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United States Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary
Washington, D.C. 20250

JAN 17 2006

Mr. Vern F. Highley
Director of Public Affairs
National Watermelon Association
1687 E. Castlebrook Drive
Fresno, California 93720

Dear Mr. Highley:

Thank you for your comments on behalf of the National Watermelon Association concerning the 2007 Farm Bill. We appreciate your sharing your insights and recommendations with us on this important legislation.

Farm Bill issues are and will continue to be a major focus of the Department of Agriculture, and it is good to have the benefit of the Association's collective wisdom and experience in this regard. I assure you that the ideas you have expressed will be given full consideration as the Department develops its proposals for the bill.

Again, thank you for taking the time to share your views.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike Johanns". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mike Johanns
Secretary