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Question1: Land use policy appears to be a big issue. A number of farmers in central Minnesota say that they can make more by dividing their land into 5 acre homesites and selling them rather than continue farming the land. This practice really wastes good land and presents a ton of problems for service providers, roads, fire protection, wildlife, schools, etc.

Perhaps there could be incentives in the farm bill to keep farm land for farming and not inefficient housing plots.

Question2: Continue to support agricultural product research. Over the years the University of Minnesota has developed new strains, new varieties, etc. that has improved yields, resisted insects, better nutrition, etc. This research takes years of development in many cases. We dare not lose our research edge in agricultural products.

Question3: This is a tough issue, but perhaps there could be a way to offer incentives to smaller growers and those who use sustainable farming methods. Given our current energy dilemma I believe we need to coordinate the farm and energy bills. It is clear that we need to place greater emphasis on renewable fuels and reduce our dependence on oil as a fuel source. It is time to take a rational, subjective look at our energy crisis and develop local solutions, rather than depend on foreign oil.

Question4: Natural resource stewardship should be an absolute when designing the farm bill. It is contradictory to ignore conservation and environmental goals in the farm bill and then face clean-up of waterways by passing a Clean Water bill. In my opinion this is one and the same problem. We need a coordinated effort. CRP, CREP, buffer zones, wetland protection, etc are good for our land, people and wildlife. We need to keep natural resource stewardship as a key component of the farm bill.

Almost nothing is more essential than clean water. We can have clean water by returning to nature's way of cleaning water, wetlands, bank cover along streams and rivers, reducing development along waterways, etc. Yes we will need sewage and water treatment plants, but it is much more efficient to go the natural route.

Question5: Helping to keep farming profitable and not place farmers in the position whereby it makes more financial sense to subdivide land for low density housing.

Question6: This should be a vital part of the farm bill. Agricultural product development is done primarily at research universities. They must have proper funding. Value added products, new crops and new uses for agriculture products will not keep pace unless we have high caliber research and development.

The bill should focus heavily on renewable energy, as we have reached the breaking point on oil prices in our country. Agriculture should be

looked to for help in reducing our dependence on oil. It appears to be a win-win situation.