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Question1: Avoid policies that link a payment to the land. A payment made to management places the value center on the farmer and their experience, and not the land. This should help to reduce the rapid rise in land prices and make access to new farmers easier.

Question2: To be honest, at the rate we are going, Brazil is going to bury us. As a farmer, I have increasingly left the commodity markets and moved to direct sales. I just have trouble seeing a future where a broad base of family farms can exist selling into commodity markets.

Question3: Once again, farm programs should be linked with farm management. Linking farm payments to production takes the focus from the farmer and on the land and what it can be utilized for. This has hurt grazing operations which are forced to exist on land that is not suitable for crops. Linking payments to management and not to production or specific crops could open the door to crop diversification and could help reduce our massive grain surpluses that get dumped into foreign markets.

Question4: This seems like a step in the right direction. Many of these tangible benefits can be tied to farmer management. In the instance of rotational grazing and continuous grazing. The management on farm puts into his rotational grazing operation allows for better forage utilization, better wildlife habitat, and in many cases better water quality.

Question5: It seems like much of the loss in rural communities is tied with value-added processing which brought more money into the community. This money would stay in the community and have a multiplier effect that is not present today. Grains go to the elevator and leave (if they even go through the elevator anymore). To get more rural development, I think the necessary change is to diversify our production. Commodity programs that encourage a one or two crop system, don't harbor small dispersed processing, they encourage large scale centralized processing. This centralized processing means fewer dollars in rural communities.

Question6: Maybe one way to encourage diversification would be to allow farmers to diversify their operations from a commodity crop while guaranteeing them the payment they received in a previous commodity production year so many years out into the future, for instance three or five years. This would allow farmers to bear less risk associated with changing their operation from a commodity crop.