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Question1: The effect of govt pmts on land prices as an unintended consequence is overblown. What it reflects is that farming is now profitable. It is the capitalized profit (actually return over variable costs) that affects land rents. Furthermore, farmers are paying the rents and the land values. The market works. As for making entry into agriculture easier, the problem is that the land values are not supported by agriculture. There are development pressures that put land purchases out of reach of beginning farmers. Farming startups are only marginally more difficult now than they have been in the past. If you index land rents on wages, you'll see very little upward trend. However, machinery and other crop input expenses have trended upward even more.
Question2: We need to keep funding ag research at ARS and in our universities. We need to police our trading partners and ensure that they abide by our trade agreements. We need to base our policies on fact, not emotions arising from perceptions of international welfare. We need to integrate energy policy with ag policy to encourage new technology in biofuels.
Question3: The biggest problem with this issue is the misrepresentation of the facts by USDA and others such as the Environmental Working Group. The concentration figures being promoted are not reflective of agriculture because two thirds of the farms included in USDA figures are not farms at all, but are rural residences instead. Any criticism of the current system based on payment concentration data implies that every farmer should receive an equal share. I don't believe that a part-time farmer with 10 cows should expect as much govt support as a 3000 acre cotton opperation. Recalculating concentration ratios over actual working farms, accounting for share rental arrangements to take landlords out of the mix of farms, and dividing by actual partners in a farming operation provides different concentration figures. I did this in our county. Where the EWG says that the payment concentration is 10% of the farms get 76% of the payments, recalculation among actual farmers results in 10% receiving 20%. Similarly, tightening payment caps will not achieve stated goals of proponents of such policy reform. USDA needs to carefully consider the report of the commission that examined the payment limitations issue. Of particular importance is the prominent roles played by the different ag policy goals. If it is decided that ag payments should be capped, a better way would be to cap LDP payments by production per acre. Only pay LDP on a max of some "average" production level. In good yield years, the amount above average is extra income anyway and doesn't need LDP.
Question4: We have already achieved Tier III in the CSP program. The program is insufficient to provide any substantive farm support, however it is nice to be recognized as good stewards. While the current CSP program is underfunded and essentially a pilot program, current payment limitations of $45,000 per farm are insuffient to get all acres enrolled.

Question5: There needs to be some govt tax incentive to get businesses to relocate to rural areas. The tax incentive should be both for the business and individual income taxes. However, no business will relocate to a rural area without good public services, particularly schools. Therefore, you also need to ensure that rural areas have world class school systems. Additionally, some notion of clustering will have to be developed to get a sufficient number of business relocations and also to attract businesses to support their families.
Question6: Do the research and let the market work.