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Subject: Farm Bill 2007 Official Comments - 07/27/2005 09:27 AM CDT
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Question1:

Question2:

Question3:

Question4: The USDA has traditionally had a "one-size fits all" mindset when it comes to their farm programs. One size does not fit all. Here in SW Wisconsin we have the very unique topography of hills and valleys, which does NOT lend itself to planting continuous corn and soybeans. However, corn and soybeans is "where it's at" for the farmer to receive the biggest share of farm bill commodity payments. Why is that? What is wrong with having different commodity programs for different areas of the country? Other parts of the country can plant continuous corn and soybeans without erosion problems. We can't. We're in MLRA 105, the driftless area of the country and we're losing more tons of soil down the Mississippi River than you can imagine. The compliance program is effective, but the new soil loss equation (RULLE II) allows more soil loss in our part of the country than we can afford PLUS we don't have the staff to catch and fix everyone's erosion problems. We NEED to begin thinking about paying OUR farmers in this part of the country for the "green" they have in their fields - waterways, headlands, buffer strips and the occasional contour strips. Make the payments comparable to what they could receive if they were growing continuous corn and soybeans and help CLEAN up our streams and most of all the Mississippi River and the hypoxic zone. MLRA 105 has a Driftless Area Initiative started to try to protect the Mississippi. This initiative is organized and includes WI, IA, MN and IL, but needs money to assist the farmers to install conservation practices. Wouldn't it be good if we could initiate a "green" program and compliment it with cost sharing through EQIP and other federal programs. Now THAT would be lining the pockets of our rural farmers and not big business.

Question5: Enlist the assistance of the RC&D's. They're already in place and under the proper guidance, they would excel at providing whatever programs were available to rural areas. They are good at educating about diversity on the rural farm and sustainable ag., plus there're informed about the Farm Bill programs.

Question6: