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Question1: Conservation easements that allow landowners to have tax breaks while ensuring that farmlands will remain in production could be used to subsidize new agriculture operations. Part of the reason why prices are so high is because farmland is fast disappearing, as housing developers are buying up farmland at an alarming rate. Conservation easements would ensure that farmlands were never turned into housing developments.

Question2: Farm policy should be designed to promote and subsidize organic agriculture, as organic food products are highly desirable in many foreign countries. Many nations have barred GMOs in food grown locally and imported, citing concerns over food allergies and contamination of regular crops, while at the same time promoting organic agriculture. GM foods should not be marketed abroad or at home, because there is not enough research to support that these foods are safe.

Question3: The farms that need the most assistance right now are organic farms that do not currently receive any assistance in the form of subsidies. Quality, not quantity, should be the basis for assistance distribution. Small farming operations should receive more than large operations, because they need it more.

Question4: Farm policy should be geared more towards sustainable agriculture that minimizes off-farm inputs in production, reduces or eliminates synthetic fertilizers and pesticides on crops, and forgoes antibiotics and animal byproducts in animal feed. Such production is known to prevent air and water pollution. Conservation easements could again be used to keep natural areas preserved while resulting in tax breaks for landowners.

Question5: Federal rural and farm programs can provide effective assistance in replacing current infrastructure with infrastructure that will allow for sustainable agriculture, whether new technologies or very old ones (sometimes the old ways are best). Better equipment is always needed, and usually very expensive, so any assistance would be appreciated.

Question6: Attention to product quality, organic and specialty crops, value added products and new uses for farm products should all be top priorities and should be fully supported by any new farm policy.