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Question1: A major "unintended consequence" of current factory farming methods is the devastation to the environment caused by livestock waste in these huge operations. Farm Policy should be designed to encourage smaller, more environmentally friendly livestock operations that enhance opportunities for local communities and individual farmers, rather than just for large-scale corporations.

Question2: As a nation that operates on a "moral imperative", we need to better enforce animal welfare standards already in place and establish animal welfare standards that are more in line with other developed nations. Consumers in the U.S. and abroad are demanding more humanely raised (and consequently healthier) livestock, as evidenced by the double-digit increases in organic food sales each year. We will be severely limiting our markets, especially in Europe, if we do not address and eliminate some of the more grievous and cruel factory farming practices, such as sow gestation crates, battery cages for laying hens, veal crates, and transporting animals by truck for long periods without food, rest, or water.

Question3: It seems inherently unfair that large corporations are given subsidies that serve primarily to increase profits to shareholders, rather than to implement more humane and environmentally-friendly farming practices. If subsidies in the new Farm Bill were given only to livestock operations with increased humane standards and environmentally-friendly policies, it would level the playing field since family farmers would be better positioned to operate in this way.

Question4: Large-scale industrial farming operations create massive amounts of manure waste that decrease the quality of air and water in communities. The USDA should provide subsidies only to farms that meet strict environmental standards and the Farm Bill should encourage smaller-scale farms more in harmony with the environment and beneficial for family farmers.

Question5: Large-scale livestock operations offer primarily low-wage jobs that do not even enable people to feed their families, and our government is currently subsidizing these operations. US Farm Policy should end subsidies to large-scale operations and provide support for smaller farms that provide a living-wage for their employees and have strict humane and environmental standards.

Question6: The Farm Bill should include funding for research that increases humane standards for animals and marketing to consumers about the benefits of more humane standards. While animal welfare has traditionally been seen as a Democratic issue, I believe it is an issue important to all Americans, because we are just and moral people. A Republican former speech writer for President Bush, Matthew Scully, makes a strong case for decent and humane treatment of our fellow creatures in his book *Dominion: The Power of Man, The Suffering of Animals, and the Call to Mercy*. Scully's book received rave reviews in both conservative and liberal forums, and he recently wrote a cover story entitled "Fear Factories: The Case for Compassionate

Conservatism--for Animals" for the May 23, 2005 issue of The American Conservative. In this article, Scully calls for a Humane Farming Act, which I strongly support. Scully discusses the implications of a Humane Farming Act:

"This reform [Humane Farming Act], a set of explicit federal cruelty statutes with enforcement funding to back it up, would leave us with farms we could imagine without wincing, photograph without prosecution, and explain without excuses. The law would uphold not only the elementary standards of animal husbandry but also of veterinary ethics, following no more complicated a principle than that pigs and cows should be able to walk and turn around, fowl to move about and spread their wings, and all creatures to know the feel of soil and grass and the warmth of the sun. . . They all get to be treated like animals and not as unfeeling machines.

On a date certain, mass confinement, sow gestation crates, veal crates, battery cages, and all such innovations would be prohibited. This will end livestock agriculture's moral race to the bottom and turn the ingenuity of its scientists toward compassionate solutions. It will remove the federal support that unnaturally serves agribusiness at the expense of small farms. And it will shift economies of scale, turning the balance in favor of humane farmers?as those who run companies like Wal-Mart could do right now by taking their business away from factory farms.

In all cases, the law would apply to corporate farmers a few simple rules that better men would have been observing all along: we cannot just take from these creatures, we must give them something in return. We owe them a merciful death, and we owe them a merciful life. And when human beings cannot do something humanely, without degrading both the creatures and ourselves, then we should not do it at all."

-Matthew Scully, former speech writer for President George W. Bush.

I strongly believe that almost all consumers would be willing to pay slightly more for their food if they understood the hidden costs to the animals and our environment behind the so-called cheapest food in the world.