



NORTHERN GUAM SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Farm Bill 2007 Listening Session – Northern Guam SWCD Input/Comments

1. Question: *How should farm policy be designed to maximize U.S. competitiveness and our country's ability to compete effectively in global markets?*

Responses:

- a. Farmland Protection
- b. Incentives and subsidies to farmers to compete competitively
- c. More aggressive in technology development on agricultural production systems, processes and commodities.
- d. Foreign Agricultural Services (FAS) to look into current priorities and identify and prioritize on commodities that could be developed and supported.
- e. Increase support to Pacific territories, specifically at small farm operations (family owned/operated) to address their needs and obstacles, such as farm labor, invasive pests and assistance with processing and exporting potential.
- f. Look into considering soybean or corn crops for bio-fuel and energy alternatives.
- g. Look into eliminating the Jones Act, which at this current time hinders (costly) import/exporting of goods to the territories.

2. Question: *How should farm policy address any unintended consequences and ensure that such consequences do not discourage new farmers and the next generation of farmers from entering production agriculture?*

Responses:

- a. Refocus and emphasis of the importance and value of agriculture and (small) farmers. American Dream, what happened to it?
- b. Threatened and Endangered (T&E) Species Act , as well as other federal regulations, should be managed to reduce obstacles and restrictions to farmlands and agricultural producers.

3. Question: *How should farm policy be designed to effectively and fairly distribute assistance to producers?*

Responses:

- a. Aggressively support and fund Outreach for programs.
- b. Look into increasing participation eligibility of tenant farmers and with leased lands with limited terms (short time requirements).

4. Question: *How could farm policy best achieve conservation and environmental goals?*

Responses:

- a. Re-emphasis of the Conservation Technical Assistance (CTA) program, through USDA-NRCS, in order to provide technical assistance across, as before.
- b. Increase support to states and territories to enhance and increase functionality and presence of SWCD in the communities, in order to strengthen the locally led process in the area of conservation and environmental goals.

5. Question: *How can Federal rural and farm programs provide effective assistance in the rural areas?*

Response:

In the name of Water Quality and Quantity, need to increase watershed program (PL-566) support and implementation, particularly in the territories with limited support historically, in order to address community based projects for water development, protection against drinking water contamination and sewerage.

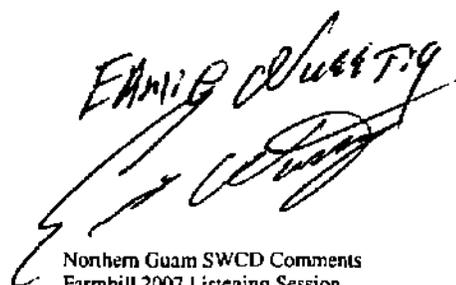
6. Question: *How should these agricultural product, marketing and research –related issues be addressed in the next farm bill?*

Response:

Land Grant Institutions (universities) should be refocused and accountable to local specific projects. Examples are pest and disease eradication, genetic altered tropical crops, market development of crops, farmer cooperative establishment, etc..

Other: Notes to improve on EQIP/WHIP programs.

- a. Allowance for equipment (portable) purchases, where is it more practical for farmer to achieve conservation and/or when necessary for a system to be functional. Examples are irrigation pumps and chipper shredders, etc.
- b. Percentage of money available upfront to the farmer, in order to provide incentive start practice implementation without having to wait until the completion of practice(s).
- c. Allowance for NRCS to pay for advertisement of Farm Bill programs, in order to improve outreach effectiveness.



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