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Question1: If we are to have a truly market based economy it seems incongruous to offer capital incentives for any reason to agricultural operations from the government. That is subsidized, socialized, agriculture, not free market, family farm agriculture.

I would like to see the development of community supported local agricultural operations rather than produced trucked from one border to the other. I believe that government programs ought to be developed which will encourage local operations over agro-business operations and that this will give a new generation of farmers hope that they can compete. Currently the cost of staying open is greater than most can bear and the work is too hard to not be rewarded.

Question2: I think the question is not the correct one to ask. Instead I would ask how can we feed our people wholesome food within our own borders. Food grown using sound agricultural practices that minimize the use of petrochemicals, in fact the use of any chemicals, that are naturally occurring in the soil. In addition how can we help the other countries of the world to do the same within their own borders. Rather than trying to capture the entire world's food market, let us try to build local, community supported agricultural economies.

Question3: I am not in favor of distributing assistance to producers with some exception. If a farm operation is truly a farm producing food and has been for some time (like five years) and they are in danger of losing their farm, through no fault of their own, and they are part of a community based local farm system then I would want to support them. I have too many stories from "farmers" who have learned how to use the system to get what they want. This translates directly to money out of my pocket in the form of taxes to provide assistance to level out and stabilize a business when I can find no such stability for myself nor any of those who live around me. If we are going to stabilize and assist the farmers, why not do the same for the local small business owner who employs the largest percentage of our populace. Perhaps then more people would be at work.

Question4: Do not trust in genetically modified organisms as the answer to any food related problems. The only method that is truly effective is the somewhat messy use of organic methods. This is messy in that one must learn to rotate crops properly and use natural soil additives rather than dump more chemicals on over used ground. Farm policy must reward those who take this seriously. Those farmers who are making early investments in the use of natural farm methods are taking a great risk and that is worth supporting. Here is why. They will reduce our dependence on foreign oil. They will increase the biodiversity on their own farms. They are acutely aware of the health of the organisms in their soil and the food they produce is far superior to that grown using artificial methods. Their crops are slightly more expensive, but since these are actually the methods used by farmers throughout the last several centuries, the costs will come down as more practitioners utilize

them. I prefer food without chemicals and grown in a proper substrate that provides the building blocks needed by the plant or animal.

Question5: It is not possible to effectively grow oranges in Oregon, but we can grow great apples and soft wood trees. Even in several of my earlier comments I railed against trucking produce all over the country it is obvious that some must be. If we want to encourage farmers to make their living off the land we must show them that their produce, their work benefits them and not a middle man. More of the money from the sale of their produce must go into their pockets and the federal government could do a lot to ensure that happens. If you want people to work the farms they have to see a benefit in doing the work.

Question6: Our country is blessed with a huge number of very smart, very educated agricultural research scientists. And we have an extension service that can disseminate the information extremely well. Fund them!