



For Immediate Release
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Media Advisory – November 9, 10:30 a.m., Teleconference

Family Farmers, Food Banks, Organic Producers, and Environmental Groups call for Federal Farm Bill that Balances Budget with America's Needs

Coalition urges Ohio Senator Portman and Congressional Supercommittee to adopt fiscally sound Farm Bill that serves needs of America's family farmers, hungry families, organic producers, and soil and water resources

(Columbus, OH) - The Ohio Farmers Union, Association of Second Harvest Food Banks, Ohio Ecological Food and Farm Association, and Ohio Environmental Council are teaming up to urge bold changes federal agriculture policy.

Their goal is to reform the Federal Farm Bill with a fiscally sound bill that will:

- Grow America's agricultural production
- Sustain the basic nutritional needs of the millions of Americans who continue to struggle to put food on the table during the Great Recession
- Nurture America's emerging sector of organic and sustainable agriculture producers
- Conserve America's precious water and soil resources

CALL DATE: Wednesday, November 9, 2011

TIME: 10:30 a.m. (EST)

PHONE: (614) 487-7507. Conference #: 294. Password: 123123.

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The U.S. Farm Bill is an outgrowth of the 1930s Dust Bowl and Great Depression. The Farm Bill originally was designed to accomplish three goals:

1. Help struggling farmers stay on their land.
2. Promote conservation of precious soil and water resources.
3. Help care for the nutrition needs of Americans left jobless by the Depression.

Eight decades following its creation, the Federal Farm Bill has changed dramatically, as has the face of American agriculture. Today, only 2% of Americans actively farm, but their amazing productivity is reliant upon a complex global system of finite supply inputs and an energy-intensive, world-wide distribution network.

The coalition wants to refocus federal agriculture funding on four basic objectives:

1. Agribusiness now controls a larger share of the food dollar than do farmers. Congress should retarget federal farm support toward an efficient safety net for family farmers, rather than multi-national agribusinesses and processors.
2. The Great Recession continues to eat away at the ability of millions of Americans to put good food on the table, creating food deserts in many U. S. cities. Congress must broaden and strengthen basic nutrition programs to meet this basic and growing need.
3. Focusing on sustainable agricultural practices, America could expand the number of farmers on the land, while more efficiently recycling nutrients and preserve and protect traditional rural communities and limited natural resources.
4. As dust storms have reappeared in the Southwest and many waterways are impaired by nutrient and sediment pollution from farm runoff, America should refocus on delivering effective conservation to the American landscape. Linking conservation compliance to federal crop insurance programs will foster stewardship while protecting farmers.

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The mission of the Ohio Environmental Council (OEC) is to secure healthy air, land, and water for all who call Ohio home. The OEC is Ohio's leading advocate for fresh air, clean water, and sustainable land use. The OEC has a 40-year history of innovation, pragmatism, and success. Using legislative initiatives, legal action, scientific principles, and statewide partnerships, the OEC secures a healthier environment for Ohio's families and communities. For more information, visit www.theOEC.org.