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Question1: My brother and I are wanting to farm in southern Idaho. Our farm is a little small to support two families. We are struggling with how to be able to afford additional land and be able to support our families while trying to pay for the land. Development has raised land prices above what really makes sense economically from a production ag perspective. Some sort of program that would allow younger producers to get a loan at a lower interest rate would help. Better yet would be if there was a way that the USDA could help farm land values to stay in line with the economics of farming.

Question2: Two things would be a big benefit here, in addition to just good marketing practices. One is to find ways to keep transportation and freight costs down. While export wheat prices are a little higher this year than last I'm getting a lower price locally because of freight rates. The second idea is that subsidies need to stay on a level that is comparable to other countries. If other countries are paying their producers then that allows them to sell their produce at a lower price and still stay in business. If our subsidies were reduced or cut while nothing changed in other countries this would really hurt our ability to be competitive in the world market and stay in business.

Question3: The current program of using payment limits and acres of a certain crop to determine an amount of assistance isn't unreasonable.

Question4: Almost all producers try their best to farm in a conservative and environmentally friendly way. The questions comes in what practices they can afford to adopt. Environmentally CRP has been a great program. For it to continue being a program that works for producers the farm bugit will have to make it a priority.

Question5: Economic development outside of farming in rural areas is very important. It helps a whole community by bringing money to the area and jobs. It is something that farm producers can be involved with and help their farm to be more profitable. In addition it allows smaller farms to stay in business if they have this sort of opportunity. If their was a way of helping someone wanting to start a new business idea in a rural area through low interest loans or grants it would help. The program should support ideas that would diversity farm incomes more. In my own case I've been looking into wind turbines. If their was help to make the initial investment in this it would go a long way.

Question6: The usda needs to continue to support all of these. In our area Utah State Unniversity and the Unniversity of Idaho have been very important in variety development. This research is very important. Getting our products marketed at a good price also needs to be accomplished.