus* agribusiness/chemical behemoths. Please support us and we will not forget you at the polls! Thank you for your assistance.

COMMENT OF DANIEL SAMBOR

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 02, 2012, 7:47 p.m.

City, State: Providence, RI

Occupation: Student

Comment: I would like the farm bill to support farmers' markets, community gardens, urban farms, and organic agriculture. A healthy, sustainable food system should include these because they produce food without harming our environment. The farm bill should also have less subsidies for large corn farms. These large corn farms severely diminish the soil quality and thus must use synthetic fertilizers and pesticides that run off fields and contaminate our waterways.

COMMENT OF CHRISTINE SAMPLE

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 6:46 p.m.

City, State: Muscatine, IA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: America needs a farm bill that makes healthy food widely available to all Americans—including schoolchildren! We must provide flexibility for states to use existing food procurement programs to purchase fresh, healthy food from local farmers and ranchers. We need to help the small organic farmers who are trying to provide healthy food to us, so we can lead a healthy life.

COMMENT OF KRISTINA SAMPSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:27 p.m.

City, State: Vail, CO

Occupation: Consultant

Comment: Dear House Agriculture Committee,

As a breast cancer survivor, what I put into my body is of the utmost importance to me. Please do not let companies like Monsanto determine what we will eat for the rest of eternity.

A recent local newspaper article discussed the increase in cancer rates among dogs, and one of the reasons stated is their exposure to chemicals in the environment, including fertilizer. Do you folks not realize that the smallest of us are the proverbial "canary in the coal mine". Don't just dismiss this because it is dogs and not humans. It is only a matter of time before it catches up with every single one of us. There is a reason the breast cancer rate has risen from 1 in 30 women in the 1970s to 1 in 8 now, and environmental toxins play a large part in that. As an MD on the *CBS Sunday Morning* show stated last week, the breast is like a sponge that soaks up everything in its environment, including toxins. **Wake Up!** You **Must** protect organic farmers and not let Monsanto and its ilk do everything in their power to destroy the organic farmer. And please do **Not** let them release genetically-modified salmon into the wild.

KRISTINA SAMPSON.

COMMENT OF RHYS SAMPSON

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 6:58 p.m.

City, State: Deerfield, OH

Occupation: Forrester

Comment: The industrialization of our food supply has resulted in unhealthy practices, at the farm and at the dinner table. Return the power of food production to families and stop the industrialization of our farms.

COMMENT OF DIANE SAMUELSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:17 p.m.

City, State: Hilton Head Island, SC

Occupation: Shaklee Sales Leader

Comment: I fear for the health of our food supply with the nonsense that is going. What are people thinking? We are one of the unhealthiest nations in the world and it is about time we stood up for the people and companies that are doing the right thing producing organic products and procedures that are safe and beneficial to all of us. Monsanto is the worst of the lot trying to not allow labeling of GMO's. This is so irresponsible and abhorrent.

COMMENT OF JENNIFER SANBORN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:26 a.m.

City, State: Winona, MN

Occupation: Software Engineer

Comment: Please consider incentives for farmers to grow **Organically**, and to move farmers away from GMO and Monsanto-driven crops. A safer food system is **Essential** for us as a country and as a member of the world. Please increase the number of inspectors of large operations.

COMMENT OF MARTA SANCHEZ

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 2:35 p.m.

City, State: Seattle, WA

Occupation: Secretary

Comment: Please recognize that seeds spread via wind, water, *etc.*, and GMOs are therefore ruining our organic crops. There is a large percentage of our country trying to live an organic lifestyle to make sure the nutrients for our families—both biological and logical are not contaminated. Let alone the mindset of a good life for animals prior to their sacrifice reaching our plates. Please ensure labeling lets me—the public, your constituents know when food is actually organic or kosher or altered with hormones. Thank you.

COMMENT OF JUDITH SANDEEN

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 08, 2012, 2:39 p.m.

City, State: Hastings, NE

Occupation: Retired Registered Nurse

Comment: Please protect funding for critical Federal nutrition programs, including the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) as you work to re-authorize the farm bill. I keep hearing that churches and other charitable organizations should feed the poor. While many of those organizations do just that, they do not have sufficient means to care for all the hungry in our country. In addition, those efforts are, by necessity, piecemeal. We are not, or at least, have not been, a country that neglects its poor and hungry. Please do not go back to the time of poor farms.

COMMENT OF MORRIS SANDEL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:25 p.m.

City, State: Austin, TX

Occupation: Retired Graphic Design/Computer Tech

Comment: Ban genetically modified produce. Ban toxic fertilizers, pesticides and all other additives from our food. Support small farms, those who produce organically grown products and limit power of “big agriculture” money-driven manipulations.

MO SANDEL.

COMMENT OF JENNIFER SANDERS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:06 p.m.

City, State: Jacksonville, FL

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Difficult as it is to believe, hardly a century ago we were able to feed ourselves, as a country, and even help others. Backyard gardens and nearby farms became unfashionable to city planners. Now, almost full circle, we eat Frankenfoods, then pop pills at alarming rates attempting to manage effects of our malnutrition:

diabetes, heart failure & obesity. The correction is elementary; return to what worked. Synthetic inputs (GMOs) don't work in animals or humans without grave (literally), consequences. Take the moment to consider the unhealthy future for your own family, if we continue on what is an unsustainable and un-natural system of agriculture. Real food is good food, make the farm bill support real food and real farms. Thank you.

JENNIFER SANDERS,
[Redacted]

COMMENT OF JULIE SANDERS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:45 p.m.

City, State: Fishers, IN

Occupation: Stay-at-Home Mom

Comment: As the main supplier of food to my family—I shop, store, and cook for those I love—I want to let you know how important H.R. 3286 is to the health and well-being of my family.

Please know that I support the full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).

I support the full funding of conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.

I support the implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).

And I support maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Please do not put the interests of agribusiness and insurance companies ahead of the health and well-being of our nations families.

Thank you for considering all the perspectives and making a decision based on the interests of health, small farmers, and the future of agriculture in our country.

COMMENT OF KENDALL SANDERS

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 2:55 a.m.

City, State: Everett, WA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Dry Beans & Peas, Greenhouse/nursery, Nuts, Poultry/poultry products, Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: The love of money is the root of many evils. We need to consider the consequences of our actions and not be motivated purely by the desire to profit. We must take care of our resources especially our food and water supplies. Organic and natural farming is one way of caring for these resources that we all need. Please consider what is at stake here. We need to create a healthy food bill to replace the farm bill. Large corporations are monopolizing this field and we need to realize this is not healthy for us or our posterity. Please research how we can do this better before it is too late!

COMMENT OF WAYNE SANGSTER

Date Submitted: Wednesday, March 14, 2012, 9:22 a.m.

City, State: Pineview, GA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Field Crops

Size: 301–500 acres

Comment: As a producer and Agricultural Banker I feel the current farm bill offers a sufficient safety net. I would like to see the FSA Loans Programs be sufficiently funded. Currently this is a huge problem I have notice as producers are eligible for FSA Loan Programs however there is too little funding available to cover the dire need of these producers.

COMMENT OF DAGNY SANMIGUEL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:59 p.m.

City, State: Sacramento, CA

Occupation: Medical Transcriptionist

Comment: Wholesome, unadulterated food is a fundamental need for good health. It is the proper function of government to ensure its adequacy and avail-

ability to all citizens, and supporting small farmers rather than corporate monsters is basic to this mandate.

COMMENT OF SARAH SANTORA

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 12:50 p.m.
City, State: Salem, CT
Occupation: Food Bank Employee
Comment: Dear Committee:

A strong nutrition title in the farm bill is the only thing keeping Americans from starving on the streets. When the economy is down, at least there is still food—that is why cutting it is short sighted and dangerous. Block granting it will cause millions of voters to lose the ability to eat. That will cause an increase in theft and violent crime. Those on the committee who care about small government generally also care about avoiding a police state, but if you take away desperate people's access to food that is just what you get—increased spending in law enforcement and incarceration. It is a smart investment to keep SNAP (food stamps) and other assistance like TEFAP (temp emergency food) available in a time of need. It's even Biblical, for those who say it's not. "Whatsoever you do to the least of my brothers, that you do unto Me".

SARAH SANTORA,
 Salem, CT.

COMMENT OF JANICE SANTOS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:33 p.m.
City, State: Caribou, ME
Occupation: Secretary—Department of Defense

Comment: The past practices of Agribusiness have decimated our bees, our land, the food has no nutritional value and I am certain we will find out soon that it has also caused the fungus that is killing our bats.

We need natural, accountable farming practices if we want to survive.

COMMENT OF OMAR SANTOS

Date Submitted: Tuesday, March 20, 2012, 12:20 p.m.
City, State: Elgin, IL
Occupation: Engineering

Comment: Local and regional food systems help create jobs and spur economic growth in rural and urban communities. Please support investment in this growing sector by including the Local Farms, Food, and Jobs Act in the next farm bill.

The future of family farming and ranching in America depends upon ensuring that would-be new farmers have access to land, capital, and markets. Please support beginning farmers and ranchers by including Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act in the next farm bill.

Farmers depend on quality, cutting-edge research to stay successful—please make sure the next farm bill invests in this crucial work.

Working lands conservation programs help farmers maintain productivity while protecting our air, water, and soil, protect these programs from unfair funding cuts!

COMMENT OF JIMENA SARAVIA

Date Submitted: Friday, April 06, 2012, 2:46 p.m.
City, State: San Francisco, CA
Occupation: Digital Artist

Comment: Title I—Stop with the Genetically Engineered commodity crops. They are not safe for the public to be eating! We've lost 30% of the micro-nutrients in our soil due to pesticide use causing severe malnutrition.

Title IV—Only organic fruits and veggies and whole grains for SNAP, since animal proteins are so detrimental to the lining of your arteries, we will eventually have to pay for their open heart surgery or cancer treatments (watch Forks Over Knives)

Title VII—needs major funding. Trees are what keep us alive, they clean our air thus reducing the amount of asthmatics and provide quality of life. Humans are animals after all, we need nature!

You need a new title to help fund a more local way of sourcing food. If you have grass you should be growing your own food and trying to be more sustainable.

COMMENT OF STEPHEN SARBIEWSKI

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 8:57 p.m.

City, State: Redmond, WA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: No more sugar subsidies for growers. We are disgusted that private growers receiving Federal subsidies have locked out union workers refusing to pay them a fair wage. Please stop giving private growers Federal funds for growing sugar.

COMMENT OF MARLENE SARNAT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:54 p.m.

City, State: Rio Vista, CA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: The use of GMO crops leads to higher levels of pesticides and weeds and insect mutations which keep the cycle going higher and higher. This must be stopped to allow natural and organic farming to maintain the balance and provide safe, sustainable, and healthy food production.

COMMENT OF MARLJEANNE SARRAILLE

Date Submitted: Sunday, April 29, 2012, 5:25 p.m.

City, State: Pittsburg, CA

Occupation: Disabled

Comment: I support the strengthening and protecting programs like TEFAP and SNAP in the farm bill. Stop helping the big corporate farmers and assist the small family farms.

COMMENT OF TARA SARRAZIN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:56 a.m.

City, State: Eagan, MN

Occupation: Accounting

Comment: The farm bill is important to so many people across this country, including a growing number that are very concerned about how their food is grown and what is used to grow them. While companies, like Monsanto, seem to have many in government in their back pockets, it is time for politicians to understand that people want to eat chemical-free grown food and know that their foods are free of GMO. As a mother, wife, and person concerned about what goes into my body and that of my family I want to show my full support for all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286). I support the full funding of conservation programs like the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.

The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236). I also support maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative. I buy organic foods for a reason. I don't want GMO foods in my house and I don't want to support farmers or businesses that grow or sell them.

Please look around at the growing organic industry and the outcry of people tired of the government listening and making decisions in favor of big businesses. This bill can help support quality programs and initiatives if the House Committee takes a stand to back them.

COMMENT OF MICHELLE SARTOR

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:30 a.m.

City, State: Maitland, FL

Occupation: Wellness Coach

Comment: As a wellness coach, I know how important local, preferably organic, produce and meat are to good health. I encourage you to support measures to stimulate small, family farms. At the same time discourage large-scale industrial farming that typically requires pesticides, herbicides, fungicides, hormones and antibiotics which limit variety and deplete our soil.

Fully fund programs that support beginning and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, organic farming, regional farm and food economies, and rural development. We need more farmers and ranchers, more sustainable food production, and more economic opportunity in our food system.

Limit funds to Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) for animal waste management infrastructure by eliminating the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) Livestock Set-aside and protect the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) from disproportionate cuts, and improve it by ranking applications solely on their conservation benefits.

COMMENT OF SAN MALO SASHA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:55 p.m.

City, State: Pahoa, HI

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Fruits

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: We need to support small farmers. We need to support organic farmers. There is too much subsidy for huge corporation farms that already control the market. It's the small farmers who need help.

COMMENT OF BRIAN SATTERWHITE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:50 p.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Manager

Comment: End subsidies to large corporate farms. They don't need them. Foster the creation and viability of small family farms. End all subsidies for corn and soybeans. These can stand on their own in the market. Cheap corn is a key contributor to our America weight problem. The farm bill is driving the cost of Medicare/Medicaid up.

COMMENT OF BRIAN SAUER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:41 p.m.

City, State: Kansas City, MO

Occupation: Scientist

Comment: As one who grew up on a small dairy farm and have spent my entire adult life as a molecular biochemist I strongly urge you to support:

- (1) full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- (2) Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- (3) The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- (4) Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Corporate interests may well try to convince you otherwise. Of course they will not be picking up the tab for the dead zone in the Gulf of Mexico, the rise of antibiotic resistance in bacterial pathogens, or for the rise in obesity/diabetes in this country—all of which can in part be reasonably attributed to unsound agricultural policies.

COMMENT OF ERIC SAUERHAGEN

Date Submitted: Wednesday, April 18, 2012, 9:24 p.m.

City, State: Bend, OR

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Field Crops

Size: 151–300 acres

Comment: As a young rancher I am interested in congress investing in the future of America's farmers. We need support in the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program.

COMMENT OF LOIS SAUNDERS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:49 p.m.

City, State: Nixa, MO

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I buy from local farmers 95 percent of the time. They produce food without chemicals, antibiotics or hormones. The food I eat tastes good and is

healthy. Food from CAFO's is terrible tasting as is most processed food. I also shop in health food markets all year long.

COMMENT OF CHRISTINE SAVARESE

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 15, 2012, 11:35 a.m.

City, State: Ft. Pierce, FL

Occupation: Holistic Health and Nutrition Counselor

Comment: We elect our Congressional Reps to represent the People, not the Corporations who feed us pesticide infested, factory farmed, unhealthy foods. I want **My** money to support Nutrition, not be cut by your outrageous Austerity measures. You say America is broke, well you are lying, you just want to enrich your donors. Congress must represent the people, not the crooks who purchase your loyalty.

COMMENT OF ROSEMARIE SAWDON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:43 p.m.

City, State: Blacksburg, VA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I realize that sustainable farming practices do not add to profits for the big agricultural conglomerates as our soil, water and air become more polluted, and that they support your political campaign. However, sustainable farming is necessary for a healthy, livable plant. Do you have children, grandchildren?

COMMENT OF CYNTHIA SAWTELL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:42 p.m.

City, State: San Anselmo, CA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: It is time to put the interests of a health-seeking public ahead of the special interests of Big Ag. Stop subsidizing and favoring the interests of large, global agribusinesses and start developing policies with the best interests of public health in mind. Small, local farmers provide **Much** healthier food options than these huge corporations do . . . and they are not causing the diabetes epidemic!

COMMENT OF CARYL SAWYER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 7:02 p.m.

City, State: Sandston, VA

Occupation: College Instructor

Comment: Please note: The public is fed up with Big Agriculture running roughshod over everyone, especially the organic farmers. And just what is a giant chemical company doing in agriculture? Maybe financing campaigns?

COMMENT OF MARTHA SAXTON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:05 p.m.

City, State: New York, NY

Occupation: Professor

Comment: We should stop subsidizing huge agribusinesses to produce enormous quantities of corn and use huge amounts of lethal pesticides which end up in our food and water. We need support for sustainable practices that are good for our soil, water and air.

COMMENT OF JONI SAYLOR

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 12:24 p.m.

City, State: Phoenix, AZ

Occupation: Industrial Designer

Comment: Please maintain critical nutrition programs in this time of unprecedented need. We must not solve our budget problems on the backs of those experiencing food insecurity, including our most vulnerable—our children, the elderly, and the disabled.

COMMENT OF LINDSEY SCALERA

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 10:29 a.m.

City, State: Ypsilanti, MI

Occupation: Community-Based Educator/Organizer

Comment: Dear Members of the House Committee on Agriculture,

Thank you so much for this opportunity to share with you my concerns and ideas for the next farm bill. Investments in sustainable food and farming practices have multiple positive effects on our nation's health, wellness, and wallets.

First, I must express that it is imperative that we pass the bill this year, in 2012. As the farmers, emergency food providers, and food advocates I interact with in Michigan are planning for the future while providing for the present, they need to know what food and farm policies and programs they can expect as we move into 2013 and beyond.

In addition to passing the bill in 2012, there are several other points I urge you to consider in your process.

1. America needs a farm bill that creates jobs and spurs economic growth. Where I live in Ypsilanti, Michigan, food and farming businesses are part of a thriving revitalization of our local and regional economy. More and more, people want to understand and take part in our food system. Lots of small to medium food and farming enterprises have sprouted up in Southeast Michigan, collectively contributing to our communities by providing healthy, affordable food along with jobs. By supporting programs like the Value-Added Producer Grants Program and guaranteeing \$30 million of mandatory funding per year, you can help VAPG provide seed money to help farmers innovate in agriculture and create jobs while securing a sustainable path to market-based farm profitability.

2. America needs a farm bill that makes healthy food widely available to all Americans—including schoolchildren! I have personally seen sixth graders in Wayne, Michigan light up as they learned how to plant potatoes in their school garden. Even as they learned about the importance of making healthy food choices, the snacks and lunch they are provided with do not help reinforce that lesson. We must provide flexibility for states to use existing food procurement programs to purchase fresh, healthy food from local farmers and ranchers.

3. America needs a farm bill that protects the ecosystems of which we are a part and on which we rely. I am 28 years old, and I am concerned about the soil, air, water, and wildlife not only in the United States, but around the world. Growing up in Michigan and visiting family all over the country, natural landscapes are an active part of our daily lives. The health and regenerative ability of ecosystems are deeply connected to the future of our ability to farm and provide food for this country. As you write this bill, please protect the Conservation Stewardship Program from unfair funding cuts, and improve it by ranking applications solely on their conservation benefits. So many farmers count on CSP and other conservation programs to conserve soil for future generations, keep water and air clean, and create habitat for wildlife—all while farming profitably!

4. America needs a farm bill that invests in the next generation of farmers and ranchers. As a co-founder of the Michigan Young Farmer Coalition, a grassroots organization networking young farmers and food advocates in our state, I can tell you with certainty that there are many young people in this country who are ready and willing to take on the responsibility of farming to feed our country now and through the next generation. As with any business, it takes a lot to break into farming and earn a livelihood. Over the past few years alone, I have seen young farmers who are well educated in both business and agriculture practices, both succeed and struggle as they work to establish food and farming operations. These young people, along with the others who are new to farming, are undeniable assets in this country. I urge you to please guarantee \$25 million per year in mandatory funding for the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program. We are not alone in our efforts here in Michigan. Grassroots organizations like ours have sprung up around the nation, and in response, young farmers have started a national coalition as well, highlighting the need for a national strategy and commitment to support beginning farmer and ranchers entering agriculture. With an aging farm population, now is the time to invest in the future of American agriculture by nurturing new agriculture start-ups. I cannot urge you enough to please consider the next generation of food and farm business owners & operators as you write this bill.

5. America needs a farm bill that drives innovation for tomorrow's farmers and food entrepreneurs. Research, education and extension go hand-in-hand with supporting American farmers and ranchers. For every \$1 invested in publicly funded agricultural research, \$20 in economic activity is generated. Please fund the Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative at \$30 million per year in mandatory funding. Investment in agricultural research is vital to con-

tinued productivity and innovation in growing and diverse sectors of American agriculture, such as organic agriculture.

6. America needs a farm bill that provides protection for Americans who are struggling to feed their families. I urge you to refrain from cuts in Nutrition spending. All of the policies and programs I have advocated for above can only serve to help bolster economies which can provide pathways for many people in this nation to earn a livelihood in food and farming businesses, and all of the other economic activity that is generated from thriving local and regional food systems. However, as our Nation's churches and food banks struggle to keep up with the growing demand from many diverse Americans who are now in need of emergency food and longer-term assistance, we cannot consider any cuts to spending in this area. Emergency food providers have expressed the very real concern that they do not have the capacity to absorb the already proposed \$4.5 Billion in cuts to nutrition spending, let alone any more. Weakening SNAP and other nutrition spending would lead to more hunger and food insecurity as well as higher health care costs. I urge you to maintain SNAP funding and flexible structure, which has had decades of bipartisan support, and to continue to expand and improve on those innovative programs that help SNAP recipients and others gain access to healthy, fresh, affordable food.

Thank you so much for your consideration and for your dedication to securing our Nation's food and farming future.

Best wishes,

LINDSEY SCALERA,
Ypsilanti, Michigan.

COMMENT OF DEIRDRA SCANLON

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 1:25 a.m.

City, State: Lewisburg, WV

Occupation: Nurse

Comment: The farm bill is **The** most pivotal piece in getting our citizens out of the disastrous obesity, heart disease, and diabetes down spiral we are on. Unhealthy food is cheap and available and healthy food is not. Please change the farm bill to subsidize healthy organic local foods. Please!

COMMENT OF MICHAEL SCHAD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:31 p.m.

City, State: Fort Myers, FL

Occupation: HVAC

Comment: Keep the public's safety (your safety) in mind when considering GMO and Pesticide operations.

No one system should be subsidized or backed as America's system. No one system is fault proof, and in time it will become painfully obvious the effects of all these potentially dangerous chemicals have on the human body.

I fear that by then it will be too late.

COMMENT OF CYNTHIA SCHANTZ

Date Submitted: Saturday, March 17, 2012, 10:44 a.m.

City, State: Long Beach, CA

Occupation: Unemployed Archaeologist/Anthropologist

Comment: I support my local food bank, and I know they are struggling right now to meet the needs of my community. I ask that you pass a strong farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP. These programs are a lifeline to the millions of Americans struggling with hunger, and I urge you make them a priority in the next farm bill.

This is not about people being lazy, this is about hard-working people some with educational loans to pay off who had been working and living paycheck to paycheck. When the economy tanked and we lost our jobs and couldn't get new inferior jobs right away, we too became food (and utility and rent) insecure. This is not the USA of the 1950's the middle class is collapsing and we need a little help at this moment. Please keep American tax-paying citizens when passing the next farm bill.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF ALEA SCHECHTER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 1:37 p.m.

City, State: Paauilo, HI
Producer/Non-producer: Producer
Type: Specialty Crops
Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: I am a coffee and organic vegetable farmer in Hawaii. I chose to change my lifestyle so that I could include farming to not just want a difference in my own life, but to be the change I wish to see in the world. It has been difficult and rewarding at the same time, yet I believe that the American government has a responsibility to small farmers and the economy to ensure a strong, sustainable, healthy food future for all of it's citizens.

There needs to be better access and resources for small farmers to learn about and receive grants and funding. It takes a lot to just be a farmer, getting the help we need, quickly and easily is essential and should not be a whole other "job" in itself for us to undertake.

Farms and farmers are the foundation of why America is a rich and prosperous country. If we want to remain this way, please give the support that this vital industry needs to produce the best possible products for American people to be healthy and happy.

Mahalo!

COMMENT OF BRUNO SCHEFFLER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:12 p.m.

City, State: Houston, TX

Occupation: Construction Worker/Pipefitter

Comment: Please do not make cut to the food banks. You people have given our money to countries who want to kills us. You have helped Detroit the car manufacturers with our tax dollars. You give billions to the rich oil companies. You give yourselves pay increase and benefits that the rest of us working people do without. And now you want to cut money to our food bank. No! These people need it and then some. I know this won't make a difference because you will justify whatever you do. But if you do make a cut into the food bank program it will be shameful. Help them like you've help yourselves.

Thank you,

BRUNO SCHEFFLER.

COMMENT OF KEN SCHEFTER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:07 p.m.

City, State: Olathe, KS

Occupation: Operations Manager/Homeowner

Comment: We must move money away from direct subsidies and support sustainable/organic agriculture if we have any chance of maintaining a level of food production capable of meeting our future needs. Increase funding for the NOP and conservation programs!

COMMENT OF JACOB SCHEIDLER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 1:00 a.m.

City, State: San Francisco, CA

Occupation: Gardener

Comment: Hello,

I am writing in support of a farm bill that actively supports small scale, organic farmers, while cutting back on subsidies to industrial agribusiness. Current legislation makes it nearly impossible for farmers to diversify their crops, grow open pollinated varieties, or participate in small scale meat production. I urge you pass a farm bill that encourages farmers to move forward into a food system that is no longer dependent on patented seeds, petroleum, and synthetic chemicals, and is instead founded on smaller, local, organic, and sustainable practices.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF DONNA SCHEIN

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 15, 2012, 11:23 a.m.

City, State: Annapolis, MD

Occupation: Food Service Executive

Comment: FNS and Nutrition education programs for K–12 are detrimental to the future health of our citizens. Please continue to fund programs at the necessary levels.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF SUE SCHELL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:54 p.m.

City, State: Evanston, IL

Occupation: Author

Comment: Please consider sustainable agricultural means for farming. The pesticides not only are hurting us by the residue on our fruits & vegetables, but also is polluting our fresh water supply, which with global warming, is becoming more and more of a problem for many of the world's people.

Please think carefully about what we are doing to our future, if not for us, our progeny.

COMMENT OF DOUG SCHENKELBERG

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 9:44 a.m.

City, State: Chicago, IL

Occupation: Vice President of Advocacy and Outreach, Greater Chicago Food Depository

Comment: Dear House Agriculture Committee Members,

The Greater Chicago Food Depository appreciates the opportunity to provide comments on the farm bill. As the food bank for Cook County, the Food Depository distributes food through a network of 650 pantries, soup kitchens and shelters to 678,000 adults and children every year. Currently, 807,690 people in Cook County—one in six—are struggling to access food. Nearly one in four children doesn't know where their next meal is coming from. The Food Depository has served 58 percent more people at our pantries in the last fiscal year than the previous 3 years, and we could not provide current levels of food assistance without significant support from TEFAP, nor could we meet increased demand if current funding levels and structure of SNAP and other Federal nutrition programs were eroded.

We urge the House Committee on Agriculture to protect and strengthen SNAP in the farm bill, and keep in mind the following priorities:

- Oppose proposals to cap or reduce funding for SNAP, restrict eligibility, reduce benefits, or otherwise reduce access or participation in SNAP.
- Protect the adequacy of the SNAP benefit by restoring the cut to the ARRA SNAP benefit increase.
- Adjust the benefit amounts in a timely manner so it reflects current food prices at the time of purchase.
- Increase the minimum benefit so that elderly households receive at the least an amount equivalent to the floor set in the 1970s.
- Fully allow SNAP benefits to be adjusted when high housing costs consume more of a family's income.
- Improve earnings disregards and other benefit computation rules.
- Extend the program to needy people now excluded from benefits by arbitrary eligibility rules.
- Allow all states to operate Supplemental Security Income (SSI) CAP model that seamlessly enrolls SSI recipients into SNAP, and encourage other data matching initiatives.
- Provide adequate resources to states and community partners for administration of SNAP and outreach and nutrition education by restoring a greater Federal share in administrative expenses and enhanced Federal matches for state investments in operational improvement.
- Encourage better nutrition by maintaining nutrition education provisions and ensuring that retailer standards balance adequate access to stores with a range of healthy foods and moderate prices, as well as equipping all farmers' markets with EBT capability.

We also urge you to strengthen TEFAP and CSFP in the farm bill. Please include an increase in mandatory funding for TEFAP foods by providing a trigger that increases the funding level available for commodity purchases in times of high unemployment, and make TEFAP Storage and Distribution funds mandatory. In addition, we ask that the Secretary of Agriculture is given the authority to make bonus commodities available in times when unemployment rates are high. We also encourage

the Committee to transition CSFP to a seniors-only program, while grandfathering in current participants, and expand eligibility for the program from 130% to 185% of the Federal Poverty Line.

Once again, thank you for this opportunity to provide comments on the importance of Federal nutrition programs like SNAP, TEFAP and CSFP in the farm bill.

Sincerely,

DOUG SCHENKELBERG,
Vice President of Advocacy and Outreach,
Greater Chicago Food Depository.

COMMENT OF AMY SCHERER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 1:12 a.m.

City, State: Menlo Park, CA

Occupation: Sales

Comment: Don't want to see subsidies going to growers of wheat, corn and soy! Would like to see support to increase small farms again which are critical to production of healthier animals and produce that isn't laden with pesticides and hormones.

I just want to see quality vegetables available to all for great prices.

COMMENT OF CAROL SCHERICK

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 7:05 p.m.

City, State: Jamaica, NY

Occupation: Retired

Comment: It is absolutely imperative that we begin to support the independent farmer and the healthy way he produces our food, and stop supporting Big Ag which is not only destroying our environment and land, but it making us a nation of sick people with the adulterated, chemical-laden food that it presents to the people.

COMMENT OF ROBERT SCHERMER

Date Submitted: Monday, May 07, 2012, 5:54 p.m.

City, State: Jericho, VT

Occupation: Retired Teacher

Comment: Our people are starving! Please support strong SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP programs as for 1 in 7 Vermonters, many of them children, these programs are their only hope to avoid hunger and malnutrition. Unemployment and under-employment are endemic in the U.S. Now is not the time to cut back on these programs.

COMMENT OF PATRICIA SCHIEWE

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 6:10 a.m.

City, State: Lake Oswego, OR

Occupation: Therapist

Comment: I just read an article about how the farmers are prospering and that now they are producing 3 times as much corn per acre but it did not mention the cost of the seed, chemicals, and fertilizers that it took to do that. Also did not mention the fact that that corn was laced with GMO toxins and had little nutritional value and that the people eating it were probably unhealthy and fat and the cost of keeping them healthy was skyrocketing adding billions to our nation's health bill.

COMMENT OF VALERIE SCHILK

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 2:20 p.m.

City, State: Pahoa, HI

Occupation: Horticulture Crew at Wellness Center

Comment: Living in Hawaii, or anywhere really, it is critical to show local support to our farmers and friends. After reading the book, *Everything I want to do is Illegal*, my respect grew tenfold for all farmers across the world. Farmers market are the main source of our food intake here. Visiting at least 2 a week, we show our support and have even attending city meeting to help one of them stay alive after being threatened to be shut down due to permitting and whatnot. Aiding small farms and ending subsidies. I have come to learn a lot of farming is a game and pretty much entails how you can scoot your way out of loop holes. I support the Food and farm bill, along with all local farmers.

COMMENT OF LISA SCHILLER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:20 p.m.

City, State: North Las Vegas, NV

Occupation: Administrative Assistant

Comment: Please do the right thing. Consider you grandchildren's grandchildren when adopting a new farm bill. Please don't forget that you are accountable for your choices.

Sincerely,

LISA SCHILLER.

COMMENT OF FRANCIS SCHILLING

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:43 p.m.

City, State: Vail, AZ

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I firmly believe that the continued weakening of the American family farmers' economic base via the stifling of competition in favor of corporate food monopolies is a critical issue to address if food production in the U.S. is to remain vital. Furthermore, it is placing an onerous burden on small farm operations which is in direct opposition to the direction this country needs to move if we are to return to having the safest food supply in the world. Giving agri-biz even more disproportionate benefits relative to small family farms than they already enjoy is the **Last** thing that that my government should be about!

COMMENT OF JARRET SCHLAFF

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:16 p.m.

City, State: Detroit, MI

Occupation: Nonprofit Case Worker

Comment: Please listen to the voice of the people and have an emphasis on organics and locally grown food. We need to plan for the future and make it easier for our communities to have access to fresh, local, healthful produce. Thank you for your service and consideration.

Best regards,

JARRET.

COMMENT OF ALVIN SCHLANGEN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:22 a.m.

City, State: Freeport, MN

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Poultry/poultry products

Size: 50-150 acres

Comment: Get out of subsidies altogether. Consumers ultimately end up paying for your involvement in the food supply as well as for the mediocre food itself. Teach the basics of cooking & nutrition and let demand shape production. Allow only raw materials for welfare and school food and keep Monsanto, Cargill and the drug companies out of the kitchen.

COMMENT OF ERIC SCHMALL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:41 p.m.

City, State: San Diego, CA

Comment: If there is anything that is important to me, it's knowing my food is going to supply me with the vitamins and minerals I need while not being a burden to my immune system. Please make that happen.

COMMENT OF LINDA A. SCHMALSTIEG

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 2:20 p.m.

City, State: Houston, TX

Occupation: Physician

Comment: Our health, economy, and way of life all depend on safe and accessible food. We cannot continue on the current path of corporation-controlled nutrition—it will not keep up, has decreasing nutritional value, and will only continue to skew what is available. Skills necessary for building and maintaining adequate and safe

food supply must be retained and nurtured in our general population before those skills are totally lost. Please consider these points in your deliberations.

Thanks,

LAS.

COMMENT OF DONALD SCHMIDT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:44 p.m.

City, State: Fargo, ND

Occupation: Retired

Comment: The next farm bill should recognize and support organic and family farms. Multi-national agribusiness should not be the focus. They can take care of themselves.

COMMENT OF MEGAN SCHMIDT

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 10:29 a.m.

City, State: Sag Harbor, NY

Occupation: Design Consultant

Comment: My family supports local food production and anything that will turn the tide away from the vicious cycle of industrial food production such as subsidies to farms producing absurd amounts of corn and soybeans; assistance to farmers who choose to improve the quality of their soil and food by rotating crops and utilizing organic farming practices; support for new farmers and those who encourage raising grass-fed animals; new USDA standards that encourage small-scale meat processing operations; and perhaps even tax incentives for individuals who support local agriculture through participation in local food co-ops or CSA programs. Thank you!

COMMENT OF BETH SCHMITT

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 15, 2012, 8:15 p.m.

City, State: Muskego, WI

Occupation: Holistic Health

Comment: The farm bill **Needs** to support local and sustainable food. We have the right to know our farmer and where our food comes from. But this can only spread to more people with more money allocated towards the organic growing community. We need to support this movement for people to get healthy and live longer. Thank you for your time.

COMMENT OF JAMES SCHMITT

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:28 a.m.

City, State: Forest Grove, PA

Occupation: Retired Pilot, Organic Farmer

Comment: Lets stop feeding C.R.A.P. to America. Richest country in the world, with positively FOUL eating habits because of our concentration on **Perceived** cost of food rather than **Actual** cost.

COMMENT OF KRISTEN SCHMITZ

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:41 p.m.

City, State: Vieira, FL

Occupation: Education

Comment: Please increase subsidies for small scale organic sustainable producers and remove them for large agribusiness. Agriculture needs to switch a locally based model and our funding needs to represent that priority.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF DAVID SCHNEIDER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 11:38 p.m.

City, State: Tolland, CT

Occupation: Retired

Comment: **Safety** for farm workers and consumers through organically grown produce on non-factory farms, especially local produce to reduce fuel waste, price rises and increase food quality.

COMMENT OF RICHARD SCHNEIDER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:39 p.m.
City, State: Carmel Valley, CA
Occupation: Language Translation Services
Comment: Dear leaders:

In considering a farm bill please take time to reflect on the well being of human beings first and not on monetary considerations exclusively. May you be guided by reliable information and the true awareness you all are.

Blessings are sent to all.

COMMENT OF KELLY SCHNEIDERHAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:13 p.m.
City, State: Eugene, OR
Occupation: Physical Therapist

Comment: Accurate labeling of organic and GMO products allows citizens to make informed choices. Please protect our freedom to be conscientious consumers by including accurate and meaningful labeling in farm legislation. Many thanks for helping us to speak for ourselves with our consumer dollars.

COMMENT OF DICK SCHOECH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:03 p.m.
City, State: Arlington, TX
Occupation: Retired

Comment: I was raised on a small dairy farm and have watched small farms suffer as large agribusinesses hog most of the agriculture subsidies. It is time to kick the K street lobbyists out of your office and listen to family farmers who are struggling. We need water & soil conservation programs in Texas, local food growers, organic farming, farmers markets, programs to combat invasive species, *etc.* Please ignore all the donations that large agribusinesses give Congress and address our farm problems.

COMMENT OF JOHN SCHOENFELD

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 12:35 p.m.
City, State: Leander, TX
Occupation: Skilled Trades

Comment: I'm not fully versed in all that's going on in this matter, but with this opportunity I would like to say that I would like to see more organic, and sustainable practices in place with all farmers, with more of an eye on the bigger producers, meaning, no pesticides, and all waste composted and reused on site. Considering the hungry in this country I would appreciate all that isn't viewed as a waste, but also not marketable, be donated, not destroyed. Thank you for your time, and this opportunity.

COMMENT OF MEG SCHOFIELD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:25 p.m.
City, State: Kapaa, HI
Occupation: Educator

Comment: Consumers want **Healthy**, sustainably and **Ethically** produced food. Significant reform is needed to level the playing field for small family farms *versus* giant agribusiness, with their environmentally and morally destructive practices.

COMMENT OF STEPHEN SCHOFIELD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:01 p.m.
City, State: Wyoming, MI
Occupation: Law Student

Comment: Stop playing politics with our food. We need clean, safe and inexpensive food that is produced in this country. Our farms need support not multi-national corporations. Let's get this done!

COMMENT OF AARON SCHOLES

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:05 p.m.
City, State: Salt Lake City, UT

Occupation: Soldier

Comment: Wealthy interest groups and their lobbyists are destroying our country, among other things. Just do what's the best for the people. Sadly we have come to expect less of our politicians.

COMMENTS OF MARK SCHONBECK

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 1:31 p.m.

City, State: Floyd, VA

Occupation: Newsletter Editor, Virginia Association for Biological Farming

Comment: Thank you for the opportunity to offer comments on the 2012 Federal Farm Bill. I am writing as a U.S. citizen, and as an advocate and service provider for family farms engaged in sustainable agricultural production, to advocate for a farm bill that is truly an Agriculture Reform, Food, and Jobs Act.

I am a consultant in sustainable agriculture, with experience in organic and low-input soil, crop, and weed management for vegetables, fruits, and row crops in Virginia and adjacent states in the Mid-Atlantic and Southeast. In this capacity, I often work with aspiring and beginning producers who are highly motivated to help meet the soaring demand for fresh, healthful, locally-grown fruits, vegetables, and other foods; and to protect and improve the land for future generations. Through my interactions with both beginning and more experienced producers and other service providers, I have come to understand the vital importance of Federal farm policy and programs in several areas:

1. Beginning Farmer and Rancher training, technical assistance, and access to land, capital, and credit
2. Rural Development
3. Local and Regional Food Systems, and related essential infrastructure.
4. Conservation
5. Research, Education and Extension in organic and sustainable systems, specialty crop production, and best practices for long term resource conservation and soil improvement
6. Classical breeding programs leading to the release of farm-ready public varieties and livestock breeds.

Following are some specific recommendations for the 2012 Farm Bill:

Provide mandatory funding for the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program (BFRDP) at \$25 million per year. The average age of farmers in the U.S. is near 58 years and rising, and some 75% of the nation's farmland is expected to change hands in the next 15 years. Meanwhile, a growing number of young people would like to enter the farming profession, yet encounter some tough hurdles: acquiring the land, capital, credit, and markets to launch a farming enterprise, as well as essential production, conservation, marketing, and business management skills. When new or transitioning farms fail because any of these is lacking, our food system and land base suffer, and the future becomes less secure. Thus it is vital at this time for the U.S. agricultural system to recruit, train, and successfully establish a new generation of farmers and land stewards to provide sufficient healthful food for tomorrow.

I have had the privilege of serving on the Curriculum Committee of the Virginia Beginning Farmer and Rancher Coalition Project, a BFRDP-funded project that is developing vital resources for aspiring and beginning producers in Virginia. Coordinated through Virginia Tech with a diverse network of 25 partner organizations, the Virginia Beginning Farmer and Rancher Coalition has drafted a comprehensive training curriculum for beginning producers, covering whole farm planning, land acquisition and tenure, sustainable production practices, marketing, and business management. Several coalition partners are utilizing this curriculum in their beginning farmer training and technical assistance programs. One of these is SustainFloyd, a community development non-profit in Floyd, VA that is planning a Working Model Farm and Land-Based Learning Center at which new farmers will receive practical hands-on training and experience that enables them to launch their own farm enterprises.

The Virginia Beginning Farmer and Rancher Coalition is also developing a state-wide Farm Mentor Network to connect new and experienced farmers with one another and other resources in the region. In my consulting work, I provide beginning farmers with science-based technical assistance in production; however they often need additional assistance in areas in which I am not trained, such as business management or gaining access to land. I refer clients to the Coalition and its Farm Mentor Network for these needs, as well as for the kind of hands-on training that only a farmer mentor can provide. Without the BFRDP, this Coalition Project would

not have been possible, and my capacity to effectively assist aspiring new farmers in Virginia would remain more limited.

With a budget of \$19 million per year under the 2008 Farm Bill, the BFRDP has supported many projects like this across the U.S., but has also had to turn down numerous other equally worthy and innovative project proposals. Given today's urgent need to help new farmers get established, and given the job creation potential of these endeavors, the \$10 million/year level of BFRDP funding recently proposed by the Senate Agriculture Committee is wholly inadequate, and a minimum of \$25 million/year is needed to meet the challenges and opportunities presented by the aging of the current farmer population and the surge of interest in farming among the younger generation.

The 2012 Farm Bill should also adopt other key provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236), including \$5 million annual funding for the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Individual Development Accounts, conservation program set-asides for beginning producers, priorities for projects benefiting beginning farmers within the Value Added Producer Grants, and a research priority for beginning producers in the Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) and other USDA research programs. One especially important element of this Act is increased funding for Conservation Reserve Program Transition Incentive Program (CRP-TIP), which provides an incentive to land owners with land coming out of the CRP to lease or sell that land to beginning farmers who implement resource-conserving production systems such as management intensive grazing, or organic crop production.

The 2012 Farm Bill must support innovative research in organic and sustainable agriculture, and provide extension, education, information, and other vital support for organic and sustainable producers. In a series of reports from 2008 to present, based on the experience of millions of small-scale producers in Africa and other developing regions of the world, the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) showed that organic and agro-ecological farming systems have the greatest potential to improve yields, protect and improve soil and other resources, and enhance poor communities' capacity to feed themselves and meet basic living, health, educational, and social needs. As fossil fuels become scarcer, soil and water quality come under increasing stress, and climate change brings unpredictable consequences, organic and sustainable farming practices will become increasingly important to the future security and adequacy of the U.S. food system as well.

Specifically, I urge the House Agriculture committee to adopt the following measures in drafting the farm bill: Organic Research and Extension Initiative (OREI) mandatory funding at \$30 million per year; permanent authorization for the Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE) program and the National Sustainable Agriculture Information Service (aka ATTRA); the Organic Certification Cost Share at \$11.5 million per year (as proposed by the Senate Ag Committee in its recent draft farm bill); the Organic Data Initiative at \$5 million (Senate level) and \$5 million for National Organic Program technology upgrades (Senate level). In addition, the new farm bill should eliminate discrimination against organic producers in crop insurance (currently, organic producers are charged higher premiums); and also make the per-contract cap for the Environmental Quality Incentive Program the same for the Organic Initiative (currently \$80,000) and for the regular EQIP (currently \$300,000).

The SARE and ATTRA programs provide vital informational and technical services for producers at the incredibly low annual cost of just 20¢ per U.S. taxpayer. In my consulting practice, I utilize SARE manuals and publications as primary information resources, and refer clients to ATTRA for in-depth information bulletins and one-on-one technical assistance with questions for which I do not have the experience to provide complete answers. The loss of either of these programs because of a lack of funding would severely limit my ability to provide the quality of service I want to offer to farmers.

On a similar note, the 2012 Farm Bill should maintain adequate funding levels for specialty crop research, including the Specialty Crop Research Initiative (SCRI—at the Senate Ag Committee's level of \$50 million per year), and the Specialty Crop Block Grant program (SCBG—again, the Senate proposed level—\$70 million). With public health professionals urging Americans to consume more fresh fruits and vegetables to address the national epidemic of obesity, type II diabetes and other degenerative diseases, it is vital to ensure that our school children, elders, and lower-income communities have sufficient access to these foods. Continued robust funding for SCRI and SCBG will help farmers meet this need through domestic production.

The 2012 Farm Bill can also improve access to healthful, fresh food for all Americans by adopting key provisions of the Local Farms, Food, and Jobs Act (HR 3286), such as provisions to allow use of SNAP and Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) to

purchase fruits and vegetables, funding the Community Foods Projects Program at the Senate-recommended level of \$10 million per year, allowing school lunch programs to use some of the commodity funds to purchase fresh local farm products, and conservation technical and financial assistance to farmers serving local markets. In addition to enhancing food quality, all of these measures would create jobs and entrepreneurial opportunities, and strengthen rural economies.

One other urgent need in our agricultural system is to restore the genetic diversity and regional adaptability of our crops and livestock through a revitalized public breeding program. To address these needs, the 2012 Farm Bill should set aside 5% of Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) funding for classical breeding leading to the release of farmer-ready public crop varieties and livestock breeds, to make classical breeding a priority in ARS research efforts, and to provide coordination among ARS, extramural, and non-governmental public breeding endeavors. With the ongoing erosion of crop and livestock genetic diversity; the need for new varieties adapted to different regions, shifting climate patterns, and production systems less dependent on intensive fossil fuel inputs; and the emerging agronomic, ecological, socioeconomic, and possible animal and human health drawbacks of genetically engineered crops and patented seeds, the need for a vigorous classical public breeding program has never been more important to U.S. agriculture. Farmers need varieties and livestock breeds that are responsive to lower input, resource conserving production systems such as organic, and whose on-farm use and reproduction (*e.g.*, seed saving) is not restricted by utility patents.

The 2012 Farm Bill should maintain funding for the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) and other Title II Conservation programs. Conservation has already taken more than its share of funding cuts in the past few years. Meanwhile, in an alarming trend caused by a combination of intensified production due to high demand and prices for commodities, and weather extremes (floods and droughts), our nation's soils are eroding and our water resources are degrading at increased rates. This is the time to strengthen our Conservation programs, not gut them through excessive funding cuts.

Finally, the 2012 Farm Bill must do all it can to ensure adequate funding and staffing for NRCS, Extension, FSA, and other USDA agencies to provide the services they are mandated to do. Part of my work in recent years has included giving presentations at training workshops in organic horticulture and conservation for agricultural professionals, through the SARE Professional Development Program and the NRCS Conservation Innovation Grant program. During these events, I have talked with many dedicated NRCS and Extension personnel who want to spend more time in the field helping farmers enhance their triple bottom line—profit, land stewardship, and quality of life—through conservation planning and other vital technical assistance. However, with continual staffing and funding cuts, these hard working individuals find themselves being asked to do more and more with less and less, and having to spend more time at the desk dealing with the paperwork. This has given me a different perspective on the frustrations of farmers who sometimes receive inadequate service from NRCS or other USDA personnel. Our Extension and Conservation programs can do so much for our farmers and our farmland—provided that they have the funding and staffing support they need. I was shocked to learn that part of the budget cutting proposals in 2011 included slashes of well over \$100 million from each of several key USDA branches, including Extension, FSA, and NRCS. This does not save tax dollars in the end—it only makes it harder for our nation to realize the full benefits of programs like the CSP because the agency does not have the resources it needs to deliver the program effectively.

I am aware of the budget constraints under which the Agriculture Committees must develop the 2012 Farm Bill, and am also aware that the above recommendations, taken together, entail a significant sum. Therefore, I would like to recommend the following measures to offset the added spending:

Adopt the Senate Ag Committee's recommended reform to Title I, which would close the loophole that allows a single large farm to receive commodity payments for several farms. This is a loophole that has needed closing for many years, and I welcome the Senate Agriculture Committee's historic step in proposing this measure.

Adopt payment limits, one-payment-per-farm, and conservation compliance criteria for Crop Insurance commensurate with those that would be implemented for the Commodity Title under the Senate proposal. With crop insurance programs having no per-farm cap nor conservation requirements, and now consuming somewhat larger annual sums of taxpayer dollars than the Commodity Title, setting the same criteria for both could save a billion dollars or more per year. This would be enough to maintain level funding for the Conservation Title and cover the several funding

requests in the above recommendations for beginning farmers, local foods, organic, and research programs.

Set a firm per-farm cap of \$150,000 or \$200,000 on Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) contracts, applicable to all operations without exception. Currently, Confined Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) can receive larger contracts (up to \$450,000) through a special waiver provision. Farmers who seek EQIP assistance to adopt major resource protection measures at more moderate cost (through practices such as fencing for management intensive grazing systems, terracing for horticultural production on sloping land, or improved crop rotations, riparian buffers, etc for cropland) should rank higher priority than agribusinesses who continue to endanger water and other resources through the inherently unsustainable CAFO system. In fact, subsidies for CAFO's to mitigate their pollution should be gradually phased out, and firm regulations adopted to require that they clean up their environmental impacts at their own expense. If such stringent measures result in the CAFOs gradually going out of business and being replaced by smaller, family-operated, ecologically-friendly, pasture-based livestock production and integrated crop-livestock systems, this will mean safer, more healthful meat for the consumer, cleaner water, and more balanced nutrient cycles. It will also create several wholesome jobs or entrepreneurial opportunities for each dangerous CAFO job eliminated.

Prioritize USDA research to address vital research tasks and topics that private industry cannot or will not address on its own. For example, industry will be highly motivated to develop new fertilizers, pesticides, and other inputs (whether conventional or organic), but not to research management practices by which farmers can sustain soil fertility and crop health while reducing the need for purchased inputs. Likewise, today's seed-biotech companies will continue to research patented crop varieties whose production they can control tightly, not offer public varieties from which producers can save seed or select land races adapted to their particular soil and microclimate. Thus, if USDA ARS, as well as AFRI and other extramural programs focus on classical breeding efforts (which cost about \$1 million per variety released) rather than high-budget genomics and biotech research (supporting industry development of GMO varieties at a total cost of about \$50 million per variety), USDA can accomplish a lot more research vital to the nation's food and agricultural system while keeping the total research budget level. Similarly, USDA-funded research into sustainable production and resource conservation systems that rely mainly on on-farm and local resources, and less on expensive purchased inputs, will yield greater public benefit per tax dollar invested.

Thank you for taking my recommendations and comments into account in your work on the 2012 Farm Bill.

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 4:24 p.m.

Comment: Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on the 2012 Farm Bill. In this communication, I speak on behalf of the Virginia Association for Biological Farming (VABF), for which I serve as the newsletter editor and farm policy liaison. VABF is Virginia's primary nonprofit membership organization for organic and sustainable farmers and gardeners. In addition to co-sponsoring with Virginia Cooperative Extension the annual Virginia Biological Farming Conference, VABF conducts on-farm research, offers field days and farm tours, and participates in the Virginia Food Systems Council and the Virginia Beginning Farmer and Rancher Coalition Project.

We would like to submit the following recommendations for the 2012 Farm Bill to make it truly an Agriculture Reform, Food, and Jobs Act:

1. Renew mandatory funding for the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program (BFRDP) at \$25 million per year. With the average age of farmers in the U.S. near 58 years and still rising, it is vital to recruit, train, and successfully establish a new generation of farmers to secure an adequate, safe, and healthful food supply for America's future.

The BFRDP, funded at \$19 million per year under the 2008 Farm Bill, has supported many excellent projects across the U.S. One of these is the Virginia Beginning Farmer and Rancher Coalition Project, coordinated through Virginia Tech, which has created a diverse coalition of some 25 partners including VABF, has developed a comprehensive training curriculum for beginning farmers, and is establishing a state wide farm mentoring network linking beginning and experienced producers. Working with this BFRDP-funded coalition multiplies VABF's capacity to help new farmers acquire vital skills, adopt resource-conserving practices, and meet the growing public demand for healthful local food. The beginning farmer training and support offered through this Coalition and other BFRDP projects across the nation can create jobs, expand entrepreneurial opportunities, and thereby strengthen rural economies.

One of the most hopeful recent trends in America's food and agricultural system has been the upsurge of interest in the farming profession among young people and among others seeking a career change. Assisting and empowering these aspiring farmers to get off to a successful start should be a top priority of Federal farm policy and programs, as so clearly stated by Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack when he challenged the USDA to help recruit and train 100,000 additional farmers under the 2008 Farm Bill.

At its current funding level, the BFRDP has received many more top-notch proposals than it could fund. The \$10 million per year proposed by the Senate Agriculture Committee for the 2012 Farm Bill is clearly inadequate. Thus, we urge the House Agriculture Committee to include at least \$25 million annual mandatory funds for BFRDP to meet the need of today's aspiring farmers and ranchers, and to take full advantage of the opportunity they represent.

2. Adopt other key provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236, introduced by Reps. Tim Walz and Jeff Fortenberry), including \$5 million annual funding for the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Individual Development Accounts, increased funding for the Conservation Reserve Program Transition Incentive Program (CRP-TIP), conservation program set-asides for beginning producers, and priorities for projects benefiting beginning farmers within the Value Added Producer Grants.

3. Maintain a strong set of programs for organic agriculture. Innovative organic and ecological production systems show the greatest long-term potential to provide adequate, nourishing food for all in a time of increasingly scarce fossil fuels, critical soil erosion and water quality concerns, climate instability, and large human populations. We recommend that the 2012 Farm Bill support organic producers in several ways: fund the Organic Certification Cost Share at \$11.5 million per year, the Organic Data Initiative at \$5 million, and \$5 million for National Organic Program technology upgrades (levels proposed for these three programs by the Senate Ag Committee); and eliminate crop insurance penalties (higher premiums) against organic producers.

4. Fund the Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative (OREI) at \$30 million per year, and provide permanent authorization for Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE—at \$60 million per year), and the National Sustainable Agriculture Information Service (aka ATTRA—at \$5 million per year). Producer members of VABF and other farmers and ranchers in our region and across the U.S. make extensive use of the invaluable technical information and support provided by SARE and ATTRA. In addition to publishing several excellent manuals on soil improvement, pest management, and other key aspects of production, SARE has upgraded its website to make the results of over 5,000 SARE-funded research projects easily accessible to the public. In providing these vital services for less than 20¢ per U.S. taxpayer, SARE and ATTRA represent one of the Federal government's most effective use of tax dollars.

One example of vital OREI-funded research is a planning grant and pending proposal for a full research grant to develop organic management strategies for the Brown Marmorated Stink Bug. This invasive exotic pest causes severe damage to a wide range of horticultural crops, and threatens the livelihoods of organic and conventional producers alike. The planning grant assembled a diverse, top-notch project team with VABF participation; however our vital work, and that of many other teams of innovators who are developing proposals on equally important questions, depends on sufficient funding for the OREI.

5. Maintain adequate funding levels for specialty crop research, including the Specialty Crop Research Initiative (SCRI—we advocate the Senate Ag Committee's level of \$50 million per year), and the Specialty Crop Block Grant program (SCBG—again, we support the Senate proposal of \$70 million). Between 2009 and 2012, the SCBG program has funded VABF to conduct on-farm demonstration trials and farm field days on organic production and pest management in summer and winter squash.

With public health professional urging Americans to consume more fresh fruits and vegetables to quell the national epidemic of obesity, type II diabetes and other degenerative diseases, it is essential to ensure that our school children, elders, and lower-income communities have sufficient access to these foods. Toward this end, the U.S. must enhance local and regional supplies of these perishable items; thus, research and extension activities that help farmers produce top quality "specialty crops" is an important investment within the farm bill.

6. Set aside 5% of Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) funding for classical breeding leading to the release of farmer-ready public crop varieties and livestock breeds. With the ongoing erosion of crop and livestock genetic diversity; the need for new varieties adapted to different regions, shifting climate patterns, and production systems less dependent on intensive fossil fuel inputs; and the emerging agronomic, ecological, socioeconomic, and possible animal and human health drawbacks of genetically engineered crops and patented seeds, the need for a vigorous classical public breeding program has never been more important in the history of U.S. agriculture. Although the 2008 Farm Bill included language that made classical breeding an AFRI priority, only one project with the potential to lead to new, farmer-ready public varieties has been funded thus far. We strongly recommend additional language in the 2012 Farm Bill to devote at least 5% of AFRI funding to this vital priority.

7. Provide mandatory funding for key rural development programs, including \$30 million per year for the Value Added Producer Grants Program. In addition to helping innovative farmers and farmer groups to meet the soaring public demand for healthful fresh foods, these programs support rural community economies and job creation. The Senate Ag Committee farm bill fails to provide mandatory funding for any rural development programs, an omission that must be corrected in the final farm bill that goes to the President for signature.

8. Support the growth of local food systems by adopting other key provisions of the Local Farms, Food, and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286) introduced by Rep. Chellie Pingree. These include enhanced access to fresh fruits and vegetables for low-income Americans through Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) and SNAP, funding for the Community Foods Projects Program at \$10 million per year (as recommended by the Senate), enhanced Conservation technical and financial assistance to producers serving local and regional markets, a provision to allow school lunch programs to use 15% of their commodity funds to purchase locally grown food, a new Extension initiative (Local and Regional Food System Enterprise Facilitation) to help the neediest parts of rural America develop vibrant local food systems, and much more. All of these provisions will create jobs and restore our economy, as well as contributing to the public health—and many do not entail additional Federal spending.

9. Protect the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) and other Title II Conservation programs from additional funding cuts. With intensified production driven by high demand and commodity prices, and unusually severe erosive rains putting added stress on our nation's soils, farm conservation programs are as necessary now as they were during the devastating Dust Bowl of the 1930s. Our nation's farmers want to take good care of their land, and they need and deserve the support Natural Resources Conservation Service can provide—if Title II programs are adequately funded. Conservation took more than its fair share of past budget cuts, and must not be cut further in the 2012 Farm Bill.

10. Offset the costs of all of the above recommendations through effective reforms to commodity subsidy and crop insurance programs. We commend the Senate Ag Committee for taking the historic step of closing the loophole that has allowed large farms to receive commodity subsidies for several farms, as well as affirming per-farm payment caps and conservation compliance requirements for participation in Title I programs. However, Federal Crop Insurance programs have grown tremendously, and now pay out slightly more tax dollars annually than does Title I. Crop insurance payments are not currently capped, nor subject to sobduster or other conservation compliance requirements. If the final farm bill adopts the Senate-proposed reform to Title I, applies it also to crop insurance, and adopts a reasonable payment cap and conservation criteria for crop insurance, annual savings could exceed \$1 billion, sufficient to cover vital beginning farmer, research and extension, local food system, and rural development programs, and to allow level funding for the Conservation Title.

Thank you for taking our recommendations into consideration in developing the 2012 Farm Bill.

COMMENT OF AMY SCHONEMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:20 p.m.

City, State: Oakland, CA

Occupation: Educator/Business Owner

Comment: Please start making decisions that favor health for children, farmers, and regular folks. We have the chance to make lasting changes to our nation's farm-

ing and food system that will be looked upon as a legacy of American ingenuity and foresight.

We are such a wealthy nation but we are sicker and fatter than most. We have to do better.

Please support the following:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

And think of my two daughters when you do!

Thank you.

COMMENT OF MEAGAN SCHORR

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 10:46 p.m.

City, State: Iowa City, IA

Occupation: Student

Comment: Dear House Agriculture Committee,

Safety nets for farmers have been in place for almost 30 years that ensure that subsidized farmers adhere to conservation practices in their fields. Conservation efforts are vital to crops, wetlands, and environmental health as a whole. The productivity of our farmlands and future resources heavily rely on conservation efforts. Due to the possibility of direct commodities being eliminated and conservation compliance not being enacted elsewhere our crops, wetlands, highly erodible lands, and future resources will be at stake. Steps must be taken to ensure that this does not happen.

During this time, when the farm bill is being prepared by the House Agriculture Committee, I urge you to protect our nations land and resources. Make sure that conservation complication protections are linked with subsidies for crop insurance. Our Nations future economic and environmental sustainability rely on conservation efforts.

Please take all of this into consideration.

Sincerely,

MEAGAN SCHORR.

COMMENT OF DIANE SCHRACK

Date Submitted: Monday, May 14, 2012, 10:51 p.m.

City, State: Highlands Ranch, CO

Comment: Dear Members of the House Committee on Agriculture,

The farm bill is one of the most important pieces of legislation that you work on because we all need to eat. And we all deserve to eat safe and healthy food—from the farms to the grocery stores to our children's school lunch programs.

I ask that you fulfill your responsibility to the citizen's of this country by funding the Organic Agriculture Extension Initiative and supporting the CSP and the Beginning Farm and Rancher Development Program.

Your job is important. Please legislate like you understand the importance of safe and healthy food.

Thank you,

DIANE SCHRACK.

COMMENT OF HENDRIKUS SCHRAVEN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:03 p.m.

City, State: Issaquah, WA

Occupation: Landscape Designer Contractor/Organics

Comment: Please allow us to eat healthy organic food ! in a world laden with pesticides and poisons with 75% of our tap water in the U.S. Not fit for human consumption! Children diseases like leukemia increase 40% in a few decades! And so on and on! My question **Is:** how far **Are You** willing to let this go?

COMMENT OF JUDY SCHRIEBMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 12:06 p.m.

City, State: San Rafael, CA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: I grow for my family but need to buy from others to fill in. This farm bill supports my family's health when it allows direct farmer to consumer; when it supports healthy livestock and organic and diverse growing practices. We no longer need to subsidize high calorie crops—we need to subsidize nutrient dense crops, like fruits and vegetables, to make sure our children have the best possible start. We also need to support creek setbacks and windrows to support the natural bug and bird predators that keep the system healthy.

COMMENT OF JACK SCHROEDER

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 8:48 p.m.

City, State: New York, NY

Occupation: Lawyer

Comment: It is absolutely imperative that GMO infected agricultural produce be labeled as such.

It is imperative that farms infected with GMO pollen from neighboring farms against their wishes have full legal recourse against those neighboring farms.

It is absolutely imperative that consumers not be restricted from purchasing any agricultural products they wish, including raw milk and raw milk products, *etc.*

COMMENT OF THERESA SCHROEDER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:11 p.m.

City, State: Knoxville, TN

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Many farmers, especially small family owned farms, cannot afford the fees and time for paperwork to be certified as "organic," or even qualify for any available aid for farmers. Young people can't afford to go into sustainable farming. Consumers are confused. Developers continue to gobble up land which was farmland. GMOs spread and huge companies monopolize seed production, *etc.* The list goes on. This is not the time to endanger the future of farmers, agricultural land and the health of our nation by cutting even more funds from programs.

- I urge the full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF ANDREW SCHUCH

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 5:54 a.m.

City, State: Marshall, NC

Occupation: Advocate

Comment: As a former producer, avid gardener, and concerned citizen I urge you not to cut any of the needed funds for the promotion and/or further study of appropriate (Organic) agricultural methods.

COMMENT OF JENNIFER SCHULTZ

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 10, 2012, 1:25 a.m.

City, State: Cheektowaga, NY

Occupation: Retired Disabled RN/BSN

Comment: We should not endanger the lives of seniors by cutting such important programs. These programs are not just for single mothers and the working poor;

they are also in place for senior citizens. There are many seniors that are taking care of spouses who may have dementia and Alzheimer's.

COMMENT OF CINDY SCHWALB

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:36 p.m.

City, State: Aiken, SC

Occupation: Health Coach

Comment: Please stop subsidizing corporations and support healthy, non-GMO, organic food. The studies of organic *versus* non-organic are quite solid. The pesticides detected in blood, the difference in minerals and nutrients. We know how we need to eat, and it is time to make this affordable for all. Thank you for very much for your service and commitment to real food for families.

COMMENT OF AMY SCHWARTZ

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:01 a.m.

City, State: Dowelltown, TN

Occupation: Artist and Teacher

Comment: I would like our government to protect the birthright of all people on this planet. Clean air, clean water, food supply that is not poisoned should be our birthright. It should be a gift from the last generation to us, and it should be a gift from us to the next generation.

COMMENT OF BURTON SCHWARTZ

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:44 p.m.

City, State: Port Jefferson Station, NY

Occupation: Retired

Comment: In order to have a healthy citizenry, you must provide support for those who grow food organically. Industrial farming has led to food that is not providing the nutrition Americans need.

COMMENT OF ELIZABETH SCHWARTZ

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 15, 2012, 11:43 a.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Writer/Community Organizer

Comment:

(1) A \$36 million cut to SNAP is not the way to go. The Committee should focus on writing a farm bill that creates economic opportunity and improves access to healthy, affordable food for all Americans.

(2) How can you even consider cutting vital funds to feed hungry people in this country before you cut farm subsidies to the mega-farms that produce unneeded amounts of commodity crops that no one can eat? Where are your priorities?

You have the power to make the farm bill something that will give food-producing small farmers the means to start new farms and thrive on their existing farms. Through the farm bill, you can also provide safe, healthy, high quality produce to all Americans. Stop subsidizing multinational megacorporations and start feeding our nation healthy, safe, high-quality, nutritious and affordable food.

Do the right thing here. Stop allowing the Farm Lobby and the Monsanto, ADMs, Cargills and Dean Foods of the world hijack the farm bill yet again.

COMMENT OF JEFF SCHWARTZ

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 9:29 p.m.

City, State: West Harwich, MA

Occupation: Solar Installer

Comment: Please support local, organic, sustainable agriculture, **Not** agribusiness. We need a farm bill that will protect small family farms and take us away from non-sustainable agribusiness approaches.

COMMENT OF JULIE SCHWARTZ

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:51 p.m.

City, State: Chestnut Ridge, NY

Occupation: Camp Director

Comment: I am not a producer, but I depend on those who are, for most of my food needs. Most of the products available on grocery store shelves really shouldn't be eaten. Organic farming is good for the planet, good for people, the food is more nutrient-rich and, frankly, tastes better. Don't cut this funding.

COMMENT OF ROBBIN SCHWARTZENHAUER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 6:29 a.m.

City, State: Manzanita, OR

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Other

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Hello House Agriculture Committee,

I am writing to inform you that I fully support the full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).

I support fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program.

I support the implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).

I support maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

I think that producers using genetically modified varieties need to have their crops quarantined to prevent GMO pollution of non GMO crops through pollen.

I support the labeling of all genetically modified producers and the labeling of where your produce came from.

Thank you!

COMMENT OF TAMSEN SCHWARTZMAN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 9:36 a.m.

City, State: Brooklyn, NY

Occupation: Museum Media Manager

Comment: It is ever so important to support our local and organic farmers to be able to continue to provide safe and healthy food alternatives to those of the big agricultural businesses that persist in using pesticides, antibiotics, and GMOs to sustain mono crops. We must support local food systems that will continue to flourish even after oil prices rise, which they inevitably will.

I most sincerely request:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

COMMENT OF PENNY SCHWARZ

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:17 p.m.

City, State: Broken Arrow, OK

Occupation: Disabled

Comment: One of this country's greatest assets has **Always** been the individual farmer and the crops they grow! I was raised by and with hardworking farmers. I trust that what they produce is not only healthier for consumption, but also better for mother Earth and her future. She will provide all we need as long as we don't abuse and pollute her. I do not want to buy government controlled, chemically treated, altered or "enhanced" produce.

COMMENT OF PATRICIA SCHWARZLANDER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:13 p.m.

City, State: Syracuse, NY

Occupation: Clinical RN Specialist in Public Health

Comment: I support local farms especially ones which grow food organically . . . I think large factory farms are giving us products which are detrimental to our health under horrendous conditions. They should be regulated in growing GMO foods, their use of tainted feed, water pollution, soil erosion, energy consumption,

contamination of the land by the waste products (especially waste that produces methane gas which is a detrimental factor in climate change . . .) animal/poultry cruelty, and they should not **Not** receive the huge subsidies which they currently get.

COMMENT OF RAPHAEL SCHWEIZER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 10:20 p.m.
City, State: Bronx, NY
Occupation: Retail
Comment: Pass a farm bill that supports Small, Organic Farms. Not giant Corporations and Mega-Producers.

COMMENT OF SHARI SCOFIELD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:37 p.m.
City, State: Harrisonburg, VA
Occupation: Higher Ed
Comment: The Agribusiness food production model is not sustainable, nor is it providing the level of nutrition I would like for my family and community. I feel personally threatened by GMO's creeping into the food chain. I will vote according to my beliefs about what is best for the land, the country and my community. I will also lobby others and continue to educate myself and others.

COMMENT OF BARBARA SCOTT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:04 p.m.
City, State: La Veta, CO
Occupation: Retired Educator
Comment: The job of the Agriculture Committee and Dept. of Agriculture is to practice wise stewardship of our country's agricultural lands and practices in order to benefit both consumers and growers.

COMMENT OF CAMERON SCOTT

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 02, 2012, 11:04 p.m.
City, State: Radford, VA
Occupation: Student
Comment: As a student (and a person with Asperser's Syndrome), I know the vast importance of decent nutrition on a daily basis to excel in schoolwork. Establishing a stronger farm bill will enable more produce to reach all Americans in need and also enable them to obtain the physical strength they need to pull themselves together, advance in life, and become better contributors to society. Consider the future of America; consider the nation's future state for your children and grandchildren.

COMMENT OF D. SCOTT

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 4:53 p.m.
City, State: Caliente, NV
Producer/Non-producer: Producer
Type: Other
Size: Less than 50 acres
Comment: Please preserve funding for SNAP, TEFAP, CSFP programs.
 Thanks,
 DEED.

COMMENT OF EMILY SCOTT

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 7:36 p.m.
City, State: Leawood, KS
Occupation: Semi-Retired
Comment: I am in the 6th district, but it isn't listed. I want honest farming in the hands of real farmers, not corporate slaves. I want organic farming. No more games!

COMMENT OF K. SCOTT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:07 p.m.

City, State: Bel Air, MD

Occupation: Mother

Comment: As a mother of three, the health, safety, and nutritive value of the foods I feed to my family are of the utmost importance to me. I go to great expense to source locally grown organic foods and grass-fed meats from local farms for my family whenever possible. I am greatly concerned about the nation's reliance on overly processed foods created with heavily subsidized corn and soy products. The health of our citizens is clearly suffering, due in large part to the extremely unhealthy food options abounding on every corner. Even the public schools fill our students with "meals" that are heavily processed and loaded with unhealthy additives. Revising the farm bill in 2012 is a great opportunity for us to address some of these issues. As your constituent, I support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Thank you for your consideration of these matters.

COMMENT OF SHERRI SCOTT

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 11:04 a.m.

City, State: Chico, CA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Greenhouse/nursery, Specialty Crops, Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Please think hard about the variety and needs of all of your constituents here in the 2nd district. Yes there is big ag around here and they are doing fine. Please support the small farmers who feed our community directly and are stewards of the land and take care of the soil as if it were food itself. Please support the farmers' markets and all of the co-ops and grocery stores and community kitchens that offer a market for these local growers. Please support community gardens and garden and nutrition education so that everyone can have access to and information on healthy food. This is all stuff that is happening here in you community right now and is making such an impact. Imagine if it were supported by you and on the national level.

I also would like you to support **Real** food. It is time to put up a wall towards corporate interests and it is time to think of the people. Pink Slime? High Fructose Corn Syrup? GMO Food? These are the things that are killing us and causing outrageous health problems and health costs. Don't allow them. Just because you can put them in your mouth should not mean that they can be called food! Not only am I a farmer but I am a garden teacher at preschool and elementary school and kids love and need vegetables and whole foods; they know it but often time only have access to McD's. Please ensure that this Food and farm bill takes into account the interests of the **Real** people that live here in your community, not corporations.

If you ever want to hear the stories and successes happening here in Chico with such groups as GRUB (Growing Resourcefully Uniting Bellies), Cultivating Communities, Let's Move Chico, CARD (Chico Area Rec. District has garden and nutrition programs) and others please contact me @ [Redacted]. If you want to hear the struggles that many of these groups have encountered trying to assist the schools to feed our kids real food, maybe even locally produced food, then I can direct you to those folks. I gave up because the system is too entrenched in politics and corporation stronghold and again not in our kids or our community's interest.

I keep trying to end this letter, but there is so much you can do to change this for the good of the people. And it is so frustrating because no matter what I say or what we could show you, you are still going to vote along the party line.

What's the use in trying.

COMMENT OF JAMES SCOTTO

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 4:42 p.m.

City, State: New York, NY

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: As it is, our system of farming is beyond horrific. I specifically refer to the treatment of animals, but there are all kinds of other horrors (GMOs, pesticides, pollution, destruction of environment, neglected workers . . . Did I mention how truly unbelievable it is that animals are mass produced and tortured, as if we are no more evolved than barbarians?) Now I hear that there will be cuts to funding for nutrition, conservation and support for organic and sustainable agriculture—mind boggling.

COMMENT OF DAVID SCRIMENTI

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:07 p.m.

City, State: Ansonia, CT

Occupation: Musician

Comment: Some of the many things we need are: mandatory labeling of all GMO foods; decentralized food production for nutritional benefits, food safety, and national security; fewer regulations for small farms; more investment in organic farming; breaking up of giant agribusinesses that have a virtual monopoly on our food production; and reduction, or elimination of subsidies to large farms that don't need any taxpayer money.

JOINT COMMENT OF MARLA L. & MORRIS D. SCRIPTER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 10:37 p.m.

City, State: Granada Hills, CA

Comment: The poor quality of our food, the toxicity, the imbalance of grains *in lieu of* vegetables and fruit, the pesticides have created a demand for medical that is totally unnecessary. The vast majority of our medical care needs are driven by poor nutrition. It is time to focus on healthy food and environment and **Not** legislating medical bureaucracy.

COMMENT OF T. SCUDDER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:52 a.m.

City, State: Springfield, OR

Occupation: Student

Comment:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

I also am against any company controlling all of the food in this country and find it unconstitutional for Monsanto in particular to be allowed to manipulate the system to best suit their interest. Please change these laws and make them label their food. I find it disturbing that they are bullying their way through these practices. This must be changed and outlawed immediately!

COMMENT OF JESSICA SEALES

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 10, 2012, 1:31 p.m.

City, State: Atlanta, GA

Occupation: Special Events Production

Comment: Good Afternoon Congressman Lewis,

Please do not cut food stamps for working families in need. Billions of families are still in need. I trust you to stand by the working people of Georgia and this nation.

Best,

JESSICA SEALES.

COMMENTS OF NEWELL SEARLE

Date Submitted: Thursday, March 22, 2012, 4:38 p.m.

City, State: Maplewood, MN

Occupation: Food Bank Executive

Comment:

Comment: The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is essential to maintaining the fabric of our rural communities. The following three stories from our SNAP outreach workers illustrate the kind of determined people—in hard circumstances—who need SNAP:

Three SNAP Stories from Minnesota

(1) I met a client today whose story truly touched me. He was laid off in 2010 and has been homeless for 2 years. His biggest concern was food. He slept at the bus shelter because he thought that no one would judge him and just think that he was trying to catch a bus from one place to another. He didn't know he could apply for food support, cash assistance, or healthcare. Poverty was new to him. He had worked his whole life. He told me that to him food was the most important thing to keep him going every day. He walks everywhere and without food he didn't have the energy to keep looking for jobs and keep living . . . He told me also told me that there was a time in his life where he was so hungry that drinking water helped satisfy his hunger pains. He was unaware of free hot community meals, homeless shelters, or even public assistance. He has been coming to the workforce center for 2 years to look and apply for jobs . . . He had no income and no money in a bank account. His only assets were a bag of clothes he had stored somewhere for safety. After I assisted him with the SNAP application, I printed off additional resources to homeless shelters, community hot meals, and local food shelves. He was so thankful and had a few words of encouragement. He told me that last night he prayed to God that God would send someone his way to help him with all the struggles he's encountered and today he met me. It is stories and people like him that help me do my job to the best of my ability and continue to do my job day in and day out.

(2) I first met Bob when he was volunteering at the ECHO Food Shelf. During slow times at times at the food shelf there are opportunities to visit with volunteers. Bob sat at my desk and wanted to know more about what I do. In the process of our conversation I found out that Bob was not on Food Support and definitely qualified. Bob had heard that if you have ever been in trouble with the law, you would not qualify for any benefits. Bob was a volunteer at ECHO through the Sentence to Serve program. (STS) He had never even thought of trying to apply because of what he had heard from others. I read him the regulations. He had a drug felony charge but that doesn't eliminate him from benefits. We filled out the application and Bob was approved for the maximum benefit of \$200. By the way, Bob is a Vietnam War Veteran and a senior citizen who lives on \$769 per month. As he volunteered at the Food Shelf he would also get his food there from time to time. Now he eats his noon meal at the Salvation Army because he enjoys the community there and not because it would be his main meal of the day. By the way, he's Bob the Builder because any repairs or building the food shelf needs, Bob is there to take care of it for them.

(3) Having an office at the Food Shelf allows me the privilege of getting to know the volunteers. Many of them are clients of the food shelf and of mine. Dave stopped by my desk one day with a question about his food support. The question was a simple fix but the story he shared was very moving for me. He talked about the courage it took for him to even walk through the doors of the food shelf. "I'm a self-sufficient man," he says. "I don't take freebees from anyone. I earn my own way." He shared his thoughts on what he used to think of people who came to the food shelf or are 'on the system.'" Low life's, lazy, scrounges, drunks, druggies, were all some of the names he used to use to describe people in need. That day he told me how his experience that first day left him feeling humble and grateful. He and his wife were broke. All savings was gone and his business was non-existent. He commented on how the volunteers treated him respect. They would listen to his story as they walked through the shelf. He talked about how cheery everyone was and how welcome they made him feel. This former business owner slumped in the chair and wiped tears from his eyes as he shared his thoughts. He told me how, now that he volunteers for the food shelf, his wife has commented on how different he acts when he comes home at night. She told him that she notices that he's smiling, he doesn't talk negative about others, he volunteers to help others in the community, and she's happy to have him around the house again. He talked about his experiences in working with clients. He now understands the life of those in need. I saw a quote the other day that said: "To work for justice is to work for dignity. Dignity is a person's ability to give, in whatever way possible for them."

Date Submitted: Monday, May 07, 2012, 12:32 p.m.

Comment: Cuts to SNAP are counter-productive. SNAP cuts are a job killer. Here's why: Each dollar of SNAP purchases generates \$1.73 in economic activity. The funds pass through communities and support jobs in groceries and Main Street. An example:

Blue Earth City, MN: average living wage for one adult: \$23,000.

2010 SNAP payments = \$4,715,700.

2010 SNAP impact (x \$1.73) = \$8,158,200.

SNAP and its impact supports 354 living wage jobs.

Proposed cuts to SNAP (4%) will reduce SNAP payments, reduce the economic impact and result in the loss of 14 current living wage jobs.

SNAP is not a cost, SNAP prevents people from becoming poorer and thus, prevents communities from becoming poorer. It sustains jobs and communities along with the people who need temporary assistance meeting their basic needs.

Cutting SNAP will undermine existing jobs when the economy needs to grow them, not cut them.

In the State of Minnesota, there are more than 32,000 living wage jobs that can be traced to the impact of SNAP. The proposed cuts would eliminate more than 12,000 current jobs in Minnesota.

COMMENT OF CINDY SEARS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:10 p.m.

City, State: Lawrence, KS

Occupation: Retired Teacher

Comment: I buy only organic produce and dairy products. My daughter wishes that she could afford to do the same for my grandchildren. Please work to help producers provide chemical free real food for ALL the families of America.

COMMENT OF ANTON SEATON

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 3:06 p.m.

City, State: Castro Valley, CA

Occupation: Student

Comment: Big agriculture has hurt our agricultural supply and farm land. This has further led to an increase in cancer and chronic diseases attributed to chemical introduction as pesticides and hormones growth. Big agriculture favors loose of regulation to keep this going but we as a government and citizens need to put this to an end. I welcome your support.

COMMENT OF LINDA SEAVER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:15 p.m.

City, State: Rhinebeck, NY

Occupation: Office Manager

Comment: My children and grandchildren trust me to feed them healthy food. I want to be able to go grocery shopping and not worry about pesticides, herbicides, fungicides, antibiotics, and genetically modified foods being in or on everything in the store! These chemicals are designed to kill and to interfere with reproduction. Why am I being forced to buy them? Why are my law makers supporting the companies that are profiting from damaging the health of my children and even future generations of children? It makes me too angry to articulate.

COMMENT OF LANCE SECRETAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:27 p.m.

City, State: Frisco, CO

Occupation: Author

Comment: Let's get current with healthy thinking, which will dramatically improve individual wellness and slash the nation's healthcare bill. It's time to end lobbyist-induced practices all the way through the food chain from producer, to manufacturer/processor to consumer.

COMMENT OF SARAH SEDGWICK

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:20 p.m.

City, State: San Diego, CA

Occupation: Laid Off

Comment: What is happening to this country and the food supply, it is a disgrace, and I am well-read on the issues at hand, Monsanto and all. It is all greed and nothing for the good of people or thought of future generation. Only the people of substance are standing up for the people, the government is supposed to be protecting us but something has gone terrible bad in this agricultural molded environment of greed and special interests. I support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

COMMENT OF KARL SEIDEL

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 10:31 a.m.

City, State: Oskaloosa, IA

Occupation: Marketing Manager

Comment: Labeling, so I know what I'm consuming, seems to be my basic right as a consumer. Yet there's no mandate so I can't know whether my food is grown organically or with GMO. Traceability of food origin is a standard business needs to work towards. Are you for or against this?

COMMENT OF MICHELLE SEIM

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:11 p.m.

City, State: Seattle, WA

Occupation: Software Developer

Comment: Please don't cut \$4 million from organic research funding. Please don't cut in half funding to support Beginning Farmers. Please support organic food and organic farming. Thanks.

COMMENT OF BRECK SEINIGER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:12 p.m.

City, State: Boise, ID

Occupation: Attorney

Comment: Regardless of one's position on "Obama Care," it is becoming increasingly clear that the food that American's are eating are the primary cause of runaway health costs. If you doubt this, watch *Forks Over Knives* (available via streaming on Netflix). We cannot control health costs without controlling the quality of the American diet. Please consider this in reviewing all legislation.

COMMENT OF DEBRA SEIZ

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:17 p.m.

City, State: Wenonah, NJ

Occupation: X-Ray Technologist

Comment: I **Support** any farm bill requiring **Labeling** on GMO's, **Stopping** bastards like Monsanto **Abusing** the U.S. justice system by filing **Frivolous Lawsuits** against organic farmers and promoting **Organic Farming**.

The public has the right to know and to choose from natural foods and GMO's saturated with **Poisons** such as Round-up that is also decimating the **Bee Population**.

I completely **Resent** congress' complicity in Big Agribusiness' **Bull Crap**.

COMMENT OF JOY SELBY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:17 p.m.

City, State: Pasadena, CA

Occupation: Retired Teacher

Comment: I would like food produced without pesticides hormones artificial fertilizers or additives or GMO's. So that I can go to the grocery store and buy groceries as my grandparents did. I believe the additives in food both in the field and in the box are killing us.

COMMENT OF STEFANIE SELLARS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:55 p.m.

City, State: Simi Valley, CA

Occupation: Composer

Comment: I want Organic produce. You know, the kind we ate when we were kids. They called it food then, not organic food. Now 70% of what is available at the grocery store is GMO—Genetically Modified Organisms. They do a number on my colon and I'm allergic to the pesticides sprayed on the conventionally grown produce. So, consequently, I have taken it upon myself to grow much of my own produce as well as shopping organic where I can get it and organic at farmer's markets. I can't always get everything I need and conversely, when I have surplus I share and can it later. I know I am not alone as I have many friends and family that trade produce with me and well there is a huge market for organically grown produce.

I also cannot tell in stores in this country what products contain GMO produce. I just learned that all Kashi products are made with GMO's. Some stores have removed it altogether and put a notice to that effect in it's place and I am grateful for this policy. I find this whole unlabeled GMO food situation to be ridiculous and frankly, un-American. I can go into any grocery store in Europe and read the labels and they will tell me whether or not the products are produced with GMOs. Their governments look out for their people's food supply. But here in the "good old USA" Monsanto and all the commercial seed companies rules the country, they have bought the government through lobbyists so that we the people are **Not Allowed** to know what is our food. A nation of over 300,000,000 people are not allowed to know what is in their food? Why? Because Monsanto funded science says it is OK? That is like the fox's lawyer saying he will guard the henhouse and won't interfere with the hens. You know we can't trust fox!

It is time to serve the people of what is left of this Nation and stop lining the pockets of congress. Just label our food. Disclose whether or not there are GMOs in it. I'm tired of playing russian roulette with hives, diarrhea and a burning colon. I'm so tired of it in fact that I grow most of my own food.

It takes a lot of time and energy each day for me to prepare, mulch, manure, grow, fertilize, tend, remove bugs manually, trim, pick harvest, compost and rototill my garden, not to mention search out organic **Non-GMO** seeds. I understand the work of our nation's organic farmers, I spend part of each of my days doing it, because I am committed to being healthy by eating healthy organic food. But it is mind boggling to me that even in communist China GMO's are labeled, in Russia and Canada they are labeled all over Europe you know what you are putting into your body, but here? **No!** Monsanto et al., wants to poison us and keep us from knowing what we are eating. (not to mention GMO genetic pollen drift that no one can control) Please, support Organic farming and labeling of GMOs. If this happens, then people will naturally buy non GMO and there will be a larger market for organic traditionally grown produce. I for one am willing to pay more for healthy organic food, heck,

I grow it myself!

COMMENT OF GABRIELLE SERRA

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 6:59 p.m.

City, State: Washington, D.C.

Occupation: Public Health Program Administration

Comment: As the Committee works to develop the 2012 Farm Bill package, the Public Health Institute (PHI) strongly urges Chairman Lucas, Ranking Member Petersen, and members of the Committee to develop a farm bill that will protect against hunger, improve nutrition and health outcomes among vulnerable populations, and strengthen community-based initiatives that link farmers with consumers and increase access to healthy foods.

Together, hunger and obesity represent two of the greatest and costliest health challenges of our time. Nearly 50 million people live in households that lack adequate resources to put healthy food on the table for their family. Further, approximately 1/3 of all children are overweight or obese. While 7 in 10 of the leading causes of death in this country are associated with preventable diet-related diseases, poor diets result in more immediate consequences as well, including negative effects on children's ability to learn, the productivity of our workforce, and sky-rocketing health care costs.

The farm bill nutrition programs are fundamental to protecting public health and improving nutrition among the most vulnerable individuals in our country. Cuts to

benefits and services, including nutrition education, would increase economic hardship and seriously compromise the food security and nutritional well-being of the 46 million individuals, including children, the hungry, and the elderly who rely on these programs to put food on the table. With record high rates of overweight and obesity, along with skyrocketing health care costs, now is not the time to cut programs that have proven to be effective in improving nutrition and reducing risk of diet-related chronic disease.

Sufficient resources, knowledge, skills, and access to healthy, safe, affordable foods can help to prevent both the short and long-term consequences of poor nutrition. While PHI recognizes that the nation faces significant fiscal challenges that require sobering budgetary decisions, we urge Chairman Lucas and the Committee to take a balanced approach to finding savings for deficit reduction in this farm bill legislation that will protect vulnerable populations from further economic hardship.

To this end, in April of this year, PHI joined with 93 other national and regional organizations to put forward balanced recommendations to protect and support the farm bill nutrition programs. PHI is pleased to have the opportunity to provide the following recommendations for the 2012 farm bill:

- Protect against hunger by ensuring adequate resources for Federal nutrition assistance programs and emergency food providers.
- Protect eligibility, benefit levels, and program integrity of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to ensure that low-income Americans have the resources necessary to afford a nutritious diet and prevent hunger.
- Ensure adequate supply of nutritious commodities for distribution through emergency food providers by increasing mandatory commodities provided by The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) and maintaining authorized funding levels for TEFAP storage and distribution.
- Maintain Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) authorization at current levels and focus program on improving nutrition for low-income seniors by transitioning CSFP to a seniors only program, with grandfathered protection for women, infants, and children currently enrolled.
- Provide a tax credit to farmers to incentivize earlier donation of high quality produce to food banks for distribution through the charitable food system.
- Improve nutrition and health outcomes for vulnerable populations by increasing consumption of fruits, vegetables and other healthy foods.
- Maintain current funding for SNAP Nutrition Education to help low-income Americans make healthy choices on a limited budget, reduce their risk of chronic disease and obesity, and optimize the SNAP benefit.
- Maintain current funding for the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program and protect the integrity of the program to ensure that low-income elementary students have a fresh fruit or vegetable snack at school every day.
- Provide grants for SNAP incentive programs to increase the purchase and consumption of fruits and vegetables at farmers markets and other healthy food retailers.
- Strengthen SNAP national vendor standards to improve availability of healthy foods while balancing adequate access to retailer outlets.
- Maintain funding for the National Institute of Food and Agriculture for vital research on nutrition, hunger and food security, and obesity prevention.
- Strengthen community-based nutrition initiatives that link farmers with consumers and increase access to healthy food to reduce food insecurity, improve nutrition, and promote self-reliance, economic development and job creation.
- Ensure funding for existing farmers' market, community food, and agriculture marketing and food hub development programs to improve outcomes and efficiency, meet demand, and maximize impact.
- Increase mandatory funding for Community Food Projects to improve nutrition and food security among low-income individuals and communities.
- Provide SNAP EBT point of sale devices to farmers markets, farm stands, green carts and other non-traditional healthy food retailers to improve access and increase consumption of fruits and vegetables.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit these comments and recommendations for the 2012 Farm Bill. PHI looks forward to opportunities to work with you to protect and support the farm bill nutrition programs.

Respectfully,

GABRIELLE SERRA,
Public Health Institute
[Redacted],

Washington, D.C.,
[Redacted].

COMMENT OF SUSAN SERVESON

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 8:22 a.m.

City, State: San Diego, CA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Please make sure the farm bill includes taking care of smaller independent farmers, organic farmers and all local farmers so that our foods are healthier. Stop subsidies to the corporate farms. Farms should produce healthy edible food and rotate land to promote good food growth. I support and ask you to support the Slow Food movement in the USA and to listen to their suggestions. We need better food for better life and health of the American people. You represent the people so I truly hope you take all suggestions as serious when they come from Slow Foods organization and the people who support them, such as myself. The effort and supportive vote from you will make a tremendous difference.

COMMENT OF ROBERT SESSIONS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:56 a.m.

City, State: Iowa City, IA

Occupation: Professor

Comment: I urge you to include monies for programs supporting organic farming and small farms, conservation and food support for the poor. On the other hand I urge you to end subsidies to corn and bean farmers—the markets are rich now and cutting these subsidies alone would allow you to reduce dramatically the cost of the farm bill.

COMMENT OF SHARON SESSIONS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:15 a.m.

City, State: Socorro, NM

Occupation: Professor of Physics

Comment: Please:

- Support small family farms.
- Reduce or eliminate subsidies for ethanol and corn intended for processing into high fructose corn syrup.
- Support organic and sustainable farm practices.

Thank you for your consideration.

COMMENT OF SAVITA SETHI

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:10 p.m.

City, State: Potomac, MD

Occupation: Social Worker (Retired)

Comment: We owe it to ourselves, our children and grandchildren to live in a clean or at the very least less polluted environment. Putting money where our mouth is will eventually save money in health care costs!

COMMENT OF ANKUR SETHI

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:57 a.m.

City, State: Herndon, VA

Occupation: Engineer

Comment: wish to voice my concern over farm subsidies which benefit larger farms. I believe farms can be used to employ more individuals and local farms without support from mass agricultural companies like Monsanto is the way of the future. We need to consider the long term health of farms over short term profit mongering. Long term we should have smaller farms and not mega-farms.

COMMENT OF MIKE SEXTON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:31 p.m.

City, State: Junction City, KS

Comment: It's time that farmers get rewarded for keeping food more natural and not designed like it's coming off a conveyor belt or something. I've noticed over the years that even fresh produce has gotten bigger but with much less flavor and less

healthier and the practices of agribusiness are completely destroying the land, our own health and the environment in general because they're treating agriculture less like real food and more about how much they can get out of their growers.

COMMENT OF HELEN SEYFERLICH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:59 p.m.
City, State: Elma, WA
Producer/Non-producer: Producer
Type: Livestock
Size: Less than 50 acres
Comment: Support for the small farmer provides important information to the farmer. The Farmer provides local fresh food and a more sustainable local economy.

COMMENT OF ANNE SHABER

Date Submitted: Monday, May 07, 2012, 4:00 p.m.
City, State: West Milton, OH
Occupation: Homemaker
Comment: Please stop subsidizing factory farms and mega farms. Subsidizing should be for small and or struggling farms that working hard to provide high quality nutritious food.

COMMENT OF JOEL SHABER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 9:24 a.m.
City, State: Boise, ID
Occupation: Waiter
Comment: We must implement sustainable, organic farming methods if we expect to become a healthy population. It is obvious that the factory farming of animals and industrial agricultural methods, which rely so heavily upon the petroleum industry, cannot work for the long haul. We are killing ourselves and destroying our children's future with our current course. Please implement the organic farm bill, and end subsidies for commodity crops. It is the only right thing to do.

COMMENT OF CONRAD SHAD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:18 p.m.
City, State: Port Orange, FL
Occupation: Retired
Comment: I don't trust anyone in government to tell the truth. I don't believe they should be on their own type of health insurance as the rest of us. What's good for us should be good for them. President included.

COMMENT OF WILLIAM SHAFFER

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 01, 2012, 11:15 a.m.
City, State: New Smyrna Beach, FL
Occupation: Retired
Comment: Anyone with an iota of compassion would pass a farm bill that fed those who are hungry, **And** would not complicate the bill with proposals that have nothing to do with feeding the hungry.

COMMENT OF KENDRA SHAMLEY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:45 a.m.
City, State: Laramie, WY
Occupation: Cook
Comment: I believe that my rights entitle me to choose what food I can or cannot eat, without the government telling me if it's safe or not. Since most officials in Washington, D.C., are not around farms, livestock or raw foods on a regular basis how then can they make an accurate decision about their place in the food system, let along the "hazard" to the public.

COMMENT OF LINDA SHANKS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:30 p.m.
City, State: Bloomington, IN
Occupation: Retired

Comment: SNAP is the cornerstone of the nutrition safety net, providing 46 million low-income people with monthly benefits that are timely, targeted, and temporary.

SNAP proved to be one of the most responsive safety net programs, growing quickly to meet rising need resulting from high unemployment in the recession. 84% of benefits go to households with a child, senior, or disabled person, and new participants spend an average of 10 months on the program. Funding cuts and harmful policy changes would require reductions in benefits or eligibility and impede SNAP's responsiveness when our economy falters or unemployment rises.

The FY 2013 Agriculture Appropriations bill should:

- Oppose funding cuts and harmful policy proposals to SNAP, including efforts to block grant, cap, or cut funding;
- impose restrictive work requirements; or
- otherwise reduce benefits or restrict participation.

The 2012 Farm Bill should:

- Maintain funding to support current eligibility and benefit levels and oppose harmful policy changes.

COMMENT OF SARA SHAPIRO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:12 p.m.

City, State: Chicago, IL

Occupation: Social Worker

Comment: I work for a nonprofit organization and many of our clients cannot afford "good" food free of pesticides and genetic engineering. I fully support anything that will change food production to be more simplified and free of GMOs.

COMMENT OF CYNTHIA SHARP

Date Submitted: Friday, April 27, 2012, 10:19 p.m.

City, State: Huntington Beach, CA

Occupation: Surgical Nurse (Disabled)

Comment: I feel that it is vitally important to make sure, there is not one single hungry American Person in our Country! If we can help all these other Countries "By God" we should never ever see a hungry person in the United States Of America!

Sincerely,

CYNTHIA SHARP.

COMMENT OF DORA SHARPE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:54 p.m.

City, State: Naples, FL

Occupation: Consultant

Comment: Our food system is out of control. It is embarrassing and completely out of touch with nature. Money and greed control our food system and it will be killing our children.

COMMENT OF MICHAEL SHARPE

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 3:12 p.m.

City, State: Eagle, AK

Occupation: Tribal Workforce Development Specialist for Tanana Chiefs Conference, Alaska

Comment: To get to the point, the bottom line is "Farmers Feed Us". (Could be taken as "Farmers Feed [the] U.S." also . . .) * Unless we live on meat 24/7 with no other source of nutrition, everything else that "we" as people consume, comes from fruits or vegetables. Even our starchy, artificial, over-processed, commercial boxed and canned foods completely devoid of nutrition in some cases, is full of products (and byproducts) made/derived from vegetables and fruit.

Nearly every soft drink contains corn syrup. That syrup was provided by a corn farmer, who often does not get completely compensated for his work or is squelched to smithereens by a farm bill that needs revision. Even more-so than ever, people are turning to vegetarian and vegan diets, organic diets or just eating more vegetable and fruits. Even people who depend on soy diets are dependent on soy farmers

*If that phrase get's used I would like some credit.

being able to provide them with them with soy that is grown properly. Squelching the farm industry “forces” farmers to sacrifice quality over quantity at some point or another. Whether it is not being able to afford a better quality fertilizer that is more beneficial for the consumer on a number of levels, or being able to put as much care into the finished product or their land before and after a grow season. I have known several people who have worked on and even owned farms. They may not have admitted it, but it is truly a “thankless” job. The consumers depend on it, the farmer depends on it. When the taxes go higher on farm land and the grip gets tighter on the farmers nationwide, all you hear are sighs in the produce aisle in the grocery store when the price of corn went up by 10–20%; or when any other fresh foods have as well.

When you keep shortening the string, you cannot make ends meet; because the string is the string that holds the nation together. The “Farmers are **Our** string”. If “we” keep “letting” the grip get tighter on the farmers, we’re all taking part in shortening our ‘string’. If we shorten the thing that holds our nation together, we fall apart. Our food supply is something that cannot be taken lightly. Supply and demand are unique. Demand for food will **Always** be there, but “supply” will not. Don’t let our supply be squelched nor squandered. Once we let it slip through the cracks, it’s a lot harder to get it back rather than to just make the changes before hand. I don’t feel like elaborating anymore. If I need to say more than this, it defeats what I have already said and the purpose behind it. Please consider this. Take the “nuggets” of truth and wisdom out of this rather than writing it “all” off as rubble. I don’t want to live in a country without affordable and **Good** fruits and vegetables. “Don’t bite the hand that feeds, and don’t let it get bit either. Hold the hand that feeds, and see it through the harvest.” Only then can we **All** benefit. Revise and **Fix** the Farm Bill. This is the “Bottom Line”.

MICHAEL SHARPE,
Eagle, Alaska.

COMMENT OF JEAN SHARRY

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 6:32 p.m.

City, State: Westwood, MA

Occupation: Instructional Assistant—High School Special Ed

Comment: It is crucial that we find a way to produce nutritious food that keeps us healthy and doesn’t sacrifice the environment or our health. Support small organic farmers!

COMMENT OF GEORGE SHAUB

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:35 p.m.

City, State: Ewing, NJ

Occupation: Insurance Claims Supervisor

Comment: In reviewing farm policy, please keep in mind that subsidies given to large agricultural interests put the health of our citizens, our land, the soil and the environment at risk, as well as risking the livelihood of small farmers and farm workers. We need a better farm bill than those of the past, one that focuses policy on organic farming and sustainable agriculture.

I support—and hope you do also—the full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286), the implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236), maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative, and fully funding conservation programs such as the Conservation Stewardship Program. Please ensure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF KIMBERLY SHAUB

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:37 p.m.

City, State: Ewing, NJ

Occupation: Secretary

Comment: Please produce a bill that actually helps the real family farmers in my state of New Jersey and the country. The Big Ag corporations do not need any more subsidies. The small & organic farmers deserve first consideration, always. They are the ones that actually feed us our **Fresh** food. **Do Not** give more money to producing genetically modified food. It is not needed.

COMMENT OF MEL SHAVER

Date Submitted: Sunday, March 25, 2012, 9:19 p.m.

City, State: Sterling, IL

Occupation: Retired & Self-Employed

Comment: Farmers do not pay taxes on the purchase of equipment or supplies—lus, their land tax is way below what the rest of us pay—the playing field is not level—let the farmer pay his fair share—then the state won't have a money problem

Please reply—I am very concerned.

MEL SHAVER.

Look at the web-site (EWG) This is farm aide . . .

This has been going on for several years—we both know why . . .

Help me please.

COMMENT OF JUSTIN SHAW

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:43 p.m.

City, State: Oneonta, NY

Occupation: Lecturer

Comment: Please support local producers and please modify farm bill so that organic, vegetable, fruit and any local dairy are not alternative but receive equal funding as giant corn and wheat CAFOs in the Midwest. Please ensure tough standards on GMOs and give rights to organic farmers fighting drift from toxic pesticide laden giant industrial farming operations.

COMMENT OF NORMAN SHAW

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:46 p.m.

City, State: Ryde, CA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Field Crops, Livestock

Size: 50–150 acres

Comment: We need to look for a sustainable local food driven market where both farmers and consumers profit. Farmers would get a better price. Consumers would get **Much** better quality food. We should be supporting local little farmers instead of huge corporate and many times not even American owned mega-business's. The little guy is getting killed! Thank you.

COMMENT OF S. SHAW

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:57 p.m.

City, State: Fargo, ND

Occupation: Assembly

Comment: I have soy allergies. Soybean oil being classified as a refined oil and not as a soy product has caused problems in my day-to-day living. The belief that **Only** the protein causes a reaction could prove deadly. I react to soybean oil and to a very long list of products made from it (including things like vitamin E) that are **Not** required by the government to carry the Soy Allergen warning. I have the right to know what is in the products that I buy, but the current labeling of ingredients allows for soy products to be included in “natural flavors” and the company does not have to disclose any use of soy due to “following Federal regulations”. Most soy/soybean products are made from GMO Soy, And I believe it would be easier to track soy/soy products if GMO ingredients must be stated as such. Thank you for your time.

COMMENT OF SHANNON SHEA

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 11:07 p.m.

City, State: Rockville, MD

Occupation: Communications Manager

Comment: Developing a sustainable, local food system nationwide is essential to maintaining our country's health, economic prosperity, and environment. As a country, we must support the creation of this system through the farm bill, the most influential law on our overall food policy in this country. A fully functional food policy would provide healthy, good, sustainable food for all people, especially the most vulnerable like children and seniors, which is why we should continue to support the SNAP program. To support the development of this system, I fully endorse all

provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286). To reduce our impact on the watersheds of this country, I also support fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs. To help develop and train the next generation of farmers, I support including the implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236). Last, I support continuing to develop the organic sector by maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

COMMENT OF N. LILLIAN SHEARER

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 10:10 a.m.

City, State: Orange, VA

Occupation: Chef

Comment: I am currently located in the agriculture center of Virginia trying to source local food for my customers. I have a history in the farm and Ag communities. I was an Ag agent in Chautauqua County, N.Y. in the mid 1960's before the large subsidy system turned to profit for large leased farms in the Midwest. Small farms are going under daily, while the large land holders in the West are pocketing the money. The system needs to be rewritten so those small farms can become viable again and we all can eat safer more healthy local foods.

COMMENT OF LYNN SHEARON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:26 p.m.

City, State: Richmond, KY

Occupation: Retired Speech Pathologist

Comment: We must do all that we can do to both support farmers and care for the environment. The almighty dollar should not be the only consideration or voice.

COMMENT OF HARRIET SHEELEY

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 11:06 p.m.

City, State: Skokie, IL

Occupation: Retired School Social Worker and Volunteer

Comment: Protect feeding programs for older Americans. We do not have a strong lobby, and programs like SNAP, TEFAP and CSFP are important for the survival of many. Thank you.

SUBMITTED STATEMENT BY TED SHEELY, UPLAND AND PIMA COTTON, ONION, CANNING TOMATO, PISTACHIO, LETTUCE, AND SEED WHEAT PRODUCER, LEMOORE, CA

I am Ted Sheely from Lemoore, California. I operate a diversified farming operation along with my family raising upland and pima cotton, onions, canning tomatoes, pistachios, lettuce, and seed wheat. I want to thank Chairman Lucas and Ranking Member Peterson for seeking input from producers in their recent field hearings on the next farm bill. I also appreciate the opportunity to discuss the views of the California cotton industry with you here today. I would also like to offer a special thanks to Representative Jim Costa, my Congressman, for your work on this Committee and for your dedicated representation of 20th District of California. Representative Dennis Cardoza, I commend your service to California agriculture.

Agriculture is one of the most important industries in California and the United States. California was the number one state in cash farm receipts in 2010, with \$37.5 billion in revenue. The state accounted for 16 percent of national receipts for crops, and seven percent of the U.S. revenue for livestock and livestock products. Numerous businesses, financial institutions and individuals provide supplies, financing and services to the farmers and ranchers that produce our nation's food and fiber. As a result, an effective farm bill that supports production agriculture is also an effective jobs bill for the general economy.

Overall, U.S. farmers are benefitting from relatively high commodity prices when compared to historical averages. However, it is important to remember that costs of essential inputs such as water, seed, fuel and fertilizer are also at historically high levels. As a result, profit margins remain thin, and higher prices have also brought increased volatility.

As an irrigated producer in the San Joaquin Valley, I have first-hand experience of the risks farmers face. The fluctuation of water supplies from 10% to 80% the last 3 years have added huge uncertainty and directly impacts my planting decisions and is a large component of any overall cost of production.

As this Committee works to reauthorize farm bill legislation, I appreciate the challenges posed by the difficult budget climate in Congress and by those in Congress that continually question the need for farm programs. While agriculture is willing to make a proportionate contribution to deficit reduction, it is vitally important that budget constraints and farm program critics not be allowed to undermine the effectiveness of our farm safety net.

With respect to production agriculture, I strongly encourage this Committee to take into consideration the diversity of production practices, cost structures and risk profiles. What works for my operation isn't going to be the same as farmers in Texas, North Dakota or Iowa. A one-size-fits-all farm program cannot address this diversity, and I hope that the eventual farm bill will offer a range of programs structured to address the needs of the different commodities and production regions.

I also urge the Committee to complete the farm bill this year—in advance of the expiration of the current legislation. We need some certainty regarding farm programs as we look at the long-term investments necessary to keep our farming operations economically viable; and to assure our bankers that there is an adequate safety net.

While most producers in this Valley are highly diversified, upland and pima cotton production remains an important crop in our operations. The 2008 Farm Bill has served cotton farmers extraordinarily well and, in recent years, has required minimal Federal outlays. However, deficit reduction efforts are placing unprecedented pressure on the existing structure of farm programs. The cotton industry also faces the unique challenge of resolving the longstanding Brazil WTO case.

In order to respond to the challenge of designing the most effective safety net with reduced funding and to make modifications that will lead to the resolution of the Brazil case, it is very important that the new farm legislation includes the cotton industry's proposal of a new revenue-based crop insurance program for upland cotton which will result in strengthening growers' ability to manage risk. By complementing existing products, the Stacked Income Protection Plan, or STAX for short, will provide a tool for growers to manage that portion of their risks for which affordable options are not currently available. This revenue-based crop insurance safety net would be combined with a modified marketing loan that is adjusted to satisfy the Brazil WTO case. Even with modifications, the marketing loan will remain an important source of cash flow from merchandisers and producers.

I also strongly support the continuation of current loan provisions for Extra Long Staple cotton and the special competitiveness program. With essentially all ELS production moving into export markets, the ELS competitiveness program is especially critical in order to keep U.S. pima cotton competitively priced in world markets. The program is critically important in a world market that is subjected to abrupt changes in trade policy such as last year's decision by Egypt to temporarily ban cotton imports. The balance between the upland and Pima programs is important to ensure that acreage is planted in response to market signals and not program benefits.

Given the diversity of weather and production practices, the menu of crop insurance choices should be diverse and customizable, allowing for maximum participation and effective coverage. In the 2008 Farm Bill, the introduction of enterprise unit pricing gave producers one more option for insuring against those risks that are beyond their control.

I encourage this Committee to resist efforts to further tighten existing payment limits and income means tests on support programs. I also strongly oppose any attempts to impose payment limits on any crop insurance products and any further eligibility tests for crop insurance purchasers. Artificially limiting benefits is a disincentive to economic efficiency and undermines the ability to compete with heavily subsidized foreign agricultural products. Artificially limited benefits are also incompatible with a market-oriented farm policy.

In recent years, conservation programs have become increasingly important and I hope those programs will remain useful options. Specifically, California producers have made good use of Conservation Innovation Grants through the NRCS EQIP provisions. These grants have been invaluable in helping our growers meet California's air quality regulations. In California alone, NRCS partnered with more than 1,100 agricultural producers to implement projects that significantly reduce emissions. I would urge Congress to continue this program as a priority matter in the next farm bill.

As a final point, cotton farmers understand that our ability to produce a crop is directly tied to there being a strong and stable demand from the textile manufacturers that produce yarn, fabric and a wide variety of textile and apparel products. We

are fortunate to sell our cotton to mills in the United States, as well as several countries in the international market.

For U.S. mills, the 2008 Farm Bill introduced an economic assistance program, and I am pleased to say that the program has been a resounding success. We have seen a revitalization of the U.S. textile manufacturing sector, as evidenced by new investments and additional jobs. I urge this Committee to continue this program in the new farm bill.

With the majority of our cotton sold in global market, the continuation of adequately funded export promotion programs such as the Market Access Program and Foreign Market Development Program is especially critical to the California cotton industry. Individual farmers and exporters do not have the necessary resources to operate effective promotion programs which maintain and expand markets—but the public-private partnerships, using a cost-share approach, have proven highly effective and have the added advantage of being WTO-compliant.

I very much appreciate the opportunity to provide these comments and look forward to answering your questions at the appropriate time.

COMMENT OF STEPHEN SHEER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:56 a.m.

City, State: Hudson, OH

Comment: Let's give healthy natural food a chance and stop using chemicals and pesticide to neuter our land and poison the very people that are taxed to give the giant Agra Business tax breaks.

JOINT COMMENT OF JOHN & JANE SHEFFIELD

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 6:35 p.m.

City, State: Austin, TX

Occupation: Retired

Comment: We desperately need better food safety in our country. We need to support small farmers in their endeavors to produce healthier safer food. We need serious monitoring and oversight of big industrial farming. The bottom line is the United States needs **Healthy And Safe Food**.

Thank you for listening.

COMMENT OF MICHAEL SHELDREW

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 10, 2012, 10:48 p.m.

City, State: Carson City, NV

Occupation: Student

Comment: It is my understanding that the SNAP/Food stamp program is supporting $\frac{1}{3}$ of Nevadans.

This is a great program aside from its sustainability. I noticed that you can't acquire food stamps and go to school more than half-time. This is counter-intuitive, you are essentially telling people you will support them forever. Meaning that without a set of guidelines or programs to help individuals in need of food stamps progress in our working infrastructure and become self sufficient; they will continually be on food stamps. You should have a program that puts struggling Americans in a cycle type process that would train and assist in a job placement. The programs we have now are a joke, training includes Microsoft suite and is limited to office and clerical type work. Why not have training in industries that are hurting and that could be used to stabilize the economy; such as, manufacturing or alternative energy. Yes these are "skilled" trades and training might be relatively expensive. However, with a long-term employment mentality in place persons in these programs would be able to contribute back into society and the very programs they took advantage of. You could even fund the training by taking .02¢ an hour from the newly trained individual for the next x number of years. But, quite frankly education and training are two very different things. And people tend to get them mixed-up, a good incentive for companies to hire someone would be to place them temporarily in the workplace for training without pay. The pay would initially come from the government, and just pay them $\frac{1}{2}$ in food stamps and $\frac{1}{2}$ in cash. Cash is important because of things that are not food, like cleaning supplies, toilet paper, paper towels, coffee filters, *etc.* If you hired them as temporary governmental employees you could drug test them, and accurately test the training programs. As well as being able to handle the insurance side of placing the persons in companies. Furthermore you could post the statistics to appease skeptics. Or you could just teach people how to grow their own food too.

COMMENT OF KATHLEEN SHELLEY

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 10:50 p.m.

City, State: Vida, OR

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Americans deserve food free of chemicals and gmos. Commercial foods are heavily subsidized. Small farmers and organic farmers deserve equal consideration.

COMMENT OF CHARLES SHELLEY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:08 p.m.

City, State: Albuquerque, NM

Occupation: Retail

Comment: No crop or insurance subsidies should be provided to **Any** farm or farmer that degrades the environment with toxic pesticides, agricultural chemicals, or genetically-modified organisms. In short, no subsidies of any kind, except to farmers who follow established principles of **Organic** farming.

COMMENT OF DAVID SHELTON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:14 p.m.

City, State: Casar, NC

Occupation: Retired

Comment: The era of chemical ag and genetically engineered crops has brought us to a very dangerous place, and we have to change course if we expect to be able to feed our population in the future.

Genetic engineering has proved to be a colossal failure, as pests and disease organisms adapt to the genetic crop modifications. Further, GM crops have not, as promised, produced more, but less, and have contaminated standard crops through cross pollination. Cross pollinated crops have been used as grounds for patent infringement lawsuits from Monsanto and others against those whose crops were contaminated. This is absolutely outrageous, and must be aggressively addressed and corrected. Monsanto, et al, have had their way for far too long, and we can now clearly see that it is leading us to disaster. The tragedy that they caused in India should be evidence enough of their failure. I am referring to the crop failures that led to numerous suicides among Indian farmers. Please do what you can to address these issues in this bill.

High chemical input monocropping has produced inferior, toxic crops, and has ruined the land with excessive chemicals. It has also given rise to We need a fundamental change in our approach to agriculture, wherein we work with nature and not against it. I am for any efforts that move us toward that goal.

For further evidence of the damage done to our environment and farmlands, see following link to video by Dr. Don Huber: <http://vimeo.com/22997532>.

I further support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF MELISSA SHELTON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:12 a.m.

City, State: Pagosa Springs, CO

Occupation: Farm Intern/Student/Home Gardener

Comment: I will allow our wise founding fathers to speak for me . . .

Its time to end the corporate rule on food and allow people to make their choice on where they would like to purchase food items.

Monocropping and GMO are destroying not only our ecosystems but our bodies as well.

I Please keep the small farmer, the communities that built America strong.

“The nation that destroys it’s soil . . . destroys itself”—Franklin Delano Roosevelt

“If people let the government decide what foods to eat and what medicines to take, their bodies will soon be in as sorry a state as the souls who live under tyranny.”—Thomas Jefferson

COMMENT OF MARLENE SHEPARD

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 2:33 p.m.

City, State: Hartford, CT

Comment: Without the help of SNAP benefits, I would not have money to feed myself or my disabled son. We are both disabled, pending SSI, and cannot work, so we depend greatly on these benefits. Please do not cut. It's hard to stretch \$200.00 as it is. Less funds would make it impossible to budget and we would go hungry.

COMMENT OF RICHARD SHERESH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:20 p.m.

City, State: Chula Vista, CA

Occupation: Consultant—Data Analysis

Comment: It is a shame that subsidies continue for those mega-farmers who have no need for them, only greed. Congress should be involved with good foods, not political contributions. Congress should continue to emphasize continued use of tax dollars that benefit the country through nutrition and conservation benefits that are long term and obvious. Continued give-aways to those who are in positions of political power through contributions only continues to degrade the nation's ability to provide local and sustainable agriculture. I urge you to support Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286, fund conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program and make sure any programs or insurances are tied to good conservation practices. Nutritional programs should be promoted and not slashed. Subsidies should be slashed not promoted.

COMMENT OF DOROTHY SHERMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:20 p.m.

City, State: Greendale, WI

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I want to see more support for non GMO and organic foods—the factory farms and major food producers are killing Americans with their chemicals and GMO's. Support nutrition in our schools and provide healthier food to the poor. Stop subsidizing corn and factory farms.

COMMENT OF VALERIE SHERMAN

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 3:15 p.m.

City, State: Cayce, SC

Occupation: Director of Outreach Ministry

Comment: Greetings! I am unsure if you know the importance of the SNAP and other food programs. These and other subsidies or programs such as pantries and ministries are imperative to the survival of our elders. They depend on these services on a monthly basis because they help bridge the gap the seniors experience. Not only our seniors but, our children as well. We speak so negatively regarding our children but, don't reach out to help them. You must understand that in order to help them better themselves we must have their attention and we can't do that when all they hear are their empty stomachs. Keep these things in place and help Ministries such as ours that try to educate people on helping themselves. Thank you.

COMMENT OF INGA SHERRILL

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 8:59 p.m.

City, State: Hanceville, AL

Occupation: Hospice Patient Caregiver

Comment: Hunger in the USA is higher now than it has been in decades. We Must Change this! Nutritional Programs must not be cut short! We have too many avenues to increase revenue and cut programs that are truly “pork”.

COMMENT OF FELISA SHESKIN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:37 p.m.

City, State: Ellenville, NY

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: Local organic food is important to me and my family. One of the reasons I live in the Hudson Valley is because so many brave people are farming small and safe. Please don't let agribusiness giants ruin this growing grass roots movement.

COMMENT OF ALICE SHIELDS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:19 p.m.

City, State: New York, NY

Occupation: Classical Musician

Comment: I want healthy organic food supplied by my farmers locally when possible. I want small farmers to receive all the support they need from all forms of government. I want all subsidies to non-organic farms and large agribusinesses terminated.

COMMENT OF DOORAE SHIN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:47 p.m.

City, State: Honolulu, HI

Occupation: Teacher's Aide, Host, Activist

Comment: *Aloha,*

Please consider my support of a healthy farm bill. The current farm bill allows big agribusiness to collect subsidies and benefits for an unsustainable and unjust system of farming. Though it is advertised to be a way to solve hunger problems around the world, it has only concentrated food (unhealthy food) into few areas of the world, while hurting the soil and land and causing long-term damage to the environment.

We must adopt a sustainable, responsible way of producing our foods through the policies of the next farm bill.

I support the full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286) and funding of conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program. Any insurance subsidies should be in compliance with the conservation programs.

We must also implement all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236) and also maintain the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Please understand your responsibility of protecting our health as well as the health of the environment and the importance of sustainable agriculture. We must protect the future generations by implementing policies that allow local and organic farmers to grow, and that hold irresponsible agribusinesses accountable for detriments to the environment and health of its consumers.

Mahalo for your consideration,

DOORAE SHIN.

COMMENT OF MARCI SHINDEL

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 12:12 p.m.

City, State: Corvallis, OR

Occupation: Mom

Comment: I speak for many moms (and people in general) out there who do not actively follow food/health issues for whatever reason. But I am a 'foodie' and eating cleaner, healthier food is a **Huge** interest to all of us. Please take whatever steps you can to get the chemicals and crap out of our food, to get food labeled, to reverse what GMOs have done (allergies, heightened sensitivities, and diseases). If you can look at what we eat and the problems that afflict our society and **Not** tie them directly to the genetically modified, chemical-laden food that is most commonly available to us, then I'd like to vote "no faith" (in you) . . . this is a huge problem, it won't go away unless we take steps to clean up our food.

COMMENT OF ELAINE SHINER

Date Submitted: Friday, April 27, 2012, 4:00 p.m.

City, State: Port Orchard, WA

Occupation: Retired, Waitress, Psy. Aide, Bookkeeper, Electrician

Comment: I grew up on N.D. Diversified farm, learned work ethic, how to meet challenges and deadlines, observation skills and analytical problem solving and observation skills, time management, self confidence to succeed in life. you will be de-

priving kids of very necessary life skills if you restrict their experiences . . . Farming is best learned hands on with later training to teach more scientific improvement of methods.

COMMENT OF DIANE SHOEMAKER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:01 p.m.

City, State: Waimea, HI

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: I live on Kauai, known as the “Garden Island” where we import 85–90% of our food that travels anywhere between 5–10,000 miles and by the time it reaches us our fresh food is not fresh, it’s at least 8–10 days old, rendering it lost with vital nutrition. On the west side of Kauai we have no “organic” farming, just thousands of acres sprayed with very toxic pesticides from 5 out of the 6 major giant GMO companies. Since moving here from the mainland I have developed all sorts of health issues from breathing in airborne pesticides. The school that I live literally next door to, Waimea Canyon Middle, has sent students home sick after the fields that are adjacent to the school and neighborhood have been sprayed with toxins. Pioneer, a Dupont Company, is currently in a lawsuit with the town of Waimea due their negligence and harm to public health with all their spraying.

A small group of residents and myself started an organic community garden (www.kekahacommunitygarden.org) so that we could have access to fresh, locally grown food that is affordable and support our health. As I said, we have **No Organic** food and very little locally grown food; it’s not available here on the west side of the “Garden Island”. There is simply not enough support to encourage organic local food production.

We have a very high percentage of Native Hawaiians compared to the state of HI. Native Hawaiians have the highest rates of diabetes, hypertension, obesity, *etc.* because they cannot afford the expensive shipped-in old” produce in our local grocery stores. The major farmers, GMO companies, are **Not** producing locally grown food, but rather conducting research while our people are dying of diseases that are directly related to food consumption. What choice do our people have but to buy cheap processed foods while we fight extremely high rates of cancer in this area?

We need a farm bill that is going to support local and organic food production, not research companies poisoning us. We have so much land (most is privately owned by good folks that are land rich, cash poor)and it could be put to good use feeding our people. Yes, feeding our people is what the farm bill is really about and I want a farm bill that supports that. It’s not rocket science although I do appreciate the complexities of law making. Do what’s *pono* (right, correct, responsible). This is what I want you, my representatives to support. I pay my taxes, vote in **All** local and national, primary and general elections and take time out of my day to be involved in the democracy I live in.

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

We believe our Kekaha community garden is a start in the right direction, but our population needs more than just our community garden, we need our representatives to support a quality farm bill so that all people are fed fresh, nutrient rich food that is grown locally without harming the ‘aina (land), other species, ourselves, our climate. We need a farm bill that embodies the concept that we can have good paying jobs that are “green” and not toxic. Please help me keep Kauai a true “Garden Island”. I’m not from here, but I care deeply about this place and the people from here. I care deeply about all the other towns and cities where people live and grow food. This is basic life stuff—feeding our people. This is what deserves your utmost support and attention to do what’s *pono*. Why else are we all here? It’s incredible that this farm bill is even an issue, that it is threatened. Always follow the path of what is right and make all your decisions from there. Thank you for taking the time to read this—I know many of my friends, family, neighbors.

COMMENT OF DOREA SHOEMAKER

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 11:40 p.m.

City, State: Incline Village, NV

Occupation: Healthcare

Comment: We must support sustainable farming that does not rely on pesticide sprays, GMO seeds and other hazardous non sustainable farming. When we support the local family farm, then we are supporting sustainable farming.

COMMENT OF LORI SHOLLENBERGER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:06 p.m.

City, State: Easthampton, MA

Occupation: Self-Employed/Piano Teacher

Comment: Massachusetts and Hampshire City in particular is leading the way in organizing land and resource to produce local, organic food. The rest of the country is so far behind—and this can and will become a real crisis in the near future. We MUST reorganize how we produce food as a nation. Thanks as always for your work! We appreciate you!

COMMENT OF CINDY SHOOK

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:39 p.m.

City, State: Golden, CO

Occupation: Retired, Retail Clerk

Comment: The nutritional value in our food is going down. Tomatoes grown hydroponically taste like wimpy cucumbers, farmers are receiving feed that has no nutritional value. Pesticides that are poisonous for us. Companies that produce these detrimental products not only poison crops in neighboring organic farms but seek to drive them out of business. This is morally wrong! Needs to be stopped.

COMMENT OF BILLY SHORE

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 16, 2012, 5:42 p.m.

City, State: Washington, D.C.

Occupation: CEO and Founder, Share Our Strength

Comment: Share Our Strength is a national nonprofit organization dedicated to ending childhood hunger in the United States by connecting children with the nutritious food they need to lead healthy, active lives. Through our No Kid Hungry campaign, Share Our Strength ensures children in need are enrolled in effective Federal nutrition programs; invests in community organizations that fight hunger; teaches at-risk families how to cook healthy, affordable meals; and builds public-private partnerships to end childhood hunger at the state and city level. This approach allows Share Our Strength to leverage Federal investments in Federal nutrition programs to ensure these programs are used effectively and efficiently. We are pleased to submit testimony for the record to the House Agriculture Committee, Subcommittee on Nutrition and Horticulture for your hearing on the farm bill reauthorization.

The reauthorization of the farm bill offers a unique opportunity to ensure children in this country receive the food they need to grow and thrive. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is a critical lifeline for millions of families struggling to make ends meet, helping them to put food on the table and to maximize nutrition on a limited budget. More than 16 million children are living in poverty in the United States and one in five children are at risk of hunger. Over 46 million Americans rely on SNAP benefits to buy the food they need to feed their families, and 76 percent of SNAP households include a child, elderly person, or disabled person. Ensuring our children have enough to eat must be a priority for our nation.

At Share Our Strength, we have long seen firsthand how important SNAP is to families. Recently, individuals from across the country have written us to share the important role SNAP played during difficult times in their lives, and, most importantly, how the program allowed them to get back on their feet to a place where they no longer needed to rely on the program.

Tracy, from the Chairwoman's home state of Ohio, told us about how food stamps served as a safety net to provide for her children when her family fell on hard financial times. She wrote to us: "I am now 61 years old but when I was a teen my parents died and I became pregnant. My daughter and I used food stamps as I finished school and then became employed. She is now raising our grandchildren after she attained her college degree with high honors and I am happily married for many

years. I am forever grateful that we had that help when it was so necessary if I were to succeed and she was to thrive in preschool.”

L. in Mr. Baca’s home state of California shared with us: “Like so many other people, I was the eldest of two siblings being raised by a single mother. The struggle for our family to stay fed was aided by school lunches and by my grandmother who often supplied our evening meal and most meals on weekends. It wasn’t until I was much older that I came to realize that she fed us so frequently because there was often little to eat at home by the end of the month. As an adult with a professional job and a college education, I sometimes run into people that make negative comments about people on public assistance. They could never have guessed that I had been one of those people . . . It is tempting to vilify people that have fallen on hard times because then you can comfort yourself with the idea that if you do everything right, this won’t happen to your family. Sometimes life just doesn’t turn out the way you planned it—not because you failed, were lazy or didn’t try hard enough . . . but because that is life.”

SNAP recipients are often our nation’s heroes. Kimberly in Indiana told us: “My experience with food stamps began in May of 1994, and it should have begun much earlier. I have five sons, and my husband was in the U.S.M.C. He was in the military drawdown after the Gulf War, so our civilian life began March 08, 1992. We went through a lot of hardship trying to be self-reliant, and in the end it did not work. I was desperate, and applied for food stamps. My family began to eat well. Their health increased. They became carefree, not having to be hungry. I am grateful to my government for helping us when we needed it.”

Lack of an adequate, nutritious diet during childhood hinders educational achievement, and has long-term consequences for future workforce competitiveness. Hungry children cannot learn as much or as fast because chronic under-nutrition impairs cognitive development. They are also more likely to be sick often, resulting in absence or tardiness from school. Hungry children are 1.4 times as likely to repeat a school grade. As we compete with a global workforce, hunger saddles our youth with lower educational and technical skills and our nation with a less capable group of workers. Funding cuts to SNAP would be detrimental to these families and would place children who rely on food provided by SNAP at an unfair disadvantage compared with their peers.

Proposals have been discussed in Congress this year to turn SNAP into a block grant program. The estimated effect of such a policy is severe: cuts of as much as \$134 billion to states that rely on Federal funding for SNAP to ensure families have access to food. These funding cuts would be devastating to the families who rely on SNAP to feed their children.

In addition to the health and education benefits SNAP provides to children and families, the program also provides crucial economic stimulus activity for communities across the country. Every \$5.00 in new SNAP benefits generates \$9.00 in total community spending. Additionally, SNAP has proven itself a program that is responsive to the economic climate, especially in recent years. As unemployment numbers grew during the recession, SNAP responded quickly and provided benefits to families facing job loss, often due to layoffs or budget cuts. Now, as the economy slowly begins to recover, SNAP participation is expected to decline to nearly pre-recession levels. According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, new SNAP recipients stay on the program an average of 8 to 10 months, demonstrating the program’s effectiveness as transitional assistance for those falling on hard times.

As important as ensuring families have access to the SNAP benefits they need is giving them the tools to prepare healthy meals with the ingredients they purchase with SNAP dollars. Share Our Strength partners with community non-profit organizations to run Cooking Matters, a 6 week nutrition education program that has taught more than 88,000 low-income families how to stretch their food dollars in a healthy way since 1993. Many of our community partners depend on funding from the SNAP Nutrition Education program to run Cooking Matters courses. Participants in the program learn how to select nutritious and low-cost ingredients, prepare them in healthy ways and maximize their food resources.

We’ve seen proven results from Cooking Matters, demonstrating additional support for the SNAP Nutrition Education program. One such example is a woman named Lareese from Graysonville, Maryland. Lareese is a single mother of two, relying on SNAP and WIC to feed her family. She recently graduated from a dental assistant program and is looking for work. Lareese is active in her community center, and signed up to take a 6 week Cooking Matters course offered there. Before participating in Cooking Matters, Lareese would sometimes run short on groceries before her benefits renewed. Six weeks after graduating from the course, she was able to stretch her food money an additional 2 weeks. Before the program, she would buy about two food items with a \$6 WIC check for fruit and vegetables. Now,

after having learned to compare the unit price of groceries and consider frozen and canned fruit as an alternative to fresh, she's able to stretch that \$6 to buy two packages of frozen fruit, two canned fruits and some applesauce. As a result of Cooking Matters and SNAP Nutrition Education, Lareese is providing healthier, more nutritious foods for her family.

Myths about the ways in which SNAP recipients spend their benefits continue to exist, including that the program's participants spend their money on unhealthy fast-food options. A recent study by Share Our Strength supports our first-hand experience with SNAP recipients who are eager to provide their families with healthy foods. We surveyed 1,500 low to middle income families—the majority of whom are SNAP or WIC recipients—about their cooking habits. In the study, which was supported by the ConAgra Foods Foundation, 85 percent of families rated eating healthy meals as important, and eight in 10 families reported they cook dinner at home at least five times a week. In a typical week, a low-income family eats fast food for dinner one night a week. As income decreases, the frequency of eating dinner made at home increases. But for all the cooking low income families are doing, they're struggling to make healthy meals because their food budgets are limited.

The study found that three in four families agree that cooking healthy meals at home is realistic, but only about ½ of those we surveyed are able to make healthy meals most nights of the week. That is far too many families whose healthy eating aspirations aren't matching up to their daily realities. When asked what was keeping them from eating healthy meals, cost was the most commonly cited barrier. Healthy options like fresh produce, lean protein and seafood are commonly passed over at the store because of their price. These findings demonstrate strong support for the continued Federal investment in Federal nutrition programs, including SNAP and SNAP Nutrition Education.

We recognize the challenges presented by the current fiscal environment, and that the Committee is under pressure to find savings this year. However, cutting funding for SNAP—either through policy changes that limit eligibility for the program for millions of Americans who need these benefits, or by lowering benefit levels—would be devastating to the economic and health well-being of our country. Efforts to fight against childhood hunger and promote child nutrition have long enjoyed bipartisan support, and there is a longstanding, bipartisan commitment to protecting SNAP, child nutrition programs, and other nutrition assistance programs in past deficit reduction plans. Congressional committees and the President's bipartisan National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform have sought ways to find cost-savings in Federal programs without cutting funding for anti-hunger programs. We urge you to take the same tack when negotiating the farm bill legislation.

We appreciate the opportunity to submit testimony on this important issue, and look forward to the Committee's actions moving forward on the Nutrition title of the farm bill.

COMMENT OF MICHAEL SHORE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:49 p.m.

City, State: Ashland, AK

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Nutrition is the only basic reason for food. Filling bellies not packages, shelves or bank accounts. We eat so we can live. We have been trained to accept eating junk as fun and easy. Education by advertisers is effective. What good do you do the nation if you poison the citizens and the farmland? Best Practices means food for the coming generations. Stop GMO Stop Mono cropping Stop poisoning the land and sea. Educate the people to be healthy; to make healthy choices and jail the producers and users of poison who lay waste to our very landscape in the name of profit. Do that now or just wait for Mother Nature to call time out for humans . . . she can do it. Either way bad practices will be ended.

COMMENT OF ERNIE SHORTNESS

Date Submitted: Monday, March 26, 2012, 9:04 p.m.

City, State: London Mills, IL

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Field Crops

Size: 1,000+ acres

Comment: Dear Congressmen:

If I could allocate resources for the next 5 years in U.S. agriculture, I would eliminate crop insurance and direct payments to farmers. Each farmer should have to

make good business decisions about the crops he plants and how aggressively to expand his operation without being bailed out by tax dollars.

I would take the savings from these cuts and upgrade and repair our lock and dam system on the Mississippi river and its tributaries. That will help the U.S. keep pace with increasing foreign competition, and benefit all U.S. farmers and consumers alike.

I thank you for this opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

ERNE SHORTNESS.

COMMENT OF CAROL LYNNE SHOTTENHAMER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012 2:07 p.m.,

City, State: Folsom, CA

Occupation: Retired Computer Analyst

Comment: I voted for you Dan Lundgren now it's your turn to act and protect the farmers and our food. Please do your part in protecting us and our future generations. Don't let big business rule our lives by bad decisions. Help protect America and Americans.

COMMENT OF CASSANDRA SHOUP

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:35 a.m.

City, State: Downingtown, PA

Occupation: Engineer

Comment: Having local food available from farmers in our neighborhoods is very important. It promotes healthy seasonal eating of fresh food which contains more nutritional value than produce which is transported for long distances. I am a first year work share member of a local CSA and having that opportunity allows me the choice to eat the foods I want to put in my body. I do not believe that processed foods, no matter how inexpensive, are the right direction for our society and will limit are ability to continue providing a higher quality of life for all people. Agribusiness does more harm to our economy and environment than it does good. Please cast your vote for what benefits increased food freedom and consider supporting the following:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).

Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.

The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).

Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

COMMENT OF LEE SHROPSHIRE

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 10:28 p.m.

City, State: Nashville, TN

Occupation: Voice-Over Talent for Medical Continuing Ed Online Programs

Comment: I want to eat organic, fair trade, locally produced food, made without pesticides, and non GMO. I want farms to be subsidized to produce the above, and not to be forced to dump their product when quotas are met, while people in this country are starving, and while we can help developing countries. I want congress to stop [Redacted] around and messing with the environment. Stop it. We don't need more gas and oil development, you idiots. We need renewable and sustainable energy sources which will create sustainable jobs. What's the matter with all of you? Get your shit together, and address my largely shared concerns.

Sincerely,

LEE SHROPSHIRE.

COMMENT OF GERRY SHUDDE

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 11:06 a.m.

City, State: Sabinal, TX

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Livestock

Size: 1,000+ acres

Comment: We need to have the Govt. support and encourage small farms. They are the only ones that can supply nutrient rich and clean disease free food. The research is there.

COMMENT OF ANITA SHUMAKER

Date Submitted: Friday, April 27, 2012, 5:12 p.m.

City, State: West Unity, OH

Occupation: College Professor

Comment: It has been said that “America has the best dressed hungry people in the world”. They are our neighbors and members of our communities, as well as your constituents. I support the local food pantry, but we really need your support for a strong farm bill to preserve programs such as SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP. Cutting food programs to the most vulnerable is not the way to balance the budget.

Thank you for your consideration.

ANITA SHUMAKER.

COMMENT OF SHERYL SHUMSKY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:31 p.m.

City, State: Seattle, WA

Occupation: Musician

Comment: Industrialized farming is destructive in so many ways. Please make strong measures now to insure family farms can coexist with larger agribusiness. Also environmental protections insure humane treatment of livestock and Mother Earth. The bottom line is human health balanced with plentiful harvests. I am against GMO because the cat is out of the bag—we have evidence it’s a dubious tactic (super weeds, lack of flavor) yet corporations like Monsanto want to control this market so all tactics become fair game and they can’t foretell the future side effects these GMO’s have likely unleashed. Human health is at stake and a way of life—family owned ranches and farms. Keep this in mind with all dealings with farm policy. Don’t give in to the lobbyists! Listen to the people!

COMMENT OF BRENDA SHUNN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:06 p.m.

City, State: Austin, TX

Occupation: Physical Therapist, Massage Therapist

Comment: I think it’s high time that we do what is morally correct towards our fellow man, fellow beings, land and environment. Our health care costs would not be the highest in the world if the food source was not so unhealthy! I do not support genetic modification at all—unless those plants which are to be genetically modified are in a carefully controlled **Closed** environment—and those foods labeled—it is bad enough that it is a challenge to find food sources that are not affected by thoughtless greed, inhumane environments—even our vegetables now carry products thanks to use of hormones and antibiotics and the likes on defenseless animals—support safe and healthy agriculture!

COMMENT OF ANNE SHUSTER

Date Submitted: Monday, May 14, 2012, 3:24 p.m.

City, State: Pittsburgh, PA

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: Many people work with low salaries. They do not earn enough to pay all expenses and food. The SNAP money is greatly needed in Pennsylvania! Thank you!

COMMENT OF DIANA SHUSTER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:08 p.m.

City, State: Rock Island, TN

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Livestock

Size: 301–500 acres

Comment: I am an American Farmer. I want real people, not big corporate ag, back to raising food the way nature intended. Grass fed and pasture raised. With heirloom varieties—not GMO, hormone, pesticide, and antibiotic ridden products.

Real food for real people—not by science and profit driven entities who care only for the bottom line and have no soul nor conscience!

COMMENT OF HELEN SHUSTER

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 2:55 p.m.

City, State: Rochdale, MA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I work with a group of intergenerational college students from Worcester State University in Massachusetts. We do SNAP outreach to seniors and others in need of assistance. As we help applicants submit their SNAP applications we hear their stories and know that they are truly in need of assistance to buy food. Many lower income seniors often have to choose whether to buy their medications or food and they are often hungry. Food prices are up and this is particularly hard on seniors with fixed incomes. SNAP is one of the best safety net programs with only a 3% level of inappropriate expenditure and is much more efficient than many other wasteful government programs such as military expenditures. SNAP is also a vitally important program for working families who even with two or three jobs find it hard to feed their children. Childhood hunger is a disgrace in this country. If you cut the SNAP budget you will be doing great harm to innocent children and needy families. Cutting SNAP is shortsighted because hungry children and seniors get sick more often and need expensive medical care which is more of a drain on the economy than SNAP. Make the correct and courageous vote to continue to fund in this time of need in the U.S. Do not reduce the deficit on the backs of those who can least afford it and will be most hurt.

COMMENT OF JANET M. SHUTE

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 10:57 p.m.

City, State: New York, NY

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Dear Chairman Lucas,

I understand that tomorrow, May 19th, is the final opportunity to submit testimony to the House Committee on Agriculture on the next farm bill. My district representative is being copied on this letter. I am a senior citizen who is appalled by the lack of attention to the needs and issues that dedicated young farmers are facing. I was also distressed to hear that only one beginning farmer was invited to testify on the challenges and critical needs of the next generation. Monsanto's monopoly is terrifying to those of us who want our children and grandchildren to grow up in a healthy fashion. Even more discouraging is the short sighted lack of planning and support for hard working young people who are turning up in large numbers to reclaim our land—many using organic practices—**When It Would Cost So Little!** I want to share my support for programs that help the next generation of growers build strong farm. It is estimated that 125,000 farmers will retire in the next 5 years. It is absolutely critical that farm bill programs help support young farmers to get started in this challenging field. I ask that the Committee endorse all of the provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236), including:

- Mandatory funding for Individual Development Accounts at \$5 million per year. This program helps new farmers raise capital to start farm businesses and is tested and proven by organizations like Practical Farmers of Iowa and the California Farmlink.
- Mandatory funding for the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program at \$25 million a year. This program funds essential education for new farmers around the country.
- Authorization of a new microloan program, to enable young and beginning farmers to better access FSA loan programs.
- Revision of FSA rules to make loan programs more accessible to more young and beginning farmers.
- Reaffirmation of the existing cost share differential for BFRs within EQIP. Also, reaffirmation of the advance payment option allowing beginning and socially disadvantaged producers to receive an advance payment for the project's costs for purchasing materials or contracting services, but increase the limit on the advance payment from 30 percent to 50 percent of costs.
- Amending the Farm and Ranch Land Protection Program (FRPP) to make farm viability part of the purpose of the program and to give discretionary authority to the eligible entities that implement the program to give priority to easements

with an option to purchase at the agricultural use value, deals that transfer the land to beginning and farmers and ranchers, applicants with farm succession plans, and other similar mechanisms to maintain the affordability of protected land.

These and other provisions within the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act will help new growers succeed and I urge you to include them in the next farm bill. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony to the House Committee on Agriculture on the next farm bill.

Sincerely,

JANET M. SHUTE.

COMMENT OF MARY SHYSHKA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:28 p.m.

City, State: Bayonne, NJ

Occupation: Hospital Administration

Comment: Agree with everything in the e-mail—support small farms without pressure from big ag, dismantle CAFO'S, label GMO's, give us a right to organic foods and raw milk, etc.

COMMENT OF AISHA SIAL

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:57 a.m.

City, State: Seattle, WA

Occupation: Gardener

Comment: Science guided by righteousness shows us a way out of the destructive practices used by as such producers as Monsanto. To attract the Mercy of Our Master and Creator more of us growers should to be using methods such as permaculture and grass fed livestock.

30:31 "So set thy face to the service of religion as one devoted to God. And follow the nature made by Allah—the nature in which He has created mankind. There is no altering the creation of Allah. That is the right religion. But most men know not."—*Holy Quran*.

COMMENT OF KATHRYN SIBLEY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:58 p.m.

City, State: Richmond, CA

Occupation: Office Worker

Comment: I support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative. Maintaining a strong food stamp program that will feed the millions who have lost jobs or are working with subsistence pay, thanks to our Federal government's bad management.

Please do not make bad farm policy even worse. It's time to take a different approach and start over with real reform. As a resident of Richmond, California, I am watching the development of solid urban farming opportunities that can be part of a citizenry-oriented farm bill.

COMMENT OF KEVIN GERSHOM SICARD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:38 p.m.

City, State: Independence, OR

Occupation: English Teacher

Comment: U.S. food and agricultural policy must focus on adopting best agricultural practices that put the health of its citizens, the land and the livelihood of farmers and farm workers over the interests of industrial agriculture lobbyists.

Unfortunately, we as a nation are not there yet. Not only are some politicians out of touch with the values of the American people, but corporate agribusiness has a stranglehold on our regulatory system and our political leaders.

But with your help Rep. Schader, we can change that.

Farmers and eaters across the U.S. benefit from a fair and healthy farm bill. We need your help today. Right now the House Agriculture Committee is accepting public comments on this critical piece of legislation.

I request that you do the following:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

COMMENT OF SARAH SIEBACH

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 10:18 p.m.

City, State: Madison, WI

Occupation: Student

Comment: Dear Chairman Lucas,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony to the House Committee on Agriculture on the next farm bill. My district representative is being copied on this testimony. I am a young farmer and I'd like to share my support for programs that help the next generation of growers build strong farm businesses. As it's estimated that 125,000 farmers will retire in the next 5 years, it's absolutely critical that farm bill programs help citizens get started in this challenging field. I ask that the Committee endorse all of the provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236), including:

- Mandatory funding for Individual Development Accounts at \$5 million per year. This program helps new farmers raise capital to start farm businesses and is tested and proven by organizations like Practical Farmers of Iowa and the California Farmlink.
- Mandatory funding for the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program at \$25 million a year. This program funds essential education for new farmers around the country.
- Authorize a new microloan program, to enable young and beginning farmers to better access FSA loan programs.
- Revise FSA rules to make loan programs more accessible to more young and beginning farmers.
- Reaffirm the existing cost share differential for BFRs within EQIP. Also, reaffirm the advance payment option allowing beginning and socially disadvantaged producers to receive an advance payment for the project's costs for purchasing materials or contracting services, but increase the limit on the advance payment from 30 percent to 50 percent of costs.
- Amend the Farm and Ranch Land Protection Program (FRPP) to make farm viability part of the purpose of the program and to give discretionary authority to the eligible entities that implement the program to give priority to easements with an option to purchase at the agricultural use value, deals that transfer the land to beginning and farmers and ranchers, applicants with farm succession plans, and other similar mechanisms to maintain the affordability of protected land.

These and other provisions within the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act will help new growers succeed and I urge you to include them in the next farm bill. As a college student, I've seen the tremendous good that SARE grants and others generate both providing opportunities to start/continue agricultural studies here at school and outreach with the community. We couldn't progress without them! I also hope that when I finish studying, I can begin work on my own orchard; I know this will be impossible to achieve without the blessing and backing of the government to get started. Please continue to encourage and enable hopeful farmers!

Sincerely,

SARAH SIEBACH.

COMMENT OF ARLIE SIEBERT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:23 p.m.

City, State: Scotland, MD

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Field Crops, Other

Size: 301–500 acres

Comment: I have farm interests in Maryland and Kansas. Conservation programs, helping new farmers get started and a huge health and business concerns with GMO's and glyphosates are my particular interests this year in the farm bills.

COMMENT OF DAN SIEBERT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:32 a.m.

City, State: Louisville, KY

Comment: My family is friends with numerous small family farmers who provide us with an abundance of delicious safe food. These farmers work hard and make limited amounts of money and they care dearly about the land, water and air. Please work to continue the law for subsidized farmers to work sustainable conservation practices on their farms. Thank you.

COMMENT OF HEIDI SIEBERTS

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 11:00 a.m.

City, State: Talent, OR

Occupation: Unemployed

Comment: We need to protect and support organic, small farmers.

COMMENT OF HEIDI SIEGELBAUM

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 11:13 a.m.

City, State: Seattle, WA

Occupation: Sustainable Tourism Consultant, Eco. Dev.

Comment:

- Funding for farmland acquisition
- Subsidies for new farmers
- Funding for RBOG and RBEG programs
- New farmer program funding
- Farm to school initiatives

COMMENT OF ANJA SIEGER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:57 a.m.

City, State: Franklin, WI

Occupation: Writer

Comment: At the age of 25 my health has already been compromised from exposure to pesticides, genetically modified wheat, corn and soy. Many of my friends in my generation have suffered similarly. This takes a toll on our ability to perform and function in a job in an already blighted economy. I urge you to consider the incredible illness so many Americans currently suffer from large scale farming.

I support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF DAN SIGMANS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:17 p.m.

City, State: Perkasio, PA

Occupation: Student

Comment: Agricultural subsidies in the U.S. severely distort the world commodities market and drive the cost of certain unhealthier foods lower than other foods within the U.S. Therefore, reform the agricultural subsidies so that the only ones that remain are those that encourage conservation and sustainable agricultural practices.

COMMENT OF LING SIGSTEDT

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 9:56 a.m.

City, State: Denver, CO

Occupation: Art Director

Comment: The people have a basic right to be protected from monopolistic organizations like Monsanto, who are trying to control our food source for their own profit. A union of truly free and unassociated individuals needs to hold them accountable. What good is any other legislation if greed and unbridled science dominates farming? Protect the bees, limit Monsanto, legalize raw milk and protect farmers from frivolous patent law suits. If the FDA won't rise to the occasion, the state must do it. I wish America would ban GM crops.

COMMENT OF SUSAN SILBER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:19 p.m.

City, State: Berkeley, CA

Occupation: Environmental Educator

Comment: We need more organic produce, and to support local farmers! Our farm bill needs to reflect our need to provide nutritious organic produce to our children!

COMMENT OF AMY SILBERSCHMIDT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:13 p.m.

City, State: St. Paul, MN

Occupation: Medical Student

Comment: We need a farm bill that promotes healthy eating. It no longer makes sense to subsidize corn and not apples (or other healthy foods). I would love to see incentives for organic farms that keep our environment and our farm workers healthy. Subsidizing corn to make unhealthy food cheap is one major factor driving obesity and related health complications in our country. As a future physician, I can rail all I want at patients to lose weight. I can "raise awareness" about health disparities and poor access to healthy food. But to really help people be healthy, we need to make it accessible and affordable. And that means changing the farm bill.

COMMENT OF THOMAS SILLIMAN

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 16, 2012, 10:24 a.m.

City, State: Enumclaw, WA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Dairy

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Dear Sirs,

I would like to see a farm bill that limits the payout to absentee farm owners and corporations. The current system seems to benefit corporations with lobbyist power. I think it is important to provide help for small family farms. Organic and traditional farms need support. Help with loans, insurance, and marketing are key areas. The reduction of subsidies for crops and industry that really need no assistance should be considered.

THOMAS SILLIMAN.

COMMENT OF PATRICIA SILVA

Date Submitted: Friday, April 13, 2012, 12:13 p.m.

City, State: Albuquerque, NM

Occupation: Service Coordinator for Low Income Elderly

Comment: I service 225 residents that are low income elderly and disabled who are in such great need of food. I run a food pantry once a month but with the need today it is not as much as is needed. Also most of these people are now seeing their food stamps cut right in half! Help us fight hunger in America—this is not an American standard to see people go hungry!

COMMENTS OF SANDRA SILVA

Date Submitted:

City, State: Chicago, IL

Occupation: Senior Healthcare Consultant

Comment: We need to encourage localized farming not factory farms, such that we are eating seasonal, locally grown, sustainable food. We need not emphasize export crops to the detriment of our own population. Keeping farming localized means less transportation from farm to plate, our population gets fed healthier food and we do not need to import basic food for our population. Also less petrol products and less antibiotics used in localized farming allowing farm animals to grow as nature intended. Also more people are employed on smaller local farms than on factory farms. More sustainable, healthier for everyone concerned.

Date Submitted: Monday, May 14, 2012, 10:38 a.m.

Comment: We need to fix our food distribution system such that we produce real food locally, in a affordable, sustainable, humane and environmentally safe for the Earth and all species of the Earth. If we were to produce food closer to the population that consumes it we would not overuse petroleum products in transport. We need to stop overemphasizing export crops, so we do not have to import basic food for our own population. Every one of our population is worthy of respect and to have his/her basic needs met.

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 11:34 a.m.

Comment: I see the effects of questionable food stuffs on seniors, *i.e.*, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, heart disease, diabetes, if we were to stop subsidizing the corn and soy bean growers to grow GMO corn or soy and those growers would grow their crops as they did before massive petroleum fertilizers and GMO technology became pervasive, we could save our topsoil, grow more nutritious corn and soybeans and have a healthier population.

COMMENT OF LOUISE SILVERMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:12 p.m.

City, State: North Myrtle Beach, SC

Occupation: Retired/Part-Time Health Consultant

Comment: As someone interested in helping people achieve and maintain optimal health I understand the importance of nutrition and the importance of organic farming and sustainable practices.

COMMENT OF DOROTHY SIMKANIN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:34 p.m.

City, State: Lackawanna, NY

Occupation: Quality Control Inspector

Comment: You Are What You Eat. Genetically altered, growth hormones, and massive doses of antibiotics have been introduced into our food. I personally would prefer organically grown food. Farmers who grow organic produce and cattle should be rewarded and supported by us and our government. It is a fact that we are what we eat, how much of this altered food will we eat before we become genetically altered also?

COMMENT OF CONNIE SIMMONS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:45 p.m.

City, State: North Port, FL

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Please support organic and family farmers. We need to stop subsidizing huge mega farms that are destroying America and our farmland. Stand up for all Americans. Thank you.

COMMENT OF KATRINA SIMMONS

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 12:30 a.m.

City, State: Sarasota, FL

Occupation: Executive Assistant

Comment: Locally grown produce is critical to our survival. Both as a community and as a healthy country.

COMMENT OF KERI J. SIMMONS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:35 p.m.

City, State: San Jose, CA

Occupation: Graduate Student, Master of Public Health Program, San Jose State University

Comment: Dear Congress,

I am a graduate student of the Master of Public Health program at San Jose State University. I am writing because I believe all Americans should have equitable access to healthy, organic, and affordable foods produced in a sustainable manner. As a young adult looking to have a future and family, I am discouraged due to America's current food system. American people have spoken—we demand food reform. We must feed our children only the most nourishing foods to expect America to continue as a powerful global contributor. For these reasons, I ask you to please join me and millions of Americans in supporting the following:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Thank you,

KERI J. SIMMONS.

COMMENT OF LIZ SIMMONS

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 15, 2012, 12:23 p.m.

City, State: Denver, CO

Occupation: Editor

Comment: I'd like to urge you to use the 2012 Farm Bill to expand access to healthy, affordable foods, rather than reduce access to those who need it the most. Cutting \$36 billion in SNAP is the exact opposite of what we should be doing. Low income people already have a tough enough time trying to stay healthy in this economy; are you trying to make it even worse?

COMMENT OF JEFF SIMMS

Date Submitted: Friday, April 27, 2012, 2:46 p.m.

City, State: Chicago, IL

Occupation: Human Services

Comment: I have seen firsthand how vital a support food pantries and SNAP can be for working families during recessions. Please support funding for the Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) in the upcoming farm bill.

COMMENT OF LOIS SIMONEAUX

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:31 p.m.

City, State: Hernando Beach, FL

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: Please keep food supply safe and protect small producers. Stop subsidies to corporations and to those not growing crops.

Tax dollar waste starts here. Make crop insurance affordable and cap payouts.

Support American family farmers, not unidentifiable, tax loophole using faceless corporations.

COMMENT OF AUDREY SIMONSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:20 p.m.

City, State: Rolfe, IA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Field Crops

Size: 301–500 acres

Comment: Please, please keep the funding for school lunches and breakfasts for those kids who don't get enough food at home. Keep the agricultural businesses honest and let us know what their products will do to our general health.

COMMENT OF MICHELLE SIMONSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:26 p.m.

City, State: Fairfax, CA

Occupation: Education

Comment: I know that you know the right thing to do that will support the best quality of food and I trust you will do it. Thank you, it means so much to all of us.

COMMENT OF DULCEY SIMPKINS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:22 p.m.

City, State: Westminster, CO

Occupation: Research Manager

Comment: I support the full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).

Rather than funding entitlements for agribusiness, our nation would benefit far more by fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.

Our agricultural sector would also benefit from the implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236), and most of all from maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

COMMENT OF JAMES SIMPLICIANO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:25 p.m.

City, State: Lahaina, HI

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Field Crops, Specialty Crops, Vegetables, Other

Size: 50–150 acres

Comment: Here on Hawaii we have all our food imported, and it should be grown all here. We need to support our local farmers in growing healthy fresh food. Our soil is rich and our future farmers such as Mao organic farm is pioneering towards training young leaders, and future farmers. I too am a socially disadvantaged farmer, and need your support.

COMMENT OF HEATHER SIMPSON

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 11:18 a.m.

City, State: Belen, NM

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: As a teacher, one of my objectives is to encourage my students to be responsible citizens. I believe our government should lead the way on supporting a farm bill that encourages and demonstrates what responsibility looks like in agriculture.

Please fully fund conservation programs and make sure subsidies are tied directly to compliance with the conservation programs.

Please maintain the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Please fully endorse all of the provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).

Thank you for your hard work and considering making the right example for our children.

Sincerely,

HEATHER SIMPSON.

COMMENT OF MEAGHAN SIMPSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:57 p.m.

City, State: Fortuna, CA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Greenhouse/nursery, Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: We want USA farm policies to rise up to the best in the world. The best is very safe and healthy and rooted in our strict certified organic farms standards such as California Certified Organic and Oregon Good Tilth certified organic farm standards. These standards include everything from the organic heirloom natural fertile seeds, the certified organic fertilizers, herbicides, pesticides, insecticides. USDA organic standards are phony as USDA has been cheating and perverting real certified organic standards ever since mid 1990s when millions of USA citizens told USDA we want certified organic foods in our super markets everywhere . . . And we must revoke USDA's right to even use "organic" on labels until they conform to

C.C.O.F. standards. USDA must be mandated to tell the truth and give full disclosures of the commercial poison chemical products and genetically modified plant strains now! We need the very best quality regulations for inspections provided by fully reformed and trained gov agencies . . . do not put our safety and health inspections in the hands of private big ag-biz business! This has proven to be an awful bad grim policy as USDA foods are banned in other countries due to the ag poisons, the antibiotics and hormones, the very sick mad-cow-diseases and way over the top bacteria! USDA standards have been getting worse and worse and worse ever since Ronald Reagan imprudently approved private industry over=sight inspections over gov USDA. USDA has been negligent and lives are on the line. Technology is available for great testing and must be used. Like in the Gulf of Mexico which is very much still very polluted. The sea foods industry in gulf is using inspections where they smell the sea food sniff test for any smell of petroleum!?

This is bad awful stupid because the poisons that are the most killer do not have smell or visibility.

The green wave in USA consumers has been stating for decades that we want the world's best standards. We want these standards for our foods, and for the bees must recover from pesticides and herbicides and GMOs. Also ag farmers and laborers are at great risks and harms working in chemically polluted farms and this is why soo many people do not want to work in chem farms!

COMMENTS OF GINA SIMS

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 16, 2012, 12:57 a.m.

City, State: Chico, CA

Occupation: Educator

Comment: Please include these priorities:

- support local, sustainable food producers
- continue to fund farmers' market, farm to school, and beginning farmer rancher programs
- stand up to big businesses and **Stop** allowing high sugar, high salt, highly processed foods to our children via school meals!
- support school gardens
- Fund organic agriculture and research

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012 2:06 a.m.

Comment: Please:

- do **Not** cut SNAP funds! Do not take food from hungry American families.
- fund more fresh, local, seasonal, organic foods in schools! Many children eat 3 meals a day at school now, and family farmers are struggling. Help create sustainable food systems so communities can feed themselves.
- fund farmers' markets, organic research, and beginning farmer rancher programs.

COMMENT OF SANDRA SIMS

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 9:31 p.m.

City, State: Brentwood, MD

Occupation: Nonprofit

Comment: I urge you not to cut funding for SNAP, WIC and other vital programs that ensure the health of our citizens.

Do not balance the budget on the backs of working people and our country's most vulnerable citizens—children and the elderly.

By repealing the Social Services Block Grant, it would be cutting home care and meals programs in many states and ending the only consistent source of state funding to help victims of elder abuse or neglect.

Repealing the Prevention and Public Health Fund, means eliminating funding for evidence-based health promotion and disease prevention programs.

Vote **No** on the current House budget package.

COMMENT OF SASCHA SIMS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:32 p.m.

City, State: Atlanta, GA

Occupation: Fitness Instruction

Comment: It would be possible to produce food sustainably if more people financially supported the cause, the same way we spend so much money on convenience

food and fast food. Urge people to vote with their dollar, and support local and sustainable farming . . . and give farmers the support they need to do so.

COMMENT OF ANDREW SINGER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 3:18 a.m.

City, State: Saint Paul, MN

Occupation: Illustrator

Comment: The farm bill needs to reward better land conservation and stewardship and those who produce food organically and/or with fewer pesticides, herbicides, chemical fertilizers and GMOs. The pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers are ending up in our drinking water (both wells and town systems) or in the Mississippi River and Gulf of Mexico, where they're contributing to algae blooms and marine "dead zones" where no sea life can survive. GMOs are proving to be toxic to beneficial insects (like butterflies and bees) and little research has been done to look at long term toxicity to humans (of things like corn that creates its own BT, a neurotoxin). Also, organic producers are experiencing "genetic drift" where pollen from GM corn is contaminating organic corn (or other crops) and preventing it from getting organic certification, particularly when it comes to exports. These chemical/GMO intensive agribusiness forms of agriculture are also much more energy/petroleum intensive.

It's time that congress looked at more sustainable forms of farming. They should:

1. Fully endorse all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
2. Fully fund conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and make sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
3. They should implement all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
4. And they should Maintain the EQIP Organic Initiative.

COMMENT OF KRISTY SINGLESTAD

Date Submitted: Thursday, March 22, 2012, 10:37 a.m.

City, State: Waseca, MN

Occupation: Food and Nutrition Student

Comment: As future Registered Dietitian, I understand the importance of improving the diet of American's through increased consumption of healthy foods such as fruits and vegetables. And, as an individual who grew up on a family-owned farm, I understand the challenges farmers face and hard labor that goes into crop production. That is why I strongly support programs that bringing together these two shared interests. As the details of the 2012 Farm Bill are discussed, I hope you, too, support the assistance of programs that expand and promote farmers markets and the purchasing of fresh fruits and vegetables in schools. These programs will ultimately benefit both the farmer and improve the health of the nation.

COMMENT OF JOY SIPE

Date Submitted: Tuesday, April 24, 2012, 12:26 p.m.

City, State: Bethel Park, PA

Occupation: Software Engineer

Comment: I would like to see Congress implement the proposals made by the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition in their publication *Farming for the Future: A Sustainable Agriculture Agenda for the 2012 Farm Bill*,* a copy of which can be found at the following website: <http://sustainableagriculture.net/publications/>. Thank you.

COMMENT OF CHERYL SITTLE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:56 a.m.

City, State: White River Junction, VT

Occupation: Senior Citizen

Comment: Food quality and the freedom to have access to it is of utmost importance for quality of life and economic reasons. Bad health is much more expensive

*The information referred to is retained in Committee file.

then high quality foods. Citizens are happier and more productive when they have their health and vitality.

COMMENT OF SUSAN SIVELY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:25 p.m.

City, State: Brooklyn, NY

Occupation: Attorney

Comment: Organic family farms are the future I want to see in this country, not the inhumane, environment-hostile, public health-threatening agribusiness I don't want to buy from.

COMMENT OF NELS SIVERSON

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 3:34 p.m.

City, State: Summerfield, FL

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Poultry/poultry products

Size: 301-500 acres

Comment: The food industry is holding the American public hostage, selling us least cost products with least nutritional value at the cost of the environment and our national health. High fructose corn syrup, trans-fats, highly processed foods resulting in a population that finds itself on the brink of diabetes, obesity, & heart disease. How about subsidizing fruits, vegetables, rather than corn, soy and wheat?

COMMENT OF MARY SKETCH

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 02, 2012, 2:46 p.m.

City, State: Durham, NC

Occupation: Student

Comment: It seems to me that to use a singular farm bill as a means to legislate all aspects of agriculture in the United States. After taking a course this year at Brown University on Sustenance and Sustainability, I have learned that the entire realm of agriculture and production cannot be encased in one definition and set of guidelines. Environmentally, conditions vary from region to region along with cultural and economic factors. This is where the issue of generalization across the board in the form of the farm bill comes in. On a more specific note, I feel that several sources of funding that are outlined in the farm bill do not necessarily reflect its ideologies and goals. For instance, it is important throughout the country to reinvigorate farming. Most farmers are above the age of 65 and we need to encourage and support the entrance of young farmers into the field. There is not adequate funding to support this goal and I propose that funding is increased for the 2012 Farm Bill.

COMMENT OF JENNIFER SKINNER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 5:18 p.m.

City, State: Fairfield, ID

Occupation: Caregiver, Holistic Therapist

Comment: We live in time where the protection of the knowledge of how to produce healthy food and live in respect with the land is absolutely critical. Our modern farming methods may have produced food faster than ever before but at a huge cost to the quality of life and our environment. Cutting funding to such important programs as organic food research, food stamp availability, *etc.* only puts a nail in the coffin labeled "concern for the American people", with the nails driven in by corporate interests controlling our house and senate and the coffin being carried out for viewing by the representatives and senators themselves. I urge you, Mike Simpson, coming from a state that prides its agricultural products and family built ranches, to do everything to protect organic, small producers, and the choice of the American people to eat healthy.

COMMENT OF SU SKJERSAA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:24 p.m.

City, State: Bend, OR

Occupation: Registered Nurse, Retired, Artist, Doc. Ministry

Comment: Please support sustainable farming and also the small independent farmers.

The overtake of Monsanto and other seed and chemical companies are poisoning our food, waters, air and land with polluting chemicals that will take centuries to correct. Let's start now, save our children, wild life and everything that grows on the land and sea. Farm with good health in mind.

COMMENT OF DAVID SKLAR

Date Submitted: Monday, May 14, 2012, 3:27 p.m.

City, State: Greenwood, IN

Occupation: Nonprofit

Comment: Many people in this country are struggling to make ends meet at no fault of their own. Now is not the time to cut back the SNAP program that is keeping millions of Americans, especially children, from going hungry every day. Do not cut the SNAP program.

COMMENT OF JUDY SKOG

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 11:35 a.m.

City, State: Madison, WI

Occupation: Retired Physical Therapist

Comment: I want to eat fresh organic vegetables, fruit and cheese, and to eat meat and eggs from animals raised organically, with access to pasture every day. I want dairy products from organically produced milk.

I support SARE and ATTRA and the Beginning Farmers and Ranchers programs. I support all the programs that support sustainable agriculture.

I **Do Not** support subsidies for corn and cotton and wool (whatever the 5 were from WWII). Nor do I support subsidies for oil or fracking, if that plays a part in this bill.

I strongly believe in capping the farm payments at income levels of \$250,000. That money should go to small farmers, **Not** to agribusiness. Close those loopholes now, please. No one should get rich from farming, but everyone should be able to make a living at it.

Thank you for listening. I hope you take action on the comments, also.

COMMENT OF LINDSEY SKRDLANT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:09 p.m.

City, State: Monrovia, CA

Occupation: Graduate Student in Biomedical Sciences

Comment: As a child of a NE 3rd District family farmer, I stay up to date on the latest Farm Regulations. I am troubled by many of the attempts to damage family farms and our arable land to cater to industrial agribusiness. I support the full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286); the implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236); and the full funding of conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.

COMMENT OF COURTNEY SKYBAK

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 1:53 a.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Landscape Designer

Comment: It is imperative that our new farm bill support small-scale farms, and those using organic and sustainable methods. The bill should absolutely not support the production of GMO crops.

COMMENT OF RUTH SLABACH

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 7:29 a.m.

City, State: Brownsburg, IN

Occupation: Registered Nurse

Comment: I support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.

- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Please do not allow giant commodity farmers and insurance companies to walk away with billions in taxpayer dollars while putting the land, soil and environment at greater risk. It's time for real reform and a healthy organic future! Please pass a **Healthy** farm bill and support our local organic farmers!

Sincerely,

RUTH SLABACH.

COMMENT OF MARIANNE SLADEK

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 11:03 a.m.

City, State: Denver, CO

Occupation: Logistics

Comment: I presume you are referring to a non-producer of ag products. I do work, and travel for a living and view ag all the time!

Please tie soil erosion and wetland conservation to insurance subsidies.

Also please continue to help farmers who are just starting out and small farmers.

Please do not allow large company lobbyists to corrupt our food supply with greed before care. The policy of supporting greed is destroying our country.

COMMENT OF DEBORAH SLAYTON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:06 p.m.

City, State: Kingsland, AR

Occupation: Small Business Development

Comment: The Delta is continuing to lose population. In 12 Arkansas counties the population declined by more than 25,000. These rural communities cannot attract businesses. They have to have the resources to build new businesses, grow existing businesses and train entrepreneurs and employees.

Rural development is critical. I ask that you please consider this as you consider the farm bill. Please continue to support the development and growth of small rural businesses. Give them the tools and resources they need to grow profitably and successfully. Thank you.

COMMENT OF PAM SLOANE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:23 p.m.

City, State: Old Greenwich, CT

Occupation: Retired Teacher, Gardening Activist

Comment: Who benefits from current practices? Change is needed to insure the safety and health of our soil, of the produce that comes from that soil to our home tables and ultimately into our bodies. We may need to take a step backwards to a simpler time when smaller farms produced more nutritious food with no pesticides or herbicides or GMOs. We need to consider the exploding health costs created by our poor farm practices. Best practices in other countries like France and Italy need to be studied. We can do it. We can restore health to our food production if we get our priorities in order. People first, profits will follow.

COMMENT OF ANN SLOBOD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:14 p.m.

City, State: Berkeley, CA

Occupation: Business Manager (Architecture)

Comment: In the next farm bill, please think about long-range future of our country. We need clean, healthy food & agricultural practices to ensure our physical and economic health. The health consequences of standard/chemical-based and subsidy-based farming are detrimental to the health of all U.S. citizens.

COMMENT OF CECILEY SLOCUM

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:29 p.m.

City, State: Providence, RI

Occupation: Medical Field

Comment: This is such important legislature for the health of our country, our land, and our children's future. Nutrition, & what we put in our bodies & soil, is

the basis for our wellbeing or our illness as a society. Please understand that everyone suffers if we do not promote healthy living.

COMMENT OF HELEN SLOMOVITS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:13 p.m.

City, State: Ann Arbor, MI

Occupation: Musician

Comment: Organic and smaller farms need full support rather than all the money going to industrial farming. Regulations should take into account size—*e.g.*, the same safety regulations for factory farms should not apply to small farms. If requirements and regulations will put small farms out of business—there's something that is wrong and needs to change!

COMMENT OF QUINN SLOTNICK

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 02, 2012, 4:56 p.m.

City, State: Missoula, MT

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Field Crops

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: The current structure of commodity payments has caused overproduction, and helped large farmers put their neighbors out of business while costing taxpayers billions of dollars in emergency assistance. The newest farm bill ignores these issues. The current assistance of commodity farming is causing difficulties. Supporting diversification is important. Additionally wetland protection is being removed. It is essential to preserve these areas for their beauty and ability to provide habitat to so many species. There also needs to be a revamped school lunch program that includes more fresh vegetables. Keep up the good work.

COMMENT OF WILLIAM SLOUTHWORTH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:54 p.m.

City, State: Cortez, CO

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Field Crops, Fruits, Poultry/poultry products

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: I've been an organic gardening and farmer since 1951 and recognize the clear benefits to the health of my family, our customers, our livestock, our soil and our water. Protect our rights as small, organic farmers in the face of big agricultural interests that continue to buy opposition in Congress to our rights.

COMMENT OF ROGER SLUGG

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 7:46 p.m.

City, State: Sparks, NV

Occupation: Retired Pharmacist

Comment: I would hope that congress would at least continue food aid in its current form during this time of economic distress. The last thing we need to do right now is try to balance the budget on the backs of needy senior citizens and children who are nutritionally challenged. There is time to balance the budget later when the economy has recovered.

COMMENT OF SALLY SMALL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:19 p.m.

City, State: Delaware, OH

Occupation: Library Circulation Associate

Comment: We really need a farm bill that puts the long-term health and wellbeing of All American consumer first. We must stop subsidizing junky stuff like high fructose corn syrup and other over-processed corn-based ingredients. We also need to move away from chemical-based agriculture to a more natural and balanced approach, that works with nature rather than against it. Over-dependence on pesticides is killing off honey bees (which are needed for proper pollination of many food crops), and is causing the development of chemical-resistant "super weeds" as well as dangerous soil pathogens and spontaneous abortions in livestock. The long-term effects of GMO products have not been adequately studied for safety.

Instead the farm bill should be more supportive of small, family farms and organic agriculture. Policies should help increase the production (and variety) of fruits

and vegetables, and to make these more affordable. Healthy food should be more affordable than the unhealthy often sugary, over-processed corn and soy-laced products that are contributing to American obesity and other costly health issues.

COMMENT OF MARYA SMALL, R.N.

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:10 p.m.

City, State: Tuckahoe, NJ

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Fruits, Greenhouse/nursery, Vegetables, Other

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: As an RN and cofounder of a local organic farm called It's About Community, I am outraged by our government's ongoing subsidizing of giant agricultural corporations which are ravaging the planet as well as the health of our citizens. We have a major obesity problem in our country, yet we subsidize the very food items which are contributing to that problem. We are threatened by the devastating effects of global warming, yet our food system is set up to release even more greenhouse gases into the air. We need a farm bill which works for people rather than the profits of the corporate elite.

COMMENT OF AL SMITH

Date Submitted: Monday, April 16, 2012, 6:41 p.m.

City, State: Galesburg, IL

Comment: These comments were hand delivered to a representative at the hearing. I wish to be assured that this issue is discussed and that I am made aware of the committee's decision.

Hon. FRANK D. LUCAS,

Sir

I understand that you will be conducting a fact-finding session in Galesburg Illinois, one of Ronald Regan's boyhood homes, on March 23, 2012.

First, Welcome!

Second, in the words of our beloved Carl Sandburg;

"I see America, not in the setting sun of a black night of despair ahead of us, I see America in the crimson light of a rising sun fresh from the burning, creative hand of God. I see great days ahead, great days possible to men and women of will and vision."

Third, I also see great days ahead. Fourth, would you please address the following facts with your committee and/or congress as a whole and what your committee's recommendations are going to be to correct them?

High sugar prices harm manufacturers of candies, chocolates, and breakfast cereal.

A 2006 study by the Commerce Department found that for each sugar industry job saved by the sugar program; nearly three food-manufacturing jobs are lost.

The study found that:

- Employment in food companies that use substantial amounts of sugar is declining.
- Imports of food products that contain sugar are growing because it is not competitive to make those products in the U.S.
- Numerous companies have relocated to Canada and Mexico, where sugar prices are much lower.
- Chicago, once the nation's candy manufacturing capital, has lost thousands of jobs.
- In 2004, candy maker Fannie May closed its Chicago factory and Brach has moved its Chicago candy production to Mexico.
- Michigan took a hit in 2002, when Kraft moved its 600-worker LifeSavers factory to Canada in search of low-cost sugar.
- Hershey Foods closed plants in Pennsylvania, Colorado, and California and relocated them to Canada as well.

In my opinion, the entire program should be dismantled over time. I think 10 years would give those affected enough time to adjust to the new-old idea of a free market.

Thank you,

Al Smith, C.M.S.,
[Redacted],

Galesburg, Illinois,
[Redacted].

COMMENT OF BARTON SMITH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:14 p.m.

City, State: Boulder CO

Occupation: Health Professional

Comment: The health and wealth of our American economy is **Directly Connected** to the health of our agriculture, soil, and the quality of our food. Imagine Americans robust and healthy, able to work long hours. Contrast that to American workers with depleted soil, pesticide-sprayed produce, calling in sick to work, and ultimately a dwindling economy.

Please consider the direct, positive economic impact of supporting organic and local agriculture. If our workers become healthier and more intelligent, we ALL make money.

Please **Support** the following initiatives, which directly effects our bottom line in terms of the energy and resourcefulness of our workers:

- The **Full** endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Throwing your **Full** support into these initiatives are creating momentum which will see a very economically rich America by working on the most basic level, the farms and the plates of Americans. Organic food takes a distracted worker doing the bare minimum for 4-6 hours, to a **Fully** competent, inspired person who is willing to work **Very** hard (even for less money) because when workers **Feel** good, they are much more likely to work harder and for longer hours and produce quality products and contribute to a rich economy.

Studies have also shown that the better we **Feel**, the more likely we are to **Spend** and participate in a flowing economy.

This all comes down to the quality of our food. At the farm level, at the kitchen table level, the higher the **Quality** of our food, the higher **Quality** of the work and the workplace. Please support local farms and organic food initiatives! We will see results 100-Fold what we are experiencing right now. Thank you for your support.

COMMENT OF BRUCE SMITH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:32 p.m.

City, State: Detroit, MI

Occupation: Hospitality

Comment: I am deeply concerned about the damage caused by the use of Round-Up both on the environment and health of humans exposed to it extremely toxic side effects.

I also strongly believe we have a right to know if the products we are buying are derived from genetically engineered and genetically modified organisms.

Stop supporting corporate farming over family farms.

COMMENT OF CAROLYN SMITH

Date Submitted: Wednesday, April 11, 2012, 6:06 p.m.

City, State: Silver City, NM

Occupation: Co-op Outreach Coordinator and Food Pantry Manager

Comment: I urge you to increase the funding for the Federal nutrition programs: TEFAP, SNAP, WIC, CSFP and others in this year's farm bill. As manager of the Grant County Community Food Pantry, I have witnessed simultaneously an increase in the numbers of residents in need of food, most of them seniors and a decrease in the amount of TEFAP food available for those who qualify. No one should go hungry in the United States. Thank you!

COMMENT OF CECILY SMITH

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 12:31 p.m.

City, State: Champaign, IL

Occupation: Water Resources Specialist, Prairie Rivers Network

Comment: To the House Committee on Agriculture:

Thank you for your efforts on the farm bill reauthorization. It's well past the time for the farm bill to make sense for producers, taxpayers, and the environment.

I fully support the Senate's adoption of sodsaver provisions for grassland conversions in their farm bill, and urge the Committee to maintain this important soil protection measure in the House version. In addition I hope the House will choose to step up and include a couple of other measures the Senate failed to include in their version:

- (1) Incorporate producer compliance with soil protection measures/other conservation program practices as a requirement for participation in the crop insurance program. It doesn't make sense for farmers to receive insurance payments for losses they could have prevented by acting as good stewards of their land and soil;
- (2) I understand funding cuts are inevitable for farm bill programs. At the same time, the conservation programs the farm bill has funded have saved thousands of acres of productive soils and wetland and wildlife habitats that provide a number of benefits to producers and taxpayers. I would request that when considering where to cut funds in the farm bill, that cuts in conservation programs not be disproportionate to cuts in other farm bill programs.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

CECILY SMITH.

COMMENT OF CHRISTINE SMITH

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 3:58 p.m.

City, State: Bridgehampton, NY

Occupation: Artist, Landlord, Environmentalist

Comment: Our food is so essential to our and our regions and country's well being, for any politician to cave in to huge food money interests such as Monsanto and big CAFO's and vote against it will bring more bad health and even hormone etc disruption to everyone. We are a country founded on decency which means . . . listen to the good science of what is healthy and what we informed consumers want! That will be good for the country and all of you in Congress.

Thank you,

CC SMITH.

COMMENT OF HEATHER SMITH

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 2:43 p.m.

City, State: Bridgewater, MA

Occupation: Homemaker

Comment: Please stop subsidizing foods like corn and soy. Those subsidies are making us the most unhealthy country in the world.

You say you want us to eat fruits and veggies. Put your money where your mouth is.

You say you want new farmers, support them.

You say you want people off food stamps, teach them to cook with basic healthy ingredients.

You say you want a thriving economy, stop feeding the huge corporations more money to make us more unhealthy.

You say you want clean food, stop attacking small farmers who are doing it right and start going after the big corporations who are causing outbreaks of deadly diseases.

Stop bowing down to Monsanto, ADM, Tyson and all the rest. Let us buy what we want from whomever we want. Food freedom is a basic human right, not something to be governed.

COMMENT OF JAN SMITH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:21 p.m.

City, State: Church Hill, TN

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Livestock

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: The lame fencing after storm funding was useless! Why not fund small farms, milk and cheesehouses, free loans with no interest and other problems

farmers are facing, like lack of workers or being able to pay workers. Rebuild barns that were destroyed in the storm.

COMMENT OF JEREMY SMITH

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 10:09 p.m.

City, State: Spearfish, SD

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Dear Chairman Lucas,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony to the House Committee on Agriculture on the next farm bill. My district representative is being copied on this testimony. My partner and I are first year farmers in western SD. We are growing mixed vegetables for our community and trying to help develop a healthy and resilient food system. Neither of us grew up involved in agriculture so we are getting first hand experience with how difficult it is to start up a farm. As a young farmer and I'd like to share my support for programs that help the next generation of growers build strong farm businesses. As it's estimated that 125,000 farmers will retire in the next 5 years, it's absolutely critical that farm bill programs help citizens get started in this challenging field. I ask that the Committee endorse all of the provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236), including:

- Mandatory funding for Individual Development Accounts at \$5 million per year. This program helps new farmers raise capital to start farm businesses and is tested and proven by organizations like Practical Farmers of Iowa and the California Farmlink.
- Mandatory funding for the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program at \$25 million a year. This program funds essential education for new farmers around the country.
- Authorize a new microloan program, to enable young and beginning farmers to better access FSA loan programs.
- Revise FSA rules to make loan programs more accessible to more young and beginning farmers.
- Reaffirm the existing cost share differential for BFRs within EQIP. Also, reaffirm the advance payment option allowing beginning and socially disadvantaged producers to receive an advance payment for the project's costs for purchasing materials or contracting services, but increase the limit on the advance payment from 30 percent to 50 percent of costs.
- Amend the Farm and Ranch Land Protection Program (FRPP) to make farm viability part of the purpose of the program and to give discretionary authority to the eligible entities that implement the program to give priority to easements with an option to purchase at the agricultural use value, deals that transfer the land to beginning and farmers and ranchers, applicants with farm succession plans, and other similar mechanisms to maintain the affordability of protected land.

These and other provisions within the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act will help new growers succeed and I urge you to include them in the next farm bill.

Sincerely,

JEREMY SMITH.

COMMENT OF JULIANNE SMITH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:20 p.m.

City, State: Bountiful, UT

Occupation: Arts Marketing

Comment: As a mom, political science scholar, and environmentally concerned citizen, I know that the farm bill is one of the largest and probably one of THE most impactful pieces of legislation. Its effects have long reach in to many of our economies participating entities.

I write today about mainly two concerns: that this bill be reviewed carefully and amended appropriately to eliminate special subsidies for agricultural entities whose processes contribute to the growing emissions of harmful chemicals in their production methods into the environment and into the food we consume itself.

I am aware and concerned also about companies like Monsanto, who receives subsidies, whose practices stifle natural organic farming and small farmers from competing fairly in the marketplace.

I ask you to **Carefully** consider the over and far-reaching impacts of your decision in this bill, for our Earth and our future generations.

Thank you,

JULIANNE SMITH.

COMMENT OF JULIE SMITH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:00 p.m.

City, State: Alderson, WV

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Livestock

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: As a resident of WV and beginning farmer, I think we need to stop subsidizing huge industrial agribusiness and start supporting smaller farms, especially in our state. WV's economy could be vastly improved if the smaller producers were given a fair shot. Let's revitalize our local state economies and keep the money inside WV! Stop bowing to the powers of the big corps! They are not the one's who elected you, we are, and you are supposed to represent our interests, not theirs!

I support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Give our beautiful state a chance to shine and thrive. There are so many people here who are willing to do this if you just help to remove the barriers, or at the very least, don't set up new barriers.

Quality local food can help West Virginia! Our economy, our health and our communities!

COMMENT OF JULIE SMITH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:10 p.m.

City, State: Lehi, UT

Occupation: Homemaker

Comment: I am a former college student, I supported my husband through dental school and now I am a stay-at-home mother raising our family! I feel very strongly about the food bill! I am a supporter of smaller farms, which are run humanely, especially in sanitary conditions! I want to do all I can to help us have better quality, and cleaner food and conditions in our country for us and our future children!

Sincerely,

JULIE SMITH.

COMMENT OF KATHY SMITH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:04 p.m.

City, State: Cleveland, OH

Occupation: Web Designer and Gardener

Comment: It is good to subsidize more fruits and vegetables, and less meat, soy and corn. It is good also to work on reducing monoculture crop farming and move towards farms with a variety of foods. Also, supporting local beekeepers is good so that bees do not have to be trucked across the country. Thank you!

COMMENT OF KRISTINE SMITH

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 1:34 p.m.

City, State: Conneautville, PA

Occupation: Homemaker

Comment: Please remember the consumers and small farmers who hold not only a proud history in this state but are a vital part of its future. Please protect our

ability to choose for ourselves the foods and products grown locally, healthfully, and sustainably.

COMMENT OF LAURA SMITH

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 9:31 a.m.

City, State: Willsboro, NY

Occupation: Home Grower

Comment: My vision for the future of farming in our country is one that grows closer to sustainable permaculture & away from damaging monoculture corporate factory farms that exploit the land & create desertification. It includes farms that do not rob the soil of its nutrients & replace them w/toxic chemical fertilizers, pesticides & herbicides. I want to be able to grow food for my family w/o fear that my land is being poisoned by nearby farms that sow GMO herbicide resistant crops. There are new studies coming out daily on the damage done by using the above substances. If we continue on the path of status quo, our land will not be able to sustain us much longer. Every effort should be made to promote local, sustainable farming & subsidies should be diverted from factory farms to the small sustainable farm. Studies have further shown that we can feed our nation on sustainable farms. Monoculture factory farming is yesterday's technology & not sustainable. It is deeply concerning that the corporate factory farms have obtained a stranglehold on Congress causing actions that have been damaging to the small farms. Case in point, is the plight of small family hog farmers in Michigan who have been having their pigs destroyed for fear they could escape & become feral hogs. Any breed of pig could escape & become a feral hog. This is a push by corporate factory farms to eliminate the small pig farmer. These pigs posed no more threat to the environment than a factory farm pig. It is imperative to write strong protections into any proposed legislation for the small family sustainable farm to be able to survive & compete with the corporate factory farms. The knowledge is there to create a sustainable future for the U.S. farm. Thank you for allowing us to voice our concerns!

COMMENT OF LEE SMITH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 2:23 p.m.

City, State: Hot Springs, CA

Occupation: Unemployed

Comment: For far too long you have supported five ag producers and now our food supply is limited. I want to see more small farms, more organic farms, more farmers' markets. You have given the biggest food suppliers the right to patent food, it is a slippery slope to ownership of our food supply. There needs to be more diversity in our farm bill.

COMMENT OF LEILANI SMITH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:26 a.m.

City, State: Davenport, IA

Occupation: Registered Nurse

Comment: We live in this great, food producing state. Please help the small, local farmers be productive in so many ways to contribute economically to our great nation and more importantly our local economy! In our school we have started a Farm to School program to help teach kids the importance of where their food comes from. We are very proud and students have written letters to Michelle Obama in hopes she will come during campaign time so that she may speak on our behalf of this great program . . . start small!

COMMENT OF LEVAR SMITH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:54 a.m.

City, State: Forestville, MD

Occupation: Mover/Driver

Comment: Our government has continuously shown us that they have no desire to keep our best interest at heart. They have not fulfilled their duties to the people to give them life liberty and the pursuit of happiness but instead given us death, disease, war, and depression. If we are to become a stronger nation we must first be willing to deliver the basics. Healthy food and water to build healthy minds, body, and spirits.

COMMENT OF LORI SMITH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:06 p.m.
City, State: Blue Springs, MO
Occupation: Transition Specialist in Special Education
Comment: Local organic farmers are more deserving of any subsidies than large farming operations that are abusing animals and poisoning our water supply with their waste and pesticide runoff. **Please** revise the farm bill to reflect and support a healthier America.

COMMENT OF LUCY SMITH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:37 p.m.
City, State: Tulsa, OK
Occupation: Shelver—Artist—Waitress
Comment: It is my belief that bad food and bad food practice are ruining our country. Please vote to support local foods and organic foods that can help our country get healthy and independent. Less dependence on foreign foods and less costs, both fiscal and environmental, on the transport.

COMMENT OF MADLEINE SMITH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:41 p.m.
City, State: Crestview, FL
Occupation: Student/Mother/Wife
Comment: Dear Sir or Madam,
 I have been informed that you are considering slashing enormous amounts of money towards programs that should stay intact. I understand the government is in a very tight spot right now, but you cannot make the American people vulnerable to more hardships. The slashing of funds from nutrition programs is mind boggling. Most families cannot provide for their children and rely heavily on those programs. Also, if you even care about this nation or your children, you should not get rid of direct payments to commodity farmers. Big agricultural farms are just no good. There are many reasons why and since you are part of the Agricultural Committee, I will half assume that you know the risks.
 I fully support and endorse all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286). I also support fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
 The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
 Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

COMMENT OF MARY SMITH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:01 p.m.
City, State: Hotchkiss, CO
Occupation: Retired Teacher
Comment: My grandchildren need **Pure** food! You must support organic foods. The large corporations have failed us and do not deserve our money and support. The health of our people depends on the choices **You** make—so make good ones!
 MARY SMITH.

COMMENT OF MICHELE SMITH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:32 p.m.
City, State: League City, TX
Occupation: Teacher
Comment: I am **Against** any cuts to organic farming, organic farming research, and cuts to beginning farmers. Make the cuts in the segments that Monsanto and other companies like them that support poisoning our food stuffs.

COMMENT OF POLLY SMITH

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 16, 2012, 10:11 p.m.
City, State: Novato, CA
Comment: Dear Chairman Lucas,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony to the House Committee on Agriculture on the next farm bill. My district representative is being copied on this testimony. I ask that the Committee follow their consciences, not the 'dollar'. Our system is corrupt, and we see the discrepancies. As our representatives, it is your responsibility to change this.

Sincerely,

POLLY SMITH.

SUBMITTED STATEMENT BY ROBERT A. SMITH, SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT, FARM CREDIT EAST

Farm Credit East is pleased to submit testimony to the House Committee on Agriculture in regard to the 2012 Farm Bill.

Farm Credit East serves approximately 12,500 customers in the six state region including New York, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Hampshire and Rhode Island. In total we extend \$4.4 billion in credit and provide a number of financial services to help farm businesses be successful including consulting, payroll and accounting assistance, tax preparation and crop insurance. We are the largest lender to agriculture in the Northeast with a market share of farm debt in excess of 60% in the states that we serve. As a farmer-owned cooperative and part of the national Farm Credit System, we serve all types and sizes of farms in our service area. The largest sector of our portfolio is dairy at about 25%, but we also have extensive lending to forest products businesses, greenhouse, nursery, fruit, vegetable, livestock, aquatic (commercial fishing) and farm service businesses.

Farm Credit East has made a strong commitment to supporting young, beginning and small farms with special program incentives to assist these customers. Our Generation NeXt program is working with young women and men on the issues and challenges involved in transferring the farm from one generation to the next.

Farm Credit East finances many operations that are involved in "local foods" through direct marketing channels including community support agriculture (CSA), green markets and at direct farmer markets. We have also financed a number of renewable energy projects and work closely with farm businesses on value-added and renewable energy grants.

Farm Credit Lending in Good and Bad Times

Farm Credit East and the Farm Credit System continued lending throughout the financial turmoil of 2007–2010. We did not change our underwriting standards and when producers faced difficult times in 2008 and 2009 and we stayed with them as they worked their way through the down-cycle.

With this hearing in the Northeast, it is important to recognize that while national net farm income reached record levels in 2011, there are many businesses in the nursery, sod and timber industries which continue to be hurt as a result of the sluggish national economy and the problems in the housing sector, especially low levels of new housing construction.

As the Agriculture Committee considers the credit title, we urge that no new additional regulatory requirements be placed on the Farm Credit System. The reality is that our lending practices are sound and our industry expertise, cooperative structure and strong capital levels (in excess of 16% risk funds) ensure that we are serving our customers in an effective manner focused on their long-term success and meeting our mission as provided in the Farm Credit Act.

While the Farm Credit System is not seeking expanded authorities in 2012 Farm Bill, it is important to understand that there are situations in which food marketing and processing businesses including some involved in "local foods" are not eligible for Farm Credit financing. There are also commercial fishing infrastructure businesses such as docking and ice providers that are essential to commercial fishing, but are not eligible for Farm Credit financing in the same manner that businesses that serve farms are eligible.

Farm Service Agency—Loan Guarantees

Farm Credit East and other commercial lenders work with farmers to use Farm Service Agency (FSA) loan guarantees in situations where the loan may have a weakness, but the long-term prospects for the business are good. With FSA loan guarantees, many farm families are able to obtain credit that might not otherwise be able to do so.

In using FSA loan guarantees, we have found that some farm business structures prevent the farm from obtaining FSA loan guarantee even though the farm involved is a family business. For example, some farms are organized with an operating LLC and an ownership LLC. In these cases, the ownership LLC is not eligible for a FSA guarantee. Ironically, one of the reasons for the operating LLC and ownership LLC

structure is to facilitate generational transfer. We also see a similar disqualification with farm businesses that are owned by a family trust. These FSA limitations are addressed in the Agricultural Credit Expansion Act of 2011 (H.R. 874 and S. 1592) and we encourage these provisions to be included in the 2012 Farm Bill.

Risk Management—Importance of Crop Insurance

The Farm Credit System supports a strong crop insurance program as an important part of the necessary risk management tools that today's farm businesses need. Farm Credit East in conjunction with four other Farm Credit institutions owns *Crop Growers LLP*, a crop insurance agency. We entered the crop insurance business to ensure that more growers throughout our region had access to crop insurance.

Although we have been able to increase crop insurance availability and usage, the reality is that the Northeast remains an under-served area for crop insurance. The diversity of crops grown in this area has meant that some producers do not have workable crop insurance products or in some cases funds have been inadequate for some pilot program efforts. RMA needs to aggressively work with the Northeast farm community and insurance companies on products that will work for a greater variety of Northeast farm products and farm businesses.

Over the past 18 months there has been considerable interest in the LGM-Dairy (Livestock Gross Margin crop insurance for dairy farmers). For some farmers this has been a good tool to manage price and input cost risk by locking in margins. Unfortunately many producers who tried to sign up for LGM-Dairy program were denied because funding levels were not available.

Crop insurance is important in the Northeast for many specialty crops including apples, grapes and vegetables as well as corn, corn silage, and soybeans. The recently agreed to Standard Reinsurance Agreement (SRA) developed by USDA included a provision that if unaddressed will have a very negative impact on crop insurance for specialty crops. For the first time, this SRA included a cap on commissions paid to agents. While we understand the intent, the application of this cap has had a disastrous impact on crop insurance agencies that serve specialty crops—following the establishment of the cap, the price of field crops increased dramatically while price of specialty crops remained level. The net effect of the commission cap with increasing row crop prices has been to shift agent commissions from those that serve specialty crops to those that serve row crops without regard for the effort made to serve producers. Congressional action in the farm bill to address this situation is necessary to ensure continuation of crop insurance for specialty crop growers.

Investments in Rural America and FarmStart

Under the Farm Credit Act of 1971, Farm Credit System institutions are authorized to make mission-related investments, subject to the approval of the Systems' regulator, the Farm Credit Administration (FCA). Farm Credit has been making mission-related investments since 1972 when FCA approved the System investing in farmers notes. Since then FCA has authorized mission related investments in USDA-guaranteed obligations and other rural investments approved on a case by case basis. As of March 2011, the Farm Credit System had approximately \$631 million in rural community investments.

As a result of the Investments in Rural America program, Farm Credit East in conjunction with CoBank established **FarmStart** in 2006. Yankee Farm Credit became part of this program in 2011. The **FarmStart** program allows for us to serve start-up farm businesses that would otherwise not be able to obtain commercial credit. Through **FarmStart** we make investments for working capital of up to \$50,000 in these businesses for a 5 year period. Our specially trained **FarmStart** Advisors work with each **FarmStart** customer on their financial planning to help these young farmers stay on track toward to achieve their business objectives and to establish a positive business and credit history. Since inception of this program in 2006, we have nearly 90 **FarmStart** farms.

Another rural investment made by Farm Credit East was for the establishment of the Genesee Valley Agri-Business Park in Batavia, New York—a shovel ready facility for agriculturally related businesses. The park recently attracted two new dairy processing (yogurt) businesses creating jobs and economic activity in western New York.

It is anticipated that FCA may take action this year on a 2008 proposed rule to provide specific criteria and portfolio limits for Farm Credit System "Investments in Rural America". We encourage the House Agriculture Committee to be supportive of the Investments in Rural America program and not do anything that would limit the Farm Credit System's efforts in this area.

Final Note

Northeast agriculture has both unique opportunities and challenges. We are seeing location of new milk processing facilities to meet consumer demands, good mar-

kets for fresh fruits and vegetables and a growing interest in buying and producing “local foods.” With strong earnings and capital, Farm Credit East is well positioned to serve Northeast agriculture as producers grow to serve customer needs.

It is important to note that Northeast agriculture is not without significant challenges including the negative impact to many industry sectors from the sluggish housing market and the lack of a workable agricultural guest worker program. Our country’s failure to establish an effective agricultural guest worker program threatens the future of labor intensive agriculture and tens of thousands of jobs for American citizens in the Northeast. If as a country we fail to find a workable solution to enable labor-intensive agriculture to maintain the necessary workforce, we will see another part of our economy (dairy, fruit, vegetable and other specialty crops) move offshore where barriers to entry for new agricultural enterprises are minimal.

Farm Credit East and other Farm Credit institution share a strong commitment to serving agriculture and in making the right decisions to serve our customer-members for generations to come. We thank the Agriculture Committee for the decision to hold a hearing in Northeast.

ROBERT A. SMITH,
Senior Vice President,
Farm Credit East,
Cobleskill, NY.

COMMENT OF SANDY SMITH

Date Submitted: Monday, May 14, 2012, 10:34 p.m.

City, State: Kannapolis, NC

Occupation: Housekeeper

Comment: We need to support our farmer s in growing healthy food that has not been genetic modified. This putting farmers out of business is crazy they have valuable knowledge that is important to our future. No company should own a patent on a seed. I feel I should have food that I feel was grown with no pesticides and animals that were raised eating what God created them to eat.

COMMENT OF SHEILA SMITH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:21 p.m.

City, State: Salinas, CA

Occupation: Psychotherapist

Comment: We need agricultural policy that is good for the Earth and good for the majority of the people. This means supporting small and organic production of crops and food animals. We need to stop subsidizing corn and tobacco and mega-farms.

COMMENT OF SHELBY SMITH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:42 a.m.

City, State: Decatur, GA

Occupation: Medical School Staff

Comment: I work in Atlanta, GA at Emory School of Medicine, which trains young doctors who will be the future caretakers of this nation. One of my big concerns is the amount of preventable diseases that today’s doctors are not able to treat due to a broken food system.

Author Chris Sayer says that our food system isn’t actually broken—it’s working as it has been designed. He writes:

“Our system of subsidies and incentives in food production evolved over decades, but it did so with a very clear primary goal: More calories, less cost. It is hard to find a better example of a system that has evolved so successfully to fulfill its original purpose. But like Mickey Mouse’s broomstick in *The Sorcerer’s Apprentice*, our food system seems to have taken on a life of its own. An interesting historical irony: One of the incentives for the cheap calories policy was the discovery at the dawn of World War Two that a large number of applicants for military service were underweight. Oh, how things have changed. One of the leading reasons for disqualification among modern recruits: obesity. The system has done all that we asked and more. Too much more.

Why has this system been so persistent? Often the blame is placed on large agribusiness. They play a role to be sure, but they are as much a byproduct as a cause. They didn’t create the system; the system created them. By rewarding high volume and low price, our current food system is built to favor economies of scale above all else. The more centralized and homogenized a producer be-

comes, the better they compete. They grow more successful, and in turn they encourage the system to cater to their strengths. And so the cycle continues.

But the resiliency of this system isn't derived from its multi-billion dollar benefactors. It is the simplicity of its mandate. More calories, less cost. Just try to find a more concise mission statement."

This system has spawned new health crises, and as the committee considers the 2012 Food and Farm Bill, I urge you to:

- Support our fight against hunger by maintaining and strengthening critical nutrition programs in this time of unprecedented need. We must not solve our budget problems on the backs of those experiencing food insecurity, including our most vulnerable—our children, the elderly, and the disabled;
- Provide an even "plowing" field by fully funding programs that support beginning and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, organic farming, regional farm and food economies, and rural development. We need more farmers and ranchers, more sustainable food production, and more economic opportunity in our food system;
- Support family farmers that really need help, not the biggest farms that don't: End subsidies (aka direct payments and countercyclical commodity programs), and replace them with loophole-free agriculture risk coverage. Additionally, implement a cap on crop insurance premium subsidies;
- Ensure that limited conservation funding maximizes lasting environmental benefits: Limit funds to Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) for animal waste management infrastructure by eliminating the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) Livestock Set-aside and protect the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) from disproportionate cuts, and improve it by ranking applications solely on their conservation benefits.

COMMENT OF STACIE SMITH

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:20 p.m.

City, State: Medford, OR

Occupation: Self-Employed Artist

Comment: My son operates a small organic farm in southern Oregon. This has opened my eyes to the importance of the House Agriculture Committee. I encourage the Committee members to be in alliance with small organic farming operations by supporting the full finding of conservation stewardship programs and by fully endorsing all provisions of HR 3286. I urge this Committee to **Stop** cutting funding for organic research. Small organic farms are our future.

COMMENT OF STEFANIE SMITH

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:39 a.m.

City, State: Toms River, NJ

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Dairy

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: As a small producer of food products, I strongly urge you to consider that family farms are the backbone of the food supply. There are less cases of disease and if there is a problem it's much more easily traced to the source. We need to continue to fund beginning farmers and we need to fund organic research. Soil management and ecology are two things that will create sustainable agriculture.

I would also like to see you fully support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

I would also like see place limitations on crop insurance subsidies and to re-attach soil erosion and wetland conservation requirements to crop insurance programs. Without this the program is just a giveaway to wealthy corporate farms that don't need more taxpayer money.

Thank you.

STEFANIE SMITH.

COMMENT OF TERRA SMITH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:58 a.m.

City, State: Fort Collins, CO

Occupation: Student

Comment: The next farm bill should incorporate more benefits for small, local farms and also provide subsidies for farms that are transitioning to organic/bio-dynamic agricultural practices. Subsidies to huge farms using GMOs and environmentally degrading practices should no longer receive subsidies.

COMMENT OF THERESA SMITH

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 12:39 a.m.

City, State: Aptos, CA

Occupation: Dietitian

Comment: I care about what I eat and the ones I love eat more than the bottom line of big agra corps. Please, if your going to subsidize anything let it be real foods—fruits, veggies non GMO grains *etc.* . . .

I will be watching the arguments and outcomes of this farm bill closely and vote accordingly. Food and health are my issues!

Thank you,

THERESA SMITH.

COMMENT OF TRACI SMITH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:42 p.m.

City, State: Long Beach, CA

Comment: We cannot sustain ourselves on wheat, corn and soy alone. Please come up with programs that help non-corporate farmers grow diverse crops that would bring down the overall cost of the fruits and vegetables that our country so desperately needs.

Don't line your pockets with corporate Ag dollars. Please think about that this country really needs. Monsanto doesn't need more corporate tax breaks and incentives to produce more poisonous genetically modified corn and soy.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF TRACY SMITH

Date Submitted: Thursday, April 19, 2012, 7:24 p.m.

City, State: Chicago, IL

Occupation: Attorney

Comment: It is critical that we not cut nutrition funding. The entitlement aspect of SNAP has allowed the program to expand during this long and deep recession, lifting millions of people out of poverty. TEFAP funding should be tied to unemployment numbers as well as market prices so that it can provide emergency food assistance during times of economic downturn. Congress should clarify that the Secretary of Agriculture has the discretion to purchase bonus commodity product in order to respond to nutritional needs. Hunger is a problem that is not acceptable in our country. Private giving is inadequate to meet this pressing need.

COMMENT OF VICTOR SMITH

Date Submitted: Friday, April 27, 2012, 1:38 p.m.

City, State: Pleasant Hill, CA

Occupation: Disabled

Comment: The U.S. needs to move toward increasing support for organic farming. Pesticides are becoming increasingly ineffective, are killing bees, polluting streams, rivers, groundwater.

Support for GMO's should be eliminated. They are dangerous to humans and wildlife. They have produced no increase in crop production.

COMMENT OF PATRYCE A. SMITH, PH.D.

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:43 p.m.

City, State: Collinsville, OK

Occupation: Holistic Natural Health Consultant

Comment: Enough . . . really?

It is **Past** time to **Stop** assisting the over sized conglomerates that pretend to be **Farmers** . . .

Help the Organic farmers . . . those that are starving in this country of ours . . . due to the horrible chemicals that are allowed to be put on what "they" refer to as food! Really enough . . . What do you think you all are going to eat when there are no other choices for you & your families but the chemical filled soils you are allowing & assisting out there in farm lands?

Sad, sad, sad for sure. Shame on you . . .

COMMENT OF MOLLY SMOLLETT

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 11:43 p.m.

City, State: Las Vegas, NV

Occupation: Indep. Filmmaker

Comment: We need a long awaited organic farm bill. Our country has a history of small farms. We must support the small family farmer. This is what made our country strong. To go against this tradition, will hurt us terribly.

COMMENT OF GREGORY SNADER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:54 p.m.

City, State: Kalamazoo, MI

Occupation: Graphic Designer

Comment: I feel that the U.S. farm bill policy should focus on providing subsidies that encourage the production of healthy food that is easily accessible by people of all income levels and for diversity of crops. I feel that the support for small-scale, diverse agriculture is the most stable and sustainable course for American agriculture. Additionally I feel that the most prudent course of action would be to give additional support to farmers who farm diversely, particularly in the use of open-pollinated seed varieties as opposed to genetically modified varieties. I do not feel that genetically modified seed varieties offer any additional benefit in production of food and do more harm by limiting the supply of seeds to several large companies, thereby encouraging a lack of diversity which creates profit now in exchange for an untenable future.

COMMENT OF RUTH SNEDIC

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:20 a.m.

City, State: West Allis, WI

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I want to see small farmers and organic farmers receive the help they need to give us good food. Take the subsidies away from the large corporate farms and use those monies for the small farms.

COMMENT OF WILLIAM SNIDER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:51 p.m.

City, State: San Diego, CA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: The highest quality, most nutritious food available in San Diego comes from local small farms. Many of these farmers are working with schools to improve lunches. Please do everything you can to support their efforts.

COMMENT OF SUSAN SNIPES-WELLS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:24 p.m.

City, State: Morrisville, PA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: 50-150 acres

Comment: As a small producer, the EQIP program and the Conservation Stewardship Program have been helpful to our farm in increasing revenue and providing jobs. We are an oasis in our community as a farm that is open to the public and provides locally grown food. Government support of the programs we provide has huge benefit to the local community as a food source, an oxygen source, a stream water filtering source, and to the local economy. Our farm bill should support small local agriculture. Locally supported business keeps local dollars spent within the local economy. This is government money well spent!

COMMENT OF JAMES SNIVELY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:38 p.m.

City, State: Smithsburg, MD

Occupation: Retired

Comment: As profitable as monopolistic agribusiness undoubtedly is, the rest of us can't eat their profits. Organic growers deserve the Federal support that is currently monopolized by agribusiness.

COMMENT OF JERRY SNODGRASS

Date Submitted: Thursday, March 22, 2012, 7:10 p.m.

City, State: Geneseo, IL

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Field Crops

Size: 500-999 acres

Occupation: Executive Board, North Central Region, National Association of Conservation Districts

Comment:

National Association Of Conservation Districts Statement

March 23, 2010

House Agriculture Committee

Farm Bill Hearing

My name is Jerry Snodgrass. I am a corn and soybean farmer from Congressman Schillings Congressional District. I live near Geneseo, IL about sixty miles northeast of here. Today I am representing the thoughts and ideas of the National Association of Conservation Districts. 3,500 Conservation districts cover every county in the U.S. and its Territories including all major metropolitan areas. We have 117,000 district directors in these counties. These Soil and Water Conservation Districts were formed in the 1930's as the result of the Dust Bowl. I have been a local district director for 23 years and am currently Chairman of my district in Henry County. I serve on the Executive Board of the Illinois Association. I presently serve on the National Association of Conservation Districts Executive Board representing the eight Midwest states and I am on the NACD Farm Bill Task Force.

Soil and Water Conservation Districts are the local authority to set work priorities and help producers implement practices with accountability. We are the local link between producers and the Natural Resource Conservation Service to implement conservation throughout America. We work not only with farmers and ranchers but with Urban people as well. In my district we worked with NRCS staff as part of an airport expansion plan to help with erosion control during construction and with water retention and drainage after the project was completed. The conservation districts in the Chicago Illinois area did the same only on a much larger scale when O'Hare Airport recently expanded in that city.

NACD appreciates the House and Senate Ag Committees using common sense and working together for a farm bill for the Super Committee. Any additional cuts to conservation programs above the \$23 million that were recommended will put the viability of conservation programs at risk.

We can see that conservation practices have worked for decades. They have kept soil in place and nutrients out of our drinking water and we must continue these practices. We cannot possibly think that we can let conservation take a vacation and then come back in another farm bill in the future and try to play catch up. The cost of conservation projects today maybe much less than what future costs could be, plus the loss of soil and nutrients can never be replaced at any cost. My district has encouraged many local producers to put in waterways and buffer strips using the Continuous CRP and also to seed very highly erodible ground into the 10 year CRP program. Our conservation district has encouraged livestock producers to us EQIP money for waste handling projects. Everyone understands the current financial crises in this country but we must also look at the long-term investment in conservation and the good it will do.

NACD supports the consolidation of programs in Title II of the next farm bill. Individuals and private landowners will benefit from consolidation when programs are easier to access, manage, and understand. With most producers having access to electronic communications more farm programs could possible have pre approval applications online. This would ease the amount of time NRCS staff would need to put a practice on the ground. These programs provide a strong risk management tool for all producers to mitigate risk for everyone. What is protected out in the country may very well benefit those in the non rural areas as well by slowing flooding and

keeping their drinking water safe. Keep in mind that as consolidation occurs, funding levels **Must** be maintained to put conservation on the ground.

Locally-led, incentive based conservation practices are the key to protecting all of our natural resources across our much diversified country.

Conservation is a **Long-Term** investment that we must make today to avoid escalating costs of making repairs in the future.

Thank you, for your time.

JERRY SNODGRASS,
[Redacted],
Geneseo, IL,
NACD Executive Board Member.

COMMENT OF JANET R. SNOW

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:20 p.m.

City, State: Presque Isle, ME

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Please stop subsidizing the corporate agribusinesses and support organic research and organic farming that is being destroyed by Monsanto, et al. For the health of all of us limitations and reforms must be placed upon corporate agribusiness. Protect the hungry children and poor people by NOT allowing the Food Stamp program to be defunded. I fully support Bills H.R. 3286 and H.R. 3236. I am a vegan because of health issues and I try to buy organic food. Not only is it difficult to find where I live but the cost is prohibitive. Please subsidize the organic farmers who really need it and not those who make billions in profits. Thank you.

JANET SNOW.

COMMENT OF ANN SNYDER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:10 p.m.

City, State: Ashwood, OR

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Livestock

Size: 301–500 acres

Comment: Dear Ag Committee,

Please maintain, and if possible increase the support for, for family farms, sustainable agriculture and nutrition programs. If you make cuts anywhere, please do it in big agribusiness and big commodity food subsidies.

This year there has already been a noticeable increase in the use of nutritional assistance card at farmers markets. This is a win-win situation for all parties. Please keep funding these types of programs and cut the big Ag ones that are eventually a lose-lose situation.

COMMENT OF DENISE SNYDER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:08 p.m.

City, State: Honolulu, HI

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Please phase out our government subsidies to GMO foods and replace them with subsidies for organic fruits, vegetables, grains, legumes.

These GMO foods and the chemicals produced in them and used on them are polluting our air, water, and land. These corn and soy crops take up almost ½ our ag land that is in production in the USA and these foods are used in over 85 percent of the processed foods which are also fueling our obesity epidemic. These foods are also fed to factory-farmed animals which are also causing tremendous amounts of pollution, animal suffering, and health problems in humans.

Time to subsidize what is good for us and tax what is making us, and our land, sick.

Thank you for reading this. Please do the right thing.

COMMENT OF PATRICK SNYDER

Date Submitted: Friday, April 27, 2012, 2:49 p.m.

City, State: Phoenix, AZ

Occupation: HR Director

Comment: My parents were raised on small farms in Illinois so I spent most summers helping on my grandparent's farms. The farmers in my family always took pride in producing food to feed this country. America is the richest country in the

world and one of the largest growers of food so how can hunger be so prevalent in the U.S.? When 1 in 4 children go to bed hungry at night in this country, we have a real problem and as an American with farm roots I am embarrassed by this fact. Congress needs to get their priorities straight and ensure that the citizens primary needs are met before focusing on anything else. Hunger in America needs to be addressed realistically at all levels and programs tied to the farm bill need to be properly funded. Thank you.

COMMENT OF PATRICIA SOBczyk

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 2:38 a.m.

City, State: Oak Creek, WI

Occupation: Retired Clerical Worker

Comment: I prefer clean food, locally grown, non-GMO. I would like to be able to choose the food I eat. The farmers need to be free to grow their crops and raise their animals as they see fit. If we need a farm bill it would be to order the government out of our farms and leave people in peace that choose to live off the land. It would also allow me to choose raw milk and other products that are being confiscated by our government.

COMMENT OF STEPHANIE SOK

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:49 p.m.

City, State: Duluth, GA

Occupation: Student

Comment: The bottom line is we need to work towards more sustainable agricultural practices. I fully endorse all provisions of the Local Foods, Farm and Jobs Act.

COMMENT OF LINDA SOLOMON

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 7:46 p.m.

City, State: Emporia, VA

Occupation: Retired Teacher

Comment: I believe we need to support small, and organic farming with an emphasis on good nutritional value, safety and local production as much as possible. Emphasizing genetically modified foods with all of the ensuing problems and cutting out small, longtime farmers is wrong and heading in the wrong direction. We do not need chemical companies in charge of our food.

COMMENT OF SAMANTHA SOMMERS

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 1:43 p.m.

City, State: Los Angeles, CA

Occupation: Graduate Student

Comment: I would like the farm bill to prioritize local, organic farming. I would particularly like there to be an emphasis on supporting young farmers purchase their own land and learn the skills necessary to run a successful farm and business.

COMMENT OF JOANNA SOREN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:49 p.m.

City, State: North Bend, WA

Occupation: Homemaker

Comment: Kill the subsidies for commodities and level the playing field for food. Fresh fruit and vegetables should be readily available and cheaper than processed food.

COMMENT OF MARY SOSSONG

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 3:47 p.m.

City, State: Princeton, ME

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: I want this bill to support family farms, food co-ops, farmers' markets—especially providing an easy access using Maine Food Stamps (EBT), organic methods, and nutritious food programs.

COMMENT OF ROXANNE SOTELO

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 15, 2012, 6:15 p.m.

City, State: Whittier, CA

Occupation: Food Server

Comment: Please subsidize organic food production to the same extent as conventional agriculture. Doing so would bring down the cost of organic produce while promoting a safer method of growing food. Growing organic benefits the planter, grower and consumer.

COMMENT OF MICHAEL SOUTHARD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:38 p.m.

City, State: Springfield, OR

Occupation: Retired

Comment: The U.S.A. needs sustainable agriculture with less dependence on pesticides, herbicides and no use of genetically modified crops or livestock. We as a nation must maintain a place for the small independent producer, particularly those who farm organically. There will always be a role for "Big Agriculture" when it comes to feeding America but that role must not rely on the excessive use of pesticides or herbicides and should not include any use genetically modified plants or animals. In addition "Big Agriculture" should not threaten to sue independent producers or scientific investigators who speak against the use of genetically modified crops or livestock.

COMMENT OF DAVID SOUZA

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 1:09 p.m.

City, State: Belington, WI

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I support the increased emphasis on organic provisions in the farm bill. The utilization of organic agricultural practices not only harks back to our country's heritage but is better for our environment, health, and food security. The current focus on subsidizing failing agricultural methods only encourages the destruction of our environment, contributes to ever increasing health problems, and endangers the security of our food supply.

COMMENT OF LYN SPANGLER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:30 a.m.

City, State: Bellingham WA

Occupation: Healthcare Provider

Comment: I have long been ashamed of our country's proclivity to subsidize large corporate and **Family Owned, Privately Held** agribusinesses that use huge amounts of natural resources producing, harvesting, and shipping our food and commodity crops (like GM corn) instead of helping true family owned farms that allow for greater food security by keeping production of real food closer to consumers.

COMMENT OF SUANNE SPARKS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:39 p.m.

City, State: Laguna Woods, CA

Occupation: Retired/Fitness

Comment: I am appalled at the priorities set in Congress that do not serve the best interests of The People, whom you are elected to represent. Food is a basic requirement and must be protected from motives of greed that corrupt the market and threaten human health.

SUBMITTED LETTER BY R. SCOTT SPEAR, BOARD PRESIDENT, SEQUOIA RIVERLANDS TRUST

May 2, 2012

Hon. DENNIS CARDOZA and JIM COSTA,
United States House of Representatives,
Washington, D.C.

Dear Congressman Cardoza and Congressman Costa:

Sequoia Riverlands Trust recognizes and thanks you for your tireless work on the farm bill.

Sequoia Riverlands Trust (SRT) is a regional, nonprofit **Central California Land Trust** dedicated to conserving the natural and agricultural legacy of the

Southern Sierra Nevada and San Joaquin Valley. The wealth, productivity and beauty of this land inspire our work to conserve it for future generations.

SRT believes it is beneficial to share our “boots on the ground” perspective and how the FRPP ranking criteria affects Fresno, Kings and Tulare Counties.

- The criteria places small family farms at a disadvantage in the southern San Joaquin Valley
- That ranking criteria also ignores the realities of the southern San Joaquin Valley. The West side of the Valley has 5 to 25 thousand acre farms; the East side has smaller family farms ranging from 20 to 200 acres. The large size farms skew the average based on the criteria putting small family farms at a disadvantage for FRPP funding
- An easement application ranks higher if it is located near existing conservation land. Tulare County has no Federal or state funded ag conservation land, placing the County at a disadvantage in the current ranking system

For these reasons, Sequoia Riverlands Trust supports American Farmland President John Scholl’s statement below.

- **Evaluation and Ranking of Applications (page 199; line 16):** *In establishing criteria to evaluate and rank applications, the language requires the Secretary to emphasize, in part, support for “maximizing the protection of contiguous acres devoted to agricultural use” (page 200, line 3). We have long believed that the most effective programs to protect the long-term viability of agricultural lands are those that focus on assembling blocks of protected land. However, there are vast differences in agricultural landscapes and farm parcel sizes around the country, and we are concerned that a single standard for what constitutes “contiguous acres” may result in applications that favor one region of the country over another. We would encourage a clarification of this language to make clear that the criteria take into account the variation around the country in agricultural land use patterns.*

Current language in the Farm Bill’s Grassland Reserve Program (GRP) requires NRCS to hold the conservation easement funded by GRP.

Sequoia Riverlands Trust lost two conservation easement opportunities involving a 7 thousand acre ranch and another 14 thousand acre ranch. The ranchers did not want the Federal Government involved in their ranching operations. They refused to participate in the GRP program.

If there was language in the farm bill that allowed an option for a nonprofit organization to hold GRP Funded Easements there would have been 21 thousand acres of grassland conservation in Eastern Tulare County.

Sincerely,



R. SCOTT SPEAR,
Board President,
Sequoia Riverlands Trust.

COMMENT OF LAURA SPEERS

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 10, 2012, 11:40 a.m.

City, State: Saugerties, NY

Occupation: Student

Comment: I am writing this comment to urge congress to please protect SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP programs under the upcoming farm bill. These programs are essential in the fight against hunger which is plaguing our country. In a country that boasts to be the most powerful in the world, it is unacceptable that 1 in 6 people are hungry. Please protect these programs. They are so important.

COMMENT OF JUANITA SPEIRS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:56 p.m.

City, State: Bend, OR

Occupation: Retired

Comment: We need a farm bill that supports first and foremost the health of our citizens, and the sustainability of our products and small, local farmers. All you have to do is look around you to be aware that the health of the average citizen is rapidly eroding (consider the diabetes stats, for one) in large part because of diet. We need real, unaltered food, grown by farmers who practice sustainable farming techniques, decent food for those who are struggling financially, and enforced rules

and regs, along with inspections that provide true supervision of this industry. To cut funds to any of these programs means an even unsafer food supply and far larger health bills down the line. I think the reports on the number of young people not fit to serve in the military due to diet-related matters ought to be enough to tell you this is not just a fringe group of sprout eaters who want and expect change. This is a national disgrace and significant security issue.

COMMENT OF MARTHA SPENCE

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 11:39 a.m.

City, State: Middletown, CA

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: I have cancer. I eat only organic non-GMO vegetables. I juice them every day to support my health. I would like to see a bill that would support these farmers and lower the cost of organic vegetables. I am on a fixed income and I spend \$100 a week on vegetables.

COMMENT OF BRENDA SPENCER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:17 p.m.

City, State: Dallas, TX

Occupation: Holistic Health Counselor

Comment: We need an organic farm bill. Please also do not allow GMO foods without labeling. The future of our children and our own health and prosperity is at stake. Thank you.

COMMENT OF MELISSA SPENCER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:31 a.m.

City, State: Harrisville, NH

Occupation: Spice Retailer

Comment: I would love to see the next farm bill support local farms/farmers through programs that allow for collaboration and financial support. End subsidies for large-scale farming that destroys the environment and provides a less quality product than a small local farm could provide. Also, the national food program in the schools needs to take is teaching children about nutrition and healthy choices and where real food comes from . . . the ground not a can!
Thank you.

COMMENT OF SARAH SPICA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:55 p.m.

City, State: Denver, CO

Occupation: Household Manager

Comment: Please put organic farms and practices at the top of funding for the new farm bill. Organic farming practices are vital for the health of our land and people and need encouragement on every level. Thank you.

COMMENT OF PATRICIA SPICER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:06 p.m.

City, State: Eugene, OR

Occupation: Retired Educator

Comment: The current wide-spread epidemic of obesity is only one evidence that there is something wrong with excessive factory farming. More localized and healthier methods of production are available and should be supported by Congress to reduce medical costs to the nation.

PATRICIA SPICER

COMMENT OF CAROLYN SPIER

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 10, 2012, 2:31 a.m.

City, State: Weimar, CA

Comment: Protect SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP: 30 percent of client households with seniors indicated that they have had to choose between food and medical care and 35 percent have had to choose between food and paying for heat/utilities. We must ensure hunger-relief programs remain protected so that seniors who worked their entire lives continue to have access to these vital programs.

COMMENTS OF MELANIE SPILLANE

Date Submitted: Monday, April 23, 2012, 4:36 a.m.

City, State: Gainesville, FL

Occupation: International Food Security Sector

Comment: It would be great if the 2012 Farm Bill would encourage not just domestic LRP programs, but continue its pilot program with USDA on an international level. It saves millions of lives, decreases fuel consumption and promotes local employment possibilities, in addition to giving participants a sense of pride in what they grow and eat. No

Date Submitted: Thursday, April 26, 2012, 5:17 a.m.

Comment: It would be great if the Farm Bill 2012 allotted more funding to domestic and international LRP programs as well as raised awareness of the benefits of local food purchases such as reduced food miles, spurring local economy, and overall healthier eating.

COMMENT OF LINDA SPINAZZOLA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:42 p.m.

City, State: Hamilton, NJ

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Save our farms! When you import foods from outside the USA there are no government oversight to make sure the pesticides and chemicals they use are safe for our consumption! By importing our fruits & veggies, you are not only allowing these countries to poison us but, bankrupting our farmers into extinction! Did you stop for one moment and wonder why the cancer rates are rising? Protect our people!

COMMENT OF GAYLE SPINKS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:34 p.m.

City, State: Costa Mesa, CA

Occupation: President of Family Owned Health Business

Comment: Being born and raised into a California family with a Dad who was raised on a farm in Kansas and a family business that encompasses health, I would like to think that we can do better when it comes to our food supply. Our family has been growing as much of our food as possible for the last decade as we have seen the decline in farming that has actually made fresh vegetables and fruit unhealthy to eat. Time for change!

COMMENT OF ALODIE SPIRES

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 1:37 p.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Bookkeeper

Comment: As a citizen my desire is to put environmental and social welfare issues above corporate advancement. Our lands must be cared for. Genetic diversity in livestock and agriculture **Must** be preserved to grow healthy, sustainable food stocks. Small farming operations offer the best stewardship for our farmlands and food supply. Healthy lands produce healthy foods and are directly related to the health of our citizens. If the main motivation is to make food cheap (and using corporate advertising to promote cheap food), people will consume that food more & more and our nation's health will continue to dwindle as is evidenced by our growing lifestyle diseases. Corporate control of our food stocks, farmlands & farmers is dangerous and in the worst form of capitalism—disregard for integrity, diversity and human welfare to benefit the few with profits. We need to end corporate food subsidies and give support to our nation's family farmers & small food producers.

COMMENT OF KATIE SPITALETTO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:17 p.m.

City, State: Boca Raton, FL

Occupation: Part-Time Teacher/Small Business Owner/Mother

Comment: I'd like to feel as if I had a choice in the food I feed my family. I'd like to know that the food I'm choosing is safe. I want GMOs labeled. I want cancer causing food dyes removed from the shelves, not used until supplies are deleted. I'd like tax breaks for local farmers who belong to farmer's markets. I don't believe that one corporation should be the driving force behind one sort of seed—monopolies are

dangerous. America is a place of diversity, and I believe that should apply to our food sources as well.

COMMENT OF MEREDITH SPITALNIK

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:17 a.m.

City, State: Newport, RI

Occupation: IT Professional

Comment: The structure of the farm bill over the last 4 years has directly contributed to the poor health of our people and to the near-death of the family farm. The farm bill was supposed to stabilize prices, not depress them.

Please! Restore the price stabilization system and end the direct subsidies. Keep the conservation titles but make the spending mandatory instead of discretionary. Support small family farms that sell in their local communities. Support organic vegetables instead of conventional corn. And while I'm dreaming—make CAFOs illegal—don't subsidize them.

COMMENT OF SARAH SPITZ

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:12 a.m.

City, State: Santa Monica, CA

Occupation: Retired Public Radio Producer/Publicity Director

Comment: I agree with Slow Food and all the other nonprofits whose interests are those of the people, not the big agricultural forces that are infecting this bill.

Small farmers, just like small business in America, drive the economy; their interests are in our welfare and making an honest dollar.

I do **Not** want my tax payer money funding Monsanto, 3M, Kellogg's, monocroppers who are destroying us through their use of pesticides, fertilizers, bad soil stewardship, all to pay themselves more while starving the people.

I am not a wild eyed liberal anarchist 99 percenter. I am a middle class retiree concerned with the fate of the planet and the people on it, whose very existence is being threatened by the practices of Big Ag.

Make room in the bill to support veterans returning from war and learning to farm—too many small farms are falling by the wayside and into the hands of big ag.

COMMENT OF LINNIE SPOR

Date Submitted: Friday, March 16, 2012, 2:13 p.m.

City, State: South Jordan, UT

Occupation: Coordinator

Comment: I work at a Community College. So many students go without meals because they have no funds for food. Hunger in college is common. This hurts student's studies and testing. We need these students to do well in college so they can give back to the community. I would like to support a strong farm bill created to help struggling students.

COMMENT OF CATHY SPOTO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:14 p.m.

City, State: Irvine, CA

Occupation: Homemaker

Comment: I am in support of a healthy food bill. The people deserve to know how our foods are coming to the table, and we deserve to know what foods are being genetically modified.

COMMENT OF MICHAEL SPOTTISWOODE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:40 p.m.

City, State: Albuquerque, NM

Occupation: Health Care Provider

Comment: Grow non-GMO foods **Only!**

Grow corn as a food, not as a bio-fuel that brings no net gain to the environment when soil depletion, pesticide pollution, and water utilization are all factored in.

Stop subsidies on low quality "staples" at the expense of nutritionally beneficial fruits and vegetables.

Promote sustainable agriculture. Subsidize sustainable practices if any at all.

COMMENT OF SARAH SPRAGUE

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 10:10 a.m.
City, State: Sarasota, FL
Occupation: Speech Pathologist
Comment: Organic is important. Small farms are important. Non-GMO farming is important. Regulations for safe humane animal husbandry is important. Local supply is important. No antibiotics is important And allowing undercover reporting is important.

COMMENT OF TAI SPRING

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 5:46 p.m.
City, State: Driftwood, TX
Occupation: Restaurant Food Service
Comment: Healthy food is probably the most important resource besides for water. We must support organic farming to keep Americans healthy with a strong immune system. Especially with the rise in cancers, obesity, diabetes, and low immune systems, we need to spend money on things that really matter to the human race. Non GMO organic food is important to the health of our nation. Science will support this claim, even though many industrial agriculture lobbyists will try to convince you otherwise. I hope you can see my point. Thank you.

COMMENT OF JUDY SPRINKLE

Date Submitted: Friday, March 16, 2012, 10:46 a.m.
City, State: San Diego, CA
Occupation: Caregiver
Comment: I believe this merits thoughtful and responsible attention. Without a healthy and robust food source and supply, all else is nearly irrelevant. Thank you.

COMMENT OF KUNUTHUR SRINIVASA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:12 a.m.
Producer/Non-producer: Producer
Type: Field Crops
Size: Less than 50 acres
Comment: Organic farming is not only essential for humans on Earth but also for all other forms of life of plant and animal origin in order to improve their quality of life holistically. Nobody has an exclusive right over others to decide how their living style should be with special reference to health.

COMMENT OF ERIC ST. CLAIR

Date Submitted: Friday, April 27, 2012, 8:54 a.m.
City, State: Waterloo, IA
Occupation: Graduate Student
Comment: In this economy, it is wrong to leave hungry Americans behind in order to preserve military spending or chase illusive budget goals. Do NOT cut funding for Food Stamps in the next farm bill. In Iowa alone 382,000 people are food insecure. They need our support, not a cold shoulder.

COMMENT OF JANICE ST. CLAIR

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:21 p.m.
City, State: Cambridge, MA
Occupation: Childcare Provider
Comment: Please reform farm policy to support small, organic, and independent farmers. This is the only way to return our country to a sustainable form of food production. Big business is ruining our soil and environment while producing less nutritious and often disease-and-chemical-ridden food, and is using its clout to ruin independent farmers who use better alternatives to chemical pesticide and fertilizer overuse and to animal cruelty.
 I support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.

- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
 - Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.
- Thank you.

COMMENT OF MARGUERITE ST. PIERRE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:40 p.m.

City, State: Chelsea, MI

Occupation: Homemaker

Comment: Stop big business from taking down the regular farmers. GMO's should be banned/stopped. I do not want to eat any of this junk. Protect the farmers, not big business. I want natural whole milk straight from a cow, not adulterated by big business and the FDA!

COMMENT OF BONITA STAAS

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 7:04 p.m.

City, State: Orangeville, IL

Occupation: Sales

Comment: Stop giving subsidies to corporate "farmers"—some who don't even live on their land. I would like to see **Small** farmers make a come-back. Help people eat **Real** food, not chemically enhanced garbage.

COMMENT OF MATTHEW STALTER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:38 p.m.

City, State: Albany, OR

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: We need a better farm bill—one that supports sustainable, long-term farming practices, not short-term practices that ruin the land for future generations and produce the lowest quality products that slowly poison this generation. Subsidize organic foods. Nearly anyone, if given the option between organic and non-organic foods at the same price will take organic. Level the playing field between the two. Give the people what they want, not what oversized, corporate agribusinesses can make the most ill-gotten dollars from.

COMMENT OF JUDITH STAMPS

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 10, 2012, 8:23 a.m.

City, State: Atlanta, GA

Occupation: Nonprofit

Comment: If you have never had to go without 3 meals per day, I am sure you don't have to worry about subsidies. Please don't forsake the neediest members of our society. There are children who will be directly impacted if you diminish the farm bill.

COMMENT OF JEANNE STANCIL

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 11:02 a.m.

City, State: Raleigh, NC

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Reports from Washington, D.C., say Republicans in the House Agricultural Committee have already "voted to slash \$33 billion from the food stamp program while leaving farm subsidies unscathed."

Also, the latest agribusiness boondoggle gladly steals food from the mouths of the hungry to create a "\$33 billion new entitlement program that guarantees the income

of profitable farm businesses. That's on top of \$90 billion in subsidies for crop and revenue insurance policies."

If this weren't bad enough, the Senate Agricultural Committee has already voted to cut \$4 million from organic research funding and cut funding to support Beginning Farmers in half. We cannot let this stand!

At the same time, the Senate Ag Committee has voted to get rid of wasteful subsidy payments. It has proposed to replace it with a new subsidized insurance program that leading sustainable agriculture advocates are calling rife with opportunities for fraud and abuse.

While Congress is looking to get rid of direct payments to commodity farmers, the subsidized insurance program it proposes to replace it with will allow giant commodity farmers and insurance companies to walk away with billions in taxpayer dollars while putting the land, soil and environment at greater risk.

According to the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition's Ferd Hoefner, "By failing to place limitations on crop insurance subsidies and to re-attach soil erosion and wetland conservation requirements to crop insurance programs, the Committee has failed to do the full reform that is needed."

We can't allow this to happen. Join us today in creating real reform and a healthy, organic future!

COMMENT OF ALAN STANLEY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:48 p.m.

City, State: Anza, CA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: A true farm bill would serve all farmers not just agribusiness. I live in an area where agribusiness comes to town, plows the land, creates a mess, uses the precious ground water, and does little to interact with the local economy. That is in contrast to local farmers who raise Alpacas and cattle, shop locally and are part of the community. Support the local farmer, don't fight them. We need a farm bill that supports organic, and is not just a bill to promote GM crops and agricultural subsidies to big corporations that are more chemical companies than farmers.

COMMENT OF SHARON STANLEY

Date Submitted: Monday, May 14, 2012, 6:12 p.m.

City, State: Rochester, NY

Occupation: Unemployed

Comment: I do not want cuts to snap food distribution. The program does too much good to keep people eating good foods and not going without due to cost. Many people are on limited incomes and count on these programs to get by.

COMMENT OF SUZANNE STAPLER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:11 a.m.

City, State: St. Davids, PA

Occupation: Nutrition Coach

Comment: Stop listening to Big Food and Big Agri. Organics will keep us all healthy. We need to help the small, organic farmers who are struggling. Stop listening to Monsanto and the like who only want to poison us and don't keep our food safe.

COMMENT OF KAREN STARK

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 15, 2012, 10:49 a.m.

City, State: Burlington, NJ

Occupation: Retired Banking Industry

Comment: I understand that you are considering cutting food stamps to help with budget cuts. This is unthinkable. Really? Of all the things you have to consider reducing I can't believe food stamps even make the list. In this economy people need this support. Please do not let this happen.

COMMENT OF DAWN STARKE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:45 p.m.

City, State: Austin, TX

Occupation: Office Administration

Comment: Americans have the right to know what we are eating. GMOs are unknowns and thus must be labeled. Farmers should not be put out of business by

Big Ag. Life should be available to all, not only those who profit from holding patents on food and medicine. End the madness and do something for the future of our species now.

COMMENT OF PHYLLIS STARKMAN

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 13, 2012, 8:11 p.m.
City, State: Los Angeles, CA
Occupation: Homemaker
Comment: Please stop farming excess corn to modify to modify to feed to us, cows, and even fish! It's hurting us! Don't allow the destruction of Bristol Bay, which will destroy Wild Salmon. I beg you, please stop animal cruelty in industrial farming!

COMMENT OF GEORGI STARR

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:55 a.m.
City, State: Mobile, AL
Occupation: Housewife
Comment: Please make our farm bill fair to smaller growers and move toward crop insurance that is affordable to all. We need more new farmers and more local grown produce to help cut our energy consumption and assure food security.
 Thank you.

COMMENT OF EVELYNN STARRETT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:38 p.m.
City, State: Lansdale, PA
Occupation: Retired
Comment: Farmers are very important to me. I must eat organic, GMO free food and it is vital that farmers receive the help that it takes to keep them producing healthy foods for me.

COMMENT OF MARY BETH STARZEL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:00 p.m.
City, State: San Francisco, CA
Occupation: Retired
Comment: Please assure us the ability to have non-GMO foods, labeled foods to know they are GMO-free, high organic production standards, and safe guards to assure we encourage smaller farms and locally grown products.

COMMENT OF DENISE STATHATOS

Date Submitted: Saturday, April 28, 2012, 11:48 a.m.
City, State: Clay, NY
Occupation: Sales
Comment: I spoke to a staff member when I called to urge my representative to support the farm bill, SNAP, and the Emergency Food Program. I didn't fail that I received any commitment, though.

COMMENT OF MICHAEL STAUFFER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:07 p.m.
City, State: Grand Rapids, MI
Occupation: Retired
Comment: Subsidizing wealthy agribusiness is like subsidizing the multibillion dollar in profits oil industry while we are paying more and more at the pumps. Please support local, family, sustainable, and organic farming so these people do not lose their farms and so the I have choice all Americans deserve to choose what I purchase and consume.

COMMENT OF JUDY STEARNS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:51 p.m.
City, State: Clearwater, NE
Producer/Non-producer: Producer
Type: Livestock
Size: 151-300 acres

Comment: I was a temporary employee for the Antelope Co. FSA office for 10 yrs. I was expected to come into that office & catch all the fulltime employees up who refused to do their assigned work. I got no benefits or credits for my work, the FSA offices need to be closed & the farm bill help as we know it needs to end **Now!**

COMMENT OF MICHAEL STEBNER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:17 p.m.

City, State: Scottsdale, AZ

Occupation: Chef

Comment: I would like the farm bill to cut subsidies to large factory farms. I think that crop insurance should be affordable for small farms as well as large. I would like to see some incentives to grow organic produce. Educating kids about the importance of healthy diet, and proper nutrition.

COMMENT OF KEGAN STEDWELL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:24 p.m.

City, State: Point Reyes, CA

Occupation: TV Film Producer

Comment: Please fight for healthy farms and healthy food practices. Stop subsidizing Big Ag that uses pesticides that are harmful to living things! No to GMO's. Round UP ready crops and Round Up pesticides are the corporations choices, not the peoples. Hear us!

COMMENT OF RALPH STEGER

Date Submitted: Friday, April 27, 2012, 8:28 p.m.

City, State: Staunton, VA

Occupation: Volunteer

Comment: As a weekly volunteer at a food pantry in the Shenandoah Valley providing food to 2,400 families each month, I have seen the awful results of current cuts to the USDA food availability. Only 1,000 lbs. of USDA was available last month. Divide that by 2,400 families and you can see the problem we face. You may like to think the recession as ebbed, but we at the food pantries have seen no sign of it yet. Please draw a Circle of Protection around the SNAP and TEFAP programs. Please help us feed the hungry women, children, fathers, and elders.

COMMENT OF FLORENCE STEICHEN

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 6:24 p.m.

City, State: St. Paul, MN

Occupation: Retired Educator

Comment: Title I: Have an annual cap of \$250,000/farm, and close loopholes that allow large operations to receive additional payments.

Title IV: Keep SNAP so that it meets needs in times of economic crises.

Title VII: support organic and sustainable agriculture systems and sustainable economic and community development.

Title X: Create programs that fully recognize the inherent value of Sustainable and organic farming systems, especially in addressing climate change. **Thank You!**

COMMENT OF DR. KAREN STEIN

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 3:41 p.m.

City, State: Woodway, WA

Occupation: Educator

Comment: We must return to sustainable organic food production. Eating food today is accompanied with a layer of fear and apprehension about the source, composition, cleanliness and overall healthfulness of our foods. As an Elder at 71 . . . many of us fear that we will succumb at earlier ages than past generations to effects of pollution, chemicals, fall out that we cannot see, taste or comprehend the effects of . . . but we do see the rising numbers of affects in an increasing number of children born with ADHD, Autism, Asbergers, Prenatal Alcohol, Nicotine, and other drugs and chemicals ingested through our food, air, water . . . and sick spirits . . . As a Nation that touts freedom and human rights it is time to heal our spirits and return to Nature and natural sustainable ways. We must begin by freeing Leonard Peltier from Prison—an innocent Lakota Man that has served over 36 years—a statistically longer period than most murderers such as The Lockerbee Bomber who

killed hundreds have served . . . Then, lets look at where we can begin to grow food locally. Churches and schools often have large lots of land. These can all be turned into productive places to raise food . . . U.S. of America used to **Grow Things** as well as **Make Things**. It is important for children to learn how food is grown or raised and how it moves to the table . . . We Elders that remember how to do this must be cultivated, respected and allowed to teach . . . Our Education **System** has become a Ponzi Scheme of more and more expensive courses, degrees, and certifications that produce nothing more than over emphasis on compliance and little on how to survive sustainably. Thank you for listening. Sincerely from one with BA, MBA, MA ED, and ED D degrees and who cannot seem to obtain a job without more course work . . .

Please! Let's change course!

DR. KAREN STEIN.

COMMENT OF ANNE STEINBERG

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 15, 2012, 9:01 p.m.

City, State: Milwaukee, WI

Occupation: Retired Teacher and Volunteer

Comment: I support a farm bill that supports local family farmers, strengthens the local food systems and makes healthy food more available to everyone.

I live in Milwaukee, WI where I help to connect small local farmers and producers with consumers who want to buy directly from them. For example, we hold a Local Farmer Open House each spring where over a thousand visitors come to meet farmers and sign up for CSA memberships.

This is what I've learned in doing this work:

We need a farm bill that helps beginning farmers get started—with credit and with technical assistance. There aren't enough farmers now growing local food to serve our metro area and many young and disadvantaged would-be farmers—and veterans—can't afford to buy land and equipment. Now is the time to invest in the future.

We need a farm bill that funds agricultural research, especially the Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative. This research is necessary to help young and established farmers be more successful in the growing organic sector of U.S. agriculture.

We need a farm bill that helps build our local food infrastructure. For example, we need food hubs, more money going into marketing for small family farmers and producers, and investment in value added production for small farmers.

We need a farm bill that protects our future by protecting our soil and water resources. So I believe there should be conservation requirements for any farmer who receives Federal aid—especially crop subsidies or insurance. I know that many Milwaukee residents are looking to buy from farmers use good conservation practices.

We need a farm bill that provides a food safety net for struggling Americans in these difficult times. It should prioritize programs that improve access to healthy food in low-income communities and our school. I do not support cutting the SNAP program in order to prevent cuts in military spending. Instead, I believe in tax equity—raising taxes on the richest U.S. citizens and ending tax breaks and subsidies for large corporations (like the oil companies).

COMMENT OF JILLIAN STEINBERGER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:13 p.m.

City, State: Oakland, CA

Occupation: Landscape Gardener (Kitchen Gardens)

Comment: Hi. I've covered the topic, writing for magazines, newspapers and blogs. This includes interviews with many organic farmers. From my research, I've found that food produced by these Americans follow stronger safety BMPs. They are in closer touch with their market that typical consumers buying at large grocery chains—and so they are more accountable. Chinese milk and beef, coming here, for example, is more dangerous than organic local strawberries, which are also safer than soft drinks, sugary cereals, and many packaged food.

I see that the Federal Government is trying to pass a farm bill which is anti-capitalist, in favor of unfair subsidies and less regulation to big corporations. Many of these have been fined and cited as polluters, as practicing cruelty to production animals and laborers (even spraying them with dangerous chemicals).

This is total BS. Let's admit it. It is support for corporate wealth because of how our system works.

Let's support organic farmers, who are the true small capitalists and who offer better lifestyles (including food safety) to consumers, laborers, animals, *etc.*

I will refrain from voting if a bad farm bill is passed, and I will lose **more** faith in my government's justice for all.

JILLIAN STEINBERGER.

COMMENT OF STEVE STEINER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:49 a.m.

City, State: Lexington, VA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Greenhouse/nursery, Poultry/poultry products, Specialty Crops

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: We are a sustainable small farm and need support for our model which is in direct contrast to the industrial agriculture currently supported by the government.

Quit subsidizing unsustainable agriculture and the rest will take care of itself.

And **Require Labeling Of GMO Food Now!**

Thanks,

STEVE STEINER

COMMENT OF CAROLINE STEINFELD

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 02, 2012, 7:44 p.m.

City, State: Providence, RI

Occupation: Student

Comment: I think you should support organic agriculture **Much More**, and **Most Of All**, small farms with a high crop variety. **Please**, stop subsidizing corn because they will be detrimental for the country in the long run. These subsidies support a model of agriculture that depletes the soil and pollutes. This is not about nature. This is about our children's welfare and a healthy future economy!

COMMENT OF SUZANNE STEINKAMP

Date Submitted: Saturday, March 17, 2012, 9:27 a.m.

City, State: Saratoga Springs, NY

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I buy almost all my produce from local farmers, small farmers who do a wonderful job of bringing us healthy, mostly organic foods.

I'm writing in support of my local, upstate NY farmers—and in support of small farmers throughout the country. Please be sure you provide the support they need in the farm bill under consideration. Thank you.

COMMENT OF VAL STELSE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:22 p.m.

City, State: Milwaukee, WI

Occupation: Homemaker

Comment: Yes, I am a mother and we are currently looking for land to purchase so we can grow our own food. Because I have been lied to by the producers for GMO corn. We were told that this corn would **Never** be allowed in our food sources, but here we are in 2012 with GMO/GE food being served to us without our consent. It was all done behind closed doors, even though there were scientists that were trying to get the word out. Big corporations used their greed to silence them and with hold this information from the public. It is good to know that not all countries on this planet are like **Ours**. There are countries that believe in the rights of their countrymen to produce and eat food that Mother Nature created and not a test tube. These corporations have lied and were given taxpayer dollars to keep up their research, which outside scientists proved over and over were dangerous.

But **Greed** is the foundation of everything in our government today. Without greed we would not be having these statements, we would have a farming bill that supports sustainable crops and the family farmer. Hell we would even have food that actually would **Prevent** diseases. But no instead we have a system that causes diseases. I do believe poison was invented to **Kill!**

So what do we do now? We fight for our right to grow and consume food that improve our bodies and minds. We work towards the common **Good**. We eliminate **Greed** from our farm bill. The farm bill was put in place to help the family farmers/

ranchers to survive on their land. To put food on every Americans table with reasonable cost. It has turned into a farce, a way for the greedy to become more greedy.

It is time to put **People** first. Food is our life. It is what can keep us healthy or what can destroy us. With all the new disease from the past 20 years it is no wonder that GMOs are under fire. All I ask is to have food that has been around since the beginning of time. The food that God created (if you are Christian) or Mother Nature (if you are not). The food that we know is healthy. That is the food this farm bill should be looking at and the family farmers/ranches that work the land every single day to bring that food to our tables.

And one last thing, no longer should factory farms or GMOs be funded by taxpayer dollars. No way, no how!

Thank you.

COMMENT OF DEEANN STENLUND

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:08 a.m.

City, State: Roseville, MN

Occupation: Medical Laboratory Scientist

Comment: I would like to see a farm bill that support the growing and distribution of healthy and varied foods, such as fruits and vegetables. It should also protect our natural resources. The Conservation Stewardship Program should not be cut! The new farm bill should also invest in beginning farmer and rancher programs. Our farmers are aging and we need to encourage and support young people who are interested in farming. Guarantee \$25 million for Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program. We should also be supporting innovation by funding the Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative at \$30 million per year in mandatory funding. Finally, support programs like the Value-Added Producer Grants Program by guaranteeing \$30 million of mandatory funding per year.

COMMENT OF CHRIS STEPHAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 11:24 a.m.

City, State: Seattle, WA

Occupation: Accountant

Comment: I am writing to urge the House Agriculture Committee to support small organic and environmentally responsible farms and end subsidies for agribusiness. In addition please push for better treatment of animals and support the farms that make this a priority. I would like to see encouraged biodiversity as well and an effort to end the destructive reign of Monsanto. Thanks!

COMMENT OF DAVID STEPHEN

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 3:04 p.m.

City, State: St. James, NY

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Livestock

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Please stop giving subsidies to large corporate unsustainable agricultural companies, instead give subsidies to small family operated and sustainable farms that supply to local markets and employ local people. Small family farms are the backbone of our national food security.

COMMENT OF GAIL STEPHENS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:10 a.m.

City, State: Truckee, CA

Occupation: Retired Psychologist

Comment: With the economic, social, and dietary needs of this nation we can no longer tolerate playing political games with our food source. Do the right thing now!

COMMENT OF GREG STEPHENS

Date Submitted: Friday, April 20, 2012, 1:37 p.m.

City, State: Salina, KS

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Field Crops, Livestock

Size: 1,000+ acres

Comment: Here are my suggestions:

- Keep these programs at current level—Rural Development, Sustainable Agriculture, Food Aid, Nutrition and Food Stamps, Crop Insurance and Estate (death tax) limits.
- Enforce and improve these programs—COOL (Country-of-Origin Labeling), GIPSA (Grain Inspection and Producer Stockyards Act), and Research.
- Reduce these programs—Crop subsidies. Need to place limits on them based on size.

Thank You.

COMMENT OF LAURA STEPHENSON

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 6:59 p.m.

City, State: Durham, NC

Occupation: Farm Hand

Comment: As an aspiring young small farmer, I hope for a future where I can make a living for myself doing something that I believe in (local and sustainable agriculture) and providing high-quality food to not only middle and upper-class citizens of this country, but low-income too. How we produce and subsidize food as a nation has been incredibly unequal—with large, multinational corporations receiving the largest subsidies. My hope for the future of the United States is to have a wide-range of diverse crops that can keep our country healthy. It appalls me that obesity has become so widespread, and that the connection between obesity and what our nation chooses to subsidize hasn't been teased out by the public. Please support aspects of the farm bill that would help beginning farmers (there are many that need help in the Piedmont of North Carolina), farmers transitioning to a more sustainable crop/diversification of crops, and please don't continue to subsidize large multinational corporations.

Thanks,

LAURA.

COMMENT OF SHARON STERGIS

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 2:47 p.m.

City, State: New York, NY

Occupation: Writer

Comment: There is a very serious hunger issue going on in our country. Obesity, illnesses, are **Not** evidence of over indulgence and excessive per Se. It's about misinformation, emotional problems, ignorance, and most importantly **Poverty!** Our First Lady has started the education on food and exercise. It needs to be a State of Emergency in my humble opinion.

Please for the Love of God, pass a farm Bill with the strength of steel to dedicate Americans back to good food, good eating, good health, good well being.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF JAN STEVENSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 10:45 a.m.

City, State: Stillwater, OK

Occupation: Unemployed, Recent Graduate

Comment: Family farms promote the best employment situation and economic situation, as well as the healthiest, most sustainable food stuffs for the world. Please bring actual reform to the farm bill.

COMMENT OF JANE STEVENSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:06 p.m.

City, State: Colorado Springs, CO

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: I am in favor of safe and thoroughly labeled food and opposed to factory farms which sacrifice safety and health for humans or animals in the name of profits. I am not against profits, but I do want to know exactly what I'm eating.

JANE STEVENSON.

COMMENT OF SCOTT STEWARD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:33 p.m.

City, State: Erie, CO

Occupation: Realtor—Self-Employed

Comment: The United States should be leading, creating and doing everything better than the next one. Time to step it up!

COMMENT OF BARBARA STEWART

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:15 p.m.

City, State: Marietta, OH

Occupation: Retail Business Owner

Comment: I am a 56 year old business woman. My husband and I have a retail mattress business, and we do approximately \$½ million a year in business. Because of the nature of the business, I spend at least an hour with every customer. I am appalled by the health of the people in our country. **People Are Poisoning Themselves By What They Eat.** The health of a nation is directly proportional to the health of its people. And if you want to find the cause of this ill health, look no further than the food. The corporate food giants, made possible by our government, are directly to blame, and the government is directly to blame by subsidizing this type of agriculture. We **Must** start addressing these agricultural problems. The medical costs of diabetes, even among young Americans, is driving health care costs. As a hard-working citizen of this society, I urge you to do the hard things that will have to be done on a large structural level to solve the problem. That means defunding big agriculture and passing legislation that will allow small farmers (especially organic farmers, who care about the health of the land), to once again become the dominant players in providing food. Will we pay more for our food? Yes. But we will pay less for medical expenses, we will feel better, we will have the health to keep our country strong.

COMMENT OF CYNTHIA STEWART

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:54 p.m.

City, State: Marianna, FL

Occupation: Land Manager

Comment: Please do all you can to help our farmers provide healthy food for America. Many neighborhoods have difficulty even finding reasonably priced produce in local stores. Our farmers must contend with soaring fertilizer, herbicide and gas prices. In our area they also must deal with drought conditions.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF DONNA STEWART

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:04 p.m.

City, State:

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Escondido, CA

Size: Specialty Crops

Comment: Less than 50 acres My husband and I own a couple of small family farms. We currently employ around 100 people and don't believe in subsidized farming for the big corporations. The government fees, insurance and regulations are what is killing us in the state of CA. Wish we could move our farms elsewhere.

COMMENT OF LISA STEWART

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 3:49 p.m.

City, State: Wharton, NJ

Occupation: Librarian

Comment: One of our country's precious resources is the individual farmer. So often the farmer is short shifted and marginalized, if not driven out of business by global agribusiness. Legislation to be far sighted needs to protect and help the farmer prosper. It will also help our country prosper, which is crucial now more than ever.

COMMENT OF DONNA STIEGMEIER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:40 p.m.

City, State: Nevada City, CA

Occupation: Artist/Teacher

Comment: The most basic of ideals we are having to beg our Government for. Good Food. Ridiculous in such an advanced and powerful country to pretend that

people can eat toxic food without the resulting catastrophic health problems. Only because people are starving for nutrition do they pump themselves full in excessive quantities of bad food. Yes, people need to know what is in their food **And** in their soil **And** in their water. Thank you House committee but what is this, a joke that you want to know if we consider quality of food important?

COMMENT OF ANN STILLMAN

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 11:22 p.m.

City, State: Grinnell, IA

Occupation: Psychologist (Retired)

Comment: I am most concerned that we continue to build into the next farm bill, the commitment and requirement for conservation practices to be part of any support plan for farmers. We must preserve our top soil.

Thank you for bringing this into the discussions that are taking place.

COMMENT OF MICHAEL STIMAC

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:02 p.m.

City, State: Lombard, IL

Occupation: Millwright

Comment: Please take a stand for the people not for big business. It seems that of our representatives are more concerned with corporations than for the people for which they represent. Please help change this growing view. Stand for the people.

COMMENT OF ALISHA STIREMAN-BEYER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:07 p.m.

City, State: Xenia, OH

Occupation: Teacher/Homesteader

Comment: We need to push for a more sustainable policy. We need to do whatever we can to encourage small farming outfits, community & co-farms, urban & suburban homesteading, farmer's markets, and localization. We need to reduce the subsidies given to big agriculture and wean ourselves from our dependence on corporate agriculture. If we don't and soon, we face mass hunger, inflated prices, big businesses raking in big profits while the people starve, environmental damage, *etc.* The government is supposed to protect and serve the people, the majority . . . not just the wealthy.

COMMENT OF JENNY STIRLING

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 9:04 a.m.

City, State: Arlington, MA

Occupation: Teacher/Musician

Comment: For years I have been watching, with great alarm, the demise of our food systems in this country.

I urgently request you to support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

I want my children and their children to have access to locally, sustainably, organically grown foods that are **Affordable** for **All** people.

I want safe foods, un-tampered by genetic experimentations, grown in healthy soils.

I want farmers to be able to work in non-toxic environments for a decent, livable pay scale, and I want folks in my community to sell the local foods produced, not have it shipped or driven from 3,000 miles away.

I want to see my local community healthy and thriving, rather than seeing government protect and (horrifically) subsidize agribusiness corporations that cause epidemics of diabetes, unknown cancers, and other illnesses.

Please support the above policies. Our future depends on this.

COMMENT OF SHIRLEY STITH

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 6:19 p.m.

City, State: Hidden Valley Lake, CA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I am interested in protecting our food supply from GMO and Monsanto greed & effects on small farms and crops and local economy. WE need local grown foods and grapes protected for our health and protection for small farms and small business with highest standards.

Not dirty trick manipulations for greed and unknown potential dangerous health hazards by big business only interested in profit.

COMMENT OF ANN STOCKDALE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:19 p.m.

City, State: Gig Harbor, WA

Occupation: Artist

Comment: Please put labels on GMO crops. I completely avoid corn now because I don't want GMO's. Please sever ties with Monsanto and look seriously into their stranglehold on our produce. This is a National Security issue, to let one company own most of our food supply . . . so what's up with that. Sterile Seeds are an abomination.

COMMENT OF DR. SARAH STOCKWELL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:49 p.m.

City, State: San Diego, CA

Occupation: Biologist

Comment: As one of the vast majority of Americans who consume food rather than producing it, my priorities lie with healthy, affordable food rather than continued subsidies to big agricultural businesses producing commodity crops. Please allow the new farm bill to reflect what is best for, and valued by, the citizens and taxpayers rather than what the lobbyists want. I value healthy land and healthy food that is accessible to all.

To this end, I am asking you for:

- Full funding of food stamp programs.
- Full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- Implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Thank you.

Dr. SARAH STOCKWELL,
University of California, San Diego.

COMMENT OF MARILYN STOKES

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:29 p.m.

City, State: Lanett, AL

Occupation: Retired Missionary Teacher

Comment: I have grown some of my food in the past, but am limited in what I can grow now. I would like to be able to buy organic food and food that has not been genetically modified. I do hope that you will consider the consumers and the local farmers rather than favoring large corporations when you submit the farm bill. It shouldn't be so difficult to find safe food for our children and grandchildren.

I would like to see results of scientific studies done on genetically modified foods that are not paid for by Monsanto and others who profit from GMO food.

Thank you for anything you can do to make our food safe.

MARILYN STOKES.

COMMENT OF SARAH STOLAR

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 11:53 a.m.

City, State: Seattle, WA

Occupation: Homemaker

Comment: End all crop subsidies. Make regulations to encourage the move from industrial agriculture and CAFOs to small, local, and organic farms. Heavily regulate the planting of GMOs and help make non-GMO organic seeds more available.

COMMENT OF JANET STOLEY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:56 p.m.

City, State: Edwards, CA

Occupation: Homemaker

Comment: As a concerned citizen of the U.S. and mother of three healthy, beautiful children who have not been sick much since we switched to mostly organic foods, I am requesting your full support on the full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act. (H.R. 3286) We desperately need these farmers to continue farming so that we can eat good quality, healthy food; and since unemployment is at an all-time low, we also need these workers to keep their jobs. It would be a mistake to depend on other countries for jobs and food. Furthermore, it is also a mistake to depend on the government for jobs and food. History has already clearly demonstrated that the government electives cannot handle that priority adequately. And now we're faced with universal health care, something all other countries in similar situations detest. At least if we had good, healthy food, we wouldn't have to pay much for health care. The need would still be there, but the majority of the bills wouldn't. I am also in full support of fully funding conservation programs and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs, the implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act(H.R. 3236), and maintaining the EQUIP Organic Initiative. I was just notified that funding for organic research and beginning farmers was cut significantly. This is a mistake and will cost us dearly, because we will end up paying the doctors rather than the farmers. I personally would rather pay the farmers to avoid health problems than the doctors to fix them. By cutting funding to these programs, you are showing people where your allegiance and values lie: with money and big business. This country is no longer run by the people or for the people, but by the government for big business. Do not make the mistake of letting money drown out the voice of the people. I can assure you that there are at least thousands of other citizens who feel the same as I do. We need to start fixing problems at the roots rather than start from the top, or else we won't need terrorists to destroy our country. We will be destroying ourselves from the inside out. I hope and pray that you will make the right decision regarding our food.

Sincerely,

JANET STOLEY.

COMMENT OF JANORA STOMBOCK

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:13 p.m.

City, State: Boulder, CO

Occupation: Retired Building Trades

Comment: The farm bill must be written in a way that fosters healthy farms and regenerative practices. Please stop sending our taxpayer dollars to agribusiness, which includes GMO's, pesticides that are killing us and this land, and commodity subsidies. Please strengthen incentives for organic agriculture and programs for new organic farmers. A farm bill should benefit the people, and not business. Our children's future is in your hands. Please choose wisely, instead of from a place of greed and corruption. Thank you.

COMMENT OF BEVERLY STONE

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 12:54 p.m.

City, State: Minneapolis, MN

Occupation: Office Administrator Environmental Agency

Comment: Please work to provide a farm bill which encourages the production of local foods and does not harass organic and family farms with paperwork designed to make them fail so that huge conglomerates control our food sources.

Protect organic and family farms from Monsanto and any other possible GMO originators, rather than allowing them to dictate the law with their egregiousness. Thank you.

COMMENT OF KAREN STONE

Date Submitted: Monday, May 07, 2012, 6:07 p.m.

City, State: East Chicago, IN

Occupation: Researcher

Comment: Please do not cut funding for hunger relief programs! The need for food in many communities is tremendous; and often hidden from public view. No one in this affluent nation should be allowed to go hungry. There is no more important priority for our nation than the well-being of its residents—hungry people are not productive people; and we need the combined energy of all of our residents to keep our nation strong and prosperous. We all have paid taxes for decades and entrust our representatives with fighting to help meet our needs—to allow any American to go hungry would cast a shameful shadow upon the ideals by which this nation was founded.

COMMENT OF MARY STONE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:10 p.m.

City, State: Oriental, NC

Occupation: Retired Teacher

Comment: I buy grass fed beef and organic produce. I support the small farmer that promotes being humane to animals and protecting our environment from pesticides.

Please support our small famers, not the corporations that are only concerned with making more money, and dumping consumers and animals at the bottom of the pile.

We depend on you to keep us safe from those who would harm our children and environment just to attain the next dollar!

COMMENT OF MICHELLE STONE

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 7:37 p.m.

City, State: Pine, AK

Comment: Please outlaw GMO food. Stop subsidizing corn used for high fructose corn syrup (which is contributing to this country's obesity crisis). Subsidize the farmers who really need it, the organic and smaller family farms. Big corporations do not need government money. Stop the waste and get back to supporting healthy crops. Stop the abuse of farm animals. If you want to reform health care do it at the food level. Give people healthy, cheap choices!

COMMENT OF CAROL STONEBURNER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:05 p.m.

City, State: Minneapolis, MN

Occupation: Administrative Assistant, University of Minnesota

Comment: We need a farm bill that starts paving the way for real reform. It needs support shifts in agricultural practice in ways that promote conservation of soil and water quality, that reduce the use petrochemical products both for fertilizers and for pesticides, that diversify crop variety by individual farmers, that expand the availability of crop insurance to non-commodity corps, and that that penalize use crops genetically modified to resist herbicides.

Also, you need to keep strong support for the nutritional aspects of the bill; SNAP has an incredibly high rate of return on investment both in terms in direct economic benefits and in a healthier society. To that end there should also be increased funding for use of SNAP benefits in farmers markets.

Failure to do these things undermines the health, economic and biological security of our country, both in the immediate future and for years to come, for the short-term benefit of a small number of corporate giants.

SUBMITTED LETTER BY CHUCK STONES, PRESIDENT/CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER,
KANSAS BANKERS ASSOCIATION

Date: April 11, 2012

To: The Honorable FRANK D. LUCAS, *Chairman*, U.S. House Agriculture Committee
The Honorable COLLIN C. PETERSON, *Ranking Minority Member*, U.S. House Agriculture Committee

The Honorable TIM HUELSKAMP, Congressman—Kansas 1st District

The Honorable LYNN JENKINS, Congresswoman—Kansas 2nd District

The Honorable KEVIN YODER, Congressman—Kansas 3rd District
 The Honorable MIKE POMPEO, Congressman—Kansas 4th District
 From: Chuck Stones, President/CEO—Kansas Bankers Association
 Re: U.S. House Agriculture Committee Farm Bill Field Hearing, April 20, 2012—
 Dodge City, Kansas

On behalf of the 300 banks that comprise the Kansas Bankers Association and the nearly 14,000 Kansans employed by those community-based organizations, we welcome Members of the U.S. House Agriculture Committee to the Sunflower State. We commend the Committee for taking time to seek input directly from agricultural producers, as well as other stakeholders that will be impacted by the next farm bill. We also appreciate this opportunity to highlight two very important items that we hope this Committee will consider as deliberations on the next farm bill continue.

Item #1: Removing Participation Limits from USDA FSA Loan Guarantee Programs

KBA supports removing the current 15 year participation limit applied to loan guarantee programs administered by USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA). The current 15 year participation limit has created uncertainty for many farmers and ranchers in Kansas and across the nation that borrow money from banks through FSA loan guarantee programs. In Kansas, there are currently 1,104 agricultural borrowers that are utilizing the FSA loan guarantee program. *Because of the participation limit imposed by Congress in 1992, 212 Kansas borrowers have already been term-limited out of the program and an additional 93 Kansas borrowers will be forced to exit the loan guarantee program within the next 2 years.* Given the cyclical nature of the agricultural economy, it seems short-sighted to place a simple 15 year limitation on program participation when the relationship between the agricultural producer and the agricultural lender often spans many decades. Furthermore, KBA is not aware of comparable term limits for other Federal loan guaranty programs and we question the merits of term limits given the volatile nature of the agricultural economy. KBA urges Members of the House Agriculture Committee to remove this restriction.

Item #2: Maintaining a Strong and Vibrant Federal Crop Insurance Program

KBA supports maintaining a strong Federal Crop Insurance Program as a vital risk management tool for farmers and ranchers. Agriculture is an inherently risky business, both in terms of weather and markets. Federal crop insurance provides producers with an effective tool to manage their risk, and it provides agricultural lenders with greater certainty that loans made to producers will be repaid. Federal crop insurance serves as an incentive for agricultural lenders when lending to young and beginning farmers that have less collateral and equity and it is instrumental in assuring that American agriculture remains solid, solvent and globally competitive. Without the risk protection provided by Federal crop insurance, agricultural lenders would be forced to increase underwriting standards, increase costs to offset risk and likely be forced to reduce credit availability to some producers for their production, equipment and land purchase needs. KBA strongly urges Members of the House Agriculture Committee to maintain the effectiveness of the Federal Crop Insurance Program as you consider the next farm bill.

Once again, thank you for holding this important forum in Kansas and thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the two important items referenced above. Kansas banks and Kansas bankers will continue to serve the needs of the Kansas agricultural community and we look forward to enactment of a strong Federal farm program that will ensure the vitality of agricultural producers and the entire agricultural industry.

For additional information, please contact Chuck Stones at [Redacted] or by calling [Redacted].

COMMENT OF SARA STOPEK

Date Submitted: Monday, May 14, 2012, 11:35 p.m.

City, State: Brooklyn, NY

Occupation: Gardener, Teacher, Writer

Comment: Our CSA makes a big difference in our neighborhood—please support small farmers, and food for the needy. These things make our local economies thrive.

COMMENT OF MARINA STOPLER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:33 p.m.

City, State: Pleasantville, NY

Occupation: Nutritionist

Comment: People are told, year after year, how important it is to eat whole foods from real farmers—at farmers markets, greenmarkets—these are the people that can take care of our land and water. Can the government **Please** take note.

People are no longer buying supermarket meat, poultry, or produce if is from the hands of mass market producers—CAFO's, chickens that can't walk because of the way they have been bred, produce that comes from thousands of miles away. America has woken up—let us know that you are listening and make the farm bill truly for farmers **Not** industry.

COMMENT OF SUSAN STORLAZZI TORPEY

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 9:44 a.m.

City, State: Lake Grove, NY

Occupation: Consultant

Comment: I implore you to reform the farm policies now so that people's health is put before the special interests of business. Organic farms need more support not less. We need to start caring more about health and protecting our environment thereby our future, before it is too late!

COMMENT OF MICHAEL STORM

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 11:03 p.m.

City, State: Louisville, KY

Occupation: Electrician/Urban Gardener/Bee Keeper

Comment: I am shocked to hear that you would even consider not to tie conservation practices with the legislation before you as had been in the past! Soil, water and air are important to everyone and need protection forever.

COMMENT OF KAYLA STORMONT

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 02, 2012, 10:55 a.m.

City, State: Providence, RI

Occupation: Student

Comment: A friend and I are working on a project for a class about sustainable agriculture and we're examining the farm bill, specifically proposals for changes to the crop insurance programs in the 2008 Farm Bill. We support the efforts that are being made to extend crop insurance to organic and specialty crops, but are skeptical about the use of a private-public partnership in order to provide this insurance. We think that a better solution would be to put the government in charge of collecting crop insurance payments and distributing monetary aid in the event of a natural or market-based disaster. We think using private companies is inefficient and might lead to wasted money. Private companies are more likely to double-count farmers, doling out multiple payments to farm owners as well as farm managers. A federally led program would facilitate enforcement of single payments to operations and would allow for more wide scale regulation which would ensure equality for all farmers.

COMMENT OF MARY JO STOUT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:36 p.m.

City, State: San Jose, CA

Comment: It is time to have a just farm bill—subsidy support for farms, all the agriculture business, dairy's—is a giant welfare program stop all this become fair just in your rulings of new farm bills.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF KAREN STOUTE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:49 p.m.

City, State: Brooklyn, NY

Occupation: Rental Agent

Comment: It is sad to see the state of our food supply. What is sadder is that this is allowed because of the policies that the government put in place. The FDA and USDA have been influence by the big food companies. They have stopped looking out for the wealth fare of the public.

The land is being destroyed by the pesticides and the GMO crops. Unfortunately, profit is the driving force behind all the policies relating to the food industry, the

health of the citizens are secondary. Well, perhaps things will change with the new farm bill.

Sincerely

KAREN.

COMMENT OF CHRISTINE STRALEY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:35 a.m.

City, State: Denver, CO

Occupation: Nutritionist

Comment: Please remove Monsanto affiliates and other big ag business from government positions. Please put the American people's health and vitality first not the almighty dollar.

COMMENT OF SALLY STRAND

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:34 p.m.

City, State: Aurora, IL

Occupation: Holistic Health Counselor

Comment: I work with people to improve their health, and one of my most powerful tools is food. And the quality of our food is being depleted by Big Ag, please support these aspects of the farm bill (I hope I've stated that correctly). By continuing to support factory farming, and not the smaller farmers, you are also supporting the growing number of health problems that seems to stem from "cheap" low-quality food, that will cost us all much more in the long run.

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Thank you for your service.

SALLY STRAND.

COMMENT OF LINDA STRANGIO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:32 p.m.

City, State: Glens Falls, NY

Occupation: Retired Homeowner/Gardener

Comment: Food is so very important. I am very concerned that GMO foods have taken over agriculture. It is devastating and will forever alter our world in a negative way, if it has not already become too late. I implore my representatives to see the light on this subject for the future generations of our nation and the world.

COMMENT OF LINDSAY M. STRAUB VORSE

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 15, 2012, 6:33 p.m.

City, State: Roseburg, OR

Occupation: Unemployed

Comment: Please support those who struggle with food security by supporting the continued funding to SNAP and other food programs. Vote against cutting the food stamps that many families need. Thank you for your time.

LINDSAY M. STRAUB VORSE.

COMMENT OF DIANE STREDNY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:51 p.m.

City, State: Albany, NY

Occupation: Registered Nurse

Comment: I teach my healthcare clients to eat only organic foods. I grew up on a farm and know we need to help organic farmers. Please support organic farming efforts.

COMMENT OF JAN STREITBURGER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:28 p.m.

City, State: Arlington, MA

Occupation: Graphic Designer/Art Director

Comment: I want purity of vegetables and fruits, no GMO's present, and if they are the public needs to know. Just label it and folks can decide if that's what they want to consume. Fair practice with farmers and consumers is all I'm asking. Thank you!

COMMENT OF ANDREA STRLE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:20 p.m.

City, State: Lewis Center, OH

Occupation: Mom, Writer/Editor, Fitness Instructor

Comment: Please considering forbidding genetically modified foods until research has proven with certainty there are no health benefits. Consider supporting and subsidizing organic farming methods. Please forbid the maltreatment of animals. Please require processors to identify what is in their food whether it was raised with chemicals and hormones and where it came from. Please support the local farmer. Please scrutinize the activities of factory farmers who do not always have the health of consumers in mind but rather the bottom line. Make good responsible organic farming affordable.

COMMENT OF AMANDA STROMBOM

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 2:33 p.m.

City, State: Issaquah, WA

Occupation: Nonprofit Manager

Comment: The most important change is to stop subsidizing foods which make us unhealthy and contribute to the huge obesity problem—especially meat, dairy, and corn and soybeans which are mostly used to feed animals. Corn is also a big problem—because it is so cheap, it is used to make all kinds of artificial food products including corn syrup. Removing these subsidies would at least level the playing field and make unhealthy foods cost a more realistic price. Farm subsidies, if any, should be focused only on healthy fruits and vegetables.

COMMENT OF CHRISTINA STROTHER

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 1:23 a.m.

City, State: Manteno, IL

Occupation: Social Worker

Comment: We need to support the local farmers! Take the big business out of our food. Clean up the farmed food from harmful pesticides and **Stop** factory farming. Pay fair, livable wages to migrant farm workers.

COMMENT OF FRIEDA STUBBE

Date Submitted: Saturday, April 28, 2012, 9:40 a.m.

City, State: Guaynabo, PR

Occupation: Singer

Comment: If we do not prioritize, if we lose sight of what being **Human** is, if we cannot empathize, not even with our own, we are not worthy of being called Americans! **Let's Feed Our Hungry First!**

FRIEDA STUBBE, PR.

COMMENT OF MELISSA STUCKEY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:47 a.m.

City, State: Lancaster, PA

Occupation: Medical Lab Scientist

Comment: Choosing what I eat is important and having safe, healthy, sustainable options available is to the benefit of all citizens. As someone who has access to the locally grown Amish crops and a large farmers market, I appreciate knowing where my food comes from, that it is produced by small local farmers, that they are organic and not genetically manufactured, and that I can trust it to be eaten. Everyone deserves the chance to eat fresh foods that aren't modified or covered in harmful pesticides. I wish people in congress and government would put the concerns and

health of their constituents over the lure of big money from agricultural firms and lobbyists. Please consider the health and **Future** of Americans, our farmers, and our future. We just want to be healthy and keep harmful chemicals out of our bodies and keep corruption out of the agricultural business. Thank you.

COMMENT OF JASON STURDEVANT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 10:37 a.m.

City, State: Raleigh, NC

Occupation: College Professor

Comment: I urge you to consider the following elements in crafting a farm bill:

First, we need a bill that encourages the growth of sustainable, local agriculture. While we owe a great deal to large-scale agriculture, this needs balance with support of small-scale farmers that can produce local, nutritious vegetables and fruit, relying upon sustainable growing practices (such as those encouraged by USDA Organic certification).

Second, we need a farm bill that protects our natural resources. Our forests and prairies, lakes and rivers, and everything in between deserve to be protected, not only for the ecological benefits that extend beyond those ecosystems, but also for the enjoyment and benefit of future generations.

Third (and last), we need a farm bill that supports investment in the next generation of farmers and producers. Encouraging young people to enter a career of tending to some of our most precious resources, our land and our food, should be an utmost priority. Such encouragement should not, however, come at the expense of the two concerns above!

Thank you for your commitment to providing a farm bill that will help both our farmers and the rest of us, now and in the future.

COMMENT OF JORDAN STURM

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:28 a.m.

City, State: Hilton Head Island, SC

Occupation: Worship Leader

Comment: This is so important! Please cut back on corn funding; level the playing field. Help to make healthy fruits and vegetables competitive price-wise with the junk food made from cheap corn and corn syrup, *etc.* You can help with our obesity and diabetes problem a lot with this legislation!

Thank you,

JORDAN STURM.

COMMENT OF KATHLEEN STYRCULA

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 12:40 p.m.

City, State: Tucson, AZ

Occupation: Retail General Manager

Comment: Quality nutrition will build strong Americans. Back to basics always works.

Less Agri-Company interests is truly good for America. Grow Local, Eat Local should be the norm not a radical idea. You will also grow local economies and put people to work through local sustainable family owned small business farming all across this great nation. Why not? It's better for everyone. We must do what is better for the majority not the minority. Today can be a new day if you choose it.

COMMENT OF SUZANNE SUDDUTH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:06 p.m.

City, State: Dallas, TX

Occupation: Accountant

Comment: Please reform our food supply now. Big Agra now rules our food supply. We must stop this! Write a **Law** that GMO foods **Must** be labeled. As a consumer I demand to know what I am feeding my children, I want to make an informed decision. Thank You.

SUBMITTED LETTER BY MIKE SUEVER, SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT OF R&D,
ENGINEERING AND MILK PROCUREMENT, HP HOOD LLC

March 8, 2012

Hon. WILLIAM L. OWENS,

U.S. House of Representatives,
Washington, D.C.

Dear Congressman Owens,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this statement for the record at the House Committee on Agriculture's field hearing in Saranac Lake, New York on Friday, March 9, 2012.

HP Hood LLC is a family owned business which operates five dairy plants in the State of New York and procures milk from several hundred New York dairy farmers who supply those operations through dairy cooperatives. Hood operates another eight dairy operations within the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic region. Today the company employs approximately 3,000 people (more than 800 in the State of New York).

Our business is directly regulated by the United States Department of Agriculture, with programs that were initiated during the Great Depression. Today, this 75 year old system of milk price regulations keeps our fluid milk products priced higher than all other dairy products, not because of consumer demand, but because of government set pricing formulas. The system is called "Federal Milk Marketing Orders."

Dairy farmers and fluid milk processors cannot use risk management tools like the futures market due to an anomaly in the fluid milk pricing system under the Federal Milk Marketing Order program. Other agricultural commodities, even other dairy items, can go to the Chicago Mercantile Exchange and hedge the cost of their products. **A simple amendment to the existing Federal Milk Marketing Order pricing system could correct this injustice.**

For example, when a restaurant chain is preparing its menu, it can (if it chooses to) lock-in the cost of almost every item on the menu and feel confident when setting menu prices. The restaurant has the ability to set menu prices for all other dairy products excluding fluid milk. We continue to see restaurant chains drop nutritious fluid milk items from their menus because they can't be sure the price listed in their menu will allow them to even cover their cost. Furthermore, fluid milk sales continue to decline (between 2-3% just this past year alone) within the Northeast.

Second, it is our understanding that the House Agriculture Committee may consider Rep. Collin Peterson's (D-MN) bill, H.R. 3062, that includes the "Dairy Market Stabilization Program" (DMSP), and we respectfully ask that you oppose it.

The DMSP will be a gross and unnecessary intrusion of government into dairy markets. It will decrease milk supply by periodically requiring HP Hood to reduce milk payments to our suppliers and submit the difference of those payments to USDA. The DMSP would also impose a new, complex, and costly regulatory burden on dairy manufacturers. In order to withhold payments from dairy farmers, our company will need to track which farmers are participating in the program. We will no doubt be subjected to periodic audits and reviews to assure that we are following the letter of this new program.

In closing, we urge you to support an amendment to the Federal Order provision commonly referred to as the "higher of cost setting" to eliminate the anomaly that exists in the fluid milk pricing system today. Second, we urge you to oppose the Dairy Market Stabilization Program or any similar programs, and instead support safety net programs for dairy farmers that do not interfere in the marketplace or directly regulate our business.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Best regards,



MIKE SUEVER,
Senior Vice President of R&D, Engineering and Milk Procurement,
HP Hood LLC.

COMMENT OF LOR SUGARMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:06 p.m.

City, State: Naples, FL

Occupation: Fiscal Technician

Comment: I am in Connie Mack's district, and I want him to represent the great majority of his constituents in labeling food with GMO status before it's too late. I promise that I will not vote for him again unless he takes that step!

COMMENT OF LAURA SUGARWALA

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 15, 2012, 8:22 a.m.
City, State: Rochester, NY
Occupation: Food Bank Nutrition Resource Manager
Comment: As part of the emergency food network, working everyday with people who are just trying to make ends meet, I oppose cuts to SNAP and all nutrition programs.

COMMENT OF GRETCHEN SUKOW

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:08 p.m.
City, State: Lexington, VA
Occupation: Preschool Teacher
Comment: I want a farm bill that supports family farms, environmentally sound farming practices, and safe food for my family. I do not want to put more tax free dollars in the pockets of huge agribusinesses which do none of this!

COMMENT OF B. SULLIVAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:11 p.m.
City, State: Louisville, CO
Occupation: Self-Employed
Comment: Farming should not be big business. It should be local, fair and humane. Organic and additive free meat, dairy and produce should be the norm. I want the right to raw dairy and to honest food labeling that lets me know every single ingredient in my food and whether or not it's GMO. Big Agra stinks and I don't want them in my elected officials' back pockets. Thank you.

COMMENT OF CAROL SULLIVAN

Date Submitted: Wednesday, March 21, 2012, 1:36 p.m.
City, State: Lackawaxen, PA
Occupation: Nonprofit
Comment: Please incorporate S. 1640, the Federal Milk Marketing Improvement Act, sponsored by Senator Casey (D-PA), into the farm bill. Dairy farmers need to have their cost of production covered. We are losing too many dairy farmers, and the rural way of life and the rural economy is suffering. Please help the dairy farmers by eliminating property taxes on dairy farms with less than 200 cows.

COMMENT OF COLLEEN SULLIVAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:44 p.m.
City, State: Santa Cruz, CA
Occupation: Education
Comment: Sustainable farming and food production is one of the most important issues facing our country today. It impacts our health, our environment and our economy. Please show leadership in the world by supporting healthy, sustainable farming practices in opposition to farming practices dictated by agribusiness with deep pockets.

COMMENT OF DR. PATRICK SULLIVAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:15 a.m.
City, State: Chapel Hill, NC
Occupation: Professor of Medicine, Duke University
Comment: Subsidies for corn based products need to be significantly reduced. Support for locally grown fruits and vegetables need to increase substantially. If we don't change our food/farm policy our health care costs will place an unsustainable burden on the economic health of our country.

COMMENT OF EILEEN SULLIVAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:59 p.m.
City, State: Charlotte, NC
Occupation: Self-Employed
Comment: U.S. food and agricultural policy must focus on adopting best agricultural practices that put the health of our citizens, the land and the livelihood of farmers and farm workers over the interests of industrial agriculture lobbyists. I

support the full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286). I ask that you fully fund conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and make sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs. I also support the implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236), and I ask that you maintain the EQIP Organic Initiative. All of these items are vitally important to me and my family. My family buys locally whenever possible, and we only eat organic food. It's a big expense, but I have two young adult daughters and I don't want my future grandchildren to be negatively affected by pesticides, GMOs and poor nutrition. I also want to be a good steward of our resources and insure clean air, clean water, and a healthy environment for my children and grandchildren.

COMMENT OF ELAINE SULLIVAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:41 p.m.

City, State: Sharon, MA

Occupation: Nurse Educator

Comment: Its time we take our farms and food production seriously in terms of the health of the nation. We need to support the small farmers and not force them out of jobs and their land, make it possible for them to sell their products and make a living.

COMMENT OF TERRY SULLIVAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:56 p.m.

City, State: Vashon, WA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Poultry/poultry products

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: We are a very small producer. We feel that the future will best be served by small local producers rather than large fossil fuel dependent producers far from their markets. To continue to put "all our eggs in one basket" is a foolhardy strategy. If you really believe in people being accountable for themselves, taking care of themselves, then you would encourage them to do that by continuing to nurture small farmers.

COMMENT OF THOMAS SULLIVAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:07 p.m.

City, State: Turners Falls, MA

Occupation: Landscape Designer

Comment: Please help us revive our local economies and preserve soils and bee habitat by favoring small scale farmers and their local markets. Also, please be sure to include hefty funding for native bee monitoring and support for farmers to increase pollinator habitat on the edges of their fields and around their farms. Help us revive our lives and lessen the dominance of corporate control of agriculture and free our markets to increase the stocks of healthy foods by supporting new farmers and farmers markets. The health of our nation depends on it.

Thanks so much,

TOM

COMMENT OF ROBERT SULLIVAN, M.D.

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:48 p.m.

City, State: Sacramento, CA

Occupation: Medical Doctor

Comment: I oppose most of the subsidies handed over to Big Ag and the Energy Industry. I'm embarrassed and angered by the corruption this strongly suggests. These are fat cats, not struggling farmers. The latter don't have the time and money to hire lobbyists, etc.

COMMENT OF ROBERT SUMMERFELT

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 8:07 p.m.

City, State: Ames, IA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Please do not cut funding for conservation programs in the 2012 farm bill. The farm bill should have a substantial component for protection of soil, preventing water pollution, and maintaining healthy environments for wildlife. After all, most taxpayers are non-producers and deserve benefits from their taxes that go to paying for the benefits to producers.

COMMENT OF DAKOTA SUMMERS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:54 p.m.

City, State: Summertown, TN

Occupation: Life Coach

Comment: Senators and Representatives, Please enact a farm bill that will provide:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

We need to keep tax money and land in the hands of private citizen farmers and small farm businesses that are investing their lives and energies in keeping the land healthy and providing quality, fresh, local farm products to our food stream. Please do your job by representing voter citizens rather than large corporations. Many of us are beginning to read the fine print and watch your job performance.

COMMENT OF JENNIFER SUMNER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 11:52 a.m.

City, State: Sutton, MA

Occupation: Stay-at-Home Mother, Former Software Engineer

Comment: It is critical that we financially and politically support full cycle, healthy, sustainable food production in this country. There is no argument that the current mass-produced agriculture is not only polluting, but it isn't sustainable. We are destroying the very soil we need and pumping non-organic fertilizers into it is not the right answer. Is sustainable food production more expensive, yes, but that is where the subsidies should go. We know we need to alter the "American" diet of burgers, soda and fries, yet where does the majority of subsidies go, corn and soy, which are then overly processed into HCFS and oils and grain which is then converted into feed for the cattle farms, which are extremely polluting. All of this is done in the name of "cheap" food. Great chips are cheap, but they are only cheap in nutrition and dollars to buy, they are costly in the later diseases (diabetes and heart diseases specifically) and pollution. This cycle isn't working. Go back to the research that George Washington did to make Mount Vernon self-sufficient so they wouldn't have to buy from England. Rotating crops, natural fertilizers, soil restoration. That is where the support in the farm bill should go.

COMMENT OF JUNIPER SUNDANCE

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 10:31 a.m.

City, State: Abrams, WI

Occupation: In-home Health Care

Comment: I am a constituent of Rep Ribble.

I believe America needs a farm bill that drives innovation for tomorrow's farmers and food entrepreneurs—fund the Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative at \$30 million per year in mandatory funding.

I believe America needs a farm bill that makes healthy food widely available to all Americans—including schoolchildren! We must provide flexibility for states to use existing food procurement programs to purchase fresh, healthy food from local farmers and ranchers.

I believe America needs a farm bill that protects our natural resources—protect the Conservation Stewardship Program from unfair funding cuts, and improve it by ranking applications solely on their conservation benefits. Farmers count on CSP and other conservation programs to conserve soil for future generations, keep water and air clean, and create habitat for wildlife—all while farming profitably.

I believe America needs a farm bill that invests in the next generation of farmers and ranchers—guarantee \$25 million per year in mandatory funding for the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program. We need a national strategy and commitment to support beginning farmer and ranchers entering agriculture. With an aging farm population, now is the time to invest in the future of American agriculture by nurturing new agriculture start-ups.

I believe America needs a farm bill that creates jobs and spurs economic growth but not at the expense of our environment and health. I oppose subsidies for tobacco. I oppose subsidies for multinational corporations who remove profits from the local area. I support programs like the Value-Added Producer Grants Program by guaranteeing \$30 million of mandatory funding per year. VAPG provides seed money to help farmers innovate in agriculture and create jobs while securing a sustainable path to market-based farm profitability.

COMMENT OF CINDY SUNDELL-GUY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:07 p.m.

City, State: Wichita, KS

Occupation: Zija Distributor and Realtor

Comment: We are coming to a time of food crisis. Help protect our food supply and health by making fruits and vegetables more affordable and keeping our food non-genetically modified. They are already beginning to ruin our health and that of the animals we eat.

COMMENT OF VIOLET SUNDERLAND

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:24 p.m.

City, State: Dallas, OR

Occupation: Homemaker/Retired

Comment: One by one, our states are going to take Monsanto and other GMO producers down before their pesticides kill all the bees which will bring on worldwide hunger. You need to get their lobbyists out of the equation and start listening to we, the people.

COMMENT OF JUDY SUPLEE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:00 p.m.

City, State: Tallahassee, FL

Occupation: Paralegal

Comment: As someone who eats healthy, please don't let the big Ag farmers dictate how you write the farm bill. Support organic farming and the small and local farmers. I am deeply disturbed about the food that people are consuming, contributing to illness/sickness.

COMMENT OF TERRI SUPOWITZ

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 11:13 a.m.

City, State: Pittsburgh, PA

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: My biggest concern is the GM crops. Monsanto cannot be allowed to run the agriculture in the USA. Monsanto needs to be told **No**. Farmers should be allowed to get seeds from their crops and not have to buy new ones every year. We need more diversity with fruits & vegetables not less. The more diverse the less likely the crop will be loss. No more farms that only grow one crop—not good for anyone. Tell farmers to use less pesticides and fertilizers & more natural organic choices.

COMMENT OF KNOSE SUSAN

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 2:52 p.m.

City, State: Indianapolis, IN

Occupation: Acquisition

Comment: I support subsidizing organic and grass-fed, pasture-raised farming and meat and dairy production. Not only would I support eliminating **All** subsidies for the production of genetically modified crops or livestock, I in fact support legislation **Banning All** genetically modified organisms from U.S. agriculture. My health has improved dramatically after switching from CAFO meat, which is all that is available in U.S. groceries, to pasture-raised meat and dairy and organic produce. Please feel free to contact me for further information.

COMMENT OF NANCY SUTER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:41 a.m.

City, State: Sequim, WA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: We have a Congress in this country to represent the people who vote them into office . . . **Not** the lobbyists and big corporate mongrels and their greed. It would be a blessing if Congress would remember this!

COMMENT OF BEVERLEY SUTTON

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 10:18 a.m.

City, State: Tucson, AZ

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: Can we please support actual farmers and not giant mega-corporations? I would like to see funding go toward those producing healthy food with no (or at least significantly fewer) pesticides, herbicides, and fungicides. Also to those hiring farm workers who get a decent wage and health benefits.

COMMENT OF CHELSEA SUTTON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:29 a.m.

City, State: Indianapolis, IN

Occupation: Freelance Editor, Graduate Student

Comment: Remember that Monsanto and other giant agri-corps does not have the U.S. citizens' best interests at heart. All they are interested in is profit—profit that never seems to trickle down to the people who need it most. If there is anything that this House can do, this Congress can do, it is to pass a farm bill that is fair and clean. For once in this session be the stand-up men and women that you ran as in your campaigns.

Specifically:

- Support our fight against hunger by maintaining and strengthening critical nutrition programs in this time of unprecedented need. We must not solve our budget problems on the backs of those experiencing food insecurity, including our most vulnerable—our children, the elderly, and the disabled;
- Provide an even “plowing” field by fully funding programs that support beginning and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, organic farming, regional farm and food economies, and rural development. We need more farmers and ranchers, more sustainable food production, and more economic opportunity in our food system;
- Support family farmers that really need help, not the biggest farms that don't: End subsidies (aka direct payments and countercyclical commodity programs), and replace them with loophole-free agriculture risk coverage. Additionally, implement a cap on crop insurance premium subsidies;
- Ensure that limited conservation funding maximizes lasting environmental benefits: Limit funds to Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) for animal waste management infrastructure by eliminating the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) Livestock Set-aside and protect the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) from disproportionate cuts, and improve it by ranking applications solely on their conservation benefits.

COMMENT OF ELLYN SUTTON

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 3:36 a.m.

City, State: Spokane, WA

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: Do not use genetically modified products. Recent studies have shown that we are becoming human pesticide factories and that our health is being deeply endangered.

COMMENT OF JANET SVIRSKY, PH.D.

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:45 p.m.

City, State: Potomac, MD

Occupation: Teacher/Artist/Mom

Comment: As someone with a Ph.D. in Math and work in biochemistry before changing careers to be a parent, I have been following the science and paying attention to the economics. Agribusiness as a purveyor of monoculture and genetically

based pesticide use is unsustainable, as evidenced by the request to use more dangerous pesticides as resistance builds to their current products, and biodiversity declines, jeopardizing ecosystems and putting future food production at risk. Companies like Monsanto and Nausea know the impact of their products as do other parts of the world, so once again, the future of people is being bought and political expediency appears to be winning yet again. Please take a stand for people, good science, and our future as a country and a species!

COMMENT OF LIN SVITKO

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:55 p.m.

City, State: Whiting, IN

Occupation: Legal Secretary

Comment: Senator Lugar lost his position in the senate because he is out of touch with the current will of the people, who are now much more informed and less willing to put up with abuses by big business and big agriculture. I urge you to re-evaluate your position as well if you are not inclined to support a more progressive farm bill that benefits the people and farmers more than the big interests of the corporate monster before it's too late. Our food supply is systematically being poisoned by corporations who only have their profit margins at heart. This is changing fast. Please be on board to support what will be for the greater good of the human beings who live in this country and produce the healthy food we need.

COMMENT OF EDWARD SWAIN

Date Submitted: Monday, May 07, 2012, 6:40 p.m.

City, State: Waldorf, MD

Occupation: Retired Government and Wal-Mart Employee

Comment: I volunteer at Community Support Systems, Brandywine, MD, and we have 30 food pantries. One in Accokeek at my church and one is Baden. On the third Tuesday of every month we give out free food at Gwyen Park H.S. in Brandywine, MD. On a bitter cold day in November over 400 families came out for free food. At Accokeek we average about 4 families a week coming in needing emergency food. At Baden it's almost double that. Baden food pantry get government commodity food and without it we could not serve the 100 or so families that come on Wednesdays and Fridays. Please do not cut the farm bill. Due to the last cuts that were made to the SNAP Program one of our clients went from \$170 in food stamps down to \$60. He is disabled senior citizen. He depends on us for additional food and medical supplies.

COMMENT OF ELAINE SWANSON

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 10:57 p.m.

City, State: Pickett, WI

Occupation: Natural Landscape Designer

Comment: I would like to see the huge factory farms abolished. Give incentives and economic support to farming that is organic, demonstrates respect and care for this planet, fosters small farms where families can live in close connection to the Earth. The farm bill should rigorously support humane methods of raising animals for human consumption. Exceptional people like Temple Grandin should be solicited when drafting policy on how animals are treated from birth to slaughter. Our farm bill should put the protection of our natural resources at the top of the priority list. Finite resources need to be protected from wastefulness and excess consumption.

COMMENT OF JOE SWANSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:23 p.m.

City, State: La Farge, WI

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Livestock

Size: 50-150 acres

Comment: Everyone is concerned with our national safety but little attention is given to the food security issues that are becoming more dangerous daily. The old saying putting all our eggs in one basket should resonate with the corporate farming community as they are presently the only ones with a basket. Given the probability of climate change and erratic weather, droughts, floods, *etc.* diversification is the only course of action that makes sense. Turning forty percent of a food source into fuel is not only holding consumers hostage but is setting a precedent to con-

tinue to specialize which in turn leads to fewer producers who are going to control the food sources for future generations.

COMMENT OF ELIZABETH SWARTHOUT

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 2:45 a.m.

City, State: Richmond, CA

Occupation: Music Teacher

Comment: Please ignore the food industry and help the average citizen find the healthiest food choices by supporting the organic food production and removing farm subsidies that are from another era.

COMMENT OF MARGARET SWEARINGEN

Date Submitted: Thursday, March 29, 2012, 4:35 p.m.

City, State: Pike Road, AL

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Field Crops

Size: 1,000+ acres

Comment: We are a large farming operation—growing cotton, corn and soybeans—This farm has been in the family since 1900's—I am a widow—whose husband was raised on this farm. He is deceased and we have 2 children and their families also live here. My concern—they be able to continue to farm and our grandchildren. Do away with the Family Farm Estate taxes. Martha Roby is doing a superlative job of representing her district here in AL. I only wish Mike Rogers would do the same/we are barely in his district and I truly stay concerned.

Thank you,

MARGARET SWEARINGEN.

COMMENT OF SHELLY SWEENEY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:21 p.m.

City, State: San Antonio, TX

Occupation: Paralegal

Comment: We must do something for our American farmers. They all seem to be under the thumb of Monsanto. This amazes me, that in America, this can happen. It pits farmer against farmer. We need our American farmers to farm & not be scared of huge corporations.

COMMENT OF PETER SWEENEY

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 8:00 p.m.

City, State: Pleasantville, NY

Occupation: Real Estate Sales

Comment: I want to be sure that you understand how vital and important SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP are to older Americans and they must be protected. Support and strengthen programs that put food on the table for hungry Americans! Subsidies for profitable industries should be cut well before food assistance. People's lives and security should come before unfairly subsidized profits for private companies. Wake up and see the hungry people.

COMMENT OF JANICE SWEGAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:33 p.m.

City, State: Garrettsville, OH

Occupation: Homeschooling Mom

Comment: Please help in any way possible to support small family farms using permaculture, organic, and localized farming methods for growing, producing and distributing of untampered with seeds, soil, and produce to become more commonplace, supported and profitable. We need to ensure a strong food base through diversity and integrity in food production. I'm pretty sure that you support this, but sending out my thoughts nevertheless. Thanks for your time and work on this and other issues important to our transformation to healthier citizens and families.

COMMENT OF JANE SWICEGOOD

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 7:32 p.m.

City, State: Tucson, AZ

Occupation: Retired Agricultural Journalist

Comment: As a retiree who majored in agriculture at the U of AZ, I am more interested than most people in feeding the hungry in our rich country. I ask that the poor and needy not be forgotten and that our government passes legislation to provide food programs necessary to sustain our population.

COMMENT OF LAWRENCE SWIDLER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:44 p.m.

City, State: Accra, NY

Occupation: Business Manager

Comment: Hello . . . as a senior, I've watched our country come more and more under the control of agribusiness; and seen practices and decisions that are short-sighted. The time is now to examine all practices in terms of the best interests of our people, ahead of best profits for Monsanto and others. Could you possibly be comfortable seeing your grandchildren eating food containing known toxins? I'm not. Please widen your perspectives!

COMMENT OF JOAN SWIFT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:24 p.m.

City, State: Eugene, OR

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Taking care of the soil through organic methods and taking care the seeds in non-GMO ways will foster our truly sustainable and economical health and well-being.

COMMENT OF SHEILA SWINFORD

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:54 a.m.

City, State: Toledo, OR

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Forestry, Livestock, Poultry/poultry products

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: The U.S. government needs to support owner operated local sustainable organic farm operations. The current direction and level of taxpayer support of corporate agriculture and unsustainable practice does not bode well for the future of our people. Toxic farming is harming our people and devastating our environment.

Thank you for your work in assessing the situation and implementing new directions for our agricultural support.

COMMENT OF SHARON SWITZER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 1:38 p.m.

City, State: Boulder, CO

Occupation: Physical Therapist

Comment: Everyone needs to eat. I choose to eat only healthy, organic foods. Food production should be clean, safe and produce food that everyone would be proud to eat or serve. Subsidizing the oil industry is unnecessary and wasteful. Food is a different matter. Think before you act.

COMMENT OF CAROL SWORD

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 7:52 p.m.

City, State: Pt. Townsend, WA

Occupation: Librarian

Comment: Respectfully,

Three of my immediate family members lost their small dairy farms in the 1980's from being unable to compete with agribusiness. It's time we stopped subsidizing **Any** corporate farming. Whatever happened to self sufficiency and the American way? Provide grants to local small farms and decrease the carbon waste of agricultural transport.

Thank you,

CAROL SWORD.

COMMENT OF EMILY SYTSMA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:34 p.m.

City, State: Viroqua, WI

Occupation: Artist

Comment: Please consider more support for **Sustainable Organic** farming! I am a cancer survivor & do not want to expose myself to all of the chemicals/pesticides/herbicides found in “traditionally farmed” crops. I also **Do Not** want to consume genetically modified organisms—please require labeling so we know what we are consuming. I try to buy local/sustainable/organic food as much as possible for my health & to place a lighter carbon footprint on the planet. These issues are very important to me & my family.

COMMENT OF RENEE SYTWU

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 1:17 a.m.

City, State: Morristown, NJ

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Encourage sustainable agriculture operation by providing subsidies to farmers/ranchers transition to Organic Plant Farming.

OPF can stop the abuses of chemical fertilizers, pesticides and antibiotics. Thus to restore a healthy environment where can produce nutrient foods to keep Americans healthy.

OPF has the least carbon footprint, is the most efficient way to use the limited resources on Earth.

The safety net of U.S. food security is OPF, not insurance. For more details, <http://www.concernedcitizensnetwork.org/category/take-action/>.

COMMENT OF ANNA SZAMOSI

Date Submitted: Saturday, April 07, 2012, 6:55 p.m.

City, State: Winston-Salem, NC

Occupation: Student

Comment: Please considerably cut agricultural subsidies to American producers in this year's farm bill. I recently took a trip to Nicaragua with the law school I attend and saw the harsh effects of our low costs subsidized food products and DR-CAFTA. We are pushing millions of Latin Americans into poverty by flooding their markets with artificially low priced food, capturing their market, and then subjecting them to the high variability of international markets. Farmers cannot compete with our prices, so they have to sell their land and move into the crowded, dirty streets of Managua or into trash dumps where they are exposed to an unimaginable amount of hazards. Our policies have hurt Nicaraguans and other lesser developed countries for decades. Please consider the global impact of your decisions and promote humanity, not farm lobbies.

COMMENT OF SHANNON SZYMKOWIAK

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:00 a.m.

City, State: Duluth, MN

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Livestock

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: I am an urban beekeeper and gardener who supports sustainable and local food security efforts. It is imperative that our farm bill committees do not include those with a solid conflict of interest. Big Ag is driving our farmers out of business and poisoning our food supply. Please support sustainable efforts. Our children depend on us to do the right thing.

COMMENT OF RAYMOND SZYMKOWICZ

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:05 p.m.

City, State: Hillsdale, NY

Occupation: Artist

Comment: The health of the people and our country, it's waters and lands, warrant our turn towards agricultural practices and nutritional sources to be of the best quality produce able. I grew up loving Twinkies and all the other crap industrial food providers have been allowed to market. It is time to turn around, admit the error of our ways and provide truly healthy foods. Plus, by restoring our surface waters and lands, we will have all the water needed for our population to thrive.

COMMENT OF PAUL TABILI

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:33 p.m.
City, State: Racine, WI
Occupation: Copy Editor
Comment: Promote organic, GMO-free, and small, local family farms. De-emphasize or eliminate large agribusiness conglomerates, pesticides and herbicides, GMOs, and factory farms. We want clean, natural, safe, local, healthy food. Period.

COMMENT OF BENJAMIN TACKETT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:11 a.m.
City, State: Denver, CO
Occupation: Sales
Comment: Current food production subsidies and overall food policy are extremely poorly designed. Demand labeling of GMO foods. Roadmap for transition away from Corn subsidies. Additional support for small, local producers.

COMMENT OF PAULA TACKETT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:41 p.m.
City, State: Santa Fe, NM
Occupation: Retired/Lawyer/Administrator
Comment: Please support agricultural practices that put the health of our citizens over corporate profits. Family farming has been one of the great backbones of this nation. Healthy organic foods are critical and nutrition programs and programs supporting organic and sustainable should be continued. We need a fair and "healthy" farm bill. Thank you.

COMMENT OF JULIETTE TACON

Date Submitted: Friday, April 27, 2012, 3:07 p.m.
City, State: Mobile, AL
Occupation: Caregiver of Senior with Alzheimer's
Comment: Nutrition programs like the Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), SNAP, the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP), and WIC work together, in conjunction with local food banks and other local charities, to ensure: Working parents can put food on the table; Children don't have to go to bed hungry; Seniors don't have to choose between filling a prescription and filling their pantries.

When I was younger, I had temporary custody of a friend's child. I was working, taking care of myself and a toddler, paying my bills and in general being a responsible citizen. During that time I used WIC. All the WIC funds went to food. I could not have adequately fed him without the help WIC gave me. I know there are people who abuse this and other such programs. However, I am sure the majority of people use them because they need the help to feed themselves and their children. These programs should be adequately funded and fairly administered. No child should ever go hungry, especially here in the USA

I am a supporter of Feeding America and my local food bank. Despite the recent improvement of the economy, there are still many people who may not know where they will get their next meal. We need a strong farm bill to help put food on the table for vulnerable children, seniors, and low-income families. Please pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP. Cutting these programs is not the way to balance the budget. I urge you make them a priority in the next farm bill.

COMMENT OF ELIZAABETH TAKAKJIAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:08 a.m.
City, State: Port Jefferson, NY
Occupation: Educator
Comment:

- Stop subsidies for large scale production.
- Support organic growers . . . and small scale farmers.
- Stricter sanctions on imported veg/fruit . . . do not accept use of chems that are banned in U.S.
- No GMOs.

COMMENT OF KAI TAKAYAMA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:04 p.m.

City, State: Kaneohe, HI

Occupation: Customer Service

Comment: As a consumer who is very attentive and wary of the foods that I ingest into my body as well as the effects that the foods I consume have on the environment due to production techniques, I would like to see the following things supported in a better farm bill:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.
- Immediately ceasing all crop subsidies from the U.S. government since America is supposed to be a free-market economy and not a socialist state.
- Institute reforms that prevent the revolving door between government and large agro-corporations from influencing the process food goes through from farm to table.

Failure by the government and elected/un-elected officials to provide for the safety and sustainability of our food supply is tantamount to negligent attempted homicide and they should be prosecuted as such.

COMMENT OF VIVIANE TALLMAN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 11:01 a.m.

City, State: Nehalem, OR

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Specialty Crops

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: As a small farmer (organic culinary and medicinal herbs), a consumer, a mother and grandmother, and a retired milk producer in Tillamook County, Oregon, I strongly support the full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).

Conservation is a necessary companion to good farming practices. I support full funding for conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program. Please ensure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.

The Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236) is crucial to long term health of our farming communities. I support the implementation of all provisions of HR 3236.

And as a small organic farmer, I strongly support Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

COMMENT OF LISA TAM

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 9:49 a.m.

City, State: Amarillo, TX

Occupation: Homemaker

Comment: I am writing to express my concern about actions being discussed by our Congress in reference to agriculture. This country needs to have Farm legislation that will support local food production, organic food production and conservation initiatives. Genuine reform needs to be taken in the area of food production. Cutting funding for programs that support that reform, such as organic and sustainable agriculture, nutrition and conservation seems to belie a greater commitment to agribusiness and its lobbies than to the American people and their need for healthy, nutritious food. Vitamin-infused Styrofoam might meet an individual's "nutritional" needs but is not a healthy alternative. The science clearly confirms that quick and cheap production of food does not result in an excellent product. Let's vote for excellence and the health of our nation.

COMMENT OF NICOLE TANATA

Date Submitted: Friday, April 27, 2012, 2:46 p.m.

City, State: Fargo, ND
Occupation: Domestic Engineer/Chief Grocery Buyer
Comment: With the cost of food going up . . . especially now with the oil boom . . . this cannot just go away. Not sure what the solution is but economy is slowly getting better but the price to feed people isn't.

COMMENT OF SCOTT TANKERSLEY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:09 p.m.
City, State: Richmond, VA
Occupation: Software Engineer
Comment: Agricultural policy must represent citizens, not lobbyists. Giant monopolistic big-ag corporations do not need assistance or subsidies of taxpayer money, but instead must be regulated. GMO products must be labeled to put consumers in control of their food choices. They should only be approved based on real third-party unbiased and extensive scientific study. Any tax payer funded assistance should go toward the support of small, sustainable, and organic farms.

COMMENT OF CHRISTINA TANT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:35 a.m.
City, State: Charleston, SC
Occupation: Yoga Teacher
Comment: Farms should be able to function without the fear of Monsanto & other GMO crops contaminating and leading to legal litigation from the "owners" of cross seed pollination.
 Subsidies should only be in favor of diversity in crops, and availability of healthy food to the public. I only buy organic and the toxicity of chemicals, and dead soil is a huge international problem. We must build healthy soil to build a healthy planet.

COMMENT OF YVETTE TAPP

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:27 p.m.
City, State: Santa Fe, NM
Occupation: Film Office Manager
Comment: I am a vegan for 30 years, and I do my best to find organic foods to purchase for myself and my son. It is unethical to allow Monsanto, Bayer, et al to label GMO and pesticide infused plant foods as "Natural", as this is clearly misleading to the consumer. We must restore respect for Nature and grow organic crops, stop eating sentient beings, stop polluting, wasting water and grains, return stolen lands to indigenous Buffalo, wolf, prairie dog, people. We need an end now to subsidizing the cattle ranchers and big polluters, allowing tax loopholes for the wealthiest and the corporations, ban Monsanto, Bayer Neonicotinoids, and bring indigenous wisdom into the school system. Greed has taken over where sacred once prevailed, and this must be reversed immediately. Nature has balanced Life quite well, and human beings must realize that interfering with Nature while revering money is taking all Life and Planet Earth into a downward spiral. Human health in body, mind and spirit depends upon the organic vegan diet, honesty, and generosity.

COMMENT OF MARGARET TARBOX

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:13 p.m.
City, State: Boxford, MA
Occupation: Retired
Comment: Hello Members of the House Committee on Agriculture,
 Please give us a bill that will allow for a fair chance for organic farms large or small.
 I am a member of a small Garden Club organization NGC. We would greatly appreciate your help.
 Thank you,
 MARGARET E. TARBOX.

COMMENT OF BIANCA TARLTON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:42 p.m.
City, State: Midlothian, VA

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: Dear Members of the House,

I implore you to please listen to your citizens and change America's food system. Frankly, I am irritated by the fact that most of you listen to big agricultural companies that put money in your campaign pockets more than the people who vote you in office. I work hard for my money, and I do not appreciate my tax dollars being spent subsidizing "Big Ag." I have 3 children, and I have taught many more over my teaching career, and I want them to actually be able to live in a world that produces real food that is produced using sustainable methods without chemicals and/or hormones. The current farm bill makes it difficult for this to ever be possible. Many of us Americans believe in eating real food, and if it's not real, we have the right to know it before we buy it. If all of us don't speak up, it is only out of ignorance—since our government does not require labeling of GMOs and the like, many people are oblivious to what they are eating. This is definitely not a coincidence. It definitely benefits "Big Ag" when no one knows what they are eating. If all of our food was produced using sustainable and organic methods, there would be no need to label anything. Please listen to the people you represent and support smaller farms who do produce their food in this manner. The following is what I request of you:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Thank you,

BIANCA TARLTON.

COMMENT OF BARBARA TARTAGLIA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:43 p.m.

City, State: Brick, NJ

Occupation: Business Owner

Comment: Please help and support the smaller farms and organic farms so they can continue their business to grow fruits, vegetables and raise beef, chicken and produce eggs, milk, cheese, *etc.* There are so many people that choose to or need to eat organic foods for their health. To get into the studies of how pesticides and chemically altered foods are affecting our health in this small space would take up too much time and space but they are fact and the results are astounding.

COMMENT OF BONNIE TARTTIER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:00 p.m.

City, State: Germantown, NY

Occupation: Nutritionist

Comment: It is an urgent matter before us as a nation. When big agricultural "farming dictates to the small farmer and small farmers are harassed by the agents of the FDA, then we are in big trouble. I urge you to vote for the small farmers, the organic farmers, those who are concerned about the health of the soil and the People of this nation. Do not be so blind as to think that big ag is doing anything in the best interest of the People.

Best regards,

BONNIE TARTTIER

COMMENT OF BEVERLY TATE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:48 p.m.

City, State: Kapolei, HI

Occupation: Student

Comment: Stop GMO's! Promote organic farming practices! Stop pesticide poisoning of America! Stop companies like Monsanto! Stop patents on seeds! If you feed America healthy food at a reasonable price health care reform will be much easier as less people will be sick!

COMMENT OF MELINDRIA TAVOULARIS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:43 p.m.

City, State: Lincoln, ME

Occupation: Fine Artist

Comment: It is tantamount to the health and well being of Americans that all the provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act be endorsed. I believe strongly in the EQIP Organic Initiative, and the Beginner Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act. The Conservation Stewardship Program to preserve the health of the land we farm is essential to our future. Please do not be swayed by the pressures imposed on our government by the giant corporations in the agricultural field. They are basically focusing on their profits in the field of agriculture, and not on the health and well being of our farming land. The small farms scattered throughout our country are truly the stewards of our land.

COMMENT OF CONSTANCE TAYLOR

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 1:27 p.m.

City, State: Phoenix, AZ

Occupation: Professional Manager & Student

Comment: Please consider increasing funds for emerging food producing and distributing enterprises such as small-scale agricultural and production, community gardens, farmers' markets, CSA programs, school agricultural projects, and the protection of rural and peri-urban agricultural land. Also, increase funding for research project directed toward these initiatives.

Thank you,

CONSTANCE TAYLOR.

COMMENT OF DAVID TAYLOR

Date Submitted: Thursday, April 26, 2012, 12:55 p.m.

City, State: Purllear, NC

Occupation: Customer Service

Comment: The problem with hunger in this country is going to get out of hand if something isn't done now. We have been through a struggle recently but things are definitely turning around. Each of us should remember that no matter what your status is the food we eat all comes from someone who grew it or raised it. Farming in the United States is beginning to make a comeback. Why would anyone want to undermine this? Farmers need our support and encouragement to continue to grow. Furthermore, more and more people are turning to organic, healthy, traditional foods. So there will be a need for more farms and a bonus is that more farms means more jobs. I encourage all members of this committee to do all that is in their power to create a path for farmers and agriculture in our country that will ensure their ease in feeding us.

Thank you,

DAVID.

COMMENT OF DEAN TAYLOR

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:19 p.m.

City, State: Lyman, ME

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Other

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: We need to be supporting small people powered farms that are not involved in using toxic chemicals, pesticides, and genetically modified seeds. The only reason there is a market for these crops is the lack of labeling (choice). WE need to help the farmers who are taking care of this fragile planet we live on. Stop subsidizing the richest farmers and support the farmers growing the healthiest food. Thank You in advance. Have a good day. P.S. You don't even have a way to express in this form the type of farms we need. You can only pick one crop. Our farm fits seven categories and is very small. Our customers can enjoy a variety of foods from one farm. One part of the farm benefits the other parts just like in nature.

COMMENT OF DEREK TAYLOR

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:30 p.m.

City, State: Seattle, WA

Occupation: Social Worker

Comment: Subsidies to farmers seem to focus on soy beans, corn and wheat. I am not convinced this is the best use of my tax dollars. I am particularly concerned about government subsidies to corn producers. In addition to having little nutritional value, the production and consumption of corn carries serious negative externalities. Obesity, increased *E. coli* in cattle, dead zones in the oceans near coastal areas and the general decline in top soil quality are just a few. These externalities disproportionately affect the poor (*e.g.*, if I can buy 2 Whoppers for \$2, why eat oranges or broccoli?) As a nation we currently pay much less of a portion of our income for food than we did 60 years ago. However, these savings are illusory as healthcare costs have spiraled out of control due to negative consumption externalities associated with products made from corn. I would very much like my tax dollars to support organic sustainable farming that produces inexpensive nutritional food. Thank you.

DEREK TAYLOR.

COMMENT OF JAMES TAYLOR

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:17 p.m.

City, State: Houlton, ME

Occupation: Retired

Comment: The current industrial food-production system is both unhealthy and unsustainable. It must be reformed or we and our land will be increasingly poisoned. Please take the side of the American people over the industrial food-production lobbyists!

COMMENT OF JOSHUA TAYLOR

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:27 p.m.

City, State: Fargo, ND

Comment: In order for the country to hold any sanctity or sanity for the future it starts with Morals and farming. Without either we are doomed. No farmers, no food, no morals, we corrupt.

I have told people around the world that farmers are the most needed and respected profession. Do not dismiss a person who works 365 days a year or a family that lives off of that work. Demand is being made on my end that you keep it clean and fair. Help them survive, now and forever.

COMMENT OF JUDY TAYLOR

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 11:52 a.m.

City, State: St. Louis, MO

Occupation: Public Relations

Comment: Let's get the conservation and eco-friendly back into our ag. regulations. There is no time to waste. When considering each and every one of the world's children and grandchildren, we need to assure them a comfortable supply of our precious natural environment.

COMMENT OF KAREN TAYLOR

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:26 a.m.

City, State: Burbank, CA

Occupation: Educator/Filmmaker/Director of Nonprofit

Comment: The U.S. should label GMO's and have a 100% organic requirement in the food supply. Americans should have complete and honest information on what their food is. Farmers should **Not** have to live in fear of actions taken by large agribusiness and/or companies like Monsanto.

COMMENT OF KIRK TAYLOR

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:03 p.m.

City, State: Yelm, WA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Giant agricultural concerns are, apparently, concerned only with profits . . . doesn't sound too bad, until one sees what this has done to the soil itself. Monoculture is un-sustainable, anathema to continued life.

I never dreamed that the dust bowls of the 1930's could be forgotten, but it seems the case . . . The "Superweeds" and "Super pests" won't save us . . . The giant Cor-

porations are trying to drag us down for the money. Only a Government who cares and listens to the people can stop this mess.

COMMENT OF MELVIN TAYLOR

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 10, 2012, 12:25 a.m.

City, State: Sacramento, CA

Comment: Food safety is very important to everyone and cuts would deeply hurt that safety and place all of us in danger. Millions depend on food programs for eat and limiting the bill would increase hunger.

COMMENT OF PATRICIA TAYLOR

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:40 p.m.

City, State: Vancouver, WA

Occupation: Retail Manager

Comment: I owned a farm in Nebraska during the 1970's. Things have changed a lot since then. Hormones in the milk, I had a grade A Dairy, to get more production from the cows. I eat organic food including meats. There comes a time when money is not the bottom line. Our health, including our children, is far more important. We need to have more respect for nature.

COMMENT OF RONNI TAYLOR

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 9:41 a.m.

City, State: Tiffin, OH

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: Please support organic and sustainable agriculture. Your grandchildren and great grandchildren deserve healthy food to allow them to grow, thrive, and succeed in their lives. Rich or poor, if we allow big business to take over food production, no amount of money will buy healthy food if we wipe out its source.

COMMENT OF MARTHA TEETER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 10:54 p.m.

City, State: Bradenton, FL

Occupation: Acupuncture Physician—Health care

Comment: It is vital for the health of humans to have good, clean and fair food to eat. Industrial agriculture depletes the soils, adds toxic chemicals to the food supply.

Support small local family farms. Create systems to allow local food producers to sell to their neighbors . . . More secure to have a networks and variety rather than monoculture crops and centralized food.

SUBMITTED STATEMENT BY JOHN TEIXIERA, LONE WILLOW FARM, FIREBAUGH, CA

1. Organic Is An Important and Growing Part of U.S. Agriculture

The overall U.S. organic market in 2011 surpassed \$31 billion for the first time. Organic fruit and vegetables have made up a significant amount of this growth. A new report from the Organic Trade Association finds the organic food industry generated more than 500,000 American jobs in 2010. Organic food sales now represent 4.2 percent of all U.S. food sales.

2. California Leads the Way in Organic Farming

California leads the nation in terms of number of organic farms, land in organic production and organic sales. Organic agriculture is a significant economic driver in California and nationally.

More importantly, organic agriculture represents a significant and growing sector of our Valley's farm economy, with an increase number of my neighbors adopting organic farming practices because of the economic, health and environmental benefits it provides.

3. Organic Farmers Have Historically Not Benefited From Farm Bill Programs

Some progress has been made to support the sector in the last two farm bills, but we cannot slide backwards in the 2012 Farm Bill.

Organic farmers still need access to conservation programs, technical assistance, research, and marketing support. Let me give you some specific examples:

- **Organic Certification Cost-share Program:** The cost-share program provides absolutely critical assistance to farmers so they can participate in the

USDA National Organic Program. This is a relatively small program in terms of total dollars, but provides significant economic stimulus to the agricultural sector since without this program, many farmers, particularly new and beginning farmers, would not be able to afford to certify as organic. The Senate Committee bill funds this program and we will be looking to you to ensure the House does the same.

- **Development of locally adapted cultivars:** This is another absolutely critical need of organic and conventional farmers alike. Seed is the backbone of agriculture and without the varieties that are best suited to our local climate, soil, disease, and pests we cannot be competitive. The Senate bill failed to include language to make this a priority of USDA competitive grant programs. Again, we need you as Members of the House Agriculture Committee to stand up for farmers and make sure this priority is included.
- **Organic Production and Market Data Initiative:** This farm bill initiative is essential to understanding the dynamics of the organic marketplace and ensuring organic farmers are appropriately covered by crop insurance.
- **Research:** We need a research title that sufficiently meets the needs of the organic farming community so we have the information to address our production issues and continue improving our systems. The Organic Agriculture and Research Extension Initiative needs to be sufficiently funded to address some emerging research needs.
- **Crop Insurance:** We need a farm bill that will address the inequities we face in risk management, specifically to eliminate the unfair 5% premium surcharge on organic crop insurance and ensure that when organic farmers incur a loss, we are reimbursed at organic prices—not conventional prices, which are often below our cost of production.
- **Conservation:** Finally, farm bill conservation programs are critically important to many of us in the Valley. The land stewardship issues we face are more complex than ever. We cannot cut programs like the Conservation Stewardship Program. It is a program that has worked for me on my farm. We also need bill language to strengthen the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) Organic Initiative to make the payment cap equal to what other EQIP users have.

Thank you Congressmen Cardoza and Costa for support of organic farmers.

JOHN TEIXIERA,
Lone Willow Farm,
Firebaugh, CA.

COMMENT OF AMY TELLER

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 16, 2012, 5:08 p.m.

City, State: Toms River, NJ

Occupation: Student

Comment: As a 23 year old, I want the 2012 Farm Bill to help young people get started as farmers—whether they live in suburban, urban, or rural areas. This means access to land, capital, training/extension, and conservation programs. These steps will lead to job creation for young people, veterans, *etc.*, and ensures that we will still have Americans producing our food in 20 years. Please see the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act for the important provisions to young farmers, and put these provisions in the 2012 Farm Bill. Also, I want these new, young farmers to be organic farmers, because it is a more profitable business, safer for the farmers and their workers, and builds healthier soil over time. Productive, innovative organic practices do not pollute the environment or harm non-target plants, animals, and pollinators like pesticide application does. Therefore, programs like OREI (Organic Research and Extension Initiative) and ODI (Organic Data Initiative) must be given full funding equal to 2008 levels. In addition, conservation compliance must be tied to crop insurance. In return for subsidizing crop insurance to save farmers from a year of crop failure, taxpayers deserve care for our soil, water, and air quality. The price of treating water with excess farm run-off over time (which will happen if we eliminate the conservation requirements that have been tied to subsidies since 1985) will be a much greater cost than the implementation of a few conservation practices on the farm.

COMMENT OF FRANK TELLEZ

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 08, 2012, 2:53 p.m.

City, State: Tucson, AZ

Occupation: Unemployed

Comment: Stop funding Monsanto and quadruple funding for **Organic** farmers please. I have my own backyard garden because Monsanto is destroying the food chain. Nothing good, not even jobs, can come from this. It's a disaster in the making. Please stop funding Monsanto. By funding organic farmers you create more jobs than you do by giving Monsanto millions of dollars it doesn't need and you don't destroy all life on Earth including humans, bees, or other insects. Nothing, absolutely nothing, good come from helping Monsanto destroy the ecosystem. Please stop funding Monsanto. Please.

COMMENT OF ROBERT TENAGLIO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:36 p.m.

City, State: Upper Darby, PA

Occupation: Unemployed

Comment: Stop corn subsidies. Allow independent farmers easier access to USDA approved slaughterhouses by making more available, especially mobile ones. Change legislation that puts big corporate agricultural companies and their processed food ahead of independent farmers.

COMMENT OF MYRTLE TENGEMBER

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 15, 2012, 10:52 a.m.

City, State: Pine Hill, NJ

Occupation: Retired School Secretary

Comment: I support the food bank and donate whenever they have food drives in my area. I worked at a school district and saw how many families were needy. With all the waste in government, I think hungry children should be the last thing on the list to be cut! By the way, I didn't understand the occupation choices.

COMMENT OF SASHA TENINTY

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 03, 2012, 11:52 a.m.

City, State: Eugene, OR

Occupation: Student

Comment: I think that a focus of the farm bill should be an improvement of working conditions and rights. While we argue for "sustainable" and "organic" foods, the rights of the workers who produce our food are cast to the wayside. Why is it that there is no minimum wage or substantial representation for agricultural workers? If the goal of the farm bill is the encourage healthy, sustainable eating practices, why do we not encourage these same values in our labor rights? I think that it is extremely skewed that we do not put the appropriate significant focus on treatment and rights of workers.

COMMENT OF TIM TERHAAR

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:26 p.m.

City, State: Brooklyn, NY

Occupation: Freelance (Copyediting, Word Game Content Development)

Comment: I strongly oppose CAFOs and monoculture farming. We desperately need a farm bill that will reverse deregulation, break up agricultural monopolies, and support small-scale family farms. I believe we should also reinstate commodity reserves for grains. The government needs to support sustainable farming practices and begin to rebuild regional food systems. Please consider policies that would make it easier for low-income communities to access high-quality whole foods. Thank you.

COMMENT OF CLARA TERRY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:51 p.m.

City, State: Wooster, OH

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I am a consumer of the food that our farmers produce and I am SICK and tired of eating genetically altered food. It's unhealthy and dangerous. We need **Organic** farming to promote healthy living and for the **Health And Welfare Of Future Generations To Survive.**

COMMENT OF JOHN TERRY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:57 p.m.

City, State: Eureka, CA

Occupation: Construction

Comment: The current process used to grow food in the U.S. is not sustainable. The amount of fossil fuels used is enormous, with fuel prices rising and continuing to rise it only means food prices will do the same. Use of such large equipment and petroleum based fertilizers should be stopped. These processes are unnecessary in the production of food. Companies should be diversifying our food production industry to provide food more on a local level to also cut back on fuel consumption. People talk about loosening our dependence on foreign oil, better farming practices would help. Furthermore, I don't want to eat anything artificial. This means anything added to the food at any point in time that wouldn't happen naturally. Including pesticides, fortifications, preservatives, and genetic modifications. If people claim we are helping fight world hunger the correct answer is no we aren't. Not with these practices. We are promoting world dependence (talk about living off the system). There are numerous better ways to grow food ecologically and sustainably. Thank you for your time and considerations.

COMMENT OF ANNETTE TERZIOTTI

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:03 p.m.

City, State: Orange, VA

Occupation: Structural Engineer

Comment: Let us have exactly the food we want. Leave the raw milk farmers alone. Stop trying to destroy everything that isn't Monsanto. Stop using the food system to poison the population so those invested in it can profit on our illnesses. All disease is manmade. This is the dirtiest food system in the world and of course we have the most sickness. The sicker we get the more money they make and it's wrong! The FDA, USDA, & EPA ought to be shut down., They work for the chemical companies. We should have every right to farm and sell to anyone we wish! I'm so sick of the FDA's gangsters & thieves trying to destroy and ruining wholesome decent farmers while the factory farms produce products that are unfit for **Any** kind of consumption. **Shut Down The Factory Farms Every Last One Of Them And Leave The Clean Farmers Alone!**

COMMENT OF ANNA TESCH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:47 p.m.

City, State: Oak Harbor, WA

Occupation: Stay-at-Home Mother

Comment: As a mother of children with food additive allergies and an individual who cares about her local community, I urge you to please understand the importance of the future of farm policy. Local farming has the unique opportunity of not only improving our health as Americans, but also employment rates. Please consider this as you make your decisions.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF JOSEPH TESTA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:25 p.m.

City, State: Thousand Oaks, CA

Occupation: Computer Programmer

Comment: Hello,

I would like to submit my comments for consideration of the House Agriculture Committee. As a voter and taxpayer, I think it's critically important to be informed of these matters and to voice our concerns.

I support and encourage:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

The subsidized insurance program as currently proposed will allow giant commodity farmers and insurance companies to walk away with billions in taxpayer dol-

lars while putting the land, soil and environment at greater risk. We cannot allow this to happen.

Thank you for your consideration.

COMMENT OF CARLA TEVELOW

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:56 p.m.

City, State: Dayton, MD

Occupation: Consultant

Comment: Several of my thoughts are:

Please consider the full endorsement of:

All provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).

Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.

The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).

Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Also, the \$33 million you would like to take away from the Food Stamp Program (or SNAP) is inhumane. Please reconsider this as i don't like to think our country wants to promote hungry children and hungry citizens.

And last, please enact and promote more organic farming in this country. The pesticides are killing bees and GMOs are changing the health of our society.

Thank you for consideration and please take steps to alter the way our country produces its food and deals with farmers, it's time to get back to nature and leave the petrochemicals off of our food.

COMMENT OF MICHAEL TEVLIN

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 11:17 p.m.

City, State: Portland, CA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Other

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Dear Chairman Lucas,

Please do everything you can to support small farmers. No joke, the fabric of America is falling apart. Farming is the most honest job in America, and good food made by local producers is the solution to a lot of our problems. Think of a world of small family farms and an agricultural revolution in the U.S. where people know their food, their farmers, their neighbors, and where all their food and goods come from. It'd be a beautiful world. Politicians don't usually do things that make sense and our system of government delays the things that really need to be done ASAP, but you should consider it. I ask that the Committee endorse all of the provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236), including:

- Mandatory funding for Individual Development Accounts at \$5 million per year. This program helps new farmers raise capital to start farm businesses and is tested and proven by organizations like Practical Farmers of Iowa and the California Farmlink.
- Mandatory funding for the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program at \$25 million a year. This program funds essential education for new farmers around the country.
- Authorize a new microloan program, to enable young and beginning farmers to better access FSA loan programs.
- Revise FSA rules to make loan programs more accessible to more young and beginning farmers.
- Reaffirm the existing cost share differential for BFRs within EQIP. Also, reaffirm the advance payment option allowing beginning and socially disadvantaged producers to receive an advance payment for the project's costs for purchasing materials or contracting services, but increase the limit on the advance payment from 30 percent to 50 percent of costs.
- Amend the Farm and Ranch Land Protection Program (FRPP) to make farm viability part of the purpose of the program and to give discretionary authority to the eligible entities that implement the program to give priority to easements with an option to purchase at the agricultural use value, deals that transfer the land to beginning and farmers and ranchers, applicants with farm succession plans, and other similar mechanisms to maintain the affordability of protected land.

These and other provisions within the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act will help new growers succeed and I urge you to include them in the next farm bill.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL TEVLIN,
[Redacted],
Portland, OR.

SUBMITTED LETTER BY ARDEN TEWKSBURY, MANAGER, PROGRESSIVE AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION

March 9, 2012

To: *Chairman* FRANK D. LUCAS and the Members of the United States House of Representatives Agriculture Committee

From: Arden Tewksbury, Manager of Pro-Ag

I want to thank Chairman Lucas and the House Agriculture Committee for allowing me to present the Progressive Agriculture Organization's (Pro-Ag's) views and recommendations to the Committee regarding the dairy farmers' crisis.

It is imperative that all Members of the Agriculture Committee (and all Members of Congress) fully understand the serious financial crisis that the majority of dairy farmers are facing all across the United States.

During 2009 the dairy farmers across the United States lost approximately \$17.7 billion. This figure is derived by using the national average cost of producing milk of \$22.28 per hundredweight (cwt). This figure is released by the Economic Research Service, a division of the USDA.

The USDA also released figures that indicated the All Milk Price in 2009 was \$12.80 per cwt.

These figures indicate the \$17.7 billion loss to dairy farmers. While prices paid to dairy farmers did recover somewhat in 2011; however, these pay prices are now plummeting again.

It is unthinkable that these prices are allowed to continue to de-escalate this year.

Pro-Ag, along with at least 23 other organizations, is urging the U.S. Congress to legislate a floor price of \$20.00 per cwt. under all milk used to manufacture dairy products. This would be a temporary solution to the dairy farmers' plight until a permanent dairy bill is passed by Congress.

During the middle of February, officials of the National Family Farm Coalition delivered a letter to all Members of Congress urging the \$20.00 per cwt. floor price be implemented.*

Herd Termination Act, and the Milk Diversion Act. Both programs were short-lived as well as being costly to taxpayers and the dairy farmers. Neither programs solved the dairy farmer's problems.

On January 1, 2000 the USDA implemented "Order Reform". We strongly opposed it, as did many other dairy farmers. We pointed out many pitfalls of Order Reform during various hearings. Presently many organizations are clamoring for changes contained in Order Reform.

However, we strongly feel that S. 1640 contains the changes that are needed in order to develop a pricing formula that will assure our American dairy farmers a chance to produce milk at a profit. Dairy farmers must have an opportunity to recover their extreme high cost of production. Certainly everyone must be aware of the high cost of corn, hay, and other feed used by dairy farmers. It is our belief that the conversion of corn to produce ethanol shares some of the responsibility for higher feed costs. Dairy farmers must have a chance to recover these costs.

1. Dairy farmers must have a cost of production formula.
2. A milk supply management program is needed at the farm level. This program must not cost the government any money.
3. Imports of unneeded dairy products such as milk protein concentrate (MPC) and casein must be brought under control.

S. 1640 (The Federal Milk Marketing Improvement Act) addresses all three of the above-mentioned items.

In conclusion, we believe that S. 1640 is the way to solve the dairy farmers' dilemma.

Proposed insurance programs will continue to be costly to the USDA and the dairy farmers.

* **Editor's note:** the statement was incomplete as submitted.

Everyone must remember that in addition to feed costs there are other substantial costs that must be covered on a dairy farm.

The only way dairy farmers have a chance to cover their costs is by Congress implementing a dairy bill like S. 1640.

Thank you very much.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Arden Tewksbury". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name.

ARDEN TEWKSBURY, life-long dairy farmer of Meshoppen, Pennsylvania, and *Manager*, Progressive Agriculture Organization.

112TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 1640

To amend the Agricultural Adjustment Act to require the Secretary of Agriculture to determine the price of all milk used for manufactured purposes, which shall be classified as Class II milk, by using the national average cost of production, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

OCTOBER 3, 2011

Mr. CASEY introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry

A BILL

To amend the Agricultural Adjustment Act to require the Secretary of Agriculture to determine the price of all milk used for manufactured purposes, which shall be classified as Class II milk, by using the national average cost of production, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Federal Milk Mar-
5 keting Improvement Act of 2011”.

1 **SEC. 2. PRICES RECEIVED FOR MILK UNDER MILK MAR-**
2 **KETING ORDERS.**

3 Section 8c(5)(B) of the Agricultural Adjustment Act
4 (7 U.S.C. 608c(5)(B)), reenacted with amendments by the
5 Agricultural Marketing Agreement Act of 1937, is amend-
6 ed—

7 (1) in the first clauses (i) and (ii), by inserting
8 “(based on the blended price of all milk covered by
9 the order)” after “uniform prices” each place it ap-
10 pears; and

11 (2) in clause (b) of the matter following the
12 first clause (ii), by inserting “and the component
13 value” after “quality”.

14 **SEC. 3. CLASS II MILK PRICING.**

15 Section 8c(5) of the Agricultural Adjustment Act (7
16 U.S.C. 608c(5)), reenacted with amendments by the Agri-
17 cultural Marketing Agreement Act of 1937, is amended
18 by adding at the end the following:

19 “(P) CLASS II MILK PRICING.—

20 “(i) DEFINITION OF NATIONAL AVER-
21 AGE COST OF PRODUCTION.—In this sub-
22 paragraph, the term ‘national average cost
23 of production’ means the amount, as deter-
24 mined by the Economic Research Service
25 of the Department of Agriculture, equal to
26 the difference between—

1 “(I) the national average of the
2 operating cost and the allocated over-
3 head cost of producing all milk in the
4 48 contiguous States; and

5 “(II) the opportunity cost for un-
6 paid labor of producing all milk in the
7 48 contiguous States.

8 “(ii) MINIMUM PRICE.—The Secretary
9 shall base the minimum price for Class II
10 milk on the national average cost of pro-
11 duction.

12 “(iii) SURVEY.—For purposes of de-
13 termining the national average cost of pro-
14 duction under clause (i), the Secretary
15 shall survey dairy producers and associa-
16 tions of dairy producers subject to Federal
17 and State milk marketing orders and in all
18 unregulated areas applicable to all milk.

19 “(iv) PRICE ANNOUNCEMENT.—

20 “(I) IN GENERAL.—Not later
21 than November 1 of each calendar
22 year, the Secretary shall announce the
23 minimum price for Class II milk for
24 the next calendar year, as determined
25 in accordance with clause (ii).

1 “(II) ADJUSTMENTS.—Using the
2 most currently available national aver-
3 age cost of production, the Secretary
4 shall adjust the price announced
5 under subclause (I) for a calendar
6 year on April 1, July 1, and October
7 1 of the calendar year.

8 “(III) NOTIFICATION.—Not later
9 than 15 days prior to the effective
10 date of a price adjustment under this
11 clause, the Secretary shall submit no-
12 tification of the adjusted price to—

13 “(aa) the Committee on Ag-
14 riculture of the House of Rep-
15 resentatives;

16 “(bb) the Committee on Ag-
17 riculture, Nutrition, and Forestry
18 of the Senate;

19 “(cc) each administrator of
20 a Federal milk marketing order;

21 “(dd) each State agency
22 that oversees the pricing of milk
23 paid to dairy producers; and

24 “(ee) other applicable Fed-
25 eral and State agencies.

1 “(IV) PUBLICATION.—After re-
2 ceiving notification under subclause
3 (III)(cc), each administrator of a Fed-
4 eral milk marketing order shall pub-
5 lish the decision of the Secretary in all
6 bulletins and publications of the Fed-
7 eral milk marketing order.

8 “(v) BASIC FORMULA PRICE.—

9 “(I) IN GENERAL.—The Sec-
10 retary shall use the Class II milk
11 price announced under clause (iv) as
12 the basic formula price for all Federal
13 and State milk marketing orders and
14 all unregulated milk production areas.

15 “(II) CLASS I MILK.—

16 “(aa) IN GENERAL.—The
17 price of Class I milk in all Fed-
18 eral and State milk marketing
19 orders and all unregulated milk
20 production areas shall be equal
21 to—

22 “(AA) the basic for-
23 mula price under subclause
24 (I); plus

1 “(BB) the applicable
2 Class I milk differential
3 under Federal and State
4 milk marketing orders.

5 “(bb) UNREGULATED
6 AREAS.—For purposes of item
7 (aa)(BB), the Secretary shall as-
8 sign comparable Class I milk dif-
9 ferentials to each unregulated
10 area.”.

11 **SEC. 4. INVENTORY MANAGEMENT PROGRAM.**

12 Section 8e(5) of the Agricultural Adjustment Act (7
13 U.S.C. 608c(5)), reenacted with amendments by the Agri-
14 cultural Marketing Agreement Act of 1937, as amended
15 by section 3, is amended by adding at the end the fol-
16 lowing:

17 “(Q) INVENTORY MANAGEMENT PRO-
18 GRAM.—

19 “(i) MILK PRODUCTION TOTALS.—Not
20 later than February 1 of each calendar
21 year, the Secretary shall determine the
22 total quantity of all milk produced by each
23 dairy producer or farming operation during
24 the 3 preceding calendar years.

25 “(ii) PRODUCTION BASE.—

1 “(I) IN GENERAL.—The starting
2 production base of a dairy producer
3 shall be the average quantity of milk
4 produced by the dairy producer during
5 the 3 calendar years immediately pre-
6 ceding the date of enactment of this
7 subparagraph.

8 “(II) ADJUSTMENT.—The pro-
9 duction base of a dairy producer shall
10 be adjusted on January 1st of each
11 year.

12 “(III) LIMITATION.—The produc-
13 tion base of a dairy producer shall be
14 based on the dairy producer, not the
15 farming operation, and may not be
16 sold, transferred, bartered, or do-
17 nated.

18 “(IV) NEW DAIRY PRODUCER EX-
19 CEPTION.—A new dairy producer, as
20 defined by the Secretary, shall—

21 “(aa) during the 1-year pe-
22 riod beginning on the date on
23 which the new dairy producer
24 commences operation, be exempt
25 from any applicable price reduce-

8

1 tion relating to the first
2 3,000,000 pounds of milk pro-
3 duced by the new dairy producer;

4 “(bb) in the case of any
5 milk produced in excess of
6 3,000,000 pounds during that 1-
7 year period, be subject to each
8 price reduction described in
9 clauses (vi) and (vii); and

10 “(cc) after that 1-year pe-
11 riod, be subject to each price re-
12 duction that applies to existing
13 dairy producers.

14 “(iii) ESTIMATION OF ANNUAL MILK
15 PRODUCTION AND DOMESTIC CONSUMP-
16 TION.—Not later than November 1 of each
17 calendar year and taking into consideration
18 the import projections and export projec-
19 tions for all milk products, the Secretary
20 shall estimate the quantity of all milk to be
21 produced in the 48 contiguous States and
22 marketed by dairy producers for commer-
23 cial use during the next 12 months.

24 “(iv) IDENTIFICATION AND DETER-
25 MINATION OF DAIRY PRODUCTS.—

1 “(I) IN GENERAL.—Not less fre-
2 quently than once each quarter, the
3 Secretary shall—

4 “(aa) identify all dairy prod-
5 ucts (including cheeses, curds,
6 butter, butterfat, butter oil, but-
7 termilk, anhydrous milk fat,
8 dairy spreads, milk, cream, con-
9 centrated milk, condensed milk,
10 nonfat dry milk powder, whole
11 milk powder, skim milk powder,
12 all other forms of powdered milk,
13 yogurt, ice cream, whey, whey
14 powder, dried whey, whey protein
15 concentrate, all other forms of
16 whey products, milk protein con-
17 centrate, milk protein isolate, ca-
18 sein, caseinates, lactose, food
19 preps containing milk, and milk
20 chocolate) imported into, or ex-
21 ported from, the United States;
22 and

23 “(bb) determine the quantity
24 of raw milk contained in each
25 such product.

1 “(II) INCLUSIONS.—In identi-
2 fying dairy products under subclause
3 (I)(aa), the Secretary shall include
4 any current or projected future im-
5 ports or exports of a product used for
6 dairy, a dairy substitute, or ingre-
7 dient, including any product that does
8 not have the status of ‘generally rec-
9 ognized as safe’, as determined by the
10 Commissioner of Food and Drugs.

11 “(v) EXCESS PRODUCTION DETER-
12 MINATION.—Not more than once every 2
13 months, if the Secretary, acting through
14 the Commodity Credit Corporation, has
15 purchased the maximum quantity of milk
16 and milk products as required by law to
17 administer programs including child nutri-
18 tion programs (as defined in section 25(b)
19 of the Richard B. Russell National School
20 Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. 1769f(b)), feeding
21 programs administered by the Secretary of
22 Defense, institutional programs, and any
23 other mandated Federal food or feeding
24 programs, the Secretary shall determine
25 whether an excess quantity of milk and

1 milk products is being produced for the na-
2 tional domestic market.

3 “(vi) REDUCTION IN PRICE RE-
4 CEIVED.—

5 “(I) IN GENERAL.—Subject to
6 subclauses (II), (IV), and (V), if the
7 Secretary determines under clause (v)
8 that there is excess production, the
9 Secretary shall provide for a reduction
10 in the price received by all dairy pro-
11 ducers for not more than 5 percent of
12 all milk produced in the 48 contiguous
13 States and marketed by dairy pro-
14 ducers for commercial use.

15 “(II) NOTIFICATION.—Not later
16 than 15 days prior to the implementa-
17 tion of a reduction in price in accord-
18 ance with subclause (I), the Secretary
19 shall submit notification of, and jus-
20 tification for, the reduction in price
21 to—

22 “(aa) the Committee on Ag-
23 riculture of the House of Rep-
24 resentatives;

1 “(bb) the Committee on Ag-
2 riculture, Nutrition, and Forestry
3 of the Senate;

4 “(cc) each administrator of
5 a Federal milk marketing order;

6 “(dd) each State agency
7 that oversees the pricing of milk
8 paid to dairy producers; and

9 “(ee) other applicable Fed-
10 eral and State agencies.

11 “(III) PUBLICATION.—After re-
12 ceiving notification under subclause
13 (II)(cc), each administrator of a Fed-
14 eral milk marketing order shall pub-
15 lish the decision of the Secretary in all
16 bulletins and publications of the Fed-
17 eral milk marketing order.

18 “(IV) LIMITATION.—The Sec-
19 retary shall not provide for a reduc-
20 tion in the price received by a dairy
21 producer under subclause (I) unless
22 the Secretary determines under this
23 subparagraph that there exists a posi-
24 tive trade balance in dairy products

1 that are imported into, or exported
2 from, the United States, based on—

3 “(aa) dollar value; and

4 “(bb) the quantity of milk
5 represented by imports and ex-
6 ports, as determined under this
7 subparagraph.

8 “(V) AMOUNT.—The amount of
9 the reduction under subclause (I) in
10 the price received by dairy producers
11 shall not exceed $\frac{1}{2}$ the minimum price
12 of Class II milk.

13 “(vii) ADDITIONAL REDUCTION.—

14 “(I) IN GENERAL.—If the Sec-
15 retary determines that the reduction
16 described in clause (vi) is insufficient
17 to reduce excess production, subject to
18 subclauses (II) and (III) and clause
19 (ii)(IV), the Secretary shall reduce the
20 price received by any dairy producer
21 or farming operation that has in-
22 creased the production of all milk in a
23 calendar quarter, as compared to the
24 average quantity of milk produced in

1 the corresponding calendar quarter in
2 the previous 3 years.

3 “(II) APPLICATION.—A reduction
4 in price under subclause (I) shall
5 apply only to the quantity of milk pro-
6 duced in excess of the average quan-
7 tity of milk produced in the cor-
8 responding calendar quarters in the
9 previous 3 years.

10 “(III) NOTIFICATION.—Not later
11 than 15 days prior to the implementa-
12 tion of a reduction in price in accord-
13 ance with subclause (I), the Secretary
14 shall submit notification of, and jus-
15 tification for, the reduction in price
16 to—

17 “(aa) the Committee on Ag-
18 riculture of the House of Rep-
19 resentatives;

20 “(bb) the Committee on Ag-
21 riculture, Nutrition, and Forestry
22 of the Senate;

23 “(cc) each administrator of
24 a Federal milk marketing order;

15

1 “(dd) each State agency
2 that oversees the pricing of milk
3 paid to dairy producers; and

4 “(ee) other applicable Fed-
5 eral and State agencies.

6 “(IV) PUBLICATION.—After re-
7 ceiving notification under subclause
8 (III)(cc), each administrator of a Fed-
9 eral milk marketing order shall pub-
10 lish the decision of the Secretary in all
11 bulletins and publications of the Fed-
12 eral milk marketing order.

13 “(viii) AMOUNTS DERIVED FROM RE-
14 DUCTION IN PRICES PAID TO DAIRY PRO-
15 DUCERS.—

16 “(I) IN GENERAL.—Not later
17 than 30 days after the end of each
18 quarter, the Secretary shall pay to the
19 special dairy producer account estab-
20 lished under subclause (II) any
21 amounts derived from a reduction in
22 milk prices paid to dairy producers
23 under clauses (vi) and (vii).

24 “(II) SPECIAL DAIRY PRODUCER
25 ACCOUNT.—The Commodity Credit

1 Corporation shall establish a special
2 dairy producer account in which
3 amounts described in subclause (I)
4 shall be credited.

5 “(ix) APPEALS.—

6 “(I) IN GENERAL.—A dairy pro-
7 ducer subject to an additional reduc-
8 tion under clause (vii) may appeal to
9 the Federal or State milk marketing
10 administrator to provide evidence that
11 the dairy producer did not increase
12 production in the calendar year that
13 the reduction was in effect when com-
14 pared to the average quantity of milk
15 produced during the 3 previous years.

16 “(II) RETURN OF AMOUNTS.—If
17 a dairy producer proves that the dairy
18 producer did not increase total pro-
19 duction for the effective calendar year,
20 the Secretary shall return to the dairy
21 producer any amounts collected for
22 any overproduction of any quarter of
23 the affected year.

24 “(III) SUBMISSION OF APPEAL.—
25 A dairy producer that ships to an un-

1 regulated milk handler may submit
2 any appeal of the dairy producer to
3 the Secretary or to the designated
4 representative of the Secretary.

5 “(x) EXTRAORDINARY CIR-
6 CUMSTANCES.—In deciding an appeal sub-
7 mitted by a dairy producer under clause
8 (ix), a Federal or State milk marketing ad-
9 ministrator (or, in the case of an appeal
10 under clause (ix)(III), the Secretary or the
11 designated representative of the Secretary)
12 shall take into consideration production
13 losses due to, at a minimum, fire, severe
14 weather conditions, or severe disease out-
15 breaks.

16 “(xi) COLLECTION.—Except as pro-
17 vided in clause (xii), reductions in price re-
18 quired under clause (vi) or (vii) shall be
19 collected by Federal and State milk mar-
20 keting administrators and timely remitted
21 to the Commodity Credit Corporation to
22 offset the cost of purchasing excess milk
23 products.

24 “(xii) COLLECTION IN UNREGULATED
25 AREAS.—Reductions in price required for

1 unregulated areas under subclause (IV) or
 2 (VI) shall be collected by the Secretary and
 3 timely remitted to the Commodity Credit
 4 Corporation to offset the cost of pur-
 5 chasing excess milk products.

6 “(R) PROHIBITION ON CERTAIN
 7 CHARGES.—In carrying out this Act, the Sec-
 8 retary shall not impose charges on dairy pro-
 9 ducers for the cost of the conversion of raw
 10 milk to manufactured products.

11 “(S) RESPONSIBILITIES OF MILK PUR-
 12 CHASING HANDLERS.—A milk handler that pur-
 13 chases milk from a dairy producer shall assume
 14 title for the milk at the time at which the milk
 15 is pumped into a milk truck provided by or oth-
 16 erwise delivered to the milk handler.

17 “(T) APPLICABILITY.—Subparagraphs (P)
 18 through (S) apply to all dairy producers and
 19 handlers of milk in the 48 contiguous States.”.

20 **SEC. 5. AMENDMENTS TO FEDERAL MILK MARKETING OR-**
 21 **DERS.**

22 Section 8e(17) of the Agricultural Adjustment Act (7
 23 U.S.C. 608e(17)), reenacted with amendments by the Ag-
 24 ricultural Marketing Agreement Act of 1937, is amended
 25 by adding at the end the following:

1 “(H) ORDERS COVERING MILK AND MILK
2 PRODUCTS.—In the case of an order covering
3 milk or milk products, disapproval of an amend-
4 ment to the order shall not be considered to be
5 disapproval of—

6 “(i) the order; or

7 “(ii) other terms of the order.”.



•S 1640 IS

ATTACHMENT 2

Estimated Pay Price to Dairy Farmers Under the Federal Milk Marketing Improvement Act of 2011 (S. 1640)

Federal Order	Class II Basic Formula	Class I Differential	Class I	Price Paid to Dairymen	Class I Utilization
1—Boston	\$22.00	\$3.25	\$25.25	\$23.51	46.5%
5—Appalachian	\$22.00	\$3.10	\$25.10	\$24.05	66.3%
6—Florida	\$22.00	\$4.00	\$26.00	\$25.36	84.0%
7—Southeast; Atlanta	\$22.00	\$3.10	\$25.10	\$23.83	59.3%
30—Midwest/Chicago	\$22.00	\$1.80	\$23.80	\$22.28	16.0%
32—Central/Kansas City	\$22.00	\$2.00	\$24.00	\$22.36	31.4%
33—Mideast/Cleveland	\$22.00	\$2.00	\$24.00	\$22.77	38.4%
124—Pacific NW/Seattle	\$22.00	\$1.90	\$23.90	\$22.56	29.5%
126—Southwest/Dallas	\$22.00	\$3.00	\$25.00	\$23.09	36.4%
131—Arizona	\$22.00	\$2.35	\$24.35	\$23.09	37.5%
California	\$22.00	\$1.90	\$23.90	\$22.34	18.0%

This pricing formula was compiled by Arden Tewksbury, Manager, Progressive Agriculture Organization, to more effectively equalize the prices paid to dairy farmers in the United States.

These figures approximately represent current economic conditions. **“Price Paid to Dairymen” reflects the price dairy farmers would receive under S. 1640.**

These pay prices will be readjusted four (4) times per year.

ATTACHMENT 3

September 26, 2011

The Following Is a Summary of “The Federal Milk Marketing Improvement Act of 2011”

- (1.) *ALL* milk produced in the United States will be priced on the national average cost of producing milk on the dairy farms.
- (2.) *ALL* milk used for fluid purposes will be classified as Class I.
- (3.) *ALL* milk used for manufacturing purposes will be classified as Class II.
- (4.) The Class II price will be the national average cost of production. This price will be uniform in all Federal and state Orders as well as unregulated areas. The Class I price will be determined by using the Class II price *plus* the existing Class I differentials that are currently in place in each Federal Order. The State of California and other unregulated areas will be assigned a Class I differential by the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture.

- (5.) *ALL* Federal and State Milk Marketing Orders will remain intact. Each Milk Marketing Order will be responsible for determining the component value of milk.
- (6.) This Proposal prohibits any cost of operating milk manufacturing plants (commonly called "Make Allowance") to be levied on dairy farmers.
- (7.) The U.S. Secretary of Agriculture will adjust the value of milk four times a year.
- (8.) This Proposal calls for an inventory supply management program. The program is aimed at preventing a buildup of domestic milk products and prevents foreign milk products from destroying dairy farmer prices.
- (9.) The inventory management program cannot be implemented unless the exports of dairy products exceed the imports of dairy products.
- (10.) *ALL* dairy farmers will fund the inventory management program. *If* and only *if* the program is necessary, then all dairy farmers will receive a lower price on up to 5% of their production. This price will be ½ of the value of manufactured milk. However, the dairy farmers will receive the correct price on 95% of their milk. *Please remember* if the inventory management program *is not implemented*, then the dairy farmers will receive the full price. *Also*, the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture may decide that only a reduction of one or two percent of total production may be sufficient.

ATTACHMENT 4

March 2012

Explaining the Profit Margin in the Casey Bill; S. 1640*By Arden Tewksbury, Manager of Pro-Ag*

The proper way to determine the profit (in my opinion) in S. 1640 is the following: I'm still using the \$22.00 per hundredweight (cwt.) as the National Average Cost of Producing milk in the United States. As S. 1640 states, the \$22.00 per cwt. becomes the Class II price for all milk used for manufacture dairy products all across the United States. (Currently the majority of milk used to manufacture dairy products carries the same value. Many times this value has been way too low).

In Order number I (the Boston Market) the pay price to dairy farmers would have been \$23.51 per cwt., therefore the profit to the average Dairy Producers in Order I would have been \$23.51 per cwt. price less the National Average Cost of Production (also the Class II price.) This figure comes to \$1.51 per cwt. But, to figure the profit accurately we must take the National Average Cost of Production and subtract the average cost of production in a particular State. In Pennsylvania the Economic Research Service (ERS) calculates the current cost of production to be \$20.83. Therefore when you subtract \$20.83 (the average cost of producing milk in Pennsylvania) from \$22.00, which we are using as the National Average Cost of Production, we find the average dairy farmers in Pennsylvania is receiving a margin of \$1.17 per cwt. By adding the margin of \$1.17 per cwt. on his cost of production advantage to his profit on the value of his milk leaves the average profit to a Pennsylvania dairy farmer of \$2.68 per cwt. A dairy farmer in Pennsylvania producing 100,000 pounds of milk per month would generate a profit of \$2,680 on his production. For 12 months his profit would be \$32,160. Of*

ATTACHMENT 5

Urgent: Dairy Farmers Need Your Help

February 14, 2012 (Updated March 5, 2012)

Dear Honorable Members of the Senate and House of Representatives,

We are requesting that the United States Congress take immediate action to prevent a financial crisis from impacting the majority of American dairy farmers that may mirror the devastation that all dairy farmers experienced in 2009.

We are urging Congress to intercede and establish a minimum floor price of \$20.00 per hundredweight (cwt.) under all milk used to manufacture dairy products produced in the United States. The existing Class I differentials will be added to the floor price and will establish the Class I price.

Butter and cheese prices at the Chicago Mercantile Exchange (CME) have plummeted from \$2.10-\$2.15 per lb. since August of 2011, down to the present level of \$1.45 per lb. These prices will soon work their way into the National Agriculture Statistics Service (NASS) survey, which is used by the USDA to establish milk prices in all Federal Milk Marketing Orders.

* **Editor's note:** the attachment was incomplete as submitted.

It is conceivable that prices paid to dairy farmers could decrease by \$7.00 per hundredweight unless immediate action is taken by Congress. One thing we know for certain is that operating costs on American dairy farms continue to escalate. If raw milk prices fall drastically, it will be dairy farmers who will be placed in an unbearable situation.

During 2009 dairy farmers lost more than \$17.7 billion based on a review of USDA's Economic Research Service (ERS) data, being forced to sell their milk for at least \$9.00 per hundredweight under their operating costs. Many have not recovered these losses and cannot sustain another financial bloodbath similar to 2009.

These low, unstable milk prices paid to dairy farmers are the main reason that thousands of dairy farmers have been forced out of business. Unfortunately, as dairy farmers exit their farms, we continually see a further deterioration of the rural economy all across the United States. A fair, stable price paid to our dairy farmers would also be beneficial to the manufacturers of dairy products and the bottlers of fresh milk. Consumers are also clamoring for fair prices for dairy farmers. Thus, a realistic, fair price paid to dairy farmers would be beneficial to everyone.

Many of our organizations and individual dairy farmers have made worthwhile suggestions to Congress and the USDA as to how these pricing inequities could be corrected. And yet, nothing has been done.

COMMENT OF CHERYL THACKER

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 11:06 a.m.

City, State: Pound Ridge, NY

Occupation: Lighting Designer

Comment: Farm policy should make fruits and vegetables cheaper and more available to consumers and stop subsidizing the corn that is making us obese.

COMMENT OF KAREN THAW

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 6:08 p.m.

City, State: Boston, MA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Support sustainable and nutritious food by allowing local farmers to grow fruits and vegetables with no penalties.

Stop subsidizing corn production for the purpose of increasing supply of high fructose corn syrup.

By subsidizing other nutritious foods—fruits and vegetables, our local farmers will be able to supply the public with healthy food.

We need to maximize affordable healthy food to control dietary diseases (*i.e.*, high sugar content in processed foods) such as diabetes and hypertension.

Our society's well being starts with a healthy diet. And this starts with a rational and well thought out farm bill.

Thank you for your attention.

COMMENT OF GARY THAYER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:31 p.m.

City, State: San Diego, CA

Occupation: Editor and Program Director

Comment: Please keep funding for small farmers! We need to change our current farm system from one that favors giant agricultural monopolies to one that supports smaller farming operations and individual farming families who want to grow organic and sustainable agriculture without the use of GMO seeds and pesticides. I now support organic farmers whenever possible, but I am lucky; many Americans have no access to organic produce. Our current agricultural system will only continue this imbalance, and Americans will continue to eat unhealthy corn-syrup laden, highly processed foods that make Americans fatter and cost the healthcare system (and taxpayers) more money. Let's reverse this trend now!

COMMENT OF LINDA THEMA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:52 p.m.

City, State: Nokomis, FL

Occupation: Psychotherapist

Comment: Our national health makes this a critical issue. Obesity and related healthcare consequences are killing us and our country. Our food is "empty" of nutrition and loaded with toxins. We must take action, now.

COMMENT OF GEORGE THEODORU

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:47 p.m.

City, State: Portage, MI

Occupation: Service Sector

Comment: It is time to stop subsidizing the big Ag farms and start thinking about the smaller self-sustaining farmers. Large CAFOs, Monsanto's GMO products only pollute the environment without solving the hunger problem. Subsidizing corn only hides the actual cost of ethyl fuels. Time for change!

COMMENT OF MICHELE THEOHARRIS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:36 p.m.

City, State: Arvada, CO

Occupation: Mother

Comment: I want to serve my family wholesome food and this means we need more farmers growing food not commodities. It is a shame we do not grow enough fruits and veg in this country for everyone to eat the USDA recommended amount. I will not feed my family GM crops.

COMMENT OF DALEY THERESA

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 7:52 a.m.

City, State: New Canaan, CT

Occupation: Artist/Businesswoman

Comment: I am ashamed that America is one of the only countries in the western world that does not safeguard organic farming or put proper controls on what biotech corporation can promote and sell to farmers, while hiding the truth of any negative effects or potential dangers to the environment and human's, from consumers. It's absolutely unethical and not worthy of America's ideals. Common America, you are not leading the way so far, you are tail-end Charlie!

COMMENT OF JANET THEW

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 16, 2012, 11:53 p.m.

City, State: Loomis, CA

Occupation: Planning Commissioner

Comment: I support retention of funds for conservation easements, but not for crop supports and funds going to wealthy landowners. Small family farms should be the priority, but farming is a business like any other, and success should not be guaranteed by the taxpayer.

I strongly support eliminating the Wildlife Services Dept., which wastes millions of dollars and millions of lives solely for the benefit of ranchers. Ranchers should not be given such total control of USDA. Please read the recent investigative series on this issue in the *Sacramento Bee*.

COMMENT OF RANDY THILL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:04 p.m.

City, State: Bisbee, AZ

Occupation: Artist

Comment: Pretty soon we won't need wars to keep the population down, cause everyone will die of the food they buy in the stores. Please assure future generations that our country cares about them, the planet they live on, and the sanity of our government. Support organic agriculture, force large food producers to be liable for healthy practices, and cut funding to those who care more about the bottom line than the nutrition of the food they are producing. Now is the best time . . . before there is nothing to work with. We are already at a point that I fear eating about 90% of the foods offered in most grocery stores. Please do your best to get us back on the right track agriculturally!

COMMENT OF REBECCA THISTLETHWAITE

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 12:08 p.m.

City, State: Mosier, OR

Occupation: Director of Nonprofit Organization

Comment: We must limit commodity payments and insurance subsidies. Use that saved money to fully fund conservation programs that work, rural development, be-

ginning farmer programs especially expanded loans, community food security projects, farm-to-school, and full funding for SNAP.

COMMENT OF BARBARA W. THOMAS

Date Submitted: Thursday, April 12, 2012, 11:02 p.m.

City, State: Las Cruces, NM

Occupation: Retired Bookkeeper

Comment: My home church, Trinity Lutheran (ELCA) operates a food pantry and receives our food almost exclusively through the New Mexico Roadrunner Food Bank. Aside from the TEFAP food that we receive for this project, all other food must be paid for. Our congregation has less than 100 active family units, and yet has been able to provide food for roughly 100+ needy families as often as twice a week.

Our congregation members have been donating funds to purchase the food that we cannot get from TEFAP.

However, the number of families that have come to us for food assistance is steadily increasing, but our congregation's membership has not increased, which means that we have only a finite amount of money donated each month with which to purchase food to give away that we do not receive for "free".

If TEFAP funding is reduced nationwide, then there are fewer pounds of "free" food available for each food bank to give away, and thus for our church to give away. Therefore to feed everyone who comes then will mean that each family will receive less food than they have been receiving currently, since we have only a finite amount of donations with which to purchase food each month.

I help bagging produce for this project which means that I am ready to leave just as families start to be processed to receive an allotted portion. In our lobby I see old people, multi-generation families, and young families—often with two or more little children—waiting their turn to receive help.

It makes me sad to know there are so many people with food insecurity; it affects me personally because my daughter and her husband attend college, and often they are feeding friends of theirs in addition to their own three young sons because there are few jobs available, and so their family's food runs out, and so I am buying food so my grandchildren can eat. The 9 year and 11 year olds have even told me, "we are very poor", and are so excited to get to drink milk at my house.

I have written in detail so that you who help determine food policy for the next fiscal year will not forget that the folks who need food help the most are the ones at the bottom of the economic ladder. Please be generous in funding food stamps, TEFAP, and other food assistance programs so that "for the least of these" there will be enough to eat.

Thank you.

Respectfully,

BARBARA W. THOMAS.

COMMENT OF ELLA THOMAS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 9:25 a.m.

City, State: Kansas City, MO

Occupation: Disabled Senior

Comment: I am one of those Senior Americans that need the assistance of the SNAP program. Please, don't cut this program, it is very important for us and the children in need. The poor are in the churches too, so their funds are down. Our country helps everyone else **Help Us Too.**

COMMENT OF MARGARET THOMAS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:22 p.m.

City, State: Rock Island, IL

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: We need to develop policy that encourages the organic production of fruits and vegetables, and discourages production of sweeteners, and meat raised in confined factory-like settings. Please keep our health in mind as you discuss agriculture policy.

COMMENT OF MARY THOMAS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:24 p.m.

City, State: Weed, CA

Occupation: Educator, Gardener and Beekeeper

Comment: I support maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative, the implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236), the full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286) and Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs. Please **Do Not** cut the Food Stamp program. Do you know how many people depend on them to thwart hunger among their children? Please support small farmers. Open your eyes and see that Big Ag is the cause of so many of our woes. Thank you.

JOINT COMMENT OF ROBERT AND LILLIAN THOMAS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:42 p.m.

City, State: Mount Jackson, VA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: As the committee considers the 2012 Food and Farm Bill, I urge you to support the small farms that really need help, not the huge corporate farms.

- Fully fund programs that support organic farmers and rural development.
- Limit or do not fund CAFO's.
- Support critical nutrition programs.

COMMENT OF MARY THOMASON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:38 p.m.

City, State: Boerne, TX

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: Please protect our farmers, our organic food, and our markets from genetically modified food products! Let us eat healthy and keep the chemicals at bay!

COMMENT OF BEN THOMPSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:00 p.m.

City, State: Mt. Vernon, IA

Occupation: Student

Comment: Agricultural production is one of the largest contributors to climate change. It doesn't have to be that way though. Current farm policy also promotes junk food for children. The obesity epidemic will prove to be a significant drain on the country's resources in the future, and it will cost many their lives. Government debt is also out of control, we need remove all unnecessary subsidies, especially those that hurt Americans. Though smart policy we can reduce our carbon footprint, save American lives, and reduce frivolous spending. (I would be in support of subsidies if they got healthier food to kids or reduced our carbon footprint—that does not include biofuel subsidies).

COMMENT OF CINDY THOMPSON

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 7:41 a.m.

City, State: Pebble Beach, CA

Occupation: Medical Technician

Comment: It is time the citizens of the USA are given an informed choice about they eat. At the present moment we are being used as guinea pigs in a huge experiment for profit by big agro that we are supporting with our own tax dollars!

And as is apparent by the increase in obesity, chronic disease, cancer and birth defects it is not working.

We need to label our foods and stop supporting big agro with our tax dollars at a minimum. Supporting small organic farms would be the best and healthiest future for all of us.

COMMENT OF COLLEEN THOMPSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:24 p.m.

City, State: Jackson, WY

Comment: Agribusiness has a stranglehold on our food supply. The growing diabetes epidemic is one consequence of the prevalence of over-processed, unhealthy food in our culture, since subsidized foods are less expensive to the consumer. While I don't want the government to be a Big Brother and tell us what we can and can't

eat, I also don't believe that incentivizing awful food choices is a desirable governmental role, either, especially when it's making us sick and adding to the health care burden everybody is complaining about.

COMMENT OF GAYLE THOMPSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:39 p.m.

City, State: Ionia, MI

Occupation: Literacy Director

Comment: Once upon a time healthy farming was a way of life. Many, many, many Americans want it to be that way again, whether you are hearing from them or not. We need to go back to small farmers who are not controlled by corporations. All the antibiotics feed to farm animals have produced a generation of people unaffected by antibiotics given by their doctors. Corporate farms care about profits only—every single person in the United States knows this even though the government keeps pretending we don't know. Bring back small, local farmers who can make a living and contribute to their communities. Who live in their communities and want to give the best product they can to their neighbors. We cannot continue the practice of ignoring healthy food and continuing to support outlaws like Monsanto. It's time for healthy food. Please see that that change happens.

COMMENT OF HEATHER THOMPSON

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 10:26 p.m.

City, State: Carol Stream, IL

Occupation: Homemaker

Comment: I vote everyday with my food dollars, organic food just makes good common sense, We Need an Organic Farm Bill. People are waking up, local, organic, sustainable agriculture is critical to our economy and the planet.

COMMENT OF JAMES THOMPSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:58 p.m.

City, State: Ogden, UT

Occupation: Registered Nurse

Comment: I don't know how the SNAP funding got tucked into the farm bill but by gawd it isn't as important to keep corporate farmers funded as it is to keep young children, through no fault of their own, with enough calories to support their mental faculties enough to make it through school on an even playing field you greedy b.

COMMENT OF LINDA THOMPSON

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 10:41 a.m.

City, State: Montrose, CO

Occupation: Office Manager

Comment: Organic food is the future of the world, so we can avoid pesticides and herbicides, as well as GMOs in our food supply and in our environment. Also, organic farming sequesters more carbon than non-organic farming, and can help us turn around global warming.

COMMENT OF SCOTT THOMPSON

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 5:41 p.m.

City, State: Fairfield, CT

Occupation: Engineer

Comment: I support:

- local farms and legislation that will make it easier for local and small farmers to be competitive;
- protection of public health by requiring labeling of GMOs;
- agricultural land and farmland conservation.

COMMENT OF TARA THOMPSON

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 10, 2012, 7:11 a.m.

City, State: Oviedo, FL

Occupation: Claims Adjuster

Comment: We need to continue to have Second Harvest Food Bank as a source to help feed the homeless and hungry people we have in our area. Please do not stop these types of programs. I feel we will begin to see situations worsen and family members begin to perish because of lack of food. Here in America? I pray God will touch the hearts of those that can help the poor and needy. *Proverbs 21:13* says "Whoso stopped his ears at the cry of the poor, he also shall cry himself, but shall not be heard". Thanks so much.

COMMENT OF MYRA THOMPSON-BULL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:22 p.m.

City, State: Alpine, CA

Occupation: Acupuncturist/Health Care Provider

Comment: We need an organic, safe food, farm bill. Do you want to feed your family toxic food? This is a no brainer. Why would anyone want to feed their precious family genetically modified (as in not real) toxic food? There is only one reason I can imagine, Corporate Greed and manipulation of the food supply for huge profits. Please don't let that insanity happen.

Thank you very much,

MYRA THOMPSON-BULL.

COMMENT OF MICHELLE THOMS

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 9:15 a.m.

City, State: Frisco, TX

Occupation: Recruiter

Comment: Please keep the best interest of our farmers in mind. We need good farmers in order to have good quality food to eat that will not cause us problems later on in life.

Regards,

MICHELLE and family.

COMMENT OF D. IRIS THOR

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:21 a.m.

City, State: Vestal, NY

Occupation: Retired

Comment: America needs healthy organically raised food sources and sustainable programs that protect our environment and our agricultural workers. It's time for a better farm bill.

COMMENT OF TESS THORMAN

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 15, 2012, 10:34 a.m.

City, State: Philadelphia, PA

Occupation: AmeriCorps Member

Comment: Please focus on writing a farm bill that creates economic opportunity and improves access to healthy, affordable food for all Americans! I am a nutrition educator in a low-income neighborhood, and I use SNAP benefits, myself. I know where to look for fresh, healthy, sustainably grown food for myself, but most people in my neighborhood do not—or there are other things stopping them from accessing healthy food. Please make it easier for us. Everyone deserves to be healthy.

In the 2012 Farm Bill, include the Community Food Projects Program, Farmers Market and Local Food Promotion Program, and Hunger-Free Community Incentive Grants.

COMMENT OF MELANIE THORNBURG

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:41 p.m.

City, State: Marion, KY

Occupation: Housewife

Comment: Mr. Whitfield this may be your only chance to take a stand on what the people demand and need. Morgellons IS found in all syndromes of unknown origin, despite the CDC latest report of refuting the DNA of what it is or where it comes from. They lie. We know that the prion protein spirochetes carry cannot be killed by any means known to man. And we also know they know they have been giving it to us in vaccines for over 30 years. The criminals who have ruled the MSMedical in this country have been killing us on purpose, just as surely as they

allowed the Anthrax vaccine for our military without testing in the spirochetes proteins that is massively infecting the population.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=yOno_2m_8LY

Yet we already know it is causing **All Syndromes** of unknown origin including the 1 in 29 kids who now suffer **No** treatment to cure them of their **Autism** that is caused by those same seronegative infections hidden in prion protein. Adding even **One** more GMO or vaccine to this mix may be mans last. We demand relief of GMO and a farm bill that sustains man. Not kills us faster. By letting them use waste on food crops that will and have washed out to sea they are not only destroying us they are destroying the world. Because our bee's are the mirror to mans existence and they are dying too in colony collapse disorder for which **Monsanto** has taken over that research too. This is the most critical time in the history of man for U.S. to get it right. Because when the 1 in 29 Autism kids added to all the other syndromes gets to be 1 in every 1—they will have won WWII and we helped them destroy man.

COMMENT OF SARA THORNTON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:17 p.m.

City, State: Eastover, SC

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: It is time for a real organic farm bill. Americans want to know what is in their food and need food labeling and help to small producers. Agribusiness should not get any subsidies and should not be in control of American farming. More and more Americans are buying organic and shopping in stores like Whole Foods, Earthfare and even Wal-Mart is now offering organic food. Monsanto has got to go. Please think about the future welfare of Americans, the planet and our food chain. Bees are dying, Roundup Ready crops are creating super bugs and we need to go back to local, sustainable and organic agriculture from heritage and non GMO seeds.

COMMENT OF DEBORAH THRASH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:53 p.m.

City, State: Fredericksburg, VA

Occupation: Retired/Disabled

Comment: In the real world some people learn how to abuse the programs that offer the most help to those in need. Please do not make cuts to SNAP, TEFAP or CSFP. These programs are a vital link for millions of Americans in securing that almighty commodity **Food**.

If you must cut something, then look to cut the loopholes and ambiguous laws that allow a few ne're do wells to profit.

These programs work, can they be made better, absolutely, but in making them better must we sacrifice the many for the evils of the few or the one?

There's a very simple, cost effective way to stop the fraud/abuse especially of SNAP.

COMMENT OF LYNN THURSTON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:58 p.m.

City, State: Phillips, ME

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Specialty Crops

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: We need a food policy—not just an ag policy. We need the gov't to support small producers and legislate regulations according to scale of operations. Don't sell out our food production and distribution to the big ag and chemical companies.

COMMENT OF CLARK TIBBITS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:35 p.m.

City, State: Columbiaville, MI

Occupation: Retired Farmer and Sustainable Agriculture Consultant

Comment: Small scale organic farming and gardening is increasing in the 10th district of Michigan, but we need fair ground rules for the sake of those producers and consumers. Please pass the Organic Farming Bill.

COMMENT OF JACKIE TIDWELL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:47 p.m.

City, State: Lafayette, LA

Occupation: Administrative Assistant

Comment: I currently work to promote water quality and sustainability is key to that mission. As a graduate in the college of environmental sciences, the information I received was clear—organic farming will keep our soil and water in usable form for future generations. There are places where water is unsafe to drink, our gulf is depleted of oxygen. We need a bill that protects the overall health of our resources and the people who rely on them for food, water, and shelter.

COMMENT OF SARAH TIERS

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:08 a.m.

City, State: Crestone, CO

Occupation: Nanny/Healer

Comment: Farm Policy needs to be free from GMO's and free to grow organic produce, the best for our health. In no way should anyone be able to coerce farmers to accept GMO's. They are free agents who need to be free to do what they feel best in their agribusiness.

COMMENT OF DAVID TIGER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:23 p.m.

City, State: Austin, TX

Occupation: Business Owner

Comment: I wish to have the freedom to chose what I eat and drink pure organics is I all want. I want labeling of GMO food so that I can chose not to eat it. Thanks.

JOINT COMMENT OF KARLA AND BRENT TILDAHL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:40 p.m.

City, State: Fontana, WI

Occupation: Retired Health Care Professional

Comment: We try to hard to eat healthy to keep our old retired bodies going and we feel strongly that the farm bill is unfair to local farmers and organic producers. Please consider these producers when you finalize the bill. Isn't it time to stop subsidizing big corporate farmers.

COMMENT OF TERRY TILLMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:26 p.m.

City, State: Santa Monica, CA

Occupation: Business Consultant/Seminar Leader

Comment: An increasing number of us want to eat **Real Food**, not factory farmed phood. Please do the right thing, not caving into the best funded lobby and business, and support our free choice, and those producers who want the same! Please listen to those who are putting people/humans in their decisions as a higher value than dollars.

COMMENT OF AARON TIMBO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 4:26 p.m.

City, State: Minneapolis, MN

Occupation: IT Professional

Comment: I believe the farm bill should lay out a framework for conservation while ensuring food security for future generations. To this end, the main goal should be supporting small-scale, organic food producers rather than subsidizing large-scale, industrial, commodity producers. No

COMMENT OF HEIDI TIMER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 7:35 p.m.

City, State: Austin, TX

Occupation: Massage Therapist

Comment: I would like to see a Farm bill that supports small organic farmers and reductions in use of GMO crops for consumption. I feel there has not been

enough research into the digestibility of GMO foods. It is also unfair that Monsanto can sue farmers whose crops have been tainted from cross pollination with Monsanto's genetically modified crops. I really feel it is unethical to patent seeds and it has put some farmers into horrible financial situations that were not their own fault.

My hope is that a Farm bill would help small farmers and support agriculture that produces healthier, cleaner foods being produced in a way that is more sustainable. Thank you for the opportunity to express my concerns.

HEIDI TIMER.

COMMENT OF SAMUEL TING

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 9:21 a.m.

City, State: Brooklyn, NY

Occupation: Student

Comment: Healthy, organic and unaltered, locally grown food are necessary for a healthy society. It will also help to reduce the huge healthcare burden on the government or its taxpayers. Besides, politicians need to start doing their actual jobs and help **All** the citizens of this country.

COMMENT OF NICOLE TINKHAM

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:52 p.m.

City, State: Los Angeles, CA

Occupation: Law

Comment: I would like a bill that supports smaller farms growing fruits and vegetables, not corn or soy. This support could come in several ways: (1) complete removal or 50% reduction in subsidies to corn and soy production, or (2) equal distribution of farm subsidies to all crops so that the price of non-corn and soy fruits and vegetables decrease and production of them increases. I would also like to see additional support for small farms raising cattle, pigs, chickens, and goats that use non-corn and soy feeds and promote natural food and grazing options for the animals.

COMMENT OF REBECCA TIPPENS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:52 a.m.

City, State: Colerain, MA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: I have a garden that serves my cultural center, live in a rural farm time where folks have been subsistence farmers for centuries **And** I am a member of various farm and garden related groups. It is essential that support be given to real food, organic, sustainably grown, and that food be helped into the schools and neighborhoods, that forces (GMO's that would harm those endeavors **Not** be given support. Wake up. Do what is right to save the world . . . quality is important!

COMMENT OF HELEN TIRBEN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:27 p.m.

City, State: Fairfield, CA

Occupation: Self-Employed

Comment: I support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

The Senate Ag Committee has voted to get rid of wasteful subsidy payments. It has proposed to replace it with a new subsidized insurance program that leading sustainable agriculture advocates are calling rife with opportunities for fraud and abuse. Please do not allow this! As it stands now, I produce my own vegetables because I cannot trust what is sold in the stores!

COMMENT OF ANN TITUS

Date Submitted: Thursday, April 19, 2012, 11:24 a.m.
City, State: Pittsburgh, PA
Occupation: Purchasing Manager
Comment: Please strengthen and support anti-hunger programs such as SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP. The disparity between rich and poor has never been greater in this country. It is imperative that government does it's part in helping feed its most vulnerable citizens.

COMMENT OF KATHRYN TITUS

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 6:35 p.m.
City, State: Athens, GA
Occupation: Retired
Comment: Those who should be controlling our food supply should be small farmers, not huge conglomerations. Let's get this nation back to some form of agricultural sanity. Cruelty to livestock, poisoning of seeds and crops is wrong. **Fix It!**

COMMENT OF JANET TOBIAS

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 10, 2012, 8:57 a.m.
City, State: Tucson, AZ
Occupation: Registered Nurse
Comment: Hello, As a nurse caring for kidney failure clients, I see firsthand the damage wrong foods do and the damage no food does. To reiterate the state of my nation's economy would be wasting precious time. To rehash the cause of this economy, well, you all know why. Now you will diminish a vital program to "balance a budget" while continuing to pour hundreds of thousands of dollars into **Illegal Alien** support programs. I live in Arizona. I support my food bank because I see how much it helps. Will you support the food banks, help them help others? I elected people I hoped would support America more than "any other country!"

COMMENT OF JOHN TOBIAS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:55 p.m.
City, State: DeKalb, IL
Occupation: Retired
Comment: Please protect our food supply and help expand Organic Food production and small farms. Mega Farms are destroying our soil and processed foods are ruining our health. Greedy large corporations only care about money. Our health should be the most important concern, not maximum profits. Thank You.

COMMENT OF CYNTHIA TOBIN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:18 a.m.
City, State: Burbank, CA
Occupation: Office Manager
Comment: I am not in favor of huge agribusiness wiping out our local farmers especially the organic farmers. I do not want GMO food grown, animals treated cruelly, or poisons spread.

COMMENT OF ALICE TODD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:29 p.m.
City, State: Carlsbad, CA
Occupation: Retired
Comment: Please support organic and sustainable farming. We must put the health of the American people **First**, before the interests of lobbyists and the greed of corporate agribusiness. Put the people first! You are there to represent our best interests! The costs in terms of health, suffering and healthcare are too big to ignore. Support healthy organic and sustainable farming now!

COMMENT OF JASMINE TOKUDA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:26 p.m.
City, State: Alameda, CA
Occupation: Business Owner

Comment: Please don't cut meat and poultry inspectors. Please encourage the use of organic techniques and heritage seeds, No GMO's. Please end farm subsidies to large mono-crop growers.

COMMENT OF DIANE TOLLEY

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 10:50 p.m.

City, State: Brookside, NJ

Comment: Dear Chairman Lucas,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony to the House Committee on Agriculture on the next farm bill. My district representative is being copied on this testimony. My son and his fiancé are young farmers and I'd like to share my support for programs that help the next generation of growers build strong farm businesses. As it's estimated that 125,000 farmers will retire in the next 5 years, it's absolutely critical that farm bill programs help citizens get started in this challenging field. They have worked endless hours—up to 14 a day for someone else. They can not afford to buy any land, especially in NJ because of the prices and taxes. They have had to give up farming and babysit and paint houses to make ends meet. You need to do something to help these young people who are willing to work long hard hours to supply us with dependable, local, all natural foods. I ask that the Committee endorse all of the provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236). These and other provisions within the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act will help new growers succeed and I urge you to include them in the next farm bill.

Sincerely,

DIANE TOLLEY.

COMMENT OF JULIE TOMAN

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 10:59 a.m.

City, State: Waukesha, WI

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: My preference is for tax dollars to be used in a way that promotes health. Healthy workforce is more employable and productive and less expensive for business and society. Subsidies to food producers would be better spent on making fruits and vegetables available at a lower cost, for schools and families. Grains currently subsidized often go to make food high in sugar and highly processed. This is a large factor in obesity/diabetes/heart disease issues plaguing our country. Help feed us well. Don't use my tax dollars to provide money for grain farmers/conglomerates that are providing an abundance of foods of which we may actually need less.

COMMENT OF MICHAEL TOMCZYSZYN

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 3:41 p.m.

City, State: San Francisco, CA

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: It is shameful in a country of such affluence to speak of allowing anyone to go hungry, and the criminality is amplified when we deliberately choose to fail to protect the most vulnerable, the "least among us," including our elderly. If we must be harder-nosed about it, let us think then in the big picture—the economic instability that is the inevitable outcome of poverty as well as the lost social capital in a society that rewards it most greedy while sacrificing its most helpless, which undermines trust and security and a common national identity.

COMMENT OF BARBARA TOMEI

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:53 p.m.

City, State: New York, NY

Occupation: Sales

Comment: Stop subsidizing the production of food that makes us and our planet sick. When will our representatives stand up to the corporations? What year?

COMMENT OF DAVID TONN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:47 p.m.

City, State: Tualatin, OR

Comment: We need to focus on sustainable farming methods. These include strong organic standards, meaningful and productive trade standards (the world is

not a balanced market and shouldn't be thought of as one—tariffs are the way to manage this, not subsidies of particular products that are poorly defined and often counterproductive), and an interest and understanding of the consequences that will result from the farming procedures that we set up. Centralized large farms result in general destitution and poor quality of food, inherently. Organic standards promote care for food quality and economic and environmental stability within the farming base of the United States.

COMMENT OF PATRICIA TOOLAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:59 p.m.

City, State: Severna Park, MD

Occupation: Counselor, Retired

Comment: Please support small farmers, especially organic ones, and try to stop the harassment and attempts by FDA to put organic and Amish farmers out of business.

We need some nutritious food alternatives, especially local ones, as alternatives to the foods produced by big agricultural super companies, often offering only genetically engineered cancerous food and/or refined food that causes obesity and diabetes. Thank you.

COMMENT OF SANDRA TORMOEN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 6:44 a.m.

City, State: Richmond, VA

Occupation: Executive

Comment: I am not a farmer but I am well of my dependence on American farmers. In the farm bill you are considering, please include measures to reduce unnecessary regulations on farmers, increase funds for farmer education, and protect America's farmland. In particular, more money needs to be spent funding SARE, Cooperative Extension services, and general education. In addition, The Local Farms, Food, and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286) should be fully funded. Please do not cut these programs! Thank you very much for considering my views.

COMMENT OF STACEY TOSADO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:52 p.m.

City, State: Dorchester, MA

Occupation: Registered Nurse

Comment: A bill emphasizing the importance in preserving traditional organic farming is an absolute necessity in protecting the health of consumers. The way that livestock are handled place consumers at great risk in contracting disease, and is simply and utterly despicable. The fact that the chickens we ingest and given hormones that speed up the growth of their bodies without any effect on their organ systems leaves their bodies in a state where they are less capable to metabolize and excrete properly to be deemed healthy organisms. These animals are kept in a den with no sunlight or access to open air were they are residing with their own waste products. This is not something that would seem appetizing to any individual and I do not think anyone would disagree that being aware of this reality is disturbing. This is only one of the many reasons why protecting and implementing organic farming, allowing these animals to graze in appropriate settings and circumstance necessary for their species to thrive is essential. This will enable better health outcomes, prevent the outbreaks of *E. coli* and other pathogenic organisms to invade our bodies that we cherish. We have a right to be granted with this opportunity.

COMMENT OF BARBARA TOSHALIS

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:06 a.m.

City, State: Middleville, MI

Occupation: Organic Gardener

Comment: We need to support conservation and sustainable farming practices as well as support for small farms, rather than continuing huge subsidies for corporate farming.

COMMENT OF KATHLEEN TOVEY

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:20 a.m.

City, State: Peotone, IL

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Specialty Crops

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: I am a very small producer. I use **No** chemicals. Even the farmers have lost touch with the land. They are in too much of a hurry because they have thousands of acres to run their gigantic machinery over. It may take more time, but we need to get back to the small farms, even if big Ag just lets us little guys do our thing America would greatly benefit. If people want raw milk, organic vegetables, *etc.* . . . let them have it. Stop making us criminals and America can be great again!

COMMENT OF MARJORIE TOWNSEND

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 5:59 p.m.

City, State: Windsor, OH

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Livestock

Size: 151–300 acres

Comment: This is not the time for austerity. The U.S. must support conservation and small and beginning and disadvantaged farmers. Insurance is not the answer—it is only lining the pockets of insurance companies. I only had to buy insurance once, and I will never buy it again.

COMMENT OF SCOTT TOWNSEND

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:46 p.m.

City, State: Derry, NH

Occupation: Electrical Engineer

Comment: My family and I believe that organic farming is the best path to a healthy future. We buy eggs, chicken, and pork from a local organic farm, and we buy local organic produce where we can. We urge you **Not** to cut funding to vital programs such as nutrition, conservation and support for organic and sustainable agriculture. These are important programs for the future health of American youth.

COMMENT OF ALARIC TOY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:21 p.m.

City, State: Pleasant Hill, CA

Occupation: Acupuncturist

Comment: I want **All** my food labeled according: GMO, non-GMO, hormone added, no-hormones added, *etc.* I have the right know everything that was added or altered to the food I buy. We need to **Stop** Federal subsidies of corn and high fructose corn syrup. Scientific study after study keeps showing that one of the main culprits in our declining health and quality of life is due to our lack of good, clean, nutritionally dense food. The farm bill needs to promote the health and wellness of the nation and our family farms. Our subsidies should also not impact international relief efforts where local farmers cannot compete with international foodstuffs. It doesn't make sense and isn't fair to the people or the world.

COMMENT OF CARMEN TRACEY

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 9:39 a.m.

City, State: Wauwatosa, WI

Occupation: Holistic Health Care

Comment: In the 2012 Farm Bill, please make sure that we protect the Conservation Stewardship Program from unfair funding cuts, and improve it by ranking applications solely on their conservation benefits. Farmers count on CSP and other conservation programs to conserve soil for future generations, keep water and air clean, and create habitat for wildlife—all while farming profitably. I would also like to see us fund the Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative at \$30 million per year in mandatory funding. Investment in agricultural research is vital to continued productivity and innovation in growing and diverse sectors of American agriculture, such as organic agriculture. Thank you for taking the time to listen to my input.

Sincerely,

CARMEN TRACEY.

COMMENT OF ELLEN TRACY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:30 p.m.
City, State: Ellsworth, ME
Occupation: Administrator
Comment: Healthy, untainted food does not originate from mass produced bid ag, using chemicals that are bad for the land, bad for animals, and bad for humans.

COMMENT OF SUSAN TRAFFORD

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 11:34 a.m.
City, State: Jeannette, PA
Occupation: Educational Consultant
Comment: How oblivious are those who want to cut funds. Now, more than ever, food banks and such are saviors to thousands upon thousands of people here in our small corner of the country. Poor and jobless and now starving?

COMMENT OF SHARON TRAGESSE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:26 a.m.
City, State: N. Huntingdon, PA
Occupation: Human Resource Director
Comment: I would like to point out that feeding our neighbors is a public-private partnership, and encourage you to do your part I want and we need our government to do its part.
 Cutting anti-hunger programs will increase hunger in America, as well as the associated health care, educational, and economic costs of food insecurity and poor nutrition.
 Please remember the families who are struggling in our community, and I urge you to protect and strengthen important anti-hunger programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP in the 2012 Farm Bill reauthorization.
 Our country needs these programs now more than ever!

COMMENT OF RABIA TREDEAU

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 2:08 p.m.
City, State: Prescott, AZ
Occupation: Teacher
Comment: Please, please do the right thing for those of us in the middle. Farms are important; we need more farmers and more good food for children, adults, the disabled and the elderly.

COMMENT OF GINA TRENKAMP

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:04 p.m.
City, State: Maple Valley, WA
Occupation: IT
Comment: Reviewing the Farm Bill:
 It is my understanding that "While Congress is looking to get rid of direct payments to commodity farmers, the subsidized insurance program it proposes to replace it with will allow giant commodity farmers and insurance companies to walk away with billions in taxpayer dollars while putting the land, soil and environment at greater risk."
Get Corporations Out Of Our Food!
The very nature of a corporation is to pay back monies to their stock holders . . . why should we risk our future with corporations?
 If the statement above is true, then you need to be our public servant and protect our future, our food and our families. **Get Corporations Out Of Congress and Out Of America!**
 Step Up ladies and gentlemen! Our Country was founded by an agronomy society. **Why** would we ever **Allow** a corporation to **Own** our food?
 America is getting tired of **Corp Greed!**

COMMENT OF PATRICIA TRICE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:30 p.m.
City, State: Fresno, TX
Comment: As a consumer of produce and other farm products, and one who values a healthy lifestyle that is linked in large part to what we eat, I ask that you

please do all that is humanly possible in and out of Congress to promote organic farming in the United States of America/United States and pass bills that favor organic farming and oppose bills that promote farming which alters the genetics of the seed and uses dangerous chemical pesticides.

COMMENT OF DANIEL TRICK

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 10:41 p.m.

City, State: Erlanger, KY

Occupation: Logistical Support

Comment: I imagine it would be difficult to think of another developed country with the same level of health problems that the U.S. has. This is due, at least in part, to our farm policy.

Subsidies for massive monocrop farms have led to an abundance of unhealthy filler ingredients that find their way into nearly everything we eat. One trip to a typical supermarket can verify the unnecessary presence of corn based sweeteners in almost all of the products on the shelf. For example, nearly every brand of sliced bread contains corn syrup. Is there a legitimate reason for this? The introduction of sweeteners into even our supposedly savory foods has shifted the American palate to expect these filler ingredients in our foods, creating a dangerous cycle of unhealthy food choices. I would argue that this has something to do with the rate of diabetes in our country.

As our representatives, I ask you to take the responsibility of creating a better farm bill seriously. I am no expert on matters of agriculture, but I sincerely hope that members of the house will consider the research of doctors, dieticians, and the American Diabetes Association over the interests of agribusinesses that are not concerned with the health of Americans. Our country is quickly mounting a medical bill that we can no longer afford to pay and it is time for a change in the agricultural policies that influence our diets. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

DANIEL TRICK.

COMMENT OF KRISTY TRIONE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:15 p.m.

City, State: Redmond, WA

Occupation: Nonprofit Organizational Consultant

Comment: A farm bill should recognize that soil health is our health. Growing food on clean, organic, healthy soil is key to our health and economic vitality. Supporting small family farms, encouraging organic, diverse, and permaculture principles should be at the core of any policy on farming and agriculture for our nation.

COMMENT OF JOHN TRIPI

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:10 p.m.

City, State: Howell, MI

Occupation: Retired Engineer

Comment: I am requesting your support to maintain a healthy food supply, protect organic product production and reduce the influence of large agricultural corporations.

COMMENT OF MELISSA TROIANO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:24 p.m.

City, State: Hamden, CT

Occupation: Financial Counselor for Yale Fertility Center

Comment: How about we knock out the big factory farming funding, instead of the important work that is going on with the local green movement of food sourcing? I want to know when there are GMO's in my food. These corporations are happy to drive down the cost of production at the expense of mine and everyone else's health. Please put a stop to that.

Thank you,

MELISSA.

COMMENT OF MARCIA TROTCHIE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:40 p.m.

City, State: Port Washington, WI

Producer/Non-producer: Producer
Type: Fruits, Nuts, Vegetables, Other
Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: As a small scale farmer, it is extremely difficult competing against the big farmers that keep buying up all of the land because they can afford it and can outbid any of the small farmers. Also, they can produce so much more at a lower price and it is an unfair advantage for the smaller farmer to have a chance. We do not belong to the Earth . . . we are the caretakers of the Earth and any of the decisions we make, we should look at how it will impact the next 7 generations . . . this is the only unselfish way to live in balance with the land. We must do this in order to heal the land, the water and the people.

COMMENT OF CONNOR TROTT

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 10:36 p.m.
City, State: Sylva, NC
Occupation: Student
Comment: Dear Chairman Lucas,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony to the House Committee on Agriculture on the next farm bill. My district representative is being copied on this testimony. I am a young farmer and I'd like to share my support for programs that help the next generation of growers build strong farm businesses. As it's estimated that 125,000 farmers will retire in the next 5 years, it's absolutely critical that farm bill programs help citizens get started in this challenging field. I depend heavily on locally produced agriculture here in Western North Carolina. It is a choice I actively make as easy as it is to walk into Walmart and buy veggies from Chile and chicken eggs from Indiana. Many of these small farms are first generation farmers and people my age. Young adults who made the choice to grow foods for their community. Please help make their job easier and not harder. I ask that the Committee endorse all of the provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236), including:

- Mandatory funding for Individual Development Accounts at \$5 million per year. This program helps new farmers raise capital to start farm businesses and is tested and proven by organizations like Practical Farmers of Iowa and the California Farmlink.
- Mandatory funding for the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program at \$25 million a year. This program funds essential education for new farmers around the country.
- Authorize a new microloan program, to enable young and beginning farmers to better access FSA loan programs.
- Revise FSA rules to make loan programs more accessible to more young and beginning farmers.
- Reaffirm the existing cost share differential for BFRs within EQIP. Also, reaffirm the advance payment option allowing beginning and socially disadvantaged producers to receive an advance payment for the project's costs for purchasing materials or contracting services, but increase the limit on the advance payment from 30 percent to 50 percent of costs.
- Amend the Farm and Ranch Land Protection Program (FRPP) to make farm viability part of the purpose of the program and to give discretionary authority to the eligible entities that implement the program to give priority to easements with an option to purchase at the agricultural use value, deals that transfer the land to beginning and farmers and ranchers, applicants with farm succession plans, and other similar mechanisms to maintain the affordability of protected land.

These and other provisions within the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act will help new growers succeed and I urge you to include them in the next farm bill.

Sincerely,

CONNOR TROTT, BS Horticulture,
 Auburn University 2007.

COMMENT OF DAVID WESLEY TROTTER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:03 p.m.
City, State: Seattle, WA
Occupation: Writer, Artist, Activist Retailer/Wholesaler

Comment: It is absolutely imperative that the health and well-being of all citizens and sojourners in the USA must come before all else, especially before corporate profits and controls. Our food must be healthy, and that requires Healthy and Fair farming practices that put natural and organic foods, livestock and land first.

It is Congress's absolute responsibility to protect the well-being of all the citizens who elected them, not just the ones who line their pockets and grease their personal wheels.

We must have:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Full funding for conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program,
- Enrollment in any new insurance subsidies being tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintenance of the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Sincerely,

DAVID W. TROTTER,
Washing State,
7th Congressional District.

COMMENT OF KATHLEEN TROTTER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:27 p.m.

City, State: Lowell, AR

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Field Crops

Size: 151–300 acres

Comment: Even as owners of farmland that produces field crops, we acknowledge that corn and soybeans don't need subsidies. And multi-national corporations don't need subsidies. But small farmers creating and using sustainable methods to produce healthy food for our neighbors **Do Need Subsidies**. Update the farm bill to 21st century needs and potential!

COMMENT OF THOMAS TROTTER, JR.

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:19 p.m.

City, State: San Francisco, CA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Dairy, Dry Beans & Peas, Field Crops, Poultry/poultry products, Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: For the last 2 years I have farmed small-scale, diverse operations. I have seen what neighboring conventional, industrial-scale growers have done to the quality of soil, air, water and the lives of their workers, and I have worked to reverse those practices in my own operation. As you work on the farm bill, please keep in place funding for research into organic, sustainable practices and maintain (if not increase) funding for EQIP and Beginning Farmer/Rancher programs—both of which are essential to helping young, small-scale growers like myself improve our systems and feed our communities in a healthy way. And as you assess the topic of subsidies, please consider the importance of attaching requirements around conservation of soil, air, and wildlands to these funds. They provide important motivations to prompt even the largest monocroppers to incorporate a modicum of sustainability into their practice.

Thank you,

Thomas Trotter, Jr.

COMMENT OF MOLLY TRUEBLOOD

Date Submitted: Friday, April 13, 2012, 1:23 p.m.

City, State: Indianapolis, IN

Occupation: Market Manager

Comment: Thank you for accepting comments on this year's farm bill. I am the market manager for the Indy Winter Farmers Market in Indianapolis. In an urban area, we are one of the few organizations providing fresh, local, clean food to Indianapolis residents. We bring in small farmers to downtown and help bring more fruits,

vegetables, and produce into the diets of our community. We continue to find it difficult to meet the needs of our community, despite the improvement of the economy. Our market has had the goal of accepting food stamps for the past 3 years, and we were finally able to design and implement a program this season. We have seen a huge return and increased interest in using food stamps at our market. This is beneficial not only to our community, but also to our farmers. Fresh, nutritious food is now available to folks in our community who wouldn't normally be able to shop at a farmers market. We need a strong farm bill to make sure that we can put food on the table for those that are still struggling. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP. These programs are a lifeline to the people struggling with hunger in Marion County, and I urge you make them a priority in the next farm bill. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

MOLLY TRUEBLOOD.

COMMENT OF THOMAS TRUEMPY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:29 p.m.

City, State: Phoenix, AZ

Occupation: Engineer

Comment: The most important thing we consider in terms of healthcare and future well being is that of farming and sustainability. Good quality food is critical to good health. We are just now seeing the affects of factory farming on health. Vegetables with inferior nutritional value from genetic modification. Beef with poor nutritional value from cows being forced to eat contrary to their nature (grains and corn). Feedlot operations spoil the environment with manure overflows. These practices are not sustainable. I would like to see subsidies go to furthering organic, sustainable farming and no subsidies going to growing more corn. It is increasingly clear that companies like Monsanto are not concerned with the public's well being. They are only concerned with consolidating power.

COMMENT OF DARLA TRUITT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:53 p.m.

City, State: Aloha, OR

Occupation: Programmer

Comment: The money we put into the food supply matters. With childhood obesity on the rise and the huge medical costs resulting from diseases associated with obesity, we cannot ignore the impact food subsidies have on our health. Do subsidize organic and sustainable farming. Do not subsidize corn and big ag.

COMMENT OF LEON TRUMPP

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 9:55 a.m.

City, State: Sedalia, MO

Occupation: Water Softener Dealer—Kinetic

Comment: End subsidies to the farmers (especially tobacco) and tighten controls on big producers to ensure animals are treated humanely. Allow hemp to be grown so that farmers can compete with foreign producers.

COMMENT OF JOEL TRUPIN

Date Submitted: Friday, April 27, 2012, 10:41 a.m.

City, State: Marshfield, VT

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Strengthen and protect programs like TEFAP and SNAP in the farm bill—which funds programs like TEFAP and SNAP that help vulnerable children, seniors, and low-income families.

COMMENT OF CAMILLE TSCHAGGENY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 10:06 p.m.

City, State: Beaverton, OR

Occupation: Banking

Comment: No more big-agri subsidies, Monsanto, Dow, Bayer, ConAgri, ADM, they need to be removed from public funding! Our agriculture policies and financial support must be focused on **Real Food** that is sustainably grown and environmentally safe.

COMMENT OF ANN TUBBS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:44 p.m.

City, State: San Francisco, CA

Occupation: Retired Healthcare Administrator

Comment: There are hundreds of reasons why the agricultural policy of the U.S. should be drastically changed. Our growing obesity problem is one, a big one, so to speak. The disappearance of species of fruit and vegetables—and of family farmers—is another. The gross unfairness of huge subsidies to agribusiness is another. And then there is the horrible way farm animals are treated in many of the huge factory farms.

COMMENT OF CHRISTINA TUCCILLO

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 12:37 p.m.

City, State: Berkeley, CA

Occupation: Recruiter

Comment: I want a farm bill that supports small and organic farmers, not huge corporate farms that cut corners and produce food that makes us sick. I want healthy food for children, at home and at school—no pink slime! I want to make sure we protect the environment for the future.

COMMENT OF FREDERICK TUCK

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 10:21 p.m.

City, State: Stanardsville, VA

Occupation: Retired Geologist

Comment: The Agriculture Department has been giving away tax dollars in subsidies to landowners for not farming certain crops, in an effort to 'manage' production for decades. This wasteful, welfare practice must end. If it was intended to help preserve small family farms, it has failed miserably. It rewards laziness, undermines capitalism, and ultimately tends to contract the supply of America's food to a few large corporations, specializing in chemical-intensive, monoculture production. The market must be allowed to determine production via price discovery.

Small family farmers, especially those who use sustainable, organic growing methods must be encouraged. Food labeling helps consumers make informed choices and should include information about genetically engineered products as well as any drugs, hormones, or other chemicals involved in food's production.

Tax dollar welfare for mega-corporations must end, now. We need a new agriculture policy that promotes increased local production, grows the number of independent farms and rewards sustainable farming practices.

COMMENT OF JEFFREY TUCKER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:32 p.m.

City, State: Miami, FL

Occupation: Nonprofit Manager

Comment: The farm bill needs to support the citizens and a sustainable, practical ag economy based on wise land use, diversity and family farms, the backbone of successful agriculture.

COMMENT OF DENISE TUGADI

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:05 a.m.

City, State: Nashville, TN

Occupation: Cook

Comment: Organic farmers should be allowed to grow food liked they have done for centuries without restrictions and bullying from agri-farming. It's a basic human right to be able to feed ourselves, let it be.

COMMENT OF VICTORIA TUGGEY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:25 p.m.

City, State: Madison, AL

Occupation: Artisan

Comment: Start fresh. Start by throwing out all the old subsidies for corn and grain and offer subsidies for non-CAFO and clean food farmers. Promote wellness and sustainability by putting small farmers back in the game and to promote locavorism. Make organic certification affordable for the small farmers who more

than abide by its rules and philosophy. Subsidize vegetables. And offer those surplus veggies to school lunch programs. It will decrease health care costs and elevate the nation mentally, physically and financially. That's doing the right thing.

COMMENT OF LAURA TUMAK

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:05 a.m.

City, State: Clarinda, IA

Occupation: Homemaker

Comment: Family Farms are disappearing in America, while the big companies that monopolize food supply are getting bigger.

Meanwhile, conventional farming has shifted from one with natural pest control to one where more and more pesticides are used. Farmers who choose not to use genetically modified corn or soy have a difficult time finding seeds to plant or an elevator to sell their crops to. The big companies specializing in seed sales, genetically modified crops and pesticides are getting bigger and bigger.

Farm subsidies should be for family farms, and to help those who choose to farm with environmentally sustainable methods.

COMMENT OF SUSAN TURNBULL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:09 p.m.

City, State: Frederick, MD

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Please stand up to the big agro-businesses to help us save family farmers and our own health from dangerous (and tasteless) practices. Let us have our old-fashioned produce again!

COMMENT OF CHRISTIANE TURNER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:17 a.m.

City, State: Ketchum, ID

Occupation: Board Member of Idaho's Bounty Co-op in Ketchum, Idaho

Comment: As the each of you considers the upcoming 2012 Food and Farm Bill, I insist that you carefully and copiously:

- Consider the job-producing, environmentally sound, healthful and the long-term community strengthening benefits of financially supporting this rapidly growing local, organic and sustainable farming movement.
- Reconsider and prevent the irreversible and long-term damaging effects that have occurred and continue to transpire from decades of financial supporting toxic industrial farming linked to politically-driven commodity programs.
- Consider the now well-documented and widespread economic, health and environmental damage caused by subsidizing these large, industrial, toxic farms.
- Consider that each of your influence today will be historically documented and recorded so that our children and grandchildren will have the ability to look back at these critical times and to judge knowing that each of you had the opportunity to intelligently change the course of history and to redirect financial support in favor of truthful, healthful, fair and sustainable farming.

I urge you to consider all the above in a personal and ethical manner and not a political one.

Thank you and sincerely,

CHRISTIANE TURNER.

COMMENT OF JOAN TURNER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:54 a.m.

City, State: Strasburg, CO

Occupation: Retired Childcare

Comment: Please find a way to stop subsidizing the farm crops that are making us sick and to help out the (small, organic) farmer raising fruits and vegetables.

COMMENT OF WARREN TURNER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:42 a.m.

City, State: Columbia, MD

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Bioenergy, Fruits, Specialty Crops, Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Please afford organic growers the same considerations that are granted conventional growers. As you know, there is a local and organic movement that has been in place for many years. It lessens our carbon footprint and strengthens our local economy and provides the freshest and most wholesome and nourishing food. As an organic grower, may I add that two avenues of assistance are vital for our existence: both **Drip Irrigation** and **Fencing**—that is, fencing that excludes deer from our food plots, are prerequisites for small growers.

Both of these are expenses that are difficult to bear for small growers, but are necessary for successful operations. Every other consideration that can be identified and afforded small growers is beneficial for them and for local economies.

(From a 40 year organic and commercial grower).

WARREN TURNER.

COMMENT OF LAURA TURZO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:42 p.m.

City, State: Brooklyn, NY

Occupation: Graphic Artist

Comment: So much of our lives a is tainted by the control of big business, whose policies are most often against health and safety.

We need to assure that farmers are supported in producing healthy food that will not increase the epidemic of “idiopathic” illnesses. Especially farmers that do not use toxic methods.

Please protect farmers from the bullying of Monsanto, I would like to have my grandson (and your grandchildren too) live in the possibility of being disease free.

COMMENT OF ROB TWO-HAWKS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:34 p.m.

City, State: East Palestine, OH

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Specialty Crops

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Agricultural reform is long past due. And, as demand increases along with the deficit . . . the need for more sustainable methods will make itself known loudly and clearly. Industrial agriculture is straining the economy as well as the carrying capacity & health of the land. Without viable and affordable forms of agriculture America is far from secure. I would hope that more congresspersons would get out of their offices and into the fields for awhile to appreciate this situation more directly. Thanks for your consideration & time.

COMMENT OF MALIN TYBAHL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:11 p.m.

City, State: Brooklyn, NY

Occupation: Actor/Teacher

Comment: The state of Agriculture is appalling right now. The way agriculture is conducted today waste more of our water resources than anything else, and are the biggest polluters of our ground water and destroys our oceans at a terrifying rate, with the heavy pesticide use. Not to mention it erodes the soil leaving it unable to nurture anything to grow. Big farmed food is so toxic, due to all pesticides, it may be more harmful to eat than the nutrition's it contains. The over production of certain grains, like soy and corn, has led them to being ingredients in almost everything as well as feed to cows, who can't break down corn naturally but get sick by it, leading to higher use of antibiotics. Consequently the population is getting fatter and fatter, and sicker and sicker, but with less and less chances to actually cure a simple infection. It's a downward spiral of destruction, of not just our own species but many. As Einstein said, when the bi is gone we have about 4 more years to live.

Healthy and sustainable farming practices reduces the environmental costs, the carbon imprint and health care costs. Want to save money? Want a healthier population? Then stop giving tax dollars to Big Agribusiness.

All subsidies to big polluting agribusiness need to stop and they should instead have environmental fines when cultivating the land in a way that is destructive to the planet. Subsidies should instead go to small sustainable organic farms, so the crap food actually cost its true value with all the pesticides and carbon pollution on top. Healthy foods should be inexpensive and more available so even people mak-

ing minimum income can choose to buy it. And the truth is, organic food is not more expensive than crap food if it wasn't for the government supporting crap food. And all GMO should be labeled, as well as where a product comes from. The future of our planet is dependent on what choices we make, and how we choose to cultivate our land is a big part of that. Our options are to do it in a sustainable respectful way in balance with nature, or wasteful and poisonous for a short period of time and then have a shortage of food and water in a few years. What do you choose for our children and coming generations?

COMMENT OF JULIA TYLER

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 15, 2012, 1:29 p.m.
City, State: Ventura, CA
Occupation: Director of Religious Education
Comment: Hello,

I am concerned about the health of our American people. I would like to see a farm bill that increases access to healthy affordable food. I work with Latino youth in Oxnard, and I fear the toll the gas station food they consume has taken on their bodies.

My boyfriend works as a technician for heart surgery, and believes it is not a coincidence that diabetes and heart failure are more common among poor people and their nutrient-poor diets.

I would also like the bill to cut subsidies to corn and soy bean growers, and offer these subsidies to small, organic farmers who prioritize our Earth's sustainability. I care that my grandchildren's children live on a planet that is still healthy to walk on and breathe in. On my commute to work, I am not happy to see strawberry growers spraying pesticides into the soil. These toxic chemicals will be there for many years, and will harm many people and animals. I am not happy that the people spraying these chemicals have to wear big white suits and protective face masks. There are other, better ways to grow and produce food, and, in great seriousness, I hope writing to the House Committee on Agriculture can help make a positive difference for our people and country.

Warmly,

JULIA TYLER.

COMMENT OF LORRAYNE TYLER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:43 a.m.
City, State: Hamilton, MT
Comment: We need real food in the USA, and we need it to be available everywhere, to everyone, especially those in need and those who can't afford quality, so they squander money on cheap junk food & fast food.

COMMENT OF LAURA TYLL

Date Submitted: Thursday, April 19, 2012, 2:29 p.m.
City, State: Ubly, MI
Occupation: Economic Development
Comment: My father and brother are running the family farm as third and fourth generation farmers. I also do the bookwork for the farm and see how it's struggling financially please support the farm bill and let's get those milk prices back up! I would love to see my son and grandchildren someday involved in the family farm.

COMMENT OF S. TYROLER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:12 p.m.
City, State: Watsonville, CA
Occupation: Therapist
Comment: Supporting High standards for organic farming practices is a health crisis. We are killing our bees and other pollinators with toxins and pesticides which will lead to our demise.

COMMENT OF LINDA TYSON

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 11:28 p.m.
City, State: Flossmoor, IL
Occupation: Garden Designer

Comment: We need a fair and healthy farm bill! It's time for real reform of the bill. Small, organic, sustainable farmers producing healthy food, including fruits, vegetables, and sustainably-raised, pastured livestock should more supported

Subsidies paid to large industrial, and corporate-owned farms should be phased out.

We need a farm bill that protects our nation's small farmers and supports local food security.

COMMENT OF JIM UFKIN

Date Submitted: Monday, March 19, 2012, 9:52 p.m.

City, State: Geneseo, IL

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Field Crops

Size: 301-500 acres

Comment: It is time to get rid of the direct payment and put in a financial safety net to help in times of low yields or very low prices. Based on a strong crop insurance program.

COMMENT OF SHAWN UHE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:45 p.m.

City, State: Edwardsville, IL

Occupation: Mom

Comment: I am surrounded by farm land and although it is a beautiful setting, my children and I are also surrounded by dangerous pesticides and herbicides that are damaging to the water, the air and the land. I am very concerned about the negative effects these chemicals will have on my family. Please write and support legislation that eliminates the need for chemicals on crops.

Thank you,

SHAWN UHE.

COMMENT OF SUSAN UJCIC

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:01 p.m.

City, State: Rochester, WA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Dry Beans & Peas, Fruits, Vegetables

Size: 50-150 acres

Comment: It is time to subsidize vegetable, fruit and legume farms and support the recommendation to consume 6-9 a day. If we all wanted to adopt the diet recommended by the USDA, we would run out of fruits and vegetables in 3 days. With the childhood obesity and diabetes epidemic alone, one would think that would be enough to motivate a fundamental change in at least our children's food landscape. Please use good judgment and support a new agricultural vision which will invigorate rural communities.

SUBMITTED STATEMENT BY UNILEVER NORTH AMERICA

This testimony is submitted on behalf of Unilever, North America, one of the world's leading suppliers of fast moving consumer goods. We work to create a better future every day and help people feel good, look good and get more out of life with brands and services that are good for them and good for others. In the United States, the portfolio includes food brand icons such as: Ben & Jerry's, Bertolli, Breyers, Country Crock, Good Humor, Hellmann's, I Can't Believe It's Not Butter!, Klondike, Knorr, Lipton, Popsicle, Promise, Ragu, Skippy, Slim-Fast, Wish-Bone, and a number of personal care products. Unilever employs over 10,000 people in the United States with manufacturing sites in 19 states and 2010 sales of over \$9 billion.

As one of the largest manufacturers of ice cream and peanut butter in the U.S., an adequate supply of sugar is imperative to our success and ability to grow our business. The 160 employees at our plant in Little Rock, Arkansas, work at the sole production site for Skippy peanut butter for the United States and for export to over 50 countries. In Jonesboro, Arkansas, 400 Unilever employees manufacture our line of personal care products. Our 100 person sales team in Rogers, Arkansas also works to ensure Unilever products are stocked at Wal-Mart stores across the country.

Unilever is dedicated to producing quality products close to their point of sale, reducing miles traveled and our carbon footprint. In keeping with our strategy of producing near where we sell, Unilever recently invested \$230 million into expanding an existing plant in Covington, Tennessee which will employ over 200 people and manufacture ice cream brands like Breyers, Good Humor, Klondike and Popsicle. Our ability to grow, however, is severely impacted by commodity prices and with U.S. sugar prices at nearly twice the world market rate, sugar-containing products Unilever manufactures in the United States are at a competitive disadvantage to products made where sugar can be purchased at world prices.

Sugar is found in a wide variety of foods and beverages. It is not only a sweetener, but has other important functional properties for baking and as a natural preservative. Sugar is an ingredient in ice cream, frozen vegetables, pasta sauce, peanut butter, canned fruit and many other products.

Many more Americans work in these sugar-using industries than in sugar production and processing. According to the U.S. Census Bureau's Annual Survey of Manufactures for 2010, total employment in cane sugar milling and refining, and beet sugar manufacturing, was only 13,009. In addition, according to the Census of Agriculture, there are 4,022 sugar beet farms and 692 sugar cane farms in the entire United States.

By contrast, in 2010 employment in those segments of the food and beverage industry that use significant amounts of sugar was 592,176. Yet current sugar policy is designed to favor sugar producers and processors by penalizing businesses like Unilever that purchase sugar.

Current sugar policies represent an antiquated program that needs to be reformed. These policies raise consumer prices, distort markets, create enormous additional costs for businesses and encourage the movement of jobs to other countries, where world market prices can be accessed.

The U.S. sugar program has three basic features. Price supports keep U.S. sugar prices above world price levels. Marketing allotments are designed to restrict supplies in the domestic market. Import quotas also restrict how much sugar can be purchased from international markets.

None of these policies normally involves direct Federal spending, but all raise input costs for the manufacturing sector and create economic inefficiencies. The negative impact of the sugar program has been even greater since passage of the 2008 Farm Bill. In that farm bill, Congress: (1) placed new limitations on the Secretary of Agriculture's ability to increase sugar import quotas, (2) created a new "Feedstock Flexibility Program" to buy surplus sugar and re-sell it to ethanol plants at a loss to taxpayers (fortunately, this program has not yet been used), and (3) raised sugar price supports and took other measures that further distorted markets.

In the period covered since the passage of the 2008 Farm Bill, both wholesale and retail U.S. sugar prices set all-time records. Annual consumer costs of sugar rose by \$4 billion, by some estimates. Ending stocks of sugar fell below USDA's traditional target every single year, with the Secretary of Agriculture having less flexibility to allow additional sugar imports when needed by the market.

As an example of how bad things have been under the new policies, in 2009/10, the United States imported 200,000 tons of "high-tier" or "over-quota" sugar. This is sugar that had to be imported outside the limits set by import quotas to meet domestic market needs, even though such imports are subject to a very high, normally-prohibitive tariff.

Prices were so distorted in 2009/10, and supplies so short that importers actually paid the prohibitive tariff because they had to have the sugar. Sugar users paid the extra tariff of over 15¢ per pound because they simply could not obtain the sugar at equal or lower cost from domestic production, from normal import quota sources or from Mexico (which is not subject to import quotas). Obviously, these supply sources were either out of sugar, or domestic prices were so artificially high that the transaction actually made economic sense, even after factoring in the "prohibitive" tariff.

A recent study by Iowa State University economists estimated that U.S. consumers could save \$3.5 billion a year, and our economy could add up to 20,000 jobs each year, if Congress reformed the sugar program. The 2012 Farm Bill is the time for this much-needed reform. Congress should take a hard look at the whole panoply of sugar policy, but especially at the counterproductive subsidies that were added in 2008. Getting rid of these would be a good start to a more thorough reform to eliminate unnecessary and unwarranted government-directed distortions of the marketplace.

Our company is proud of its history as a producer of products that help people feel good, look good and get more out of life and we are proud of our 10,000 employees in the United States. We want to continue to generate both jobs and economic

activity. Unfortunately, the current sugar program works against our ability to do that. Congress can help consumers, workers and businesses alike by reforming an outdated, regressive sugar program in the 2012 Farm Bill.

COMMENT OF NATHAN UNSWORTH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:06 a.m.

City, State: Newton, IA

Occupation: City Parks-Administrative Superintendent

Comment: I was born and raised in a small farming town in Illinois called Alexis, went to Iowa State University and majored in Animal Ecology (wildlife) and minored Agronomy, and continue to live in Iowa today. As a young professional that stands up for conservation and rural development, I hope this next farm bill includes three very important things:

1. Increased funding for water quality issues associated with agriculture
2. Continued funding for the CRP Program
3. Funding to help attract and retain young professionals in rural areas.

My hope is that the new farm bill will address these three things. The first two are very similar and comes from my conservation background. Water quality is not improving in Iowa and elsewhere around the Midwest. We need to do everything we can to protect clean water for our citizens. This is truly an economic development issue because despite what some people seem to think, we all need clean water to live. Clean water is not only important to humans, but the livestock and crops we grow in the Midwest, too. I would like to see congress continue to fund water quality projects like the buffer program, giving money to improve water quality on recreational lakes and rivers around the Midwest, and enact stricter polices that ensure producers are following their farm plans.

CRP is another huge portion of the farm bill that I support. When CRP was at it is highest levels our pheasant population were up, too. If you have come to Iowa you know our pheasant population is down along with countless other species. In my eyes every species is worth trying to help. However, I know we can't protect and save everything. However, I know the more CRP we have on the ground the better our game birds numbers will be, which will help bring back our hunting/tourism business. Plus, the CRP program also has other benefits—promotes cleaner water, reduces soil loss, take CO₂ out of the atmosphere, *etc.*

Finally, my last important piece is the impact the farm bill has on rural life. As someone that grew up in a small town and still resides in a rural county, I promote rural development. We need polices in the farm bill that promotes rural areas abilities to retain and recruit young professionals. The number one reason why young professionals are leaving areas is lack of jobs. However, I feel that if we can build up the rural areas around the larger cities, we would see young people willing to live farther out of the cities and in the smaller towns. The way this can happen is by ensuring rural areas are ascetically attractive, provide recreational opportunities, potentially provide mass transit opportunities to the cities, *etc.* I just think more can be done to promote young professionals recruitment in the rural areas. I also think high speed rail going through out the midsection of the country would be a positive aspect of rural development, but admit that might pertain more closely with other legislation.

Thank you for taking the time to read my comments. As a proud voter, I hope you will listen to “real rural people” and enact policies we want, not the policies of large corporations that only help them profit. We are the ones that live in the rural areas, we care about their future, and depend on their prosperity to live.

COMMENT OF STEPHANIE URBAN

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012 3:17 p.m.

City, State: Bethesda, MD

Occupation: Artist/Designer

Comment: As time goes on, we have more and more evidence that the food we eat affects our health. People who buy organic food should be totally secure in the knowledge that what they are purchasing is the purest, cleanest food grown with no genetic modification or added substances.

COMMENT OF SHARON USHER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 9:11 p.m.

City, State: Northport, MI

Occupation: Counselor/Psychology

Comment: I am concerned about the violence that big agriculture (like Monsanto) is doing to the people all over the planet (in countries where their produce is permitted) and to the land that they are using to farm their toxic products.

COMMENT OF ADA USTJANAUSKAS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:00 p.m.

City, State: Old Greenwich, CT

Occupation: Consultant

Comment: America is fast becoming the bane of the civilized world as our food production becomes more commercialized—and less how food is meant to be grown.

COMMENT OF KELLY UUSITALO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:34 p.m.

City, State: Everson, WA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Specialty Crops

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: More financial investment needs to be given to small producers providing sustainably produced products for local communities. Local producers provide food security and local jobs that create strong healthy communities. It is imperative that we invest in our future and small scale local farmers; we are the ones on the front lines offering healthy food choices to our local communities and diverse populations. Unfortunately too much money and preference has been given to large agriculture businesses, lobbyist and corporate interest. We in this nation need to redirect our financial investment away from commodity subsidies into a food system that is based on healthy food that is affordable and available to everyone. We will never achieve this if we continue to funnel all our investments into and industrial agriculture system that produces industrial byproducts rather than food. Support local, invest in the future and promote sustainable agriculture by directing a large portion of this year's farm bill to small scale farmers, farmers markets, healthy school lunch programs and extensions. Invest in our future not corporate futures!

Thank you,

KELLY UUSITALO,
Organic Farmer.

COMMENT OF IMENA VALDES

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:06 p.m.

City, State: Kissimmee, FL

Occupation: Student

Comment: We as a people need a government that works in favor of our best interests, such as our health and well-being. Not a government that caters to corporations and profits.

COMMENT OF ABEL VALENZUELA

Date Submitted: Friday, April 20, 2012, 9:54 a.m.

City, State: Milford, UT

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Livestock

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Farm Takeover Bill legislation, would not improve the well being of the animals neither food safety or quality, it would increase cost of production and we are going to reduce production like it happened in Germany when in 2010 they regulated the cage of hens. This bill is not based in science but rather in Feelings.

Thanks.

Sincerely,

ABEL VALENZUELA.

COMMENT OF JACQUELINE VALENZUELA

Date Submitted: Friday, April 20, 2012, 2:14 p.m.

City, State: Mesa, AZ

Occupation: Stay-at-Home Mom

Comment: I am tired of having poison ridden fruit and vegetables. The health of my family is important to me and I feel like the system that we have for our agriculture is broken. The pesticides that are used are so horribly dangerous to our health I can't even understand why they were allowed to be put to use in the first place. We need changes to this broken system. Please support changes to the upcoming farm bill that will help reform the system we have now. Support BFROA and LFFJA. Thank you for your help.

COMMENT OF ENA VALIKOV

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:20 p.m.

City, State: Long Beach, CA

Occupation: Veterinarian

Comment: I believe it is crucial to support organic farmers utilizing sustainable techniques with minimal use of herbicides and insecticides which have significant cumulative effects on public health. It is vital to our health to get away from genetically modified commodity crops and create a future of farming in which the livestock is treated humanely and the Earth's bounty is harvested in harmony with nature.

COMMENT OF ALEXANDRA VAN DE KAMP

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:19 p.m.

City, State: Stony Brook, NY

Occupation: University Lecturer

Comment: How can the health of a country's citizens be less important than corporate profit? Healthy food is also practical as it prevents and fights against other health issues that come from consuming foods affected by pesticides, hormones and anti-biotic usage. A healthy nation physically, is just that, a healthy nation! How else can we move forward as a nation, compete with other rising global countries, and be at our best intellectually and physically if we are not truly "healthy"?

COMMENT OF MICHELE VAN DERRICK

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:43 p.m.

City, State: West Newbury, MA

Occupation: Mother

Comment: Please stop letting Monsanto walk all over the government. The people deserve better. Let's get the chemicals out of our food supply. Please make organics much easier to access and afford.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF ANNELIES VAN DOMMELEN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:08 a.m.

City, State: Lambertville, NJ

Occupation: Artist, House Painter, Bartender, Etc., Self-Employed

Comment: I live a simple life, but the money that I spend is on quality, organic, when I can, locally produced food. Funding should be put forward to encourage healthy food, especially for the poor and young. There is no reason to keep feeding people food that will tax our health system. Do not subsidize bad food!

COMMENT OF TRACEY VAN HOOSER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:14 p.m.

City, State: Tiburon, CA

Occupation: Mom, Marketer

Comment: Farm subsidies are currently a joke. Millions of taxpayer dollars are going directly into the pocket of giant agricultural firms that don't need it and don't benefit the public. I want my tax dollars to support sustainable organic farming that doesn't destroy the environment (our soil and water and air are a public resource that needs to be protected for the good of everyone) with poisons, treats animals with kindness and provides healthy food at a good price. It is ridiculous that overly processed junk foods are so much cheaper to eat than non-processed vegetables. The epidemic of obesity is a direct outcome of our farm subsidies and we must stop making the same disastrous policy decisions because of the electoral map. Have a spine and stand up for the average American, not factory farms.

COMMENT OF LESLEY VAN LEEUWEN-VEGA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:24 p.m.

City, State: Spring Lake, MI

Occupation: Business Owner—Graphic Designer/Writer

Comment: History will judge us by the important decisions we are making today. This is one of them. The health of our citizens is directly affected by the food grown and consumed. Environmentally-sensitive and sustainable agricultural practices with respect and viable reward for the farmer and farm workers are the hallmark of a truly civilized (and, indeed, sustainable) society.

COMMENT OF GINNY VAN LOO

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 12:27 p.m.

City, State: Milwaukie, OR

Occupation: Program Manager

Comment: The farm bill should help fund the RC&D's across the country. Pulling their funding was a big mistake in that they are able to leverage Federal dollars from \$6.00 to \$12.00 to one. They are the on the ground face to face organizations that have been helping farmer's for over 5 decades. To unfund them is just wrong. \$51,000,000 would fund them all nationally and continue help provide the technical assistance needed for Conservation and Development nationwide. Please include this in the farm bill.

COMMENT OF ISABEL VAN SICKLEN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:58 p.m.

City, State: Modesto, CA

Occupation: Psychotherapist

Comment: Please keep our food clean and pure. Do we really need to continue adding toxins and carcinogens to our daily lives in something as basic as the food we eat?

COMMENT OF EILEEN VAN SOELEN

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 9:33 a.m.

City, State: Berkeley, CA

Occupation: Painter Fine Art

Comment: I worked in the healthcare "industry" for several years. What I learned is that 70¢ of **Every** dollar spent on healthcare is spent on health problems we human beings have **Created** and caused for ourselves "unintentionally". Organic food, fresh water, clean air, are the **Backbones** of good health. Watch at www.topdocumentaryfilms.com, the *World According to Monsanto* under environment, film #65. **Owning** seeds? **Owning** water? **Owning** air? What, are (some)men creating **Hell** on Earth for money and power? Intentionally? Are they that angry and miserable, greedy and vile? I hope not.

COMMENT OF PATRICIA VAN TWYVER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:09 p.m.

City, State: Lake Helen, FL

Occupation: Retired

Comment: It is time that we take back our farms. Big agra is not doing the job. Too many pesticides *etc.* Small farmers can do so much better and the food is better for you. Mass production is not the answer. Keep Monsanto off the farm.

COMMENT OF MARY VAN VALIN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:16 p.m.

City, State: Traverse City, MI

Occupation: Retired Teacher

Comment: I request the Agriculture Committee consider the big picture of health for our people and our land and waters. Small organic farmers are transforming our agricultural practices so that we can eat healthier food and take care of our natural resources at the same time. These local producers are helping create more resilient communities, as well. It is time to do the right thing for our collective future. Write a farm bill that supports and encourages farming practices that bring health to our ecosystems as well as our bodies. It's really just one more test of our government. Is it possible any more to do the right thing, that is what supports the well-being

of our people and ecosystems, or is it still just another sell out to the corporations? As a citizen, I request a farm bill that supports health on all levels, not just the profits of the large corporations. Thank you for considering that possibility.

COMMENT OF NIKE VANARSDALE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:47 p.m.

City, State: Longmont, CO

Occupation: Sales Manager

Comment: I work in the food industry selling quality food. It's time that the farm bill supports food that is healthy and nutritious. It has become clear in the last couple of years that corn and soybeans are no longer being used for nourishing the people in this country. The farm bill is supporting farming that has become outdated and out of touch with what the people want and need.

COMMENT OF PATRICIAN VANBUSKIRK

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 10, 2012, 7:04 p.m.

City, State: Oak Park, IL

Occupation: Day Care Provider/Volunteer at Food Pantry

Comment: It would be a real shame to see SNAP cut from the budget as every week we use that food to feed the hundreds of hungry families who come to the pantry don't cut SNAP!

COMMENT OF PATRICIA VANCE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:10 p.m.

City, State: Tucson, AZ

Occupation: Elementary School Safety Monitor (P/T)

Comment: You want to cut \$33 billion for Food Stamps and give it to rich people to sit on their rears? I am at least **Trying** to make an honest living. Please stop cutting money from education so I can get a job that would actually allow me to **Live**, pay my bills and buy my own food. I fully support H.R. 3286, H.R. 3236, Conservation programs and Maintaining EQIP Organic Initiative.

COMMENT OF PAULETTE VANDEGRIF

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:33 p.m.

City, State: Greenfield, IN

Occupation: Retired

Comment: The **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program** (SNAP) is the cornerstone of the nutrition safety net, providing 46 million low-income people with monthly benefits that are timely, targeted, and temporary.

SNAP proved to be one of the most responsive safety net programs, growing quickly to meet rising need resulting from high unemployment in the recession. 84% of benefits go to households with a child, senior, or disabled person, and new participants spend an average of 10 months on the program. Funding cuts and other policy changes would require reductions in benefits or eligibility and impede SNAP's responsiveness when our economy falters or unemployment rises.

The FY 2013 Agriculture Appropriations bill should oppose funding cuts and harmful policy proposals to SNAP, including efforts to block grant, cap, or cut funding; impose restrictive work requirements; or otherwise reduce benefits or restrict participation. The 2012 Farm Bill should maintain funding to support current eligibility and benefit levels and oppose harmful policy changes.

Thank you for your consideration.

PAULETTE VANDEGRIF,

[Redacted],

Greenfield, IN.

COMMENT OF GREG VANDEN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:16 p.m.

City, State: Niles, MI

Occupation: Sales

Comment: Agricultural subsidies are entitlement programs that need to be shut down. We no longer have the financial capability of paying for these electoral gifts. Take the ethanol program for example, what a total money pit! It is time to face this country's debt and cut all the pork no matter how long it has been in play!

COMMENT OF NOELLE VANDENBERG

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 4:47 p.m.
City, State: Delray Beach, FL
Occupation: Hair Stylist
Comment: Dear Reprehensive of 22 district,

I am writing you today to urge the U.S. government to reform the U.S. food and agriculture policy. We must adopt sustainable practices that put the health of its citizens, the land and the livelihood of farmers & farm workers **Over** the interests of industrial agriculture lobbyists.

Our future and especially our children's future depends in this.

COMMENT OF JANE VANDERHOOF

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:03 p.m.
City, State: Port Angeles, WA
Producer/Non-producer: Producer
Type: Field Crops, Fruits, Vegetables, Other
Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Norm, Do your homework to learn that conventional agriculture is doomed because it destroys the soil, is not a sustainable method of feeding people as we much into the end-of-oil era. Please stop subsidizing conventional agriculture. The only hope for the future is returning to our agrarian roots, and local economy. Read the book *Fatal Harvest* and see *what's coming if you don't stop what you are doing*.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF RICK VANDERKNYFF

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 16, 2012, 11:52 a.m.
City, State: Woodinville, WA
Occupation: Online Program Manager (Microsoft)
Comment: hanks for this opportunity to comment.

I am not a producer myself, but I am a very interested observer, and serve on the board of an organization that works to protect and preserve small, family-run farms in the state of Washington. In that capacity, I have had the opportunity just in the last week to visit five farm properties (three in eastern Washington, two in the Puyallup River Valley). I have also had a chance to meet a number of farmers over the course of these visits. I have been involved in farmland preservation for 4 years, and these most recent conversations mirror what I have heard time and again.

A couple of important points:

1. The true innovation in American agriculture—innovation that is geared less to short-term profits and bizarre distortions of IP laws and more to true long-term sustainability—is happening on small farms. This is the innovation that tackles truly important questions: How will we care for the long-term health of our soils, the safety of our foods, the viability of farming as a profession? I have met farmers in my state who are tackling these issues in incredibly resourceful ways, and generally without the assistance of the Federal government (and against the commodity pressures of big-time ag).
2. Our farmer population is aging and is not being replaced. That is largely because large-scale commodity farming is geared to benefit everyone at the expense of the individual farmer. Commodity pressures do not make farming an attractive career. On the other hand, I see young people lining up to learn farming from mentors on smaller, organic or biodynamic farms. At this scale, farming can be a fulfilling career, and one that benefits society at large. The Federal government should divert at least some of the many millions/billions of dollars it pours into big ag into program that encourage young farmers to enter the profession and helps them secure the land to do it.

I'll stop there but I hope you have the chance to personally visit small-scale sustainable farms and experience the passion and entrepreneurship that drives this part of our economy.

Specific recommendations (and, full disclosure, these are verbatim from the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition, but I support these points wholeheartedly):

- America needs a farm bill that makes healthy food widely available to all Americans—including schoolchildren! I urge you to vote for a bill that provides flexi-

bility for states to use existing food procurement programs to purchase fresh, healthy food from local farmers and ranchers.

- And maybe most importantly of all, for the future of our state and all who live here, pass a farm bill that protects our natural resources—protect the Conservation Stewardship Program from unfair funding cuts, and improve it by ranking applications solely on their conservation benefits. Farmers count on CSP and other conservation programs to conserve soil for future generations, keep water and air clean, and create habitat for wildlife—all while farming profitably.
- I also want to see legislation that invests in the next generation of farmers and ranchers—guarantee \$25 million per year in mandatory funding for the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program. We need a national strategy and commitment to support beginning farmer and ranchers entering agriculture. Our farm population is aging and now is the time to nurture new agriculture start-ups.
- I also urge you to support a farm bill that funds the Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative at \$30 million per year in mandatory funding. Investment in agricultural research is vital to continued productivity and innovation in growing and diverse sectors of American agriculture, such as organic agriculture.

I thank you for your important work in shaping this bill.

RICK VANDERKNYFF,
Woodinville, WA.

COMMENT OF SUSAN VANDERZEE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:44 p.m.

City, State: Durham, CT

Occupation: Retired Newspaper Editor and Home Producer

Comment: I believe our country is best served by encouraging family farms and not big-corporation agriculture which destroys the land. We must encourage healthy, sustainable practices and not make feeding people into an agribusiness. Food should not be a commodity on the stock exchange. It is a basic human need.

COMMENT OF NAOMI VANN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:47 p.m.

City, State: Duluth, GA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: It seems the government is trying to kill us off slowly by destroying our beautiful Earth with deadly toxins. What's more important in life than our food, along with our freedom and worshipping our God without fear. Let us fight to stop this take-over of our agriculture just for the sake of money.

COMMENT OF BARB VARELLAS

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 2:49 p.m.

City, State: San Dimas, CA

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: The farm bill must contain sustainable agriculture that protects our water, air and soil. Get rid of subsidies to Big Agribusiness and help the small family farmer. Clean up the criteria for organic.

COMMENT OF VERONICA VARNER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:53 p.m.

City, State: Millersville, MD

Occupation: Construction Estimator

Comment: Its time our elected representatives begin to care about the health and welfare of the people they are supposed to serve instead of the big agribusiness that doesn't care about **Our** health, just about getting approval for unsafe products—by hook **And** by crook—all in the name of the almighty dollar.

COMMENT OF CARMELA VARVARO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 2:37 p.m.

City, State: Akron, OH

Occupation: Secretary

Comment: Please consider inclusion into the farm bill, the need for organic farming. Monsanto continues to use GMO seed to crop our nation's farmlands. Most of Europe, Canada and other nations have outlawed GMO and the use of dangerous herbicides produced by Monsanto & BASF. Germany has run BASF basically out of their country, only to have them building a facility now in Raleigh. This country will sacrifice the health and well-being of its citizens to allow big business to control our food crops. If you are at all knowledgeable about the dangers of these super herbicides, the contamination of our food and milk supplies, I implore you to designate monies to the organic farmers who have not succumbed and continue to try and produce good, healthy food crops so our children and their children can grow up healthy.

Sincerely,

CARMELA VARVARO.

COMMENT OF JENNIFER VASQUEZ

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:36 p.m.

City, State: Fort Belvoir, VA

Occupation: Homemaker

Comment: I would like to take the time to ask, no . . . **Beg** you to please support organic products . . . it is all my family and I eat. Because we have cut down on our intake of process foods I have lost weight, the kids have more energy and it makes me happy to know that I am cooking **Healthy** foods for them that are free of pesticides and other harmful chemicals. I understand that not everyone feels like this, that some people don't care where their foods come from, but my family cares . . . my husband serves in the military to protect this country, my job as a homemaker is to secure the health of the future generation . . . please, give us the option of being able to buy **Organic!**

Thank you for taking the time to read this.

COMMENT OF CAREY VAUGHAN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 6:59 a.m.

City, State: Jefferson City, MO

Occupation: Physician

Comment: This is much about local economics and jobs at the **Local** level as it is about creating healthy and sustainable farming practices that are in line with securing and repairing damage that has occurred by way of corporate farming and agriculture. Our health and the health of our environment demand that we find environmentally sustainable and people friendly (*i.e.*, non-toxic) ways of producing our country's food supply.

COMMENT OF LAURA VAUGHAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:24 p.m.

City, State: Rosemount, MN

Occupation: Director of Real Estate

Comment: I urge you to work on a better farm bill that leads to healthier organic foods for everyone. Please support our good nutritional programs, organic farmers and sustainable farming practices.

COMMENT OF SUSAN VAUGHAN

Date Submitted: Friday, March 16, 2012, 8:56 a.m.

City, State: Winston Salem, NC

Occupation: Administrative Assistant

Comment: Please support a significant increase to the TEFAP program. Many people in our community—unemployed and working poor—need food assistance on a regular basis. This program provides needed food in a direct way. Don't cut it! Increase it!

COMMENT OF Z. VAUGHN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 5:34 p.m.

City, State: Houston, TX

Occupation: Stay-at-Home Mom

Comment: With the rise in cancer rates, diabetes, and other diseases, the citizens of the United States have become aware that much of it is related to the toxic

produce and meat that have been approved for the consumption of the public to the benefit of the companies producing it. Please place humanity before the “bottom line” when writing the farm bill. Thank you.

COMMENT OF JENNIFER VEAL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:01 p.m.

City, State: Marietta, GA

Occupation: Business Administrator

Comment: I would like to see more focus on educating people on the value of naked **Real** food (*i.e.*, fruits and vegetables!) Emphasis on sustainable farming practices. And to expose how livestock is raised in our country and how it could be raised.

COMMENT OF GEORGE ARTHUR VEGHTE

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 4:35 a.m.

City, State: Whiting, NJ

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Good Day, I have seen so many issues with the small family farmers in our country directly caused by big AGRA, Our food supply is being threatened by GMO, The small farmer that tries to produce natural food and raise livestock, who stands up to these big Agra Corporate farms, are being targeted, If we do not keep our food production safe from this corporate foreign bank run globalist take over then we will lose our country we must protect the small farmer and stop these bogus regulations, that have been in use for hundreds of years, We must keep control of the destiny and future of all of our free United States.

COMMENT OF MARIE VENNER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:37 p.m.

City, State: Lakewood, CO

Occupation: Mom, Self-Employed Researcher/Report Writer

Comment: Subsidies should be eliminated for large corporate farms (over \$100K or \$200K net profit per year?). All farms should have to comply with environmental laws, which protect all of us. Regular administration of antibiotics should also be outlawed, as this is harming public health, reducing abilities' to fight infection. We are relying on you to attend to the public interest, not the interests of large corporate contributors. We need your help and responsibility!

COMMENT OF AVA VENTURELLI

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 10:00 a.m.

City, State: Burbank, CA

Occupation: Retired Credit Union CEO and Gardener Extraordinaire

Comment: It is time to stop subsidizing big industrial food producers. They will never “feed the world” they will only torture animals, genetically modify what nature has made perfectly and kill the nutrients in the soil with the poison they must use to grow their crops. Instead, help small organic farmers on a local level to thrive and thus heal our out of control and poisonous food supply. No more 99¢ burgers made of pink slime. Quit giving them money and that burger will cost \$300. Time for bold moves so get with the game people!

COMMENT OF VASAN VENUGOPALAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:01 p.m.

City, State: Irvine, CA

Occupation: Professor

Comment: Dear Honorable Members of the House Agriculture Committee,

I am writing you as an ordinary citizen concerned about the health of our nation. As you know there is a health crisis in our country as heart disease, hypertension, diabetes, and obesity have reached epidemic proportion. Many health experts believe this is due to our poor food supply which, while generally safe, is over industrialized and processed. All of you have great influence to greatly improve this situation with the farm bill. I encourage you to consider the following points:

Between 2008 and 2010, the farm bill spent \$39.4 billion of taxpayer money subsidizing commodity crops. These do little to improve the health of our nation and is more than eight times what has been spent on perennially underfunded programs

to support research, promotion and purchasing of fruits and vegetables. These include an array of programs that buy fruit and vegetable snacks for low-income schools, and invest in research and marketing to help organic, local and sustainable farmers.

As a result I support:

1. The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
2. Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
3. The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
4. Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Thank you,

VASAN VENUGOPALAN,
[Redacted],
Irvine, CA.

COMMENT OF JOELLE VERBEKE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:33 p.m.

City, State: Austin, TX

Occupation: Real Estate Investments

Comment: We must protect organic farms big and small and not let the big agricultural corporations dictate what they want to feed us which is mostly unhealthy and depleted of vitamins and minerals not to mention the indigestible protein that derives from GMO crops per the ongoing research. We have over 7 billion people on Earth and GMO seeds are only good for 1 season and cannot reproduce. We are putting our food in the hands of profiteering practices, we must become wiser.

Thanks.

COMMENT OF BOBBIE VERGO

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:48 p.m.

City, State: Indianapolis, IN

Occupation: Occupational Therapist

Comment: I am constantly dumbfounded at the decisions made by the leaders of our country to choose to not only allow but encourage the genetic modification of our food—and the slow and steady destruction one of the foundations of our nation that is agriculture. That anyone would turn a blind eye to the impact the industrialization of the food industry has on the health of our nations citizens makes me question the integrity of our nation's leaders. I hope that you will consider putting **People** and **Not** money first and that you will make the decision to support legislation that backs initiatives to support sustainable, responsible, and organic means of producing food and protecting those dear, hard working citizens who engage in methods to produce food in those ways. That said, I support the full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286). I support fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs. I support the implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236), and lastly maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative. I hope you will support these as well!

JOINT COMMENT OF PAM, ROB, MIKO, AND ISAAC VERGUN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:36 p.m.

City, State: Beaverton, OR

Occupation: Sociologist/Public Policy Analyst/Homemaker and Mom; Economist; School children

Comment: It is extremely important to me that you ensure:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).

- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

My family does everything we can to buy organic and from local family farms, to eat healthy food so that we will have good lives which also means low medical costs. We resent corporations that are promoting toxic practices including the use of GMOs and their encroachment on other crops. And the additional cost that we bear in buying higher quality food and through taxes because of anti-environment/anti-social responsibility subsidies.

Agriculture needs to be again about these core values of health, happiness, and seeing that the environment is well cared for, not about propping up wealthy corporations and promoting unsustainable practices.

We also ask that each member of the committee look at what organizations are supporting your election campaigns and do not take money from groups that do not respect the above principals.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF MARY VERMEULEN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:48 p.m.

City, State: Waynesboro, VA

Occupation: Retired Educator

Comment: As the daughter and sister of small farmers, I know the benefits of receiving the products of small farms. Now as an adult, I abhor the practices of Big Agriculture and believe we must be careful and move slowly with genetic engineering. The quality of farm products must be protected. As a believer in quality, I chose to purchase locally grown, organic produce, eggs, and dairy products. I enjoy the same quality and taste of these products that I had as a child. A great deal of quality is lost through the practices of Big Agriculture. Yes, we must feed the world, however, we must do so with careful attention to quality and safety.

COMMENT OF EMILY VIDRINE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:47 p.m.

City, State: Lowell, MA

Occupation: Researcher

Comment: It is absolutely urgent that we support sustainable and healthy farm practices and discontinue the use of chemical pesticides and fertilizers which are literally killing the ecosystems we rely on heavily for our sustenance.

COMMENT OF DANIEL VIELE

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 3:54 p.m.

City, State: Santa Rosa, CA

Occupation: Property Management, General Contractor

Comment: Support true cost of goods pricing, no fixing by government or other entities. Milk products, meat, eggs, *etc.* should be sold by it's cost to produce, not manipulated pricing. All products must reflect their true cost.

End subsidies (aka direct payments and countercyclical commodity programs), and replace them with loophole-free agriculture risk coverage. Additionally, implement a cap on crop insurance premium subsidies.

Support family farmers that really need help, not the biggest farms that don't.

COMMENT OF DAWN VIERRA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:42 p.m.

City, State: Salt Lake City, UT

Occupation: Administrative Assistant

Comment: We desire **Real** reform. We look to our farmers that have integrity to produce an organic, healthy, non GMO product. We no longer will put up with our health & welfare being sold down the river to big agra corporations & our representatives.

COMMENT OF ALYSE VIGGIANO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:29 p.m.

City, State: Pittsburgh, PA

Occupation: Student

Comment: Regardless if my food is considered organic, what matters more is whether or not I am paying the farmer enough to produce it. What stimulates and

improves the local economy is buying local. The problem that arises here is that many do not have the opportunity or understand what local really is and that is where Slow Food is making a real change.

COMMENT OF JOHN VIGNOCCHI

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 7:05 p.m.

City, State: San Francisco, CA

Occupation: Corporate Development

Comment: Stop subsidizing big agriculture! And end tariffs on imported sugar. No wonder American's have high fructose corn syrup in so many foods . . . buying sugar in the U.S. is 2x more expensive than other nations (because of America's ridiculous tariffs). Sugar tariffs increase manufacturing costs and reduces American food manufacturers global competitiveness, increases prices for American consumers, and increases the use of high fructose corn syrup (another benefactor from the Federal government's crony approach to agriculture).

COMMENT OF RICHARD VILLADONIGA

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 2:36 p.m.

City, State: St. Augustine, FL

Occupation: Teacher/Founder of Slow Food First Coast

Comment: On behalf of Slow Food First Coast, a nonprofit organization promoting a food system based on quality and pleasure, environmental sustainability, and social justice, I encourage Congress to pass a farm bill that funds local food systems, organic farmers, small family farms, an more fairness for all involved in our food system, including small producers, farmworkers, and children. Please stop subsidizing industrial agriculture giants only, and begin to fund in greater amounts those that will strengthen our local and regional food systems.

COMMENT OF MIRTHA L. VILLAMIL, R.N.

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 5:42 p.m.

City, State: West Palm Beach, FL

Occupation: Registered Nurse

Comment: Dear Mr. West:

As a Registered Nurse, I know the importance of a good and balance nutrition. Mr. West please advocate for maintaining and strengthening low income children, single mothers and the elderly critical nutrition programs. Please support the good, clean, and fair food and farm bill.

Thank you,

M.L. VILLAMIL, R.N.

COMMENT OF TERESITA VILLASENOR

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 2:24 p.m.

City, State: Carlsbad, CA

Occupation: Nutrition Counselor and Body Alignment

Comment: I have been eating organic since 1971 and am in better health because of it. Parents very ill with diabetes, cancer and arthritis.

We need an organic health bill.

Keep the USA strong and healthy, buy organic, support organic farmers.

Thank you,

SITA PALOMA.

COMMENT OF LARA VILLAVICENCIO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:22 a.m.

City, State: Minneapolis, MN

Occupation: Sales

Comment: Please support fresh fruit and vegetable production. Reduce and eliminate subsidies on crops that do not support good health including corn, soy, canola, sugar.

COMMENT OF KAREN VINCENT

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 12, 2012, 1:57 a.m.

City, State: Burlington, WA

Occupation: Receptionist/Server

Comment: America needs a farm bill that makes healthy food widely available to all Americans—including schoolchildren! We must provide flexibility for states to use existing food procurement programs to purchase fresh, healthy food from local farmers and ranchers.

COMMENT OF ANGELA VIRTUHAZO

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 9:12 a.m.

City, State: Pacific, MO

Occupation: Corporate Training Consultant

Comment: Please keep the funding for organic farming and beginning farmers intact. We need a healthier. Action, not a genetically modified future. Thank you.

COMMENT OF BEN VITALE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:09 p.m.

City, State: South Orange, NJ

Occupation: Computer Software Developer

Comment: Please pass a reformed farm bill. Here are some of the ideas that I think need attention:

- end distorting subsidies for corn, soy, *etc.* that lead to the obesity epidemic. encourage farmers to grow green vegetables.
- include the ideas from the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286)
- make policy that encourages small new farmers, and lessens support for Cargill, ADM, *etc.* Agribusiness doesn't need any government help.
- include environmental protections that preserve farms in densely populated areas, don't overuse pesticide, herbicide, and fertilizer
- GMO labeling

Thanks.

COMMENT OF ELLYSE ADELE VITIELLO

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 12, 2012, 8:58 p.m.

City, State: Los Angeles, CA

Occupation: Retired Civil Service: New York State Department of Labor

Comment: I would hate to be hungry when I'm old. Please help our senior citizens in this time of serious challenges to economic survival. There are headlines in the news of suicides in Italy and Greece, when older folks cannot manage to get by in the current crisis. Let's not have this problem in the USA. Thank you for your consideration to this problem.

COMMENT OF ANN VITOVITCH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:42 p.m.

City, State: Northampton, PA

Occupation: Homemaker

Comment: Please remember in making your decisions when voting on the next farm bill that the outcome will not only affect us but also all of our congressional leaders and their families. The farmer is the most "vital" part of our culture; one we will never be able to do without! Supporting them in any way possible is the key element to our very existence.

COMMENT OF T. VIZZARD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:58 p.m.

City, State: Tucson, AZ

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I support the following:

1. The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
2. Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
3. The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
4. Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

“By failing to place limitations on crop insurance subsidies and to re-attach soil erosion and wetland conservation requirements to crop insurance programs, the Committee has failed to do the full reform that is needed.”

While Congress is looking to get rid of direct payments to commodity farmers, the subsidized insurance program it proposes to replace it with will allow giant commodity farmers and insurance companies to walk away with billions in taxpayer dollars while putting the land, soil and environment at greater risk.

Please listen to the people of this country and stop listening to Big Ag, Big Insurance and other corporate entities.

Congress is ruining sustainable farming and organic farming all in the interest of election funding and other selfish interests of congress and Big Business.

I am disgusted and will do everything in my power to fight and defeat this attitude and the perpetrators.

COMMENT OF SUSAN VOGT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:54 p.m.

City, State: Fairbanks, AK

Occupation: Environmental Consultant

Comment: I would hope this farm bill actually does something to help the real small family farmers and stop the huge subsidies to mass corporate farms that promote antibiotics, cause massive polluted runoff of fertilizer and animal waste. Make the corporate farmers pay for cleaning up their own farms! Not the American taxpayers!

COMMENT OF KEVIN VOLK

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 10:28 a.m.

City, State: Marlborough, MA

Occupation: Senior Program Manager

Comment: Please support this crucial farm bill—we have a right to healthy, organic and local foods at an affordable price!

Stop backing big-Agro and support the right movement—real food! Our future depends on this bill. Kids are destined to live shorter lives unless we change our food supply and production system. Please support this bill and make the change we need desperately for our health and the future wellbeing of this country. Thank you.

KEVIN.

COMMENT OF RACHEL VOLK

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 9:57 a.m.

City, State: Marlborough, MA

Occupation: Holistic Health Coach

Comment: Please support this crucial farm bill—we have a right to healthy, organic and local foods at an affordable price!

Every day I work with sick, middle-class people who struggle because they can't afford to eat well. Stop backing big-Agro and support the right movement— real food! Our future depends on this bill. Kids are destined to live shorter lives unless we change our food supply and production system. Please support this bill and make the change we need desperately for our health and the future wellbeing of this country. Thank you.

RACHEL.

COMMENT OF MOLLY VOLKER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:22 p.m.

City, State: St. Cloud, MN

Occupation: Teacher and Business Consultant

Comment: Cancer, severe allergies, autism, extreme asthma, and many many more. The links are many to our food system. Fear not that we will not be able to feed the world. Fear that we are poisoning ourselves . . . we are. Heavily subsidize organic, sustainable practices and you will see the spending in Medicaid and Medicare go down. Please do it for our children and the future. This path we are on is hurting us. So Stop!

COMMENT OF PAMELA ROSE VOLLINGER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 10:06 p.m.

City, State: East Hartford, CT
Occupation: Clergy
Comment: Dear Elected Officials,

I am writing to express my deep concern for the quality of food that is produced here in the United States and how the land, a critical natural resource is used. I firmly believe that we need to have food that is grown locally with heritage seeds not contaminated by chemicals or non-genetically modified crops. I have seen so much evidence to support small local farmers using sustainable farming practices produce the healthiest food and are protecting our land and water resources for future generations. I feel it is my right as a citizen of this country to have the freedom to buy food which I feel is healthiest for my family and for the land. In order to protect my rights as a citizen and a consumer and the rights and health and future generations of citizens and consumers, I strongly recommend and give full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286). I think it is in the best interest of the common good and future generations that you fully fund conservation programs such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs. I also feel it is the right and best thing to implement all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236). It is essential for our freedom to choose what we feel is the healthiest food for our families and our right as consumers to have a choice that you maintain the EQIP Organic Initiative.

PAMELA ROSE VOLLINGER,
 [Redacted],
 Fishers Island, NY, and
 [Redacted],
 East Hartford, CT.

COMMENT OF MAX VOLLMER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:21 p.m.
City, State: Baker City, OR
Occupation: Retired Banker

Comment: American corporate agribusiness is a bloated pig on needless and excessive farm subsidies, and it is putting unhealthy, adulterated food on American tables that is responsible for the obesity, diabetes, and heart disease plaguing this country.

COMMENT OF CAROL VON BORSTEL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:54 p.m.
City, State: Sequim, WA
Occupation: Retired Teacher

Comment: A farm bill needs to represent the needs of the people of this country, not the desires of corporate agriculture. We want food and land use policies that promote our health and the health of our environment. Small and organic farms need the support to grow the food we choose to eat.

COMMENT OF REBECCA VON DUERING

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:44 p.m.
City, State: Seattle, WA
Occupation: Speech Pathologist

Comment: I believe that non-GMO agricultural products are crucial to the health of our nation and the health of our economy. Europe does not want GMO's and because nature is nature (and can't be contained) we have no way to protect our non-GMO crops from being pollinated by GMO crop. We must not let GMO's infiltrate our foods.

COMMENT OF MELANY VORASS

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 10:56 a.m.
City, State: Seattle, WA
Occupation: Writer/Urban Farmer
Comment: Dear Representative McDermott,

Our children need access to healthy, affordable food. The current farm bill is heavily weighted toward subsidizing large, conventional (*versus* organic) farms.

Providing cheap, unhealthy food (such as GMO corn and soy) grown in pesticides and nutrition depleted soils are creating a nation of sick, obese, dysfunctional, lower IQ people.

If we are serious about improving our health care system and lowering health care cost, we need to start at the root cause of our problems: unhealthy food.

Farm subsidies should be weighted toward producers that are producing healthy foods, not just empty calories that can be manipulated in a lab. Currently, very little assistance goes to small, organic farms. We should be providing incentives for large, industrial farms to carry out organic growing principles.

Please consider this carefully as Congress recrafts the farm bill.

Sincerely,

MELANY VORASS.

COMMENT OF LASZLO VOROSMARTY

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 1:36 p.m.

City, State: Glens Falls, NY

Occupation: Congressional Advocate

Comment: It is unfortunate to see that the government has again failed to utilize its urban and rural resources and schools for developing agricultural related job programs that would feed, educated and employ its people. The tax money would be better well spent if it were utilized on behalf of supporting the people's consumption of fresh, healthy and nutritious fruits and vegetables within a 100 mile radius of any school where ever they live. Whereupon, throughout the year, a number of sustainable urban and rural agricultural jobs could be supported within every 100 mile radius of this endeavor. Visualizing the schools of every community as base of operations. In observing the need for this in my community I am "Doing Business As American Resources Recovery Congress" in an attempt to enjoin the schools, government, enterprise and labor of my community to this purpose.

However, for lack of funding, this program has not become available to my community: Even though so much needs to be done.

COMMENT OF CAROL VOSS

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 8:47 a.m.

City, State: Hibbing, MN

Occupation: Executive Director for Hibbing Food Shelf

Comment: I am an Executive Director for the Hibbing Food Shelf. I don't need SNAP program to go down, or any other program for low income families.

COMMENT OF ADRIANA VOSS-ANDREAE, M.D., PH.D.

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 15, 2012, 8:48 p.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Healthy Foods Access for Low-Income Families

Comment: The drastic cut of nearly \$36 billion from Federal nutrition programs, at a time where a growing population of low-income families heavily rely on these programs to feed their families while attempting to find living wage jobs, is simply outrageous and unacceptable. Additionally, with global energy prices continuing to rise and looming climate change, we urgently need to invest in community food security through funding of our local food systems, such as funding of Farmers Market and Local Food Promotion Program, Hunger-Free Community Incentive Grants, and Community Food Projects Programs.

For these and other reasons, I urge the House Agriculture Committee to eliminate the Federal nutrition program cuts and add the Food and Jobs Act to their bill.

Sincerely,

ADRIANA VOSS-ANDREAE, M.D., PH.D.

COMMENT OF JANICE VRANKA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 5:32 p.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Research Scientist

Comment: American needs a farm bill that makes healthy food widely available to all Americans. This is especially important for our school children! Studies have shown that the obesity epidemic may be directly tied to malnutrition and the inability of many Americans to find nutritional foods.

Please take a strong stand on this issue. We need a better 2012 Food and farm bill!

Thank you for your consideration,
JANICE VRANKA.

COMMENT OF CAROLINE VRAZEL

Date Submitted: Thursday, April 26, 2012, 12:26 p.m.

City, State: Wisconsin Rapids, WI

Occupation: Homemaker

Comment: Please consider what this will do to our hardworking farming families. We need to consider legislation that will support them not squash their ability to make a living and support their families. We are trusting you to represent **Every** American, not corporate greed.

COMMENT OF KELLY VRESILOVIC

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 11:24 a.m.

City, State: Ardmore, PA

Occupation: Architect

Comment: I buy organic food and believe it is better for our environment. I want to make sure that we have clean air and water for everyone not just the wealthy. Clean strong farms are the backbone of a clean strong America.

Thank you for all you do.

COMMENT OF MARILYN W.

Date Submitted: Friday, April 20, 2012, 1:09 a.m.

City, State: Dumas, AR

Occupation: Bank Teller

Comment: While I am not currently working in agriculture our family has been farming. I am **Very Concerned** about the current methods of constant usage of chemicals applied to our crops. It is slowly and steadily and stealthily killing our environment and us. Cancer is rampant. Bees are dying. Rivers and lands are polluted. **All Organic farming is Desperately Needed!**

Farmers need to be kept in the fields. What will it take? Fuel prices are eating the profits. Chemicals are sickening and killing whatever they come into contact with.

You are in a position to change the scene. Please take action **Now!**

COMMENT OF TRISHA W.

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:04 p.m.

City, State: Kankakee, IL

Occupation: Homemaker

Comment: I would like the farm bill to support small local farmers, not big agriculture. I want the farm bill to focus on encouraging and supporting organic and sustainable farming practices. I want it to encourage labeling of genetically modified foods, antibiotic usage, feeding practices, pesticides used, and other unhealthy additives, so that people can finally know what they are truly buying at the store. I want the farm bill to encourage good nutrition for school children and poor families using WIC and food stamps. There needs to be healthy food provided to these people. Not pink slime beef, pesticide covered fruits and vegetables, or worse yet, lack of fruits and vegetables. Let's start focusing on supporting family farms, creating healthy foods and animals, healthy farms and land, transparency in labeling, and good nutrition for all.

COMMENT OF FRANCES WADE

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 2:45 p.m.

City, State: Bigfork, MT

Occupation: P/T Desk Clerk/Disabled

Comment: I belong to a CSA where I am able to access organic fruits and vegetables in season. I am not willing to eat the toxic products supplied by the majority of the corporate agribusiness and sold in most commercial groceries.

Most Americans would prefer to have access to wholesome foods that are neither GMO's nor contaminated by toxic chemical fertilizers or pesticides. Why do you

refuse to protect the people from the corporations who put profit above public safety?

COMMENT OF NANCY WADE

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:01 p.m.

City, State: Chicago, IL

Occupation: Educator

Comment: Our agricultural system must be reformed to put consumer and environmental safety at the top of the list of priorities. GMO food and the ownership of genes should not be allowed. There are no benefits to the consumer, only to the corporate owners of food supply.

COMMENT OF TERRY WADKINS

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 2:49 p.m.

City, State: Jacksonville, FL

Occupation: Self-Employed

Comment: The people you represent don't want huge monoculture agribusinesses to be our source of food, as much as we want you to support and encourage smaller sustainable farmers. Better quality produce. Better for the environment.

COMMENT OF JAMES WAGGLE

Date Submitted: Monday, May 07, 2012, 6:01 p.m.

City, State: Ward, AR

Occupation: Nurse

Comment: I strongly suggest to eliminate **All** subsidies. Farmers don't need entitlements from the U.S. Government to be productive these days. Let them bear the burden like all other Americans, if you pick that career field than you learn how to be productive in it and be financial responsible for your choices. All other career fields don't get government hand outs we just had to work longer hours. I suggest let **Farmers** become more responsible for their choices and stop handing out **Free** money to them. I mean if I know I can plant a crop knowing it's going to fail but I'm going to get paid for it twice the price it's worth who wouldn't care about being responsible. The farmers collect insurance off the failed crop then collect anywhere between \$50,000 to \$1 million every year in March/April in government subsidies.

COMMENT OF DEBORAH WAGNER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 6:57 a.m.

City, State: Brookeville, MD

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Fruits, Livestock, Poultry/poultry products, Vegetables, Other

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Dear Committee Members: Please consider eliminating all subsidies to corporate farms, which are one of the leading causes of the loss of small family farms and a leading cause of soil erosion and loss of diversity through huge unsustainable monocropping. We need to improve subsidies to forest retention and other conservation programs, and encourage more young people to go into farming. Only consider government programs and payments to farms on which the owner does at least 51% of the actual physical work of the farm.

COMMENT OF MARK WAGNER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:37 p.m.

City, State: Royal Oak, MI

Occupation: Engineer

Comment: End genetically modified organisms or at least inform consumers of all haphazard and require proper labeling of products containing GMOs.

Define what is considered "natural" and it should not include corn syrup, canola oil, GMO products, trans fats or other synthetic products. Foods should be labeled accordingly.

Tariffs on imported sugar should be eliminated so that it is no longer more expensive than corn syrup. This would provide tremendous improvement to our diabetes and obesity epidemics.

Outlaw trans fats.

Outlaw addictive food additives and additives that make consumers feel hungrier.

COMMENT OF MICHAEL WAGNER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 12, 2012, 3:18 p.m.

City, State: Carbondale, IL

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Specialty Crops

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: I urge you to pass a strong farm bill that;

- (1) protects programs like SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP.
- (2) Promotes local food production, processing and marketing.
- (3) Promotes local bio-energy production from waste streams.
- (4) Victory (community) gardens where everyone has an opportunity and responsibility to get their hands dirty.

COMMENT OF ROBYN WAGONER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:39 p.m.

City, State: Olympia, WA

Occupation: Business Owner

Comment: Only **Sustainable Healthy** processes should be used to grow food: *i.e.*, **Organic**. Safe food and water for children and adults require a halt to the use of chemical fertilizers, genetic modification, pesticides, herbicides and fungicides in our food chain. Cancer, DNA mutations, pollution, as-yet-unknown-side-effects, none of these are acceptable risks, even in 1:1,000,000 cases. Food is meant to nourish us, not poison us. If it is poisoning people, and ecosystems, it is not food, it is poison. We cannot continue to sicken our children, families, and environment.

Factory farms produce too much methane and are destroying the ozone layer creating global warming. We have known about this since the 1970's. End factory farms.

Livestock take up 50% of our country's landmass and use 50% of our drinkable water. This is unacceptable. We must limit the amount of resources allotted to raising nitrogen polluting livestock, starting with removing government subsidized and privately owned grazing animals from **All** public lands. The wild animals that live there need that area to nest and forage. Tell ranchers to keep their cows on their own property like everyone else must do with their animals in this country.

If genetically modified substances continue to be marketed as "food" they **Must** be labeled as such, preferably with a warning that the long-term side effects of consuming such substances are unknown!

We seriously need more stringent screenings for Mad Cow Disease.

Thank you for your time.

COMMENT OF DAVID WAHLER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:23 p.m.

City, State: Wolcott, VT

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I live in a small dynamic state with inventive young farmers who are actively growing for their neighbors and in some cases as they grow they are able to hire people, providing jobs and food and shipping healthy food to nearby states. Funding should be provided for these farms over the support of the huge agro growers who have little regard in for our environment, they are bottom line big business in many cases.

COMMENT OF DIANE WALAS

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 10, 2012, 6:18 p.m.

City, State: Tucson, AZ

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I support the Community Food Bank of Southern AZ by volunteering and making food and cash donations. Arizona has been very hard hit with persons losing homes to foreclosure and the number of persons seeking food assistance has greatly increased, making our food bank have more and more difficulty meeting the increased needs. I would like a strong farm bill to help these needy families. It is difficult to watch parents struggling to keep themselves and their children healthy on smaller and smaller incomes. I hope and pray that you pass a farm bill that will protect and strengthen programs like SNAP, TEFAP and CSFP. Our community and many communities throughout America cannot afford cuts to these programs. It is hard to watch heads of corporations live in multiple dwellings and earn more

and more perks when young families cannot afford basic nutrition and have lost their homes.

COMMENT OF KAREN WALDECKER

Date Submitted: Tuesday, April 24, 2012, 11:01 a.m.

City, State: Kirkwood, MO

Occupation: Disabled

Comment: As a person of a very low income, I pray you don't cut funding for hungry people. I am a diabetic and I can't afford to eat properly so my blood sugar is always a rollercoaster. I'm a widow who had to move in with my son to save enough money to get an apartment. That's just not right!

COMMENT OF MATTHEW WALDORF

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 6:43 a.m.

City, State: Darien, IL

Occupation: Sales Executive

Comment: It is time that the truth is being told. We must label GMO'S and be very clear with the public how horrible high fructose corn syrup is to our children and how it is a main cause of our obesity problem in this country. No more government corn subsidies!

COMMENT OF CHARLOTTE WALES

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:35 p.m.

City, State: Monticello, AR

Occupation: Community Development

Comment: As a gardener myself, I urge you to focus on **Clean, Fresh Foods Instead Of Corporate Agri** which is laden with toxic chemicals and fertilizers. **We The People** do **Not** want the dangers to our health and the environment caused by agri chemicals and pesticides; they are a danger to us and especially to our children. I wish **All Of You On The House Committee On Agriculture To Focus On Clean Food Instead Of Listening To The Corporate Agri Giants Whose Only Concern Is Their Obscene Profits, Not The Health Of Our Families Or Our Planet.**

COMMENT OF JAMIE WALKER

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 10:16 a.m.

City, State: Garden City, MI

Occupation: Disabled

Comment: My disability is directly related to the corporate, pharmaceutical foods this country forces upon us, that is nutrient and vitamin lacking, and an assault on our bodies.

We need natural, pesticide/herbicide, and GMO-free foods that nourish our bodies instead.

COMMENT OF JENNY WALKER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 11:16 p.m.

City, State: New York, NY

Occupation: Physician/Educator

Comment: As a Family Physician, I am very aware of the importance of access to healthy food to preserve health and prevent illness. The model Big Agriculture with tons of pesticides, excessive use of antibiotics, untested genetically engineered products and factory-farmed animals has not proven in the best interests of our health or environment. New Farm legislation needs to emphasize small, sustainable farming, especially local and organic. It needs to limit use of antibiotics to only the amount needed to treat infected animals (to slow down antibiotic resistance) and pesticides to reduce destruction of the environment (remember bumble bees?) It also needs to acknowledge the importance and value of diversified gene lines and to ban additional genetically modified organisms until their safety can be established and they can be shown to grow without contaminating traditional plants, especially organic.

COMMENT OF JOAN WALKER

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 9:45 p.m.

City, State: Lincoln, MA

Occupation: Educator

Comment: I am interested in supporting small, local, organic farms. I do my best to avoid eating anything that is not organic and when possible try to buy local or grow my own.

COMMENT OF LEE WALKER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:13 p.m.

City, State: Salt Lake City, UT

Occupation: Lawyer

Comment: I support the Food Democracy positions. For the sake of individual farmers and the wholesomeness of the food we all get, Big Ag has gone too far. End the corn supports, the policies that lead to monopoly, massive overcrowding, filth, cruelty and need to over-use antibiotics. I am also alarmed at the over use of chemicals in agriculture and genetic modification of our food.

COMMENT OF MARGARET WALKER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 10:33 p.m.

City, State: Panama City, FL

Occupation: Retired Editor

Comment: I want a farm bill that provides opportunities to small farmers, especially organic farmers. I want the corporate farmers to be curtailed. I want genetic modification to be stopped. I want herbicides and pesticides to be curtailed, in some cases outlawed (*e.g.*, Roundup). I want provisions for bees to be allowed to eat their own products and not be fed sugar water instead. I want an end to monocrop mania. I could go on.

COMMENT OF MEDOH WALKER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:31 p.m.

City, State: Free Union, VA

Occupation: Community Organizer

Comment: The safety of the nutritional quality and healthfulness of the food made available to Americans is an inalienable right just as life itself. Our health and our lives depend on it. This is no place for corporate greed and control sacrificing our nutrition.

COMMENT OF MAUREEN WALL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:15 p.m.

City, State: Port Angeles, WA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Other

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: I am convinced that you all know nothing about plants, animals, soil or how they interact. Please keep the biodiversity of our planet strong. Leave farming to people who know how to do it. Keep your multinational food companies out of small farms. Try, one time, to not have big agriculture as your primary focus.

COMMENT OF BOB WALLACE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:06 p.m.

City, State: Fort Worth, TX

Occupation: Retired

Comment: A Fair farm bill for the consumer (everyone) means:

- Better choices from a more vibrant marketplace and stable prices. Restoring common-sense practices like agricultural reserves can prevent speculation from driving up food prices.
- Increased access to healthy food: More families will have easy access to healthy foods they can afford.
- Stronger local infrastructure: Reversing the consolidation in the food system would allow for more local businesses.

JOINT COMMENT OF BRIGITTE AND JOHN WALLACE

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 7:36 a.m.

1465

City, State: Gulfport, FL

Occupation: Self-Employed

Comment: For the health of Americans, for the welfare of the animals, for the economic viability of the small farms, for the environment and because we must stand against big Agra, we want sustainable organic and humane farming.

COMMENT OF GARRY WALLACE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:06 p.m.

City, State: Charlottesville, VA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Our current big business ag system is broken. Local producers offer the best chance for healthy food. Big ag \$\$\$\$ should not be your driving interest in our health decisions.

COMMENT OF JAMES WALLACE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:26 p.m.

City, State: Benicia, CA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Livestock, Field Crops

Size: 1,000+ acres

Comment: I am very concerned that the Food and Agricultural bills that favor farmers in crop production, distribution and support family farms are those that my representative and other representatives support. It is critical not to allow these bills to languish in committee or be killed by inaction. Thank you.

COMMENT OF MARGARET WALLACE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:25 p.m.

City, State: Watsonville, CA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Still need subsidies for small farmers; protect organic growers from GMO's, pesticides and other like dangers from Monsanto, Dow Chemical, Bayer and other chemical companies. Stop Monsanto from 'owning' all seed crops and ruining food crops with their genetic modifications.

COMMENT OF RYAN WALLACE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:23 p.m.

City, State: Denver, CO

Occupation: Business Manager

Comment: Subsidize Real Food! Lower the National Debt by Subsidizing food that makes us healthier and lowers the burdens our health problems put on the healthcare system. Create jobs and Subsidize Family Farmers that grow real food.

COMMENT OF SONDRA WALLACE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 10:42 a.m.

City, State: Ogden, UT

Occupation: Retired

Comment: In addition, support for organic food is necessary to provide healthy food in order to lower disease. Support is needed to reduce the price of decent food, *i.e.*, organic, so everyone can afford it.

COMMENT OF ANNIE WALLACK

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:27 p.m.

City, State: Rosamond, CA

Occupation: Retired Teacher

Comment: Please! Let's be sensible here. We are asking for the betterment of humanity's health In the name of an improved nation of healthy individuals. We ask that you advocate on **Our** behalf and not that of greedy corporations who do not have the best interests of humanity at heart.

COMMENT OF KATHY WALLER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:07 p.m.

City, State: Austin, TX

Occupation: Writer

Comment: My father was a small farmer and rancher. He produced clean food, and he loved the land. He would be appalled to see what corporate agribusiness is doing to our food supply and our farmland.

I support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Thank you for your attention.

COMMENT OF NICHOLAS WALLIN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:40 p.m.

City, State: Minneapolis, MN

Occupation: Architect

Comment: Stop contributing to big Agriculture companies, and find better ways to provide healthy, safe foods for everyone at every income level. Currently, eating healthy is luxury.

COMMENT OF HUNTER WALLOF

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 10:47 a.m.

City, State: Pt. Reyes, CA

Occupation: Artist/Ecologist

Comment: We want corporations out of the production of the produce we feed our families. Move the cows off the land and the people back onto it as land-stewards and providers of the food we eat.

COMMENT OF JUDY WALLS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:30 a.m.

City, State: Fairfield, IA

Occupation: Accounting Assistant

Comment: I am really tired of supporting **Huge** corporate AG businesses who (much to some peoples thinking) **Do Not Do The Right Thing**. But, I guess they have the money to lobby Congress into **Not Doing The Right Thing Either**. Can you please try to think about all the rest of us, we need to have a voice and I am hoping it is thru you, the person I voted for.

COMMENT OF KAREN WALLS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:04 p.m.

City, State: Novato, CA

Occupation: Business Manager at Independent School

Comment: I hope that the farm bill finally stops subsidizing the huge agribusiness farms and instead supports small organic farms. Subsidizing corn and soy to the point where they are put into everything and animals are fed corn when they should be fed grasses is wreaking havoc on people and animals alike.

COMMENT OF DORA WALMSLEY

Date Submitted: Thursday, April 19, 2012, 10:40 a.m.

City, State: Pittsburgh, PA

Occupation: Volunteer Coordinator

Comment: As an employee for a private not-for-profit organization, I see, every day, the impact programs like CSFP, SNAP and TEFAP have on the lives of western Pennsylvanians. I'm doing my part in helping those in need in my community. I need my government to do the same by keeping these critical feeding programs.

COMMENT OF CAITILIN WALSH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:59 p.m.

City, State: Redmond, WA

Occupation: Translator

Comment: I would like to add my name to the many citizens who would like to see the playing field for real food producers (otherwise known as farmers) leveled, by ending subsidies for commodity crops. We don't eat commodities: they are profit instruments for the powerful corporations that control them. If you (or rather we the taxpayers) are going to subsidize anything, Let it be those who are doing the right things in terms of healing the planet with sustainable farming practices, reducing carbon emissions and dependence on foreign oil (thus working toward national security) by growing and selling locally.

COMMENT OF SISTER JULIA WALSH, F.S.P.A.

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:04 p.m.

City, State: Chicago, IL

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: Hello!

Thanks for your desire to represent us as you decide how to craft the Food Bill. It is really important to me that the final version you come up with is very supportive of independent, organic, local and sustainable farms who are caring for the natural resources (of soil, air, water, *etc.*) and workers properly. It is also very important to me that you create systems to support new sustainable agriculture, especially in areas where food is scarce in the U.S. and abroad. Food Aid needs to be sustainable and encourage development of communities. Give a boost to those who need it, please, but try not to give hand-outs in a larger system where it is too difficult to compete with corporate agriculture!

In particular, I support the following:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Thank you!

Peace and All Good,

SISTER JULIA WALSH, F.S.P.A.

COMMENT OF MARY WALSH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:49 p.m.

City, State: Lakewood, OH

Occupation: Media Producer/Director

Comment: Please stop listening to lobbyists. The state of food production in this country is profitable and bountiful—now. What it isn't is sustainable or healthy. Put the needs of the people first, and make sure family farms and sustainable agriculture are supported. The Big Ag companies have enough money—they don't need government money too.

COMMENT OF BETTY LOU WALSMAN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 7:51 a.m.

City, State: Indianapolis, IN

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Need support for small farmers, organic farmers, non-GMO producers. Stop subsidies for huge farming agribusinesses and crop insurance for marginal lands.

We Need Reform that benefits the people of the U.S. and not the large corporations with their lobbyists.

COMMENT OF MARIE WALTERS

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 2:39 a.m.

City, State: Oak Grove, OR

Occupation: Financial Services

Comment: Do not cut funding to vital programs such as nutrition, conservation and support for organic and sustainable agriculture. These are too vital to the health of our population!

COMMENT OF PAT WALTKE

Date Submitted: Monday, March 19, 2012, 4:09 p.m.

City, State: Fort Wayne, IN

Occupation: Retired Homemaker

Comment: Something has to be done to prevent hunger in our nation. If children & adults do not have food to live, what else is there for them? Their children cannot study in school and parents are unable to give their family proper nutrition. I don't know what the answer is, but there is a lot of money wasted in our government. Thank you.

COMMENT OF JON WALTON

Date Submitted: Tuesday, March 20, 2012, 11:02 p.m.

City, State: Friendsville, TN

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Field Crops, Livestock, Other

Size: 151–300 acres

Comment: Crop insurance needs to be changed to address the issue of yield switching fraud between farm numbers. Producers participating in this type of fraud are using the names of multiple family members on leases from different farm numbers to show losses and receive indemnities while building yield history on other farm numbers. This fraud creates a distinct disadvantage for producers who report yields accurately.

COMMENT OF GARY WALVATNE

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 16, 2012, 1:11 a.m.

City, State: West Linn, OR

Occupation: Hydrogeologist

Comment: I support the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP). Please continue to include SNAP and TEFAP in future farm policy and the next farm bill.

Thank you,

GARY WALVATNE.

COMMENT OF LISA WALZEM

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:14 p.m.

City, State: Fresno, CA

Occupation: Office Manager

Comment: As a mother, wife and longtime citizen of Central California, one of the most fertile and productive farming areas in the country, I believe we have to change the way we are doing things. We have to make a stand against the large corporate farms and companies that supply them. Large scale farming operations based on chemicals and genetically modified crops are not sustainable and in the long run are doing more harm than good to our environment and economy. We need to follow the lead of the majority of developed nations and ban GMOs and embrace organic farming methods. I endorse the following:

1. The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
2. Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
3. The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
4. Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

COMMENTS OF RUBY WANG

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:56 p.m.

City, State: Ellicott City, MD

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: We need to support organic farming, which is more friendly to our environment, consequently better for our health. While the current bill is always in favor of factory farming, which is number one cause of pollution and global warming, we should limit its practice, should not support it.

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 1:49 p.m.

Comment: Please help organic farming, not factory farming. Organic farming can absorb 40% of green house gas, whereas factory farming is one of the major contributor to global warming. Please help!

COMMENT OF ALBERT WARD

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 12:47 p.m.

City, State: Las Vegas, NV

Occupation: Graphic Designer/Gardener

Comment: Please allow more subsidies for local and organic farmers. We do not want more monopolies on our food (seed). Less money spent on chemicals will also help the environment and our health.

COMMENT OF LINDA WARD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:02 p.m.

City, State: Cottonwood, AZ

Occupation: Medical

Comment: I have an autoimmune disease and many food allergies and chemical sensitivities. I only eat organic vegetables. It is important that I know what I am eating so I don't suffer reactions. So many commercialized produce have chemical pesticides, so I stay away from the produce area of regular grocery stores.

COMMENT OF TERRI WARD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:43 p.m.

City, State: Tualatin, OR

Occupation: CPA

Comment: I am writing to let you know that I support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.
- GMO Labeling

I do not support farm subsidies for any GMO crops and the new proposed subsidized insurance program is full of opportunities for fraud and abuse. These wasteful entitlement programs need to stop.

Our system is broken and the first thing that should happen to fix it is to stop the revolving door between industry and the USDA. No former industry executives should be hired in official positions. Officials need to be objective and independent. The Iron Triangle and the revolving door are rife with corruption. You need only look at other industries such as finance and accounting to understand that objectivity and independence can and should be the standard.

The health of U.S. citizens is at risk and giant agri-corps contribute significantly to the problem. We need to fund organic research and support organic farmers as well as educate the public about the risks chemicals and pesticides pose to our health and the environment. There is plenty of good science out there to prove my point if you look outside the studies funded by industry.

Please act to save our health, soil and environment.

COMMENT OF GERARD WARDELL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:14 p.m.

City, State: Great Falls, VA

Occupation: Regulatory Consultant

Comment: As a regular consumer of Organic Produce, I think it is about time the USA got serious about protecting organic farmers and their families. Factory farms feed a lot more people but that does not mean they should determine **All** Agricultural Policies of the U.S. I urge you to seriously consider re-writing the next farm bill to make it more friendly to the organic industry so all citizens of the U.S. have a choice.

COMMENT OF NICHOLAS WARE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:50 p.m.

City, State: Los Angeles, CA

Occupation: Materials Engineering Student

Comment: We are, literally, what we eat and I want my country to represent the value of true food and upward mobility. We each as an individual have the responsibility to step toward this goal or ignore it. Please, help this country grow in a way that will sustain us as a people.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF JASON WARFIELD

Date Submitted: Tuesday, March 20, 2012, 10:11 a.m.

City, State: Abilene, TX

Occupation: Researcher

Comment: Anything which deals with carbon credits should be struck from the bill. Also all GMO needs to be labeled and all side effects listed. GMO has been proven very dangerous and should not even be in the market. Also, raw milk and real organic farms, and individual gardens should be highlighted and re-enforced as legal for producing, sale to the public, and consumption.

COMMENT OF DR. CAROLE A. WARNER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:46 p.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Physician

Comment: As a Naturopathic physician, I see the people who are the dietary and nutritional “canaries in the coal mine;” those who have strong negative impacts to their health as a consequence of their exposure to GMO produce and the resultant high levels of pesticides and herbicides used on them. In addition, these foods have inferior levels of nutrition because the soils have been so seriously depleted of minerals and the microflora that works with plants roots synergistically to extract nutrients from the soil have been wiped out and pathological strains have replaced them. I see patients with obesity and the range of serious chronic illnesses that result from consuming food that is truly toxic to health yet is the vast majority of “food” being produced by our farming practices in this country. This is making ill and killing literally millions of Americans every year, yet we have yet to reform our nation’s agricultural practices to address this incredibly serious issue. We have probably spent trillions of dollars and been at war for 10 years as a result of an attack that destroyed two buildings and killed a few thousand people, yet we sit back and so nothing of substance to address the horrible state of health and deaths of millions of Americans every year! This is either a tragic oversight on the part of our elected officials or an unethical and outright treasonous derelict of duty on their part. Addressing this travesty rapidly and with real reform will better this nation on so many fronts. It will dramatically improve our nation’s health, dramatically improve our land’s health by implementing practices that don’t degrade and pollute our soil and water, and as a byproduct be a huge financial boon to the country in the form of dramatically decreased healthcare costs, *etc.* Please, urgently take on real reform of our agricultural practices this year. Our nation’s health depends on it.

Sincerely,

DR. CAROLE A. WARNER.

COMMENT OF SARA WARNER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:00 p.m.

City, State: Grand Ridge, FL

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Livestock

Size: 50–150 acres

Comment: We need to promote health in our farms and products, not cater to lobbyists. If we don’t pay more attention to a healthy environment and healthy production of food, we can never get the country out of the health care crisis.

COMMENT OF TIM WARNER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:41 a.m.

City, State: Los Angeles, CA

Occupation: TV Editor

Comment: Americans want safe, healthy, whole foods. Agribusiness giants like Monsanto are using humans as guinea pigs in their genetically modified food experiment and I want no part of it. Please protect small farmers and consumers and stop cozying up to corruption and lies.

COMMENT OF SHEREE WARNER NYREN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:57 p.m.

City, State: Fairbanks, AK

Occupation: Body Worker

Comment: The health of America health of Americans, physically and mentally. Processed foods and modified food produced by big AG and corporations **Do Not** make healthy bodies or minds. An over-burdened health care system does not support a strong economic America and is bringing it down.

COMMENT OF BESS WARREN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:48 p.m.

City, State: Germantown, TN

Occupation: Mother

Comment: I am very concerned about the direction farming is moving in the United States. I think we need to protect small farmers and support organic, traditional farming methods over chemically mass producing foods that make us ill.

COMMENTS OF BRANDI WARREN

Date Submitted: Friday, March 16, 2012, 10:44 a.m.

City, State: Brooks, KY

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Poultry/poultry products, Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: No more genetically modified foods without decades of research and data. No more factory farms! No more growth hormones and overused antibiotics.

The people are demanding food that won't kill us! Farming methods that are sustainable. The world can be fed without buying one new seed every year. Cut ties with Monsanto and stop cow-toeing to them!

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 2:35 p.m.

Comment: We need a better farm bill to put the future of our food into the hands of the people, not biotechnology labs. There are a plethora of fixes from guaranteeing funds for beginning farmer and rancher programs, ensuring the safety of our food—No GMO, and protecting the environment while feeding the world. These things can be done, but we must farm in a different way, not in factory barns and feedplots.

COMMENT OF PENNY WARREN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:38 p.m.

City, State: Annapolis, MD

Occupation: Acupuncturist

Comment: Our health is our most important resource, and it depends on the quality of our food. More research shows organically grown food provides far more nutritive value without the harmful toxic chemicals. We, as a nation, depend on the dedication of our organic farmers.

COMMENT OF PETER WARREN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:20 p.m.

City, State: Ashland, OR

Occupation: Software Developer

Comment: As a voter, a sustainable, healthy, environmentally responsible food system is of foremost concern to me. We need to eliminate subsidies for farming practices that ultimately do more harm than good, and we need to encourage practices that invigorate and vitalize the planet, rather than deplete it.

COMMENT OF RUBY WARREN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:35 p.m.

City, State: Asheville, NC
Occupation: Grower of Perennial Food Crops
Comment: We must change our way of growing food as it is making us ill, polluting our water, air and Earth. Remember Rachel Carson and take her message to heart!

COMMENT OF TOMI WARREN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:22 p.m.
City, State: Ridgecrest, CA
Occupation: Registered Nurse
Comment: I find eating food that is organic or grown without pesticides make me feel better and increases my health. Please support this bill as it makes me a healthier person.

COMMENT OF NANCY WARSHAWER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 9:31 a.m.
City, State: Tucson, AZ
Occupation: Clinical Laboratory Scientist
Comment: Healthy Farm Bill, Now!
 Want to save the U.S. billions (trillions?) of dollars? Fix the food system that subsidizes our current diet of "foods" (manufactured food-like substances!), that are making us fatter and increasing a host of diseases, **And Our Health Care Costs!** If we're going to subsidize, how about fresh fruits and vegetables?! Thanks for listening!

COMMENT OF THOMAS WASHBURN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:40 p.m.
City, State: Fernandina Beach, FL
Occupation: Public Health Physician
Comment: As your constituent, I write to urge your votes for strong overhaul of the farm bill.
 We must preserve the SNAP program at the present level to protect the hunger needs of so many people in our nation who are living in poverty.
 We must stop the subsidy program for agribusinesses. They absolutely have no need of government support.
 Please support the full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
 I think we must fully fund conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and make sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
 Please support the implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
 Please vote to maintain the EQIP Organic Initiative.

COMMENTS OF KELLY WASSELL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:46 p.m.
City, State: Kapa'a, HI
Producer/Non-producer: Producer
Type: Vegetables
Size: Less than 50 acres
Comment: *Aloha!*
 Please take a moment to think about where you last meal came from. Know that we could have an entirely sustainable and local food system if we put our money where our mouth is! There are tons of young people raring to farm and create the local food economy, but they need encouragement and help! It is a risky and expensive business to start up no matter how you look at it, but small, sustainable farmers are willing to take that risk to build food security for the communities that they love!
 I am one of them, but money is the main thing that holds me back! Access to land that I can count on being in my possession for 25 years or more is very hard to find. Especially in Hawai'i, there is a huge need to create local, small scale, sustainable agriculture so that everyone can continue to eat in the next 50 years. I believe in that amount of time regular shipping from the mainland will end, so Hawai'i

needs to start now building that local food network so we can care for our *ohana* and *'aina*.

Please support beginning and sustainable farmers in the next farm bill!

Mahalo!

KELLY WASSELL,
Beginning organic farmer in Kaua'i.

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012 9:50 p.m.

Comment: *Aloha* Chairman Lucas, *Mahalo* for the opportunity to submit testimony to the House Committee on Agriculture on the next farm bill. My district representative is being copied on this testimony. I work as a farm hand on an organic vegetable farm and live in Kaua'i, Hawaii, one of the most expensive rural counties in the U.S. So trying to save up for starting my own venture is virtually impossible on \$10 per hour. I am going to need help from somewhere, and considering that the government used billions to bail out large banking institutions, I think we can spend a refreshing amount on the people that are and will supply us with fresh, healthy food in the future! Small and sustainable farmers need help especially in counties where the land prices are sky high because incredibly rich people buy land here and have driven up prices! Kaua'i imports 90% of its food, so food security is very low, and there is an amazing amount of open, flat land that would be great for agriculture, but only partially being used for cattle or GMOs so that rich people can get a tax break! There are so many challenges to farming on an island like this, but I want to do it, and I want to make sure all the hard work I do to improve the land is not squandered by some irrational owner. It is extremely hard to get long term land leases here and I have seen master farmers that have poured their sweat into land be kicked off without due regard to the amazing work they do. Lots of reasons for farmers to own their own land, but so many things stand in the way of that, especially money! So please consider where that next mouthful comes from! Small and sustainable farmers need all the support they can get! I ask that the Committee endorse all of the provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236), including:

- Mandatory funding for Individual Development Accounts at \$5 million per year. This program helps new farmers raise capital to start farm businesses and is tested and proven by organizations like Practical Farmers of Iowa and the California Farmlink.
- Mandatory funding for the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program at \$25 million a year. This program funds essential education for new farmers around the country.
- Authorize a new microloan program, to enable young and beginning farmers to better access FSA loan programs.
- Revise FSA rules to make loan programs more accessible to more young and beginning farmers.
- Reaffirm the existing cost share differential for BFRs within EQIP. Also, reaffirm the advance payment option allowing beginning and socially disadvantaged producers to receive an advance payment for the project's costs for purchasing materials or contracting services, but increase the limit on the advance payment from 30 percent to 50 percent of costs.
- Amend the Farm and Ranch Land Protection Program (FRPP) to make farm viability part of the purpose of the program and to give discretionary authority to the eligible entities that implement the program to give priority to easements with an option to purchase at the agricultural use value, deals that transfer the land to beginning and farmers and ranchers, applicants with farm succession plans, and other similar mechanisms to maintain the affordability of protected land.

These and other provisions within the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act will help new growers succeed and I urge you to include them in the next farm bill.

Sincerely,

KELLY WASSELL.

COMMENT OF BRENT WASSER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:20 a.m.

City, State: Williamstown, MA

Occupation: Higher Education Programming

Comment: With the new farm bill, please support:

- alternative agricultural systems such as organic and biodynamic production

- the production of whole foods, and provide less money to commodity crop production destined for processed foods
- SNAP outreach programs and nutrition education programs
- beginning farmer initiatives and support programs

COMMENT OF PAULA SQUIRE WATERMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:45 p.m.

City, State: Rockville, MD

Comment: I am a consumer who watches very closely what I put in my body. Big agribusiness could care less about me and my needs. Their focus is on the bottom line and **Not** my health.

COMMENT OF JULIA WATERS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:30 p.m.

City, State: Oakland, CA

Occupation: Nutrition Student

Comment: I would like to see increased subsidies for small farmers and organic farmers in order to encourage the production of healthier foods near urban areas. In light of the obesity crisis, subsidizing big corn for cattle feed and HFCS doesn't make sense. We need to lose weight, and that starts with switching our financial support to the kinds of food commodities that are health promoting. Please take a stand before the poor health of our nation determines our future. Prevention is **Always** cheaper than interventions later on. Thank you.

COMMENT OF KRISTINE WATERS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 10:31 a.m.

City, State: Indian Wells, CA

Occupation: Teacher, Environmental Advocate

Comment: Support individual farmers who farm sustainably and organically with zero or minimal pesticide use. Do not support Monsanto or any organization that farms using monoculture or GMO's.

COMMENT OF CARL WATKINS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:57 p.m.

City, State: Eugene, OR

Occupation: EV Battery Distribution

Comment: Protect Organic Farms, keep organic regulations strict and strong. Label all GMO products. Stop banking harassment. End subsidies for wealthy farmers.

COMMENT OF PAUL WATKINS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:03 p.m.

City, State: Longview, TX

Occupation: Home Health

Comment: The USDA has destroyed family farms in this country. support self sustaining family farming, not monolithic corporate agribusiness, if a single family owns a massive one crop corporate farm with excessive use of petroleum based fertilizers, that does not make it a family farm. **Stop Destroying Agriculture In America.** If you need clarification, e-mail me. If you are paid lackeys of corporate masters, ignore this. Americans are not stupid, and we vote.

COMMENT OF BRUCE WATSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:19 p.m.

City, State: Raleigh, NC

Occupation: Film Colorist/Finisher

Comment: The future of agriculture comes down to sustainability. And our current status quo is anything but sustainable. So, shift away from big ag. Shift instead toward little ag and support small organic farms.

Redirect the current unnecessary subsidies of "big ag" toward small farms that practice sustainable agriculture. In particular, establish farm policy that establishes organic practices, teaches these practices, and subsidizes small farmers who shift to these practices.

We have to do this. It's not a choice. The cost of fossil fuel is only going to rise. And as fossil fuels go, so go the fertilizers, pesticides, and herbicides.

But this is also a public health issue. The more we learn about the fertilizers, pesticides, and herbicides in the food supply, the more we learn that even very low levels have bad public health outcomes, especially for the farmers and field workers.

COMMENT OF JAN WATSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:06 p.m.

City, State: Hakalau, HI

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Specialty Crops

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Please consider and encourage small sustainable no spray farming. The food we eat is essential to our bodies and mind. The land that gives us our food is needing the same attention. Do not give into money and mass production of food, that is lacking in nutrition and diminishes the land. This is not rocket science but it is the survival of our planet and the health of all that inhabit her. *Mahalo*.

COMMENT OF JERI WATSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:25 p.m.

City, State: La Grande, OR

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: It is time to support sustainable practices that are healthy for people and the Earth. People are clamoring for safer food. Let Oregon be a leader in this regard. Keep supporting positive change, not large corporate food and damn the consequences. Portlandia is a laughable extreme, but people are caring more and more about good local food.

Please help support it. Fund positive change!

COMMENT OF JULIE WATSON

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 10:20 p.m.

City, State: Greensboro, NC

Occupation: Small Business Owner

Comment: As a small business owner, I rely on the organic products that I can find locally. Please take new measure to help grow the local organic markets, instead of hinder them. Big Ag is the cause of many of the issues in this country. Please focus the farm bill away from Big Ag and towards a more sustainable way to farm.

COMMENT OF MARILYN WATSON

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 2:21 p.m.

City, State: Hartford, CT

Occupation: Retired

Comment: First of all, this country is already in the ground; people in Congress do not care about people in the country. This is where God steps in and will allow the people to take over this country—watch and see! I don't receive SNAP benefits because they messed up on my paperwork I sent them. But if you take them away there will be people standing outside of the White House angry! Do not take away the SNAP for the people that need it!

COMMENT OF PAUL WATSON

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 16, 2012, 2:13 p.m.

City, State: Anchorage, AK

Occupation: Food Stamp Outreach Coordinator—AFC

Comment: In 2 years of visiting villages and rural communities in Alaska, I've witnessed no let up in "food anxiety" due to rising fuel prices, housing and medical costs, and lack of jobs and income. I urge Don Young and members of the House Agriculture Committee to reject cuts in these programs for Alaska's poor!

COMMENT OF PHIL WATSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:25 p.m.

City, State: Langley, WA

Occupation: Retired Advertising Exec.

Comment: My wife I buy organic products as much as possible even though we pay more for it. We are voting with our dollars to support sustainable and ecologically friendly agriculture. Large commercial mono-culture farming is raping the land, polluting our waterways and turning farmland into desert by killing the soil. We are also buying organic to maintain our health to reduce our contribution to healthcare costs. We urge to protect the viability of organic farming in this country.

COMMENT OF ANN WATTERS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:29 p.m.

City, State: Salem, OR

Occupation: Health Care

Comment: End food subsidies. Label GMO food. Do not allow **Monsanto** to run agriculture. Decisions. We will have a nation of sick people and dead people. No ethanol subsidies.

COMMENT OF NANCY WATTS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:09 p.m.

City, State: San Luis Obispo, CA

Occupation: Retired English Teacher, Raised on Farms

Comment: Bad ideas that Congress is considering: cutting funding to vital programs such as nutrition, conservation and cutting support for organic and sustainable agriculture . . .

COMMENT OF ANN WAUGH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:31 p.m.

City, State: Boring, OR

Occupation: Self-Employed

Comment: The old farm bill is unfair to the smaller farms. Please level the field and stop giving all the selling and marketing power to the big agricultural communities. We need to sustain all local and small farms to ensure free access to fresh, healthy, unprocessed junk foods.

COMMENT OF NATHAN WAY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:07 p.m.

City, State: Knoxville, TN

Occupation: Doctor

Comment: I see a need to increase utilization of local produce and reduce subsidies to transportation of commodity produce farmed by large corporations.

COMMENT OF CATHY WAYMIRE ROOKS

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 11:10 p.m.

City, State: Langley, WA

Occupation: Garden Designer and Landscape Contractor

Comment: We are going the wrong direction with huge agribusiness farms. Our food isn't healthy or sustainable, current farming practices are ruining the soil, and GMOs threatens the very livelihood of much of the world's population. Please put the health of the planet ahead of big business' quest for profit and instead help support our small local producers.

COMMENT OF LYNN WEATHERSBY

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 6:17 a.m.

City, State: Azle, AR

Occupation: Stay-at-Home Housewife and Mother

Comment: I am very concerned about what my children are ingesting. I understand that your action to improve and make safe the country's food supply may result in higher prices. This is a trade-off I'm willing to make to ensure the food my children eat is healthy, safe and nutritious.

Sincerely,

LYNN WEATHERSBY.

COMMENT OF CAT WEATHERUP

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:28 p.m.

City, State: Berkeley, CA

Occupation: Art Director

Comment: With Autism 1,000-fold more prevalent than it was only decades ago, we need to **Stop** poisoning our food supply with pesticides. Many of us would rather have an insect in our veggies over poison. If we continue to poison our land, water, and food we can only expect illness to worsen. Please stop using Americans as unwitting lab rats for genetically modified foods and pesticides, so that big business can profit. Label them! Better yet, stop using them until long-term studies prove them innocuous. I don't care what Monsanto wants. We are not guinea pigs and it is unconscionable for this country to treat us as such!

COMMENT OF ANDREW WEAVER

Date Submitted: Friday, March 16, 2012, 2:57 p.m.

City, State: Castaic, CA

Occupation: Unemployed

Comment: You have an obligation to insure that all families and individuals receive the proper healthy meals that are required in order to survive. Excluding chemical based foods with heavy chemicals that will end up killing millions of Americans.

COMMENT OF BECCA WEAVER

Date Submitted: Monday, May 14, 2012, 9:22 a.m.

City, State: Somerville, MA

Occupation: Farm Service Provider

Comment: Dear Committee on Agriculture,

I work with beginning and established farmers every day through my work on Farmland Matching and Beginning Farmer Support in MA. I have noticed firsthand the difference that Federal programs have made in the lives and businesses of local farmers, as well as the regional food system in which we operate. In this light, I urge you to create a farm bill which:

- (1) invests in the next generation of farmers and ranchers—guarantee \$25 million per year in mandatory funding for the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program. We need a national strategy and commitment to support beginning farmer and ranchers entering agriculture. With an aging farm population, now is the time to invest in the future of American agriculture by nurturing new agriculture start-ups.
- (2) protects our natural resources—protect the Conservation Stewardship Program from unfair funding cuts, and improve it by ranking applications solely on their conservation benefits. Farmers count on CSP and other conservation programs to conserve soil for future generations, keep water and air clean, and create habitat for wildlife—all while farming profitably.
- (3) drives innovation for tomorrow's farmers and food entrepreneurs—fund the Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative at \$30 million per year in mandatory funding. Investment in agricultural research is vital to continued productivity and innovation in growing and diverse sectors of American agriculture, such as organic agriculture. And
- (4) creates jobs and spurs economic growth—support programs like the Value-Added Producer Grants Program by guaranteeing \$30 million of mandatory funding per year. VAPG provides seed money to help farmers innovate in agriculture and create jobs while securing a sustainable path to market-based farm profitability.

Thank you for doing your best to make this happen in order to create a vibrant agricultural and food system for every Farmer and consumer in America.

Sincerely,

BECCA WEAVER.

COMMENT OF DAVID WEAVER

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 08, 2012, 12:11 p.m.

City, State: Lubbock, TX

Occupation: CEO, South Plains Food Bank

Comment: I work with the South Plains Food Bank. Since 2008, we have seen a dramatic increase the number of families receiving food assistance from us. Last year's drought made the situation worse for citizens of our rural communities.

Local donors have stepped up to help us meet the increased needs of our community. But even with increased support we are being overwhelmed. As the economy improves, I expect to see a decrease in the number of families we assist. However, in the meantime, families throughout the South Plains are looking to the food bank and our network of churches and non-profits for food assistance.

We need a strong farm bill to make sure that struggling families can put food on the table. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP. Our community cannot afford cuts to these programs.

COMMENT OF GENE WEBB

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:59 p.m.

City, State: San Rafael, CA

Comment: I'm informed enough to be a vegan who buys only organic. U.S.D.A. F.D.A. Congress, Supreme Court, President, have the credibility of starving devils. Wish you luck Lynn. *Forks over Knives*.

COMMENT OF PATRICIA WEBB

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:53 a.m.

City, State: State College, PA

Occupation: Health Educator

Comment: I am a nurse—farming practices are public health issues. Human health depends fundamentally on the safety and quality of what we eat. Mass produced, engineered, and heavily processed foods shipped between countries and across oceans is not only unhealthy for people, it is not sustainable for economies or habitats.

Please educate yourself about local/regional farming and its benefits for human & environmental health. Smaller scale regional farming is the most responsible and sustainable path for benefiting quality of life & health on the planet.

COMMENT OF JEFF WEBSTER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:57 a.m.

City, State: Harmony, MN

Comment: Hi,

It is high time to clean up USDA, FDA and our ag schools all who work for Ag Industry. Not at all protecting the very people that pay their salary. Yours too. The present system is corrupt and awful to say the least.

I want my tax dollars helping out farmers who produce food for people not wasting limited natural resources on crap like ethanol.

JEFF WEBSTER,
Harmony, MN.

COMMENT OF KEVIN WEBSTER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 11:59 a.m.

City, State: Abilene, TX

Occupation: Self-Employed

Comment: Dear Sir,

While I understand that the lion's share of your focus in addressing the farm bill is to lookout for the many large agricultural interests of our district, I ask that you please not forget the citizenry, whom you are actually supposed to be representing. Please do not continue to fall for the erroneous logic of bigger is better, especially in this category of our life sustaining food supply. Contrary to other types of mass production, "Better" in this case, must instead be determined by the health supporting quality of the food, rather than the volume. We can eat less if it is rich in nutrients, but no amount of eating cardboard will ever serve the intended purpose adequately. The higher the quality of the food, the greater the health of the eater, and less that individual will need to depend on the government for helping them deal with poor health. If you point the tax dollars the correct direction, you won't need more tax dollars elsewhere to deal with the consequences of not doing so, as is the case with the current subsidization. Small farmers are the ones that need the subsidies, and particularly those committing to the higher standards of producing

nutrient rich, high quality foods, *i.e.*, Organic Farming that is actually self-sustaining as it contributes back to nature what it takes, rather than depleting it of all that is truly given by nature. Man made artificial substitutes will always come with consequences, and more often than not, they are grave and far more expensive, leaving ruin in their wake, and ultimately hurrying us to our graves. Please consider your own life and that of your loved ones, and the quality of life you desire to provide for them, and then offer the same opportunity to your constituents. Support increasing our access to nutritious whole foods, free from contamination by man made products and thus free from the devastating consequences to our health and quality of life. Food shortage is not the genuine concern, rather it is food quality. Please open your eyes to the true science and future, rather than the for-profit driven manipulations of facts you are no doubt perpetually bombarded with by the larger business interests. Please quit helping them maim and kill us for the sake of their profits. Don't forget who you are really accountable to, in this life and the next.

Sincerely, one of your supporters to date,

KEVIN WEBSTER.

COMMENT OF SHANNON WECKMAN

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 7:51 p.m.

City, State: Felton, CA

Occupation: Retired/Disabled

Comment: We need wholesome organic food, **Not** government subsidized unhealthy food such as high fructose corn syrup and GMO foods. Our health depends on good quality food and who would not want that.

COMMENT OF JENNIFER WEEDEN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:34 p.m.

City, State: Upton, MA

Occupation: Mom, Wife, Elementary School Administrator

Comment: I can't think of any more important issue right now than the support for healthy, sustainable agricultural practices and support for the viability of small-scale (family!) farming. Allowing big agribusiness to not only destroy our planet with carcinogenic and otherwise harmful chemicals but also to actively work to destroy small-scale farming is to allow the destruction of our planet and of a very American way of life. Now is the time to support organic farming, small-scale farming, and broad policies that protect the health of our people and of our planet.

COMMENT OF DARRELL WEEMS

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 7:55 p.m.

City, State: Adel, IA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Field Crops, Livestock

Size: 151-300 acres

Comment: In regard to the 2012 Farm Bill:

- (1) Imperative to pass a new farm bill before elections
- (2) Must contain strong conservation title even while reducing budget exposure to stop uncontrolled U.S. Gov't spending and debt. Must think long term to protect our Ag. production resources far into the future.
- (3) Needs to maintain a conservation compliance strategy with in a strong crop insurance program, and that can be done without jeopardizing all farmer access to crop insurance. *i.e.*,: amount of subsidization based on conservation practiced (\$'s or %) or similar
- (4) Needs a strong new or young farmer component. Extremely hard, almost impossible for a new young farmer to gain land access, to compete with the big guys.

COMMENT OF PATRICIA WEEMS

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 4:38 p.m.

City, State: Chatsworth, CA

Occupation: Sales Marketing

Comment: I'm in the same situation as other seniors, but wound up destitute due to a personal injury when hit by an uninsured driver, lost job had to sell car and possessions to survive since I was an independent contractor . . . still looking for

work, trying to set up internet consulting business in addition . . . really difficult . . . I'd like to be able get a small loan to start my business Chores-on Call . . . highly in demand in my area . . . would like to be able to hire seniors only to help get them out of destitution . . . it's a horrible place to be. What the government needs to do is to allot small business start up loans for seniors and let us start a network of seniors who are capable of working and want to . . . we can help each other. I will be homeless if something doesn't click soon. The private sector could get involved, especially wealthy corporations who could get tax breaks and let us pay the loans back with reasonable monthly payments . . . there is a wealth of knowledge and capability among many seniors . . . [Redacted] Google voice if responses are required.

COMMENT OF TYSON WEEMS

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 4:57 p.m.

City, State: Portland, ME

Occupation: Registered Dietitian/Public Health Educator

Comment: The farm bill can promote public health better by reducing subsidies for corn and soy and increasing them for other vegetables. In general, it should reflect public health interest rather than the interests of large agricultural and chemical companies, many of which run counter to improving Americans' diets and associated health.

COMMENT OF MELANIE WEHMEYER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:58 a.m.

City, State: Boerne, TX

Comment: Organic farming is the **Only** way **Anyone** should be farming. There must not even be an alternate way. The health of the people of this United States depends on it! GMO's must be stopped!

COMMENT OF EDNA WEIGEL

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 9:08 a.m.

City, State: Bisbee, AZ

Occupation: Writer

Comment: Please make sure the farm bill emphasizes sustainability rather than subsidizing industrial ag. Food stamps to serve as a safety net for those most in need and nutrition programs to fight the health-care costs of obesity are important.

COMMENT OF DONNA WEILER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:47 a.m.

City, State: Huntingdon Valley, PA

Occupation: Homemaker

Comment: Please stop the support for meat, dairy, eggs, poultry, soy and corn. We need to support those farmers growing healthful foods: fruits & vegetables.

COMMENT OF LARRY WEINBERG

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 9:50 a.m.

City, State: East Meadow, NY

Occupation: Massage Therapist/Yoga Instructor/Colon Hydrotherapist

Comment: Please don't cut spending on research for organic farming or support for beginning Farmers. We need to keep organics alive in order to keep this planet alive. The chemicals are destroying our bodies, our health and the health of the entire planet. Please help.

COMMENT OF LESLIE WEINBERG

Date Submitted: Friday, April 27, 2012, 8:49 a.m.

City, State: Stamford, CT

Occupation: Unemployed Advocate

Comment: We must continue to properly budget the nutrition programs, such as SNAP, WIC, and TEFAP. In these difficult times, more people now depend on Food Banks, Pantries, and Soup Kitchens. I thank you for your support of these programs, and other aspects of the Safety Net as well.

LESLIE WEINBERG.

COMMENT OF MARGARET WEINER

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 16, 2012, 3:19 p.m.

City, State: Urbandale, IA

Occupation: Retired

Comment:

- America needs a farm bill that makes healthy food widely available to all Americans—including schoolchildren! I urge you to vote for a bill that provides flexibility for states to use existing food procurement programs to purchase fresh, healthy food from local farmers and ranchers.
- And maybe most importantly of all, for the future of our state and all who live here, pass a farm bill that protects our natural resources—protect the Conservation Stewardship Program from unfair funding cuts, and improve it by ranking applications solely on their conservation benefits. Farmers count on CSP and other conservation programs to conserve soil for future generations, keep water and air clean, and create habitat for wildlife—all while farming profitably.
- I also want to see legislation that invests in the next generation of farmers and ranchers—guarantee \$25 million per year in mandatory funding for the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program. We need a national strategy and commitment to support beginning farmer and ranchers entering agriculture. Our farm population is aging and now is the time to nurture new agriculture start-ups.
- I also urge you to support a farm bill that funds the Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative at \$30 million per year in mandatory funding. Investment in agricultural research is vital to continued productivity and innovation in growing and diverse sectors of American agriculture, such as organic agriculture.

COMMENT OF CAROL WEINGEIST

Date Submitted: Friday, March 16, 2012, 8:40 a.m.

City, State: Hanover, NH

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Please label all food that are GMO. Please subsidize food for the hungry; and make it healthy food that has labels to identify content. Do not give the hungry junk food.

COMMENT OF SHARYL WEINSHILBOUM

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:37 p.m.

City, State: Pacifica, CA

Occupation: Preschool Teacher

Comment: I am a single mother with three children, a preschool teacher, who is trying to live on a salary of less than \$2,000.00 a month in the San Francisco peninsula. The children's father has paid no child support in 2012. Without the help of SNAP benefits, only about \$350.00 a month, and Second Harvest food bank I would not be able to afford to feed my family. Please help people like me by keeping funding strong for food programs.

COMMENT OF CHRIS WEINTROB

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:56 a.m.

City, State: Bethesda, MD

Occupation: Nutrition Counselor

Comment: The healthcare crisis in America, which includes rising cases of obesity, type 2 diabetes, heart disease, Alzheimer's, and certain cancers, could be resolved with one simple solution: meaningful subsidies to fruit and vegetable growers. It's no coincidence that the most unhealthy, cheap foods that are causing these modern diseases are made with products that are heavily subsidized by the government. Countless times I hear people say, "I can't afford to eat healthy . . ." What kind of country are we where our policies make our citizens sick and keep them sick. Please do the right thing by looking out for the interests of the consumer rather than the interests of big food companies. It really is a simple solution and it's the right, decent, humane thing to do.

As the committee considers the 2012 Food and Farm Bill, I urge you to:

- Support our fight against hunger by maintaining and strengthening critical nutrition programs in this time of unprecedented need. We must not solve our

budget problems on the backs of those experiencing food insecurity, including our most vulnerable—our children, the elderly, and the disabled;

- Provide an even “plowing” field by fully funding programs that support beginning and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, organic farming, regional farm and food economies, and rural development. We need more farmers and ranchers, more sustainable food production, and more economic opportunity in our food system;
- Support family farmers that really need help, not the biggest farms that don’t: End subsidies (aka direct payments and countercyclical commodity programs), and replace them with loophole-free agriculture risk coverage. Additionally, implement a cap on crop insurance premium subsidies;
- Ensure that limited conservation funding maximizes lasting environmental benefits: Limit funds to Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) for animal waste management infrastructure by eliminating the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) Livestock Set-aside and protect the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) from disproportionate cuts, and improve it by ranking applications solely on their conservation benefits.

COMMENT OF ANNA WEISBERG

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 2:50 p.m.

City, State: Philadelphia, PA

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: We need a farm bill that encourages new farmers to enter the industry, small family farmers to stay in the industry. Stop subsidies to the largest producers, and instead provide grants and seed money to new and small growers.

We need a farm bill that makes healthy food available to all people by allowing those with benefits to use them at farmers markets, among other programs.

The farm bill should support farms that conserve resources and do not degrade the surrounding environment or soil. Please protect the Conservation Stewardship Program from funding cuts.

Last, we need a farm bill that invests in research and innovation. Please fund the Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative at \$30 million per year in mandatory funding.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF JEAN WEISMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:52 a.m.

City, State: Brooklyn, NY

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I urge you to stop subsidizing big farms that are making huge profits. You should support small farms that are providing organic fruits and vegetables to school children. We need more food stamps and farmers’ markets.

JEAN WEISMAN

COMMENT OF CHARLIE WEISS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:12 p.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Research Consultant

Comment: The farm policy of this country is based on a reality between 50 and 100 years old. It would seem worthwhile to update that policy, which now seems to enrich a few at the expense of . . . everyone else. Thanks.

COMMENT OF GABRIEL WEISS

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:09 a.m.

City, State: East Orland, ME

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Greenhouse/nursery, Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: We have to invest in the future. Environmental protection and consumer protection are indivisible with long term economic sustainability. We need to encourage alternative methods of farming and empower localized food systems or we risk unacceptable vulnerability to our food security and national security. Please give us a farm bill that is for the people and the planet. Thank you.

COMMENT OF GREGG WEISS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:51 p.m.

City, State: Savannah, GA

Occupation: Musician

Comment: It's a very simple thing really. Just like we always knew about smoking, even before the facts were printed, it has been clear from the very beginning that gross agricultural concerns and all sorts of additive based food products are intrinsically unhealthy.

As a person reliant on the commercial agricultural business I find it imperative to search out foods grown with quality **And Care.**

It is time we start taking account of almost lost practices and encourage local supply and production chains, and how to exploit them in our current state of development.

Please help keep people above profits. As legislators you are our only hope.

COMMENT OF RIKE WEISS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:22 p.m.

City, State: Honolulu, HI

Occupation: Healthcare Professional

Comment: Hawai'i imports 90 percent of its food. A policy that favors small farmers (over Monsanto and other agribusiness) would contribute to healthier foods for all. Haven't we learned that mono-crops don't work (only for stockholders, only for so long).

COMMENT OF NANCY WEISS-FRIED

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:54 p.m.

City, State: Cranston, RI

Occupation: Landscape Designer

Comment: As a consumer with children and grandchildren I am concerned about the health of our food supply and also about the future of agriculture in the U.S. Nowhere does it seem that agribusiness is concerned about good nutrition and good, sustainable farming practices. Congress should be encouraging small farmers more than the mega farm businesses.

COMMENT OF KERRI WELCH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:47 p.m.

City, State: White Plains, NY

Occupation: Early Childhood Adjunct

Comment: Please make the needed changes on the farm bill to help the little organic farmers, have safer, healthier food and less illnesses and deaths because of contaminated food. Please also realize that the majority of Americans want to know and need to know exactly what is in their food, even if it is a GMO or ingredients from another country such as China. My beloved miniature dachshund almost died in 2007 because of the unlisted Chinese ingredient melamine in her USA made dog food. Her and I survived 9/11 together living in downtown Manhattan, so she is my therapy dog and I do not know what I would do without her. Too many other pets did die in 2007 because of the unlisted ingredient above so you must do something now to make sure that never happens again. I am also a mother of two young boys (one a baby) and I feed them mostly organic food because of all the crap allowed in non-organic food. GMO's were allowed into our food in the 1990's and since then there has been a rise in food allergies, autism and cancer. Makes you think?

COMMENT OF P. WELLAND

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:47 p.m.

City, State: Florence, MA

Occupation: Musician

Comment: Please don't give everything away to big AG. That is neither sustainable, fair, nor democratic. Giant corporations do not need further handouts or a leg up, family farmers do . . . so level the playing field.

Support organic, sustainable production that does not ruin the environment, the water systems, or the soil, as so many industrial farms do.

Don't give the store away to Monsanto, with their unsustainable, pesticide-based products that create super weeds, water, air, and soil pollution nightmares. This is very bad for our children's developing bodies and brains.

- Please do fund programs that support beginning and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, organic farming, regional farm and food economies, and rural development. We need more farmers and ranchers, more sustainable food production, and more economic opportunity in our food system;
- Support family farmers that really need help, not the biggest farms that don't: End subsidies (aka direct payments and countercyclical commodity programs), and replace them with loophole-free agriculture risk coverage. Additionally, implement a cap on crop insurance premium subsidies;
- Ensure that limited conservation funding maximizes lasting environmental benefits: Limit funds to Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) for animal waste management infrastructure by eliminating the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) Livestock Set-aside and protect the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) from disproportionate cuts, and improve it by ranking applications solely on their conservation benefits.

COMMENT OF CARLY WELLINGTON

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 02, 2012, 10:47 a.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Student

Comment: One comment that I would like to bring to your attention is the percentage of farmers that are being represented by their districts; only 1/3 of U.S. House of Representatives members represent fewer than 1,500 farmer in their districts so I would like to see this number improved.

I would also like to see younger farmers involved in agriculture; so increased education would be necessary.

COMMENT OF BARBARA WELLS

Date Submitted: Wednesday, April 18, 2012, 11:19 a.m.

City, State: Claremore, OK

Occupation: Social Worker

Comment: With the cost of fuel and food increasing rapidly, many of our clients are unable to feed their families without assistance. Please support the farm bill and protect the TEFAP and SNAP programs. We may not be able to control the cost of gasoline and other energy sources, but, we should try to make sure, no person in this country goes hungry.

COMMENT OF COLLIN WELLS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:21 p.m.

City, State: Richardson, TX

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Specialty Crops

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Things need to change in America and fast. Cancers, mental and behavior related illnesses, obesity, and other serious health issues are on the rise because of the way Americans eat and are fed. Unfortunately many believe that the government has their best interests in mind when it comes to food and no one would intentionally be poisoning the population. That is obviously not true with the continuous intrusions into what's "right *versus* wrong" by big agricultural firms who genetically modify and treat our food without any long-term research on the health risks.

Please help us change things.

Regards,

COLLIN WELLS.

COMMENT OF DAWN ANNE WELLS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:59 p.m.

City, State: Union Mills, IN

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Please consider your decisions in light of the fact that every single person **Needs** healthful food. Anything you do to encourage food produced with GMO and/or non-sustainable agricultural practices is a blow to the health of people everywhere (not just in the U.S.A.). It affect not only the food produced, but also the environment. Please think before you act.

1485

COMMENT OF JIM WELLS

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 2:59 a.m.

City, State: Medford, OR

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Fruits

Size: 50–150 acres

Comment: As I prepared to figure out how to compose the most poignant, eloquent, comprehensive, and entrenched barrier-piercing essay that might even stand a chance of my comments getting even a semblance of your serious attention despite the incredibly thick insulation that your agricultural paradigm covers you with, the following link appeared in my inbox. Its timeliness and spot-on reflection of the basis of my advocacy for fundamental reform of Federal agricultural policy begs for it to be my choice of comment at this time. For, if you don't understand and appreciate it, there is not a snowball's chance in hell that you would understand nor appreciate any of thousands of specific comments I could have made. And if you somehow miraculously DO understand or appreciate it, then you don't need my specific comments, because you will be capable yourself of designing new legislative direction and language that could not help but be vast improvements many orders of magnitude over past and currently in force farm bills.

The link to the essay I incorporate into this comment as its core now follows: http://www.tomdispatch.com/post/175538/tomgram/#37;3A_ernest_callen_bach%2C_last_words_to_an_america_in_decline/.*

COMMENT OF RACHEL WELLS

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 5:09 a.m.

City, State: Brooklyn, NY

Occupation: Artist, Art Teacher and Child Care Specialist

Comment: Family farms are as American as apple pie, the Declaration of Independence, our right to vote and public education. I want to eat food that is grown in my country and if possible in my state. Stop the loss of family farms to development. Help our farmers.

COMMENT OF RUTH WELLS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:28 p.m.

City, State: San Francisco, CA

Occupation: Administrative Professional

Comment: I strongly urge the Committee to use this opportunity to direct the nation's farm policy toward organic and sustainable farming methods. It is critical that small family farms be supported and that subsidies to industrial producers end.

COMMENT OF SHANNON WELLS

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:13 p.m.

City, State: Florence, AL

Occupation: Photographer

Comment: I support organic farming and the elimination of harmful chemicals to our land and foods, needed funding for farmers growing organic and healthy alternatives in foods, improving the lives of the citizens of Alabama through a healthier organic choice in our food products.

SHANNON WELLS.

COMMENT OF MARK WELSH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:56 p.m.

City, State: Newark, OH

Occupation: Educator

Comment: We need a realistic farm bill that will help provide safe and wholesome foods for the American Public and for those around the world who benefit from America's production. Don't forget about our organic farmers. Thank you for your consideration.

*The information referred to is retained in Committee file.

COMMENT OF SJON WELTERS

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:47 p.m.

City, State: Cabot, VT

Occupation: General Manager of an Organic Food Processor

Comment: We need fairness and a level playing field when it comes to agriculture. Corporations and large farms have for too long determined policy at the expense of small family farms. We also need to wean ourselves off chemical farming and stimulate organic farming to save our environment for those who will farm the fields when we've passed on.

Thank you for considering these thoughts.

COMMENT OF SILVIA WEND

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:31 p.m.

City, State: Chestnut Ridge, NY

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: Please ban Monsanto's GMO's and immoral ways to deal with farmers, plants and animals. Treat the land and animals in natural ways. No toxic substances to fertilize or kill plagues, research better ways to do that! They certainly exist already (see biodynamic agriculture). Don't poison nature, water and man in any way.

COMMENT OF EDWIN WENSMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:30 a.m.

City, State: White Bear Lake, MN

Occupation: Retired Teacher

Comment: Please insure that the new farm bill advances what should be the goal of such legislation: to nutritionally improve the American diet, to aid owners of individually owned and operated farms rather than corporate farms, and to insure that our export policy does not undermine the ability of receiving nations to sustain their own agricultural infrastructure and diet.

COMMENT OF REBECCA WENTWORTH

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:14 p.m.

City, State: Blue Hill, ME

Occupation: Retired

Comment: If you really want to improve the economy and the political system get speculation out of agriculture. Remember the only thing that produces real money from nothing is a seed. Every other transaction is a zero sum game.

COMMENT OF FREDERICK WENZLAFF

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:45 p.m.

City, State: Los Angeles, CA

Occupation: Sales

Comment: I want an Organic Farm Bill! GMO's are dangerous and Monsanto does not have anyone's best interest in mind except their own. Don't be fooled. See the studies that document the destructive nature of Monsanto's GMO vegetable seeds. Please help!

Thanks,

FRED.

COMMENT OF SYLVIA WERMES

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:55 a.m.

City, State: Scottsdale, AZ

Occupation: Retired BSN

Comment: Let's get back to America growing and providing food for our people. There is so much waste in government that not providing for families in need because they don't have a job is not what our country is about—let's take care of each other and help provide for those less fortunate.

COMMENT OF ANGELA WERNEKE

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 1:15 p.m.

City, State: Santa Fe, NM

Occupation: Design Consultant

Comment: The farm bill is an opportunity to support healthy, local, sustainable economy, which is the foundation of any true economic recovery. Next to water, food is the most basic element of life. Let's support life by supporting local farm economies, thereby providing a healthy, natural, abundant food supply for their local communities.

COMMENT OF CHARLES WESLEY

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 8:24 p.m.

City, State: New York, NY

Occupation: Legal Clerk

Comment: Just looking at Americans, one can see that there is something wrong with our agriculture system and our priorities. Please make some meaningful change by supporting an Organic Farm Bill.

COMMENT OF JANETTE WESLEY

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 7:24 a.m.

City, State: Greenville, SC

Occupation: Nonprofit Farmer's Market Manager, Earth Market Greenville

Comment: As the committee considers the 2012 Food and Farm Bill, I urge you to:

- Support our fight against hunger by maintaining and strengthening critical nutrition programs in this time of unprecedented need. We must not solve our budget problems on the backs of those experiencing food insecurity, including our most vulnerable—our children, the elderly, and the disabled;
- Provide an even “plowing” field by fully funding programs that support beginning and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, organic farming, regional farm and food economies, and rural development. We need more farmers and ranchers, more sustainable food production, and more economic opportunity in our food system;
- Support family farmers that really need help, not the biggest farms that don't: End subsidies (aka direct payments and countercyclical commodity programs), and replace them with loophole-free agriculture risk coverage. Additionally, implement a cap on crop insurance premium subsidies;
- Ensure that limited conservation funding maximizes lasting environmental benefits: Limit funds to Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) for animal waste management infrastructure by eliminating the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) Livestock Set-aside and protect the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) from disproportionate cuts, and improve it by ranking applications solely on their conservation benefits.
- Encourage sustainable farming methods and breeds of animals that are sustainable.

Please review the future of the “Cornish Cross” chicken, as to it's breeding methods will be extinct in 50 years and will provide a very large hole in poultry needs of the consumer. Please encourage other breeds of poultry rather than this one.

COMMENT OF ERIC WEST

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:34 p.m.

City, State: Port Orange, FL

Occupation: Captain

Comment: With the population of the world doubling in only a few decades, we need every bit of farmland taken care of and not poisoned and depleted. We need to make sure we have enough to feed our population without destroying the planet and we need to stop subsidizing Big Agriculture.

COMMENT OF HEIDI WEST

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:02 p.m.

City, State: Elkton, KY

Occupation: Nurse Aide

Comment: As it always has been, farmers have been the core to every aspect of our food supply. I do not agree with cutting funds from the organic farmers because of the quality of the food, farmers should not have to be forced and/or coerced into their farms being turned into farms where it is sprayed with chemicals that can and

has harmed individuals. It is vital that the funds not be cut or reduced because families and individuals long for organic foods and cannot stand the fact the food supply is limited due to the fact the majority of the foods are tainted with deadly sprays. Please really consider this . . . It is a matter of health for everyone. Thank you.

COMMENT OF NORMAN WEST

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:00 p.m.

City, State: Lake Ronkonkoma, NY

Occupation: Professor of History

Comment: It is vitally important that the Farm bill provide support for organic farming and local farmers' markets for the sake of a sustainable farm economy.

The farm bill should not subsidize farm practices that are ecologically unsustainable or that do not need to be subsidized.

COMMENT OF PENNY WEST

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:35 p.m.

City, State: Belfast, ME

Occupation: Clerk/Writer

Comment: If we cannot feed our people with good, healthy food that won't cause cancer, heart disease, diabetes, obesity, *etc.*, we are failing in our first duty to our citizens, which is to safeguard our natural resources and keep our country strong.

Please do everything you can to encourage organic farmers, and stay away from GMO's.

Until each of us knows who our farmers are and eat responsibly we will just be weakening ourselves.

COMMENT OF SYBIL WEST

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:52 p.m.

City, State: Wrightsville Beach, NC

Occupation: Potter

Comment: We desperately need to support small farmers, organic production, conservation, and nutrition. Huge agribusinesses are driving small family farms totally out of business and GMO's sometimes alter and contaminate other fields. Monsanto is one of the worst offenders. Please know you make laws and regulations which have consequences for years and years!

COMMENT OF VIRGINIA WEST

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:33 p.m.

City, State: Las Vegas, NV

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I would appreciate an agriculture system in the United States that gave more support to the small, independent farmer. Also to the organic growers. I do not want our land to be continually poisoned and destroyed by large companies like Monsanto, who uses Round-Up on the ground and also in their seeds. Round-Up is contaminating our land and waterways.

COMMENT OF SERENA WESTBERRY

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:57 a.m.

City, State: Covington, LA

Occupation: Human Resources

Comment: Now, more than ever, with obesity advancing at alarming rates . . . rates that will increase health costs **Ten**-fold, it is essential that we promote **Healthy** foods and **Stop** subsidizing the large manufacturers, the big boxes, that are producing unhealthy, nutritionally poor foods, the empty calories. I am asking you to do the right thing and **Support** the health and, by extension, the future financial health of our nation.

COMMENT OF TARA WESTMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:12 p.m.

City, State: Altadena, CA

Occupation: Philanthropy Program Manager

Comment: It is very important to maintain food insecurity programs and increase access to healthy food. Please support local family farmers and opportunities to reduce hunger among all people.

COMMENT OF CATHLEEN WESTON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:12 p.m.

City, State: Post Falls, ID

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: More support and financial assist for small **Local** producers More concern and interest in organic production and **Major** decrease in the overall use of pesticides. Please get corporate interests out of the production of food. Eating is a right, and health of the Earth and the people who consume the food produced should be a higher priority than profits.

COMMENT OF LES WETMORE

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:49 a.m.

City, State: Cambridge, VT

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: For far too long American agriculture has been moving in the wrong direction. Short term gains have been held in high regard with no concern for the long view. The evidence now piling up showing this is the wrong take. Years and even decades of potential development in sustainable agriculture have been lost due to the persistence of big chemical-Ag. It is truly vile that our leaders have allowed this to happen. Farmers and consumers alike have a right to chose safe and healthy practices over the fields of poison.

The proof is in the pudding. The bees are dying, cancer rates are sky rocketing, and the super weeds we said would eventually replace the weeds that 'Round-up' kills are here. (just to name a few things going very wrong)

It is time to stop this madness. When history looks back at this time as the age of stupidity, will you be able to say the you fought to change it, or fought to keep it?

COMMENT OF KIM WHATCOTT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:48 p.m.

City, State: San Tan Valley, AZ

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: How much harm needs to be done before genetically modified foods are banned or at least labeled. Farmers are being sued by the likes of Monsanto and Dow because they don't kow tow to their robber baron tactics. We need a farm bill now, or what we really need is an impeached president, and his cronies removed from office and sanity restored to the country.

COMMENT OF WILMA WHEELER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:48 a.m.

City, State: Mammoth Lakes, CA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I think large commercial farms should not receive agricultural subsidies. The farm bill must have provisions to feed the millions of people in the U.S who do not have sufficient food to have a healthy life. The farms produce enough food to have everyone well fed.

COMMENT OF WILLIAM WHITAKER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 1:18 p.m.

City, State: Charlottesville, VA

Occupation: Landscape Architect

Comment: The farm bill should dismantle the waste of traditional subsidies and use the money that is freed up to fund small regional farming initiatives. Local,

small farms and distribution networks such as CSAs and farmers markets are critical to meet the food needs of the future. The type of food they offer is also better for the economy, consumers and the environment. It is a win, win, win undertaking and Washington needs to get behind it and push. This a non-partisan agenda with roots that reach back to the country's beginning. The America people are ready for a change.

COMMENT OF BILLIE WHITE

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 10:27 a.m.

City, State: Scottsdale, AZ

Occupation: Medical Librarian

Comment: Keep Americans' healthy—Support organic food growers. No GMO food growers. It's is time to listen to your constituents. More organic food farmers. My family's health is important to me, and I seek out clean/organic food for my family. Your family is the **American People**, help us to be healthier. It is past time to support this initiative.

COMMENT OF CHRISTINE WHITE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:17 p.m.

City, State: Madison, WI

Occupation: Legal Advocate

Comment: I just don't understand why **Everyone** does not wish to eat healthy. What we eat has nothing to do with political parties and everything to do with what is right for all of us.

COMMENT OF DENISE WHITE

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:52 a.m.

City, State: Southport, FL

Occupation: Unemployed

Comment: It is **Critical** to the health of this nation's people, land, wild and aquatic life that we **Support** healthy and organic food. Please **Do The Right Thing!**

Thank you.

COMMENT OF JAN WHITE

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 11:35 a.m.

City, State: Ochlocknee, GA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Please consider real reform! We do need an organic farm bill and please **Do Not** allow giant commodity farmers and insurance companies to walk away with subsidized insurance programs while ignoring the small farmers—we need to support funding for Beginning Farmers—our food quality is at risk.

COMMENT OF JENNIFER WHITE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:51 p.m.

City, State: Chapel Hill, NC

Occupation: Network Technologies

Comment: I would like to see more support for organic and sustainable agriculture and less for petroleum-dependent methods of agriculture. I do not think taxpayers should have to subsidize large industrial operations year after year, especially for monocultural crops of questionable nutritional value. If the large industrial operations can't make ends meet, they're doing something wrong and throwing more taxpayer money at them won't fix the problem. If taxpayers are expected to support agriculture, it should be for sustainable agriculture that won't need more funding once it gets a head start.

COMMENT OF JOHN WHITE

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 4:55 p.m.

City, State: Bailey, CO

Occupation: Transportation

Comment: I used to be a producer, I was fortunate to move to the city. There I worked at the most polluting steel mill in the U.S. I have not developed cancer

however. My farming cousins have all developed cancer. Lung, testicular, brain, prostate, all cancers my farming cousins have hadona has died of brain cancer.

I no longer fear the producing. I fear what's being produced. All the poisons, antibiotics, hormones. **It Needs To Stop!**

JOHN WHITE.

COMMENT OF KAREN WHITE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:03 p.m.

City, State: Los Angeles, CA

Occupation: Audiobook Narrator

Comment: It is **Very** important that this bill support small family farms that are working hard to grow fruits and vegetables sustainably. Stop supporting the soy and corn grown by big businesses that is turned into processed food like substances that are contributing to our obesity epidemic.

COMMENT OF KATHLEEN WHITE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:00 p.m.

City, State: High Rolls, NM

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Dairy

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: We have a very small dairy operation, but I feel fortunate that at least I live in a state where raw dairy is legal. If you truly care about America's health issues, let us have choices as to what we eat and let us know **What** we are eating (GMOs).

COMMENT OF LEIGH WHITE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:58 p.m.

City, State: Orlando, FL

Occupation: Physician and Mother

Comment: As both a physician and mother, I feel strongly about the increased nutrition and safety of organic produce for me and my family. I am a lifetime member in Homegrown Co-op, a group that sells locally grown organic produce and products here in Orlando. I believe that our representatives should support and enable this grass roots movement for greater nutrition and health. If you do, our future generations, of all socioeconomic strata, will have the opportunity to eat healthier, better tasting fruits and vegetables, and as a result will be on whole healthier people!

COMMENT OF LISA WHITE

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 10:57 p.m.

City, State: Doylestown, PA

Comment: I want to know exactly where my food comes from and how it was produced. I need clear, honest, complete information and I am increasingly committed to eating organically produced food.

COMMENT OF MARCIA WHITE

Date Submitted: Wednesday, March 28, 2012, 2:25 p.m.

City, State: Monmouth, IL

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I grew up on a farm. I plowed the fields, mowed fence rows, hauled grain to the elevator, cleaned feed lots, spread manure, and am a girl. I was driving when I was 12 years old. Tractors, mowers with sickles. I raised my own cattle. So, I am familiar with the workings of a farm. I am now a city girl, but the major problem I see with the area farmers in our "Warren County", is you are giving anyone with 5 acres our tax dollars to **Not** do anything with that property. There are people here taking a huge advantage of these government programs and making a great deal of money off the backs of the tax payer. If you look at only "Warren County" as far as the money the government "**Gives**" to the so-called farmers in this county it amounts to millions of dollars. Check it out! Subsidies, or we, non-farmers, call it the "farmers welfare", is paid to people who should not be getting anything. Also, there are farmers who set their land aside, or claim they didn't get the yield, so here we go, and pay them for their loss. Well . . . these same farmers have the big-

gest equipment, hired hands, newest trucks, huge semi's, Cadillac's in the garage, and go on two or three cruises per year. Now, I'm only pointing this out because these people are busting the system. Please look at the subsidy program for Warren County only, and then figure all of the other counties in this country that gives out even more . . . This just doesn't make sense. The government farmers welfare has got to either stop or cut back. These area farmers need to go back to "if you only get 150 bushels per acre instead of 250 bushels per acre . . . live within your means and don't expect the tax payers to make up the difference". Yes, our agriculture is very important, but not to the tune of millions of dollars per county. There needs to be some checks & balances here. I'm would hope that you will, at least, check out our county and see how many people are on the government roll. I'm sure you will be amazed. Our county is pretty small, so just have one person check all of the farms, and anyone who received a subsidy check them out. Should only take 3 or 4 days. Now that would be money well spent. This has been going on for years, and needs an overhaul. So, please check out the Warren County government subsidy listing and then do a little research and maybe, you can find some reasons to stop some of these programs which are a burden on the average taxpayer.

Thank you for your time.

COMMENT OF SHAWN WHITE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:53 p.m.

City, State: Montpelier, VT

Occupation: College Professor/Math Tutor

Comment: Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to give comments on the farm bill. I support funding that promotes sustainable agriculture, conservation programs, and nutrition programs. I believe this is important to the future of the country as well as the health of its citizens. Sustainable agriculture and conservation will help fight global warming, topsoil erosion and loss, and maintain (sometimes finite) water resources. Finding solutions to these problems is vital to preserving the economic future of this country.

I support the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286), would like to see full funding conservation programs, and legislation to ensure that compliance with conservation programs is linked to enrollment in any new insurance subsidies.

I also support full implementation the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236) and maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

COMMENT OF VALERIE WHITE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:29 p.m.

City, State: Everett, WA

Occupation: Sales

Comment: I am so frustrated by the reports I read of cuts to food stamps program yet the subsidies continue. The system now in place is damaging our land, reducing the availability of healthy foods, and limiting more and more what options the future generations may have, if any.

Please, please vote against subsidies and for the health of our nation.

COMMENT OF VICTORY WHITE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:46 p.m.

City, State: Brooklyn Center, MN

Occupation: Writer and IT Support Specialist

Comment: I feel that the continued support of subsidies for big agribusiness, while cutting funding for small, local farms, and new start-up farms is not in the best interest of the American people. Small farms that work with sustainable, conservationist, organic methods are needed in our country. The American public has the right to make their own choices in the market on what foods they want.

For too long big Agribusiness has been the only voice heard in Washington, D.C., as well as many state capitals on what foods will be grown, and during that time, diseases of every kind have risen. It is time to examine more closely the cause and effect of the foods we eat and it is more than time to look at viable alternatives to the chemically grown, nutritionally low grade food offered by the largest food producers in the world.

Anytime you have only one or two companies producing any product it becomes a dangerous situation. It is even more dangerous when it is the food we depend on for life.

I urge congress to do it's true duty and think of the American people, not the corporations which have been telling us all how and why to live for far too long.

COMMENT OF TAMARA WHITED

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:04 p.m.

City, State: Indiana, PA

Occupation: Professor

Comment: As a private citizen I am in agreement with all of the organizations lobbying for generous measures toward organic and other sustainable agricultural practices to be included in the agriculture bill. We need and deserve a better food supply, soils that will continue to produce for generations ahead, and an agricultural system less dependent on fossil fuels and less polluting to waterways. If you are going to subsidize in any form, subsidize **Organic** and **Sustainable** practices.

COMMENT OF ALTON WHITEHOUSE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:13 a.m.

City, State: Cleveland, OH

Occupation: Student

Comment: I am particularly interested in seeing the government increase their support of small scale, local or family owned meat producers. As it stands, legislation and regulation make it extremely difficult for small meat producers to have their goods processed, mostly because Federal regulations make operating a processing facility equipped to handle small scale intake prohibitively costly.

Support local meat by adjusting your policy to take into account the importance, for health, food safety and local economies, by fostering rather than stifling the establishment of smaller processing facilities.

COMMENT OF JUDY WHITEHOUSE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:33 p.m.

City, State: Phoenix, AZ

Occupation: Retired LPGA Golf Teacher

Comment: Nothing is more important to our future than the integrity of our food, air, and water. That requires transparency in production methods, chemical use, genetic modification, and crop diversity and rotation. The best way to achieve this globally is to removed seed patents and monopolies, subsidies for huge agribusiness, and restore local control of food production and processing.

COMMENT OF NIKKI WHITELEY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:51 p.m.

City, State: Colorado Springs, CO

Occupation: Graduate Student and Research Assistant

Comment: When forming agriculture policy, our country needs to support sustainable non-GMO organic farming, living soils, and a clean environment. Policies should also support biodiverse agriculture free of chemicals that destroy beneficial insects.

COMMENT OF PAULINE WHITEMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:13 p.m.

City, State: Aromas, CA

Occupation: Retired Postal Clerk

Comment: So many citizens are experiencing side effects to GMO foods including myself. We need organic farming in order to protect the health of our people. Please be aware of how many your bill will effect if it does not provide for natural farming.

COMMENT OF ERIN WHITFORD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:41 p.m.

City, State: San Diego, CA

Occupation: Self-Employed

Comment: Freedom of food choice is becoming a big issue for a growing number of people in America. As more people wake up to the inherent dangers of processed foods, GM crops and overuse of antibiotics, hormones and pesticides in our food supplies I believe it is imperative that we answer the call of Manifest Destiny by improving and expanding our viable farming options.

COMMENT OF PAMELA WHITING-BROEDER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:22 p.m.

City, State: Encinitas, CA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Our family is really angry that U.S. Agriculture Policies are lazily influenced by the very corporations that need reform. We're angry that GMO's are not labeled! We're very angry that **Big Ag** controls policy. We don't want pesticides and cancerous fertilizers and GMO's in our food supply. Smaller Organic Farms are bullied. Factory farming is ruining the food supply. Monsanto is way too involved in the AG Department; a huge, huge conflict of interest. It's got to stop. We don't want to eat Monsanto's Roundup which is in just about everything. It's unbelievable that **You** would allow this. Disgusting. It's no wonder we're all dying of cancer. It's **Your** fault! Dammit, Label it!

U.S. food and agricultural policy must focus on adopting best agricultural practices that put the **Health** of its citizens, the land and the livelihood of farmers and farm workers over the interests of industrial agriculture lobbyists.

COMMENT OF GLENN WHITLOW

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:54 p.m.

City, State: Truckee, CA

Occupation: HVAC/R Technician

Comment: GMO products need to be labeled—**Period!** The consumers are asking for it, it is the seed producers that are fight it. I say label it and let the free market say which one consumers will buy. If they buy the GMO food, then the market has spoken. The seed producers (namely Monsanto) fear that if the non-GMO grains, fruits, and vegetables win, then no one will buy their seed. That is a valid outcome in a market economy—there are winners and losers. The government should require the labeling so the public is informed and can decide for themselves. An informed public should be what America is all about.

SUBMITTED STATEMENT BY ART WHITMAN, PRESIDENT, NORTHEAST AG AND FEED ALLIANCE

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input into development of the 2012 Farm Bill. The Northeast Ag and Feed Alliance is an association of nearly 300 individual livestock feed manufacturers and distributors located throughout the Northeast including New York and including New England. Our members manufacture feed for livestock and pets throughout the Northeast and include family owned businesses with single mills as well as publicly traded companies conducting business across several continents.

Dairy farming directly supports nearly 150,000 jobs in the Northeast through milk production and processing. Federal policy needs to be sensitive to the varied scale of commercial milk production in the Northeast (from six cows to several thousand cows per farm), the diverse production practices employed by farmers as well as regional variation in dairy processing infrastructure. Dairy pricing reform is of utmost importance to reduce the volatility experienced by the dairy industry for the past several years. The hard work conducted by many producer groups to develop outlines for various margin insurance programs coupled with a market stabilization structure is commendable and has provided several options for meaningful reform. To meet budgetary criteria for Federal backing any new developments for dairy pricing will need to address the highly sensitive issue of market supply.

Many programs developed as part of the 1996, 2002 and 2008 Farm Bills and administered through USDA Rural Development have provided significant resources to the dairy industry to develop new products and markets and to provide producer technical assistance. Rural Business Enterprise Grants, Value-Added Producer Grants and Agricultural Innovation Centers have proven their value through educational programs for improved business and production practices and support for fledgling dairy based businesses. Federal support of innovative producers through these programs has created increased processing infrastructure and expanded markets for agricultural products. As university extension systems have been reduced the technical assistance available through USDA RD funded projects is essential to producers facing the challenges of intergenerational transfer, business expansion or diversification.

Farms have significant energy demands for production and processing of food. The Rural Energy for America Program and the Biomass Crop Assistance Program provide funding to assist farms in the development of dispersed electricity generation, conservation plantings that provide biomass, and electricity generation as a means

for diversified farm income. The benefit of farm based power generation extends far beyond the farm community as these projects create jobs in rural areas and reduce dependence on non-renewable energy sources. Often the funding provided by USDA RD is the final component that allows the project to go forward in an economically feasible manner.

In the heavily populated Northeast with abundant rainfall, Federal land conservation and water quality programs are especially important. Funding provided through the Farm and Ranch Land Protection Program assures access to quality land for future generations of farmers. The Environmental Quality Incentives Program is essential in assisting farmers with land management practices to minimize water quality impacts. Federal provisions to provide conservation funding to 15 historically under-served states (many in the Northeast) is vital as the basis for programs that routinely experience demand that far outstrips capacity. These programs are increasingly important with continued developments in water quality regulatory criteria.

Crop insurance programs have made substantial headway over the past twenty years to be useful to a wide variety of farmers across diverse geographical and climatic conditions. Continued improvements to crop insurance programs should address ease of application, value of policies, and worth to farmers with varied markets for their crops. For example, the impact of the loss of even as little as 20% of a forage crop has a much more significant impact on income for a dairy farmer who must maintain a continuous pipeline of animals in all stages of maturity and production than for a farmer selling forages.

The Northeast Ag and Feed Alliance recognizes the importance of our land-grant university system for the education of future producers and research for new practices and products. Funds provided through the Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education program, the Agricultural and Food Research Initiative and the National Institute of Food and Agriculture are critical to the on-going development of new techniques and technology for use by producers and processors of food.

The support of Northeast farmers through a myriad of federally supported programs, many carried out in partnership with states and private entities, plays a vital role in the on-going production of food across the country to meet the needs of a wide range of consumers. We are proud of the creativity and productivity of Northeast farmers and appreciate the support provided through many Federal programs. Expansion of some programs, and changes to others will further increase the ability of Northeast farmers to continue their role as producers of wholesome and nutritious food consumed across the United States.

Respectfully,

ART WHITMAN.

COMMENT OF ANDREA WHITSON

Date Submitted: Friday, March 16, 2012, 10:39 a.m.

City, State: San Jose, CA

Occupation: Faculty for Hunger and Environmental Nutrition SJSU

Comment: I am urging for proper funding for our organizations that are fighting hunger (SNAP, WIC, and others). Our communities have people with the need for these services greatly especially with this economy.

I would also like to bring up the fact that we need more funding for organic farming techniques and sustainable farming methods. Our environment should be kept intact with these alternative practices.

COMMENT OF MICHAEL WHITT

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:20 p.m.

City, State: Inverness, CA

Occupation: Physician

Comment: Please discontinue support for: ethanol (no product that has food value should be used for fuel), corn syrup and other unhealthy products, agribusiness (esp. cash crops like cotton and soy beans & mega-dairies. Support sustainable farms producing healthy food, organic milk *etc.* Thank you for considering my opinions.

COMMENT OF DIANE WHITTEN

Date Submitted: Friday, March 16, 2012, 4:28 p.m.

City, State: Schuylerville, NY

Occupation: Community Nutrition Educator

Comment: As a professional that educates community members at farmers' markets, I've seen the enormous growth over the past 10 years in the interest of consumers to eat locally produced foods. In the Washington/Saratoga county area, that means purchasing foods from small scale farmers. The farm bill needs to support small scale farms. I truly believe that ensuring the viability of diversified agriculture is a matter of national security as well.

As a nutritionist, I also believe that the farm bill should include subsidies to fruit and vegetable farmers, especially those who sell to schools. The USDA wants schools to serve more fruits and vegetables, but the cost can be prohibitive. The farm bill could help keep producers in business while at the same time encouraging a connection between farms and schools to help our children eat healthier.

COMMENT OF LINDA WHITTINGTON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:30 p.m.

City, State: Chula Vista, CA

Occupation: Small Business

Comment: Allowing all Americans access to better quality food products results in a healthier population which in turn brings down the cost of health care costs . . .

COMMENT OF KAREN WHITTREDGE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:21 p.m.

City, State: Arlington, MA

Occupation: Retired Teacher

Comment: Please support organic farmers, especially the smaller ones, who are trying to provide us with healthy food. Also please be sure to require all foods to be labeled correctly included GMO. Monsanto has a stranglehold on independent, organic farmers. Its bullying ways should not be tolerated in a democracy. Please listen to us, the consumers who are looking to the health of future generations. I am not some radical—just an intelligent American who wants the best for our society. Thank you for your consideration.

COMMENT OF LOUISE WHOLEY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:54 p.m.

City, State: Saratoga, CA

Occupation: Retired Home Food Gardener

Comment: We have to reduce Big Ag subsidies. It is ridiculous to continue to support the bad food that creates high medical expenses. Incentives to get more small farms growing food in the plains states might help keep the economy there from collapsing. We have to start somewhere! Please help!

COMMENT OF JEAN WIA NT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:09 p.m.

City, State: Philipsburg, PA

Occupation: Director of Religious Education

Comment: I grew up on a family farm in PA and am appalled at the state of animal misery on factory farms. Animals have a right to a life where they can breathe fresh air, enjoy the outdoors, ruminant or eat grass, and be treated humanely. I am very disappointed that the corporate farms have taken over this country and mistreated animals to the extent that they are. Please vote to stop this awful state.

COMMENT OF DANIEL WIBERG

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:01 p.m.

City, State: Goose Creek, SC

Occupation: Retired Military

Comment: How about some common sense when it comes to farm bills. The closest most politician have come to farms is during "photo" opportunities. The ISO, Invasive Species Order is one where common sense has totally been forgotten and stupidity reigns supreme. If you would care to talk about it just e-mail me.

COMMENT OF VOLINDA WICK

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 11:01 a.m.

City, State: St. Cloud, MN

Occupation: Student

Comment: I am concerned with the new wave of ignorance and lack of foresight I am witnessing in our governmental handling of the production and funding of food sources in the U.S. and other countries as well. The future of ourselves and the critical future of our children and grandchildren is at the mercy of greed.

The organic research funding and the support for Beginning Farmers are important, we do not want these to be cut from the budget. The subsidized insurance program will allow giant "commodity farmers and insurance companies" tax money while destroying the land, soil, water and environment! Stop this insanity. These subsidies to agribusiness is a landslide of poison from large chemical and will eventually be the demise of us all in the pursuit of money, which will not buy health.

The least you could do is place limitations on crop insurance subsidies and re-attach soil erosion and wetland conservation requirements to these insurance programs.

I am disgusted with the difficulty of obtaining truly healthy food for me and my family. I would think as legislatures you would be concerned for your own future and that of your own family and the society as a whole. I and many, many others are watching how the voting goes and who will stand up for health rather than greed.

VOLINDA WICK.

COMMENT OF ALLEN WICKHAM

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 12:28 a.m.

City, State: Molalla, OR

Occupation: Software Developer/Gardener

Comment: I urge you all to think about sustainability, about giving our children quality healthy food by fostering organic farms and practices, about supporting the small farmers and all the people they support in kind, and by supporting the conservation of our precious land and water resources. In an era of trying to wean ourselves of petroleum, let's try to wean ourselves off of petroleum-based pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers. Let's feed ourselves good food!

COMMENT OF DEBRA WICKS

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 8:04 a.m.

City, State: Jersey City, NJ

Occupation: Civil Servant

Comment: There should be transparency showing where all the food products on the grocery shelves that are not purchased ends up. And remedy that situation to a public food stock that is accessible. An example being healthy reduced priced products. Why are there far more stocked goods than package or non-packaged produce. I would like to see farms that are owned by non-Caucasians increase. The schools lunch program is a fine example of good legislation.

COMMENT OF MEG WICKWIRE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:17 p.m.

City, State: Concord, MA

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: Please fight as hard as you can to protect children and adults from the ill effects of massive food companies. Small and organic farmers serve us all so much better! I am a mother and a breast cancer survivor. I am done pretending chemically grown and processed food doesn't matter!

Thank you for any help you can legislate.

COMMENT OF EVELYN WIDHALM

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:17 p.m.

City, State: Missoula, MT

Occupation: School Counselor

Comment: It's time for agriculture subsidy reform. The corporate conglomerate ag businesses 'farm' the government programs and make millions off the tax payers. This must stop.

COMMENT OF JOHN WIERCIOCH

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 5:32 p.m.

City, State: Roanoke, VA

Occupation: House Painter

Comment: It would be inspiring to see a bill not based upon the power of Big Ag lobbyists whose agenda is to promote their employers profits. I challenge you to show your integrity and support small local farms in this bill. An industry that creates pink slime, GMO's laced with insecticides (that are not safe when objectively independently tested), and Factory farms full of antibiotic pumped, tortured animals that are treated as if they are not living beings—these are not the ways I want my tax monies spent.

COMMENT OF CHRISTINE WIGHT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:56 p.m.

City, State: Rockport, MA

Occupation: Educator

Comment: Government let go of controlling our food sources. Banish Monsanto's underhanded efforts to take over the planet's food production as though they invented it and are responsible for what is on my plate! It is unreasonable for me to need to defend my right to healthy choices! I fire Monsanto from feeding me! I choose to go elsewhere for my food!

COMMENT OF KEN WILBUR

Date Submitted: Monday, March 19, 2012, 7:15 p.m.

City, State: Abilene, TX

Occupation: Owner of Dog Kennel

Comment: It is time to stop the assistance programs, subsidies are just another form of assistance.

Grain prices are high, as is food for humans and animals

If you do go against the people and give these people checks for not producing, at least so not allow them to lease the land out for hunting . . . the taxpayer has paid for this land, it should be made available to the public free for hunting . . .

You want to hear a cry from rich land owners, make that happen . . . the small family farmer will go along with it . . .

COMMENT OF MAYA WILCHER

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 4:55 p.m.

City, State: Sadsbury, PA

Occupation: Student

Comment: Please write a fair farm bill! For far too long, corporate monopolies have dominated the food system. It is unjust for the consumers and unjust for small traditional farms. Now is the time to redefine our agriculture industry, and stop catering to the greed and money of big business.

COMMENT OF DOROTHY WILCOX

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:53 p.m.

City, State: Youngstown, OH

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I grew up on a family farm. We had chickens, a pig, a milk cow, cattle, a big garden; most of our food came from this farm—good organic food! As a result we were healthy, and enjoyed the hard-work ethic that comes from all the chores and farm life.

Corporate farms do not provide such things. Rather the land is forced to produce as much and as fast as it can without little thought of resorting what was taken from the soil. The produce and crops aren't **Real** food; it's genetically engineered or modified food with many health consequences from consuming it. And there is no seed; therefore, it creates a total dependency upon a company to provide seed to farmers. If there was ever any farming system that could create **World Famine**; in my estimation, it would be Genetically Engineered Food, if one could even identify it as "food."

COMMENT OF LYNN WILDE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:41 p.m.

City, State: Salinas, CA

Occupation: Retired Teacher

Comment: Living in Salinas, I see how important agriculture is to the economy and how poor the workers are who bring food to the world. I've seen how laws have protected the safety of food and workers. We must protect safety gains, help organic farms, end subsidies for food crops being used for fuel, feed the poor who work in our fields. Farm policies that encourage family farms, enrich the land, cut fertilizer and pesticide costs, protect bees, restore wind brakes, bring down the cost of organics and grow our quality food supply will make the U.S.A. strong. People first, not profits.

COMMENT OF FLO WILDER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:56 a.m.

City, State: Hancock, ME

Occupation: Bookkeeper

Comment: Please stop the subsidies to corporations which produce the so-called food which is slowly killing us. Allocate the USDA resources toward producing safe, organic healthy food.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF ERIC WILDS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:55 p.m.

City, State: Palmetto, FL

Occupation: Fitness Trainer

Comment: Small family farms are our best option for good nutrition. Good nutrition is a key component needed for a healthy populace. A health populace is necessary for a strong America. Be a patriot and protect small farmers.

COMMENT OF ALAN WILHITE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:13 p.m.

City, State: Austin, TX

Occupation: Performer

Comment: I urge you to support truth and quality instead of corporate profits. Big agribusiness is making our citizens sicker earlier than ever, filling our hospitals and creating a massive economic drain on our country. We must grow our food organically, with well cared for soil, not synthetic fertilizers and pesticides. Do what is right for all our citizens, not just big business and your own pocket. Serve the public.

COMMENT OF GAIL WILKE

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 6:57 p.m.

City, State: Sunland, CA

Occupation: Retired Teacher

Comment: Any subsidies should go to fruit and vegetable growers, not to large commercial growers. I believe many of your subsidies even go to land owners, who live nowhere near their farmland.

COMMENT OF CHALICE WILKERSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:32 p.m.

City, State: Chicago, IL

Occupation: House Painter and Organic Gardener

Comment: Please consider an organic bill so that producers and consumers are both able to assess their products in a way that is healthy for farmers and Americans. I am quite leery about the continuing influence of Big Ag on our policy makers. The track record of some of these corporations shows they will cheat, lie, fudge scientific reports, leave out certain data, and go to court to keep consumers from knowing what they are buying to eat. If we are so free-market, we need a free-market in labeling too.

COMMENT OF SAMUEL WILKES

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:47 a.m.

City, State: Little Rock, AR

Occupation: Political Campaign Supporter

Comment: To whom it may concern,

The new farm Bill must be written with extreme consideration for human consumers and Organic Farmers here in the United States. We can no longer cater to the interests of Industrial Farming and the likes of Monsanto, who seem to want to get rid of Organic Farming altogether.

Whereas I understand the need to Industrial Farming, as it is a tariffed export, I also know that we as Citizens, unaffiliated with Industrial Farming, desire reasonably price, extremely healthy Organically Grown (by USDA Standards) Foods. They are healthier for us, for our progeny, and at this point are far too expensive for the average Citizen. We should have a right to foods grown without toxic pesticides and herbicides, to foods that draw nutrients from nutrient rich soil and not depleted soil that has to be fertilized every year with outside elements like Nitrogen, Calcium, and Potassium.

Organic Farmers need to be protected in this farm bill. They need to be protected from companies like Monsanto who have been successfully suing them for the better part of 15 years, and whose money and power has been used to destroy them. And, we need protection for these farmers from Genetically Modified Pollen, Herbicide, and Pesticide drift and pollution of the very Aquifers that Organic Farmers rely upon, because, after all, once this water is used, and pollen drift occurs, these farmers can no longer call their products Organic or GMO-Free.

Please stand up for the people and not Agri-Business and the Money and Power they have to influence your decisions. Be Politicians of Integrity and Please do not sell out for your own personal gain.

And, do this please, look up on Google, "The World's Worst Company" . . . the result will be St. Louis based Monsanto. Monsanto is even taking advantage of your very own constituents by genetically modifying their patented seeds, such that the seed is not viable for planting the next year, costing industrial-sized farms much more per year, taxing our already subsidized Agricultural system even further.

Finally, Organic Farmers should also receive subsidies, since after all, not only are they attempting to feed us, but they are doing so in very healthy ways.

Thank you sincerely.

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COMMENT OF JOANNE WILKINS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:21 p.m.

City, State: Fairfield, IA

Occupation: Programmer

Comment: The farm bill should highly support agriculture that is sustainable, healthy for humans and the land. The farm bill should support organic, sustainable practices.

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COMMENT OF SHANNON WILKINS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:57 p.m.

City, State: Heathsville, VA

Occupation: Commercial Fishing

Comment: Local organic and **Non-GMO** foods are important to me. Local farm food producers need to be supported not crushed by industry (*i.e.*, Monsanto).

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COMMENT OF CAROL WILKINSON

Date Submitted: Monday, April 16, 2012, 11:04 p.m.

City, State: Winchester, MA

Occupation: Self-Employed Legal Assistant

Comment: I am concerned with genetically modified food and would like all produce sold in the U.S. to be labeled as "genetically modified" if there has been **Any** modification at all.

I also believe all produce sold in U.S. should state its country-of-origin.

We label organic food now so I and other family members would request these two items be labeled as well.

Thank you.

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COMMENT OF JAMES WILKINSON

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 7:56 p.m.

City, State: North Bennington, VT

Occupation: Writer

Comment: It is long since time to end the public subsidies for food whose production is destroying soils, waterways, aquifers, and species integrity (via GMOs) and whose consumption has led to an epidemic of obesity and diabetes which will bankrupt the entire country.

COMMENT OF JULIANNE WILL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:38 p.m.

City, State: Fort Wayne, IN

Occupation: Marketing Consultant, Writer

Comment: Please be sure that any legislation provides for small, organic farms where non-GMO food is raised, animals are without cages and hormones, and the food produced will not cause the inflammation that is becoming epidemic in our country.

COMMENT OF CHRIS WILLEY

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:46 a.m.

City, State: Warrensburg, MO

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Please support healthy food, which translates to a healthy population and environment. Support small farmers and sustainable agriculture. If you are considering farm subsidies, either healthy food should be subsidized to make them more competitive, or the subsidies for mega crops like corn, soy, and wheat should be cut back or eliminated. Thank you.

COMMENT OF ALICE WILLIAMS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:57 p.m.

City, State: Georgetown, SC

Occupation: Retired Teacher, Small Farmer

Comment: Please don't weaken the help for new small farmer entry. The corporations seem to get all the "welfare" they need in the name of farm subsidy. People shame the poor for their use of food stamps, but with this depression they are calling "the Great Recession" folks without living wage jobs need help.

In the great depression many folks went back to small farms to work and survive and we need to make sure this is still an option for the current generation.

COMMENT OF AMANDA WILLIAMS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:44 p.m.

City, State: Midvale, UT

Occupation: Food Blogger/Garden & General Horticultural Consultant

Comment: It is time for us to recognize and accept accountability for the far-reaching effect of corn and soy subsidies on our health and the obesity epidemic in America. We need to somehow loosen the stranglehold of corporate farming and special interest food lobbies—the dairy, meat, corn and soy industries, we could see that so many of the problems our children and families are facing today are the direct result of those lobbyists efforts. We are fat because we are being fed cheap corn, soy, dairy and meat, and farmers trying to produce vegetables, fruits, and whole grains in a manner consistent with long-term ecosystem health cannot compete with the price of processed food and soda.

The security and safety of our nation are at risk when healthy and local food are unavailable and small farmers are pushed out of the market. The health of our land, the ability to grow food in perpetuity, is increasingly more difficult as greater numbers of chemicals become necessary to combat superbugs and to subsidize fertility from drastically depleted soils. The farm bill should support real farms, farms that care not only for their livelihood, but for the Earth and the crops that provide it, farms using sustainable practices providing food that brings health and not sickness to its consumers.

Please encourage and support changes to the farm bill that will eliminate subsidies to the big lobbyists—corn, soy, Monsanto, meat and dairy industries, Cargill, ADM, Smithfield. Even the playing field. Support organic, biodynamic, and local farm subsidies and supports.

COMMENT OF BERNADETTE WILLIAMS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 11:46 p.m.

City, State: Alexandria, VA
Occupation: Software Engineer
Comment:

- America needs more local farming efforts.
- Focus legislation on developing the nation's network of small and organic farms.
- Instead of farm subsidies going toward very large farming "factories", grants and tax incentives should be made available to cities and communities to implement local, sustainable urban agriculture frameworks.
- Encourage seed saving programs and provide subsidies to farmers who plant heritage crops in order to promote biological diversity.
- Provide training and subsidies to farmers who substantially decrease the amount of pesticides used on our nation's crops.

Thank you so much for your time.

Sincerely,

BERNADETTE WILLIAMS,
 Alexandria, Virginia.

COMMENT OF BEVERLY WILLIAMS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:03 p.m.

City, State: Arlington, MA

Occupation: Retired English as a Second Language Teacher

Comment: In this technological society, we should be able to have our food properly labeled and safe for us elders and our grandchildren. Please keep the consumers, and not agribusiness, as your priority. Thank you.

COMMENT OF CAROL WILLIAMS

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 11:30 a.m.

City, State: Roan Mountain, TN

Occupation: Artist

Comment: Our genetically altered pesticide laced agribusiness myopic profit-only orientation is killing Americans—obesity, diabetes, cancer, dumbing down of intelligence. It is imperative we support measures that enhance our local and organic farms and the life force and nutritional value of our food. Why are all my grocery store garlic cloves from China when they can be grown right here in TN? Support our local farmers trying to grow organic plants and humanely raised pasture animals. We are what we eat.

COMMENT OF CYNDY WILLIAMS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:21 a.m.

City, State: Crozet, VA

Occupation: Accountant

Comment: It is most important to support our farmers & protect a clean food supply. The small farmer is the back bone of our country, we need more access to small farm produce that is healthy & local.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF D. WILLIAMS

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 3:22 p.m.

City, State: Asheville, NC

Occupation: Land Sales and Development

Comment: Could we protect small family farmers, organic growers and responsible farm practices instead of lining the pockets of all connected to big "agribusiness" please?

The corporatocracy that rules us for only their benefit has done enough damage without continuing to influence our food supply in the irresponsible and greedy, malicious way they do now. **Enough** of this nonsense.

COMMENT OF D. WILLIAMS

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 3:45 p.m.

City, State: Westminster, CA

Occupation: Educator

Comment: Dear Lawmakers: You must support Organic farmers and eaters. Our patience, as taxpaying voters, has run out. Encourage real food and our access to it, now.

Sincerely,
D. WILLIAMS.

COMMENT OF DEBORA WILLIAMS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:45 p.m.

City, State: Drain, OR

Occupation: Unemployed

Comment: Please stop the Frankenstein food with toxic chemicals. The chemical soaked fruits and vegetables are poisoning humans and animals. They are destroying the soil and poisoning the animal life and livestock. Did you know that the GMO corn and wheat are making livestock sterile? And the saturation of Roundup is killing all the beneficial bugs, (including honeybees). Please give the American people back their vote and jobs and health! Please give us back our country! Please.

Sincerely,
DEBORA WILLIAMS.

COMMENT OF ELSIE WILLIAMS

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 3:44 p.m.

City, State: Houston, TX

Occupation: Food Pantry Director

Comment: SNAP should raise the amount of food stamps seniors receives because many have special diets and need to buy food that is not available through at food pantries.

COMMENT OF EMELE WILLIAMS

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 08, 2012, 11:40 p.m.

City, State: Reno, NV

Occupation: Communications and Marketing Coordinator

Comment: I urge you to vote for a fully-funded farm bill complete with feeding programs that help those who need food. This group of people are the last to recover from the 2008 recession and these programs ensure that they have nutritious food sources in their and their families lives. We are the greatest nation on Earth and no one in it should ever go hungry. Thank you.

COMMENT OF JACKI WILLIAMS

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 11:35 p.m.

City, State: San Luis Obispo, CA

Occupation: Garden Designer

Comment: No GMOs, support small farmers, quit subsidizing agribusiness and corporations.

COMMENT OF JENNA WILLIAMS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:22 p.m.

City, State: Saint Paul, MN

Occupation: Communications

Comment: Please put money into agriculture that creates healthier diets, limits the use of antibiotics on livestock, and helps support our environment. This is such an important bill for the future of America!

Thank you,
JENNA.

COMMENT OF KELLY WILLIAMS

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012 12:14 a.m.

City, State: Apache Junction, AZ

Occupation: Composite Materials Technician

Comment: While I am not a current producer, I once was. I was a dairy farmer. I still have friends who farm. So I have insight into both sides of the issue. Honestly, corporations do not, and never will have any interest beyond profit.

To wit, I believe that the following would be a very good start.

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
 - Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
 - The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
 - Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.
- Please understand that once America loses it's family farmers, America will not stand.

COMMENT OF PENELOPE WILLIAMS

Date Submitted: Friday, March 16, 2012, 9:00 a.m.

City, State: Rockledge, FL

Occupation: Retired Graphic Artist

Comment: The U.S. government needs to encourage our small farmers especially organic farmers because now the corporations which control our food system are destroying our health with their toxic pesticides & herbicides and GMO foods. We as consumers need to know what is in our food and how it is grown.

Corporations don't want us to know because they know we wouldn't buy it. The future of our country depends first on the fuel we give it to run it. The most important fuel we give ourselves is the food we eat. Let's stop fueling the wallets of corporations which are robbing us of our health wealth and awakening. Have the courage to stand up for what is right rather than caving into corporate greed at our expense. Thank you!

COMMENT OF PRECIOUS WILLIAMS

Date Submitted: Thursday, March 29, 2012, 5:16 p.m.

City, State: Texarkana, AR

Occupation: Community Based Education Program Director

Comment: I encourage you to re-instate the Outreach and Assistance for Socially Disadvantaged Farmers and Ranchers (2501 Program) back into the 2012 Farm Bill and maintain its funding at \$25 million annually. This education program has been very helpful to farmers and communities of Southwest Arkansas. SDF's are made aware of all USDA programs, receiving assistance in planning and production and we feel that it is one of the best program available to small and limited resource farmers. We really need this program. Therefore, I encourage our congressional leaders to support this program and socially disadvantaged farmers in Arkansas.

COMMENT OF SARA WILLIAMS

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 11:00 a.m.

City, State: Cherry Valley, CA

Occupation: Laboratory Technician

Comment: This country needs a better farming industry. Corn needs to stop being subsidized so its various products end up in foods that are unhealthy and are making this country obese. Small farmers need to be able to support themselves, not have to go into debt because large companies take control over every process of farming. The food grown needs to be more organic, not modified. Smarter farming practices need to be done like planting trees around fields for wind and soil protection, *etc.* So much needs to be improved.

COMMENT OF VICTORIA WILLIAMS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:03 p.m.

City, State: Joshua Tree, CA

Occupation: Songwriter

Comment: I have MS and Hep. C and must eat organically and even if I wasn't sick I would still want to eat organically grown food. There is no reason for a man to put his body thru the trouble of pesticides.

COMMENT OF ANDREA WILLIAMSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:57 p.m.

City, State: Snoqualmie, WA

Occupation: Landscape Designer

Comment: I respectfully request that the government eliminate all agricultural subsidies, but especially for corn. I work hard to feed my family only local organic foods (when I can afford it) and I truly believe that processed food is the root of our country's health problems. By stopping the subsidies on corn, junk food will reflect its true cost and even the playing field for all food growers. Perhaps it will begin to improve the overall health of our nation. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

ANDREA WILLIAMSON.

COMMENT OF THERESA WILLIAMSON

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 7:22 p.m.

City, State: Cleburne, TX

Occupation: Home Gardener/Homemaker

Comment: I prefer to buy non-GMO food. That is why I grow heirloom seed. Presently, I have Rutgers tomatoes, Golden Bantam corn, lettuce, pattypan squash, pumpkins, watermelon, green peas, purple-hull peas, and potatoes growing so far.

My assorted cross-bred chickens and white Chinese geese free range all over the backyard. I would like to get some goats or a cow, in the future, for milk and meat products and grass mowing. Also, I would like to get fruit and nut trees growing. We live on 1 acre. Just think about what other people could grow on an acre if they really thought about it.

I think it is a waste to see huge lawns of just green St. Augustine grass. They could be growing their groceries instead all over our country.

COMMENT OF DIANE WILLIS

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:34 a.m.

City, State: Nehalem, OR

Occupation: Research

Comment: I want my tax dollars to be used to subsidize food that is good for me and my community rather than subsidizing non sustainable food production.

COMMENT OF JUDITH WILLIS

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 10, 2012, 5:29 p.m.

City, State: Gladstone, MO

Occupation: Retired Administrative Assistant

Comment: Cutting SNAP is so irresponsible! This is a terrible time for individuals and families who need assistance to survive. What are you thinking?! I know these are difficult times for all of us, but cutting the very life blood of the poor is unacceptable!

COMMENT OF PAUL WILLIS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:31 p.m.

City, State: Comanche, IA

Occupation: Pastor

Comment: It is time to stop caring for only Big Ag and consider and start helping the little producer. The poisons being used by Industrial Farming are detrimental to the health and survival of our planet.

COMMENT OF PENNY WILLIS

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 08, 2012, 4:01 p.m.

City, State: Orlando, FL

Occupation: Retired

Comment: How can you and I throw away the seniors who are in such dire need. A group (150+) of doctors decided rather than hospitalizing seniors who were in trouble with nutrition, they would try getting them 20 lbs. of food within 24 hours and find out if they needed more before 30 days. Of 73 individuals so far, not one has had to go to the hospital! Be smart and **Help** these seniors the way **You Can**.

COMMENT OF WALT WILLIS

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 08, 2012, 3:51 p.m.

City, State: Orlando, FL

Comment: There are 130,000 seniors in Orange and Seminole counties in desperate need of food. How did you and I let this happen? Don't let it get worse. In these economic times it could even be your family or the ones next door. With all the food available let's get it to the ones already in trouble. You can do it, if you wish!

COMMENT OF MARGARET WILLITS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:17 p.m.

City, State: Sonora, CA

Occupation: Botanist

Comment: Soil is a very important resource. It can be quickly lost and takes a lot of time to build. Please ensure that anyone that benefits financially from this bill is caring for the soil. Soil loss pollutes streams and reduces the water holding capacity.

Also, in the long term it is important to find ways to grow crops more sustainably and with fewer oil-based inputs. Support research in organic farming and other methods that conserve and build soil.

Support those with diverse crops. Just as we know not to put all our investments into a single item, with the more variable climate, it is important to diversify. Offering crop insurance without attention to what farmers are doing allows them to take risks with taxpayer dollars. Single crops and genetically uniform crops offer little resilience to perform in times of variable and more extreme weather.

Agriculture is a very important base for this country. Consider the long-term well being of all citizens when making your decisions.

Thank you.

MARGARET WILLITS.

COMMENT OF YOLANDA WILLMORE

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 8:33 a.m.

City, State: Sleepy Hollow, NY

Occupation: Housewife

Comment: I would like Congress to support organic/sustainable farming. Eliminate the use of harmful pesticides and genetically modified products and support practices that protect animal well-being. It would also be beneficial to make organic products accessible to families at the lower end of the economic spectrum and better educate as to the benefits of a healthy diet.

COMMENT OF RACHEL WILLS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:38 p.m.

City, State: Norcross, GA

Occupation: Information Technology

Comment: As an American consumer, I am concerned about my health, the reduced quality of the food available for purchase, and the sustainability of the environment and food production for generations to come. I am writing to voice my support for organic farming, local farming, and the family farms that the country was built on. Allowing large agribusiness to thrive on large subsidies, while family farms suffer and the breadbasket of our country is slowly poisoned for our grandchildren to have to deal with, is not the way to manage the nation's food supply. Please vote in the interest of families, individual citizens, and future generations; rather than in the interest of large agribusiness that profits at our expense.

I support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs . . .
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Thank you.

RACHEL WILLS.

COMMENT OF SEAN WILLSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:45 p.m.

City, State: North Hollywood, CA

Occupation: Musician

Comment: We need safer farming practices, and a focus on organic. Please get rid of Monsanto, we all know they are evil and the biggest threat to real farming, and farmers.

COMMENT OF ARIEL WILSON

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 15, 2012, 5:14 p.m.

City, State: Bakersville, NC

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Livestock

Size: 50-150 acres

Comment: A \$36 million cut to SNAP is not the way to go. The Committee should focus on writing a farm bill that creates economic opportunity and improves access to healthy, affordable food for all Americans.

COMMENT OF CONNIE WILSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:52 p.m.

City, State: Cabot, AR

Occupation: Retired

Comment:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

We can not allow organic research funding to be cut. We need full funding to support Beginning Farmers. Please do not let the cuts stand!

Let us instead go to work on good investigative work and preventive measures against fraud and abuses that hurt everyone.

Real reform towards healthy organic farming is the way we should be heading and getting rid of GMO foods. The public do not want these food products. Work for us please!

I support my local farmers. Our farmers are still the backbone of this country. Thank you

COMMENT OF DAVID WILSON

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 10:36 a.m.

City, State: Leasburg, MO

Comment: U.S. Govt. should hold any recipient of Federal farm aid to high standards for land management. Most farmers want to do the right thing, but when someone does not, it harms us all. I don't want upstream farmers' actions damaging my bottomlands, especially when he is getting Federal farm aid.

Every farmer should be able to describe his conservation management plan in order to qualify for farm assistance.

COMMENT OF DEBORAH WILSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:25 p.m.

City, State: Springfield, MO

Occupation: Artist/Teacher

Comment: Please protect small, family farms, especially organic growers and farmers. Allow the people to make our own choices as to whether we want to buy raw milk, *etc.* Please stop groups like Monsanto, who are destroying the seeds and feeding our people foods that are shown to be harmful. These foods need to be labeled, and actually banned (like they are in other countries). The USA needs to raise it's standards and stop allowing big corporations to push them around.

COMMENT OF DELILAH WILSON

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 15, 2012, 10:01 a.m.

City, State: Pasadena, CA

Occupation: Student

Comment: As one of the richest countries in the world, we should be able to feed seniors and people who need help. Politicians got free health care and salary beyond the normal person. I think politicians should work in homeless shelters 20 hours a week and see how it really is out there for people. I think they should roll up their sleeves and pitch in instead of seating behind their desks.

COMMENT OF DEVIN WILSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:26 a.m.

City, State: Baltimore, MD

Occupation: IT

Comment: Esteemed members of Congress,

It is time to radically re-think our outdated, ineffective, and damaging farm bill. We can no longer stand by while subsidies are given to ecologically damaging, pesticide intensive monocultures like soy and corn. The previous farm bills have twisted what little farmland we have left into what is now basically a wasteland, requiring so much artificial additives to grow anything that the soil will likely not recover for generations. We need to start healing our farmlands now. By not subsidizing corn and soy, we can go back to a food system that is based on diversity, health, sustainability, and nature. Please remove corn and soy subsidies from the bill.

Additionally, as the committee considers the 2012 Food and Farm Bill, I urge you to:

- Support our fight against hunger by maintaining and strengthening critical nutrition programs in this time of unprecedented need. We must not solve our budget problems on the backs of those experiencing food insecurity, including our most vulnerable—our children, the elderly, and the disabled;
- Provide an even “plowing” field by fully funding programs that support beginning and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, organic farming, regional farm and food economies, and rural development. We need more farmers and ranchers, more sustainable food production, and more economic opportunity in our food system;
- Support family farmers that really need help, not the biggest farms that don’t: End subsidies (aka direct payments and countercyclical commodity programs), and replace them with loophole-free agriculture risk coverage. Additionally, implement a cap on crop insurance premium subsidies;
- Ensure that limited conservation funding maximizes lasting environmental benefits: Limit funds to Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) for animal waste management infrastructure by eliminating the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) Livestock Set-aside and protect the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) from disproportionate cuts, and improve it by ranking applications solely on their conservation benefits.

Thank you,

DEVIN WILSON.

COMMENT OF DORIS WILSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:58 p.m.

City, State: Lyman, SC

Occupation: Substitute Teacher

Comment: Like most Americans, I am deeply concerned about the direction agriculture is going in this country. There is too much “corn sugar” and not enough healthy fresh produce. I want to be able to buy local, to know whether a food has GMOs, and to have farm animals reasonably well treated, with water supplies *etc.* protected from animal run off. Support family farms, not just huge agribusiness.

COMMENT OF DOROTHY WILSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:08 p.m.

City, State: Bloomington, IN

Occupation: Retired Teacher

Comment: Small farmers must be given every possible advantage to be successful because they can’t compete with agribusiness. The future of a healthy kind of agri-

culture depends on attracting young interested men and women to get involved right away. We face tremendous challenges in the future as world population increases and our soil is depleted and poisoned. Please act responsibly for future generations.

COMMENT OF JAN WILSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:47 p.m.
City, State: Shoreline, WA
Occupation: Retired Registered Nurse
Comment: Please strive to reduce the use of pesticides and chemicals. We need to work for an organic, healthy environment for the safety of our children, grandchildren and ourselves.

COMMENT OF JANE WILSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:24 p.m.
City, State: Oregon City, OR
Occupation: Homemaker
Comment: I hope that instead of supporting corporate farms that you will seek to encourage small sustainable family farms in their effort to go organic.

COMMENT OF JOAN WILSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:57 a.m.
City, State: St. Genevieve, MO
Occupation: Retired Teacher
Comment: Small farmers need subsidies; big business farms can do quite well without the subsidies. Americans need more fresh fruits and vegetables from local farmers' markets; we need fewer processed foods that factory farms provide.

COMMENT OF JOHN WILSON

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 7:39 a.m.
City, State: Virginia Beach, VA
Producer/Non-producer: Producer
Type: Fruits
Size: Less than 50 acres
Comment: As a grower and eater, I know the importance of fresh organic food in our diet. We now have an obesity epidemic. Please change the farm to support local small organic farmers. Giving money to large polluters and growers of low nutrition, chemical laden food is dangerous to us all.

COMMENT OF LINDSAY WILSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:56 a.m.
City, State: Sautee Nacoochee, GA
Producer/Non-producer: Producer
Type: Fruits, Specialty Crops, Vegetables
Size: Less than 50 acres
Comment: We need a farm bill that supports and protects small farms. Let's promptly move away from big ag and petro-chemicals and move forward into farming with nature. Please watch this 45 min. film to watch a woman in the UK narrate **Exactly** how I feel about the situation regarding food production and farming—<http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=2750012006939737230>.

COMMENT OF MARC WILSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:09 p.m.
City, State: Clinton, WA
Producer/Non-producer: Producer
Type: Forestry, Fruits, Greenhouse/nursery, Specialty Crops, Vegetables
Size: Less than 50 acres
Comment: The current farm bill continues to support farms that are reducing our ability to produce food in the future. We need to eliminate all support for the unsustainable farms and expand support activities for farms that build the fertility of the soil that is the basis of all food.

COMMENT OF MARTHA WILSON

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 06, 2012, 7:42 p.m.
City, State: Bryan, TX
Occupation: Writer
Comment: Please support continued funding for all Federal nutrition programs, including TEFAP, SNAP (food stamps), WIC, CSFP and others.
 The federally funded nutrition programs listed above provide a desperately needed safety net for hungry Americans throughout our country.

COMMENT OF ROBERT WILSON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:55 p.m.
City, State: Jacksonville, FL
Occupation: Retired
Comment: Please do everything you can to protect our increasingly poisoned food supply. The health of our citizens—and particularly our children—is relying on you and other representatives and senators to stand up to the agriculture lobby by denying their financial support (bribery) and passing laws preventing these poisons from reaching our food!

COMMENT OF STACIE WILSON

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 11:23 a.m.
City, State: Jacksonville, FL
Occupation: Stay-at-Home Mom and Military Wife
Comment: I think it is important to educate people on what is in their food. We are spending so much time raising awareness obesity and much is left unsaid about the foods that are “considered” healthy—but **How** healthy? It does no good for us to eat “healthy” if what we are eating is just as bad as eating anything at all and not caring about being overweight. I would like to get rid of GMO’s all together, but if that takes time, at **Least** have our genetically altered foods made aware to us so those who cannot afford to eat organic, as it is more costly, can choose which foods are within their budget that are altered. I believe the more we know, the more empowered we are to take action!

COMMENT OF WARD WILSON

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 12:29 p.m.
City, State: Louisville, KY
Occupation: Engineer
Comment: Please insist on keeping conservation requirements in the farm bill. We can, we must, preserve the land and water as we produce our crops. It is a false economy to damage the foundation of our crop production for short-term gain. It is also critical to improving our environment—from biodiversity to Gulf of Mexico sea-food, there are real costs to uncontrolled agriculture.

COMMENT OF REGINA WILSON-SEPPA

Date Submitted: Friday, April 27, 2012, 11:20 a.m.
City, State: Pennngrove, CA
Producer/Non-producer: Producer
Type: Specialty Crops
Size: Less than 50 acres
Comment: It is very important to me that feeding families who are having great difficulty financially, is included in the farm bill. The economy is improving though slowly and many poor, elderly, children and families are still having a hard time securing regular meals.

COMMENT OF ANN WINEGAR

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 10:55 a.m.
City, State: Excelsior, MN
Occupation: Retired
Comment: It is important to me that we take care of the needs of our own citizens before sending funds to foreign countries. It is important that our poor children, families and elders have enough food to live and be healthy. Thank you.

COMMENT OF SALLY WINGATE

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 10:16 p.m.
City, State: Nashville, TN
Occupation: Retired
Comment: Please fund the Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative at \$30 million/year in mandatory funding. Investment in agricultural research is vital to continued productivity and innovation in growing and diverse sectors of American agriculture, such as organic agriculture.

COMMENT OF BETTY WINHOLTZ

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 2:55 a.m.
City, State: Morro Bay, CA
Occupation: Tutor
Comment: Food is basic. I came to CA from Iowa. From one farm state to another, I know the importance of small farms. Please let the farmer not mega ag-business corporations grow our food.

COMMENT OF GEOFF WINN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:58 p.m.
City, State: Redmond, OR
Occupation: Retired
Comment: Please keep voting in favor of Monsanto and other ag giants as we need corporate control of our food. We the people can't be trusted. I also love it when GMO crops pollinate nearby fields and the big corporations sue the blameless farmer, and they win. You must be so proud of yourselves.

COMMENT OF TRISHA WINN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:38 a.m.
City, State: Beaverton, MI
Producer/Non-producer: Producer
Type: Livestock, Poultry/poultry products, Vegetables
Size: Less than 50 acres
Comment: Please, stop subsidizing corn and soy! Help small family and organic farms, not the giant corporate farms. I work at this full time, as a single mom raising four children, one with a disability. I have to be home, so I choke this life to make sure my children have clean food. My **Right** to feed my kids clean food is being destroyed due to GMOs cross-pollinating my organic heirloom crops. I raise my livestock on grass and hay, and with GMO alfalfa, all hay in the U.S. will be contaminated within 5 years according to scientists. This is unacceptable!
Support family farmers! That means doing away with corn and soy subsidies! The U.S. should not have to import its vegetables and fruit, but now we do, because we use corn for everything, most of it terribly unhealthy and not necessary! Feed lots are an abomination—animals should graze or browse. HFCS is everything is a travesty—new research is linking HFCS to inability to excrete heavy metals (read: *Autism and Alzheimer's*)
 Locally grown, nutrient rich food is what Americans and this economy needs. Please support **Farmers**, not corporations!

COMMENT OF SANDRA WINTER

Date Submitted: Friday, April 27, 2012, 10:13 a.m.
City, State: Marblehead, MA
Occupation: Retired Educator
Comment: I urge my elected officials to protect the programs in the farm bill that fund food for children and low income families—like SNAP. We as a nation cannot balance a budget by taking food from those less fortunate. Providing for our needy is our first responsibility—there are other options. Please use them. And while you are at it, how about supporting all the small organic farms that serve to protect us from the harmful pesticides and fertilizers that big ag uses to produce food that is actually harmful to our health. The U.S. has much to do to restore our national food supply to health.
 Thank you very much for your service to this country. Do you best!
 SANDRA WINTER, Marblehead, MA.

1512

COMMENT OF FRANCIS WINZIG

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:17 p.m.

City, State: Orlando, FL

Occupation: Retired

Comment: All subsidies for corporation farms should be stopped. Support for food stamps, and local farm co-ops should be increased! Obesity and Diabetes should not be a "win-win" for Corn growers, McDonalds and the Pharma companies.

COMMENT OF RANDY WIRTH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:33 a.m.

City, State: Millville, UT

Occupation: Business Owner

Comment: Hi,

I have been involved in the organic industry since 1974 as both a businessman and a consumer. It is crucial to me, my family, and my business that certified organic products continue to be a viable alternative to industrial agribusiness.

COMMENT OF NORMAN WIRZBA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:27 p.m.

City, State: Hillsborough, NC

Occupation: Professor

Comment: It is vitally important to me and to my family that we have a farm bill that promotes the health of eaters and the health of the land and its creatures. Today's conventional agriculture is ruinous of soil and water and highly abusive of animals and farm workers. This needs to change. The farm bill can help by supporting healthy food, grown in a sustainable way, with just agricultural working policies.

COMMENT OF KEN WISE

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 2:51 p.m.

City, State: New Paltz, NY

Occupation: Agricultural Extension Specialist

Comment: Keep in mind that sustainable agriculture, soil and water conservation, and the reduction of pesticide and fossil fuels as fertilizers are very important. Policy should increase the willingness and incentive to make changes to farming operations to meet the needs of our current and future food needs. While this sounds easy . . . I can tell you it is not. Social change takes a lot of work . . . meaning changing farming practices to make it more sustainable specific to each farm and farm producer. Providing a means for more education that gets directly to farmers is the number one priority. We have the technology to make sustainability happen—farm policy need to embrace this and make it happen. Money needs to be provided to states in a non-competitive manner (meaning stop the grants give the money that is needed to do the work) so we all can help teach producers how to be more sustainable for future generation of farms.

Sincerely,

KEN WISE.

COMMENT OF JOWANDA WISEMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:26 p.m.

City, State: Jeffersonville, OH

Occupation: Librarian/Hobby Farmer

Comment: I think more monies and consideration should be given to small, organic/natural farmers and fewer bills/monies in favor of the ag giants. Make sure the bill provides access to small farmers, schools, FFA, 4-H and doesn't put undue hardship on those who struggle the hardest to provide good, wholesome food for their tables and those of their neighbors.

While you're at it, make the ag giants accountable for the harm they are doing to the soil, the air and the people.

COMMENT OF JEANETTE WISNIEWSKI

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 2:02 p.m.

City, State: Schaumburg, IL

1513

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I volunteer at the Food Pantry run by my church and see the increase in numbers of people needing our services. I hope you'll consider voting for the farm bill coming up shortly. Thank you for your time.

COMMENT OF WALTER WISZOWATY

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:33 p.m.

City, State: San Diego, CA

Occupation: Trainer

Comment: Agribusiness is polluting our food, water and land for the sake of more profit and thereby contaminating our food and water supply unchecked. This needs to be regulated just like any other large business that causes reckless endangerment to the citizens of this country. Former members of agribusiness and the pesticide industry cannot be allowed to be members of our regulatory structure because of their vested interests and biases.

COMMENT OF LON WITHERS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:24 p.m.

City, State: Chicago, IL

Occupation: Entertainment Industry

Comment: Three words: **Organic, Organic, Organic.** Stop the poisons, stop the GMOs. There's only one direction to a healthy food supply, and the direction leads away from pouring billions of gallons of poison into our lands and waters, and laboratory created plants with toxic side effects. Mother Nature truly does know better than Monsanto. Stand up for what's right!

COMMENT OF HELEN WITOWSKI

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:24 p.m.

City, State: Bridgeport, CT

Occupation: Cashier

Comment: Big business needs to keep their greed mentality out of the American food chain! All they care about are profits, not people! Have you all learned nothing from all the oil spills and mine accidents? Please don't continue being blind to what big companies are doing to our country!

COMMENT OF JOHN WITTE

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 15, 2012, 6:44 p.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Much better to "subsidize" *i.e.*, increase funding for such programs as SNAP than to throw \$\$\$\$ at commodity production (think soy beans, corn, and wheat) The commodities do very little nutrition-wise other than lead to obesity!

COMMENT OF MOLLY WOEHLIN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:09 p.m.

City, State: Northfield, MN

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I am interested in maintaining a safe food supply and very good inspections and monitoring—as well as support for small and sustainable farmers who are providing an alternative to factory farming which are hard on the environment. We need to make a big shift to supporting farmers who are heavily into conservation rather than encouraging more of the commodities. Thank you for looking to the future needs of our population.

COMMENT OF NIKKI WOELK

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:24 p.m.

City, State: Oakland, CA

Occupation: Nonprofit Manager

Comment: Please subsidize nutritional foods for all Americans (fruits, vegetables) and end subsidies which falsely lower the price and reinforce the purchase of

unhealthy foods (soy, corn, meat). Do not cut funding for vital programs such as nutrition, conservation and support for organic and sustainable agriculture. Our health depends on it.

COMMENT OF PATRICIA WOJCIECHOWSKI

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:17 a.m.

City, State: West Allis, WI

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: School food programs should contribute to the daily educational curriculum of students. Nutritional information should be displayed with the food choices and data could be compiled for each student to be shared with parents and staff. Take advantage of this educational opportunity.

COMMENT OF NANCY WOLBACH

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 8:30 a.m.

City, State: Tiverton, RI

Occupation: Unemployed

Comment: Hello, Representative Cicilline,

I am a volunteer worker at a small certified organic farm, Skinny Dip Farm, in Little Compton, RI and Westport, MA. The owners are a part of a strong and healthy, if small, sector of the farm population in America dedicated to farming without pesticides, herbicides, *etc.* in order to produce safe and nutritious vegetables, meats and poultry.

They have taken on the monumental task of educating the public to the health benefits of eating locally and organically grown food.

It is however not surprising that American agribusiness continues to forge on in its quest for power to the extreme that it refuses even to label genetically modified food, thereby denying the public its right to know what they are buying. It is equally unsurprising that our government would allow this.

Please, Mr. Cicilline, do all you can to fight against the enormous force that would take from us the right to choose.

Thank you,

NANCY WOLBACH.

COMMENT OF JILLIAN WOLF

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:42 p.m.

City, State: Leicester, NC

Occupation: Subsidized Housing

Comment: Please consider small, local farmers as the only way to a sustainable future for all of us. It's time to recognize the mass destruction that agribusiness has wrought upon us . . . to take responsibility for cleaning ourselves up. It's now . . . or never.

COMMENT OF TODD WOLF

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 12:09 p.m.

City, State: Parsippany, NJ

Occupation: Veterinarian

Comment: Surrendering all U.S. agriculture to corporate control is dangerous, unhealthy (to individuals & the environment), and will put accessibility to one of the most basic human needs, food, at risk of being used as a tool of control against American citizens. The current loss of control to the big ag. corporations must cease or the consequences will be severe on many levels.

COMMENT OF ALISSA WOLFE

Date Submitted: Thursday, April 12, 2012, 10:02 a.m.

City, State: Rio Rancho, NM

Occupation: Food Banking

Comment: Nearly 50 million Americans are living in food insecurity. While food banks, churches, and pantries are doing great work in our community, charity alone cannot meet the need for food assistance. Feeding our neighbors is a public-private partnership. I try to do my part by helping at a local hunger relief program in my community.

COMMENT OF ASHLEY WOLFE

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 9:37 a.m.**City, State:** Fort Worth, TX**Occupation:** Teacher**Comment:** When I buy produce at the store or farmer's market, I look for items grown in the USA. This is pretty difficult since most produce I find is grown in Mexico, Costa Rica, Chile, *etc.*

I would like to see more produce from the USA in our large chain grocery stores. We have capable farmers who can provide all the produce our country needs in a sustainable and organic way, without genetic modifications.

I would also like a farm bill that requires genetically modified foods to be labeled accordingly.

 SUBMITTED STATEMENT BY DENNIS C. WOLFF, OWNER, PEN-COL FARMS; PARTNER,
 VERSANT STRATEGIES
Introduction

I am presenting written testimony today on suggested changes to dairy policy as part of the 2012 Farm Bill. I am both a dairy farmer, owner of Pen-Col Farms, Millville, Pennsylvania, a purebred Holstein dairy farm, and also as a partner in a public affairs firm, Versant Strategies, of Harrisburg, PA that represents DPAC, a group of dairy farmers focusing on dairy policy reform. I have condensed my testimony into four bullet points to remove the burden of reading a lengthy document. My recommendations were formulated from my experience as someone who both worked in state government as the former Secretary of Agriculture for Pennsylvania as well as spending my entire life as an active dairy producer. I have great hope that the 2012 Farm Bill will bring some much needed changes to Federal dairy policy. The United States has finally realized that the future growth of the dairy industry will come from expanding exports. Our policy needs to reflect this reality. Thank you for this opportunity.

- Global Markets will drive the growth of the U.S. dairy industry going forward. We need Federal Dairy Policy that complements this by eliminating the DPPSP (Dairy Product Price Support Program) and makes sure supply management is not part of future policy. This will send a clear signal to our trading partners that we will be a dependable supplier going forward.
- Simplify our existing complex policy by going to a two-class system with competitive price discovery based on component values. The competition will improve producer revenue while simplifying the complexity of current pricing.
- Take electronic reporting to the next level by requiring it daily and including more products to increase marketplace accountability and dilute the effects of the thinly traded CME.
- Give dairy producers the option to custom fit their risk management by moving LGM-Dairy forward and removing it from pilot status. As a pilot program, it has proven itself as a great tool for our industry. Many feel that this program should replace MILC.

 COMMENT OF LEE WOLKOWITZ
Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:58 p.m.**City, State:** Culver City, CA**Occupation:** Sustainable Urban Agriculture Advocate**Comment:** It is imperative that we move from the megafarm and cheap processed food era that we have created and move back to smaller family owned and operated farms. The reason people are as obese and unhealthy as they are is directly proportional to the availability of cheap processed food and the lack of access to fresh pesticide free produce. It would be more economical to move back to pre-green revolution farming methods, without all the petro-chemical fertilizers, pesticides and giant machinery which. We must also begin to ban GMO crops because we have no idea what they are doing to us.

 SUBMITTED STATEMENT BY TOMMY WOLLENMAN, BOARD CHAIR, CALIFORNIA CITRUS
 MUTUAL

Good morning, my name is Tommy Wollenman and I am here today representing California Citrus Mutual. I serve as Board Chairman for that organization and have had the pleasure of doing so for almost 2 years. I am also a citrus producer farming 120 acres and my family farms an additional 1,600 acres. I also serve as General

Manager of LoBue Citrus, one of the industry's oldest shipper and marketer of fine California Citrus. We're proud of our history and look forward to our future.

As you know, Citrus Mutual is active in public policy as a voluntary trade association representing citrus producers from as far as Imperial County and North up to Sacramento. We represent well over 2,000 producers and over 65% of the tree crop produced in our state. California is the nation's number one fresh citrus producer. In terms of tonnage, we rank second to Florida, but in terms of value our \$2 billion industry is second to none. We ship to all 50 states and export around the world. Some 3,900 farmers employ 12,000 people with another 10,000 individuals dependent upon our industry for their jobs. The economic value of our entire effort exceeds \$4B.

The farm bill, as far as we are concerned, provides the economic environment in which we can compete and hopefully continue to provide a nutritious commodity to millions of people around the world in a sustainable fashion that also provides the economic conclusion desired.

Last September Citrus Mutual and our industry colleague, Sunkist, provided a letter that outlined our priorities relative to farm bill deliberations. Our priorities are still intact, and we were pleased to see a draft document promulgated by Congressional committees last Fall in anticipation of budget reconciliation. While that compromise never materialized between Houses of Congress the language developed by this Committee we deemed positive. Our concern is that it may unravel to our detriment.

The budget for and programs within the Animal Plant Health Inspection Service are vitally important to our industry. APHIS trains our border inspectors, they help overcome trade barriers with their technical team of negotiators and they establish procedures for finding, treating and communicating about pests and diseases. Their work is to assist producers overcome pest and disease issues that are created by those who innocently or maliciously ignore our laws regarding the importation of foreign material. The APHIS budget has been cut, and this has created hardships on multiple industries. The farm bill must recognize the return on the dollar this agency brings to agriculture and the economy.

Concurrent with that is the Citrus Health Response Program or CHRP and the 10201 program. CHRP is a national effort to do what no other nation has been able to do; allow their citrus industry to survive against the spread of Huanglongbing. Florida has it and has lost 200,000 acres. Brazil has it and they have pulled over 12 million trees. It has been discovered in Texas groves and now in a small city in LA County. We believe this can be defeated and a full partnership with industry money and the Federal Government must be sustained.

The 10201 program is a pest detection program that partners with state and local government to prevent the development of endemic populations of pests and diseases. Whether it is medflies, emerald ash borer or diseases; we cannot let this program become diminished because it places our nation's environment at great peril.

A second agency within USDA must be supported by the farm bill. The Foreign Agricultural Service is a valuable tool to address trade opportunities from a policy perspective. Our President, Joel Nelsen, is presently Chair of the Fruit & Vegetable Trade Advisory Committee, for example. FAS occupies offices in foreign countries and Washington that works with industry stakeholders to create viable solutions for reducing tariff barriers, closing ports such as Jakarta, Indonesia and opening lucrative markets such as Korea, in our case. Without FAS, export opportunities would be greatly hampered.

A third Agency has been spotlighted for review and that is the Risk Management Agency. Our industry is the second largest user of crop insurance in California. Over 80% of producers use it and Committee Members from California are all too familiar with our freezes of 1990 and 1998. We don't mind other commodities seeking to copy our success in developing viable programs that are demanded by growers. But we are very concerned that new efforts would increase the cost of RMA to the nation's budget thereby increase our costs as an offset. That simply cannot be condoned and we would ask the Committee to be mindful of what looks good and what the unintended consequences may be.

Citrus Mutual and our industry have found Market Access Program (MAP) and the Technical Assistance for Specialty Crops (TASC)—to be quite valuable. Neither program is a free ride for a commodity. Both create vehicles that allow industry to develop solution paths that expand exports. MAP and TASC have been used by this industry to create a market in Korea, one of our largest export destinations. MAP and TASC have allowed us to penetrate Australia and keep it as a viable market. Qatar, Dubai, Vietnam and Thailand are examples of small developing areas of commerce for the citrus industry that would not be materializing if it weren't for MAP.

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We certainly understand the need for fiscal responsibility. But when the effort to reduce costs creates unintended consequences such as the ability to market one's product, then is Congress really achieving the goal. Our industry's ability to maintain its economic viability insures over \$500m of income tax support, 20,000+ jobs, \$4b in economic activity. The strength of the programs and agencies above directly correlates with the strength of our industry. That partnership cannot be sacrificed. The unintended consequences would be dramatic.

Thank you for this opportunity and I look forward to answering any questions you may have.

COMMENT OF BARBARA WOLLMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:20 p.m.

City, State: Friday Harbor, WA

Occupation: Retired Librarian

Comment: More support in legislation and tax breaks for small (50 acres and under) farms, especially those who do not use hormones, antibiotics and other damaging products or practices. Prefer those with free range animals. The agribusiness mega farms do not need your help.

COMMENT OF SUSAN WOLVERTON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:43 a.m.

City, State: Cedar Rapids, IA

Occupation: College Professor

Comment: As a parent, teacher, gardener and food consumer, and citizen of a farm state, **Iowa**, I am deeply concerned that our ability to produce healthy food for the immediate and near future is compromised if the environment used to grow food, managed by the farmers, is not managed responsibly. I urge you to keep support for conservation programs in place so that our food supply is not put in jeopardy. It is our collective responsibility to manage our valuable agricultural lands with sustainable practices. This is a short-term and long term responsibility that should take priority. Without healthy and productive land we cannot have healthy and productive societies.

COMMENT OF LAETITIA WON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:35 p.m.

City, State: Tewksbury, MA

Occupation: Stay-at-Home Mother and Gardener

Comment: Please help small organic farms, stop subsidizing commodity crops, and don't cut the food stamps programs! By making healthy food more affordable, you will help Americans get healthier and thus reduce the cost of health care. Listen to common sense, not special interests.

COMMENT OF CHRISTINE WOOD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:21 a.m.

City, State: South Lake Tahoe, CA

Occupation: Bookkeeper and Mother

Comment: House Committee on Agriculture members,

My husband and I are deeply disappointed in the food market of the United States of today. It seems that the majority of the foods on the supermarket shelves are either laden with genetically modified corn products or heavily pesticide-sprayed soy products. You all have the power to help change this with the 2012 Food and Farm bill.

As the committee considers the 2012 Food and Farm Bill, I urge you to:

Provide an even field by fully funding programs that support beginning and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, organic farming, regional farming, and rural development. We need more organic farmers and ranchers, more sustainable food production, and more economic opportunity in our food system.

Support family farmers that really need help, and not the biggest farms that don't.

I hope you will consider the health of the your constituents akin to my concern for my two children.

Thank you for your time,

CHRISTINE WOOD.

COMMENT OF EMMY WOOD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:01 p.m.

City, State: Wheat Ridge, CO

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: I would like to see the government rewarding farmers who produce healthy foods and use their lands in a sustainable, healthy and environmentally responsible way.

As an educator I see firsthand the effects of our subsidy system. The foods provided for the school lunch program are hideous and inedible—they definitely do not align with the *choosemyplate.gov* standards! Healthy foods need to be more affordable and the unhealthy foods made from corn, soy and white rice need to be more expensive so we are not paying for them later (healthcare, and behavior problems in children and adults—prisons)

Thank you for considering these much needed changes!

EMMY WOOD.

COMMENT OF KRISTINE WOOD

Date Submitted: Monday, May 14, 2012, 2:58 p.m.

City, State: Council Bluffs, IA

Occupation: WIC Coordinator/Dietitian

Comment: I urge Congress to protect against hunger and promote nutrition in the upcoming farm bill by supporting programs like SNAP, TEFAP, CSFP, and FFVP. The children and families we see at the WIC clinics are very vulnerable in this economy!

COMMENT OF STEPHANIE WOOD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:01 p.m.

City, State: Montclair, NJ

Occupation: Secretary

Comment: I eat, and my niece and nephew eat. Please get rid of Monsanto and their toxic GMOs and give our kids **Healthy Organic Food!** Don't you have children in your family? By the way you ought to stop torturing animals. Haven't you heard about mad cow disease, *Salmonella*, etc.? These come from mistreating farm animals. Please do the right thing—you eat, too—do it for your own health! Thanks!

COMMENT OF SARAH WOODARD

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:15 p.m.

City, State: Pittsford, NY

Occupation: Asst. Treasurer

Comment: The bill for our country's farms need to be revamped. They need to represent the changing environmental concerns of our citizenry by taking into account organic farming practices and the promotion of family farming that isn't reliant on synthesized chemicals.

COMMENT OF NOLA WOODBURY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:41 p.m.

City, State: Eugene, OR

Occupation: Retired Nurse

Comment: I believe that Americans have been hoodwinked into eating an unhealthy diet. The *China Study* has given us concrete proof that nutrition (or that lack of it) is the cause of most of our illnesses. It definitely is the cause of the epidemic of obesity in our country. It is time to focus on the people's health and not the profits of agribusinesses! The push for "cheap food" is **Not** worth the price we are paying in our health! I now eat a "whole food/plant" based diet and feel healthier than I ever have, without any medications. It is time to support local farms and organic farmers! It is time to label any food that contains GMO ingredients. It is time to re-educate the American people regarding their food choices and stop "hiding" sugars, and oils in most processed foods. It is time for some forward-looking action from our government!

COMMENT OF MARGARET WOODRUFF

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:07 a.m.

City, State: Charlotte, VT

Occupation: Librarian

Comment: Good, fair food should be available to all. The economic and environmental models make it clear that we can grow enough food for all by growing close to home in a responsible way. Let's provide the opportunity for our farmers to do this and for the rest of us to benefit from the results.

COMMENT OF KENNETH A. "JACK" WOODS

Date Submitted: Monday, April 23, 2012, 3:16 p.m.

City, State: Minneola, KS

Occupation: Ag Banker

Comment: My main concern is the fact that some are wanting to put a \$40,000 cap on the amount of crop insurance that a producer can receive. That would be much like telling a home owner with a \$500,000 home he can only insure it for \$40,000. Why waste the money for such a small amount of coverage.

COMMENT OF LORA WOODS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 4:48 p.m.

City, State: Ojai, CA

Occupation: Backyard Gardener

Comment: It's a sick government which takes food stamps away from the poor and continues exorbitant payments to wealthy farmers. It's agribusiness who are purveyors of poison and clearly own congressmen who would even consider such a bill. But then a physically sick citizenry is big business, too! And here you have the chance to start turning that around. We need organic, diverse crops.

COMMENT OF TARA WOODS

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 11:59 p.m.

City, State: Springfield, MA

Occupation: Full-Time Student

Comment: Absolutely no cuts can possibly take place right now. You have cut so many people off of unemployment who still have not obtained new employment. Along with all the others that were already dependent on the SNAP program these people now with no income have to go and seek this assistance as well. I understand the State needs to make cuts but for those living in a community that is struggling financially, will just make the less fortunate lives go from bad to worst. The food pantry is losing funding and it is just really terrible. I currently volunteer at the food pantry and we are serving over 2,000 recipients monthly. What will these families do? Please we do not need this type of cut right now. Help Us!

COMMENT OF JILL WOODWARD

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 11:24 a.m.

City, State: New York, NY

Occupation: Video Editor

Comment: Our current system of subsidizing giant agribusiness is making America sick and obese, poisoning our water supply, and contributing to global warming. A neat way to solve all three problems would be to take those subsidies and give them to small organic farms. Taxes shouldn't go towards such harmful practices. It's time to start righting some wrongs.

COMMENT OF JOEL WOOL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:58 a.m.

City, State: Cambridge, MA

Occupation: Environmental Organizer

Comment: The Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286) is an essential bill that will protect the state of agriculture in the United States, an industry which has great impact on economy, environment and health.

COMMENT OF BARBARA WOOLLEY

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:05 p.m.

City, State: Wilmot, NH

Occupation: Medical Social Worker/Author

Comment: Please, please, please listen to the people! Money interests have no business controlling the food supply. We have the right to have access to normal, unadulterated, organic, healthy food that nourishes our bodies and sustains life.

I am deeply distressed that the mega corporations have been allowed to dictate what will/what will not be our food supply. Other nations are saying **No** emphatically to agribusiness. They are demanding truth in labeling. They are demanding food that is meant for humans. They are aware of the dire impact on the environment and every living thing by the chemical concoctions that are agribusiness offerings.

I implore you to stand up against this tide of death that is being unconscionably inflicted upon us.

Please, please, please vote for truth in agriculture, food that sustains health and the maintenance of life.

As the great wise one, Hillel, said:

“If not now, when?”

COMMENT OF CATHY WOOTAN

Date Submitted: Tuesday, May 08, 2012, 9:53 a.m.

City, State: Cleveland, OH

Occupation: Site Coordinator of a Food Pantry

Comment: I am writing, both as a mother and as the coordinator of a Cleveland-area food pantry, to urge you to protect hunger programs, especially those that directly impact children. There is no way we can expect our citizens to be capable and competitive in the future if they don't get proper nourishment today. And in spite of what you may hear from politicians and analysts, the economy has not yet turned around, at least not for the population we serve at our food pantry, so there is still a great need for programs like SNAP and TEFAP. I thank you in advance for doing whatever you can to safeguard this critical assistance.

Sincerely,

CATHY WOOTAN,
Site Coordinator,
Brookside Center.

COMMENTS OF RUTH WOOTTEN

Date Submitted: Friday, April 27, 2012, 12:08 p.m.

City, State: Tempe, AZ

Occupation: Retired Social Worker

Comment: It is imperative that you maintain the SNAP and other nutrition programs as you develop programs and funding for the reauthorization. SNAP has done exactly what it should do in responding promptly to severe unemployment and crisis situations. Do not cut nutrition programs which help meet the needs of low income families: 57% of households receiving SNAP have income at or below the Federal poverty level, and 84% of them have a child, a senior, or a disabled person in the household.

Conservation measures and assistance to small growers should also be continued.

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 03, 2012, 2:02 p.m.

Comment: We would urge you to assure that the farm bill includes strong support for nutrition programs for poor and hungry people, at home and abroad.

SNAP benefits need to be maintained, and incentives should be increased for the purchase of healthy foods.

Farm policies need to help build markets for domestic farmers, linking them to local and regional development of rural areas.

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 5:29 p.m.

Comment: It is tremendously important that you include strong provisions for continuing and strengthening nutrition programs, such as SNAP and TEFAP. A circle of protection needs to be placed around programs which meet the needs of poor and vulnerable people at home and around the globe.

COMMENT OF JENNY WORMAN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 1:23 p.m.

City, State: West Hollywood, CA

Occupation: Actor

Comment: Please lift onerous red tape for small, and organic farmers. **Stop FDA Harassment Of Raw Milk Producers Now!** Lift ban on hemp farming, so our farmers can grow this extremely profitable cash crop. Ban GMO and sanction Mon-

santo from harassing small, local producers and other farmers. Stop colluding with Monsanto, and giving subsidies to Big Ag. Turn the water back on for all our farmers in California's central valley. People are more important than a 2 inch fish not even indigenous to the area.

Thanks.

COMMENT OF JIM WORSTELL

Date Submitted: Thursday, March 22, 2012, 8:04 a.m.

City, State: Almyra, AR

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Greenhouse/nursery

Size: 301-500 acres

Comment: Value-added Producer Grant Program and Farmers Market Promotion Program are the two programs which should not be cut and in fact should be increased. We do need to cut government expenditures drastically, but study after study shows that investment in job creating programs such as VAPG and FMPP actually increase government revenues because they increase jobs and income.

COMMENT OF DENISE WRIGHT

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 11:09 a.m.

City, State: Sebastopol, CA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Poultry/poultry products

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: I would like to see fair competition for all, large or small. No subsidies for farming, all GMO products labeled, no pesticides used. This would allow equitable local sustainable farming. Thank you for listening.

COMMENT OF JEFF WRIGHT

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 12, 2012, 6:00 a.m.

City, State: Bellville, OH

Occupation: Outreach Center & Food Pantry

Comment: As president and a volunteer at an Outreach Center and hunger program, I am writing to share my deep concern about hunger in Ohio. With unemployment (and underemployment) still high and many Americans still struggling to make ends meet, anti-hunger programs are helping many of our neighbors just put food on the table.

Nearly 50 million Americans are living in food insecurity. While food banks, churches, and pantries are doing great work in our community, charity alone cannot meet the need for food assistance. My program, is the Bellville Neighborhood Outreach Center in Bellville, OH (southern Richland County) which serves about 750 people each month, providing nearly 58,000 meals a year. This is an increase of approx. 50% over the number of people we were serving a year ago!

Congress should do its part by continuing to support anti-hunger programs like the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), and the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP), all of which are authorized in the farm bill.

Cutting anti-hunger programs will increase hunger in America. Given the associated health care and educational costs of hunger and poor nutrition, cuts to anti-hunger programs are short-sighted.

I ask you to please remember the families who are struggling in our country, and urge you to protect and strengthen important anti-hunger programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP in the 2012 Farm Bill reauthorization.

COMMENT OF JIM WRIGHT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:08 a.m.

City, State: Somerville, MA

Occupation: Art Conservator

Comment: I am planning to start a small production vegetable farm in the Northeast in the next 5 years. Please consider the small, organic family owned farms as well the big producers.

COMMENT OF MIKI WRIGHT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:26 p.m.

City, State: Lexington, KY
Occupation: Graphic Design

Comment: We can't feed the world with non-nutritive mass produced mono-crops. This country and the world needs the nutrition small farms can provide in the form of native vegetables and meats. We have to have more than corn and soy. Look what that diet has done to our own country. We are horribly obese and unhealthy. We can and must do better for ourselves and the people of the world we want to help. They don't need obesity, diabetes, and high blood pressure that comes from eating cheap mono-cropped grains. Imagine a field full of greens, broccoli, tomatoes, yams, beans, and squash instead of soy and more soy and corn and more corn. Yes it is cheap and it fills their bellies, but they need a more balanced diet. We all do. By subsidizing these massive grain crops, you are killing people with cheap calories and junk food, and killing the planet with pesticides and herbicides while depleting the soil for future generations. We are running out of phosphorus from making artificial fertilizers for these massive fields, when we could be using composted manure that would make the soil alive again. This is so very out of balance, and our Government subsidies are the cause. Please be the remedy and support small farms, diverse crops and organic practices.

COMMENT OF NADINE WRIGHT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 11, 2012, 5:33 p.m.
City, State: Madison, WI

Comment: Farming is an act upon the Earth for our own health. Pesticides, factory farms, other harmful chemicals, bad practice techniques and talking responsibility away from the communities for healthy food production are all hurting farmers and consumers.

COMMENT OF NANCY WRIGHT

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:29 p.m.
City, State: Orange City, FL
Occupation: Retired

Comment: Having concerns for the quality of our food inasmuch as it has been in steady decline over the past 50 years, I am calling for your support for organic and sustainable agriculture and the full endorsement of all the provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286), as well as the implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236). We do not need to cut the food stamp program by billions of dollars in order to leave farm subsidies intact—we need to fully fund conservation programs like the Conservation Stewardship Program to make sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs. When you grow good-quality, fully nutritious food, you don't need to eat as much to get your nutrition to keep a healthy body. God made us stewards of the land and animals to keep a viable future going for our next generations, and right now we are failing miserably at His command due to the influence of money and profits at the expense of others. The Native Indians had a better sense of the importance of taking care of Mother Earth than we ever have—we need to take lessons from those that take care of, and weed out the profiteers who are ruining things for everyone else as they have no real concern for anyone but themselves. We need more organic research funding for sustainable agriculture as we can grow more quality organic food in a small space that will properly feed more people than large agribusiness operations do with their nutrition-less crops that cause disasters for all. Please take heed—we all want our grandkids to have something great for their future, and not the illnesses and obesity they have now!

COMMENT OF WYNETTA WRIGHT

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 8:14 p.m.
City, State: Jacksonville, FL
Occupation: Nonprofit Org. Community Gardens

Comment: I live in a community that is a food desert I take elders in my organization to the closest store there are so many that don't have this support. Let's feed the elders and everyone.

WYNETTA WRIGHT.

COMMENT OF DWAYNE WRIGHTSMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:44 p.m.

City, State: Lee, NH

Occupation: Retired Teacher and Producer

Comment: I favor a farm bill that maximizes nutritious food production without excessive use of chemicals (herbicides and pesticides) in the production process in order to keep the people of our nation healthy throughout their lifetimes.

COMMENT OF CHRIS WRINN

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 12:25 p.m.

City, State: Milford, CT

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: I produce my own organic food because I have an auto-immune condition. We need to stop dumping tons of Round Up from Monsanto on our land, we need to be able to grow organic food and get support if needed. We need to let our local farmers label GMO foods as a freedom to let the public know what's going into their bodies. We need to stop fracking so the water and land isn't destroyed. We need to stop growing GMO corn as it's killing the bees, Poland has already stopped this practice. We need to get back to the land and away from chemicals that are killing it. We need to support the local farmer. Thank you.

COMMENT OF ROBERT WROBLEWSKI

Date Submitted: Saturday, April 28, 2012, 8:52 p.m.

City, State: Dearborn, MI

Occupation: Retired Teacher

Comment: Dear Members of the House Committee on Agriculture:

As you prepare to write and vote on the farm bill, I ask you emphatically to preserve current funding for the Food Stamp program. Although I recognize the need to balance the budget and reduce the deficit, I implore you not to do so by cutting this most vital program to combat the problem of hunger in the United States. A recent study indicates that the Food Stamp program is preventing millions of Americans from falling below the poverty level. With a record number of Americans currently in poverty, I strongly urge you to protect this vital food assistance for some of our most needy and vulnerable Americans. Thank you for considering my opinion.

COMMENT OF JANE WURM

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:54 p.m.

City, State: New Bedford, MA

Occupation: Unemployed USPS Mail Carrier

Comment: I live surrounded by small farms (dairy, produce, cattle and poultry.) Most of them use limited to no chemicals; maintaining and improving the land they occupy. Having a source of nutrient dense **Wholesome** food so close to home benefits me, my family and the community in countless ways. These farmers need all the help they can get to survive against the **Huge** agribusinesses that receive WAY more government help than they need. The **Health** of our citizens is dependent on real food, from real farms that use sustainable agricultural practices. Invest in our small farmers now, save **Billions** on health care costs later. The savings to the environment in carbon terms is incredible. (My food is from a few miles away, not shipped from the other side of the world)

Our local farmers help the community all they can: helping urban farmers grow crops on reclaimed vacant lots, helping volunteers grow tons and tons of food for our low income families, *etc.* Local farmers truly pay it forward. So I ask you to please support our small local farmers through a fair and generous farm bill. The health and future of this country depends on it. Thank you so much for all your hard work!

JANE WURM; Age: 56 on **No** medications, only see my Dr. for yearly check up. Probably due to eating healthy local food.

COMMENT OF JAMES WURSTER

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 6:36 a.m.

City, State: Springfield, PA

Occupation: Sr. Software Engineer

Comment: Farmers serve an extremely important role in our society—they help feed us. They are sometimes valued much less than what they are worth, much like teachers. We need to help them in every way we can to help them survive and so help us all survive.

COMMENT OF KATHERINE WUTHRICH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:43 p.m.

City, State: Chicago, IL

Occupation: Mother and Grandmother

Comment: We need to cut farm subsidies and keep funding for organic and new beginning farmers. This is the way we can combat obesity and sickness. Many years ago we did not distinguish or food by organic and non-organic. It was all the same and pretty healthy. **Cut The Entitlements To Farm Subsidies!** Why are you against giving seniors and the poor what they are entitled to, yet you have no problem subsidizing the big farmers? **Stop It!**

COMMENT OF JEFFREY WYATT

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 1:07 a.m.

City, State: Fairfield, CA

Occupation: Food Service

Comment: Organic and non-toxic farming techniques provide the best defense against major disease and pest infestation without considering the potentially harmful effects caused by consumption of pesticides and genetically modified foods. If we forced disclosure of the potentially harmful methods some of the fruits and vegetables are being cultivated with, the market demand for non-toxic fruits and vegetables would take care of the rest, benefiting the economy and the health of those who have been or will be affected by consumption of foods that contain toxic substances.

COMMENT OF BRYAN WYBERG

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 4:24 p.m.

City, State: Coon Rapids, MN

Occupation: Engineering

Comment: Provide sound and robust funding for voluntary conservation programs. An investment in farm bill conservation delivers positive outcomes that benefit everyone. Protecting soil and enhancing water quality are long-term investments in food security and health that ultimately act as cost-saving measures as well as an economic stimulus. Prioritize the Conservation Title by funding it at the current baseline average of \$6 billion a year.

Re-establish the stewardship compact that ensures basic soil and water conservation on American farmland receiving farm bill subsidies. The Federal crop insurance program has evolved to become the largest farm bill subsidy provided to agricultural producers. Subsidizing risk can create an incentive for taking serious risks with our natural resources. Re-attach the same basic stewardship obligations that apply to other farm bill subsidies (provisions known as “Conservation Compliance”) to combat unintended destructive consequences of taxpayer-subsidized crop insurance.

COMMENT OF NANCY WYLAND

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:10 a.m.

City, State: Coralville, IA

Occupation: Environmental Health Research Administration

Comment: It is critical that we maintain incentives for farmers to use conservation practices on Iowa land. If we do not take steps to conserve our most valuable natural resource, our cropland, we are not protecting our economic and environmental health interests. It's as simple as that. Without incentives, some farmers or farming operations may be tempted to forgo best practices in the interest of increasing yields and profits. We cannot afford to exploit the land in ways that lead to environmental degradation: soil erosion, destruction of natural prairies and wetlands that are critical to the survival of native species and the eco-balance in this region. Please protect these elements of the farm bill which look out for the long term sustainability of our land and the life upon it.

COMMENT OF LOIS WYMAN

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 10:18 a.m.

City, State: Union, MO

Occupation: Land Owner

Comment: We own a farm in Mo. and used a conservation easement to protect the land from future development . . . this would not have been possible without the tax abatement in the farm bill . . . please keep the incentives.

LOIS WYMAN.

JOINT COMMENT OF PHILLIP & HANNAH WYMOLA

Date Submitted: Saturday, March 24, 2012, 8:05 p.m.

City, State: Bryan, TX

Occupation: Stockroom Manager at a State University

Comment: I encourage you to support food programs for people who do not earn enough to feed themselves. Our family has been eligible for reduced price school lunches and probably other programs, but we have not used them. I believe the eligibility requirements should be adjusted, but I want the programs there if we really need them in the future.

May God bless us.

COMMENT OF STEVEANNA WYNN

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 16, 2012, 8:48 a.m.

City, State: Philadelphia, PA

Occupation: Executive Director

Comment:

1. Feeding our neighbors is a public-private partnership, and that you are doing your part and you want our government to do its part.
2. Cutting anti-hunger programs will increase hunger in America, as well as the associated health care, educational, and economic costs of food insecurity and poor nutrition.
3. Remember the families who are struggling in our community, and urge them to protect and strengthen important anti-hunger programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP in the 2012 Farm Bill reauthorization.

COMMENT OF PEEDEE WYRE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:39 p.m.

City, State: Oakland, CA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: As a Vietnam vet with "Agent Orange cancer," I would **Love** to see all herbicides, pesticides, *etc.*, done away with; and for AgriBiz to find ways to work **With** Nature, not against it.

Remember: if it kills earthworms, it's not good for humans. ***Etc., Etc., Etc.***

COMMENT OF MARY XAKELLIS-CHAPMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012 4:18 p.m.

City, State: Greenbelt, MD

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Factory farming is unsustainable. So is the massive use of chemicals which poison the Earth and the water. It is a legal form of fraud to have large areas untilled land under the guise of working farms and being paid to keep the acreage out of circulation. That this is allowed implies that are legislators are not operating for the common good, but for wealthy constituents.

COMMENT OF ZITA XAVIER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:46 p.m.

City, State: Bayfield, CO

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Field Crops, Fruits, Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: It's time for an ag bill that supports sustainable agriculture and small farmers and takes away subsidies for mass chemical soil destroying farming. Please support a progressive farm bill that supports small farms like ours and resilience through local sustainable farms.

COMMENT OF SANGITA YADAV

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:00 p.m.

City, State: Germantown, TN

Occupation: Mother and Consultant

Comment: The Ag Committee needs to not only consider the economic interests of big-Ag but also the effects of this industrialized food systems that is costing us more in terms of our health, our environment—polluted air, increased use of water as well as degraded land when the long-term outlook if we are to continue on the same path looks very dire for all these natural resources. I hope the farm policy is based on all our interests, each citizen, and is holistic in its approach as we are in need of sustainable solutions not a stock market short-term approach which has shown to be problematic.

COMMENT OF ARTEMAS YAFFE

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 2:09 a.m.

City, State: Redwood City, CA

Occupation: Health Educator

Comment: An Agriculture Bill must be passed which protects both the agriculture workers and the public which eats the food or end product. Avoiding dangerous pesticides & practices are foundational. Also, not allowing Monsanto or others control of the food round the world. Be wise, think and decide with wisdom and foresight.

Thank you,

ARTEMAS YAFFE.

COMMENT OF TOM YAHNKE, SR.

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 2:38 p.m.

City, State: St. Louis, MO

Occupation: Retired Businessman and Educator

Comment: I would like to see fair labor. I would like to see genetic modified food and components identified. I would like to see organic farmers have a better chance. I would like to see all subsidies carefully reevaluated.

COMMENT OF LYDIA YAMAGUCHI

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 02, 2012, 4:59 p.m.

City, State: Long Beach, CA

Occupation: Student

Comment: As a citizen and student who is concerned about the future of United States Agriculture, I strongly advocate that the House Committee on Agriculture and the United States Congress keep smaller farm operations in consideration during deliberations over the farm bill. Small farming operations are economically, culturally and historically an integral part of our country's agricultural landscape and their needs should not be pushed to the side in the face of large agribusinesses and other interests. I would like to recommend that within the farm bill you have structures and supports to help assure that agricultural policy is not biased against small farming operations, in order to make sure that they are economically viable. In this way we can maintain a diverse agricultural landscape, support the American people, encourage local connections through agriculture, and make our agricultural communities places that people will be proud of in the future.

COMMENT OF KYO YAMASHIRO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:13 p.m.

City, State: Santa Monica, CA

Occupation: Researcher

Comment: First and foremost, the priority of a new farm bill should be the safety and wholesomeness of our foods. We do not know enough about the effects of GMO products on our long-term health and the ecosystem. In the absence of eliminating or limiting the use of GMOs, we should at the very least be transparent about GMO products and label such products so that consumers are aware of what they are purchasing and putting into their children's and families' bodies. We should have the right to choose and we should have adequate information to make such a choice.

COMMENT OF REV. M. YANISH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:01 p.m.

City, State: Katonah, NY

Occupation: Retail Store Owner

Comment: It is time for a return to sanity in our governments' support for healthy farming. Corporate agribusiness clearly does not have the public's health in mind with their practices. Our representatives need to stop giving in to those that are destroying our health, our environment and our humanity. It is time to represent the greater good, not corporate influence. Talk is cheap, action is priceless and our health is at increasingly at risk.

COMMENT OF FINN YARBROUGH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:39 p.m.

City, State: Ferrisburgh, VT

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Livestock

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: Meaningful financial reform in the agricultural sector will mean gradually cutting out the subsidy props that support high-input means of production. Yes, this will mean that the price of some kinds of food on the shelves will appear to rise. But the true burden on the taxpayer remains the same, or even improves over time as our food system becomes more sustainable and a higher number of American farmers have access to reasonable profit margins without the need for government intervention.

COMMENT OF ERIN YARROBINO

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 5:53 a.m.

City, State: Ozone Park, NY

Occupation: Unemployed

Comment: Farmers should be given protection about the crops they harvest, and should be given fair wages too. Farm policy must protect farmers and the crops and all animals on the farm from pesticides and Toxins.

COMMENT OF SHARON YATES

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 12, 2012, 8:00 a.m.

City, State: Brooklyn, NY

Occupation: Retired

Comment: We need to stop the enormous subsidies to Factory farms that essentially raise animal feed. These are monocultures that are environmentally disastrous and economically unsustainable. Instead, we should be supporting small local farms which grow a greater variety of crops, provide a place for the next generation of farmers to begin their careers, and which ensure that fresh local organic produce will be available nationwide without having to ship it from all over the world.

COMMENT OF VIRGINIA YATES

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 09, 2012, 5:54 p.m.

City, State: Stafford, VA

Occupation: Sales Associate

Comment: Please don't support this bill that would undermine the stability of the poorest people in our country! So many people have to rely on SNAP programs *etc.* and if you cut down those programs it will affect the community negatively.

COMMENT OF ALEJANDRA YEE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:23 p.m.

City, State: Raeford, NC

Occupation: Homemaker

Comment: Support organic farming! Don't give in to Big Ag (Monsanto) and their bullying. Stop subsidizing wheat and corn which makes processed foods cheaper. Our nation's health is heading into collapse with obesity and diabetes on the rise! Do the right thing for yourself and the nation!

COMMENT OF JEFF YOCHEs

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:19 p.m.
City, State: New York, NY
Occupation: Sustainable Designer
Comment: Support small farms! Create jobs by support and nurturing the farm community we need food grown by people, not machines and industrial processes.

COMMENT OF DAVID YODER

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 20, 2012, 1:24 p.m.
City, State: Chattanooga, TN
Occupation: Insurance Sales
Comment: It's time to end agricultural subsidies to industrial farms. These funds should be re-allocated to small farms. Specifically, funds should be used to help modernize equipment/technology, convert to organic, or diversify crops.

COMMENT OF JAC YON

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:03 p.m.
City, State: Spring Branch, TX
Occupation: Retired
Comment: If we want to lower the cost of health care in this country, we need to slow its demand. Improving nutrition is a huge step toward this goal. Increasing organic whole foods reduces the stress chemicals fertilizer and pesticides add to our bodies, thus promoting a stronger immune system to naturally battle disease. Our farm bill must help consumers choose better food that's organic. Doing so will lower the cost of health care . . . allowing consumers to increase prosperity . . . while improving their quality of life. If you want to reduce government debt, and improve the quality of citizens' lives, then vote to help make organic whole foods more available. Thank you.

COMMENT OF YUKI YOSHIDA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:59 a.m.
City, State: Urbana, IL
Occupation: Student in Natural Resources
Comment: The evidence is clear that the subsidies for large-scale, mono-culture farming is doing more harm than good. I also hope that you will consider designing a bill that gives farmers a stable security that does not require them to "get big or get out."
 Thank you.

COMMENT OF ANDREA YOUNESS

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 5:43 a.m.
City, State: Tampa, FL
Occupation: Massage Therapist
Comment: Please help create **Real** reform where the small organic farmer isn't bulldozed over by huge agricultural monopolies and forced to destroy the Earth's delicate balance by using chemicals to prepare the soil. We need to come together for real and sustainable farming. I would **Love** to see a realistic Organic Farm Bill put to work and supported by our government. Believe it or not, some of us aren't governed by the all mighty dollar and actually care about the foods we put into our mouths and how that food was grown.

COMMENT OF ANNE YOUNG

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:00 p.m.
City, State: Revere, PA
Occupation: Executive Assistant
Comment: The big problem of child obesity should be proof that we are subsidizing the wrong foods. Please end funding for corn and soybeans and increase funding for fruits and vegetables. I support H.R. 3236 and H.R. 3286.
 Thank you,
 Ms. ANNE YOUNG.

COMMENT OF CAROL YOUNG

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:44 p.m.

City, State: Port St. Lucie, FL

Occupation: Nurse

Comment: Our agricultural products must be kept safe for human consumption. We need to be aware of all genetically engineered food by labels. We need to protect family farms from being bullied and overruled by big money corporate farming corps. So many areas of life are affected by corruption and greed, we need to protect our food. We all need to eat to stay alive and we must stand up for safe food supplies.

COMMENT OF CATHERINE YOUNG

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:25 p.m.

City, State: Stroudsburg, PA

Occupation: Career Counselor

Comment: I believe that U.S. food and agricultural policy must focus on adopting best agricultural practices that put the health of its citizens, the land and the livelihood of farmers and farm workers over the interests of industrial agriculture lobbyists.

I support:

- (1) The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- (2) Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- (3) The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- (4) Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

COMMENT OF JENNIFER YOUNG

Date Submitted: Wednesday, May 02, 2012, 9:48 p.m.

City, State: Waterloo, IA

Occupation: Social Worker

Comment: Food insecurity should not be part of the literal Land of Plenty. Nourishment should be affordable and easy to find. Not a privilege for only a few. It's really a shame American farmer's farm to feed animals not the American people.

COMMENT OF JULIE YOUNG

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 9:53 a.m.

City, State: Golden, CO

Occupation: Substance Abuse Counselor

Comment: Please support the programs we need for TANF and SNAP. Many of the families I work with every day cannot survive without them. Large agribusinesses should not be included in any agriculture subsidies. They do not need government subsidies intended to help family farms. Our environment is being polluted with chemicals from pesticides and fertilizers used in farming. Organic farming helps the environment through the safe farming practices in the EQIP Organic Initiative. I support the full funding of the Conservation Stewardship Program and believe that any new farm insurance programs should comply with its guidelines. I also support the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236) as an important tool in encouraging new farmers.

We need to reduce the cost of transportation and energy required to move food long distances from where it is grown by encouraging food grown locally. I support the provisions contained in the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).

COMMENT OF KRISTOFER YOUNG

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:58 p.m.

City, State: Ojai, CA

Occupation: Doctor of Chiropractic

Comment: The farm bill has historically subsidized crops that are now clearly known to cause obesity and chronic illness. We need a big change! We need to support the production of vegetables and fruits that are scientifically proven to improve health, and combat disease.

COMMENT OF MARC YOUNG

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 9:48 p.m.

City, State: Sealy, TX

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Livestock

Size: 50–150 acres

Comment: Crop Insurance is an essential.

Must keep Farm Service Agencies in each county that has agriculture. Consolidation must be more than a just a prescriptive “X” number of miles apart. Consolidation reduces a counties say when the number on the Local Committee has to be prated. Bigger area should have a bigger number of representatives. Areas that are being consolidated, if consolidation must happen should be areas of common types of ag production. Rice Farming areas should be consolidated with Rice Farming Areas not with Cattle and Corn, Cotton and Milo areas. (Waller Co. with Harris and Montgomery, not Waller and Austin Co.)

Conservation and Wildlife subsidies while desirable are not as critical as crop subsidies. Low Cost Housing is not Agricultural related. No preference should be given to anyone on the basis of race, age, sex, creed or national origin.

Programs should be moved to the state level and consolidated with state programs to reduce costs. Shift tax collection to the states.

COMMENT OF MATTHEW YOUNG

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:08 p.m.

City, State: Lake Forest, CA

Occupation: Student and Teaching

Comment: Please support a farm bill that pushes our country in the direction of encouraging and investing in healthier, higher quality food, with proper funding for organic, local, and sustainable agriculture. **Do Not** cut funding to vital programs such as nutrition, conservation and support for organic and sustainable agriculture. This would be a mistake and would put you on the wrong side of history. Agriculture and food politics is one of the next frontiers in political reform, and the direction in which the world, the nation, and local communities are moving is toward higher sustainability, organic farming, and increased implementation of cutting edge nutritional research into our dietary and agricultural economies. Good farming policy considers environmental, health, and local economy concerns. Thank you.

COMMENT OF S. YOUNG

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:35 p.m.

City, State: Gainesville, FL

Occupation: Administrator for Aviation Leasing Company

Comment: Please support local sustainable agriculture and organic agriculture in the farm bill.

We desperately need to support our local farmers and ranchers to help avoid food riots in case the transportation grid goes down, which it could far too easily do should the Middle East erupt in war and the military seizes all sources of fuel.

We also desperately need to support organic agriculture, as scientific studies have shown that all the chemicals and additives in our non-organic food supply have actually decreased its nutritional value to the point of barely offering any nutrition at all.

Good nutrition is the heart of maintaining a healthy happy productive America, which is vital to the short- and long-term success of America.

Big Corporate AgriBusiness does **Not** need any subsidies nor unfair marketing support. The small local farmers and ranchers, however, critically need support.

Local farmers and ranchers are vital to providing food to communities in event of Middle East war, which is beginning to look more and more likely.

Please do your best to help ensure local farmers and ranchers, and organic farmers, are well enabled to stay in business and to succeed, in order to protect America's health and ability to succeed and to grow despite overseas turmoil.

Thank you.

COMMENT OF SHARON YOUNG

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:28 p.m.

City, State: Sykesville, MD

Occupation: Retired Federal Employee

Comment: Roscoe,

Due To My Medical Conditions I Have Found That Organically-Grown, Non-GMO Foods Are Better For My Health Than “Big Agri-Business” Produced Foods. These wholesome foods have actually kept me from being one of those **Burdensome** patients for the nation’s medical facilities.

It Is Simply Silly To Reduce \$4 million from organic research funding and cut funding to support Beginning Farmers in half. Especially at a time when **Science (Yep, There’s That Word Again) Clearly** indicates that organically grown, **Whole** foods are one of the **Keys** to reducing **Obesity** in this nation.

So, **In The Public Interest**, Roscoe, here’s what I’d like to see you do:

1. fully endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
2. Fully fund conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and make sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
3. Implement of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
4. Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Roscoe, please remember that as one of your constituents **And** a taxpayer I am also your employer.

Thank You For Your Time.

COMMENT OF THOMAS YOUNG

Date Submitted: Sunday, May 13, 2012, 4:50 p.m.

City, State: Seattle, WA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Specialty Crops

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: As a small, young organic farmer we have found that it is nearly impossible to earn enough money farming, which is a very low-income profession, to purchase the major input required for farming: land. We would love to see the new farm bill provide support for new farmers to access farmland at affordable prices that are not subject to the vagaries of speculation by the real estate market.

We also are concerned about the general inability of most farmers to afford health insurance, despite the fact that farming is an inherently dangerous profession. Unaffordable costs associated with health care are one of the top reasons that many farmers end up having to sell their land and go out of business. Any provisions which make health care more affordable to farmers would be widely hailed as a tremendous benefit to low-income farmers.

Finally, I would like to see programs that increase the access and affordability of locally grown produce for low-income consumers. Numerous studies have shown that low income families tend to eat less healthy diets high in processed corn and soy ingredients (which are heavily subsidized) rather than whole foods. As a consequence, these families suffer higher rates of obesity, heart disease, and type II diabetes, and they are often uninsured, further taxing our health care system. By increasing the availability of healthy, high nutrient, locally grown produce to low-income families, we will begin to address the myriad health problems associated with poor diets in America and support local agricultural producers, thereby creating stronger, healthier, and more resilient communities.

COMMENT OF CAROL LOU YOUNG-HOLT

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 8:34 p.m.

City, State: La Honda, CA

Occupation: Retired Educator

Comment: I live in an agricultural region where we depended on locally produced food from small farms. We have no supermarkets locally and with farmers markets we are able to get fresh produce that is sustainably grown. Our farmers need your support.

COMMENT OF SAAD YOUSEF

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:15 p.m.

City, State: Austin, TX

Occupation: Entrepreneur

Comment: I believe we can use organic farming practices and still be very profitable. Industrial lobbyists who only care about their bottom dollar will regret their

actions only when a loved one is affected by unsafe farming practices. I call on you to ensure that a safe farming bill is passed through the House. I am sure you eat organic foods all the time and know how much more better tasting they are than regular foods. I will choose not to do business in a state or area where the health of individuals is not of utmost importance. After all it is a national security concern.

COMMENT OF ELEU YUEN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 2:51 a.m.

City, State: San Diego, CA

Comment: I hope that everyone gets to help us make the right choice. You know . . . food is one of the most important things to us Humans. Unless people are planning on killing us from the inside out with bad food, I don't see why any one person wouldn't vote for Organic. Thank you for your time.

COMMENT OF ARTHUR YUENGER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:36 p.m.

City, State: Fairfield, IA

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Wouldn't it be wise to put public money into healthy farms to produce healthy food? Why not take all the wasted defense money and put it into healthy agriculture?

COMMENT OF RUTH YURCHUCK

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 10, 2012, 9:49 a.m.

City, State: Tucker, GA

Occupation: Part-Time Nursing Faculty Member

Comment: Cuts to the Food Stamps program will be devastating to many who have jobs that do not pay enough, have lost jobs, and are between jobs.

Food insecurity is a problem with a significant and growing number of Americans. Please do not reduce this most important and necessary form of assistance.

COMMENT OF JULIE ZAK

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 1:12 a.m.

City, State: Forestville, CA

Occupation: Environmental and Coatings Consulting

Comment: Large agribusiness concerns are hurting small farmers—people have the right, always, to have good clean food, depend on the control of hazardous substances and be advised about what is in their food. Get real, get money out of Washington and work with farmers to ensure good food properly grown and identified.

COMMENT OF MICHELLE ZAMBRANO

Date Submitted: Tuesday, March 20, 2012, 2:40 p.m.

City, State: Lynbrook, NY

Occupation: Outreach Coordinator

Comment: Do not make cuts to SNAP benefits! SNAP relieves pressure on overwhelmed food banks, pantries, religious congregations and other emergency food providers across the country who could not begin to meet the need for food assistance if SNAP eligibility or benefits were reduced. SNAP is targeted to the neediest and most vulnerable people in our country, 84% of all benefits go to households with a child, senior, or disabled person. Please keep funding for this vital program intact!

COMMENT OF JANET ZAMPIERI

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:26 p.m.

City, State: Tucson, AZ

Occupation: Retired

Comment: We need a healthy farm bill that focuses on organic methods and away from chemical fertilizers and insecticides. We need to treat farm animals humanely. Bring the animals back into the pasture to let them fertilize the soil!

COMMENT OF KEITH ZANG

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:39 p.m.

City, State: Elma, WA

1533

Occupation: Health Education

Comment: Please keep funding for small independent farmers as well as organic farmers. We need them. they provide food and keep the money in our local communities creating economic stability.

COMMENT OF DOUGLAS ZAPOTOCNY

Date Submitted: Monday, May 14, 2012, 8:24 a.m.

City, State: Oak Park, IL

Occupation: Retired

Comment: It is important to protect food subsidy programs in the Federal budget and to not reduce the SNAP program. Budget cuts hurt are most vulnerable the most; we must protect this population as we reduce our overall expenditures.

COMMENT OF JESSE ZASTROW

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 6:58 a.m.

City, State: Baltimore, MD

Occupation: AmeriCorps Service Member

Comment: In full support of an Organic Farm Bill! It is way too long overdue and as a people we **Do** have a right to know we have a very accessible means to safe, healthy, local, and sustainably harvested and farmed foods. I am a taxpayer and its absurd that it goes straight to keep huge agribusinesses afloat from ridiculous subsidies and lack of regulation. My one and only wish is for the next farm bill is that you give considerably more funding to small, local, organic farmers and lay a framework for allowing new and existing farmers alike an economically viable opportunity to farm using organic and regenerative methods. Thanks you.

COMMENT OF DEBRA ZAVALA

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 2:25 a.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Theatre Checker

Comment: We need to eat real food people. Folks are getting cancer and illnesses that are not 100% curable. We need to support farmers and have as much fresh vegetables from USA & fruits from USA on the tables of our families for children to eat and grow strong with healthy cells and healthy brains, and without autism. Please support the bill.

COMMENT OF JENNA ZAWACKI

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:17 p.m.

City, State: Robbinsville, NJ

Occupation: Nanny

Comment: Monsanto has released its first direct-to-consumer product, a GM sweet corn containing Bt toxin, designed to protect the plant by rupturing the stomach of any insect that feeds on its. Monsanto claims the toxin will break down before the corn makes it to your dinner table, but rats fed on the GM corn showed organ failure and the toxin has been detected in the bodies of pregnant women. Please help our local farmers and keep Monsanto out of our fields! America is being destroyed for the sake of greed. These are your, brothers, sisters, child, grandchild that are being affected by this. Please please help us.

COMMENT OF CHRISTINE ZECCA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 10:58 a.m.

City, State: Sausalito, CA

Occupation: Artist/Counselor

Comment: Please limit all your controls to agribusiness and huge feed lot operations. Let small farmers do what they do so well, which is grow clean healthy food, letting their cows eat grass in pastoral settings. Not only is this good for the environment, the animals and plants, but it is also better for us humans that need healthy food to grow and thrive. This is not happening now with the GMO tainted food and industrialized feed lots.

COMMENT OF JUDY ZEHR

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:32 a.m.

City, State: Portland, OR
Occupation: Counselor
Comment: Please support family farms, small farms, organic farms, the farms that really need your support. Please support diversity in farming, and environmentally sound farming practices.

COMMENT OF SHADY ZEINEDDINE

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:51 p.m.
City, State: Garden Grove, CA
Occupation: Software Engineer
Comment: The only path to a safe, secure, and equal food system is to eliminate all subsidies and government programs. Let people vote with their dollar by supporting the farms they prefer. Stop manipulating what farmers grow and what people eat by falling prey to powerful interest groups. An industry is like a football game, and the government role is the referee. Your role is to make sure everyone follows the rules to ensure our food is safe and do nothing else!

COMMENT OF MICHAEL ZELKO

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 2:16 p.m.
City, State: Makawao, HI
Producer/Non-producer: Producer
Type: Field Crops
Size: Less than 50 acres
Comment: America's greatness, at its foundation, is Agriculture . . . not Agribusiness. Please focus our taxpayer dollars on the building of locally produced safe food systems. If you, our representatives, focus our resources on sustainable agriculture then We Farmers will grow and produce food that will nurture our children for generations. The jobs based on sustainable agriculture will grow a stable long term economy.

Please Focus, our future reality depends on it.

Aloha

MIKE ZELKO.

COMMENT OF ELIZABETH ZENKER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:36 p.m.
City, State: Arcata, CA
Occupation: Unemployed Social Worker
Comment: I only purchase and consume organically grown food, due to my health issues (brain tumor survivor) and what I have seen take place in this country. And due to that brain surgery, I am disabled, and so on a low income. Yet it may have been my healthy lifestyle which has brought me far further on my recovery than the neurologists ever predicted it would!

As I know how to cook basic foods, such as rice and beans, I find beautiful garden vegetables fully delicious—so continue to avoid purchasing non-organic foods. And I will take this opportunity to inform you of what I, and many others in my community, fully support:

- The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

COMMENT OF JANET ZERBEL

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:18 p.m.
City, State: Grawn, MI
Occupation: Retired Public School Teacher
Comment: It's all about the health of our citizens. To be pragmatic, it's also about the financial cost of medical care for Americans. We deserve and need the **Best** nutrition, not the toxic "food" produced by factory farms and Monsanto!

COMMENT OF NATALIE ZERI

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 4:56 p.m.

City, State: Topanga, CA

Comment: I do not eat pesticide sprayed food. I will not eat chemically engineered food.

Abolish this type of farming practice or unsustainable, unethical, mindless food production machine that goes against the laws and cycles of nature.

I don't want to be sick because of the food I may eat, the air I may breath or the water I drink. These unsustainable food production systems effect more than the growing pockets of chemical companies, they effect the balance of healthy life, healthy immune systems of all living species.

Enough!

Abolish this terror on our food and environment!

COMMENT OF JAMIE ZERILLI

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:51 p.m.

City, State: Blauvelt, NY

Occupation: Office Representative for Doctor

Comment: I'd like organic farming in our Nation! Let's get back to basics and produce great quality foods. Our Nation is suffering with epidemics in massive proportions. Please!

COMMENT OF DAVID ZEUTZIUS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 7:15 p.m.

City, State: Erie, CO

Occupation: Software Receive Call

Comment: We need to cut back on the number of herbicides and pesticides used on crops. this will keep the farm workers safe and our food healthier. We also need to cut back on the amount of GM Corn/soy/cotton/canola grown.

COMMENT OF CAROLYN ZEZIMA

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:50 a.m.

City, State: New York, NY

Occupation: Director of Nonprofit

Comment: Please think about the importance of "real" food, vegetables and fruits, local economies and nutrition programs. Please start abandoning the emphasis on commodities and processed foods. This is our children's future—please don't make it worse. The farming of the last 40 years has got to move on to healthier, sustaining, soil-building methods.

COMMENT OF ADRIENNE ZHANG

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:59 p.m.

City, State: Hamel, MN

Occupation: Registered Nurse

Comment: Please help stop the obesity epidemic, as well as many other health problems, by shifting support to non-GMO growers, and more fruit and vegetable production than grain production. I believe we are only beginning to see the adverse affects of high pest control and GMO use and will continue to feel them for decades to come . . . just like we have with DDT use. Help us stop experimenting on the public and take a more conservative approach that food is **Not** safe until proven so, as opposed to the FDA's current approach that it is not dangerous until proven so.

COMMENT OF JACQUELINE ZIEGLER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:27 p.m.

City, State: Plymouth, WI

Occupation: Minister

Comment: It is time to support small family farmers who want to grow food and raise animals in sustainable and organic agriculture methods.

The public has a right to want this; we are saying that it is important to us **And** to the land, water, air—to allow small family farms to provide people with local and healthy food. As we contribute with our taxes to the paying for the subsidies in the farm bill, we have a right to demand our requests be honored.

COMMENT OF BARBARA ZIEK

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 11:57 p.m.**City, State:** Colorado Springs, CO**Producer/Non-producer:** Producer**Type:** Other**Size:** Less than 50 acres

Comment: Grow a spine, congress! Stand up and do what you know is right. Revamp the farm bill so that it works for real food producers—organic farmers and the like—and for the food consumers of this nation. That would be all of us, even you, congress person. Push back against the big chemical/agriculture corporations' lobbyists even if they did give you money. Do something completely different for a change. Support the small farmer who grows diverse species of fruits, veggies and grains. In that way, you will support good health for American food consumers. Sorry, but a diet of Froot Loops, Twinkies, pizza, French fries and Coke does not build good health, and, via their GMO ingredients, these foods are usually subsidized. Subsidize the small farmer who produces real food, wholesome vegetables, fruits and grains, not corporations who contribute genetically modified ingredients to the food-like substances that parade as food in our country today.

Now, I do understand that the FDA, the USDA, Monsanto, Cargill et al., are simply different arms of the same entity and that their interest is in making profits—especially wealth for themselves. And I do realize they push you hard for generous subsidies. However, it is time that the farm subsidies work in favor of consumers and in favor of the small farmers who produce real food—lots of vegetables, fruits and whole grains as well as meat and dairy that is humanely raised on diets natural to their species without the use of routine antibiotics and GMO grain.

Where will the money come from? Immediately drop **All** subsidies for producers of genetically modified food unless genetically modified food is accurately labeled for the consumer. The corporations will whine and whimper and cry foul. But you will not be adding regulations. You will not be adding taxes. You will simply be asking those companies to stand on their own feet instead of riding on the tax payers' backs.

Split the current subsidy pot two ways: farmers who raise organic food and the food consumers. If GMO producers suddenly overcome their aversion to labeling, give those chemical/agricultural corporations that get subsidies now up to 1/3 of the pot, with the stipulation that the subsidies must first go to developing and implementing ways of preventing their crops from spreading uninvited to neighboring fields. Other corporate subsidy money should be spent doing rigorous testing on GMOs by independent researchers.

Why subsidize the small farmers and organic growers? It will help lower the prices of nutritious whole food which will encourage people to buy and eat this good food. Raising these subsidies and lowering GMO ag-corp subsidies will make real whole food more competitively priced with processed food-like substances. People will buy more healthy food. A healthy diet = healthier citizens = potentially lower medical bills, especially bills related to obesity and obesity related diseases such as diabetes and heart disease. Hmmm. I think I heard somewhere that skyrocketing 'health' care bills could bankrupt this country in the few decades . . . Ah, yes, congress person, what one puts in one's body is often related to how much one puts in the local hospital's coffers. By legislating for healthier whole foods, you will at the very same time and at no added expense, legislate for healthier human citizens. Healthier human citizens have fewer medical bills. This could help offset the terrible national medical expense. Healthy human citizens are more productive on the job. Gee, isn't productivity on the job an issue? Isn't the pentagon a bit worried about finding healthy recruits? **Feed The Nation Healthy Food, Real Whole Food, For A Change!** You have the power to do that by restructuring farm subsidies and passing other health promoting legislation, congress person!

I suggested subsidizing food consumers. In the farm bill? Why in the world do that? Almost two generations have grown up with processed food ads as their nutritional 'experts' and guides. Home economics courses were dropped from schools long ago to save the schools money. People, especially young people, need to be retrained about what to eat and how to prepare food. They have been trained by expert corporate marketers to consume disease promoting junk. They know nothing about real nutrition or healthy preparation of food. They don't know that eating a diet of highly processed crap brings them the misery of diabetes, heart attacks and obesity. Who is going to teach them? No one, unless Uncle Sam steps in. Big food corporations are not going to stop spewing their nutritional nonsense on TV. The advertising arms of food interests have shown without a doubt that they cannot be trusted to do that. I started teaching in 1970. I witnessed firsthand the change in my

students' diets over the decades. I watched with great frustration the decreased learning abilities of increasing numbers of kids—kids who eat Twinkies for breakfast and come to school with their Pepsi in hand, then eat pizza and fries for lunch every day. Garbage in; garbage out.

So how would subsidizes to help consumers work? Subsidize supermarkets in food deserts. Subsidize food stamps so that they will pay 2 for 1 when spent on whole grains, vegetables and fruits and organic meat and dairy. Hold classes about fresh food preparation and cooking in the supermarkets and subsidize that. Send those consumers home with food necessary to cook the meal they just learned about. Subsidize that. Use some of that money to advertise fresh veggies and whole grains to kids to help combat the endless promoting of health destroying junk food that they watch on TV. Use some of that GMO subsidy money to teach people, especially kids, to grow community gardens in the cities. Kids who grow food, kids who prepare food, are likely to eat it—even if it's broccoli. Kids who eat lots of carrots and spinach and yes, broccoli, are healthier and learn better than kids who eat lots of processed cake, soda and chips.

This reallocating of subsidies will support small farmers and food businesses as well as food consumers and will send a strong message to big chemical/agricultural corporations that this nation is truly about supporting its farmers and its food consumers (that's us—we all eat). You will be saying that you are not going to be spending our hard earned tax dollars supporting the disgusting health-destroying charade that masquerades as our food supply system today.

In addition to reallocating farm subsidies, support H.R. 3236 and H.R. 3286. Fully fund conservation programs such as the Conservation Stewardship Program. Maintain the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Stand up to your corporate controllers, congress person! Stand up for the **People** of this country! It is actually patriotic to work for the good of the country! Stand up, congress person! Be a human American working for other human Americans, for a change.

If you are that rare Congress Person who does work for the people of this country and their health and well being, thank you! Please pass this along to a congress person who needs a little reminder. If you are a congress person who needs a reminder to work on a farm bill that benefits the producers of real, whole foods and benefits food consumers, **Get Your Ass In Gear And Pass A Farm Bill That Will Help Producers Of Organic Food And Help Americans Get Healthy.**

The farm bill may be the most important bill you pass. Yes, the farm bill affects those who produce the food we eat. It also directly affects the health of our citizens. You have it in your power to do something about that, congress person. Do you have the courage it will take to fly in the face of these corporate citizens who like the status quo and want more?

The farm bill quite directly affects how well students learn. You have it in your power to do something about that. Do you really care about our kids? You either do or you don't.

The farm bill affects the military, and thus, our national security; recruiters say up to ¼ of applicants are too obese and unhealthy to be soldiers. Are you a true patriot? One who will stand up against corporate controllers, one who will stand up for real food reform in this country? They say the army moves on its stomach . . .

A major reason our young population is so unhealthy is the often subsidized GMO-containing food-like substances they do eat—and the real, whole foods they don't eat. You have in your power to do something about that. Are you man enough for the job?

Companies' expenses shoot through the roof with the outrageous cost of employee health benefits and employee absenteeism; a healthy workforce eats good, whole food. Health benefits for healthy employees cost less; healthy employees are more productive. You have it in your power to do something about that, congress person. Don't rubberstamp the farm bill, don't just tweak it and **Don't** give in to your controllers' demands for more subsidies and more unsavory leeway in getting their unhealthy products to market.

Trash the destructive parts of the old farm bill. Be willing to think outside the corporate box; don't be afraid to do something ingenious because it hasn't been done before. Pass a bill that supports good, whole food for America instead of supporting the disease-promoting crap that is so regularly presented to us as food. Use our tax money to support the growing of healthy food for America. Work for the human citizens who voted for you, not the corporate citizens who may have bought you.

COMMENT OF LINDA ZIGICH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:38 p.m.

City, State: Medford, OR

Occupation: Retired

Comment: Why not cut subsidies to farmers who do not farm on their land and support the organic and sustainable crops farmers that do? We need product, produce, and progress on this measure not profit for the few. Our food supply needs to be sustainable and abundant.

Please take action that insures us of that need. Thank you.

COMMENT OF ADAM ZIMMERMAN

Date Submitted: Thursday, May 17, 2012, 3:22 p.m.

City, State: Portland, OR

Occupation: Investor

Comment: Thank you for accepting comments on this important piece of legislation. The farm bill is our *de facto* policy for rural development in the U.S. It has long been a grab bag of subsidies and disconnected programs that prefers to funnel money into existing programs, often disregarding their efficacy, or ability to create real economic opportunities. Please consider increasing support to programs that catalyze rural business innovation, that support the development of a diverse small-business base in rural communities. That score proposals that offer living wage employment and small business generation higher than subsidies for factory farms that provide minimum wage jobs with little opportunity for advancement. Thank you.

COMMENT OF AUDREY ZIMMERMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 9:42 a.m.

City, State: Cary, ME

Occupation: Educator

Comment: I think one of the most important jobs you have before you in the 2012 Farm bill is to decentralize the farm industry by moving farm policy toward greater support of small family farms (~100–1,000 acres), and smaller farms in general. This is critical to food security, food safety, and farming/environmental sustainability.

End subsidies for corn, which is fueling more ethanol than food production, and is responsible for the explosion in cheap corn syrup sweetener, which is debilitating the health of our people.

I think the link should be broken between food production and commodities/futures markets, which don't benefit farmers as much as Wall Street financiers.

- Support our fight against hunger by maintaining and strengthening critical nutrition programs in this time of unprecedented need. We must not solve our budget problems on the backs of those experiencing food insecurity, including our most vulnerable—our children, the elderly, and the disabled;
- Provide an even “plowing” field by fully funding programs that support beginning and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, organic farming, regional farm and food economies, and rural development. We need more farmers and ranchers, more sustainable food production, and more economic opportunity in our food system;
- Support family farmers that really need help, not the biggest farms that don't: End subsidies (aka direct payments and countercyclical commodity programs), and replace them with loophole-free agriculture risk coverage. Additionally, implement a cap on crop insurance premium subsidies;
- Ensure that limited conservation funding maximizes lasting environmental benefits: Limit funds to Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) for animal waste management infrastructure by eliminating the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) Livestock Set-aside and protect the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) from disproportionate cuts, and improve it by ranking applications solely on their conservation benefits.

COMMENT OF CINDY ZIMMERMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 8:18 p.m.

City, State: Palatine, IL

Occupation: Engineer

Comment: Stop farm subsidies on large scale farms. Encourage small scale farms which practice sustainable farming. Don't get provisions that help organic farming. Don't encourage CAFO animal production.

COMMENT OF JOAN ZIMMERMAN

Date Submitted: Saturday, May 19, 2012, 1:11 p.m.

City, State: Dearborn, MI

Occupation: Early Childhood Educator

Comment: It's tough for farmers to deal with uncertain weather, as well as big moneyed companies like Monsanto bullying farmers and producing "Frankenfoods" which will undoubtedly mean negative health effects to many consumers. Big industrialists need to know that we are all in this together! Our food safety is their food safety as well. I am old enough to remember the movie *Soylent Green* . . . Who knew at the time that that Charleton Heston film was a glimpse to the future of farming and farmers, and how we what people would have available to eat! How sad for all of us. Please! Stop the madness and save our farms and the farmers who work to feed America. Thank you!

COMMENT OF TRACEY ZINK

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:36 p.m.

City, State: Richmond, VA

Occupation: Public Relations Professional

Comment: I cannot stress enough how important it is to support organic farmers and organic farming practices in a time where we are being bombarded with chemicals from every direction. I practice a very healthy lifestyle eating fresh fruits and vegetables and exercising daily. Several years ago in my mid-30s I became ill and started gaining weight, losing muscle tone and contracted skin cancer and some odd muscle inflammations. I'm too young and shouldn't be having these issues so I've done a lot of research to find out what happened. I was predominantly eating kashi and non-organic (aka genetically modified GMO) vegetables and fruits. I believe the symptoms I had were a direct result of all the toxins I was unknowingly ingesting and a lack of nutrients in the food to bolster my immune system. In fact GMOs are polluting our environment as pesticide resistance increases and the runoff is getting into our air, our meat and our water supply. It's not a sustainable method of farming and logical observers should be able to make a common sense judgment that while these are not intentionally ill-meant farming practices, they are having a negative effect on the health of the general population in the United States as a whole. Since switching to completely organic foods, I have not had a recurrence of cancer or any of the other health issues that I was dealing with before. Other than that my lifestyle has not changed much. I don't ask that you make a judgment on GMOs at this time (as we would need to cite many studies and the questionable influence of former Monsanto employees in all the bureaucratic positions), but I do ask that you keep competition in farming practices fair and competitive so all Virginians will still have the opportunity to make their own choice on what they choose to eat. I urge you to support funding aimed towards organic farming and practices that are natural and do not use pesticides and additives. By increasing funding here you will not only help support sustainable practices in agriculture and local businesses that will maintain our agricultural landscape in Va., but also you'll be supporting Virginians right to choose foods that they feel are the best for their family and the environment. Please vote to increase funding to organic farmers and organic farming practices in this session's farm bill. Thank you for your serious consideration in this matter and for serving as the voice for our community.

COMMENT OF JEAN ZIRGER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 2:34 p.m.

City, State: Mena, AR

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: This new farm bill must level the playing field upon which producers of any size compete in the marketplace. The unfettered free market will then decide how the profits get shared.

COMMENT OF VINCENT ZITO

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:43 p.m.

City, State: Concord, NH

Occupation: Electronics Technician

Comment: Our farm policy should promote organic farming, period. We need to remove forever the influence of agribusiness, GMO, and chemical industry special

interests from our agricultural policymaking. This will improve not only the health of our people, but the health of our democracy.

COMMENT OF MARC ZOCHER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 1:00 p.m.

City, State: Bainbridge Island, WA

Producer/Non-producer: Producer

Type: Vegetables

Size: Less than 50 acres

Comment: As a small producer, I urge you to refocus the farm bill to match the grassroots movement away from factory farming, away from GMO crop support, and away from the corporate control of our food supply. In case you haven't noticed—if you don't fix it, we, the people, will. Please help us while you're still relevant in this discussion!

COMMENT OF CHETANAA ZOELLER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:52 p.m.

City, State: Makawao, HI

Occupation: Realtor

Comment: Organic farming is the only way to really be sustainable and ensure that there will be a livable planet for many future generations . . . so please make sure you take that into account. GMO will create too many imbalances . . . it is not safe and needs to be abandoned now.

COMMENT OF HONZ ZONDORGH

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:35 p.m.

City, State: Tucson, AZ

Occupation: Retired Doctor

Comment: Please protect small organic farmers who help improve food quality and sustainable agriculture for benefit of our children and grandchildren. Thank you.

COMMENT OF GRETTA ZORN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:09 p.m.

City, State: North Brunswick, NJ

Occupation: Retired Educator

Comment: Please consider the impact of the bill on the health of the land and of the citizens who consume the products of the land. Big agribusiness has held sway far too long, to the detriment of our health and environment.

COMMENT OF DEMETRIO P. ZOURARAKIS, PH.D., GISP, CMS

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:06 p.m.

City, State: Versailles, KY

Occupation: Geographic Information Systems Analyst

Comment: Dear Representative,

As a Fellow of the Soil and Water Conservation Society, and member of the SWCS Kentucky Bluegrass Chapter for the last 25 years, while holding a Ph.D. in Soil Science and Plant Physiology from the University of Kentucky, and living in a rural county such as Woodford, I can truly appreciate the value of the natural resources with which our county, state and country are blessed with. Please make sure you tie any subsidies to compliance with resource conservation programs. Our future and sustainability depends on it. I am not asking for higher taxes or more spending; just spending our dollars wisely to ensure future generations of Americans are able to produce their own food, fiber, feed, fuel, and pharmaceuticals from natural resource production systems.

Sincerely,

DEMETRIO P. ZOURARAKIS, PH.D., GISP, CMS,

[Redacted].

COMMENT OF ANNE ZUBER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:12 p.m.

City, State: Sunnyvale, CA

Occupation: Natural Products Educator

Comment: Do everything you can to lead us to an America that shines among the healthiest countries in the world. There is no excuse for the way we have fallen short of this. Let us shine!

COMMENT OF ROBERT ZUCCHI

Date Submitted: Saturday, March 17, 2012, 12:40 a.m.

City, State: Corvallis, OR

Occupation: Retired

Comment: I'm aware that the majority of the funding in the farm bill goes to nutrition programs like Supplemental Nutritional Assistance and Emergency Food Assistance. These programs put food on the table for hungry kids, seniors and families. At a time of widespread economic hardship in our country, it is imperative that these programs continue to be adequately funded.

COMMENT OF PAM ZUCHOWSKI

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 6:57 p.m.

City, State: Wellsboro, PA

Occupation: Teacher

Comment: Let's end subsidies to corn and start putting our money toward organic initiatives. With a little government backing we can break the Monsanto monopoly!

COMMENT OF ISABEL ZUCKER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 3:52 p.m.

City, State: Davis, CA

Occupation: Student

Comment: The farm bill needs to **Stop** subsidizing the production of corn. Corn leads to many health problems like diabetes and unequal access to healthy foods. Corn subsidies also contribute to the need for factory meat production to eat the overproduction of corn. The farm bill needs to support healthy produce like broccoli, spinach, carrots, squash, yams, oats, *etc.* to promote equal access to healthy, fresh produce and increase the well being of **The People**.

COMMENT OF RICHARD ZUCKERMAN

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 12:51 p.m.

City, State: New Brunswick, NJ

Occupation: Unemployed Paralegal

Comment:

- [1] Organic food;
- [2] No more Monsanto genetically-modified "food"! I want Genetically-modified food to be labeled for consumer choice. Monsanto can yell and scream about filing lawsuit, but they have no cause of action against anybody for requiring GM food to be labeled! A fully informed consumer is the best consumer.
- [3] Waste no more money on the growth hormone-feces-pus-blood laden pasteurized milk from Big Dairy agribusiness!
- [4] No more dangerous pesticides, including Monsanto's pesticides.
- [5] Supplement the soil with nutritional minerals.
- [6] Support Industrial Hemp farmers, too!

COMMENT OF MICHELE ZURAKOWSKI

Date Submitted: Friday, April 27, 2012, 12:56 p.m.

City, State: Oak Park, IL

Occupation: Food Pantry Executive Director

Comment: Every day at my job, I help provide food for people in our community who cannot afford to feed their families. Clients tell me they have to choose between buying food and paying for heat. Often, parents don't eat so they can feed their children. Please strengthen TEFAP funding so that we may continue to provide needed food for the 17,000 families who came to our Pantry in 2011. I also ask that you fight against any cuts to SNAP funding or eligibility requirements. If you could see what I see every day, you would never dream of cutting food supports.

COMMENT OF CHAD ZUYBER

Date Submitted: Friday, May 18, 2012, 5:24 p.m.**City, State:** Oceanside, CA**Occupation:** Photographer/Model

Comment: I am outraged by the lack of dedication and responsibility of our leaders in protecting our food sources. Many people do not have the resources to grow their own food and thus are unable to acquire quality nutritious foods. Others are simply ignorant and it is this ignorance that agribusiness capitalizes on. We have a growing concern for the future of the health of Americans and the best cure is prevention. Let's feed our people well and then we can grow and flourish as a nation.

Form Letters

CATHOLIC CAMPAIGN FOR HUMAN DEVELOPMENT FORM LETTER

Dear Representative,

As you consider the 2012 Farm Bill, I urge you to support and strengthen programs that provide for poor and hungry people in the United States and around the world, offer effective assistance for those who grow our food, ensure fairness to family farmers and ranchers, and promote stewardship of the land.

I believe the poor and hungry should be given priority as we deal with the Federal budget. Cuts to essential safety net programs will harm the most vulnerable children, seniors, people with disabilities and the unemployed. I also write as a supporter of the Catholics Confront Global Poverty initiative of Catholic Relief Services, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Catholic Charities USA, and the National Catholic Rural Life Conference. Those who struggle for food and survival, whether in the U.S. or overseas, have a moral claim on our nation's resources. I believe that in the face of budgetary constraints, the 2012 Farm Bill is an opportunity to address our nation's broken and outdated agricultural policies.

I urge you to strengthen the Senate's 2012 Farm Bill by incorporating the following changes into the House Farm Bill:

- Preserve funding for the Food for Peace development "safe box" at the current \$450 million authorized level rather than potentially slashing it to as little as \$275 million annually. This program assists chronically hungry people overseas to produce more and better food for their families and end hunger.
- Fully fund essential conservation programs such as the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP), the Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) and the Grassland Reserve Program (GRP) to promote stewardship of God's creation;
- Maintain funding for the Value-Added Producer grants, the Rural Micro-Entrepreneur Assistance Program (RMAP), and ensure access to broad-band telecommunications services for rural communities; and
- Redirect subsidies to small and medium-sized farms, especially minority-owned farms and ranches that truly need assistance. The Senate proposal to reduce direct payments is a positive step in decreasing unneeded subsidies. Savings from reductions in subsidies and direct payments should be used to fund and support domestic nutrition programs such as SNAP (formerly Food Stamps) and international food assistance programs such as Title II.

I also urge you to ensure that the following provisions in the Senate 2012 Farm Bill are included in the House Farm Bill:

- Adequately fund and oppose cuts and weakening or restructuring of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) that would cut benefits to hungry and vulnerable people. Maintain funding for the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) and The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) so that people in need in the U.S. can obtain adequate and nutritious food;
- Maintain the \$2.5 billion funding levels for the Food for Peace program that combats chronic hunger, builds resilience against natural disasters and provides nutritious foods to poor and malnourished families overseas; and
- Maintain flexibility in Food for Peace, support the increased cash resources and incorporation of Local and Regional Procurement as proposed in the Senate bill so that more hungry people can be reached.

The moral measure of our nation's agriculture policies is how they serve "the least of these." Thank you for your consideration of these policies and programs that save

lives and improve nutrition, support family farmers and rural communities, and help preserve God's creation.

Sincerely,

Zebulon Bartels
Bonnie Hackett
Dan Robinson

Robin Bochsler
Adam Janke
Verne Schweiger

Deanna Bowers
George Rezac

FOOD DEMOCRACY NOW! FORM LETTER

U.S. food and agricultural policy must focus on adopting best agricultural practices that put the health of citizens, land and farmers' livelihoods and farm workers over the interests of industrial agriculture lobbyists. I would like to see:

- the full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

Reports from Washington, D.C. about the farm bill negotiations have not been pretty. According to an editorial in the *San Francisco Chronicle* by Environmental Working Group's Ken Cook and Kari Hamerschlag, Republicans in the House Agricultural Committee have already "voted to slash \$33 billion from the food stamp program while leaving farm subsidies unscathed."

The editorial goes on to report on the latest agribusiness boondoggle that gladly steals food from the mouths of the hungry to create a "\$33 billion new entitlement program that guarantees the income of profitable farm businesses. That's on top of \$90 billion in subsidies for crop and revenue insurance policies."

If this weren't bad enough, the Senate Agricultural Committee has already **voted to cut \$4 million from organic research funding and cut funding to support Beginning Farmers in half. We cannot let this stand!**

At the same time, the Senate Ag Committee has voted to get rid of wasteful subsidy payments. It has proposed to replace it with a new subsidized insurance program that **leading sustainable agriculture advocates are calling rife with opportunities for fraud and abuse.**

While Congress is looking to get rid of direct payments to commodity farmers, the subsidized insurance program it proposes to replace it with **will allow giant commodity farmers and insurance companies to walk away with billions in taxpayer dollars while putting the land, soil and environment at greater risk.**

According to the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition's Ferd Hoefner, "By failing to place limitations on crop insurance subsidies and to re-attach soil erosion and wetland conservation requirements to crop insurance programs, the Committee has failed to do the full reform that is needed."

We can't allow this to happen. Join us today in creating real reform and a healthy, organic future

A					
Inez Agar	Karen Ahlgren	Sholey Argani	Steve Arnold	Kim Atkinson	
B					
Karen Hedwig Backman	Joseph Battaglia	Tony Bell	Geneva Blake	Yolanda Bucio	John Burnett
Clifton Bain	Helen Baumgartner	Corey Benjamin	Malcolm Blue	Melissa Buffaloe	Jerri Butts
Adele Baker	Nancy Beavers	J. Beverly	Gloria Bradford	William Burdette	
C					
Jane Capehart	Sharyl Carter	Carmine Caruso	Janet Catt	Richard Chambers	Chris Cherry
Robert Clarke	Jeffrey Couch	John Crand			
D					
Tonya Daily	Sara Danehe	Jim Donovan	Kathy Dunn		
E					
Sarah Edwards	Barbara Eirich	Mary Engstrom	Jonathan Ertelt	Pamela Evans	
F					
Pauline Faye	R. Ferrier	Craig Fiels	Deborah Fine	Paul Finkler	Colleen Floyd
George Foras	Victoria Fuller				

G					
Adam G. Pash Galbavy	Robert Gammon Jill Gibson	A.G. Gilmore Marcy Gold	Barb Good Mary Ann and Frank Graffagnino	Sheila Gray Jose Luis Greco	Linda Green Thomas Groover
H					
A. Hamill Iphigenia Hasara Leigh Hill	Barbara Hannelore Joel Hildebrandt Valerie Holmes	David Harlan Jenny Hoffman	Tom Hicks Karen Husted	Kenneth Hittel Lisa Hardy	SSG Mary Horgan Lisa Hendricks
I & J					
Tina Iivonen	Aria Jackson	Bruce Johnson	Shawn Johnston		
K					
Angela Kantola	Richard Karst	Sherry Kimmons			
L					
Michael Lamoureux Mary Lyda	Katie-Lyn Lantow	Tom Lasley	Debbie LeBlanc	Jennifer Lewis	Christine Lofgren
M					
Alicia Martin Jeremy Matter D. McCaig	Diarmaid McGleenan Chris McKellar Janine Melrose	Carol Mendez Christina Mendrinios Andy Middleton	Maria Minno Lisa Miotto Dena Moore	Jason Morales Pamela Morpew Charity Moschopoulos	Michele Murto Rick Myers
N					
Yogi Nasser	David Nelson	Carmen Nichols			
O					
Sue Ocopnick Larry Owens	Michelle Ognjanovic	Michael Ohrt	Susan Ohrt	Corey E. Olsen	Bonnie Orife
P					
Sharon Packer John Pivovarnick	Stefanie Pappalardo Michael Preston	Tia Pearson Donald Peak	Susan Peirce	Barbara Peterson	Amy Pickering
R					
Nancy Rasmussen Erin Rodriguez Annie Ryan	Patrick Reilly Rolando Rodriguez	Rodney Rice Bella Romain	Kate Richman Naomi Rubin	Lia Robb Christiane Ruggiero	Donna Rock Sarah Rutherford-Bundy
S					
Penelope Sallberg Bonnie Singleton	Nikita Samusev Hannah Stallman	Alan Sanders Sandra Stephon	Joseph Savant K. Stewart	Barb Schiltz Lynette Strangstad	Catherine Shraga
T					
Marcia Tendick	Holger Tressin	Mary Truelove			
V					
Mike Van Landingham	Martha Vest	Sarah Vito	Dean von Germeten	Maxim Voronov	
W & Y					
Ethan W. Jeffrey White	Dawn Wait E.M. Williford	Cynthia Weeks Steve Yakoban	Sara West Andrew Yates	Andrea Westmoreland	Antonio White

DERIVATION 1

U.S. food and agricultural policy must focus on adopting best agricultural practices that put the health of citizens, land and farmers' livelihoods and farm workers over the interests of industrial agriculture lobbyists. I would like to see:*

- the full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).
- Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.
- The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.

A & B					
Carol Appleby-Vanko	Dawn Baeier	Laura Barnaby	Rebecca Blackbyrd		
C, D & F					
Charlotte Carpenter	Helen Colby	Joanne Czeck	Carole Doty	Ed Ferrara	Royal Forest

* **Editors' note:** The following form letter is derivative of the Food Democracy Now! form letter. *However*, since it differs with the omission of the main body of the form letter the signatories are listed separately.

G, H & K					
Manon Gaudreau	Gordon Gerbitz	Jill A. Hawtrey	Beth Hilliard	Nancy Hiser	Barbara King
L					
Mercedes Lackey	Elizabeth LaPenne	David Laws	Mary Leitch	Robin Leroux	Penny Little
Greta Loeffelbein	Michael Losoff				
M, P & R					
Barry Mateer	Charles McCall	Rhoda Mitchell	Patricia Parker	Deborah Ramos	Anita Riksheim
S, T & W					
Dania Saarony, M.S., R.D.	Suzanne Shevell	Christopher Stephens	Richard Stuckey	Jyll Taylor	Joel Trupin
Susan Wechsler					

DERIVATION 2

Tell Congress that you support:*

- *The full endorsement of all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).*
- *Fully funding conservation programs, such as the Conservation Stewardship Program, and making sure that enrollment in any new insurance subsidies are tied directly to compliance with conservation programs.*
- *The implementation of all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).*
- *Maintaining the EQIP Organic Initiative.*

A					
Amanda Aaron	Sal Alfano	Henry Amador	Heather Angier	Marissa Arias	Dane Augustine
Cindy Abernathy	Jennifer Allan	Julie Amato	Kathleen Angotti	Jennifer Armerding	Laura Austan
Judi Acego	Maryna Allan	Darryn Ambrose	Matthew Angrisani	Anne Armistead	Lorna Austin
Gordon Adams	Frank Allen	Loren Amelang	Anita Anita	Kathleen Armstrong	Carolyn Aversano
Angie Affolter	Georgia Allen	Kalynn Amundson	Jessica Anklam	Tony Arroyos	Lupe Avila
Bobbi Agüero	Jo Allen	Celeste Anacker	Sir Anomen	Susan Arthur	Ron Avila
Milagros Aguirre	Mindy Allen	Ana Anaya	Gracen Antrobus	Myrto Ashe	Janet Aviles
Sally Ahnger	Nicole Allen	Lee Yen Anderson	Paul Antze	Regina Ashodian	Steve Aydelott
Lauri Aigner	Kathleen Altman	Sherri Andrade	Renita Anzinger	Aram Aslanian	
Louis G. Albano	Virginia Alvarado	Tanya Andrew	Vickie Apadula	Artemis Asproyarakas	
Anthony Albert	Joanne Alvergue	Emily Andrews	Jimmy Arcade	Carol Assa	
V. Alexander	Jen Aly	Melissa Andrews	Angela Arguelles	Evelyn Atkinson	
B					
Nancy Baer	Mark Beattie	Laura Bernstein	Scott Boggs	Cecilia Boyer	David Brultz
Elyse Baggan	Alex Beatty	Kelly Berry	Matthew Bogusian	Lindsay Boseman	Heather Bruner
Joyce Bagley-Menges	David Beaulieu	Jane Berryhill	Rodney Bogusch	Debra Brackett	Ron Brunk
Thomas Bahr	Paul Bechtel	Cathy Bertinuson	Stephen Bohac	Dale Braiman	Yvonne Brunot
J. Adam Bailey	Carol Becker	Leonard Bieszczynski	Amanda Boldreghini	Georgia Braithwaite	Judy Bryce
Lynne Bailey	Jennifer Becker	Alex Betser	Luise Bolleber	Steve Branch	Cathy Buckley
Jordan Bain	Gary Beckerman	David Bigelow	Jane Bollinger	Will Branch	Marian Buckner
Ashley Baker	Peter Bedard	Lindsey Billshach	Sue Bonar	Casey Brandt	Terri Bullert
Cathy Balan	Tracy Bedford	Deborah Bird	Robin Bonswor	Crystal Brandt	Roger Bultot
Valerie Baldissierotto	Victoria Beerman	Elaine Bisbey	Susan Booker	Pamela Brandt	Joyce Buragino
Brittany Baldwin	David Belcher	Robert Bishop	Hedy Bookin-Weiner	Michael Branigan	Renee Burchfield
Lee Baldwin	Mary Belknap	Sarah Bishop	Kathy Boone	Chris Bratt	Marti Burgan
Cedric Balozian	Evelyn Bell	Roger Bius	Barrington Boothe	Amy Breakwell	William Burgess
Marcia Bando	Jonathan Bell	Eric Bivona	Deborah Boots	DeLaine Bredrik	Erin Burke
Nathan Banks	Marjorie Bell	Barron Black	Linda Borchert	Drew Brenner	Paul Burke
Sharon Barbell	Peri Beller	David Blair	Gary Boren	Elizabeth Brensinger	Kathleen Burke, R.N., C.S.
Eugene Barber	Luis Beltran	Stephanie Blair	Bridget Borer	Lisa Brewer	Terri Burney-Bisset
John Barbatt	M. Bendahan	Tom Blair III	Edith Borie	Jeffrey Briggs	Dale C. Burns
Connie Barker	Phyllis Bengtson	Chai Blair-Stahn	Gavin Bornholtz	Elisabeth Brooks	Phoebe Burns
Brandon Barnard	David Benjamin	Michelle Blake	David Bosch	Jason Brooks	Nancy Burr
Phoebe Barnes	Donna Benjamin	Terry Blanchard	Patrick Bosold	Sam F. Broughton, Ph.D.	Jon Burrell
Stephen Barr	Paul Bennett	Phil Blaustein	Robert Bost	Amy Brown	Karen Burroughs
Dennis Barrett	John Benschoter	Joan Blessing	Jeremiah Bostick	Assata Brown	Grace Burson
Willard Barry	Mary Benson	Faulette Bliss	Shavon Botsford	Ayra Brown	Betsy Burton
Alan Bartl	Kathleen Bentley	Emily Blitz	Andre Bougher	Bornie Brown	Vic Burton
Nick Bartol	Richard Bentley	Andrea Bloom	Naomi Bourne	Beth Brown	Ingrid Bush
Kevin Bartoy	Kristina Berg	Jerry Bloomer	Marlene Boven	Deborah Brown	Julie Busgang
Brian Battisti	Kevin Berger	Susan Blubaugh	Joyce Bowen	Jason Brown	Joan Butcher
Melissa Bauer	Darcy Bergh	Kaci Blue	Chris Bowker	Jeff Brown	E.J. Butler
Mariah Baumann	Yvonne Bergholm	Eric Blum	Kristi Bowman	Jennifer Brown	Rachel Bynum
Ruby Baxter	Daryl Bergunder	Matthew Blumrich	Marina Bowsher	John H. Brown	Charles Byrne
Cathy Bayne	Nicole Berkheimer	Melantha Bobrick	Kenneth Boyd	Kevin Brown	
Bret Beall	Mylene Berkowitz	Casey Bodden	Patty Boyd	Laura Brown	
James Paul Beam	David Berkshire	Karin Bodingius	Renee Boyd	Rachael Bruce	
Jacob Bean	Brook Bernini	Lisa Bogar	Lorraine Boyden	Danielle Brugnone	
C					
Brian Cady	Stef Carson	Timothy Cheston	Roxanne Cole	Molly Coon	Daniel Crandall
Carla Caesar	Bonnie Carter	Eileen Chieco	Shoshanna Cole	Matt Cooney	Jaime Crandall
Melissa Cain	Frances Carter	Brian Chisholm	Susan Coleman	Elizabeth Cooper	Bob and Marey Crawford
Van Cain	Lori Carter	Nancy Chismar	Coles	Jamie Cooper	Lani Crawford
Benjamin Caire	Samuel Carter	Gwynyth Chmura-Huff	Geri Collecchia	Nan Cooper	Dennis Crean, Jr.
Ashley Caldwell	Cynthia Casey	Karen Christian	Michael Collier	Nancy Cooper	Mark Creighton
Burton Callicott	Kathleen Casey-Zeitz	Linda Church	Sherry Collier	Nina Cooper	Brando Crespi
Vincent Campanaro	Richard Casese	Glenn Churchill	Jean Colombo	Tiffany Cooper	Marshall Crews

* **Editors' note:** The following form letter is derivative of the Food Democracy Now! form letter. *However*, since it differs with the omission of the first sentence the signatories are listed separately.

Gracie Campbell	Jessie Castael	Barbara Clark	Cameron Coltraine	Margaret Copi	Helen Crisp
Robin Campbell	Alice Castellano	Donald Clark	Maria Concilio	Margaret Copenrath	Fona Crockett
Serena Campbell	Linda Castle	Jerry Clark	Angela Cone	Gretchen Corbin	April Crook
Steven Campbell	Michael Castleberry	Laura Clark	Robin Conley	J.C. Corcoran	Carolyn Croom
Amy Cannata	Lorraine Castro	Terrence Clark	Karin Connelly	Joe Corio	Clinton Crow
Susan Canning	M. Catchpole	Charlene Clegg	Karen Conniff	Davin Cornia	Bill Crowley
Angela Cape-Baker	Mary Cato	Steven Clements	Cameryn Conrad	Deborah Cornett	Kate Crowley
Jason Cara	Kent Caudill	Karoli Clever	Keith Conrad	Alejandro Cortes	Deborah J. Cruz
Diana Cardillo	John Chamness	Pamela Clum	Kjirsten Conrad	Meagan Costea	John Casazar
Zoe Carlberg	David Chandler	A. Cobbett	Arthur Conrady	Justin Cote	Emily Cumbie-Drake
Stephen Carl	Patricia Chang	John Cobey	Sophia Conroy	Elna Coulter	Johanna Cummings
Marcia Carlson	Alexander Chapman	Alice Coffey	Barbara Cosbruch	Carole Courtney	Judith Cummings
Margaret Carlson	Michelle Chappell	Dianna Cohen	Laura Contreras	Katie Covello	L. Cummings
Nancy Carlson	Rachel Chaput	Laurel Cohen	S.R. Converse	Caryn Cowin	Erica Curry
Beth Carr	Lorig Charkoudian	Mark Cohen	Chris Cook	Michael Cox	Kieran Cusack
Chuck Carr	Andrea Chavez	Robert Cohen	Jonathan Cook	Phillip J. Crabill	Carol Cutler
J. Carr	Michele Chavez-Pardini	Robin Cohen	Kristin Cook	Aaron Craellus	Elizabeth Cutright
Patrick Carragher	Emily Chen	Alison Cohn	Brian Cooke	Laura Craig	Trina Cysa, RN-C, B.S.N., M.P.H.
Niall Carroll	Chiu Cheng	Rachel Cohn	Cathy Cooke	Toni Craige	
Thomas Carsner	L. Cherry	Joan Colbert	James Cooke	Tess Cramer	

D

Lori Dafilou	Steven Davies-Sigmund	Karen Dearborn	Kathryn Deputat	Mia Distasi	Griswold Draz
Joanne Dahill	Ramon Davila	Brittany Dearing	Dr. Pamela Derfus	Dana Dixon	Jane Drews
Alan Dahl	Ann Marie Davis	Brian Debasitis	Jennifer Derricks	Linda Dodderidge	Jennifer Driscoll
Lindsay Dahl	Cornelia Davis	Cynthia Debenedetti	Jane Derrington	Anthony Doherty	Richard Drummond
Barbara Dalbey	Karmin Davis	Michelle DeCarlo	Brett DeSchepper	Susan M. Dolinar	Stephen Drury
Tommy Daly	Kathy Davis	Liz Dee	Rosemary DeSena	Francine Dolins	Sharon Due
Patricia Damron	Laura Davis	Bruce DeGroot	Denise Desplaines	Sharon Dolleman	Corey Dugan
Jennifer Daniel	Rebecca Davis	Bob Delaney	Stephen Devakow	Jessica Donahue	Thomas Dukas
Paul Daniello	Virginia Davis	Chairone Delaney	Kary DeVaney	Josh Donald	Lisa Dumay
Roy Daniels	Craig Dawson	M. D. Delatte	Rhonda Devereaux	Mike Donose	Jennifer Dunham
Mark Dankoff	Robert Dawson	Alison Delattre	Lisa Devore	Tim Donovan	Cumie Carol Dunio
Carrie Darling	Brooke Day	Renee DeJong	Kathy Dickerson	Matthew Doughty	Deborah Duniwant
George Darling	Hannah Day	Judi Dellino	Cheryl Dickson	Andy Douglas	Debra Dunlop
Melinda Dastrup	Jeremy Day	Adriane Dellorco	Isabel Dickstein	Leah Douglas	Deborah Dunn
Sherry Daugherty	Joe Day	Ellen Delo	Greg Dietrich	Noel Douglas	Susan Dunn
Janis David	Christina de la Fuente	Chris DeLucia	Tonya DiFiore	Zak Douglas	Eve Duplissis
Mollie David	Jackie de Vries	Debra Demske	Jessie Dijkstra	Alan Douglass	Judith Dupree
Amelie J. Davidson	Milan de Vries	Gudrun Dennis	Jordan Dilger	Lauren Dowdy	Eame Dutcher
Jill Davidson	Mark Deakins	Stephanie Dennis	Bethany Dilworth	Natalie Dowty	Melissa Duttie
Dorothy Lynne Davies	Katherine Dean	Christopher DeNoia	Lydia DiMarantonio	Sheri Doyel	Doug Dyer
May Davies	Carol Deantoni	Richard DePrizio	Matt Dingle	Matthew Doyle	

E

Bradley Eardley	Martha Edelheit	Kathleen Edwards	Margaret Ellingson	Brad Engler	Glenn Esler
Chelsea Earnhardt Plax	Willa Edgar	Sheila Edwards	Ashley Ellis	Cynthia Enlow	Carl Estes
Christian T. Eaton, M.D.	T. Edick	Cara Eflinger	David Ellis	Frances Enriquez	Gregory Esteve
Anne Ebbers	Eemunah Edinburg	Debbie Egan	Glenda Elmer	Kurt Erbach	S. Etherton
Michele Eby	Barbara Edwards	Erin Eggleston	Kate Elsgree	Barry Ergang	Ronald Eubanks
Diane Echlin	Eric Edwards (IL)	Kathryn Ek	Lezlie Ely	Kinara Erickson	Mary Evans
Alyse Eckenrode	Erin Edwards (NY)	Carl Ekholm	Brian Emerson	Cathie Ernst	Sandra Eve
Tatiana Eckstrand	Jenna Edwards	Elizabeth Elgin	Rev. Kathy Engle-Dulac	Jamie Ervin	Sarah Evers

F

Carrie Fairchild	Myrna Felix	Larry Fishman	Mason W. Foley	Anne-Lise Francois	Sarah Frost
Jennie Fairchild	Linda Fellows	Ted Fishman	Richard Ford	Alissa Frank	Josephine Fuentes
Jeffery Fane	Jane Felton	Ann Fitzgerald	Paul Ford	Cynthia Frank	Max Fuentes
Charles Faris	Daniel Fenner	Shawn Fitzgerald	Scott Forno	Elisa Frank	David Fuerstenau
John Farley	Stephen Fenning	Erik Fitzpatrick	Linnea Forseth	Larry Frank	Greg Fuess
Cameron Farlow	Steven Fenster	Jodi Fitzpatrick	Cheryl Forster	Korrine Fraser	Chris Fuhrmann
Christine Farlow	Julia Ferguson	Stephen Flanery	Eric Fosburgh	Emily Fredericks	Sheila Fuller
Tara Farris	Steve Ferguson	Karen Flaugh	Delaina Foster	Geri Freeman	Paul Fung
Cary Fassler	Zachary Ferguson	Grace Fleischman	Robert Foster	Stormie Freinmark	Rachel Fussell
Linda Faste	Mauro Ferrero	Chris Fleming	Rosemary Foutts	Andrew Frey	Enid Futterman
Jared Featherstone	Kathy Ferrier	M. Kay Fleming	Kristi Foutz	Amy Frieden	
David Fedor-Cunningham	Monica Ferry	Karen Fletcher	Jason Fox	Cari Frisch	
Karen L. Fedorov	Robbee Flan	Cheryl Flinn	Lori Fox	Clara Fritsch	
Mary Fesser	Maria Fili	Brianne Fluewelling	Inna Franchi	Bert Fritz	
Skylar Fegal	Andrew Fisher	Eileen Foley	Arturo Franco	Monica Frolander-Ulf	

G

Donna Gaab	Donna Garrison	Daniel Giey	Nancy Goldstein	Jean Gough	Kelly Grindstaff
Joyce Gabay	Lydia Garvey	Dr. David Gilbertson	Noah Goldstein	Pat & Gary Gover	Burt Griswold
Robert Gabriel	Jane Garvin	James Gillaspie	Melissa Golladay	Harvey Grady	Lisa Groenewold
Julie Gaertner	Anna Gasner	Emma Gimon	Remigio Gongon	Jeanne Graffin	Norah Grooms
Leigh Gage	Cali Gaston	Evrith Giovenco	Jorge Gonzalez	Ileana Grams-Moog	Karen Gropper
Regina Galbick	Tusi Gastonguay	Juan P. Girardi, MA, MS	Leo Gonzalez	Nina Grant	Elizabeth Groscost
Sean Gallagher	Robert Gates	Winnie Givot	Melissa Gonzalez	Chuck Graver	Harvey Gross
Susan Gallegos	Christopher Gautrau	Sarah Gladstone	Suzanne Goodelman	Caryn Graves	Diane Grotheer
Elena Gallenberger	Beth Gehman	Elizabeth Glasgow	E. Gooding	Donna Greathouse Neel	Marilyn Grotzky
Pamela Gandy	Maggie Gelber	Jamie Glass	Diane Goodman	Kimberly Grebert	Steven Gruchawka
Rob Ganger	Kerry Gendron	Kevin Glatzel	Rhea Goodman	Rhyan Grech	Anthony Grudin
Valeska Gann	Carl Gendvil	Jena Glaze	Tyler Goodman	Ann Green	Lisa Grutzmacher
Marc Garber	Todd Gentry	Allison Glennon	Catherine Goodrum	Judith Green	Jennifer Guajardo
Sandra Garber	Carol George	Art Glick	Kahil Goodwyn	Nell Green Nylen	Peter Guarino
Gregory Garbinsky	Justine George	Avi Glickstein	Alexandra Gordon	Deborah Greene	Ann Guirao
Kathe Garbrick	Mary George	Lydia Gnos	Karen Gordon	Susan Greenough	Elizabeth Gulley
Debra Garcia	Michael Gerken	Ann Gobert	Marcy Gordon	Sandra Greenwald	Ellen Gumbiner
Peggy Gardner	Carey Gersten	Emily Godfrey	Sarah Gordon	Gary Gregerson	Mindy Gungor
Domenic Garefino	Tully Gibbons	Lisa Goetz	Arnold Gore	Maura Gregory	Elizabeth Gupton
Michael Garitty	Susan K. Gibbons, M.D.	John Goforth	David Gorsell	Amy Griffin	Annette Gurdo
Holly Garland	Vicki Giella	Beth Goldenfield	Kally Goschke	Robert Griffin	Erin Gurdziel
Christopher Garre	Rita Gier	Sandy Goldman	Chailley Goss-Garner	Earline Griffith	Andrew Gustus
Marjo Garrison	Jolene Giese	Steven Goldman	Lyn Gottschalk	Eddie Griffiths	Hamilton Gutierrez

H

Kevin Haas	Diane M. Hanson	Mary Hathaway	Winifred Herberg	Cathy Holden	Natalie Houghton
Kenneth Haback	Grace Hanson	Joan Hathaway-Sheldon	Katherine Herbst	Stephen Holden	Carl Howard
Pamela Haddad	Larry Hanus	Erik Haunold	Richard Hermant	Deborah Holder	Lina Howard
Sarah Hager	Carla Happel	Robert Havrilla	Irene Hernandez	Lynne Holley	Eryn Howe
M.C. Hagerly	Sherry Happel	Jenny Hawke	David Heron	Olympia Holliday	Holly Howell

Kyle Hahn	Kristen Harbour	Wendy Hawkins	J. Michael Herr	Marjorie Holman	Mary E. Howie
Avi Haimowitz	Sondra Hardgrave	Denise Hayashi	Jonas Herzog	David Holmes	Emma Hoyt
Ellen Hakes	Kris Harker	Janice Haynes	Hillary Hess	Helga Holtmann	Jacklyn Heu
Eileen Hale	Linda Harkness	Linda Haynes	Lory Hess	Daeryl Holzer	Susan Hubbard
Scott Hale	J. Harmon	Tessa Haynes	Susanne Hesse	Kim Hood	Amara Huckabone
Jeremy Halimon	Tyler Harmon-Townsend	McGregor Hayslip	Thea Hatzner	John Hope	Stan Huff
Ann Cox Halkett	Andrea Harms	Kris Head	Todd Heyman	Courtney Hopkins	Beth Hufnagel
Chris Hall	Greg Harness	Mark Heald	Jane Hickey	Laura Hopkins	Carole Hughes
Gina Hall	Frances Harriman	Fran Healey	John Higby	Martina Hopkins	Christine Hughes
Patrick Hall	Johnny Harris	Diane Heath	James Hill	Kate Hoppe	John Hughes
Will Hall	Melanie Harris	Wanda Hebert	Sarah Hiller	Cynthia Hosue	Sheryl Humphrey
Brian Hallas	Richard Harris	Elizabeth Hebron	Lisa Hillman	Julia Horn	Kim Humphreys
Rob Hambleton	Nancy Harrison	Christine Heinicke	Patricia Hilton	Karen Horn	David Hunn
Bob Hamburg	Thomas Harrison	Jill Heishman	Lisa Hilyer	Leslie Horst	Paul Hunter
Lisa Hamill	Linda Harrouer	Gina Helfrich	Lani Hink	Patricia Horter	Eric Hurt
Jeremy Hammer	Allegra Hart	Frank Heller	Howard Hintertner	Blair Horton	Celeste Huss
Dian Hampton	Susan Hart	Keith Helmskamp	Serena Hirst	Jennifer Horton	Nicole Hutchinson
Muredy Hanford	Danyela Harting	Daria Hemmings	Dessa Hix	Martin Horwitz	Frederica Huxley
D. Bridget Hanley	Gregory Hartley	Deborah Hemphill	Harold T. Hodes	Rebecca Horwitz	Margaret Hyland
Jackie Hannahs	Clifton Hartsuff	Meghana Hemphill	Julia Hoel	Jessica Hose	Maureen Hyslop
Megan Hannan	Erik Hartten	Devin Henry	H. Hoffman	Pamela Hosler	
Alan Hansen	Diane Hashem	P. Henry	Mike Hognowski	Lee Hostick	
Art Hanson	Pamela Hatch	Pamela Henry-Biskup	Ashley Holbrook	Tom Hougham	

I

Paula Isabella	Lori Idso	Paul Impola	Deborah Irwin	Justin Isaacs	Anthony Israel
Rebecca Iverson					

J

Courtney Jackson	Paul Janyja	Daryrne Jessler	Connie Johnson	Rene Johnson	Jeff Jones
Rick Jackson	Andres Jaramillo	Barbara Jester	Dale Johnson (CO)	Richard Johnson	Lauren Jones
Shawn Jackson	Meghan Jarchow	Sarah Jewell	Dale Johnson (WI)	Sadie Johnsonell	Margaret Jones
Marie-Louise Jackson-Miller	Thomas Jefferson	William Joersz	David Johnson	Sarah Johnson	Sandy Jones
Susan Jacobson	David Jennings	Anne Johnson	Lanie Johnson	Shara Johnson	Phoebe Joseph
Matt Jager	Kristy Jensch	Blake Johnson	Laura Johnson	Elizabeth Joimer	Karen Judd
Mike Jaklitsch	Alyson Jensen	Candace Johnson	Maile Johnson	Susan Jolicoeur	Cecilia Jude
Jess James	Teresa Jenson	Clifford Johnson	Michael Johnson	Elizabeth Jonasson	

K

Chuck Kaiser	Sondra Katz	Katelyn Kenderish	William King	Leslie Knoeland	Steven Kostis
Kellen Kaiser	Mollie Katzen	Kali Kennedy	Dan Kinman	Donna Knipp	Malichansouk Kouanchao
Laura Kaiser	Rachel Kaufman	Marita Kennedy-Castro	Donna Kirik	Carolyn Knoll	Josef Kozaka
Katherine Kalajainen	Joel Kay	Liese Keon	Shanna Kirk	Brad Knopf	Joan Kozar
Karen Kan	Aliza Keddem	Hugh Keown	Jerome Kirsling	Claire Knowlton	Daniel Kozminski
Jane Kane	Chris Keefe	Gwendolyn Kerber	Irene Kitantzdes	Karla Koch	Susan Kraft
Karen T. Kane	Carole Keene	Kathryn Keal	Michael Klausung	Zoya Kocur	Maria Kraba
Nadia Kanhai	Dylan Keenen	Gurumustuk Khalsa	Robert Klein	Diane Koenig	Barbara Krall
Linden Kaniewski	Michael Keeney	Hari Khalsa	Rebecca Klemme Eliceiri	Robert Kogan	Eytan Krasilovsky
John Karish	John Keiser	Harinam Khalsa	Daniel Klonsky	Alyssa Kohlman	Doug Krause
Jacob Karlins	Jerry Keller	Kulwant Khalsa	Linda Klosky	Jordan Kojouharov	Lisa Krausz
Peter Kasabian	Lee Keller	Eckhart Kiesel	Marc and Jill Kloesner	Michael Kolman	David Kreis-Tomkins
Alexis Kassan	Sarah Keller	Amyr Kilbane	Kari Knabe	Ryan Kononinski	Dan Krekeler
Julie Katana	Emily Kellendorfer	Gwen Killheffer	Richard Knablin	LeaAnne Koppen	Mariann Kromenacker
Jean Katayama	Lorie Kellogg	Dawn Kimble	Kristan Knapp	Sam Koprak	Mary Kroninger
Daisy (Dorothy) Kates	Gerald Kelly	Lawrie Kimbrough	Peggy Knapp	Karen Koritko	Linda Krueger
Braun Kathy	Ross Kelman	Julie Kimmel	Hilary Knause	Mary Ellen Korman	Edward Kuczynski
David Katz	Rebecka Kempton	Heather King	Judith Knauss	Judith Kory	Suzanne Kuffler
Ronald Katz	Anna Kendall	Tristan King	Nathan Knecht	Dawn Kosec	

L

Sharon Lacy	Betty Laufer	Wayne Leggett	Jo Ann Lesser	Peter Linde	Jeanette Louis
Stephen Ladd	Marie Laughlin	Audra Lehman	Adrie Lester	Lynda Linke	Cynthia Love
Brad Lagorio	Rhett Lawrence	Susan Leibowitz	Debra Letchworth	Leslie Linnebur	Surrender Love
Mark Laitz-Snyder	Joseph Lawson	Jodie Leidecker	Michael Letendre	Doug Linney	Barbara Lowe
Rhonda Lakatos	Karen Lawson	Ingrid Leigh	Helen Levin	Lisa Lintner	Jillayne Lowe
Mark Lamore	Judith Layman	Nancy Leiserowitz	Russell Levine	Amy Lippert	R. Lowis
Ruth Lampe	Martha Layman	Cornelia Lemke	Michael Levinson	Janet Lipstreu	Carol Lowry
Doug Landau	Lüsti Le	Sybil Lemke	Nancy Levy	Shaun Little	Sara Lowry
Gordon Landis	Brian Le Gette	Robert Lemlin	Erma Lewis	Glynnis Litwin	Rachel Lowther
Robyn Landry	Dr. Andrew Leavenworth	Sarah Lenoue	Mark Lewis	G. Liu	Gabe Lozano
Hannah Landsman	Jeffrey LeBlanc	Alejandro Leon	Roberta Lewis	Deja Lizer	Carol Lubetkin
Barry Langford	Faye Lederman	Robert Leon	Lisa Li	Sofia Ljuslin	Felice Lucero
Theresa Lantz	Jessica Ledger	Greg Leonard	Ming Ju Li	Alan Lloyd	Keth Luke
Barbara Lapidus	Catherine Lee	Lee Leonard	Harry Lichtenstein	Tarah Locke	Edmund Lundberg
Pamela Lappies	Christopher Lee	Monique Leonard	Les Liebmann	Beverly Leder	Jim Luongo
Catherine Laramee	Eric Lee	Tom Leonard	Alan Liechty	Elizabeth Logan	Jana Lussier
Judy Larson	Gary Lee	Leslie Lepeska	Steve Lieland	Dave Loiselle	Jim Lutz
Susan Larson	Karen Lee	Kate Lepisto	Nancy Enz Lill	Katharine Loman	Elizabeth Lynn
M. Larue	Todd Lee	James Lerch	Angela Lilly	Sonya Lopez	Laura Lyons
Max Lau	Claire Leeds	Michelle Lerner	Tim Lilly	Leng Lor	Mary Lyons
Pamela Lau	Connie Legare	Virginia Leslie	Glenys Lim	Ruth Lorenz	Stephen Lytle
Suzanne Laucella	Gail Leger	Angela Lesser	Christina Lin	Gregory Louie	

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Vajra Ma	Katherine Marks	Haven McClure	Mark Mellinger	Clifford Minor	William Morrison
Barbara MacAlpine	Justin Marlin	Brian McCollum	Bernadine Mellis	Sharon Minor	Jackie Morrissey
Angus M. Macdonald	Judith Maron-Friend	Nina McCollum	James Melloh, M.D.	Nancy Minter	Pamela Morrow
Leah Mack	Hilda Marshall	Barney McComas	Abigail Meloche	Alicia Mishinski	Cynthia Morse
Ellen Mackall	Tara Marshall	Lynette McComas	T. Meloche	Kathy Missal	Robert Morse
Michelle MacKenzie	Karen Martakos	Robert McCombs	Joe Melton	Sandra Mitchell	Kerry Mortensen
Craig MacKie	Bob Marti	Deris McCormick	Kathryn Melton	Melanie Mitzner	C.H. Moskowitz
Chris MacKrell	R. Marti	Nicole McCormick	Gregory Menard	Ruth Mahr	Paul Moss
Rhys MacLean	Elizabeth Martin	Richard McCormick	Melani Menendez	Maya Moiseyev	Torben Mottes
Patricia Macy	Frances Martin	Jene McCovey	Lynda Menkhaus	Clay Moncrief	Wanice Mottola
Emilly Madara	Leonide Martin	Diane McCoy	V. Merchant	William Moncus	Kim Motylewski
Guillermo Madrid	Linda Martin	T.K. McCranie	Jackie Merino	Abigail Monihan	Christie Moulton
L Leigh Magee	Mary Kay Martin	Tom McCurry	Graham Meriwether	Patricia Monroe	Stephen Mudrick
Rosemarie Magliato-Chrisostimos	Monte Martin	Jeanne McDonnell	Krista Merrihew	Danielle Montague-Judd	Kirstin Mueller
J. Magnano	Terry Martin	Bridget McElroy	R. Meservve	J.K. Montanaro	Marilyn Mueller
Lisa Mair	Micah Marty	Mary McGann	Joni Metaal-Kemp	Peter Monteleone	Mary Beth Mueller
Joshua Maizel	Kathleen Marx	Gary McGivney	Ari Meyer	Deirdre Montgomerie	Rafeak Muhammad
Marc Major	Christine Mason	Mindy McGovern	Bonnie Meyers	William Mooney	Jennifer Muhr

Erika Maki	Rich Mason	Terrence McGovern, Jr.	Gerri Michalska	Cheryl Moore	Carol Muise
Marie Malanaphy-Sorg	John Maseman	Richard McGowan	Leah Michels	Greg Moore	Tiffany Mulford
Robert Malcomson	Lisa Mastalier	Molle McGregor	Karen Mickler	Mary Moore	Jen Mullen
Sherrie Rose Maleson	Mary Masters	Julianna McGuire	Eliza Migdal	Claire Moran	Tina Munson
Betty Mallorca	Ashley M. Mathis	Chad McIntyre	Brian Mihok	David Morf	Joseph F. Muratore
Maureen Mancini	Martha Mattes	Jean McKay	Joanna Mikolajczuk	Kathleen Morgan	Elizabeth Murdoch
Marcia Mandelberg	Laurell Matthews	Tienne McKenzie	Amber Milam	Merri Morgan	Wendy Murdoch
Lauren Mangini	Scott Mauer	Kathinka McKeown	Rachel Milgroom	Sharon Morgan	Hanifah Murfin
Jay Mankita	Marie Mauger	Shawnee McLemore	Brad Miller	Richard Morgese	Sarah Murfin
Marianna Manley	Barbara Mauk	Sharon McMenamin	Donald Miller	Naoko Morita	Carol Murphee
Jeffrey Mann	David May	Colleen McMullen	Natalie Miller	Lydia Morken	Andy Murphy
Jennifer Mann	Janelle May	William McMullin	Susan Miller	James Norman	Callie Murphy
Mark Mansfield	Vanna May	Nina McPherson	David Millett	Melody Morrell	Katy Murphy
Robin Marco	Craig Mazer	Ryan Meade	J.L. Tuck Milligan II	Sophia Morren	Sean Murphy
Susan Mardock	Kyle McAdam	Emily Meath	Celia Milota	Francis Morris	John Mutzberg
Laube Marga	Alan McAllister	Reshma Mehta	Laurel Miltenberger	Jennifer Morris	Larkin Myers
Joanne Marino	Michael McAllister	Yvonne Meijering	Randy Mims	Nancy Morris	
Derek Markham	Matt McCafferty	Ruby Meister	Michael Miner	Sue and John Morris	
John Markowitz	Sara McCay	Joshua Melino	Cindy Mingus	Sharon Morrison	
N					
Naomi Nachun	Katherine Nelson	Laura Nevins	Elizabeth Nguyen	Pauline Nivens	Scott Norris
Donald Nadeau	Kirk Nelson	Lara Newbold	Laura Nicholson	Debra Nix	Susan Norwood
D. Narveson	Robert Nelson	H. Newcomb	Pam Nicolai	John Nix	James Nowack
Patty Navarrete	Barbara Neri	Linda Newkirk	Rael Nidess, M.D.	Neal Nollette	Maryann Nowakowski
Vera Nazon	Timothy Nero	Daria Newman	Jami Nielsen	Daphne Nolte	Donna Noyes
Larry Needleman	Sonia Niess	Mark Newman	Greg Nielsen	Nora Norback	Pat Nudl
Erin Neff	Ruben Neves	Sanford Newmark	Carol Niemi	Jeanette Nord	Devon Nuño
Layne Negrin	Deanna Neville	Mary Neyland	Eufren Ninancuro Ramos	Lanette Nordquist	
O					
Tijana O'Caillaigh	Nancy O'Byrne	Jennifer Dryden	Margot Olavarria, Ph.D.	Melissa Oresky	Ruth Ostrenga
Antoinette O'Connell	Thomas Ocampo	Meghan O'Donnell	Joe Oliveto	Robert Orzel	Shawn O'Sullivan
Elizabeth O'Hara	John O'Connor	Kevin O'Hagen	Karin O'Loughlin	L. Osborn	Michael Osweiler
Benjamin O'Brien	Casey Odom	Patrick Ohanlon	Janna Olson	Molly Osborne	Tracy Ouellette
William O'Brien	Deanne O'Donnell	Janet Oja	Rachel Onuf	Lara Oshon	
P					
Gail Pacurari	Luke Parkhurst	Elizabeth Pavka	Dina Pesenson	Mary Pierce	John Prance
Rebecca Padgett	Diana Farmeter	Jessica Paxton	Cynthia Peters	Jeremy Phil	Alison Pratt Shelling
Mike Pagan	Debbi Parrott	Kendra Pearsall	Kyle Peterson	Kiley Pike	Elizabeth Pressman-Coo-
Heidi Page	Victoria Parruccini	Jane Pearson	Tina Peterson	Joan Pinkert	Bonnie Presti
Nick Page	Adam Parsons	Sue Ann Peck	Julia Petipas	Jack Pliskin	Carl Pribanic
Julia Pais	Shireen Parsons	Robert Pekrul	Bethanie Petitpas	Lawrence Plumlee	Karen Price
Laura Palan	Harla Partridge	Sandra Pelletier	Susan L. Petrella	Christy Plumly	Amy Priest
Margaret Pallas	Ms. Parvati	Andrea Pellicani	Bryan Petrusis	Raymond Poincelot	Yvonne Prinz
Kristin Palmesjar	Richard Pasichnyk	Marguerite Pelose	Rhonda Pfaltzgraft-Carl-	Jason Pollens	Melissa Probst
Peter Pamplin	Karman Pate	Mattie Perelman	Gary Pfeiffer	Elizabeth Poole	Melissa Prochnow
April Panknin	William Patrick	Sandra Perkins	Jeanette Phelps	P.C. Porter	Damian Puggelli
Alexander Pappas	Marcia Patis	K. Periman	Matt Piccone	Sebastian Posern	Barry Pulley
Christian Pappas	Anne Patterson	Amy Perrin	Stacy Pickhardt	Flavia Potenza	Patricia Pureoil
Diana Paradise	Brett Patterson	Renee Perry	James Pickrell	Theresa Poulin	Caleb Pussey
Jen Paredes	James Patterson	Raymond Person	Diane Pienta	Mark Powell	
Soohyun Park	Nicole Paul-Almand	Angela Perstein	Dick Pierce	Mark Powers	
Q					
Rita Quinn	Maclovia Quintana	Rafael Quintero			
R					
J. R.	Marsha Reeves	Andrew Ricker	Mary Rose Roberts	Ellen Rose	Reese Ruder
Brian Rabnovitz	Joy Reich	Alison Riddle	Nancy Roberts-Moneir	Janice Rose	Kathi Ruel
Tammy Radan	Donna Reid	Jane Ried	Jim Robertson	Kathryn Rose	Osiel Ruiz
Irene Radke	Jane Reifer	Katie Riedler	Susan Robinson	Fred Rosenberg	Seema Rupani
Gretchen Raichle	Misty Reilly	Susie Ries	Sharon Robinson-Rosen-	Elizabeth Rosnel	Charles Rusanak
Eden Rain	Steve Reis	Rick Rigby	Peter Roche	Eric Ross	Robert Rusanak
Elizabeth Raintree	Bonita Reishus	Richard Riggs	Soretta Rodack	Kat Ross	Kenneth Russell
Nadine Ralph	Kait Reinsner	Bobby Righi	Terrell Rodefer	Lilli Ross	Morgan Russell
Rudy Ramp	Michelle Reott	Robin Rigoli	Elisa Rodero	Lynn Ross	Nancy Russell
Lois Ramsey	Ronald Reuse	Kathy Riley	Patricia Rodgers	Maya Ross	Sharon Russick
Sandra Rando	Joy Res	Thomasin Ringler	Joseph Rodriguez	Maria Rosselli	Kathleen Rutecki
Bob Rankin	Edgar Reyes	Louis Rink	C.G. Roehrs	Jerome Roth	Rebecca Rutt
Brian Ranum	R. Reyes	Tina Risley	Megan Roemer	David Rothenberg	Ben Ruwe
Bharat Ratra	Charle Ricci	Kim Rismondo	Robert Rogers	Jane Elizabeth Rothman	Robert Ryan
William Rau	Jima Rice	Robert Rismondo	Marian Roh	Suellen Rowlison	E. Aldona Rygelis
George Ray	Lincoln Rice	Aimee Rist	Brian Rohr	Carol Royce	Melisa Rys
Richard Ray	Stephanie Richards	Kristin Ritau	Matt Rollins	Maria Rua	
Regan Rea	Lewis Richardson	Susan Rivo	Betty Roman	Scott Rubel	
Shelley Reeder-Lueth	Lonna Richmond	Christine Roane	Sharon Romano	William Ruch, Jr.	
Dr. Kathy Reese	Patricia Richter	Robert Robbins	Denise Romesburg	Linda Ruddle	
S					
Shanta Sacharoff	John Schinnerer	Kinsey Service	Diane Simpson	Janet Sorell	Kharla Stepnitz
Michelle Sadeh	E. Muriel Schlicht	Scott Seshar	Lauren Singer	Linda Sotis	Bruce Sterling
Ron Saeger	Christine Schlicht	Tyler Severy	Naomi Singer	Krissa Sotomayor	Patricia Stewart
Elizabeth Saenger	Patty Schlueter	Linda Sewell	Jon Singleton	Sue South	Robin Stewart
William Saenz	Suzanne Schluter	Rachel Shabi	Ron Sitts	Kathryn Spahr	Sarah Stewart
R. Sage	Brendley Schmidt	Dina Shadwell	Sheilah Skolakey	Margaret Spak	Vaunie Stewart
Geoffrey Saig	Michael B. Schmidt	Georgia Shankel	Damon Skelton	Jon Spar	Dianne Stiers
Paul Sakamoto	Suzanne Schmidt	Laura Shapiro	Sue Skidmore	Gregg Sparkman	Sarah Stimely
Joe Salazar	Cathie Schneider	Inna Shapkina	Richard Slawson	Alicia Sparks	Kian Stipp
Barry Saltzman	Gerald Schneider	George Shardy	George Shardy	Jordan Sparks	Laurie Stoff
Michael Salzman	Karen Schneider	David Shatkin	Heidi Sloan	Alex Sparrow	Emory Stoker
Ellen Sanders	Douglas Schneider	Tatyana Shatorova	Joanna Slodownik	Lawrence Spatz	John Stokes
Terri Sanders	Bryce Schober	Emily Sheafe	Theresa Slusher	Jesse Spears	Debra Stoleroff
Jean Sandstrom	Adam Schofield	Meredith Sheane	Steve Small	Arlene Spencer	Erica Stonestreet
Karen Sankey	Jeanette Schreiber	Gwen Shear	Linda Smathers	John Spencer	Cheryl Storm
Dorota Sapinski	Robin Schreier	Sheila Sheehan	M. Smerken, Ph.D.	Jane Sperr	Lauren Storm
Mary Sapp	Elizabeth Schroeder	Michelle Shellhammer	Amy Smith	Amalia Spescha	Elizabeth Julia Stoumen
	Julie Schroeder	Katherine Shelton	Edward Smith	Michael Spicer	Helen Strader

Christine Sartwell	Cassandra Schuler	Mary Sherman	Ellen Smith	Warren Spicer	Erich Stratmann
Jill Sasser-Sullivan	Eva Schultz	Paul Sherman	Glenn Smith	Carolyn Spier	Garry Strawser
Karen Sattler	Michael Schultz	Vicki Sherman	Grant Smith	Robert Spies	Debby Stringham
Robert Satz	Todd & Karishma Schumacher	Lorraine Sherwood	James Smith	Heather Sponseller	Daniel Strong
Ellen Saunders	Frances Schwartz	Amit Shoham	Janice Smith	Martha Springer	Miriam Strysik
James Saunders	Robert Schwentker	Jamil Shoot	Judith Smith	Andrea Springmeier	Melissa Stuckey
Carol Sauzek	William Scott	Victoria A. Short	Kellie Smith	John St. Claire	Melinda Sunflow
Carissa Savage	Katy Scrogin	Rachel Shprintzen	Margaret Smith	Suzanne Stack	Micha Sulewsky
Salvatore Savastano	Lauren Scurry	Richard Shulman	Marilyn Smith	Lisa Stahley	Maureen Sullivan
Susan Savia	Elizabeth Seaman	Susan Shulman	Natalie Smith	Jessica Stamp	Stacey Sullivan
Shae Savoy	Knute Sears	Cory Shumaker	Shane Smith	David Stampe	Rebecca Summer
Jesse Sawyer	Shelley Sechrist	Larry Siegel	Stewart Smith	Elizabeth Standard	Amanda Summers
Carol Sawyers	Nina Seco	Mike Siegel	Thomas Smith	Robert Stang	Bruce Surface
Geri Saxe	Marlene Sedillos	Keene Siffer	Lora Smith McBride	Cedar Stanistreet	Katya Surreance
Meera Saxena	Tracia Sedivy	Dan Silver	Robert Smyth	Kara Stans	Miriam Swaffer
Daniela Scaramuzza	Jonathan Seeley	David Silverstein	Marie Snavely	Sandra Stanton	Kristen Swanson
Mary Schaad	Paul Seer	Bill Simerly	Juleigh Snell	Douglas Stark	Steven Swartzendruber
James Schall	Joshua Seff	Adrienne Simmons	Helen Snively	Shelley Stark	Nicole Sween
N. Schar	Daniel Seirawan	Carole Simmons	Virginia Snodgrass Rangel	Chris Stay	Peter Sweeny
J. Scheerbaum	Cynthia Selene	Dee Simmons	Peter Snow	Peggy Steart	Ed Sweet
Bill Scheffer	Lucy Sells	Janie Simmons	Katherine & Bruce Sogolow	Patrick Steggall	Justin Sweet
Margaret Schehl	Sarah Selph	Tim Simmons	Jonathan Sola	Sarah Steinberg	Riva Sweetrocket
Kristin L. Schibsted	Anne Senuta	Ashley Simon	Renee Solano	George Steinitz	
Emily Schick	Diane Sepsis	Carol Simon	Deborah Soodak	Marjory Steinweis	
Richard Schieffer	Cindy Sergeant	Mary Simon	Michael Sopkiv	Rachael Stephens	
Brian Schiffer	Molly Servais	Murray Simon	David Soracco	Misty Stephenson	
T					
Mark Takaro	Dr. F. Taylor	Carolyn B. Thayer	Susan Thomson	Rachel Toomim	Tracy S. Troth
Erika Takeo	Havely Taylor	Julie Thayer	Jerilyn Thurber	Burton Toone	Nick Tshilis
Ruth Ann Takes, PBVM	Kathy Taylor	Jeff Thering	Kirby Thwing	Josephine Torrez	Christina Tuccillo
Nathaniel Talbot	Troy Teets	Bonnie Thistle	Janet Tee	Harriet Totten	Ann Tucker
Theo Tang	Anna Teigen	Cathryn Thomas	Mary Tierney	Ryan Toops	Teya Tufford Petter
Yvette Tannenbaum	Michele Temple	David Thomas	Penelope Tingle	Steven Trafton	Pat Turney
Jane Tanner	Martha Tenney	Jennifer Thomas	Valerie Tisdell	Thomas Treat	Michele Tusinak
Don Tarbutton	Sharon Tepe	Ralph Thomas	Leah Tobani	Gigi Trebatoski	Bernadette Tuthill
Joan Taslitz	Jean Terranova	Paul Thompson	Claire Todd	Curt Tresenriter	Forrest Twombly
Anne Taub	Nancy Terrill	Cindy Thompson	Katherine Todd	Jennifer Trevino	Connie Tyler
Sandra Tauferner	Patricia Teter	George Thompson	Jude Todd, Ph.D.	Scott Trieshmann	Melissa Tyler
Brian Tausig-Lux	Susan Tharp	Martha Thompson	Pala Tomasello	Sandra Triponney	Lynn Tytla
Angela Taylor	Leslie Thatcher	Sarah Thompson	Adam Tomei	Adrienne Tripp	
Debra Taylor	Randy Thatcher	Scott Thompson	Barbara Toomey	Charles Tripp	
U					
Erik Ulman	Gene Ulmer	Jenna Umbriac	Elizabeth Ungar	Marilyn Ungaro	Eliana Uretsky
Sam Urmy	Zofia Uznanska				
V					
Lynn Vaag	Sara Van Asten	Kathleen Vander Heijden	Jessica Verge	Val Voci	Emily von W. Gilbert
Karen Vahtra	Matthew Van Auken	Renee Vanderhoff	David Via	Carla Vogel-Stone	Robin Vosburg
Carina Valenti	Dona van Bloemen	Aliza Vanderlip	Laura Vicari	Robin Vogler	Erka Voss
Leyva Valerie	Emma Van de Water	Rhonda Vanvingerden	Reka Viczian	Vera Vogt	Paul Voytas
Autumn Valley	Laurel van den Cline	Stamatios Varias	Jane Vieira	Terry Vollmer	Michelle Vruwink
Cheryl Vallone Rigby	Joshua Van Deventer	Michael Vaughan	Helene Vion	Whitney Voltz	
Curt Valmy	Sara Van Fleet	Anthony Vecchio	Greg Virgo	Timothy Vollmer	
Vivian S. Valtri Burgess	Cathie Van Wert	Ray Velazquez	Nedda Viscovich	Karl von Kries	
W					
K. W.	Marlo K. Wamsganz	Judith Weil	Carey Wheaton	Terry J. Williams	Andrew Woiakoski
Emily Wachowiak	Bethany Ward	Naomi Weinstein	Jean Wheelock	Lisa Williamson	Michele Wojcicki
Sharon Wachaler	Paula Ward	Jennifer M. Weishaar	Cynthia White	Michael Wills	Kathleen Wolchick
Art Wagner	Tara Ward	Faye Weisler	Gail White	Anna Wilson	A. Wolf
Brianna Wagner	Jennifer Ward McDonald	Clifford Weiss	Greg White	Ila Wilson	Sasha Wolf
Carol Wagner	Catherine Warner	E.B. Weiss	Laura White	Janet Wilson	Wesley Wolf
Katie Wagner	Maria Warnick	George Weissmann	Mary White	Marsha Wilson	Kathleen Wolfe
Vickie Wagner	Nan Warshaw	Arnold Welber	Catherine Whiteside	Maryrose Wilson	Kristin Womack
Garrett Weiss	Anje' Waters	Christopher Welch	Rhoda Whitney	Shannon Wilson	Arthur Wood
Marie Wakefield	Randy Waters	Susan Welch	Christine Wichmann	Kimberly Winder	Barbara Wood
Rebecca Walding	Billie Watkins	Greeley Wells	Margaret Wieser	Maggie Wineburgh-Freed	Brian Wood
Beverly Walker	Debbie Watkins	Lark Wells	Joseph Wiesner	Jennifer Wingard	Edward Wood
Carolyn Walker	Fan Watkinson	Duane Welsch	Margarita Wiewall	Julie Winkel	Rachel Wood
Shannon Wallace	Danny Watson	Sarah Welsh	Margaret Wilbur	Richard Winkler	Theresa Wood
Rhoda Waller	Laura Watson	Susan Welsh	John Wiles III	Debra Winter	Tara Woodard
Brad Walrod	Mandy Watson	Constance Welzel	Jonathan Wilk	Maura Winterer	Charlene Woodcock
Donald Walsh	Michael Watson	Emma Wendt	Marian Wilkerson	David Wish	Karen Woods
Sean Walsh	Sylvia Watterson	Barbara Werner	Matthew Wilkes	Elizabeth Wisler	Rory Woods
Tammy Walter	Elizabeth Watts	Marita Wesely Clough	Jonathon Williams	Judith Glassburg Wisnia	Rachael Wooten
Garrett Walters	Mark Wax	Lee West	Linda Williams	Julie Wissinger	Tracy Wreden
Jacqueline Walters	Julene Weaver	Susan West	Lisa Williams	Martin Witchger	Barbara B. Wyle
Sonya Walters	Deborah Webster	Amy Westcott	Pamela Williams	Trude Witham	Devik Wyman
Zachary Waltz	Shoshana Wechsler	Donna Westmoreland	Sharon Williams	Bob Witmer	
X					
Deborah Xiques					
Y					
Hilary Yarmus	Dennis Yee	Holly Yee	Rhonda Yellin-Waldron	William Yenke, Ph.D.	Susan Yewell
Clay Young	John Young	Mary Ystuetta	Amy Yu Gray		
Z					
Norman Zachod	Dr. Stanley J. Zawada	Cynthia Zeito	Cynthia Ziegler	Rebecca Zoellner	Eric Zuesse
Douglas and Dianne Zande	Marci Zayon	L. Zeveloff	Rachel Zierzow	Abigail Zoline	Jennifer Zwarg
Linda Jo Zapar	Gisela Zechmeister	David Zevin	Maureen Zika	Theodore Zook	Michael Zwiebach
Alfonso Zaragosa	Eron Zehavi	Cathy Zheutlin	Fred Zimmerman	Marguery Lee Zucker	

LAND TRUST ALLIANCE FORM LETTER

- **Please support the Senate funding levels for Agricultural Land Easements**, which advance the proven model of leveraging Federal funds through local partners to secure perpetual conservation easements that help keep farm and ranch lands in production, while conserving important natural resources.
- **Restore the existing FRPP match formula** to encourage bargain sales and allow waivers of the match requirements for strategic projects.
- Restore language clarifying that the Federal Government is not acquiring a real property interest and has only a “**contingent right of enforcement.**”

Pat Deering
Marlena Lange
Mark Sollitto

John French
James L. Leet
Becky Stock

Ann Hutchinson
Michael Shand
Chris Wood

NATIONAL SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE COALITION FORM LETTER

- **America needs a farm bill that creates jobs and spurs economic growth**—support programs like the Value-Added Producer Grants Program by guaranteeing \$30 million of mandatory funding per year. VAPG provides seed money to help farmers innovate in agriculture and create jobs while securing a sustainable path to market-based farm profitability.
- **America needs a farm bill that makes healthy food widely available to all Americans**—including schoolchildren! We must provide flexibility for states to use existing food procurement programs to purchase fresh, healthy food from local farmers and ranchers.
- **America needs a farm bill that protects our natural resources**—protect the Conservation Stewardship Program from unfair funding cuts, and improve it by ranking applications solely on their conservation benefits. Farmers count on CSP and other conservation programs to conserve soil for future generations, keep water and air clean, and create habitat for wildlife—all while farming profitably.
- **America needs a farm bill that invests in the next generation of farmers and ranchers**—guarantee \$25 million per year in mandatory funding for the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program. We need a national strategy and commitment to support beginning farmer and ranchers entering agriculture. With an aging farm population, now is the time to invest in the future of American agriculture by nurturing new agriculture start-ups.
- **America needs a farm bill that drives innovation for tomorrow’s farmers and food entrepreneurs**—fund the Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative at \$30 million per year in mandatory funding. Investment in agricultural research is vital to continued productivity and innovation in growing and diverse sectors of American agriculture, such as organic agriculture.

A

John E. Akin
Robin Ayars

Kathleen Alexander

John K. Akin

Matt Anton

B

Kim Bacon
Melvin Bautista
Gerald Bednar

Anne Behroozi
Frank Belcastro
J. Beverly

Patrick Bosold
Charlene Boydston

Sandy Brown
Bonnie Breckenridge

C

Regina Cappelletti
Andrew Cardno

Edith Coleman
Geri Collecchia

Tim Collingwood
Susan Constantine

Phyllis Crawford

D & E

Jim Dailey
Eric Edwards

K. Danowski
Bibi Elsamahy

Beth Darby

Christopher Dent

F

Angela Fazzari

Elisabeth Fiekowsky

Jennifer Fike

Anna Louise E. Fontaine

G			
Dave Garlock Cinda Gaynor	Brian Gibbons Valerie Gilbert	Frances Goff Jerry Goodrich	Tina Gruen
H			
Dave Hanson Stephen Hasson Catherine Haug	Ray Hawkins Elizabeth Hickman Thomas Higgins	Deanna Homer Mike and Judy Howden Dawn Hoyt	Karen L. Hudson Krissey Hughes
J			
James James	Barbara Johnson		
K			
A. K. Loni Kemp Steven Kennedy	Timothy Kirsch Carl Klein Fred Klemmer	Marc Klosner Dawn Kosec Jennifer Krouchick	Cosima Krueger- Cunningham Holly Kukkonen
L			
Gwen Lambert Val Leitner	Kathryn Lemoine Leslie Leslie	Helena Liber John Lopez	Terry Luke Mary Lyda
M			
Jim Maguire Jeremy Manela Stuart McDonald	Tom McLaughlin Ann McMullen	Taunia Miles Prof. Joan P. Mencher	Randy Murbach Blayne Myers
N			
Steve Nance Neal Nollette	Jean Naples Sydney Null	Ryan Nestler	Louisa Newcomb
P			
Jill Peiffer Rev. Melody C. Porter	Amy Perrin Laura Prestridge	Martha Poliquin	Adrian Poloni
R			
Irene Radke	Barbara Ross		
S			
Mark Salamon Marni Salmon Mary Schor	Liya Schwartzman P. Scoville Melissa Sharp	Daniel Shively Daedra Smith Judith Smith	Michael Sodos Evan Studenmund Matthew Swyers
T			
William Tamblyn	Ryan Touns	Alicja Trzopek	
W			
Ariel Wallick Rebecca Watkins	Susan Watts Susan Weems	Nathan Wesselowski Shawn Weymouth	Elizabeth Williams Terrie Williams
Y & Z			
April Yuds	Rudy Zeller	Barry Zuckerman	

NATIONAL YOUNG FARMERS' COALITION FORM LETTER

Dear Chairman Lucas,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony to the House Committee on Agriculture on the next farm bill. My district representative is being copied on this testimony. I am a **[fill in the blank]** and I'd like to share my support for programs that help the next generation of growers build strong farm businesses. As it's estimated that 125,000 farmers will retire in the next 5 years, it's absolutely critical that farm bill programs help citizens get started in this challenging field. I ask that

the Committee endorse all of the provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236), including:

- Mandatory funding for Individual Development Accounts at \$5 million per year. This program helps new farmers raise capital to start farm businesses and is tested and proven by organizations like Practical Farmers of Iowa and the California Farmlink.
- Mandatory funding for the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Development Program at \$25 million a year. This program funds essential education for new farmers around the country.
- Authorize a new microloan program, to enable young and beginning farmers to better access FSA loan programs.
- Revise FSA rules to make loan programs more accessible to more young and beginning farmers.
- Reaffirm the existing cost share differential for BFRs within EQIP. Also, reaffirm the advance payment option allowing beginning and socially disadvantaged producers to receive an advance payment for the project's costs for purchasing materials or contracting services, but increase the limit on the advance payment from 30 percent to 50 percent of costs.
- Amend the Farm and Ranch Land Protection Program (FRPP) to make farm viability part of the purpose of the program and to give discretionary authority to the eligible entities that implement the program to give priority to easements with an option to purchase at the agricultural use value, deals that transfer the land to beginning and farmers and ranchers, applicants with farm succession plans, and other similar mechanisms to maintain the affordability of protected land.

These and other provisions within the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act will help new growers succeed and I urge you to include them in the next farm bill.

Sincerely,

Ann Adams	Doug Goosey	Bryn Roshong
Kristen Balschunat	Krista H.	Utah Roshong
Dara Barr	Larry Haberman	Jeremy Ryan
Mark Begley	Amanda Hanley Dalzell	Abby Sadauckas
Mark Begley	Wes Hannah	Abigail Salzer
Jenn Bell	Wes Hannah	Alan Seid
Steven Beltram	Catherine Harrison	Micah Sewell
Steven Beltram	Michaela Hayes	Kirk Shaunfield
Kevin Bodle	Mary Jawlik	Lindsey Shute
Chandler Briggs	Sara Jobin	Chris Sieverts
William C. Briggs, Jr.	Kathlene Jordan	Carol Sullivan
Paul Buseck	Kim Kirkbride	Audrey Swanenberg
Thea Carlson	Emma Kirwan	Cassie Tharinger
Patricia Carson	Francesca Lane	Diane Tolley
Edward Cheetham	Chris Larsen	Connor Trott
Kyle Chidester	Alex Liebman	Tune Farm
Nichollette Codding	Daniel Livingston	William Whitaker
Mark Dattilio	Rick Machado	Leah White
Roy Dollar	Nellie McAdams	Dottie Wolfe
Robert DuBois	Daniel Moyer	Zoe Wroten
Laurie Duncan	Amy Pickering	David Zabkar
Chris Erickson	Emily Place	Sean Zigmund
Rachel Firak	Tim Redmond	
Marybeth Gentry	Jennifer Reilly	
James Gibson	Laurie Rolfe	

ORGANIC FARMING RESEARCH FOUNDATION FORM LETTER

As a strong supporter of organic farming, I ask that you . . .

- Fully fund the Organic Research and Extension Initiative (OREI) at the 2008 level.
- Endorse all provisions of the Local Foods, Farms and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286).

- Support all provisions of the Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236).
- Maintain EQIP Organic Initiative and do NOT cut the Conservation Stewardship Program.

Becky Bassham	Ellen Kanner	Brian O'Connor
Jeffery Beacham	Randy Kiel	Catherine Peters
John Bobbe	Sibella Kraus	Paul Roge
Paul Bucciaglia	Gwen Lambert	Marjorie Roswell
Sean Clark	Patrick Lillard	Susan Shields
Elizabeth Coontz	Marc Lionetti	Patricia A. Simon
Edi Dwiyono	Kellene Mart	Dr. Rik Smith
Andrew Hammerstein	Lynne Martinez	Miriam Steinberg
Pam Hartwell-Herrero	Stacy Mates	Lee Valkenaar
Krissy Hughes	Victoria McGarrity	Ford Waterstrat
T.J. Johnson	Aline Mukai	Donald Worley

PEACE AND JUSTICE COMMISSION OF THE CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF SALT LAKE CITY

The Peace and Justice Commission of the Catholic Diocese of Salt Lake City urges you to:

- (1) protect funding and structure for SNAP; efforts to block grant this important nutrition program will weaken our nation's response to hunger and increase food insecurity in at risk households, particularly those with young children, the elderly and the disabled;
- (2) create incentives for small farmers who grow fruits, vegetables and other specialty crops; and
- (3) adequately fund The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) and make it more responsive to need; this program provides food banks and emergency food pantries with commodities and provides low-income households food.

Mamta Chaudhari	Alyssa Geisler	Jean Hill	Joanna Straughn
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SLOW FOOD USA FORM LETTER

As the committee considers the 2012 Food and Farm Bill, I urge you to:

- **Support our fight against hunger by maintaining and strengthening critical nutrition programs** in this time of unprecedented need. We must not solve our budget problems on the backs of those experiencing food insecurity, including our most vulnerable—our children, the elderly, and the disabled;
- **Provide an even “plowing” field** by fully funding programs that support beginning and socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers, organic farming, regional farm and food economies, and rural development. We need more farmers and ranchers, more sustainable food production, and more economic opportunity in our food system;
- **Support family farmers that really need help, not the biggest farms that don't:** End subsidies (aka direct payments and countercyclical commodity programs), and replace them with loophole-free agriculture risk coverage. Additionally, implement a cap on crop insurance premium subsidies;
- **Ensure that limited conservation funding maximizes lasting environmental benefits:** Limit funds to Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs) for animal waste management infrastructure by eliminating the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) Livestock Set-aside and protect the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) from disproportionate cuts, and improve it by ranking applications solely on their conservation benefits.

A

Mary Able	Lawrence Adymy	Jaimie Alley	Pamela Angulo	Vanessa Arcara	Jamie Atkinson
Amanda Acevedo	Aifita Afifi	Linda Alley	Pat Annce	Tim Archer	Meghan Atwood
Laura Ackerman	Janice Aht	Gene Ammarell	Koh Annette	Deniz Arslan	Christina Aulick
Miriam Ackerman	Gina Alianiello	Sean Anderson	Frederique Appfel-Margin	Debra Asher	
Hillary AcMoody	Paul Allen	Tove Andvik	Jesse Appelman	J. Donna Asmussen	

B

Hannah Babich	Aaron Beam	Kristin Berkery	Stacey Blaschke	Steffen Brandt	Wanda Bruce
Jason Bade	Jaynie Beard	Nicole Berkheimer	Jessica Blemker-Ferree	Joshua Brau	Vincent Bruno
Janet Bailey	Joe Bearden	Karen Bernard	Sharon Blezard	Michael Braude	Jane Buch
Luke Bailey	Karen Bearden	Suzel Bertrand	Sharon Blickenstaff	Jeff Brauer	Evelyn Buchanan

Jane Bainter Maryellen Baker Suzanne Baker	Patricia Becker Jeremy Beckman Judy Beckman	Janet Beth Judith Bevilacqua John Christopher Bezyiko Anjana Bhalla Erin Bishi Carolyn Bigger Susan Bilda Rhonda Biles Kathleen Billings Emily Birden Melissa Birns Carrie Blackburn Mary Blackwell Louise Blaschke	Christina Blomberg Carol Blum Scott Bogart Jana Bogs Jamie Bollman Yvette Bone Donna Bonifield Tracey Booth Nadia Borowski Scott Cynthia Bower Sarah Boysen Katharine Bradley Veronica Bradshaw Shelly Brandenburger	Laura Braun Ann Braunstein Heather Breidenbach Amy Brenner Kellen Brenner Jim Brett Nicola Breuer Vanessa Brocato James Brooks Sarah Browder Joeylyn Brown Linda Brown Diana Brownstone Jonathan Bruce	Melissa Bukovinac Rupert Burg Robin Burgess Linda Burke Terry Burkhardt Naomi Bustamante Julianna Butch Shelley Butler Jeb Byers
Mia Baki Krystal Baldasaro Nancy Barba Sherri Barker Meghan Barnard Julie Barr Joyce Bartolmain Patricia Batchelder Vicki Bates Geri Baumblatt Alec Baxt	Neal Beets Shanah Bell Mignon Belongie Catherine Belt-Vahle Sarah Benesch Larry Benjamin Susan Bennett Tiffany Bensen Carol Benton Frieda Benun Christopher Beres				
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M. C. Laurie Cain Lily Calderwood Matt Callo Holly Camarota Kathryn Campbell-Kibler Derinda Cantrell Erica Carlson Laura Carlson Martha Carlson Virginia Carlsten Megan Carlucci Heather Carman	Jady Carmichael Laura Carneecchia Julie Carroll Amy Carensen Melanie Casey Joan Cassell Lauren Castellini Dana Cavallaro Dignam Eli Cavich Santher Celeste Clinton Chamberlain John Richard Chamberlain Peg Champion	Alice Chang Margaret Chanler Katherine Chapman Jillian DeMarco Alejandro Chavez Eric Cheadle Debbie Cheesman Sharlene Chew Ann Chiaverini Kris Christie Gillan Cindy Jonathon Clark	Margaret Clarke Francine Cleer Jean Clements Ryan Cakley Fritz Cohen Ida Cohen Zoe Cohen Jeff Coleman Timothy Coleman Larissa Collins Louise Collins Robert Colman Pat Coluzzi	Meghan Conboy Alison Conforti Kathleen Conzelmann Wendy Copp Pasquaina Coppola Jackie Cornell Shawn Cortay Wayne Corteville Mariana Cotlear Stacy Couch Edith Couchman Flora Crapko Elizabeth Creighton	Alison Croney Eliza Cross Jennifer Cuhacyan Karin Cummins Joan H. Cunningham Nathalie Curabba Paul Curcio Julia Curry Tamara Cusick Melissa Cyr Alex Czurylo
D					
Steve Daigneault Bruce Daniel Donna Daniels Alessandro d'Ansembourg Donna Davis Jaimee Davis Laurie Davis Rebecca Allen Davis Seth Davis	Martha Davis Kipeak Emi Day Rebecka Daye Christi De Lacro Kirstin De Mello Selena Deak Elsa Dean Olivia Delancia Chris DeLucia	Sarah DeLucia Jessica DeMarco Kathi Demarest Jillian DePete-McMahon Amy DeSantis David DeVaughn Terri Dewald Connie Dewdney Rita Di Tondo	Carolyn Dickey Anna Diffenderfer David Diffenderfer Rachel DiFranco Brandt Ditgen Fernando Divina Nina Dmetruk Christina Dobbs Tina Dohseavage	Lori Dodson Mary Lynne Doleys Daisy Dominguez Ydun Donahoe Jim Donovan Liat Douglas J.D. Doyle Molly Drazin Catherine Drzewiecki	Christopher Duane Jeffrey Dubinsky Tim Duffin Robin Dumitiz Anne Dunning Jennifer Durban
E					
Matthew Earle Sylvia Eckardt Karen Edwards	Samuel Efron Stephen Eichelberger Susan Ekk	Barbara Elfman Jodi Elliott Rebeca Elliott	Ann Ely Erin Ely Catherine Enfield	Lori Enright William Erb Cheryl Erenberg	Glenn Esher Gregory Esteve
F					
Jamie Fahrner John Farais Emily Farr Valerie Farr Chelsea Farrell Monica Favela Shervin Fazel John Federico	Sarah Feierabend Kimberly Feilteu Tracy Feldman Andrew Fenton Barbara Ferguson Danielle Ferguson David Fetter Bryan Field	Joy Fields Cathy Finlay Andrea Finley Andrew Fippinger Matthew Fisher Rachel Fiske-Cipriani Mary Fleming Natalie Fleming	Alexandra Flemming Luis Flores Joshua Flowers Sonia Flowers Christine Flynn Jill Flynn Noelle Fogg Dale Ford	Susan Ford Blake Forrest Carolyn Forayth Aimee Foster Kathleen Fowler Anna Fox Ashli Franck Jacquie Fraser	Grethen Frederick Thomas Freedman Brock Freeman Claire Freierman Katie French Maurice Pierre Friedrichs Margy Furst
G					
Linda Gagne Susan Gallaher Matthew Gallotti Joshua Galliano Anne Galvin Florence Gans Elizabeth Garber Gina Garcia Marisol Garratton Anna Garzon	Robert Gaston Christopher Gauthier Chris Geiger Matthew Genaze Jacqueline Genze Chris George Teal George Romola Georgia Chester Georgi-Denamore Daniele Gerard	Karen Gerbatsch Kristin Gervasio Sandy Giallanza Franca Gilbert Paul Gillette Lindsay Gilmour Marla Gisi Jessica Glendinning James Glynn Dawn Goddard	Eric Godin Christine Goepf Donna Goff Pascal Golay Mia Goldman Louise Golub Anne Good Melinda Goossen Pete Gosar Hope Grable	Alex Grace Heather Graham Laura Graham Chris Gramly Mia Green Catherine Gregorio Bonnie Gregory Dana Greyson Melissa Griffin Jacqueline Grote	Sherrye Grotte Hannah Grubba Merry Guben Thad Guidry Angie T. Gulley Catharine Gunderson Laura Guy
H					
Linda Haas Sarah Hafer Alan Haggard John Haggerty Carla Hall Lori Hall Michelle Hall Kathleen Halliday Patricia Halpern Madeleine-Therese Halpert Bob Hamburg Munth Hamilton Safya Hamit Chris Hammack	Sasha Hammad Stacey Hannaford Lisa Hannahich Josh Hansen Karen Hansen Shedryl Hansen Katie Haqq Kathryn Harris Megan Hartman Maralyn Hauer Todd Hauser Heather Hawkinson Carol Hay Erin Hayde	Shannon Hayes Angela Heynie Alicia Hecht Jill Hector Patricia Heinze Kathryn Helms Megan L. Helzner Margaret Hemley Kelley Heneveld Sarah Hensel George Heritier Julie Herres Emily Herrick Daniel Herron	Maggie Herskovits Elizabeth Hickman Jennifer Hill Lindsay Hill Ann Hines Jennifer Hines Mary Ann Histed Raphael Hitzke Douglas Hiza Melanie Hoekstra Kim Hoffman Paula Hoffman Heather Hoffmann Heidi Hoffmann	John Holden Halsey Holt Perdita Holtz Michael Holub Jim Homer Kate Hopkins Kelly Horriagan Barbara Horter Andrea Horton Jerry Horton Caroline Howe Jan Howe Christopher Howell Dawn Hoyt	Caitlin Hudson Patrina Huff Laurel Hummel Anny Hunt Jean Hunt Janet Hunter Lisa Hunter Richard Hurley Dana Husehle Abigail Hutchinson Jenny Hutcheson Marian Huttman Diane Hyndman
I					
Annika Ihnat	Kelly Ireland	Wendy Isaacs	Misty Ismail	Samuel Itin	Kathy Ivey
J					
Carol Jackson Rachel Jacobs Britt Jacobson Virginia Jacobson Garland Jaeger	Michael James Chris Janni Marsha Jarvis Patricia Jenatsch Alyssa Jenkins	Katherine Jensen Melissa Joachim JoLin Johnson Susan Johnson Whitney Johnson	Sabrina Johnston Annabel Jones Emily Jones Emily Jones Georgia Jones	Gina Jones Leslie Jones Matthew Jones Robert Jones Janine Jordan	Carey Jung Gia Jurevich Mary Jursinovic
K					
K. K. Nadine Kagan	Shira Katz Jennifer Kaufer	Louise Kennedy Charity Kenyon	Barbara King Khali Kinge	Joan Kogan Carolee Kokola	Laura Kremser Philip Kreyck

Sarah Kalloch	Lise Kauffman	Debbie Kenyon	Melissa Kirby	Pauline Kolody	Martha Krikava
S. Kaplan	Shoshana Kaufman	Alexandra Ketchum	Annette Klapstein	Blanche Korfmacher	Sarah Kruger
Julia Kardon	Stephanie Keane	Meg Kettell	Joshua Kleiner	George Kormendi	Marina Kubicek
Janice Karlovich	Michelle Keaney	Cori Kettler	Laura Kleman	Marilyn Korsedal	Carol Kuelper
Albert Karok	Martha Keating	Ashley Keul	Gregory Koch	Chris Kosak	Ping Kwan
Leslie Karst	Annelise Kelly	Kerry Kilroy	Andrea L. Koeman	Sally Krause	
Sue Kasoff	Cait Kennedy	Jenn Kim	Dana Koga	James Kreider	
L					
Margaret LaBarbera	Erin Larses	Fiona Lee	Janice Lewis	Robert Lockhart	Sharon Lukachevich
Madeline Lafleur	Key Larkin	Sarah Lee	Ken Lewis	Jenna Lollis	Sally Lulez
Sherry Lam	Brooke Larm	Tawanna Lee	Kristin Lewis	Julie Lombardo	Kirsten Lund
Michele Lamb	Megan Larmer	Michelle Leggore	Sue Lewis	Sharon Long	Sherry Lund
Gwen Lambert	Amie LaRouche	Carrie Lehtonen	Carrie Ley	Thornton Long	Hannah Lupien
Nick Land	Phil Latella	Kristin Leonard	Sallie Liben	Bobby Loparo	Catherine Lydon
Leticia Landa	Meghan Laurs	Dave Leone	Catherine Ligenza	Brooke Lopez	Robert Lyle
Swann Lander	Jean Layton	Leslie Lepeska	Elizabeth Liljestrom	Michele Lovd	Linda Lynch
E.D.M. Landman, M.D.	Silvia Leahu-Aluas	Charles Leps	Erin Linville	Patricia Lovejoy	April Lynskey
Donna Landon	Jill Leahy	Shelley Levine	Christopher Lish	Jesse Lucas	
Leah Langstaff	Nathan Leamy	Danielle Levitt	Brian Littlefield	Barbara Luck	
Jennifer Lanski	Nicole Leaper	Jeffrey Levrant	W. Ryan Livingston	Judith Luebke	
Rachel Lanzafame	Deanna Lee	Don Lewis	Joann Lo	Jocelyn Luglio	
M					
Lori Maas	Lindsay Marquez	Rosemary Maziarz	Sara Corinne McLarin-	Ena Miceil	Ivy Morales
			Hadden		
Elizabeth Macaulay	Kim Marshall	Marghretta McBean	Angela McLaughlin	Eric Milano	Christina Morkner Brown
Emily Madara	Charles Marshik	Brant McClelland	Brenda McMahon	Deborah Miller	Rita Morris
Amber Madole	Elizabeth Marston	Praline McCormack	Jana McMahon	Jayne Miller	Tara Morris
Raven Magill	Sheila Martin	Kim McCoy	Robin McMullen	Katherine Miller	Teresa Morris
Marsha Magnone	Alfred Martinez	Jonathan McCurley	David McNulty	Marilyn Miller	Robert Morrison
Chris Maguire	Eleanor Martz Gomez	Andrea McDonald-	Jason McWright	Tiffany Miller	Marina Morrone
		Fingland			
Nadia Mahdi	Oliver Masciarotte	Robert and Rebecca	Kristi McWright	Linda Millman	William Morrow
		McDowell			
James Maher	Shannon Massey	Tom McElderry	Jeanne Medina	Carol Milstein	John Mortensen
Glenda Mahoney	Annmarie Mastro	Janis McElhaney	Veronica Medina	Danisa Mishima	Jenna Moseoso
Elena Makansi	Mimi Mather	Sally McEntire	Kristin Megan	Jennifer Mitchell	Alice Mosley
Karen Maki	Anne Matthei	Brooke McFee	Jessica Mehlhoff	Kate Mitchell	Katie Moulton
Rachel Makleff	Kuhl Matthew	Alma McGoldrick	Anthony Melli	David Modarelli	Jean Muckian
Sharon Malek	Lissa Mattson	Alycia McGoldrick	Matthew Memoli	James Monaco	Charlotte Muller
Louise Mann	Tamara Matz	Kevin McGovern	Richard Mendes	Montana Made	Robin Mullet
Clarence Manning	Rich Mauro	Nathan McGowan	Teresa Mendietta	Nicole Montesano	Michelle Mullinax
Travis Manntz	Michael May	Jenny McGuire	Bethany Menkart	Aimee Montgomery	Cecilia Murphy
R.J. Marchetti	Brianna Mayberry-Kurth	Andrew McIntire	Linda Mensinga	Rebecca Montgomery	Matthew Murphy
Lydia Marchuk	Peter Mayes	Suzi McKee	Sue Menz	Angeline Montoya	S. Murphy
Mindy Marin	Kim Maynard	Alice McKenzie	Laura Merrick	Dawn Moore	Timothy Murphy
Howard Markwell	Gisbert Mayr	Elijah McKenzie	Monika Merryman	Meg Moorman	Mindy Mutterperl
N					
Camille Nava	Paul Nelson	Lynn Neuman	Shelly Nichols	Rosanna Nissen	Lucy Norris
Ana Neff	Terri Nestel	Veronica Nevils	Tyler Nickl	Sherri Nixon	Jennifer Nu
Ginny Nelson	Mary Neundorf	Danielle Ngo	Derick Niss	Katherine Norris	
O					
Edna Oakley	Sammy Oh	Margarite Olmos	Jenine Osbon	Jenna Osiason	Kris Ohleth
Christine Odabashian	Barbara Oleksa-Reiss	Meg Olson	Janet Osborn	Mary Ostafi	Castle O'Neill
Elizabeth O'Donnell	Jennifer Osborn	Mark Owen			
P					
Gina Paige	Ken Parker	Michael Peel	Cindy Pfender	Royal Pitchford	Melinda Preston
Theresa Palazzo	Sarah Parker	Tamar Peltz	Manska Phalgoo	Jenny Pomplito	Dave & Sue Priest
Joan Palinski	Jill Parsh	Kim Penney	Hoang-Lien Pham	Judith Pender	Terri Procie
Shaina Palmere	Craig Patane	Anna Perna	Caleb Phillips	Tony Pope	Lisa Pullen
Julie Palumbo	Michael Patrick	Kim Perszyk	Carla Phillips	Ronna Popkin	Mary Purdy
Cinzia Panetti	Karen Pavone	Joanne Peterson	Gabriel Phillips	Anna Porter	
Ivano Panetti	Abigail Pawka-Orzolek	Kila Peterson	Jessica Phillips	Dana Porter	
Monica Paolini	Stephanie Pearce	Rachel Pettit	Matt Piarle	Lorrie Poseguy	
Burt Pardue	Cindi Pearlman	Margaret Pfeiffer	Patricia Pisani	Margo Powell	
Q					
Gina Quattrochi	Magaly Queralt	Tristan Quinn-Thibodeau			
R					
Lucy Radys	Kelton Reid	Kathleen Reside	Sandra Rivera	Grace Roman	Holly Rushing
Beverly Rae	Mary Reid	Jason Retzke	Rosemari Roast	Nancy Rosch	Ian Russell
Tiffany Rapplean	Carol Reilly	Michelle Rice	Krista Roberts	Amy Rosenberg	Kathleen Russell
Mary-Noelle Rasi	Dorothy Reilly	Cort Richer	Evette Robinson	Jeffrey Rosenberg	Minette Russell-Inace
Wendy Ready	Lucinda Reinas	Susan Richman	Laura Robinson	Myriam Ross	Branka Ruzak
Jennifer Reagan	Rachel Reinhart	Brent Riggs	Mary Rochon	Terri Roush	Amanda Ryan
Errica Redmind	Barbara Reinish	Kathleen Riley	Valerie Rodgers	Susan Rowe	
Eric Reed	Dick Reiss	Jeffrey Rios	Bari Rodriguez	Wg Rowe	
Jess Reed	Tamara Reitz	Judith Risen	Misty Rogers	Constance Rubin	
Laura Reeder	Jody Renaud	Jonathan Risley	Yolanda Rogers	Paul Rucker	
Annie Reichert	Douglas Renick	David Ritchie	Linda Rolfe	Susan Ruffridge	
S					
Lauren Sacha	Josh Schaffner	Julie Sergovic	Brilana Silva	Tim Smith	James St. Pierre
Aaron Sachs	Cynthia Schandl	Claudia Shabin	Shakira Simley	Vanesa Smith	Amiee Staggs
Eileen Sackett	Christine Schantz	Julie Shaffer	Jill Simone	Bobbi Snodgrass	Nicole Stancel
Carmen Saenz	Ariel Schlager	Ralph Shannon	Sandra Simpson	Marc Snyder	Craig Stancliff
Alison Sager	Randy Schlesinger	Melina Shannon-DiPietro	Winston Sims	Nancy Snyder	Jennifer Stanley
Susan Salafsky	Kim Schlossberg	Deborah Shapiro	Grace Singleton	Todd Snyder	Autumn Starkey
Deborah Salerno	Daniel Schmalz	Laura Sharkey	Kim Sintoni	Judith Soffiantino	Ninian Stein
Jennifer Salkowicz	Katie Schmieder	Paula Shatkin	Vidya Sivam	Mardi Solomon	Laurie Steinberg
Shelby Salley	Brian Schneider	Kirk Shaunfield	John Skelton	Jaime Soltero, Jr.	Sheryl Steinke
Rachel Salloway	Laurie Schneyer	Julie Shaw	Stacey Skole	Janet Sommers	Zan Sterling
Shira Sameroff	Gail Schorsch	Lorinda Shearburn	Anna Slabicki	Shivani Sood	Tim Stevenson
Nicole Sandberg	Destiny Schwartz	Laura Sheinkopf	Emily Sloane	Tristan Sophia	Anika Stewart
Shari Sands	Betsy Scott	Charles Shelly	Kristin Small	Aletha Soule	Tracy Stone
Jennifer Sandy	K. Scott	Stephanie Sherman	Alex Smith	Kathy Soule	Vladimir Strugatsky

Jada Santoro	Duane Sebesta	Robyn Shores Foster	Debra Smith	Jennifer Spiker	Tia Sukin
Christine Sassi	David Sedovic	June Shrestha	Julia Smith	Carol Spillane-Mueller	Kathryn Sukites
Mark Saunders	Lisa Selby	Robert Shwajlyk	Kimberly Smith	Gary Spoto	Shauna Sullivan
Nancy Sawyer	Aurelia Serbia	Will Siegel-Sawma	Kristin Smith	Chris St. John	Joy Swanson
T					
Meredith Tabcott	Lisa Taylor	Charissa Thomas	Mary Tierney	Towne's Harvest Farm	James Turner
Katy Tafoya	Susan Taylor	Luanne Thomas	Amy Tinto	Suzanne Trenney	Roger Turpin
Lisa Talbot	Martha Teeter	Martha Thomas	William Tippie	Jennifer Trotter	Sharon Tutchings
Jessica Tallarico	J.P. Teets	Nancy Thomas	Linda Tlolo	Susan Trotter	Curtis Tyler
Becky Talyn	John Teevan	Elizabeth Thompson	Peter Tochet	Kristy Truax Nichols	
Lisa Tam	Stan Tellin	Jennifer Thornton	Daum Tod	Francisco Tschen	
Rachel Tanksley-Russell	Kristin Terpening	K.C. Thorson	Michael Tomczyszyn	John Tucker	
Bruno Tarazona	Leslie Terzian Markoff	Rick Thronburg	C. Toporow	Eric and Sheree Tuppan	
Dorothy Taylor	Irene Tetonis	Christine Tiballi	Melissa Torres	John Turlington	
U					
Aaron Ucko	Marc Udoff	Dee Ulano	Julie Ulmer	Marsha Ungehusri	William Upchurch
Amy Urbank					
V					
Elisa van Dam	Amanda Vanni	Vishal Verma	Lori Vincent	Emily Vokac	Crystal Vossler
Katrin van Dam	Vikas Verma	James Vermillion	Kristen Vittitow	Linda Vono	
W					
Julie Wade	Susan B. Wasch	Natalya Weinstein	Linda Wheeler	Kate Williams	Kari Wishingrad
Briana Wagner	Rebecca Waterhouse	Judith Weisman	Nina Wheeler	Linda Williams	Maria Wiskur
Teresa Wagner	Janel Watkins	Jennifer Weiss	Angie White	Pam Williams	Ann Wiswell
Ida Wainschel	Christine Watson	Natalie Weiss	Kimberly White	Tom Williams	Devera Witkin
Winford Walker	Laci Watson	Claire Weiss Brownstein	Parris Whittingham	Jerry Williamson	Chris Wittrock
Donna Wallace	S. Watson	Scott Weissflog	Amy Whitworth	Thea Williamson	Sharon Wolbert, Ph.D.
Emily Walsh	Cheyenne Weaver	Jennifer Wellard	Terry Wiggins	Cacyntha Willis	Linda Woodworth
Paula Walter	Gina Webb	Kindra Wentworth	John Wight	Lila Wilmerding	Donald Worley
Karen Waltuch	Clare Webber	Cheryl Wentz	Briana Wilcox	Ariel Wilson	Jennifer Worth
Jessica Ward-Ramirez	Kathryn Weber	Ruby Westbrook	Robyn Wilds	Evis Wilson	Frank Wright
Kelly Waring	Judy Webster	Carly Westerman	Flynn Wiley	Gregory Wilson	Jennifer Wright
Dee Warner	Sally Weed	Jody Westfall	Andre Wiley	Linda Wilson	Beth Wyatt
Sarah Warran	Kelly Weger	Page Westover	Carolyn Williams	Tamsen Wilshire	Mark Wyatt
Kris Warrenburg	Chris Weidenbach	Mike Weyand	Christopher Williams	Erin Winter	Barbara B. Wyle
Kristen Wasbotten	Elizabeth Weigand	Carrie Wheeler	Jason Williams	Briar Winters	
Y					
Michael Yares	David Yeazel	Tara Yeager	Rachel Yon	Kristy York	Abby Youngblood
Stephanie York	Ed Yowell				
Z					
Jim Zack	Lina Zerbarini	Jodi Zeigleru	Robert Zeuner	Alexandra Ziss	Amy Zoldak
Susan Zubalik	Nitsa Zuppas				

To the Members of the House Committee on Agriculture,

This was drafted by ten young farmers from Rhode Island and Massachusetts who met on 5/5/12 to discuss the 2012 Farm Bill and the kind of USDA funding we would like to see in the next 5 years.

I am a [fill in the blank] with hopes of soon becoming a farmer.

In general, I support the recommendations of NSAC and Food And Water Watch to increase funding for provisions and programs that promote sustainable agricultural production, fair and equitable treatment of farmers and farm workers, rural development and family farms, ecological diversity and environmental conservation.

Below are some suggestions that support these values within the 2012 Agriculture Reform, Food and Jobs Act. With scale-appropriate tiered regulation and support for new and beginning farmers, we can grow America towards a healthy and sustainable future.

I support, and want to applaud the Committees continued support of the following changes in the 2012 Farm Bill:

- Sen. Leahy's provision that would make it easier for SNAP to be used at farmers markets and CSAs.
- The \$5 million in research funding allocated for sustainable agriculture. This is a step in the right direction, but more should be allocated for local and sustainable agriculture research and education.

Please consider the following suggestions, which are crucial for America's future:

- Cap subsidy amounts on a per-farm basis and reinstate Microloans and Value-Added Grants, especially for beginning famers.
- Shift funding away from ethanol and commodity production and towards sustainable agriculture and rural development research and training in Title VI (Rural Development) and Title X (Horticulture and Organic Agriculture).
- Please reinstate mandatory funding for 2501 under Title XIV (Miscellaneous) in order to support disadvantaged farmers and continue the standing fund for farm worker disaster relief.
- Reinstate farm-to-school program funding under Title IV (Nutrition) in order to feed a healthy future population of Americans and support America's Family Farms.

- A large portion of funds under Title II (Conservation) supports reducing the environmental harms of CAFOs. We think a better system would be to regulate CAFOs and instate a punitive system that makes polluters pay, and shifts conservation dollars to support more sustainable operations.
- Remove loopholes from the Packers and Stockyards Act under Title XI (Livestock) that allow for abuse of livestock producers. This will help small farmers to get their product to market and receive a fair price that will let them stay in business.
- Although there has been a great deal of positive press regarding the shifts in Title I (Commodities) to reduce direct crop subsidy payments and shift towards crop insurance support, in reality the tax payer resources will be directed to the same large-scale, conventional production, monocrop operations, that have harmful environmental and social consequences. With no conservation requirements within the new Revenue Insurance Scheme we fear production will be pushed onto marginalized land causing adverse affects on our natural resources.

Thank you for considering our voices,

Annie Bayer	Tess and Laura Brown-Lavoie	Keally Cieslik
Samuel Dickman	Ava Donaldson	Dylan Ettlinger
Adam Graffunder	Annie Macdonald	Kaishian Patricia
Margiana Petersen-Rockney	Sianna Plavin	Rosasharn Farm CSA
Sean Ryan	Ellen Shadburn	Fay Strongin

Dear House Agriculture Committee:

Because of the important role farmer's play in our food system, taxpayers have supported a safety net for farmers for nearly 30 years, always in return for a guarantee that subsidized farmers will follow basic conservation practices in their fields. This revolved around the basic realization that while Americans needed food, it was critical to utilize conservation practices in order to preserve the economic viability and productivity of our farmlands and resources for the future.

As the House Agriculture Committee prepares its version of the farm bill, I urge you to restore the link between taxpayer-supported subsidies for crop insurance and conservation compliance protections that will protect the nation's water and land.

This action is especially important as Congress considers eliminating direct payments, the major subsidy program that is linked to conservation compliance, and moving some of those funds to support increased subsidies for crop insurance, which lacks compliance requirements. Unless you help to reconnect crop insurance subsidies to conservation compliance, a significant part of farmers' incentive to follow conservation plans will disappear this year.

Farmers need crop insurance as part of their safety net and the public needs basic conservation practices on farms to make sure that quality farm land and water can support future generations as well as the current needs of our country. We cannot accept sacrificing long-term economic and environmental sustainability for short-sighted and short-term economic profits.

Connecting eligibility for crop insurance subsidies to conservation compliance is fiscally responsible and ensures public subsidies for farmer's insurance premium payments align with the public's interest in basic conservation of our soil and water.

Sincerely,

Jane Allen Jones	Dale Anderson	Leona Bochantin
Sondra Cabell	Mary Clark	Whitney Davis
David Dempsey	Kathleen Dolson	David Eash
Thomas Evans	David Gates	Joanne Graf
Michael Hannan	Susan Harper	Trevor Harris
Brauna Hartzell	David B. Hauge	Katie Heathcote
James Holtzman	Greg Houseal	Lorene Hunter
Shyonna Johnson	Mary Laudon	Brett Lorenzen
Melissa Moulton	Joy Peterson	Libby Reuter
Alex D. Rindler	2LT Jake Ryan	Holly Schmitt
Robert Sessions	Janet R. Warner	Kathi Whitman
Ann T. Winkelmann	Walt Zuurdeeg	

The sum of agricultural support from the Federal Government is immensely unbalanced. The current paradigm spends the vast majority of funds on supporting large scale grain based agriculture. The farm model created by these grain subsidies

is destroying the entrepreneurial farm industry, destroying the family farm, and handing the reigns of our food industry to mega corporations. The average age of farmers in this nation is swiftly approaching 60 years old. The next decade will find our food supply outsourced to other countries or taken over by corporate entities resulting in large scale monopolization of one of the three primary necessities for human life.

I urge the House Committee on Agriculture to re-align our nation's food and farming priorities in such a way that the playing field for small farm business is leveled. I urge the House Committee on Agriculture to re-align our nation's food and farming priorities in such a way that grain based food products such as high fructose corn syrup no longer beat healthful foods such as fruits, vegetables, and healthy meats on price point, primarily because they are subsidized by citizen tax dollars.

I urge the House Committee on Agriculture to re-align our nation's food and farming priorities in such a way that young U.S. Citizens find a government environment which encourages and assists them in starting up new farming ventures, rather than an environment filled with land-mine regulations which do nothing for the small farm business owner and everything for the large scale corporate agriculture.

In summation, I urge the House Committee on Agriculture to support the following amendments:

- Family Farms First and Training for Beginning Farmers—put forward by Senators Brown (D–OH) and Nelson (D–NE)
- Affordable Land for Farmers, Forever—put forward by Senator Leahy (D–VT)
- Non-GMO Plant and Animal Breeding—put forward by Senator Gillibrand (D–NY)
- Crop Insurance for Organics—put forward by Senator Casey (D–PA)
- Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act—put forward by Congressman Walz (D–MN) and Congressman Fortenberry (R–NE)
- The Local Farms, Food, and Jobs Act—put forward by Congresswoman Pingree (D–ME) and Senator Brown (D–OH)

Thank you sincerely, for your time.

Gwenyth Hallet
Mark Hallet
William Hallet

Joel Hallet
Miriam Hallet
Amanda Piepenhagen

Loralei Hallet
Roger Hallet

We need a farm bill that helps the margins, not re-establishes the *status quo*. We need to create more jobs through agriculture, which involves more diversification and less oil-dependent methods—more real people doing work that they're compensated for fairly.

New policies ought to protect the productivity of agricultural lands by discouraging environmentally harmful practices—particularly when given crop insurance subsidies—and those crop insurance subsidies ought to be available to non-commodity growers too.

The Conservation Title has been making an impact—we've been seeing a reduction in erosion and wetland conversion, and that must be maintained (and not eroded, like current crop insurance encourages—to plant every last inch of acreage, environmentally sensitive or not). Please reform the crop insurance subsidy. Really, it shouldn't be outsourced like it currently is. The government and taxpayers should keep the massive incomes the insurance companies currently receive, and run it more efficiently and reinvest it into our economy.

Farming is a very hard business to get into and survive in, and a new farm bill should include policies that enable beginning and socially disadvantage producers to access land, credit, and crop insurance.

The farm bill can either uphold the *status quo*, or give support to new sustainable growth in our rural economies. Please work for new growth.

Thank you!

Jenifer Angerer

Theresa Carbrey

Laura Engel

Allison Gnade

On behalf of the at-risk families living in lower-income communities that suffer the consequences of poor access to affordable healthy food and nutritional education, we urge you to seize the immediate opportunity to directly impact the health of these residents, while also reducing their long-term cost burden to health care.

The farm bill legislation that will be considered by you for approval in 2012, with appropriate changes or enhancements, has the potential to impact childhood obesity,

diabetes and heart disease in areas identified as having poor access to affordable healthy food (food deserts). Diabetes affects an estimated 25.8 million U.S. adults—over eight percent of the population. Left untreated, diabetes can cause blindness and end stage renal disease. It also increases the risk of cardiovascular disease by two to four fold and is the seventh leading cause of death for Americans. The diabetes hospitalization rates in 2009 were 17.7 per 10,000 residents. Communities with poor to limited access to health care, as well as affordable healthy food and nutritional education are estimated to have three times the hospitalization rate of the entire population. In all of our communities the incidence of childhood obesity has increased, and lack of access to good nutrition have contributed to our national problems. Addressing childhood obesity through education and exposure to good nutrition practices will impact these staggering numbers and costs. Everyone wins—the individuals impacted by these chronic diseases, the communities they live in through the creation of a healthy, educated and productive population, and the cost of health care provided by Federal, state and local governments and employers too!

In addition to supporting the recommendations of your colleagues, I urge your support of an approved 2012 Farm Bill that ensures:

- education and financial support to generate growth and employment in the healthy food retail sector.
- incentives to preserve and increase regional healthy food production.
- funding for pilots that bring together community groups, schools, nonprofits and health care providers that focus on reducing childhood obesity and hospitalization related to diabetes.

Many of us involved in the health care arena are committed to partnering with our communities to improve access to affordable healthy food and the understanding of the role good nutrition plays in one's personal health. In fact, many organizations are already implementing healthy food programs for our patients, residents and staff. In short, we promise live out message we advocate in this letter.

We urge you to support the farm bill with the changes we have outlined.

Thank you for considering this request.

Sincerely,

Janice Burnett
Patricia Eck
Walter Hund
Laurie Motejl
Karen Spann-Hollingsworth,
R.N.

Diane E. Cohen, R.H.I.A.
Omelfi A. Garcia
Charles Ignatius
Julio Rodriguez

Marie Dow
Jennifer Giuffrida
Judy Lindberg
Sarah Shaikh

I am writing to request your support for a progressive farm bill that increases access to healthy food for ALL Americans. Given that many of our neighbors are still facing dire economic circumstances, it is essential that Congress maintain SNAP funding.

A \$36 million cut to SNAP is not the way to go. The Committee should focus on writing a farm bill that creates economic opportunity and improves access to healthy, affordable food for all Americans. CFSC members had important wins in the Senate's Agriculture Reform, Food and Jobs Act and the House Agriculture Committee should include them in their bill.

Community Food Projects Program—\$10 million per year to help communities build food self-reliance.

Farmers Market and Local Food Promotion Program—\$20 million per year to develop farmers market capacity and create food hubs to connect farmers with schools, hospitals, grocery stores and other markets.

Hunger-Free Community Incentive Grants—An average of \$20 million per year for a new SNAP local fruit and vegetable incentive grant program at farmers markets and other healthy food retailers.

Chris Conkling
Holly Nelson

Alison Goldstein
Amy Peters

Marie Kessler, J.D.
Dave Redding

Cuts to our nation's food safety net have on a serious impact on our most vulnerable citizens. Cuts to SNAP (food stamps)—like the ones currently under consideration in the farm bill—would further limit access to the food and nutrition programs that millions of older Americans rely on. Meanwhile, the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP), which provides monthly boxes of food to low-income seniors,

faces its own funding threats. These issues matter. What will seniors do if they no longer have access to these vital programs?

Huxley Coulter	Julianne Craig	Jillana Laufer
Shannon Nasser	John Spencer	Emily Stimmel
Beverly Trottier	Karen Weidner	Elizabeth Zenker

2012 Farm Bill has to shift the animal based agribusiness to a sustainable agriculture by encouraging farmers and ranchers transition to Organic Plant Farming (OPF). Only OPF can stop toxin pollution like chemical fertilizers, pesticides, and antibiotics. Healthy foods can be produced only from healthy soil and clean water. We have to make the Earth livable by allowing the cohabitants to maintain the ecobalance on this Planet.

Sonny Dinh	Thaohui Liu	Joy Su
Judith Huczko	Jun Meng	Nga Truong
Tuan Le	Joy Nelson-Calhoun	Jean You

My name is [fill in the blank], and I live in [fill in the blank], AL. I'm concerned about the obesity epidemic in Alabama, and I'm a very strong supporter of local farmers and fresh, healthy food choices for everyone. I see billions of dollars spent on food that is produced outside of Alabama leaking from our economy. We need to keep those dollars here at home. I'm aware of several proposed bills that support local farms and foods including the Local Food Farm and Jobs Act (H.R. 3286); Let's Grow Act (H.R. 4351), Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236) and H.R. 4284.

As a constituent, I urge Congress to:

- (1) Support the Local Farms, Food and Jobs Act (S. 1773, H.R. 3286); Let's Grow Act (H.R. 4351); Beginning Farmer and Rancher Opportunity Act (H.R. 3236) and H.R. 4284.
- (2) Refuse further cuts to the SNAP (formerly Food Stamps) and preserve TEFAP (The Emergency Food Assistance Program) that provides food to Food Banks. I can't imagine that church pantries and other feeding programs can handle more demand in this economic downturn. Alabama Food Banks were on the frontlines of disaster response this April—we need to keep this critical network of food distribution intact.

Wade Austin	(Decatur)	Lori Pence	(Huntsville)
Debbie Roche	(Morgan County)	Karen Voelker	(Huntsville)

FEEDING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FORM LETTERS

I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like TEFAP, SNAP & CSFP . . . these programs assist in ensuring healthy outcomes in the lives of hungry families and individuals . . . many are seniors, single mothers and kids. "A healthy farm bill is a good farm bill for the future of our country" or "We need a strong farm bill to help put more food on the table for hungry Americans when you talk about working class families, individuals . . . many of the vulnerable are seniors and kids."

I agree with the goal of deficit reduction, but we should not achieve it on the backs of the most vulnerable.

Ann Brown Rabirotff	Sharon Carter	Joyce Coe
Jason Davis	Sharon Davis	Helena Freeman
John Gusmano	Steve Janowitz	Avery Lawton
Dawn Lillis	James Madden	Judith McAloon
Matthew Molpus	Troy Olsen	Elsy Shallman
Joy Smrcina	Cynthia Suarez	Sondra Sweeney

DERIVATION 1

I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like TEFAP, SNAP & CSFP . . . these programs assist in ensuring healthy outcomes in the lives of hungry families and individuals . . . many are seniors, single moth-

ers and kids. “A healthy farm bill is a good farm bill for the future of our country” or “We need a strong farm bill to help put more food on the table for hungry Americans when you talk about working class families, individuals . . . many of the vulnerable are seniors and kids.”

Donna Berry	Mario Obledo, Jr.	Maritess Sanchez
Nicole Brisard	William M. Seyfried, Jr.	Victoria Ohman
Tricia Heinrich	Roshunda Smith	Richard Plumlee, Jr.
Adrienne Lujan	Robin Stephenson	Caitlin Watkins
Megan Marsh		

DERIVATION 2

Please pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP. Cutting these programs is not the way to balance the budget. I urge you make them a priority in the next farm bill.

Shannon Archer	Peter Bunder	Philip Cox
Patricia Gibbons	Michael Guer	Erin Harris
Amy Hilt	Mary Hurley	Norma Kinan
Gregory King	Omar Rodriguez	Beth Schumann
Kathryn Smith		

DERIVATION 3

We need a strong farm bill to help put food on the table for vulnerable children, seniors, and low-income families. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP. Cutting these programs is not the way to balance the budget. They are a lifeline to people struggling with hunger in your district, and I urge you make them a priority in the next farm bill.

Elizabeth Browne	John Bulla	Veronica Bulla
Dee Cannon	Kelly Clifton	Tania Crouch
Gay M. Eaton	Bridget Keeler	Angela Parent-Perez
Mary Prange	Anna Staples	Jill Teague
Orange Urban	Diane Woodman	

Cuts to our nation’s food safety net have on a serious impact on our most vulnerable citizens. Cuts to SNAP (food stamps)—like the ones currently under consideration in the farm bill—would further limit access to the food and nutrition programs that millions of older Americans rely on. Meanwhile, the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP), which provides monthly boxes of food to low-income seniors, faces its own funding threats. These issues matter. What will seniors do if they no longer have access to these vital programs?

Huxley Coulter	Julianne Craig	Jillana Laufer
Shannon Nasser	John Spencer	Emily Stimmel
Beverly Trottier	Karen Weidner	Elizabeth Zenker

Pass a strong farm bill that protects programs like SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP which help provide food for millions of America’s most vulnerable seniors, children, and working poor.

B

Susan Babbitt	Janice Botsko	Ricky Brown	Sharon Bykerk-Lonergan
Bev Black	Marilyn Brannon	Kirsten Burt	
Julia Black	Corinne Broskett	Joanne Byars	

C

Stacey Cannon	Virginia Cassidy	R. Wayne Crandlemere	Kathleen Crittenden
Gary Cronin			

D

Jill Dahlman	Michael Denham	Kristin Depew	Jonathan DeVito
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Lisa D'Ambrosio Karen DeLay Rachel Deierling	Danna Dennis Lynette Dimock	Rodney Derbigny Kimberly Doneche	William Dickerson David Dumas
E			
Dinda Evans	Walker Everette		
F			
Darlene Fields	Amy Ford	Janet Foster	John Fussell
G			
Tina Gallaway Adrienne Gardner Andres Garganta	Michael Garitty Holly Gietl Migdalia Gloria	Carol Gold Laura R. Goldstein Samantha Gorczewicz	Mondelle Greene Erica Grimm Rand Guthrie
H			
Christine Haar Barbara Haddad Sascha Harper	Beverly Harris Erin Harris Mary Ellen Hasbrouck	Carole Henry, M.S.W. Sam Hensley Kim Heying	Lucy Hillman Alan Hollis Celeste Hong
J & K			
Fahari Jones Warner	Kathleen Kinsey	Steven Kostis	Jean Kresse
L			
Susan Land Debra Lazo	Erma Lewis	Adrian Lilly	Keth Luke
M			
Barb M. Suzanne M. Mace Carol Maghakian Joshua Maizel	Hilary Malyon Natalie Mannering Dave Mattozzi Jean McFarland	Kathleen McSweeney Jacqueline Meehan Melissa Melissa Donna Mikulka	Rev. Curt Miner Michael Misquez Chrysteen Moelter-Gray Matthew Morse
N & O			
Tim Nistler	Carol O'Neill		
P			
Mary Phillips Vanna Pichel	Josephine Polifroni	Lisa Powell	Boh Prypin
R			
Ellen Radday Philip Robar	Mick Robinson Lauren Rodriguez	Judith Rosen Sophia Rubenstein	Sarah Ryan
S			
Marijeanne Sarraille Deborah Schechter Michael Seager William M. Seyfried, Jr.	Laura Silverman Kristine Sims Steven Skal Angela Smith	Suzanne Smithson Green Marie Snavely Martha Spencer Ann Sprayregen	George Stadnik Mrs. Struve
T			
Ryan Toups	Rose Troyer	Sean Twohig	
W			
Kevin Ward	Bill Weston	Bobbiejo Winfrey	Douglas Woerschling

SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SNAP) FORM LETTERS

VARIANT 1

Hon. FRANK D. LUCAS,
Chairman,
 House Committee on Agriculture,
 Washington, D.C.

Hon. FRANK D. LUCAS (*Chair*),

I am greatly worried about the future of hunger in America with respect to your recent proposal to cut funding for SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program).

Are you aware that in 2010, approximately one in seven American households was food insecure? Additionally, instances of poverty in this country have been increasing for the past 6 years.

Surely, you can agree that now is not the time to slash funding from important programs that help feed hungry families. I cannot understand why you would suggest that **SNAP take a \$33 billion funding cut**.

We need to continue to support families who need assistance. I hope you will recognize the importance of this goal and **reinstate all funding to SNAP**.

A

Janice Anderson	Anthony Andreacola	Dorothy Andrews
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B

Rakesia B. Shane Bobo Guy Boyer	Adrian Bassow Gwendolyn Bogans Mary Britton	Victor J. Bernacki Faye Bohr Anthony Bunzynch
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C

Donna Jo Capps Helen Cassario Robert Cheezum Joyce Cluelow Malisa Cooney	Oscar E. Capps Scott Cassario P.T. Clarke Erin Confroy Charlene Corbett	Dan Cassario William D. Chalmers John R. Cluelow Caitlyn Coombs
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D

Ruth Daniels Angela DeLisi Amy Diedrichson Ellen Donahue	David DeLaney Sharon DeMarco William P. Difflor Valerie Dougherty	Bertha DeLarge Frances DeRosa Shirley Dill Douglas DuBois
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E & F

Kay F. Esworthy	Virginia Farley	John F. Farrell
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G, H, I & J

Edward Gamble Susan Hayerty Shirley Ivins	Marge Hackney Gertrude Hinman Dyanne E. Jackson	Robert Hartzell Victoria Hobbs Ferdinand Johann
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K

Toscha Kendall Kevin Kerper	Nancy V. Kennedy June King	John F. Kenney Bruce C. Kramer
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L

Robert Landry, Jr.	Sarah Lyons	
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M

Kevin J. Macky Paul Mahoney Robin Marks Samuel Marsa Wendy L. McDermott Abigail S. Messenger Wayne C. Murphy	Kim Maghan Donna Markgraf Stacy Markward Kathleen Matlack Sabine D.H. Mehnert Amy Minnich Laurie Murry	Diane Mahoney Thomas Markgraf Thomas Markward Mary McCracken Phylis J. Meichan Loretta Morrow Thomas Myer
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N & O		
Alicia Newsome Madonna Nichols	Betzy Newsome D. Oberton	Brian T. Newsome
P		
Rose Pedersen Tabitha Phillips Grace Post	Daniel Perla Dina A. Pluta	Edward J. Phelan III Jay D. Pluta
R		
Alana Reichfeld Renée Robinson Dianara Ruiz	James Reimel Angel L. Rodriguez L. Joyce Rupp	Lorene M. Robinson Carmen Ruiz
S, T & U		
Robert Saliba Kelly Schenberger Ken Short Arthur Stewart	Bryon Saris Constance D. Schwein Joan Spataro Olga I. Torres	M.J. Schemelia Richard "Rick" Schwein Renée St. Maur Nicole L. Utley
V, W, & Z		
Cheryl Varjabedian Steve Volz Mark Wilbur Kristina Wright	Dennis M. Victor Dorothy Wames Nancy Wilbur Jo Ann Zanetich	Angela Visconti Melissa Wames Diana Winter Natasha N. Zirbel

VARIANT 2

Should we let anyone go hungry in the U.S.? Cutting programs that feed those who are the least among us is no way to balance our budget. Please protect funding for critical Federal nutrition programs, including the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) as you work to reauthorize the farm bill.

Marcus Alston	Jeffery A. Behling	Larry Booth
Charlene Hinckley	Vicki Keskinen	Larry L.
Susan Meyer	Edith Parker	Susan Snyder
Robin Wallace		

FEEDING AMERICA FORM LETTER

I work for Feeding America, the nation's leading domestic hunger-relief charity. Through my day-to-day work, I know that many families in our country are struggling. With increased demand for emergency food assistance, high food and gas prices, and declines in TEFAP commodities—a major source of the food Feeding America's network of food banks distribute—hunger is a serious problem in our country. We need a strong farm bill to make sure that struggling families can put food on the table. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP. Our communities cannot afford cuts to these programs.

Caren Bersamin	Mary Callaghan	Elizabeth Chandler	Devi Chari
David Edders	Betsy Harman	Michael Huffman	Ian Hunter
Andy Isztok	David Lee	Diane Letson	Daphne Logan
Kathryn Lyons	Peter Mavrovic	Christopher Moss	Elizabeth Nielsen
Todd Oetting	Jerry Rice	Janine Stines	Kelli Walker

FROM LETTERS IN SUPPORT OF FOOD BANKS

I am a supporter of Feeding America and my local food bank. Despite the recent improvement of the economy, there are still many people who may not know where their next meal will come from. We need a strong farm bill to help put food on the table for vulnerable children, seniors, and low-income families. Please pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP. Cutting

these programs is not the way to balance the budget. I urge you make them a priority in the next farm bill.

A					
Chris Andersen	J. Angell	Sarah Apfel			
B					
Gerritt and Elizabeth Baker-Smith	Jason Bard	Nancy Bell	Diane Berl	Anthony Boren	John Brophy
C					
James Caldwell Linda Courtney	Jesse Caldwell	Mary A. Carroll	Nancy Chismar	Erin Cleere	Cathy Connell
D & E					
Armin Day	Judith DiNardo	Janet Dingle	Madeline Dixon	Jan Emerson	Thomas and June Esposito
F					
Yane Flores	Janey Foust	Forest Frasier	William Frayer		
G					
MacKenzie Gage Eugene Graham	Julia Gobhart Krista Grandstaff	Gina Gentilozzi Karen Green	Joe Glaston	Marianne Gonta	Lisa Gosnell
H					
Ryan Hammond	Marie Harper	Bridgette Haste	Rebecca Hiesterman	Douglas Hodge	Patrina Huff
J & K					
Robert Jenks	Melissa Judge	Alex Kading	Mischa Kandinsky	Susan Kirby	James Kirks
L					
Mercedes Lackey	James Landewee	Angela Lepley	Sammy Low	Keth Luke	
M, N & O					
Suzanne M. Mace Matthew Morse	Nick Mantas, Esq. B.E. Murphy	Jamie McCratic Jean Naples, M.D., Ph.D.	Robert Mihaly Tim Nistler	James Miles Margaret O'Connor	Elizabeth Misner
P & R					
Elaine Panagopoulos Amy Perrin	Arlene Pantalone Greg Phillips	Kelly Parker Jim Phillips	Joan Parrish Tim Powderly	Adina Parsley Irene Radke	Patricia Parsons Mary Rausch
S					
Tamara Sandberg Martha Starnes	Ann Sanders Dan Stein	Karen Schorlemer Diane Steverson	Martha Spencer Ann Stevning-Roe	Carolyn Spier Sarah Stuckey	Jan Sprinkle Robin Swecker
T, V, W, & Y					
Peter Tijerina Jessica Wheeler	Ryan Toups Vilma White	Ruth Valdez Kathleen Wolfe	Tina Watkins Joyce Wollenburg	Angela Watson Karen Woodings	Eric West Barbara Yslas

I support my local food bank, and I know they are struggling right now to meet the needs of my community. I ask that you pass a strong farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP. These programs are a lifeline to the millions of Americans struggling with hunger, and I urge you make them a priority in the next farm bill.

A					
Cynthia Adams Cheryl Atkisson	Tricia Adams	Diana Adelman	Dave Alexander	Janet Alfieri	J. Angell
B					
Joy Barkley Todd Blaylock	Josh Barnard Bob Bousquet	Kathryn Barry Jeff Bracken	Linda Berry Georgia Braithwaite	Erica Bettwy Juliana Brown	Uphoria Blackham Samantha Butler
C					
Patricia Chang	Teresa Conner	Corinne Constable	Jim Conway	Janet Cuthbertr	
D					
Pamela Dahl Bethanne Donovan	Jim Dailey Felicity Dorsett	Angel Dawson Katherine Dutton	Donna Dennison	Mary Beth Dickey	
E					
Wendy Eckert	Belinda Ellerbe	Wendilyn Emrys	Christy Epstein	Walker Everette	
F					
Laurel Facey Lisa Fues	Angela Fazzari	Elisabeth Fiekowsky	Gabriella Forrester	Patricia Frederick	Carolyn Friedman
G					
Lynn Galvan Debra Grossberg	Mr. Ganymede	Lisa Gast	Jaime Gollaz	Katherine Graham	Chuck Graver
H					
William Haegele	Gabrielle Halko	Larry Hannon	Raleigh Harris	Barbaara Harrison	Beverly Hawkins

Julie Heath Elliott William Hutchings	Mary Beth Heffernan	Christopher Heimarek	Dorothy Holtzman	Roger Hornaday	Robin Husslage
J					
John Jayne	Martha Jean	Donna M. Jitchovisut	Carrie Jones		
K					
Kellie Karkanen	Harry Kattner	Mark Kaufman	Jennie Kelly	Mary Nell and Jim Kerr	Tom Koziel
L					
Mark Lainer Kimberly Locke	Alex Landis Sammy Low	Mildred Lanin Caroline Luley	Karen Lennon Grant Lupher	LaDonne Lenzini Nora Lyman	Sharon Lewis
M					
Michelle Maani Danielle Masek Joseph Milne	Jim Maguire Cheryl Maveety Kelly Myers	V.L. Marez Gail McGlone	Zakry Marler Tom McKinney	Caryn Martin Gin McMillan	Cindy Martinez Thomas Milliken
N & O					
Heather Napolitano	Mary Neno	Ricki Newman	Jenni Nowak	Terry O'Connell	Karen Ornelas
P & Q					
Jessica Park Julie Pryor	Adina Parsley Alicia Quintero	Margaret Pellegrini	Ronald Peterson	Paul Piescik	Arthur Pinkerton
R					
Leann Ramirez Soretta Rodack	Barbara Richards Elsa Rush	Matt Richmond	Jennie Riley	Christine Roane	Sherri Robertson
S					
Mark Salomon Anne Seidlitz Kimberly Slavings Paula Suter	Terry San Cartier Jennifer Sellers Sally Small John Swift	Ann Sandritter Gerald Shaia Judith Smith	Jeff Saye Sharon Shimick Marie Snavelly	Debra Scacciaferro Elliot Silverman Todd Snyder	Judy Schindler Sally Simpson Laura Spence
T, V, W, Y & Z					
Paige Treston Bill Weston	Kristen Van Tassell Kimberly Williams	Kathleen Wagner Liana Wong	Nicole Waldron Lane Yoshiyama	Pamela Welsh Laura Zambrano	Chris West Sheila Zipprich

AGAPE FOOD BANK

Name: Michael Oberle, Director.

Comment: I am the Director at the Agape Food Bank in Lakeland, FL. With many traditional food streams declining, we continue to find it difficult to meet the needs of our community, despite the improvement in the economy. We need a strong farm bill to make sure we can put food on the table for those that are still struggling. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP. These programs are a lifeline to thousands of people struggling with hunger in your district, and I urge you to make them a priority in the next farm bill.

AGAPE HOUSE INC. OF MOUNTAIN VIEW

Name: Tressa Pric, Program Development Director.

Comment: I am the Program Development Director for the Agape House Inc. of Mountain View, shelter for victims of domestic violence. The economy has shown some improvement in certain parts of the nation and we are very encouraged. However, rural Missouri hasn't had the same turn around. We are still struggling with the loss of many jobs as factories and mills have been forced to close with no alternatives for the citizens the need has increased by a great margin. Here at the Agape House Inc. of Mountain View we are seeing an increase for need and an increase in the cost for groceries, our budget was cut \$48,000 this year, therefore cutting funding for food in half. We urge you to pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like TEFAP, SNAP and CSFP. These programs are a lifeline to the many victims of domestic violence we serve in a rural 10 county service area, with a population ranging over 100,000. People in the 8th congressional district are suffering to meet the demands at the grocery stores just to feed their families, the shelters also struggle with all the budget cuts to meet the needs of the many victims we serve. Please make the less fortunate population a priority in the next farm bill.

AKRON-CANTON FOODBANK

Name: Colleen Benson.

Comment: I work at the Akron-Canton Regional Foodbank which serves more than 40,500 people per week in Ohio's congressional districts 13, 14, 16, 17 and 18 and I am writing to share my concern about hunger in Ohio and across the nation.

We have seen more than a 50% increase in food distribution since 2007 and our member agencies report no relief at all. Now more than ever, our clients are relying

on anti-hunger programs like the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), which are authorized in the 2012 Farm Bill

Congress should do its part by continuing to support hunger-relief programs. Given the associated health care and educational costs of hunger and poor nutrition, cuts to anti-hunger programs will only increase hunger in America.

AL BEECH/WEST SIDE FOOD PANTRY

Name: John Casey, President; William Davis, Board Member and Volunteer.

Comment: I am the [fill in the blank] of the Al Beech West Side Food Pantry in Kingston, Pa. With traditional food streams declining, we continue to find it difficult to meet the needs of our community, despite the improvement of the economy. We need a strong farm bill to make sure that we can put food on the table of those that are still struggling. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like TEFAP, SNAP, AND CSFP. These programs are a lifeline to the people struggling with hunger in your district, and I urge you to make them a priority in the next farm bill.

ALAMEDA COUNTY COMMUNITY FOOD BANK

Name: Ecaterina Burton, Advocacy and Education Associate.

Comment: I work at a Food Bank that feeds 1 in 6 people in my county alone. The \$36 Billion cut to SNAP is the WRONG direction our farm bill is taking. It would take 6 entire Feeding America food bank networks to fill that gap. Food Banks are already operating at maximum capacity. Making these cuts at this time shows a extreme amount of irresponsibility and a calculated decision to ignore the high levels of hunger and poverty we have currently in America. Shame on you for pretending otherwise!

Our farm bill should focus on creating economic opportunity and improving access to healthy, affordable food for all Americans. I recommend that the House Agriculture Committee invest more into SNAP. One such way is to include the Hunger-Free Community Incentive Grants that were in the Senate's version of the farm bill. This would create an average of \$20 million per year for a new SNAP local fruit and vegetable incentive grant program at farmers markets and other healthy food retailers.

Another way to invest in SNAP is to increase the income levels at which people would be eligible. As it stands right now, the U.S. Census has stated that 1 in 3 Americans are near poor, barely above the poverty line and struggling to survive. We are in the worst economic time period since the Great Depression. In the Great Depression, our elected officials on both sides of the aisles worked on programs and solutions that helped people in that time of great need. Let's do the same. This is no time to turn our backs on our fellow Americans.

Sincerely,
ECATERINA BURTON,
Advocacy and Education Associate,
Alameda County Community Food Bank,
Oakland, CA.

ARIZONA FOOD BANKS

Name: Ginny Hildebrand.

Comment: As a constituent and an employee of a food bank association that serves more than 1 million hungry Arizonans a year, I urge you to pass a strong farm bill that protects programs like SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP, which help provide food for millions of America's most vulnerable: children, low income families, seniors, and those who are disabled. Please make sure the critical safety net we have in our nation stays intact.

Name: Rebecca Smolic.

Comment: I and my family depend on the Food Banks in Tucson, AZ. Without this help to supplement our very tight food budget, we could not eat as healthy as we do. The Food Bank is necessary for us. With increased demand for emergency food assistance, high food and gas prices, and declines in TEFAP commodities—a major source of the food distributed—our food bank is having difficulty meeting the needs of our community. We need a strong farm bill to make sure that struggling families like mine can put food on the table. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP. Our community cannot afford cuts to these programs.

Name: Michael Wahl.

Comment: I am a supporter of the Community Food Bank, often dropping off food in what have become hard times for a lot of low wage workers, elderly and unemployed. I am asking you to support a strong farm bill that will put food on the table for those in need.

ARKANSAS FOODBANK

Name: Shelly Lane.

Comment: I am an employee of the Arkansas Foodbank. Right now, 1 in 5 adults and 1 in 4 children in our community are struggling. With increased demand for emergency food assistance, high food and gas prices, and declines in TEFAP commodities—a major source of the food we distribute—our food bank is having difficulty meeting the needs of our community. We need a strong farm bill to make sure that struggling families can put food on the table. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP. Arkansas cannot afford cuts to these programs.

ASH GROVE FOOD PANTRY/THE OZARK FOOD HARVEST

Name: Deanna Monnig, President.

Comment: As President of the Ash Grove Food Pantry, I am very aware of the need just in our area alone. We serve up to 90 families every month. Without the help from The Ozark Food Harvest, we would not be able to purchase food for our families in need. Please keep those who cannot speak for themselves (the children of these families, the elderly and the disabled) in mind when you make your decisions concerning the farm bill. Thank you, Deanna Monnig, Ash Grove Missouri

ASHLEY FOOD PANTRY

Name: Judith Rinker, Coordinator.

Comment: I am the coordinator at Ashley Food Pantry. With traditional food streams declining, we continue to find it difficult to meet the needs of our community, despite the improvement of the economy. We need a strong farm bill to make sure that we can put food on the table for those that are still struggling. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP. These programs are a lifeline to the [INSERT LOCAL MMG DATA] people struggling with hunger in your district, and I urge you make them a priority in the next farm bill.

ATLANTA COMMUNITY FOOD BANK

Comments: As an employee for the Atlanta Community Food Bank it is imperative that we offer as much assistance to those in need more than ever! As I continue to see the vast majority of our community become unemployed, and therefore unable to provide food for their families, we need to continue the fight to increase the ability to provide assistance to those in need.

RONALD BURNS.

I urge you to preserve current funding levels for the SNAP program. The cuts that are being proposed in the farm bill and elsewhere to this vital safety net program would have a devastating impact on the nearly 49.1 million Americans who are food insecure. Even while poverty rates nationwide have climbed in recent years, food insecurity rates have remained stable precisely because SNAP has responded as it was designed to do—to supplement families' food budgets when job losses, medical conditions, or low wages make it next to impossible to make ends meet.

GREG SIMS.

Please do not cut funding for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. As a front line worker that assists Georgia residents on a daily basis with accessing SNAP, I see the continued need for full funding of this program. People are still hungry and need additional help with providing food for their families in order to free up their other resources to pay for other household needs such as their housing and utilities. The number of children, elderly, and unemployed persons that this program assists far exceeds the number of abusers of it.

SKYE THOMPSON, VILMA WALLACE, and CARROLL WILLIAMS.

Please do not cut funding to nutrition programs, during this economy, where nearly 50% of all recent graduates cannot find work, with shrinking wages and enormous challenges facing working poor and unemployed, to cut food programs would be devastating.

MELINDA WOOD.

Billions of dollars in cuts to food stamps would be devastating to the vast numbers of Americans who need this assistance to weather the storm of job loss or

underemployment! Please consider this before making a decision to cut resources for those in need.

Angela Clawson Michael DeCoursey Tabitha Hollaway Phillip Holmes Kim Kurtz Carol Richburg

BALLARD COMMUNITY SERVICES

Name: Eric Myser, Director of Human Services.

Comment: I am the Director of Human Services at Ballard Community Services. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP. These programs are a lifeline to the thousands of people struggling with hunger in your district, and I urge you to make them a priority in the next farm bill. Charitable organizations cannot make up the difference that these government-funded programs make in the lives of the hungry. Thank you for your consideration.

BLUE RIDGE AREA FOOD BANK

Comment: With traditional food streams declining, we continue to find it difficult to meet the needs of our community, despite the improvement of the economy. We need a strong farm bill to ensure that we can put food on the table for our struggling neighbors. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP. These programs are a lifeline to the 152,000 people struggling with hunger in the Blue Ridge region, and I urge you make them a priority in the next farm bill.

Nancy Bowman DRichard Dugan Stevan Resan James Scrivener II	(Employee) (Volunteer) (Employee) (Employee)	Ethel Doherty Toya Finzel Doron Samuel-Siegel Ben Yonkofski	(Volunteer) (Volunteer) (Employee) (Employee)
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CALIFORNIA

Names: Carl Hansen; Barbara Robertson.

Comment: Please don't cut emergency food services to the poor through SNAP and TEFAP provided through Food Banks. Other sources of food are scarce in this economy, and the farm bill's help through the USDA has been the ultimate safety net. I volunteer at my local food bank and the need has grown significantly over the past few years. It's difficult to succeed with increased need and the significant cuts you are considering. Don't do it. There is a moral bottom line too. Our recipients are either hard working families with low-income jobs and no benefits, or children and seniors with little accessibility to healthy food. Let's invest in our future by providing the basic building block to a successful life—healthy minds and bodies.

CAPITAL AREA FOOD BANK

Name: Brett Weisel.

Comment: I am a supporter of the Capital Area Food Bank. Right now, many families in our community are struggling. With increased demand for emergency food assistance, high food and gas prices, and declines in TEFAP commodities—a major source of the food we distribute—our food bank is having difficulty meeting the needs of our community. We need a strong farm bill to make sure that struggling families can put food on the table. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP. Our community cannot afford cuts to these programs.

CAPITAL AREA FOOD BANK OF AUSTIN

Name: Frank R. Deutsch.

Comment: Please do all possible to see that agencies like the Capital Area food bank of Austin get all the help they can by seeing that TECAP SNAP AND other programs are passed. Our economy is better for a lot of people but the lower income families I see daily looking for help are hurting and the food bank is very limited and stretched beyond their current resources. We cannot in this great country allow our children and their family members continue to go without a meal. Thank you, FRANK R. DEUTSCH.

CAPITAL AREA FOOD BANK OF TEXAS

Comment: With traditional food streams declining, food banks such as Capital Area Food Bank of Texas continue to find it difficult to meet the needs of our community, despite the improvement of the economy. We need a strong farm bill to

make sure that we can put food on the table for those that are still struggling. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP. These programs are a lifeline to the people struggling with hunger in Central Texas, and I urge you make them a priority in the next farm bill.

James Allen Heidi Baschnagel Hanna Morgan Julie Wickert Kristina Wolter

CENTRAL PENNSYLVANIA FOOD BANK

Name: Joe Arthur.

Comment: I am an employee of Central Pennsylvania Food Bank. Right now, many families in our community are struggling. With increased demand for emergency food assistance, high food and gas prices, and declines in TEFAP commodities—a major source of the food we distribute—our food bank is having difficulty meeting the needs of our community. We need a strong farm bill to make sure that struggling families can put food on the table. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP. Our community cannot afford cuts to these programs.

CENTRAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Name: Julie Smith, Director of Community Outreach.

Comment: I am the Director of Community outreach for Central Presbyterian Church in Kansas City, MO. With traditional food streams declining we continue to find it difficult to meet the needs of our community for food. We need a strong nutrition title in the farm bill to make sure that we can put food on the table for those who are struggling. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP. These are some programs that are a lifeline to the thousands of people struggling with hunger in your district, and I urge you to make them a priority in the next farm bill.

CHESTER COUNTY FOOD BANK

Name: Phoebe Kitson.

Comment: Please DO NOT cut our TEFAP, CSFP and other food funding to Chester County and the great Commonwealth of Pennsylvania where 1 in 8 people go without a meal each day simply because they cannot afford to buy healthy food for themselves or their families. We need your help! People are hungry in the 6th district and that is unacceptable. YOU can make a difference. PLEASE help us feed your people.

CHURCH OF THE HOLY SPIRIT FOOD PANTRY

Comment: I am a VOLUNTEER of Church of the Holy Spirit Food Pantry in Schaumburg. Right now, many families in our community are struggling. With increased demand for emergency food assistance, high food and gas prices, and declines in TEFAP commodities—a major source of the food that is distributed by food pantries, soup kitchens, and shelters—our agency is having difficulty meeting the needs of our community. We need a strong farm bill to make sure that struggling families can put food on the table. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP. Our community cannot afford cuts to these programs.

Kathleen M. Drennan LaVerne Horgan Jill Wood-Naatz

CITY UNION MISSION

Name: Greg Dahl, Food Service and Food Warehouse Director.

Comment: I am the Food Service and Food Warehouse Director at City Union Mission. With traditional food streams declining, we continue to find it difficult to meet the needs of our community, despite the improvement in the economy. We need a strong nutrition title in the farm bill to make sure that we can put food on the table for those who are still struggling. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP. These programs are a lifeline to the thousands of people struggling with hunger in your district, and I urge you to make them a priority in the next farm bill.

COLUMBIA PACIFIC FOOD BANK

Name: Jenny Ahlers Rudolph.

Comment: House Agriculture Committee,

I am writing you today to urge you to fully restore funding for farm bill programs that support low-income families. I am currently a volunteer board member for the Columbia Pacific Food Bank in Columbia County Oregon. We are a community that has been hit hard by the recession. The local Boise Cascade mill closed down in early 2009, and losses of Timber Payments, as well as layoffs in other sectors, has greatly increased the number of families who are coming to the food bank. We are seeing many more working families who are struggling to make it on one income alone, and may folks who cannot make ends meet because of rising fuel and utility costs. With increased demand for emergency food assistance, high food and gas prices, and declines in TEFAP commodities—a major source of the food we distribute—our food bank is having difficulty meeting the needs of our community. We need a strong farm bill to make sure that struggling families can put food on the table. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens SNAP, SNAP-Ed, TEFAP, and CSFP. Our community cannot afford additional cuts to these programs.

Respectfully,
 JENNY AHLERS RUDOLPH

COMMUNITY CHEST NEVADA

Name: Erik Schoen.

Comment: The proposed cuts to the SNAP program would severely impact the lives of many people already living on the edge in Lyon, Mineral, and Storey counties. 50% of the recipients of SNAP Benefits in Nevada are children and these cuts would significantly harm them and their families.

In years past, nonprofit agencies such as ours did what we could to make up the difference. We—and our sister organizations—no longer have the capacity to absorb any further cuts to such funding streams. This means that already hungry people, many of them neighbors, will go hungry and the quality of life for all Nevadans will be detrimentally impacted.

Please do not support these cuts. Instead, we hope that you will have the courage to ask for additional funds with which to increase the funding for SNAP benefits. Thank you.

COMMUNITY FOOD BANK OF EASTERN OKLAHOMA

Comment: I am a [fill in the blank] of the Community Food Bank of Eastern Oklahoma. With traditional food streams declining and a recession still lingering, they continue to find it difficult to meet the demands for food assistance, despite the overwhelming support from our community. We all need a strong farm bill to make sure that we can put food on the table for those that are still struggling. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens nutrition programs like TEFAP and SNAP. These programs provide a lifeline to more than 600,000 food insecure Oklahomans, including the 240,740 children at risk of going to bed hungry tonight. I urge you make them a priority in the next farm bill.

Amy Anderson	(Supporter)	Mary & Kenneth Beebe	(Supporters)
Kathleen Benfield	(Supporter)	Frances Bevel	(Employee)
Pat Bryan	(Supporter)	Amy Cannon	(Employee)
Joanna Chavez	(Supporter)	Mike Clark	(Supporter)
Cynthia Cummins	(Staff)	Rebecca Demas	(Supporter)
J. Eleanor Dennison	(Supporter)	Janet M. Dixon	(Supporter)
Mark Fritz	(Supporter)	Tara Harris	(Employee)
Cynthia Helms	(Supporter)	Raine Igarta	(Supporter)
Scott Lewis	(Supporter)	John Mahaffey	(Employee)
Debbie Marouk	(Supporter)	Betsy McClendon	(Supporter)
Ken McGee	(Employee)	Brooks Miriam	(Supporter)
Regana Mouser	(Supporter)	Mary Pelizzoni	(Supporter)
Carol Round	(Supporter)	Darlyn Slater	(Employee)
Keith Stitt	(Supporter)	Debra Stone	(Supporter)
J. Treston	(Supporter)	Michael Vernon	(Employee)
Sally Weisenbach	(Employee)		

COMMUNITY FOOD BANK OF SOUTHERN ARIZONA

Comment: I am a [fill in the blank] of the Southern Arizona Community Food Bank. I see families each week who are struggling to put food on their tables. The need has increased and the resources have lessened. It is especially difficult to see how children are affected by this problem. I am asking that you pass a farm bill that will protect programs like SNAP and TEFAP. Thank you for listening.

Ronny Beard	(Supporter)	Myrna Beards	(Supporter)
Ronald Cohen	(Supporter)	Terry Dennis	(Volunteer)
Rev. George Easley	(Employee)	Lydia Glasson	(Supporter)
Mary Goldstein	(Supporter)	Yvonne Guzman	(Supporter)
Donna Hall	(Supporter)	Linda Hampton	(Employee)
Meghan Heddings	(Employee)	Thomas Hull	(Supporter)
Marie P. Kessler, J.D.	(Employee)	Dale & Paula Keyes	(Supporters)
Carolyn Nash	(Volunteer)	John Reeves	(Supporter)
Lynda Reeves	(Volunteer)	Steven Snitkin	(Supporter)
Anne Tatum	(Supporter)	Donald Whitney	(Supporter)
Kenneth Wortzel	(Supporter)		

COMMUNITY FOOD BANK OF TUCSON

Name: Barbara Arvold.

Comment: I am a volunteer at the Community Food Bank in Tucson two half days a week. I see the numbers of people standing in line, seeking food assistance growing weekly! I see the price of food such as peanut butter double in price.

The CFB cannot depend upon the generosity of Tucsonans to meet the needs of so many. We need a strong farm bill to make sure that these families can put food on their tables.

Help pass the farm bill to help our community.

Peace.

COMMUNITY FOOD PANTRY

Name: Deborah Bluminberg.

Comment: Every month, I serve hungry families at the Community Food Pantry. Many of those families receive food stamps, and still have a need for the food pantry. Cutting SNAP means less help for families who already are struggling to feed themselves and their children. PLEASE DO NOT CUT SNAP.

COMMUNITY FOODBANK OF NEW JERSEY

Comment: As a [fill in the blank] at the Community FoodBank of New Jersey, I'm writing to share my concern about hunger in New Jersey. With unemployment still high and many Americans struggling to make ends meet, anti-hunger programs are helping many put food on the table.

Nearly 50 million Americans live with food insecurity. While food banks, churches, and pantries do great work, charity alone can't meet the need for food assistance. Feeding our neighbors is a public-private partnership. I try to do my part by volunteering at and donating to the CFBNJ in Hillside, NJ.

Congress should do its part by continuing to support anti-hunger programs like the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), the Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), and the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP), all of which are authorized in the farm bill.

Cutting anti-hunger programs will obviously increase hunger in America. Given the associated health care and educational costs of hunger and poor nutrition, cuts to anti-hunger programs are short-sighted.

Please remember the families who are struggling in our country and urge you to protect and strengthen important anti-hunger programs like SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP in the 2012 Farm Bill reauthorization.

Barbara La Mort	(Volunteer)	Sue Yurasits	(Employee)
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COMMUNITY HEALTH MINISTRY

Name: Cindy Cassity, Coordinator.

Comment: I am the Food Bank Coordinator at Community Health Ministry in Alma, KS. With traditional food streams declining, we continue to find it difficult to meet the needs of our community, despite the improvement in the economy. We need a strong nutrition title in the farm bill to make sure that we can put food on the table for those who are still struggling. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP. These programs are a lifeline to the thousands of people struggling with hunger in your district, and I urge you to make them a priority in the next farm bill.

CONTRA COST FOOD BANK

Name: Patricia Ellison.

Comment: I volunteer at the Contra Cost Food Bank and I have seen how important programs like SNAP are for families and seniors.

The number of people who would have to skip a daily meal is increasing. I urge you to not make cuts in any of the food supplement programs in the agriculture bill. Thank you.

DUTCHESS OUTREACH, INC.

Name: Rosemary Fritz Grabowska.

Comment: I work at Dutchess Outreach, Inc. This is a not-for-profit that runs a food pantry and soup kitchen 5 days a week. We serve families in need from all over Dutchess County and the sentiment I hear the most is that families are having a hard time making ends meet WITH the food stamps they're receiving. We serve over 20 families a day in our food pantry, giving them groceries so they make what little they have stretch just a little bit more. If programs like TEFAP and SNAP are decreased we're going to have an increase in demand that we just can't keep up with. Please strengthen programs like TEFAP and SNAP!

EAST TEXAS FOOD BANK

Name: Brandi Lamberth.

Comment: I am a supporter of our local food bank in Tyler. East Texas children and families are in the top states for people living in poverty. We need a strong farm bill to help put food on the table for vulnerable children, seniors, and low-income families. Please pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP. Cutting these programs is not the way to balance the budget. I urge you make them a priority in the next farm bill.

EMERGENCY FOOD CUPBOARD

Name: Robert Lauterbach.

Comment: Please do not cut the funds for SNAP, as it would cause great hardships for people in need of food. As a volunteer coordinator for an Emergency Food Cupboard near Downtown Rochester, NY, I see first hand how important SNAP funds are for our clients. Most of them run out of the funds mid-way through the month, and need our services to feed their families.

EMERGENCY INFANT SERVICES

Name: Tom Taylor, Executive Director.

Comment: I am the Executive Director at Emergency Infant Services, which serves infants and kids ages 0 thru their 5th birthday. With traditional food streams declining and a recession still lingering, we continue to find it difficult to meet the demands for food assistance, despite the overwhelming support from our community. We need a strong FARM Bill to make sure that we can put food on the table for those that are still struggling. I ask that you pass a FARM Bill that protects and strengthens nutrition programs like TEFAP and SNAP. These programs provide a lifeline to more than 600,000 food insecure Oklahomans, including 240,740 children at risk of going to bed hungry tonight. I urge you to make them a priority in the next FARM Bill.

FAYETTE COUNTY COMMUNITY ACTION FOOD BANK

Name: Jennifer Miller.

Comment: I am a supporter of Fayette County Community Action Food Bank. Right now, many families in our community are struggling. With increased demand for emergency food assistance, high food and gas prices, and declines in TEFAP commodities—a major source of the food we distribute—our food bank is having difficulty meeting the needs of our community. We need a strong farm bill to make sure that struggling families can put food on the table. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP. Our community cannot afford cuts to these programs.

FEEDING AMERICA AND ST. MARY'S FOOD BANK ALLIANCE

Name: Lee Wasko.

Comment: I am a supporter of Feeding America and St. Mary's Food Bank Alliance. Despite the recent improvement of the economy, there are still many people who may not know where they will find their next meal. We need a strong farm bill to help put food on the table for vulnerable children, seniors, and low-income families. Please pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like

TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP. Cutting these programs is not the way to balance the budget. I urge you make them a priority in the next farm bill.

FEEDING AMERICA SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA

Name: Wayne Johnson.

Comment: Our clients are in dire need of food and we depend heavily on the USDA food provided to us thru Feeding America Southwest Virginia. Please help us as we seek to feed the needy in this area.

Name: James Pearman, Board Chair.

Comment: I am the Board Chair at Feeding America Southwest Virginia. I have been involved as a volunteer Board member for almost 20 years. Our service area is southwestern Virginia (26 counties, 10 cities) and contains some of the poorest areas of the Commonwealth. Food supply has always been a challenge for us as we do not have significant food production or manufacturing in our service area. With continuing decline in traditional food streams, we continue to find it difficult to meet the needs of our communities, despite the improvement of the economy. We need a strong farm bill to make sure we can put food on the table of those individuals still struggling. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP. These programs are a lifeline to the thousands of children and older adults struggling with hunger in southwestern Virginia. I urge you to make them a priority in the next farm bill.

FEEDING AMERICA/RI COMMUNITY FOODBANK/GENESIS PROJECT

Name: Ken Stec.

Comment: I am a supporter of Feeding America and my local food bank. Despite the recent improvement of the economy, there are still many people who may not know where their next meal will come from. 1 in 5 children do not know where their next meal will come from in this country—as the richest country in the world, we should be ashamed! We need a strong farm bill to help put food on the table for vulnerable children, seniors, and low-income families. Please pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP—AND supports access to fresh, nutritious food. Cutting these programs is not the way to balance the budget. A thriving economy needs well-nourished citizens at all income-levels, and I urge you make these programs a priority in the next farm bill.

FEEDING OUR NEIGHBORS

Name: Lori Kantor.

Comment: Feeding Our Neighbors is a public-private partnership. I am doing my part and want our government to do its part.

Cutting anti-hunger programs will increase hunger in America, as well as the associated health care, educational, and economic costs of food insecurity and poor nutrition.

Please remember the families who are struggling in our community and protect and strengthen important anti-hunger programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP in the 2012 Farm Bill reauthorization.

FOOD BANK AT PRINCE OF PEACE LUTHERAN CHURCH

Name: Sharleen Jespersen.

Comment: I am a supporter and volunteer at the Food Bank at Prince of Peace Lutheran Church. Please keep a strong farm bill and protect the benefits of these people who really need our help right now to feed their families.

FOOD BANK OF CONTRA COSTA AND SOLANO

Comment: As a [fill in the blank] of my local food bank, I am writing to share my concern about hunger in California and the country. With unemployment still high and many Americans still struggling to make ends meet, anti-hunger programs are vital to many of our neighbors just put food on the table.

Nearly 50 million Americans are living in food insecurity. While food banks, churches, and pantries are doing great work in our community, charity alone cannot meet the need for food assistance. Feeding our neighbors is a public-private partnership. I try to do my part by supporting the Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano.

Congress should do its part by continuing to support anti-hunger programs like the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), which are authorized in the farm bill.

Cutting anti-hunger programs will increase hunger in America. Given the associated health care and educational costs of hunger and poor nutrition, cuts to anti-

hunger programs are short-sighted. Don't cut these programs—if you are looking for ways to reduce government spending, then cut the farm subsidies to the growers. A truly wasteful program.

I ask you to please remember the families who are struggling in our country, and urge you to protect and strengthen important anti-hunger programs like TEFAP and SNAP in the 2012 Farm Bill reauthorization.

Gil Berkeley	(Supporter)	Rachel Braver	(Supporter)
Sarah Hafer	(Supporter)	Bruce Phelps	(Employee)
Lisa Sherrill	(Employee)		

FOOD BANK OF IOWA

Name: Carey Miller, Executive Director.

Comment: I am Carey Miller, Executive Director of the Food Bank of Iowa. Right now, many families in our community are struggling. With increased demand for emergency food assistance, high food and gas prices, and declines in TEFAP commodities—a major source of the food we distribute—our food bank is having difficulty meeting the needs of our community. We need a strong farm bill to make sure that struggling families can put food on the table. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP. Our community cannot afford cuts to these programs. Thank you.

FOOD BANK OF NORTHERN NEVADA

Comment: I am a [fill in the blank] of the Food Bank of Northern Nevada. Right now, many families in our community are struggling. With increased demand for emergency food assistance, high food and gas prices, and declines in TEFAP commodities—a major source of the food we distribute—our food bank is having difficulty meeting the needs of our community. We need a strong farm bill to make sure that struggling families can put food on the table. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP. Our community cannot afford cuts to these programs.

Rosemary Beard	(Supporter)	Carole Ennis	(Supporter)
Cherie Jamason	(Supporter)	Jocelyn Lantrip	(Employee)
Cheryl Le	(Supporter)		

FOOD BANK OF NORTHWEST INDIANA

Comment: I am a [fill in the blank] for the Food Bank of Northwest Indiana. Right now, many families in our community are struggling. With increased demand for emergency food assistance, high food and gas prices, and declines in TEFAP commodities—a major source of the food we distribute—our food bank is having difficulty meeting the needs of our community. We need a strong farm bill to make sure that struggling families can put food on the table. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP. Our community cannot afford cuts to these programs.

Marshal Anderson	(Volunteer)	Sue Helm	(Supporter)
DeLynn Hodges	(Supporter)	D. Holland	(Supporter)
Debbie Kardos	(Supporter)	Pastor Lonnie Lawson	(Supporter)
Amanda Maynard	(Employee)	LuAnn Parrish	(Supporter)
Jean Proctor	(Supporter)	Rose Mary Salazar	(Employee)
Megan Sikes	(Employee)	Margaret Sinde	(Supporter)
Chandra Timberlake	(Employee)		

FOOD BANK OF SOUTH CENTRAL MICHIGAN

Comment: I am an [fill in the blank] representing the Food Bank of South Central Michigan. With traditional food streams declining, the Food Bank continues to find it difficult to meet the needs of our community, despite the improvement of the economy. We need a strong farm bill to make sure that we can put food on the table for those that are still struggling. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP. These programs are a lifeline to the 1,828,060 Michigan residents who struggle with hunger and I urge you make them a priority in the next farm bill. 25% of the 102,600 individuals receiving food through the Food Bank of South Central Michigan are older Americans and senior citizens.

Sandra Dobbins Dan Salerno	(Donor) (Supporter)	Douglas Ivey	(Supporter)
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FOOD BANK OF SOUTH JERSEY

Comment: I am an [fill in the blank] of the Food Bank of South Jersey. Right now, many families in our community are struggling. With increased demand for emergency food assistance, high food and gas prices, and declines in TEFAP commodities—a major source of the food we distribute—our food bank is having difficulty meeting the needs of our community. We need a strong farm bill to make sure that struggling families can put food on the table. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP. Our community cannot afford cuts to these programs.

All of us count on your support for the people of South Jersey.
Thank you

Susan Croll	(Supporter)	Ujwala Samant	(Employee)
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FOOD BANK OF THE SOUTHERN TIER COMMUNITY

Name: Missy Goetschius.

Comment: While we appreciate your recognition of the need for additional TEFAP supplies across the country, more help is needed this year so the Food Bank of the Southern Tier can continue responding to the increasing need for food assistance. Our local Food Bank is currently feeding over 11,000 people each week and the need for food assistance continues to grow.

We appreciate your attention to this request and look forward to hearing from you regarding this issue.

Comment: I am a [fill in the blank] at the [fill in the blank], which is a hunger-relief member agency of the Food Bank of the Southern Tier. Right now, many families in our community are struggling. In fact, the Food Bank of the Southern Tier's hunger-relief network, of more than 160 hunger-relief member agencies including food pantries, soup kitchens, shelters and other nonprofit organizations, provide assistance to over 11,000 individuals each week.

With high and prolonged unemployment and many more families scraping by on one salary or reduced hours and wages, many families in our community are still hurting and the Food Bank is having difficulty meeting the needs of our community. We need a strong farm bill to make sure that struggling families can put food on the table.

I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like SNAP and TEFAP. Our community cannot afford cuts to these programs!

Areliia Gamble	(Volunteer)	Corning Community Food Pantry
Beth	(Volunteer)	Corning Community Food Pantry
Donna Bernhardt	(Volunteer)	Groton Food Providers Food Pantry
Joan Zhe	(Volunteer)	Groton Food Providers Food Pantry
Edward Baldwin	(Volunteer)	New Beginnings Food Pantry
Verna Baldwin	(Volunteer)	New Beginnings Food Pantry
James Freeman	(Volunteer)	New Beginnings Food Pantry
Barbara Peterson	(Volunteer)	New Beginnings Food Pantry
Mary Rich	(Volunteer)	New Beginnings Food Pantry
Dolores Kauffman	(Volunteer)	Penn Ave United Methodist Church Food Pantry
Frederick Buchholz, Jr.	(Volunteer)	Riverside Food Pantry
Nancy Burton	(Volunteer)	Tuscarora and Addison Food Pantries
Kathy Greene	(Volunteer)	Tuscarora and Addison Food Pantries
Shirley Harris	(Volunteer)	Tuscarora and Addison Food Pantries

FOOD BANK OF WESTERN NEW YORK

Name: Kathleen Mendez.

Comment: I am an employee of the Food Bank of Western New York and am aware of that fact that many families in our community are struggling to put food on the table. There is an increased demand for emergency food assistance, due to increased food costs. A decline in TEFAP commodities—a major source of the food we distribute—results in our food bank having difficulty meeting the needs of our four-county community. We need a strong farm bill to make sure that struggling families can put food on the table. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP. The less fortunate in Western New York cannot afford cuts to these programs.

FOOD CUPBOARD

Name: Fran Jensen.

Comment: I help run a Food Cupboard and assist at several soup kitchens. The situation out here is very difficult for many people. SNAP and TEFAP are essential. It may sound incredible in this nation, but people could starve without some of these benefits. Please preserve these programs!

FOOD FOR FRIENDS PROGRAM

Name: Lauralee Colella.

Comment: I am a volunteer for the Food For Friends program in Plainville Ct. and we benefit from TEFAP and really need this kind of help to make this program possible. We are serving needy people every week and see more need each week. We need a strong farm bill to make sure that struggling families can have the hot meals we provide. Our community cannot afford cuts to these programs.

FOOD ROOTS

Name: Randall Koch.

Comment: I work with Food Roots, a 501(c)3 teaching children to grow food in their schools with the help of FoodCorps and create micro enterprise programs for small farmers to help them fund their food production as well as work regionally to develop a 100 mile regional food system for production and distribution of healthy for all income levels through Farmers Markets and SNAP match programs.

FOOD SHARE IN OXNARD, CA

Name: Fran McNeill, Chief Program Officer.

Comment: I am the Chief Program Officer at Food Share in Oxnard, CA. With traditional food streams declining, we continue to find it difficult to meet the needs of our community, despite the improvement of the economy. We need a strong farm bill to make sure that we can put food on the table for those that are still struggling. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP. These programs are a lifeline to one in six people struggling with hunger in your district, and I urge you make them a priority in the next farm bill. These critical programs affect the most vulnerable of our population. One in four of those who are hungry are children, and they are our future.

FOODLINK

Comment: I am an [fill in the blank] of Foodlink, the regional food bank in Rochester, NY. Right now, many families in our community are struggling. With increased demand for emergency food assistance, high food and gas prices, and declines in TEFAP commodities—a major source of the food we distribute—our food bank is having difficulty meeting the needs of our community. We need a strong farm bill to make sure that struggling families can put food on the table. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP. Our community cannot afford cuts to these programs.

Martha Brown	(Employee)	Michelle Larson	(Supporter)
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FOODSHARE

Comment: I am a [fill in the blank] of FOODSHARE. Right now, many families in our community are struggling. With increased demand for emergency food assistance, high food and gas prices, and declines in TEFAP commodities—a major source of the food we distribute—our food bank is having difficulty meeting the needs of our community. We need a strong farm bill to make sure that struggling families can put food on the table. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strength-

ens programs like SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP. Our community cannot afford cuts to these programs.

Emily Chenette	(Supporter)	Kai Loundon	(Employee)
Patricia Maden	(Volunteer)	Leslie Soler	(Employee)

FOODSHARE IN BLOOMFIELD

Comment: am a [fill in the blank] at the [fill in the blank] food pantry working with Foodshare in Bloomfield to help the hungry in our town. Please pass a strong farm bill that will allow us to continue to feed the hungry in CT. SNAP, CFSP and TEFAP programs provide needed nutrition in the fight against hunger. Without these programs my neighbors will go hungry. Please do not vote to cut these necessary programs.

Janet Colturi	(Employee)	Cristina Ramsay	(Supporter)
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FOODSHARE, HARTFORD AND TOLLAND COUNTIES, CT

Comment: I am [fill in the blank] of FoodShare, Inc. of Hartford, Connecticut a food bank serving Hartford and Tolland counties of the State of Connecticut. With traditional food streams declining, we continue to find it difficult to meet the needs of our community, despite the improvement of the economy. We need a strong farm bill to make sure that we can put food on the table for those that are still struggling. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP. These programs are a lifeline to the residents of Hartford and Tolland counties of the State of Connecticut who are struggling with hunger, and I urge you make them a priority in the next farm bill.

Mark La Fontaine	(Employee)	Janice Traczyk	(Employee)
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FREE LUNCH

Name: Leslie Weinberg.

Comment: I care deeply about the issue of poverty and hunger, here in the U.S. as well as overseas. In these difficult times, many depend on the SNAP program, WIC, or Food Banks and Pantries. I participate in a Free Lunch in Stamford, CT. Please include these nutrition programs, as well as free lunches in public schools for those who qualify. Many Food Banks and Pantries are significantly strained. People who could once make donations are now clients.

GEORGIA FOOD BANK ASSOCIATION

Name: Danah Craft.

Comment: Please protect TEFAP and Federal Nutrition Programs like SNAP. Food Banks in GA distributed more than 95 million pounds of food last year through more than 2,500 partner agencies and pantries. Without these programs, our agencies, including 1,700 churches and congregations, will be on the front lines of trying to help struggling Georgians. Now is not the time to cut food assistance.

GLORIA DEI FOOD DISTRIBUTION CENTER

Name: Joel Weinhardt, Pantry Manager.

Comment: I am a Pantry Manager of Gloria Dei Food Distribution Center in Leesburg. Right now, many families in our community are struggling. With increased demand for emergency food assistance, high food and gas prices, and declines in TEFAP commodities—a major source of the food we distribute—our food bank is having difficulty meeting the needs of our community. We need a strong farm bill to make sure that struggling families can put food on the table. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP. Our community cannot afford cuts to these programs. We started from scratch a little over a year ago and are now giving 145 people 1 week of nutritional food 1 time per month. Without the 2nd harvest TEFAP foods we receive we would not be able to feed more than 30–40 people. Joel Weinhardt, Manager Pro Tem Gloria Dei Food Distribution Center

GOOD SHEPHERD FOOD BANK

Comment: I am [fill in the blank] at Good Shepherd Food Bank. With traditional food streams declining, we continue to find it difficult to meet the hunger

needs in Maine, despite the improving economy. We need a strong farm bill to make sure that we can put food on that table for those that are still struggling. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP. These programs are a lifeline to the more than 200,000 Mainers who struggle with hunger. I urge you to make them a priority in the next farm bill. Sincerely,

Christine Force	(Employee)	Nicole Nadeau	(Employee)
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GRACE UMC FOOD PANTRY IN MANVEL

Name: Nancy Marsac.

Comment: I urge you to prioritize full funding of farm bill nutrition programs. Try as we may, those of us in food pantries can't keep up with the need.

I am a Constituent, and I vote. (Although I have been in the 14th CD, I just voted in the 22nd, as we have been redistricted.)

GREAT COMMISSION COMMUNITY MINISTRY, INC., HOUSE OF MANNA FOOD PANTRY

Name: Henrietta Sailor.

Comment: I am a supporter of the Great Commission Community Ministry, Inc., House of Manna Food Pantry, serving the Greater Hartford, CT area. Many families in our community are struggling and with increased demand for emergency food assistance, high food and gas prices, and declines in TEFAP commodities, a major source of food we distribute, our organization is having difficulty meeting the needs of our community. We need a strong farm bill to make sure that struggling families can put food on the table. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP. Our community cannot afford cuts to these programs. Thank you

GREATER HARTFORD AREA

Comment: I am a [fill in the blank] of [fill in the blank], serving the Greater Hartford, CT area. Right now, many families in our community are struggling. With increased demand for emergency food assistance, high food and gas prices, and declines in TEFAP commodities—a major source of the food we distribute—our organization is having difficulty meeting the needs of our community. We need a strong farm bill to make sure that struggling families can put food on the table. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP. Our community cannot afford cuts to these programs.

Max Castro	(Supporter)	Jaren Morrison	(Supporter)
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GREATER PITTSBURGH COMMUNITY FOOD BANK

Comment: I am the [fill in the blank] at Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank. With traditional food donations declining, along with an increase in demand of services, we continue to find it difficult to meet the needs of our community, despite the improvement of the economy. We need a strong farm bill to make sure that we can put food on the table for those that are still struggling. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP. These programs are a lifeline to the 158,670 people struggling with hunger in Allegheny County, Pennsylvania and I urge you make them a priority in the next farm bill. Thank you for your consideration.

Rachel Schneider	(Employee)	Chris West	(Employee)
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HANDS ON HARTFORD

Name: Cody Stewart.

Comment: I am an employee of Hands on Hartford, serving the Greater Hartford, CT area. Right now, many families in our community are struggling. With increased demand for emergency food assistance, high food and gas prices, and declines in TEFAP commodities—a major source of the food we distribute—our organization is having difficulty meeting the needs of our community. We need a strong farm bill to make sure that struggling families can put food on the table. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP. Our community cannot afford cuts to these programs.

HARRY CHAPIN FOOD BANK OF SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

Name: Ben Walther.

Comment: I am a SUPPORTER of Harry Chapin Food Bank of Southwest Florida. Right now, many families in our community are struggling. With increased demand for emergency food assistance, high food and gas prices, and declines in TEFAP commodities—a major source of the food we distribute—our food bank is having difficulty meeting the needs of our community. We need a strong farm bill to make sure that struggling families can put food on the table. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP. Our community cannot afford cuts to these programs.

HELPING HANDS FOOD MINISTRY

Name: Tami Hernandez, Director.

Comment: I am the Director at Helping Hands Food Ministry. With traditional food streams declining, we continue to find it difficult to meet the needs of our community, despite the improvement in the economy. We need a strong nutrition title in the farm bill to make sure that we can put food on the table for those who are still struggling. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP. These programs are a lifeline to the thousands of people struggling with hunger in your district, and I urge you to make them a priority in the next farm bill.

HOT SPRINGS FOOD PANTRY

Name: Deb Meyers, VP of the Board of Directors.

Comment: I am the VP of the Board of Directors of the Hot Springs Food Pantry. I see less and less food coming into our pantry from our Network. Many of our ranches, townfolk, and even relatives from out of state help keep our shelves full, but none of them are wealthy. They will not be able to do this forever. We are seeing increases every month in our roles. This town of about 450 has 180 people who need food each month. As you can see, we are desperate for funding. Many of our clients are elderly and are seeing less money in their social security checks. Many more are either embarrassed to be seen coming in for food or they are disabled and for whatever reason don't ask us to deliver to them, which is something we are eager to do.

Add those to the ones already on the roles and you can see our position. Please, please, please, if you won't help get the funding back, which was already cut, at least stop any further cuts.

HOUSE OF HOPE FOOD PANTRY

Name: Everett Bass.

Comment: I am a Volunteer employee of House of Hope Food Pantry. Right now, many families in our community are struggling. With increased demand for emergency food assistance, high food and gas prices, and declines in TEFAP commodities—a major source of the food we distribute—our food bank is having difficulty meeting the needs of our community. We need a strong farm bill to make sure that struggling families can put food on the table. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP. Our community cannot afford cuts to these programs.

Leesburg First Assembly of God,
Fruitland Park, FL

HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES

Name: Caroline Shook.

Comment: I am an employee of Housing Opportunities. We run a food pantry which relays on TEFAP commodities for our pantry. Our pantry serves over 1500 families a month. Right now, many families in our community are struggling. With increased demand for emergency food assistance, high food and gas prices, and declines in TEFAP commodities—a major source of the food we distribute—our food bank is having difficulty meeting the needs of our community. We need a strong farm bill to make sure that struggling families can put food on the table. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP. Our community cannot afford cuts to these programs.

HOUSTON FOOD BANK

Name: Timothy Williams.

Comment: I urge you to oppose proposals to cap or reduce funding, restrict eligibility, or reduce nutrition program benefits

Please support increased benefits to ensure American families have resources to purchase a nutritionally adequate diet;

I am a supporter of Feeding America and the Houston Food Bank. In spite of recent economic improvements, there are too many families who do not know where their next meal will come from. We need a strong farm bill to help put food on the table for children, the elderly and low-income families. Cutting these programs is not the way to balance the budget.

I urge you to prioritize full funding of farm bill nutrition programs.

I am a Constituent, and I vote.

HUNGER-FREE PENNSYLVANIA

Name: Sheila Christopher, Executive Director.

Comment: I am the Executive Director of Hunger-Free Pennsylvania. With traditional food streams declining, we continue to find it difficult to meet the needs of our community, despite the improvement of the economy. We need a strong farm bill to make sure that we can put food on the table for those that are still struggling. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP. Of particular interest to us is the reauthorization of the Commodity Supplemental Food Program [CSFP]. In Pennsylvania we provide a vital nutritious food package to 34,533 each month. We were blessed in 2002 to be awarded the program with a caseload of 5,000. We are celebrating 10 years of administering this program for the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, with over 300,000 seniors eligible for this program our work is far from done

CSFP, along with the other food/nutrition programs are a lifeline to the people struggling with hunger in your district, and I urge you make them a priority in the next farm bill.

ILLINOIS FOOD BANKS

Comment: As a volunteer for our local food pantry, I know many of our clients rely on food stamps as well as on the pantry for their food. Please don't cut SNAP! I am writing to encourage strong support of nutritional programs nationwide. Members of my family currently depend on food subsidies to make ends meet. As a food pantry volunteer, I see the face of needy people regularly. We feed hundreds of people each week through our community food pantry. Please do not cut SNAP funding. Our neighbors are hungry and need our support and care.

William Drennan	(Supporter)	Julie R. Harley	(Employee)
Kenneth Hooker	(Volunteer)	Nana Pearlman	(Volunteer)
Karen Stelmach	(Employee)	Phyllis Voosen	(Volunteer)
Sally Wallace	(Employee)	Mabel Wayne	(Supporter)
Marguerite Wood	(Volunteer)		

INDIANA FOOD BANK

Name: Mallie Gwathney.

Comment: I serve as a food pantry director and I see the need in our community for the food that is supplied by the services that are provided through the USDA food distributions. If these services are cut it will cause hardships for many families.

JEWISH FAMILY & CHILDREN'S SERVICE OF PITTSBURGH/SQUIRREL HILL FOOD PANTRY

Name: Rebecca Abrams, Director.

Comment: I urge Congress to protect against hunger and promote nutrition in the upcoming farm bill by supporting programs like SNAP, TEFAP, CSFP, and FFVP.

As the director of the Squirrel Hill Food Pantry in Pittsburgh, PA I serve over 1,200 people each year with supplemental food assistance. Please don't cut these vital programs to provide healthy foods to people in need. If these cuts go forward, I worry that my program will not be able to keep pace with the number of people who will turn to my food pantry program for help.

Thank you,

REBECCA ABRAMS, M.S.W.,

Director, Squirrel Hill Community Food Pantry,

A program of Jewish Family & Children's Service of Pittsburgh.

JONNYCAKE FOOD BANK

Name: Gene Corl.

Comment: I am a supporter of the Jonnycake Food Bank in our community. Right now, many families in our community are struggling. With increased demand for emergency food assistance, high food and gas prices, and declines in TEFAP commodities—a major source of the food we distribute—our food bank is having difficulty meeting the needs of our community. We need a strong farm bill to make sure that struggling families can put food on the table. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP. Our community cannot afford cuts to these programs.

The kids are the ones who are adversely affected the most, and that is a sad state of affairs for America.

LADY LAKE CHURCH OF GOD FOOD PANTRY

Name: James Newton.

Comment: I am an EMPLOYEE of Lady Lake Church of GOD Food Pantry. Right now, many families in our community are struggling. With increased demand for emergency food assistance, high food and gas prices, and declines in TEFAP commodities—a major source of the food we distribute—our food bank is having difficulty meeting the needs of our community. We need a strong farm bill to make sure that struggling families can put food on the table. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP. Our community cannot afford cuts to these programs.

MARILLAC SOCIAL CENTER

Name: Whitney Allen, Director of Family Services.

Comment: I am the Director of Family Services at Marillac Social Center. Right now, many families in our community are struggling. With increased demand for emergency food assistance, high food and gas prices, and declines in TEFAP commodities—a major source of the food that is distributed by food pantries, soup kitchens, and shelters—our agency is having difficulty meeting the needs of our community. We need a strong farm bill to make sure that struggling families can put food on the table. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP. Our community cannot afford cuts to these programs.

MARYLAND

Name: Antje Krueger.

Comment: I support my local food bank, and I know they are struggling right now to meet the needs of my community. I ask that you pass a strong farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP. These programs are a lifeline to the millions of Americans struggling with hunger, and I urge you make them a priority in the next farm bill.

MID-SOUTH FOOD BANK

Name: Barbara Southwell.

Comment: Do Not pass Any bill which weakens our ability to provide food for those who are children, elderly, underemployed, disabled, etc. My husband and I are volunteers in our community and so far we have raised 1,969 pounds of food and \$1,261.25 for the Mid-South Food Bank and that's not a dent in what is needed in this area! Don't make it any more difficult than it already is for us to help feed those in need! I swear I think our elected officials are so clueless!

Name: Marcia Wells.

Comment: Food insecurity in our area is more than 20% of the population. With increased demand for emergency food assistance, high food and gas prices, and declines in TEFAP commodities, our food bank is struggling to feed the need in our community. We need a strong farm bill to make sure that individuals and families can put food on the table. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP. Memphis and the Mid-South cannot afford cuts to these programs.

MINNESOTA

Name: Maryann Bartos.

Comment: I work with the homeless. The drop of farm surplus to the local food banks is not good. The need has increased in these hard economic times. The pro-

gram needs to continue. It looks like a win/win situation for our citizens producer or not.

Name: Deb Aries

Comment: PLEASE continue to protect & strengthen the food programs for the hungry. Our numbers are up & there is no end in sight for the continued use of our facilities. We serve 13 counties in SE Minnesota & though we are blessed with wonderful donors, we do have shortages at certain times of the year.

Comment: Dear Representative McCollum:

I work as a Social Worker in [fill in the blank] and strongly urge you to support existing funding levels for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) within the farm bill.

One in 9 Minnesota citizens struggles to put food on the table. In Ramsey County, at least 12.6 percent of the population is food insecure. SNAP is critical to maintaining good nutrition and health among our population.

Economic studies in Minnesota show that people who lack access to adequate nutrition are more often chronically ill; children don't fully develop physically and cognitively and are more prone to fail courses, repeat grades and drop out of school before graduation. The cost of hunger's impact—largely as uninsured medical care—is conservatively estimated at \$1.6 billion annually. Cutting SNAP or limiting access to it will increase charity care caseloads for the counties, which will be borne by local property taxes.

Last but not least, every dollar of SNAP purchases goes into the local economy and generates \$1.73 in economic activity. This is not a net expense; it is a net gain of 73% that supports jobs on Main Street. In a time of high unemployment, we cannot afford to add to the unemployed by reducing community economic assets of which SNAP is one.

As a constituent and as a public servant, I strongly oppose cuts to critical anti-hunger programs SNAP, TEFAP as well as the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) for seniors and Women, Infants and Children (WIC)

For the sake of our neighbors who can't earn enough to get the food they need, it is important to maintain funding for programs that provide basic food assistance programs.

Sincerely,

Lynnete Medcalf, L.S.W.	Ramsey County	Ellen Morrow, L.S.W.	Blue Earth County
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MISSOURI

Name: Amanda Winschel.

Comment: With traditional food streams declining, we continue to find it difficult to meet the needs of our community, despite the improvement of the economy. We need a strong farm bill to make sure that we can put food on the table for those that are still struggling. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP. These programs are a lifeline to the 70,000 people struggling with hunger in your district, and I urge you make them a priority in the next farm bill.

Name: Jan Wright.

Comment: Running the local food pantry keeps me constantly aware of how much we need the gov't. commodities program for our seniors CSFP, reg commodities. and our SNAP programs. Food pantries alone cannot handle this. Last month alone this little food pantry fed 206 people. The economy is improving but not to the point you can do away with these programs.

MONTGOMERY AREA FOOD BANK

Name: Teresa Vigneault.

Comment: Dear House Committee Members:

It is critical that we not make the suggested cuts to TEFAP, SNAP, USDA. These programs ensure that food banks and others are able to assist those that need it most with simple nutrition and having access to much needed food. No one should have to go hungry, Children should be able to grow mentally, physically and spiritually.

NEW HAMPSHIRE FOOD BANK

Name: Mel Gosselin.

Comment: Although we are seeing slight improvements in the economy, we are seeing greater demand for food assistance. A strong farm bill is imperative to assist-

ing with the needs of our most vulnerable. These assistance programs are critical; please make them a priority. Thank you.

NEW MEXICO

Comment: As a supporter of my local food bank, I am writing to share my concern about hunger in New Mexico. With unemployment still high and many Americans still struggling to make ends meet, anti-hunger programs are helping many of our neighbors just put food on the table.

Nearly 50 million Americans are living in food insecurity. While food banks, churches, and pantries are doing great work in our community, charity alone cannot meet the need for food assistance. Feeding our neighbors is a public-private partnership. I try to do my part by supporting local hunger relief programs in my community.

Congress should do its part by continuing to support anti-hunger programs like the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), and the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP), all of which are authorized in the farm bill.

Cutting anti-hunger programs will increase hunger in America. Given the associated health care and educational costs of hunger and poor nutrition, cuts to anti-hunger programs are short-sighted.

I ask you to please remember the families who are struggling in our country, and urge you to protect and strengthen important anti-hunger programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP in the 2012 Farm Bill reauthorization. Cutting anti-hunger programs will increase hunger in America. Given the associated health care and educational costs of hunger and poor nutrition, cuts to anti-hunger programs are short-sighted.

I ask you to please remember the families who are struggling in our country, and urge you to protect and strengthen important anti-hunger programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP in the 2012 Farm Bill reauthorization.

Michael Bennett	Louise Bradley	Brad Brown
Cathy Brown	Rebecca Burwinkle	Leann Buss
Joyce Campbell-Layman	Eileen Cook	Bishop David Cooper
Dale Dannhaus	Ron EppesBlake Farley	
Art Fine	Charlet Garcia	Robin Garcia
Chrisann Gray	Rumaldo J. Griego	Jennifer Hollis
John Laude	Diana Martinez	Lori Medina
Robin Prudencio	Ken Reno	Jason Riggs
Karen Smoot	Linda Wedeen	Kim Wheeler
Marrienne White	Ruth Williams	

NEW YORK

Comment: As a [fill in the blank] of my local food bank, I am writing to share my concern about hunger in New York. With unemployment still high and many Americans still struggling to make ends meet, anti-hunger programs are helping many of our neighbors just put food on the table.

Nearly 50 million Americans are living in food insecurity. While food banks, churches, and pantries are doing great work in our community, charity alone cannot meet the need for food assistance. Feeding our neighbors is a public-private partnership.

Congress should do its part by continuing to support anti-hunger programs like the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), and the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP), all of which are authorized in the farm bill.

Cutting anti-hunger programs will increase hunger in America. Given the associated health care and educational costs of hunger and poor nutrition, cuts to anti-hunger programs are short-sighted.

I ask you to please remember the families who are struggling in our country, and urge you to protect and strengthen important anti-hunger programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP in the 2012 Farm Bill reauthorization.

Kathleen Keske	(Supporter)	Larkin Kimmerer	(Employee)
Chuck Schwartz	(Supporter)	Jeremy Schwartz	(Supporter)
Jill Schwartz	(Supporter)	Lauren Tonti	(Supporter)
Sandra Trujillo	(Supporter)		

NORTH PARK FRIENDSHIP CENTER

Name: John Potamites.

Comment: I do volunteer work at the North Park Friendship Center. Whenever asked, I tell people that to learn how the people who need us are affected by present American economics that they should come and work with me for a week. I could list all the various hardships I see, but more would be learned if “you see for yourself.” Please don’t help them less.

NORTH TEXAS FOOD BANK

Name: Damaris Lawson, Agency Relations Specialist.

Comment: I am an Agency Relations Specialist at North Texas Food Bank. With traditional food streams declining, we continue to find it difficult to meet the needs of our community, despite the improvement of the economy. We need a strong farm bill to make sure that we can put food on the table for those that are still struggling. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP. These programs are a lifeline to people struggling with hunger in your district, and I urge you to make them a priority in the next farm bill.

NORTHBOROUGH MASSACHUSETTS

Name: Sarah Rothery, Director.

Comment: As a director of my local food bank in Northborough Massachusetts, I am writing to share my concern about hunger in Massachusetts. With unemployment still high and many Americans still struggling to make ends meet, anti-hunger programs are helping many of our neighbors put food on the table.

Nearly 50 million Americans are living at-risk of hunger. While food banks and food pantries are doing great work in our community, charity alone cannot meet the need for food assistance. Feeding our neighbors is a public-private partnership. I do my part by contributing resources such as food, funds and volunteer time to the Worcester County Food Bank in Shrewsbury, MA.

Congress can do its part by continuing to support anti-hunger programs like the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP Food Stamps) and The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), all of which are authorized in the farm bill. These programs complement the hunger-relief efforts of the Food Bank and the food donations they receive.

Please remember the families who are struggling in Massachusetts and in our country by protecting and strengthening important programs like SNAP and TEFAP in the 2012 Farm Bill.

NORTHERN NECK FOOD BANK

Name: Marilyn McGlamary.

Comment: I am volunteer coordinator at the Northern Neck Food Bank & see every day the need for fresh, nutritious food. Our food bank is working to draw local farmers into our system by agreeing to grow crops for our customers.

NORTHWEST HARVEST

Name: Christina Wong.

Comment: I work for Northwest Harvest—we are a private, nonprofit hunger relief organization providing nutritious food to food banks, meal programs and high need schools. Please use the farm bill to strengthen and protect SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP. In our current economic climate, we must work to ensure that basic needs, like hunger, are met first. SNAP is working exactly as it was intended: it expands in times of high economic need and works towards its own shrinking of its rolls by being an economic stimulus, generating jobs and revenue in our food system while helping to feed hungry families who need a little assistance to help make it through until our economy improves. We need to extend the ARRA boost, and keep state options like Categorical Eligibility and Heat and Eat. These programs create efficiencies, saving administrative costs in eligibility and benefits determination and even the boost that they provide in benefits is not enough to meet all of a family’s nutritional needs, *i.e.*, is NOT keeping them comfortably fed so as to act as a disincentive from self-sufficiency. Otherwise, the loss of SNAP benefits will shift the burden of feeding families to the charitable hunger relief system which is already overburdened from serving record numbers of clients. Strengthen SNAP and strengthen TEFAP, the funds that help food banks with commodities and with operational costs—that is the partnership that is essential for eliminating hunger. Thank you.

NWI FOOD BANK

Comment: I am a [fill in the blank] of NWI Food Bank. Right now, many families in our community are struggling. With increased demand for emergency food assistance, high food and gas prices, and declines in TEFAP commodities—a major source of the food we distribute—our food bank is having difficulty meeting the needs of our community. We need a strong farm bill to make sure that struggling families can put food on the table. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP. Our community cannot afford cuts to these programs.

Donna Cunningham	(Supporter)	Lynn Jackson	(Supporter)
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OAK PARK FOOD PANTRY

Names: Dede Berdelle; Kerry Buhmann; Julie Duff.

Comment: I volunteer every month at the Oak Park Food Pantry serving very hungry people. Cutting SNAP will mean more hungry people will be even more hungry. Please don't cut SNAP.

OAK PARK RIVER FOREST FOOD PANTRY

Comment: I am a [fill in the blank] at the OPRF Food Pantry. Weekly, I hear how the combination of our efforts and the resources most of our clients currently receive from SNAP allow them to eat regularly. Notice I said “a combination”. By reducing SNAP benefits in the latest rendition of the **“Farm bill” you will ensure many of our clients will no longer have that privilege. Think about it—the “privilege to eat regularly”.** In this country. Really?

Please do **Not** cut SNAP benefits. Hunger is **Not** a pretty sight.

Dawn Altman	(Employee)	Lorraine Arnold	(Volunteer)
Elizabeth Backes	(Volunteer)	Peter Clark	(Volunteer)
Kiley Delaney	(Volunteer)	Vera Dowell	(Volunteer)
Iris Earzo	(Volunteer)	Pat Eichenold	(Volunteer)
Bob Haisman	(Volunteer)	Monica Halloran	(Volunteer)
Dawn Lustig	(Volunteer)	Karen Mansfield	(Volunteer)
Judith McDevitt	(Volunteer)	Larry Michel	(Volunteer)
Donna Myers	(Volunteer)	Maureen Newman	(Volunteer)
Kristen Ras	(Volunteer)	Laurel Saltzman	(Volunteer)
Kathryn Werner	(Volunteer)		

OHIO

Comment: As a [fill in the blank] for a hunger program serving the [fill in the blank] district, I am writing to share my concern about hunger in Ohio. Congress should do its part by continuing to support anti-hunger programs like the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), which are authorized in the 2012 Farm Bill. Given the associated health care and educational costs of hunger and poor nutrition, cuts to anti-hunger programs will only increase hunger in America.

Melisa Michael	(Volunteer)	Gregory and Ann Walker	(Volunteers)
Jeff Wright	(Volunteer)		

OREGON FOOD BANK

Comment: I am an [fill in the blank] of Oregon Food Bank. Right now, many families across our state are struggling. With increased demand for emergency food assistance, high food and gas prices, and declines in TEFAP commodities—a major source of the food we distribute—our food bank is having difficulty meeting the needs of our communities. We need a strong farm bill to make sure that struggling families can put food on the table. I know from personal experience what a lifeline SNAP can be for getting back on your feet during a period of unemployment, and I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP. Our state cannot afford cuts to these programs.

James Hensel	(Employee)	Tracie Weitzman	(Employee)
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OREGON FOOD BANK NETWORK

Comment: All Americans deserve to be healthy and have the opportunity to prosper. At a time of record need for emergency food assistance, two programs in the farm bill, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), must be strengthened and enhanced. I am a [fill in the blank] of the Oregon Food Bank Network, and its resources are stretched thin as they work to keep up with the high level of food insecurity in Oregon and Southwest Washington. The charitable sector simply cannot make up for cuts to critical nutrition programs like SNAP and TEFAP.

Jamie Adams Nicole Gibson	Cheryl Alto Steven Harrop	Judith Beck James Hensel	Renee Cote John Gregory Johnson	Kristopher Dausz Callie Jordan	Ineke Deruyter Judith Lienhard
Pamela Mahon James Prelack	Caryn May Gregory Ptaszynski	Laurence Morandi Dale Secord	Janet Moss Wade Lynn F. Shaker	Ben Ngan Kulick Sharon	Jenni Nowak Steve Sullivan-Lanphier
George Taylor	Patti Thompson	Marcy Wambach	Julia Williamson	David Wilson	Sonia Tellez

OUR LADY OF MT. CARMEL ST. VINCENT DEPAUL SOCIETY

Name: Frances Tereszczuk.

Comment: Food programs that help to feed the growing number of hungry Americans should not be cut. It would be harmful to the people we serve if cuts are made in the farm bill. The biggest concern for low-income families is having enough food to feed their family. Our agency, Our Lady of Mt. Carmel St. Vincent dePaul Society, provides a food pantry and a weekly hot-meal program for members of our community. These families need these programs to sustain a quality lifestyle.

OXFORD AREA NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES CENTER

Name: Carla Brown.

Comment: I work at the Oxford Area Neighborhood Services Center in Oxford, PA, in southwestern Chester County. One of the services we provide for our community is a food pantry. We receive food provided by state grants and TEFAP (The Emergency Food Assistance Program). Our food needs have increased 37% over the last 3 years but our funding has remained the same, and the TEFAP items have decreased dramatically over the last year. Our food pantry is not alone in this problem . . . We need increases in our funds and in the TEFAP items we desperately need. Please continue the farm bill and if possible increase it so that we can better meet the demands in our community. Thank you.

OZARKS FOOD HARVEST

Comment: I am a [fill in the blank] of Ozarks Food Harvest in Springfield, MO. With traditional food streams declining, I know it is difficult to meet the needs of our community, despite the improvement of the economy. We need a strong farm bill to make sure we can help put food on the table for those that are struggling. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP. These programs are critical to the thousands of people with hunger issues in southwest Missouri. Please help these people in need in the next farm bill.

Thank you,

Buddy Ball	(Volunteer)	Virginia Jones	(Volunteer)
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PALM BAY CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Name: Shauna Whisman, Coordinator.

Comment: I am a coordinator of the food pantry at Palm Bay Christian Church in Palm Bay, Florida. Over the years my family has had to rely on the efforts and dedication of others to sustain our family. It has always been a welcome relief during a very difficult situation. Palm Bay Christian Church utilizes the donations and financial assistance that is given to the Second Harvest Food Bank of Central Florida to help fight hunger in our community. Right now, many families in our community are struggling. With increased demand for emergency food assistance, high food and gas prices, and declines in TEFAP commodities—a major source of the food we distribute—our food bank is having difficulty meeting the needs of our community. We need a strong farm bill to make sure that struggling families can put food on the table. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP. Our community cannot afford cuts to these pro-

grams. Please do not let the families and especially the children within our community go hungry.

PENNSYLVANIA

Comment: I am a [fill in the blank] of the [fill in the blank] Food [Bank/Pantry] in [fill in the blank]. Right now, many families in our community are struggling. With increased demand for emergency food assistance, high food and gas prices, and declines in TEFAP commodities—a major source of the food that is distributed by food pantries, soup kitchens, and shelters—our agency is having difficulty meeting the needs of our community. We need a strong farm bill to make sure that struggling families can put food on the table. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP. Our community cannot afford cuts to these programs.

Thank you.

Agnes Gibson	(Volunteer)	Jill Lawton	(Food Banker)
Charlese McKinney	(Supporter)	Teresa Pomerleau	(Supporter)
Naomi Siegel	(Supporter)	Janet Yodanis	(Supporter)

PHOENIXVILLE, PA FOOD PANTRY

Name: Lisa Scott.

Comment: Please do not cut the farm bill. I am involved with a food pantry in Phoenixville, PA and we are already noticing a drop in food from the Federal government. Providing food to community members is important. Please do not cut this program. We need your help as well. Looking at the big picture, cutting this program could cause an increase in hunger in American, which could cause an increase in poor nutrition and health care costs.

PITTSBURGH FOOD BANK

Name: Suzanne Smith.

Comment: I want you to protect the SNAP, TEFAP and CSFP programs. These are front line programs to protect against food insecurity and hunger in PA. I have met many families that are struggling to put food on the table and meet all of their other living expenses—especially not having medical care. Protecting food programs helps families stay whole. Additionally going back to the asset test for SNAP will only be an additional cost to the program and will deter families from applying. It also so against what we encourage families to do to bring themselves out of poverty saving money and working.

PLAINVILLE' FOOD FOR FRIENDS

Name: Ruth Bernadt.

Comment: I am a supporter and volunteer of Plainville' Food for Friends organization serving the Greater Hartford, CT area. Right now, many families in our community are struggling. With increased demand for emergency food assistance, high food and gas prices, and declines in TEFAP commodities—a major source of the food we distribute—our organization is having difficulty meeting the needs of our community. We need a strong farm bill to make sure that struggling families can put food on the table. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP. Our community cannot afford cuts to these programs.

PRINCE OF PEACE LUTHERAN CHURCH FOOD PANTRY

Name: Janet Vokovich, Co-Team Leader.

Comment: I am a co-team leader of the Prince of Peace Lutheran Church Food Pantry in Orlando, FL. This past month we served 250 families (over 1,000 people) with food. The need has grown over 50% in the past year. We are asking that you support a strong farm bill that strengthens the TEFAP, SNAP and EBT programs. Our pantry depends on the TEFAP food we obtain from Second Harvest Food Bank to provide good nutrition to our clients. We see all segments of the the population, young families and senior citizens. Please vote to help us continue our work with no cuts. Thank you.

PUTNEY FOODSHELF

Name: Susan Kochinkas.

Comment: I am a volunteer at the Putney Foodshelf in Putney Vermont. With traditional food streams declining, we continue to find it difficult to meet the needs of our community, despite the improvement of the economy. (the number of families needing our help with supplemental food is going up.) We need a strong farm bill to make sure that we can put food on the table for those that are still struggling. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP. These programs are a lifeline to the many people struggling with hunger in your district, and I urge you make them a priority in the next farm bill.

RI COMMUNITY FOOD BANK AND THE GENESIS PROJECT

Name: Ann Brassard.

Comment: I am a supporter of Feeding America and my local food banks—RI Community Food Bank and The Genesis Project. Despite the recent improvement of the economy in some parts of the country, there are still many people who may not know where their next meal will come from. We need a strong farm bill to help put food on the table for vulnerable children, seniors, and low-income families. Please pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP. Cutting these programs is not the way to balance the budget. I urge you make them a priority in the next farm bill.

ROADRUNNER FOOD BANK/LAS CRUCES

Name: Donna Kuehn.

Comment: As a supporter of my local Roadrunner Food Bank and a volunteer at one of the Las Cruces food pantry sites, I am writing to share my concern about hunger in New Mexico. With unemployment still high and many Americans still struggling to make ends meet, anti-hunger programs are helping many of our neighbors just put food on the table.

Nearly 50 million Americans are living in food insecurity. While food banks, churches, and pantries are doing great work in our community, charity alone cannot meet the need for food assistance. Feeding our neighbors is a public-private partnership. I try to do my part by helping at one of the food pantry sites in Las Cruces twice a week. We would not be able to help the participating families without the current government-supported programs.

I urge Congress to continue supporting anti-hunger programs like the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), and the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP), all of which are authorized in the farm bill.

Cutting anti-hunger programs will increase hunger in America. Given the associated health care and educational costs of hunger and poor nutrition, cuts to anti-hunger programs are short-sighted.

I ask you to please remember the families who are struggling in our country, and urge you to protect and strengthen important anti-hunger programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP in the 2012 Farm Bill reauthorization.

SAFE NET MINISTRIES, INC.

Name: Joanne Graves.

Comment: I am a volunteer at Safe Net Ministries, Inc., serving the Greater Hartford, CT area. Right now, many families in our community are struggling. With increased demand for emergency food assistance, high food and gas prices, and declines in TEFAP commodities—a major source of the food we distribute—our organization is having difficulty meeting the needs of our community. We need a strong farm bill to make sure that struggling families can put food on the table. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP. Our community cannot afford cuts to these programs.

SAINT VINCENT DEPAUL FOOD PANTRY

Name: Janet Stoffel.

Comment: I am a supporter and volunteer for our local Saint Vincent DePaul food pantry. Right now, many families in our community are struggling. With increased demand for emergency food assistance, high food and gas prices, and declines in TEFAP commodities—a major source of the food we distribute—our food pantry is having difficulty meeting the needs of our community. We need a strong farm bill to make sure that struggling families can put food on the table. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP. Our community cannot afford cuts to these programs.

SECOND HARVEST FOOD BANK

Comment: I am a [fill in the blank] of Second Harvest Food Bank. Right now, many families in our community are struggling. With increased demand for emergency food assistance, high food and gas prices, and declines in TEFAP commodities—a major source of the food we distribute—our food bank is having difficulty meeting the needs of our community. We need a strong farm bill to make sure that struggling families can put food on the table. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP. Our community cannot afford cuts to these programs.

Thomas Harris	(Supporter)	Dennis Hill	(Supporter)
Michael Iberis	(Employee)	Michele James	
Jeff Kaplan	(Supporter)	Judith Lents	(Supporter)
Mike Schnitzer	(Supporter)	Lena Tolliver	(Supporter)

SECOND HARVEST FOOD BANK OF CENTRAL FLORIDA

Name: Katherine Martin.

Comment: I am a strong supporter of Second Harvest Food Bank of Central Florida. Right now, many families in our community are struggling. With increased demand for emergency food assistance, high food and gas prices, and declines in TEFAP commodities—a major source of the food we distribute—our food bank is having difficulty meeting the needs of our community. We need a strong farm bill to make sure that struggling families can put food on the table. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP. Our community cannot afford cuts to these programs.

SECOND HARVEST FOOD BANK OF THE LEHIGH VALLEY AND NORTHEAST PENNSYLVANIA

Comment: I am a [fill in the blank] of Second Harvest Food Bank of Lehigh Valley and Northeast Pennsylvania. Right now, many families in our community are struggling. With increased demand for emergency food assistance, high food and gas prices, and declines in TEFAP commodities—a major source of the food we distribute—our food bank is having difficulty meeting the needs of our community. We need a strong farm bill to make sure that struggling families can put food on the table. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP. Our community cannot afford cuts to these programs.

Lindsay Deemer	(Employee)	Sharon Hall	(Supporter)
Janet Ney	(Employee)		

SECOND HARVEST FOOD BANK-DAYTONA BEACH

Name: Myrtis Rimassa.

Comment: I am a supporter of Second Harvest Food Bank-Daytona Beach area. Right now, many families in our community are struggling and unemployment is extremely high. With increased demand for emergency food assistance, high food and gas prices, and declines in TEFAP commodities—a major source of the food we distribute—our food bank is having difficulty meeting the needs of our community. We need a strong farm bill to make sure that struggling families can put food on the table. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP. Our community cannot afford cuts to these programs.

SECOND HARVEST FOOD BANKS

Name: Cynthia Flatt.

Comment: I am a SUPPORTER of Second Harvest Food Banks. Right now, many families in our community are struggling. With increased demand for emergency food assistance, high food and gas prices, and declines in TEFAP commodities—a major source of the food we distribute—our food bank is having difficulty meeting the needs of our community. We need a strong farm bill to make sure that struggling families can put food on the table. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP. Our community cannot afford cuts to these programs.

SECOND HARVEST FOODBANK OF SOUTHERN WISCONSIN

Name: Lisa Gundlach.

Comment: I am an employee of Second Harvest Foodbank of Southern Wisconsin. We serve nearly 141,000 individuals facing hunger every year and are serving 83% more than we were in 2006. With increased demand for emergency food assistance and high food and gas prices, we need a strong farm bill to make sure that struggling families can put food on the table. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP. Our community cannot afford cuts to these programs.

Thank you for your time.

SECOND HARVEST NORTH CENTRAL FOOD BANK

Comment: I am a supporter of Second Harvest North Central Food Bank in north central Minnesota. With traditional food streams declining, we continue to find it difficult to meet the needs of our community, despite the improvement of the economy. We need a strong farm bill to make sure that we can put food on the table for those that are still struggling. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP. These programs are a lifeline to the 29,600 people struggling with hunger in your district, and I urge you make them a priority in the next farm bill.

Peggy Albert	(Supporter)	Cynthia Brummer	(Donor and Supporter)
Judith Christenson	(Volunteer, Donor, and Supporter)	Ellen Christmas	(Employee)
Susan Estee	(Employee)	Martha Lentz	(Volunteer, Donor, and Supporter)

SHARED HARVEST FOODBANK

Name: Tina Osso, Executive Director.

Comment: I am the Executive Director at Shared Harvest Foodbank. With traditional food streams declining, we continue to find it difficult to meet the needs of our community, despite the improvement of the economy. We need a strong farm bill to make sure that we can put food on the table for those that are still struggling. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP. These programs are a lifeline to the 64,000 people struggling with hunger in your district, and I urge you make them a priority in the next farm bill.

SHEFFIELD FOOD PANTRY

Name: Norma Williams, Treasurer.

Comment: I am the Treasurer of the Sheffield Food Pantry in Sheffield Vermont. With traditional food streams declining, we continue to find it difficult to meet the needs of our community, despite the improvement of the economy. We need a strong farm bill to make sure that we can put food on the table for those that are still struggling. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP. These programs are a lifeline to the many people struggling with hunger here in Sheffield VT, I urge you make them a priority in the next farm bill.

SOUTH JERSEY FOOD BANK

Name: John Eskate.

Comment: I am a supporter of Feeding America, the South Jersey Food Bank, and Philabundance. Despite the recent improvement of the economy, there are still many people who may not know where their next meal will come from. We need a strong farm bill to help put food on the table for vulnerable children, seniors, and low-income families. Please pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP. Cutting these programs is not the way to balance the budget. I urge you make them a priority in the next farm bill.

SOUTH TEXAS FOOD BANK LETTER

Comment:

May 14, 2012
 House Committee on Agriculture
 1301 Longworth Building
 Washington, D.C.

Dear Chairman Lucas, Ranking Member Peterson, and members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on the upcoming farm bill reauthorization. Given the increasing need for food assistance in our state and the declining supply of Federal commodity support, I strongly urge you protect and strengthen nutrition programs in the 2012 Farm Bill.

At the South Texas Food Bank, we see every day how important Federal nutrition programs are in our community and how effectively they are working to ensure that struggling South Texans can provide enough food for their families. Currently, the South Texas Food Bank serves 700,000 people annually.

Nationally, the Feeding America network of more than 200 food banks has seen a 46 percent increase in food bank clients from 2006 to 2010, and we are struggling to keep up with increased demand. Without strong farm bill nutrition programs like The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP), food banks across the country would be struggling even more to meet the increased need.

We recognize the challenge you face drafting a farm bill in a time of deficit reduction, but we are also sensitive to the tremendous, ongoing need in our state. As such, we have two key priorities for the farm bill.

First, we urge you to strengthen TEFAP to help us keep up with increased demand. TEFAP supplies about 25 percent of the food moving through Feeding America's national network of food banks. But because of strong commodity prices, TEFAP food declined 30 percent last year, and our food bank is struggling to make up the difference. We urge you to make TEFAP more responsive during times of high need by tying increases in mandatory funding to a trigger based on unemployment levels. We also propose to enhance the Secretary of Agriculture's authority to make TEFAP bonus purchases at times when the need for emergency food assistance is high—for example high unemployment—in addition to times of weak agriculture markets so that the program can respond to both excess supply and excess demand.

Second, we also strongly urge you to protect SNAP from harmful funding cuts or policy proposals that would restrict eligibility or reduce benefits. SNAP has responded effectively to growing need in the recession with benefits that are timely, targeted, and temporary. The average SNAP household has an income of only 57 percent of the Federal poverty guideline, and 84 percent of benefits go to households with a child, senior, or disabled person. The program is working to support vulnerable Texas families, and our food bank or local agency partners would not be able to meet the increased need for food assistance if SNAP were cut.

These programs have a real impact on your constituents, many of whom must rely on the food bank and Federal nutrition programs to meet their basic food needs. I would encourage you to visit the food banks serving your district before the Committee marks up a farm bill so you can meet our clients and see firsthand how Federal nutrition programs are working to protect vulnerable Americans from hunger.

The South Texas Food Bank believes that feeding our neighbors is a shared responsibility, and food banks like ours rely on a variety of food streams to support our communities, including generous support from partners in retail, manufacturing, and agriculture. However, the Federal Government is an equally critical partner through programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP, and with tremendous, ongoing need in our state, ongoing Federal support is more important than ever.

As the House Agriculture Committee moves forward with farm bill reauthorization, our food bank urges you to protect the nutrition safety net and offers the specific recommendations below.

Sincerely,

Rev. Jose Angel
Elia Solis

Carla Gonzalez
Sandra Vela

Brenda Pardue

Feeding America Farm Bill Priorities

The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP): TEFAP is a means-tested Federal program that provides food commodities at no cost to Americans in need of short-term hunger relief through organizations like food banks, pantries, soup kitchens, and emergency shelters. Nutritious food commodities provided through TEFAP are an essential resource for Feeding America food banks. As the demand for food remains high at food banks across the country, a continuous stream of TEFAP is necessary for the provision of a steady emergency food supply.

- TEFAP commodities account for approximately 25% of the food moving through Feeding America food banks. Food banks combine TEFAP with private donations to maximize TEFAP benefits far beyond the budgeted amount for the pro-

gram. In this way, food banks exemplify an optimum model of public-private partnership.

- TEFAP has a strong impact on the farm economy. According to USDA's Economic Research Service, producers of commodities provided as bonus TEFAP (those purchased by USDA to intervene in weak agricultural markets) receive an estimated 85¢ per dollar of Federal expenditure. Producers of other commodities provided through TEFAP receive about 27¢ per dollar. By contrast, only about 16¢ of every retail food dollar goes back to the farmer.
- Declines in Section 32 funding and strong agriculture markets resulted in a 30% decline in TEFAP purchases during FY 2011. This decline is expected to continue in FY 2012 as food banks continue struggling to meet increased need. The shortfall between supply and demand will only worsen when the SNAP ARRA benefit boost expires, as many participants turn to food banks to make up for the reduction in benefit levels.

Farm Bill Priorities for TEFAP:

- Make mandatory funding for TEFAP food more responsive to changes in need by providing a trigger that ties funding to unemployment levels
- Enhance Secretary of Agriculture's authority to purchase bonus commodities in times of high need for emergency food relief in addition to times of low commodity prices so the program is responsive both to excess supply and excess demand
- Reauthorize funding for TEFAP Storage and Distribution Funds at \$100 million per year
- Reauthorize funding for TEFAP Infrastructure Grants at \$15 million per year

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP): SNAP is the cornerstone of the nutrition safety net, providing over 46 million low-income participants with monthly benefits via a grocery debit card. Eligibility is based on household income and assets and is subject to work and citizenship requirements. SNAP is one of the most responsive safety net programs, expanding quickly to meet rising need during the recession. The program is targeted at our most vulnerable; 76% of SNAP households contain a child, senior, or disabled member, and 84% of all benefits go to these households.

- As the number of people unemployed grew 110% from 2007 to 2010, SNAP responded with a 53% increase in participation over the same period. As the economy slowly recovers and unemployment begins to fall, SNAP participation and costs too can be expected to decline.
- The SNAP accuracy rate of 96.19% (FY10) is an all-time program high. SNAP error rates declined by 61% from FY 1999 to FY 2010, from 9.86% to a record low of 3.81%.
- SNAP benefits supplement a household's food budget but are insufficient to last most participants through the month, causing many participants to rely regularly on food banks. Among Feeding America food pantry clients receiving SNAP benefits, over ½ (58%) reported having visited a food pantry at least 6 months or more during the prior year.
- The average SNAP household has a gross monthly income of \$731 and countable resources of \$333, consists of 2.2 persons, and participates in the program for 9 months. The average household receives a monthly benefit of \$287, or about \$1.49 per person per meal.

Farm Bill Priorities for SNAP:

- Protect SNAP by opposing proposals to cap or reduce funding, restrict eligibility, reduce benefits, or otherwise impede access or benefit adequacy. Recent proposals to block grant the program would prevent it from responding effectively to fluctuations in need, and efforts to limit broad based categorical eligibility would increase administrative costs and access barriers.
- Restore the cut to the SNAP ARRA benefit boost used to pay for the 2010 child nutrition bill and phase out the boost in a way that protects families from a cliff in benefit levels.
- Encourage better nutrition by maintaining nutrition education, incentivizing the purchase of healthy foods, and ensuring that retailer standards balance adequate access to stores with access to a range of healthy foods and moderate prices.
- Build on SNAP's strong record of integrity and payment accuracy by issuing guidance to states on the eligibility of lottery winners and college students and upgrading resources and technology for trafficking prevention.

Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP): CSFP leverages government buying power to provide nutritious food packages to approximately 599,000 low income people each month. Nearly 97 percent of program participants are seniors with incomes of less than 130% of the poverty line (approximately \$14,000 for a senior living alone). Currently, 39 states and the District of Columbia participate in CSFP. Another six states (CT, HI, ID, MD, MA, & RI) have USDA-approved plans, but have not yet received appropriations to begin service.

- CSFP is an efficient and effective program. While the cost to USDA to purchase commodities for this package of food is about \$20 per month, the average retail value of the foods in the package is \$50.
- CSFP helps to combat the poor health conditions often found in seniors who are experiencing food insecurity and at risk of hunger. CSFP food packages, specifically designed to supplement nutrients typically lacking in participants' diets like protein, iron, and zinc, can play an important role in addressing the nutrition needs of low-income seniors.
- Many seniors participating in CSFP are able to have their food boxes delivered directly to their homes or to seniors' centers nearby, an important benefit for those who are homebound, have limited mobility or do not have convenient access to a grocery store.

Farm Bill Priorities for CSFP:

- Transition CSFP to a seniors-only program by phasing out eligibility of women, infants, and children while grandfathering in current participants.

SOUTHERN ARIZONA FOOD BANK LETTER

I am a [fill in the blank] of the Community Food Bank of Southern Arizona. Right now, many families in our community are struggling. With increased demand for emergency food assistance, high food and gas prices, and declines in TEFAP commodities—a major source of the food we distribute—our food bank is having difficulty meeting the needs of our community. We need a strong farm bill to make sure that struggling families can put food on the table. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP. Our community cannot afford cuts to these programs. If you are looking for a source of funding to offset the cost of these programs I suggest you stop playing politics and start earning your pay. The best way to pay for essential services is through taxation. Stop cutting taxes and start raising the revenue needed to fund essential services before it is too late . . .

A					
William Abraham	(Supporter)	Cassie Alegria	(Supporter)	Jetana Allison	(Supporter)
Lucy M. Almasy	(Supporter)	Grace Aranda	(Supporter)	Deirdre Avery	(Supporter)
B					
Bobby Baxter	(Supporter)	Barbara Beach	(Volunteer)	David Benton	(Supporter)
Maureen Bike	(Supporter)	Timothy Bolen	(Employee)	Scott Brill	(Supporter)
Robert Brooks	(Supporter)	Dorothy Bruce	(Supporter)	Rosalva A. Bullock	(Supporter)
Carol Burgess	(Supporter)	Margo Burwell	(Volunteer)	Carol Buuck	(Supporter)
C					
William Carnegie	(Employee)	Megan Carver	(Supporter)	Jessica Castillo	(Employee)
Patrick Chaisson	(Supporter)	Tim Challis	(Supporter)	John Chambers	(Volunteer)
Connie Clark	(Supporter)	Dan Cole	(Supporter)	Dena Cowan	(Supporter)
D					
Nicollette Daly	(Supporter)	Sarah A. Danielson	(Supporter)	Laura Dickerson	(Supporter)
Arthur Dixon	(Supporter)	Keri Dixon	(Supporter)	Deborah Dobson	(Supporter)
E					
Alice Eager	(Supporter)	Bess Edmunds	(Supporter)	Judy Elder	(Supporter)
Pamela Endicott	(Employee)	David Engelsberg	(Supporter)		
F					
Dick Fisher	(Supporter)	Scott Forrer	(Supporter)	Dale Free	(Supporter)
Sherry Fritz	(Supporter)				
G					
Susan Gamble	(Supporter)	Patricia Gehlen	(Supporter)	Ruth Gray	(Supporter)

H, I & K			
Hilary Hamlin (Supporter)	Nicole Hampton (Supporter)	Sara Hastings (Supporter)	
Kristen Hershberger (Supporter)	Karen Heyse (Supporter)	Hannah Holik (Supporter)	
Rachel Holik (Supporter)	Lou Hummel (Supporter)	Sandra Hummel (Supporter)	
Martha Hunter (Donor)	Lauri Israel (Supporter)	Donna Kaniss (Supporter)	
Molly Kent (Supporter)	Robert Kleban (Supporter)	Gene Kraay (Volunteer)	
L			
Albert Lannon (Supporter)	Antonia Lauterio (Supporter)	Sam Levitz (Supporter)	
Marco Liu (Employee)	Patricia Long (Supporter)	Anne Lopez (Supporter)	
Carrel Loveless (Donor)			
M			
Andrea Mannell (Supporter)	David Marshall (Supporter)	Katy McAllister (Supporter)	
Kord McDaris (Supporter)	Luke McDaris (Supporter)	Samuel McGaha (Supporter)	
Deborah McMullen (Supporter)	Amy Mellor (Intern)	Leah Mercer (Supporter)	
John E. Miller (Supporter)	Randy Montgomery (Supporter)	Nicholas Moran (Donor)	
Sarah More (Supporter)	Mo Moslem (Supporter)	Sally Myers (Supporter)	
N			
Desika Narayanan (Supporter)			
P			
Joan Patch (Supporter)	Lois Pawlak (Supporter)	Clayton Phillips (Supporter)	
Kent Phillips (Supporter)	Mark Phillips (Supporter)	Sandra Phillips (Supporter)	
Zach Phillips (Supporter)	Terry Plapp-Frank (Supporter)	Jane Prinz (Donor)	
Q & R			
John Quillen (Supporter)	Joseph Ramirez (Supporter)	Michael Reinschmidt (Supporter)	
Bill Rimmel (Supporter)	ElizaBeth Root (Supporter)	Mary Ann Rosas (Supporter)	
Barbara Rose (Supporter)	Elizabeth Rosenblatt (Supporter) ((Volunteer) (Deacons' Food Pantry))		
S			
Nancy Scholtz (Supporter)	Richard Sexton (Supporter)	Eve Shapiro (Supporter)	
Alisa Z. Shorr (Supporter)	Terry Shreve (Supporter)	Natanya Siegel (Supporter)	
Douglas Smith (Supporter)	Chester Squire (Supporter)	Sharlene Stager (Supporter)	
Elias Stratigouleas (Supporter)	Juan Suarez (Supporter)	Helen Swanson (Supporter)	
T & U			
Aileen Thatcher (Supporter)	Cecily Urizar-Faught (Supporter)		
W & Y			
Colleen Wallace (Employee)	Rebecca Werner (Supporter)	Susan Willis (Supporter)	
Claudia Wright (Supporter)	Janay Young (Supporter)		

SPRINGFIELD FAMILY CENTER

Name: Stephanie Gibson, Executive Director.

Comment: My name is Stephanie Gibson and I am the Executive Director at the Springfield Family Center in Springfield, Vermont.

I want to make a point to share with you support of the farm bill.

With traditional food streams declining, we continue to find it difficult to meet the needs of our community, despite the slow but continued improvement of the economy.

We need a strong farm bill to make sure that we can put food on the table for those that are still struggling.

At a time when we need to be able to offer the safety-net emergency services the most, that is when it seems we get the least support.

I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP. These programs are a lifeline to the many people struggling with hunger in my community and your State, and I urge you make them a priority in the next farm bill.

I invite you to visit our organization, talk with our clients and see first hand the real struggles we are facing every day.

Best,
STEPHANIE GIBSON,
Executive Director,
Springfield Family Center,
[Redacted],
Springfield, VT 05156.

[Redacted].

ST. EDWARD FOOD PANTRY

Name: Anita Fein.

Comment: Please do not cut or touch items like SNAP or TEFAP! These are very important to help us with our struggles to feed families in need. These are not frivolous items and are very important as we try our best to help the hungry. In large cities, such as NYC, we need this. With the economy still not what it used to be, our numbers have surged to record levels. Wages are not keeping up with surging prices for housing, medical, utilities and transportation expenses. Please help us and do not make the cuts that will hurt more people than you realize!

ST. LOUIS AREA FOODBANK

Name: Ryan Farmer.

Comment: Hunger is a national problem. Please protect programs like TEFAP and SNAP.

ST. MARTIN'S FOOD PANTRY

Name: Charlaine McAnany.

Comment: Please leave SNAP money alone. We still have so many people hungry as seen by St. Martin's Food Pantry and the Oak Park, River Forest Food Pantry's increased clientele.

ST. PETER'S FOOD PANTRY

Name: Julie Scott.

Comment: I am the Overall Pantry Coordinator for St. Peter's Food Pantry in Phoenixville, PA. Our pantry is run 100% on assistance from our government as well as donations of food and money from our community. Our pantry continues to see new clients every week who need our assistance to feed themselves and their families. Feeding our neighbors is a public-private partnership, and my team of volunteers are doing our part and we want our government to do its part. Cutting anti-hunger programs will increase hunger in America, as well as the associated health care, educational, and economic costs of food insecurity and poor nutrition. Please remember the families who are struggling in our community, and we urge you to protect and strengthen important anti-hunger programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP in the 2012 Farm Bill reauthorization. Thank you for your consideration.

ST. VINCENT DE PAUL—OUR LADY QUEEN OF PEACE CHURCH

Name: Sheila M. Rust.

Comment: Please pass the agriculture bill to feed more Americans and helping the needy. I am one of them. I work at St. Vincent De Paul at Our Lady Queen Of Peace Church in New Port Richey Florida and also help with Feeding America. There are many, many hungry and needy people in Pasco county that need our help. There are many who are still unemployed and have used all the unemployment available to them that aren't counted in the amount of people on unemployment so it looks like there are less on unemployment but it is because they can no longer get it and are still not working. Many people are homeless or living in a home they bought and it is in foreclosure. We the people need help! Please help us!

Sincerely,
SHEILA M. RUST

ST. VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY FOOD PANTRY

Name: Alejandro Concha.

Comment: St. Vincent de Paul Society has a Food Pantry in Homestead, Fl. Each week, on Saturdays, from 8 to 10 a.m. or until we ran out of food, we provide food directly to more than 250 families. I would like to invite you to come and visit us when we are distributing food for the hungry. I am an older American and a volunteer to fight hunger in America.

STEVENS COUNTY

Name: Ruth Vetsch, Director.

Comment: I am the director of a small food bank in Stevens County. Even though we are small the food is drastically needed. The assistance for energy is vital to folks in this area. We earn our own funding however we really need whatever comes down the line from the State and other sources. If you close this avenue of

assistance you will see an increase in the crime rates. People will feed their kids one way or another. Think about this very carefully, please.

TEXAS

Comment: I am a [fill in the blank] of Feeding America and our local food bank in [fill in the blank]. We need to have a strong farm bill to help put food on the table for America's vulnerable population, such as children, the elderly, and low income families. Feeding and nourishing our needy population should be a number 1 priority, I feel success starts there for a person and a community. Please put together and pass a farm bill that will preserve and strengthen programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP. Feeding programs are absolutely vital to our foundation of our country.

Thank you,

Georgia Crump	(Supporter)	Jossie J. Fowler	(Supporter)
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THE FOOD BANK OF WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS

Name: Andrew Morehouse, Executive Director.

Comment: I am the executive director at The Food Bank of Western Massachusetts. With traditional food streams declining, we continue to find it difficult to meet the needs of our community, despite the improvement of the economy. We need a strong farm bill to make sure that we can put food on the table for those that are still struggling. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like TEFAP, SNAP, EFSP and WIC. These programs are a lifeline to the 112,000 people struggling with hunger in your district, and I urge you to make them a priority in the next farm bill.

THE FOODBANK, INC.

Name: Deborah Combs.

Comment: I am an employee of The Foodbank, Inc. in Dayton, Ohio. Right now, many families in our community are struggling. With increased demand for emergency food assistance, high food and gas prices, and declines in TEFAP commodities—a major source of the food we distribute—our food bank is having difficulty meeting the needs of our community. We need a strong farm bill to make sure that struggling families can put food on the table. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP. Our community cannot afford cuts to these programs.

THE GREATER PITTSBURGH COMMUNITY FOOD BANK

Name: Robert Bilas.

Comment: I am actively involved in the public/private partnership of solving the hunger problem in the U.S. and do my part by donating money and food to local and national food banks (Feeding America and The Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank). I would also like the Federal Government to do its part by reauthorizing and strengthening the SNAP, TEFAP and CSFP/Senior Boxes programs.

The Federal Government will make the problem of hunger worse if it cuts programs like these. There are millions of Americans who depend upon these programs for basic food needs. These are NOT luxury items; they are necessities in many cases to the millions of families struggling in today's bad economic conditions. Cuts to these programs will increase hunger and cause additional problems in health, education and other areas.

I urge the House Agriculture Committee to renew and strengthen these programs when it considers the 2012 Farm Bill.

THE MIGRANT FARMWORKERS PROJECT

Name: Paul Snyder, Food Pantry Supervisor.

Comment: I am the Food Pantry Supervisor at The Migrant Farmworkers Project. With traditional food streams declining, we continue to find it difficult to meet the needs of our community, despite the improvement in the economy. We need a strong nutrition title in the farm bill to make sure that we can put food on the table for those who are still struggling. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP. These programs are a lifeline to the thousands of people struggling with hunger in your district, and I urge you to make them a priority in the next farm bill.

THE MILTON FAMILY COMMUNITY CENTER

Name: Cheryl Alwine, Food Shelf Manager.

Comment: I am the Food Shelf Manager at The Milton Family Community Center in Milton Vermont. With traditional food streams declining, we continue to find it difficult to meet the needs of our community, despite the improvement of the economy. We need a strong farm bill to make sure that we can put food on the table for those that are still struggling. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP. These programs are a lifeline to the many people struggling with hunger in your district, and I urge you make them a priority in the next farm bill.

THE SALVATION ARMY

Name: Janet Charleston, Food Pantry Manager.

Comment: I manage a food pantry at The Salvation Army and I see the demand growing all the time. I feel that because of the prices of other items such as gas and housing and utility and not getting enough or any food stamps and other government programs they have increased their use of pantries in their area. This is not going to change unless the cost of living improves. So programs such as SNAP CSFP and TEFAP need to be stronger programs not diminished programs. I hope your committee will really look at the amount of need around all our communities. I am only speaking for the issues in Lake County, In but I am sure it is the same in any city, county or state in this country. Please do the right thing and strengthen these programs and give our Food Bank as well as our at risk families better programs.

THE SALVATION ARMY EAST CHICAGO CORPS

Name: Capt. Daniel Paredes.

Comment: I am a Captain Daniel Paredes of The Salvation Army East Chicago Corps in East Chicago. We run a Food Pantry and a Feeding Program. As our Congress District Representative you may know that our families in our community are struggling. The income level in East Chicago is lower than the U.S. poverty income level. With increased demand for emergency food assistance, high food and gas prices, and declines in TEFAP commodities—a major source of the food we distribute—our food bank is having difficulty meeting the needs of our community. We need a strong farm bill to make sure that struggling families can put food on the table. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP. Our community cannot afford cuts to these programs.

THE SHARING CENTER

Name: Tonia Vogel.

Comment: I am an EMPLOYEE of The Sharing Center. Right now, many families in our community are struggling. With increased demand for emergency food assistance, high food and gas prices, and declines in TEFAP commodities—a major source of the food we distribute—our food bank is having difficulty meeting the needs of our community. We need a strong farm bill to make sure that struggling families can put food on the table. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP. Our community cannot afford cuts to these programs.

TREASURE COAST FOOD BANK

Comment: As an [fill in the blank] of Treasure Coast Food Bank, I am writing to share my concern about hunger in Florida. With unemployment still high and many Americans still struggling to make ends meet, anti-hunger programs are helping many of our neighbors just put food on the table.

Nearly 50 million Americans are living in food insecurity. While food banks, churches, and pantries are doing great work in our community, charity alone cannot meet the need for food assistance. Feeding our neighbors is a public-private partnership.

Congress should do its part by continuing to support anti-hunger programs like the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), and the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP), all of which are authorized in the farm bill.

Cutting anti-hunger programs will increase hunger in America. Given the associated health care and educational costs of hunger and poor nutrition, cuts to anti-hunger programs are short-sighted.

I ask you to please remember the families who are struggling in our country, and urge you to protect and strengthen important anti-hunger programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP in the 2012 Farm Bill re-authorization. Thank you.

Mary Carlucci	(Employee)	Krista Garofalo	(Employee)
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TRI-KO, INC.

Name: Sarah Lamb, Vocational Instructor.

Comment: I am a Vocational Instructor at Tri-Ko, INC. With traditional food streams declining, we continue to find it difficult to meet the needs of our community, despite the improvement in the economy. We need a strong nutrition title in the farm bill to make sure that we can put food on the table for those who are still struggling. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP. These programs are a lifeline to the thousands of people struggling with hunger in your district, and I urge you to make them a priority in the next farm bill.

TUCSON COMMUNITY FOOD BANK

Comment: We are [fill in the blank] of the Tucson community we are ardent supporters of the Tucson Food Bank. With an increasing demand for emergency food we need positive votes on the farm bill. With an increasing need for emergency food and declines in TEFAP—a major source of our food distribution—our food bank is having a difficult time meeting the needs of our community.

We encourage you to not cut spending for the programs—SNAP, TEFAP and CSFB—and increase the benefits.

Thank you.

Lee Olitzky	(Supporter)	Larry & Carol Noon	(Supporters)
Diane Wilson	(Supporter)		

VENTURA COUNTY FOOD BANK

Name: Fran McNeill, Program Officer.

Comment: As a resident of Camarillo, one of your constituents, and the Program Officer at Ventura County's Food Bank, I urge you to support a strong farm bill that protects vital food programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP. Many of our children, families, and seniors are hungry and forced to choose between food and medicine, rent, transportation to look for or keep their jobs. Food is the most basic need and cutting these programs when hunger is at an all time high is not the way to balance the budget. I urge you to make these programs a priority in the next farm bill.

VERMONT FOODBANK

Comment: In Vermont, we struggle with hunger—14% of our residents are at risk of not having enough food to meet basic needs. One-third of people seeking charitable food assistance have children in their household—it adds up to 21% of our children living in food insecure households. To purchase the food needed to close the meal gap each year would cost over \$41 million dollars. We are trying many innovative solutions to address our hunger issues, from improving charitable food systems to combating root causes of hunger.

I am a [fill in the blank] of the Vermont Foodbank, in helping organize their largest fundraiser. While our event is successful, it is not enough for the demand in the state. Right now, 1 in 7 Vermonters is struggling with hunger. With increased demand for emergency food assistance, high food and gas prices, and declines in TEFAP commodities—a major source of the food we distribute—the Vermont Foodbank is having difficulty meeting the needs of our community. We need a strong farm bill to make sure that struggling families can put food on the table. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP. Our community cannot afford cuts to these programs.

Thank you!

Jessica Cox	(Supporter)	Jennifer Hutchinson	(Employee)
Helen Labun Jordan	(Supporter)	Theresa McCabe	(Supporter)
Alan Scocca	(Supporter, Employee)	Judy Stermer	(Employee)
Michelle Wallace	(Employee)	Donna Watts	(Employee)

VIRGINIA

Name: Judy Sperka.

Comment: As a local food bank volunteer and supporter, I am alarmed by the growing number of food insecure families in our area. Mostly employed but still unable to afford adequate food, these children need our help. Please continue to support and fund SNAP and other food programs. Thank you.

WASHINGTON

Name: Ann O. Jackson.

Comment: Dear Representative Reichert,

Please support the portions of the farm bill that feed the hungry through TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP. I support our local food banks who are experiencing increasing demands and ask that you speak for support of these programs.

Sincerely,

ANN O. JACKSON.

WCSI

Name: Beth Barchesky.

Comment: I am an employee of WCSI. Right now, many families in our community are struggling. With increased demand for emergency food assistance, high food and gas prices, and declines in TEFAP commodities—a major source of the food we distribute—our food bank is having difficulty meeting the needs of our community. We need a strong farm bill to make sure that struggling families can put food on the table. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP. Our community cannot afford cuts to these programs.

WESTMORELAND COUNTY FOOD BANK

Comment: I am a [fill in the blank] of Westmoreland County Community Foodbank (Pa). Right now, many families in our community are struggling. With increased demand for emergency food assistance, high food and gas prices, and declines in TEFAP commodities—a major source of the food we distribute—our food bank is having difficulty meeting the needs of our community. We need a strong farm bill to make sure that struggling families can put food on the table. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP. Our community cannot afford cuts to these programs.

Stephanie Anderson	(Supporter)	Crystal Byerly	(Supporter)
Joe Canada	(Volunteer)	Joseph Canada	(Supporter)
Julie Cawoski	(Supporter)	Rick Claypool	(Supporter)
Richard Greco	(Supporter)	Shirley Hoke	(Supporter)
Valerie LaBella	(Supporter)	Amber Luther	(Supporter)
Sara Perman	(Supporter)	Eve Roha	(Supporter)
Katherine Sam	(Supporter)	Taska Smola	(Supporter)
Texie Waddell	(Employee)	Lynda Warren	(Supporter)

WILLING PARTNERS, INC.

Comment: I am the [fill in the blank] in Galax. We operate a thrift store and a food bank for residents of Carroll and Grayson Counties and the City of Galax. With traditional food streams declining, we continue to find it difficult to meet the needs of our community, despite the publicized improvement of the economy. We need a strong farm bill to make sure that we can put food on the table for those that are still struggling. I ask that you pass a farm bill that protects and strengthens programs like TEFAP, SNAP, and CSFP. These programs are a lifeline to the southwest Virginia people struggling with hunger in your district, and I urge you to make them a priority in the next farm bill.

Ted Bartlett	President	John Cooley	Technical Assistant
Kathy Cooley	Office Manager	Dorothy Crouse	Cashier
Judy Hackler	Sales	Doris Hamm	Cashier
Jacky Hamm	Service & Delivery Worker	Carol J. Medley	Vice President
Weldon Utt	Service & Delivery Worker	Mark Vaughan	Delivery & Service Worker

WINSTON-SALEM

Name: Amanda Schroeder.

1601

Comment: In North Carolina, 1 in 6 citizens do not know where their next meal is coming. Programs like SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP play an important role in keeping our Nation strong and healthy. Every day I see families, children, and seniors struggling to put food on their table. I urge you to pass a strong farm bill to protect SNAP, TEFAP, and CSFP Programs so the citizens in our well-developed country will not go hungry.