

From: "bmjnj@ictc.com%inter2" <bmjnj@ictc.com>
Subject: 2007 Farm Bill comments
Date Sent: 07/25/2005 05:07:31 CDT
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Dear Secretary Johanns:

Thank you for providing an opportunity to provide public comment on the development of the 2007 Farm Bill. As a consumer, a rural community member and an independent consultant working with a variety of farm organizations in North Dakota, I am very interested in the development of effective conservation programs, as well as the protection of the environment. I strongly support farm programs that provide incentives for all farmers to incorporate, or at the very least try, new conservation practices on their farms.

One of the major obstacles for farmers in participating in conservation programs is the complexity of program regulations. Farmers are willing to participate in conservation programs, such as the Conservation Security Program. However, when the rules are issued, the complexity of the regulations prohibits farmers from even considering the programs. Also, the incentive payments need to be considerable enough to encourage farmers to consider alternative practices and help cover the economic risk of implementing new conservation practices.

Programs need to be flexible and provide multiple options for addressing individual farm problem areas. The best way to accomplish this is to have knowledgeable, local decision-makers with authority to oversee these programs. A one-size-fits-all approach to conservation programs does not serve farmers well. I encourage you to develop programs, which use the already established NRCS locally-led process.

Finally, I encourage you to seek out innovative ways to encourage farmers to conserve our natural resources. The Conservation Security Program is one innovative approach to policy. I encourage you to continue incorporate programs that support organic and sustainable agricultural practices as well. These are growing agricultural markets, which should not be neglected.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,

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