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From: Ed Fashing, VP-Communications American Agriculture Movement
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The first forum will be July 7th in Nashville, TN. It is live on RFD TV [Ch. 379] 6:00 to 10:00 pm CDT.

Six topics will be used to frame the comments, they are:

1. How should farm policy be designed to maximize U.S. competitiveness and to effectively compete in world markets?

USDA has as its main mission to protect markets, income, and rights of U.S. farmers and ranchers. The USTR with the advise of USDA employees, agricultural attaches, has deemed it necessary to bargain away the markets, income and rights of U.S. farmers and ranchers for the protection of media producers, agribusiness, and multinational corporations protecting seed patents, electronic patents, Hollywood copyrights, and intellectual rights for printed and other materials.

Amazingly recent cases have demonstrated that many countries especially China and Mexico have not even honored these important bargained away items.

Imports should be limited to products American producers cannot easily supply.

2. How should farm policy address any unintended consequences and to ensure that such consequences do not discourage new farmers from entering production-agriculture.

A recent Supreme Court action demonstrated the seizure and socialization of property by the extension of eminent domain beyond what is good for a local community to what is good for big businesses, elites, and government income derived from taxes. This is in keeping with actions by USDA, the Forest Service, in the West in the Klamath River area and crass disregard for fire safety for personal property found within the nations National Parks and similar areas. These actions demonstrate contempt for property and riparian rights in the name of the environment and following the wishes of extremist environmental NGOs.

The initial cost for getting into farming or ranching is in the hundreds of thousands of dollars in most areas for commodity production. The projected profits to new farmers and ranchers for such a venture is essentially a few dollars per hour worked; this is a deterrent to most young persons, who often subsequently decide to work for agribusiness, join the military, or to move off the farm to urban areas.

3. How should farm policy be designed to effectively and fairly? distribute assistance to producers?

Listen to farm organizations that get ideas from the bottom up membership rather than only elite controlled "farm" organizations that are controlled from the top down. A farm council should be of ranchers and farmers; not only executives of big agribusiness should sit on this council. Many producers are highly educated by university and the school of hard-knocks.

4. How can farm policy best achieve conservation and environmental goals?

Farmers and ranchers are the first environmentalists. They should be also listened to rather than urban planners who have become environmentalists trying to implement UN Agenda 21 and the Kyoto

Agreement, which has not even been passed by the U.S. Senate.

Wooded areas have been set aside for the spotted owl when none have been seen there in decades. Rogue environmentalists have been caught planting hairs of bears. Extremist environmentalists have committed arson to burn out "invaders to wooded areas" and SUVs that consume massive amounts of fuel.

5. How can Federal rural and farm programs provide effective assistance in rural areas.

Pass USDA regulations early enough so farmers can plan for the next crop year.

Once laws like COOL have been passed USDA should not lobby to change the implementation date or prevent proper funding of unpopular parts of the "farm bill" to big agribusiness as have been done in the past.

The handling of the second BSE cow case from Texas, seven months late, shows the undo influence of the packers in USDA actions.

According to a report from the University of Missouri by Drs. Bill Heffernan and Mary Hendrickson 26 corporations control 12 markets-this should be prevented by regulations. This has returned the beef industry to the situation of a century ago in the agricultural sector. Upton Sinclair's description of the meat packing industry as described in "The Jungle" has risen from the dead.

The Average of commodities' prices compared to the 1910-1914 Parity levels of commodities is now less than 50%.

6. How should agricultural product development, marketing and research-related issues be addressed in the next farm bill?

USDA should listen less to the packing, pharmaceutical, chemical and agribusiness industries and listen more to ideas from the American Agriculture Movement and other small and medium production farmers' organizations. USDA should care less for factory farms' protection and care more for family farmers.

The whole idea of an international level playing field is bogus and destined to make world farmers lose control of individual countries' food production. Free Trade Agreements are, as presently structured, unfair to American workers, small businesses, farmers and ranchers. A country that cannot produce its own food is a country controlled by foreign corporations or countries. One factor in the American Revolution was the loss of control of the Colonies' raw materials and over taxation by agencies similar in function to the World Bank, International Monetary system and a world dominating British Empire similar to the projected end of the United Nations as seen by one-worlders.

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