



Family Farm Agenda

2010 Spring Issue

From the President by Ben Burkett



Dena Hoff, Ben and Boyce Thorne Miller at NFFC winter meeting

It was a pleasure as well as an honor and privilege to attend the winter meeting of the National Family Farm Coalition, January 30-February 2, 2010, in Washington, D.C. Three Mississippi farmers attended: Daniel Teague, Andre Matthew and myself. I represent the Federation of Southern Cooperatives on the board of directors.

During this meeting I was re-elected for my third term as president. I would like to thank everyone for their trust in me to represent this organization and urge everyone to continue to support our efforts. We as family farmers are facing one of the most challenging times for our enterprises. The high cost of seeds, fertilizer, fuel oil and most farm supplies continue to ebb away at the profits most of the small farmers get.

Although the attendance was not as high as it normally is, the winter meeting was good. The speakers included Tim Wise from Tufts University, Joe Kennedy and Greg Nelson from the White House Office of Public Engagement, and Mark Tobey, U.S. Department of Justice (Antitrust Division). Our allies Farm Aid, Food and Water Watch, WHY Hunger and others were among those who attended. I would also like to thank those who formerly served on the executive committee and welcome our new EC members. In light of the many events taking place this summer, we are looking at having our next board meeting in early fall, and encourage everyone to participate in the various events taking place this summer around the country. I look forward to attending as many meetings of member groups as I can, given prior notice.

Here in the South, our struggle remains; low market prices and the Pigford vs. Glickman lawsuit (better known as the black farmers' lawsuit) are just two of the issues we face. We continue to assist the small farmers and ranchers by providing technical assistance and information on USDA and state agency programmatic services that will enhance their enterprises. In our goal to achieve food sovereignty, I urge us to continue to partner with and support the La Via Campesina movement, on both a national and international level.

Hmong Farming in CA's Central Valley: A NHAFFI Update by Annette Hiatt and Chukou Thao



Young Hmong farmers at the farm stand - A. Hiatt photo

Farming in California should be a profitable enterprise. In particular, Fresno County could be considered an agricultural mecca – which is what drew many Hmong farmers to the central valley originally. Boasting annual agricultural sales of more than \$3.5 billion, Fresno County alone produces more than some states. However, on closer examination of the USDA census statistics, you can see that the majority of Fresno's farmers have a gross income from farming that is less than \$100,000 annually, and

22% of the county's farmers make less than \$10,000 a year.

Let's move beyond the figures and look at the on-the-ground reality. Many Hmong refugee families resettled in Fresno because of their agricultural backgrounds. They are still here because they can produce fruits, vegetables and cooking staples for their family's consumption; farming is not a moneymaking enterprise. Many of our member families do not use English as their first language so they are disconnected from resources and do not know of the laws impacting their daily work.

NHAFFI (National Hmong American Farmers, Inc.) was founded to help connect these family farmers to the appropriate agencies and resources and to provide a means for economic development within the Hmong community. Like many NFFC organizations, we are often called upon to 'put out fires' – when a farmer loses a crop, when a contract is not honored, when farmers can not access FSA or markets, when there are

regulation 'violations'. We also work proactively to assist our farmer members to build their family – and community – wealth.

Most recently, NHAFFI started a farm stand at a local elementary school. Every week, we provide students, staff and community members with fresh, locally grown produce at \$1 per bag. We facilitate a connection between farmers and the community at large and are very excited to see kids running to pick up bags of produce.



Customers peruse the produce - A. Hiatt photo

NHAFFI will host a national conference *May 24-25, 2010*, in Fresno. We will have workshops and farm tours, but also want to have some fun, so we hope that all of our NFFC family will consider attending.

Annette is Policy Analyst and Chukou is Executive Director of National Hmong American Farmers, Inc.

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President: Ben Burkett, Federation of Southern Cooperatives/Mississippi Association of Cooperatives

Vice President: Dena Hoff, Northern Plains Resource Council/MT

Secretary: John Kinsman, Family Farm Defenders/WI

At Large Members:

Margot McMillen, Missouri Rural Crisis Center; **Niaz Dorry**, Northwest Atlantic Marine Alliance, MA; **Joel Greeno**, American Raw Milk Producers' Pricing Association/WI; **Bob St. Peter**, Food for Maine's Future



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The Family Farm Agenda is published several times annually by the National Family Farm Coalition, a nonprofit providing a voice for grassroots groups on farm, food, trade and rural economic issues to ensure fair prices for family farmers and fishers, safe and healthy food, and vibrant, environmentally sound rural communities here and around the world.

Voices at the Iowa Workshop

The Department of Justice and USDA kicked off the workshop series examining concentration in agriculture on March 12 in Ankeny, Iowa. The DOJ highlighted three major goals for the workshops: 1) to promote dialogue among interested parties; 2) to foster learning with respect to the appropriate legal and economic analyses of these issues; and 3) to listen to and learn from parties with real-world experience in the agricultural sector.

U.S. Attorney General Holder called the workshop a milestone event: "We want everybody to have a fair shot. Big is not necessarily bad, but big can be bad if power that comes from being big is misused. That is simply not something that this Department of Justice is going to stand for." Holder's presence symbolized the elevation of concentration in agriculture as a DOJ issue and set the stage for further action. Christine Varney, Assistant U.S. Attorney General, concurred. "You have my commitment that we're going to do everything we can to make sure that it's a competitive agriculture economy that farmers, growers, packers, processors, are all making a decent wage, and we're getting American consumers food on their table that's safe...healthy and a decent price."

On the first panel, farmers provided testimony to support their responses to Secretary Vilsack's question: What one suggestion would you make to improve the circumstances and situations for farm families in the country? Several were deeply invested in GMOs and emphasized the need for research and fair prices. Jim Foster, an Iowa grain and cattle farmer, and Eric Nelson, a Missouri independent hog producer, highlighted various concerns, including packer ownership of animals, Technology Stewardship agreements with biotech firms, the void in research on conventional crops and the high cost of seeds.

The second panel focused on the seed industry. Despite disagreeing on most points, both Jim Tobin, vice president of industry affairs at Monsanto, and Diana Moss, vice president of the American Antitrust Institute, argued that current patent law was necessary to spur innovation. Neil Harl, Emeritus Professor of Economics at Iowa State University, noted that the Plant Variety Protection Act should be the "...sole protection for plant developers producing these crops", not patent law, which limits farmer choice. He also commented on the roles of biotech companies and patent law in transforming the seed industry: "Before 1980, seed germplasm was considered...public domain...developed in the field and shared. Now seeds are developed in the laboratory...patented and licensed." Harl also noted the reluctance of plant breeders, seed dealers, farmers and others to share their concerns

over fear of retribution.

The future of America's family farms was an ongoing theme throughout the workshop, particularly throughout the third panel which addressed agricultural trends ranging from disappearing local markets to America's aging family farmers. Chuck Wirtz, an independent Iowa hog producer commented, "It used to be a love affair with farming, but two of my kids aren't coming back to the farm." Patrick Woodall of Food & Water Watch described the pressure from meat packers, shippers and grocery chains, "...pushing...down on farmers, so the real farm gate prices for almost everything have been coming down for several decades while the real cost to produce these goods has been going up [which] puts kind of a double squeeze on the situation. Farmers get a little less every year. Consumers pay more every year, and the...fewer and fewer companies in the middle are taking a bigger bite." Mary Hendrickson, Extension Associate Professor in Rural Sociology at the University of Missouri, added, "[There are] other social/community/environmental issues that are really important...with contracting...there's a lot more specification...you're moving decision-making away from the farmer and into the hands of absent management...a way to move profit away from the farmer and into the hands of ... people who control the contracts."

The final panel focused on regulation and enforcement. The panelists included Attorneys General from Montana, Ohio and Missouri, USDA regulators, a DOJ antitrust section chief and the director of the Enforcement Division on the Commodity Futures Trading Commission. Panelists generally agreed that antitrust regulation is necessary and overdue. Montana AG Steven Bullock, who spearheaded a multi-state comment letter in preparation for this workshop, also emphasized that intellectual property laws should be examined.

During the day several farmers discussed concerns raised in the *Out of Hand* report (<http://farmertofarmercampaign.com/>). The day-long event concluded with approximately 20 farmers offering more comments. Several from NFFC member groups Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement, Dakota Resource Council, ARMPPA and Family Farm Defenders, including Brad Wilson, Joel Greeno, Randy Jasper, Todd Leake and George Naylor, shared personal perspectives on the loss and damage experienced through industry concentration.

(The complete March 12 workshop transcript is posted at: <http://www.justice.gov/atr/public/workshops/ag2010/iowa-agworkshop-transcript.txt>)

NFFC Goes to Iowa for Town Hall Meeting

"Monsanto does not have the right to dictate the value of my life, my work, or the food I produce. Kraft Foods does not have the right to set the price of my milk, which they do without question."
 - Joel Greeno at March 11 Town Hall meeting



Thursday night's town hall meeting - Jeri Lynn Bakken photo

On March 12, 2010, family farmers were part of an 800-plus member audience in Ankeny, Iowa, to participate in the first antitrust workshop hosted by the USDA and the Department of Justice (DOJ). This workshop is the first of five examining concentration and competition within the agricultural sector. The Ankeny workshop focused on issues impacting crop farmers including seed technology, vertical integration, market transparency and buying power.

To insure that all family farmers had the opportunity to speak, Iowa Citizens for Community Improvement (ICCI), Food Democracy Now!, NFFC, Food and Water Watch and organizations within the US Working Group on the Food Crisis organized a town hall meeting the night before the workshop entitled, "Unleash Food Democracy: Taking on Corporate Power in our Food System." More than 250 people attended the evening town hall meeting to hear from farmers, union representatives and food advocates on the devastating impact of "Big Ag" in rural communities.

NFFC Winter Meeting Update

NFFC held its winter meeting after one of the milder snowstorms in DC, January 30-February 1. The board thanked exiting executive committee members - Adam Barr (CFA) and Bryan Wolfe (OFU) - and welcomed Niaz Dorry (NAMA), Margot McMillen (MRCC) and Bob St. Peter (FFMF). Ben Burkett (MAC/FSC) accepted the role of President for another year, as did Vice President Dena Hoff (NPRC) and Secretary John Kinsman (FFD). Several board reps could not travel but participated by telephone.

Several themes evolved during roundtable and issue discussions:

- Fair prices, strategic reserves and fairness
- Prioritize issues/goals through resources, capacity, funds, people
- Raise funds, monitor plans, set goals, be accountable
- Maximize media moments: know your farmer, know your food
- Don't duplicate efforts - work together in different areas
- Educate/involve the public - consumers are affected, too.

The meeting began with a panel comprised of: Barb Kalbach (fourth-generation family farmer and ICCI member); George Naylor, (grain farmer and ICCI member); Paul Rozwadowski, (WI dairy farmer and NFFC dairy subcommittee chair); Rhonda Perry (livestock farmer and Missouri Rural Crisis Center policy director); Patty Lovera (Assistant Director, Food and Water Watch); Siena Chrisman (Global Movements Program, World Hunger Year); and Mark Lauritsen (UFCW International Union). These panelists clearly and succinctly voiced the negative impact of corporate power in agriculture on farmers, consumers, workers and the environment. Following the discussion participants were invited to

share their experiences with "Big Ag" in 60 seconds or less at the microphone. Nearly 50 farmers related their stories to paint a powerful picture of the corrosive impact of corporate agriculture on family farms. A dairy farmer from southern Iowa noted, "The American dream has turned into the American nightmare." Powerful comments like this reinforced the message that immediate, drastic action by the DOJ is needed to "Bust the Trust" and restore economic vitality to rural America.

For more information, press and videos visit:

<http://bustthetrust.org/media>

<http://www.farmaid.org>

http://iowacci.org/calendar/march_11_townhall.html

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O1axAqJGEXI>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sAHk9PHYm1M&feature=related>



Courtesy of Food First and Farm Aid

The Local Foods/New Farmers Committee looked at engaging mentoring programs and the public, particularly the faith community, more around food safety and other issues.

The Committee on NAIS agreed to pursue findings from last summer's listening sessions, monitor and oppose livestock boards and state tagging requirements and focus on messaging around cleaning up slaughterhouses, stop mandating premise id.

The Credit Committee discussed inconsistent FSA practices, farmer eligibility, loan suspension request to USDA, flow of cash (tax dollars and TARP funds) to banks and on to farmers.

The Dairy Subcommittee agreed to support the international dairy manifesto, seek an emergency floor price using ERS data, request testing of MPCs and build coalitions with other groups.

The GMO Campaign requested member comments on the GE alfalfa EIS, challenge corporations' patents of life and connect fishing and farming stories. *(cont. p. 6, column 2)*



Tim Gibbons, Brad Wilson, Bob St. Peter, John Peck



Bruce Drinkman and John Kinsman



Joel Greeno, Andre Mathew, Randy Jasper, Zena Jasper

Department of Agriculture Sees the Light on Animal ID by Donley Darnell

Livestock producers and consumers that make up the Powder River Basin Resource Council and the Western Organization of Resource Councils are applauding action by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (last week) to terminate the redundant and burdensome program known as National Animal Identification System. Our grass-roots membership has worked for years to show that NAIS is little more than a reactive, industry generated system that would make for greater concentration of power in the food industry with no benefit to food safety.

After USDA held 15 listening sessions on the program, the agency finally saw the light and *listened* to ranchers, farmers and consumers. Opponents told USDA that the program was too expensive, intrusive, and unworkable and did nothing to prevent or control animal disease. By standing up and voicing their concerns, ranchers and consumers have convinced USDA there is a better way.

USDA is now changing course to trace animal disease. The agency intends to work with industry groups, local farmers, ranchers, organic farmers, and underserved communities to develop commodity-based animal disease traceability approaches at the state level.

Earlier, Congress listened, too, and cut the funding for this misdirected program. Senators Mike Enzi (R-WY) and Jon Tester (D-MT), in particular, deserve the credit for leading the charge to rein in the program.

PRBRC and WORC are also grateful that many allied organizations across the country contributed to USDA's reversal. The focus should be to solve the real problems of disease control - stopping the importation of disease from other countries, including

tuberculosis from Mexico, foot and mouth from South America, and bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) from Canada.

Moreover, the control of food processing and supply by a handful of industrial food giants remains a major threat to consumers and ranchers alike. The pending rulemaking on unfair market competition in the livestock industry and food industry monopolization are the next opportunities for USDA to do the right thing for America.

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack deserves a tip of the hat for his decision. WORC and PRBRC look forward to working with USDA and our allies on these issues and welcome the opportunity to give input on a trace-back program that is voluntary, state-based, and workable for the livestock producers.

Donley is a rancher from Newcastle, WY, a member of Powder River Basin Resource Council and of Western Organization of Resource Council's Livestock Committee. He posted this letter to the editor in February.

*Addendum from Bill Bensel/PRBRC:

The USDA agenda for disease tracking under their new proposal was a major focus of the National Institute for Animal Agriculture meeting March 15-17 in Kansas City, KS. NIAA was a launching pad for the original NAIS system and a closed session on March 17 may have generated specific recommendations for the new system. In addition, the Western States Livestock Health Association convened their spring meeting with a coalition of veterinarians, animal health and food safety professionals to discuss specific animal health diseases, food safety issues and animal traceability in the context of the latest USDA proposals at their March 10-11 meeting in Reno, NV. No word on meeting outcomes.

National Ocean Policy and Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning by Boyce Thorne Miller

Unlike land, which may be privately or publicly owned, the sea is no one's private property; rather, it is a commons that belongs to all people with governance through respective coastal States to three miles from shore and the Federal government out to 200 miles (the internationally agreed extent of each nation's Exclusive Economic Zone or EEZ). The Great Lakes also are considered part of this commons.

It is the responsibility of governments to protect the public interest, which increasingly includes environmental stewardship and determining whether, where, how and by whom ocean, coastal and Great Lakes resources should be used and/or protected for the public good.

In June 2009, President Obama established the Interagency Task Force on Ocean Policy led by the White House Council on Environmental Quality. The Task Force was charged with framing "a recommendation for a national policy that would ensure protection, maintenance and restoration of oceans, our coasts and the Great Lakes." The proposed policy identifies several priority objectives, one of which is coastal and marine spatial planning (CMSP), and the Task Force was directed to develop a framework for that.

The "Interim Framework for Effective Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning" was issued at the end of the year for public review and comment. NAMA (Northwest Atlantic Marine Alliance) responded with comments supported by a broad group of fishermen, farmers, academics and community organizations.

With competing interests in utilizing coastal and marine resources, CMSP tries to offer a comprehensive, integrated approach to overseeing uses and activities. We believe the proposed framework will help fishermen and their communities have a seat at the table when critical decisions about proposed uses of the ocean are being made, including if and where they should be allowed. Marine spatial planning is a decision-making process, it is not permanent zoning. This is an important distinction because of the constantly shifting and changing marine environmental conditions and our evolving knowledge of these ecosystems. Fluctuating or

interim boundaries matching the ecosystem and adaptive management are key.

Under the proposed framework, CMSP would be focused regionally and developed cooperatively among Federal, State, Tribal, regional and local authorities and institutions with substantial stakeholder and public input. The nature of that public and stakeholder input is critical and some of our comments were directed toward that. We also feel it important to develop standards for identifying and prohibiting uses of the ocean and land that are incompatible with healthy marine ecosystems. They should be prohibited or may be redesigned to be compatible. This often boils down to the scales of operations and management. It is not news to community fishermen and family farmers that scale matters.

As CMSP is implemented regionally with oversight by a National Ocean Commission, the relevance of this process to farmers will hopefully become strong and clear. The interactions and interdependence of marine and terrestrial systems are most intense at the coastal zone. One cannot be ignored without the other suffering. For instance, the importance of drainage basins and the quality of water entering coastal and marine areas will place constraints on large scale industrialized operations that generate significant waste and runoff. This CMSP process should also highlight and reinforce the importance of local and regional food systems, including food from both sea and land. Humans are part of ecosystems, and as such our duties as stewards and our needs as responsible users must be considered.

The community fishermen greatly appreciate the support of family farming communities when we submitted our letter to the Ocean Policy Task Force. It strengthened the message and made a strong statement to the Task Force about the interconnectedness of terrestrial and marine ecosystems and food systems. (See <http://www.whitehouse.gov/administration/eop/ceq/initiatives/oceans> for a description of the process and the resulting reports.) *Boyce is Science and Policy Coordinator of Northwest Atlantic Marine Alliance; see www.namanet.org.*

La Via Campesina North America - 1 March 2010 - Guadalajara, Mexico

La Via Campesina groups together organizations of peasants, family farmers, indigenous peoples, farm workers, women and rural youth from some 70 countries worldwide, representing about 500 million families of women and men of the land [including George Naylor of Iowa, representing the US]. We are those who produce the majority of the food consumed in this world, despite facing ever worse conditions work, while the conditions allowing for unimpeded profits by a few transnational corporations are ever more favorable, without any regard for the impacts on people or on the Mother Earth.

We take it as an act of aggression, as a profound lack of respect, and as an affront, that the Food & Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has decided to meet in Mexico with governments and the private sector, under the false argument that "biotechnology can benefit peasants in poor countries" - as stated in a deceptive official press release (<http://www.fao.org/news/story/en/item/40390/icode/>).

They use the word "biotechnology," an intentionally vague and broad term, when we all know that the real purpose is to promote genetically modified (GM) crops, which have never benefited farmer families, and never will. It is an act of aggression against, and a provocation of, the Mexican people and the peasant and indigenous families of the world, to come to Mexico to promote GMOs, when it is precisely in Mexico that there is an intense struggle to stop the contamination of our ancestral maize varieties with GM pollen. This contamination puts the centers of origin and biodiversity of a crop that is so important to our culture and to humanity, at risk.

Coming here with a pro GMO message, just when the Mexican organizations and people are trying to defend their maize from the "Monsanto Law" and the authorization of open-field experimental plantings of GM maize, makes it absolutely clear to all of society that the FAO serves the interests of Monsanto, a corporate criminal, and the interests of the bad government, rather than the interests of our peoples. We repeat, it is an act of aggression to come here and takes sides in this conflict here in Mexico.

How is it possible that an international conference "for the benefit of peasants" has only invited and credentialed one representative of La Via Campesina, and he only with the status of "observer"? If the desire to benefit peasants is real, why not have met instead with peasant and indigenous peoples' organizations, to find out from us what we want in order to be better able to carry out our role in society, which is to grow food and protect Mother Earth? If they did that, we would tell them in no uncertain terms that GM maize is one thing we definitely do NOT want. But they are not interested in knowing what we think, we do not interest them, we are of no importance to them, and therefore we reject them.

The world today is in a financial, food, climate, energy, environmental, political and spiritual crisis that is the product of the greed inherent in the capitalist system. In the face of this crisis, we are witnessing a worldwide conflict between two models of food and agriculture. The "model of death," of industrial monocultures, agrochemicals and GMOs, feeds financial speculation and automobiles - via agrofuels -- rather than feeding people, who face ever worsening hunger.

It is no coincidence that in recent years we have seen the confluence of record levels of hunger - despite record harvests - with record level corporate profits for the transnationals of death, like Monsanto, Syngenta, Cargill, ADM, Maseca and Wal-Mart. This model diminishes and privatizes the genetic biodiversity of our crops, just when the world needs more genetic biodiversity, and it constitutes the theft of our heritage as rural peoples, our seeds.

We defend the other model of food production, the model of sustainable peasant, indigenous and family farm agriculture, that con-

serves and augments biodiversity, and that protects the Mother Earth. Multiple scientific studies prove that this "model of life" is more productive than industrial agriculture, and as part of food sovereignty, is more than capable of feeding the world without threatening human health or the environment.

While one model worsens the various faces of the crisis, like climate change (by releasing greenhouse gasses), and also financial speculation - which together with corporate hoarding of food stocks is a fundamental cause of the food crisis -- the other models offers solutions. Food sovereignty based on sustainable peasant and family farm agriculture takes food out of the circuits of speculation and free trade, and drastically reduces climate impacts. We must expel transnational corporations from our food system, and put food back under the control of our peoples. Our food, produced by peasants, family farmers and indigenous people using ancestral knowledge and the principles of agroecology, is healthy, while an ever greater number of scientific studies demonstrate the multiple risks to human health posed by GMOs.

GMOs have no place whatsoever in our vision of agriculture. GMO maize is NOT equivalent to native maize, in any sense, regardless of what the FAO may say. GMOs are a way to privatize life, and put our native varieties at risk of genomic degradation when they are contaminated by transgenes. In our view, GMOs are a fundamental part of a global campaign against peasant, indigenous and family farm seeds. More and more neoliberal laws prohibit the exchange of non-certified seeds, while only corporations can certify, and a range of technologies from hybrid to Terminator seeds are designed to make it impossible for us to save our own for future planting. The corporations, with the complicity of the FAO and governments, want to make us completely dependent upon them.

We can only conclude that, rather than feeding the hungry, they are only interested in feeding their own greed. But as Gandhi said, "the Earth provides enough to satisfy every man's need, but not every man's greed."

For us farmers, the act of planting our native maize, and defending it, is an act of resistance, and an act of rebellion against an unjust system. But is also an act of hope. Hope because we know that solutions to the crisis are to be found in food sovereignty and sustainable peasant, indigenous and family farm agriculture, and we know that these seeds of rebellion that we plant, are also the seeds of that other and better world we want.

For more information: www.viacampesinanorteamerica.org; www.viacampesina.org; Jessica Roe: jroe@nffc.net; Jesus Andrade: +52-1-967-114-7282 (Español); Peter Rosset: +52-1-967-118-5093 (English)

Globalize the Struggle!

Globalize Hope!

To mark the 17th of April 2010, La Via Campesina called upon its members and allies to join forces and increase resistance against TNCs, and to amplify the voices and rights of peasants worldwide by organizing an event or action (protest, public debate, direct action, film screening, farmers' market, heirloom seed exchange, song or picture contest) in your school, community or organization. Visit www.viacampesina.org or subscribe to Via Campesina's list: http://viacampesina.net/mailman/listinfo/via.17april_viacampesina.net. For events in the Chicago-Madison area contact John Peck/FFD at 608.260.0900 or visit www.familyfarmdefenders.org. For events in the Tucson area contact James Jordan at 520.243.0381.



The Cost of A Mvskoke Diet by Chako

We know that in our traditional way of life we were healthy people spiritually, mentally, emotionally and physically. Much of the traditional ways are about maintaining a healthy balance within ourselves, our relationships, our families, our communities and our lands. To put it simply, health and tradition go hand in hand. As we have lost our traditional way of life, we have lost our health. When it comes to food, we were healthy with our traditional Mvskoke diets. Assuming we all want health for us and our children, rather than the Atkins diet, Jenny Craig diet, Mediterranean diet, eat-more-weigh-less diet, why aren't we all trying the Mvskoke diet?

One answer is that many of us assume that a Mvskoke diet is too difficult, that it would cost us too much time and energy. How can we make a Mvskoke diet a reality today? Sure we'd love to live off a traditional diet, but that requires going hunting, butchering our own game, drying the meat, growing our own crops, spending hours and days processing them with our own hands and cooking over a fire. Nobody has land, time, money and energy to do all that.

The point I'd like to make is that the overall cost of a Mvskoke diet is actually much, much less than the diets we live on today.



Chako in the garden with a young student

Our current diets cost a lot more, but the costs are hidden and are being paid for by other people.

When we buy a cheap food product, someone had to prepare it. The people who work at the assembly line in the meat processing plant, the people picking the lettuce, the tomatoes, etc., are all paying with their time and energy. One such example is in Florida where farm operations produce fruits and vegetables for Wal-Mart, Kroger, Aramark and Sodexo. These major corporations sell the food to fast food joints, grocery stores and schools. Some of these operations in Florida have been repeatedly charged with modern-day slavery. Workers are extremely overworked, underpaid and even held against their will (see <http://www.ciw-online.org/>). Hard labor is still being done, it's just being done by other people. We have to ask ourselves, is this morally right? As Mvskoke people, is it our cultural ethic to have other people do our work, rather than be self-sufficient and strong and do it ourselves? Ironically, most of the farm laborers mentioned are Indigenous Mayan and other tribes from Mexico and Guatemala.

There are also hidden costs that we ourselves pay. Today we can buy a hamburger for a dollar, no effort raising, butchering, cooking; just \$1.00 and it's yours. However, if you eat one-dollar hamburgers your whole life, you are virtually guaranteed to pay

burger you had to deposit \$10.00 towards later medical costs of clogged arteries, high cholesterol, etc, it wouldn't seem so cheap. For those of us who don't pay our own medical bills, the Creek Nation or our employers pick up the bill.

Then, of course, there is the cost we pay in actual dollars. If you eat out once a day, you may spend about \$8.00 on that meal. For many of us, it may have taken an hour working at a job to earn that \$8.00. So you are still paying an hour's labor just for that meal. What if that one hour could be put toward cooking a traditional meal?

Finally, another major hidden cost of the current food system is to the earth. We as Mvskokvike, as Native people, say all kinds of stuff about loving our mother earth. The way the ancestors lived actually embodied that, they 'walked the walk' not just 'talked the talk'. Traditional agriculture does not deplete the soil and cause pollution. Our ancestors hunted wild animals in a sacred, respectable, natural process. Animals were not born and raised in cages, forced to live extremely unhealthy lives. The fact is, when we're eating out, or even buying our food from the grocery store, we're not respecting our mother earth, plant and animal life. We can talk about how great 'our culture' is, but if we don't live by it, then it's not really our culture, it's the culture of our ancestors. Our culture is one of exploiting the earth, plants, and animals.

It is a lot easier to critique the current system than to create a better one. I eat out, I buy food from the grocery store. None of us are going to snap our fingers and be living traditionally off the land. Many of us don't even have land! Being aware of the costs of the current system, as a people we can make a conscious choice as to what kind of system we'd like pass down to future generations, then begin working to set up such a system.

Overall a Mvskoke diet does not cost more than the diets most of us eat today. If we rearranged the system we live in today we could move closer to a Mvskoke diet: spending more time working the land and cooking traditionally and less time earning money and paying someone else to cook; buying from local growers rather than crops from around the world; raising our young ones to think that hunting and farming are respectable options for work. If our tribal governments started helping people acquire land to grow, traditionally prepare and redistribute food among our own people they would spend less on hospital bills. There are many steps we could take to move toward a Mvskoke diet and return to the health our ancestors once had.

Chako is the Communications Coordinator for the Mvskoke Food Sovereignty Initiative. Visit: www.mvskokefood.org for more info.

(NFFC Winter Meeting Update cont. from p. 3)

The Farm & Food Policy/Trade Committee assessed ways to support allies' activities, develop stronger messages on bad policy (Haiti) and good (strategic reserves, captive supply reform) as well as upcoming events (US Social Forum, USDA-DOJ workshops).

Members enjoyed discussing activities back home over wonderful meals, thanks in part to MS Assoc. of Co-ops, Northwest Atlantic Marine Alliance, Cedar Grove/FFD, Patchwork Farms/MRCC, Snowville Creamery (OH) and Pizzeria Paradiso (DC), whose contributions were either stand-alone stars or featured in dishes prepared by caterer Kit Wood. Tim Wise discussed the real winners of US trade and agriculture policy, while other guests provided input around strategizing on various issues. Members donated items for a fundraising effort for Haiti that raised more than \$200. Despite the winter chill and heavy concerns about farmers and fishers everywhere, there was a sense of hope, unity and progress.



Margot McMillen and Frank McAninch in DC

Director's Take by Kathy Ozer

As spring arrives across the country, there is a sense of urgency for real action that will benefit farmers, ranchers, fishers and their families in our rural communities. The nation's dairy farmers are reeling from more than a year of absurdly low prices, threatening the equity they hold on their farms and decades of work building their operations. The lingering, deepening impacts of the recession are felt as farmers are denied credit and see few options to receive operating funds based on projected low prices. On April 8, NFFC, Farm Aid, RAFI-USA, Rural Coalition, National Farmers Union and Food and Water Watch took the message to a White House meeting with policymakers that action is needed now to get farmers the credit for planting crops and feeding animals. Emergency funds are needed to increase Farm Service Agency (FSA) direct and guaranteed loans as USDA is about to run out of funds given record high demand as other bankers and creditors deny farmers and fishers commercial credit. We are also pushing for the \$1.2 billion needed to fund the black farmer lawsuit and a commitment to resolve other pending discrimination cases.

NFFC continues to urge USDA Secretary Vilsack to issue a loan suspension ensuring that no FSA loans are used to expand or acquire new confined livestock and poultry operations. This action, requested during the transition process, is crucial to limiting the expansion of poultry and hog facilities, which further depresses prices for all producers, and to making the scarce FSA loan funds available to the borrowers with no other access to credit. Headlines call for action to avert the foreclosure crisis in housing and we call for actions to stem the losses in our farming and fishing communities.

The political climate in 2010 has been shaped by the health care debate and the jobs situation across the country. Just before Congress started its two-week recess on March 26, two other major events occurred - the appointment of Dr. Siddiqui as the agriculture negotiator for the US Trade Representative (USTR) and the Senate Agriculture Committee vote on the Child Nutrition Reauthorization Bill.

On March 27, President Obama announced 15 recess appointments - pending nominations requiring Senate confirmation but whose nominees may hold office without Senate approval until January 2011. Dr. Siddiqui was on this list. NFFC helped launch the opposition to his nomination in September 2009 and was one of 113 organizations on a March 2010 letter to Senators reaffirming our opposition. Now that he will represent the U.S. at international trade negotiations, we must "watch-dog" his role to ensure that the public understands the paradox between promoting local and regional approaches to food security and exporting the US failed farm, biotech and trade policies to the world. As Congress considers the Global Food Security Act, NFFC continues to register opposition to the explicit support for research into genetically engineered crops as the solution to addressing world hunger. Specifically we ask that the mandate for GM crop research be stricken, eliminating Section 202. This will keep agricultural research funding under the Foreign Assistance Act appropriately focused on the priorities and local conditions of family farmers.

Unfortunately, the myth that jobs are created by increased exports continues to permeate the public policy arena. USDA and Secretary Vilsack perpetuate this in speeches across the country and before the House Appropriations Committee, which controls funding for USDA programs. USDA continues to express support for pending bilateral trade agreements with Columbia and South Korea, despite the White House focus on the domestic economy. They imply that while it may be good for agriculture (with which we disagree) there are other reasons (jobs, environment) why the White House is sending a mixed message on their trade agenda. This situation makes it even more critical for us to promote the TRADE Act (HR 3012/S. 2821) as the model to review existing

trade agreements and a way to assess future agreements for fairness.

NFFC supports USDA's efforts to promote the campaign and policies included within the "Know your Food; Know your Farmer" initiative but has identified a major disconnect between supporting local and regional food systems and the policies being promoted at national and international levels. This includes the need for adequate disaster and credit programs and the ability of farmers to use retail, not wholesale, prices to calculate program eligibility. The March 24 action by the Senate Ag Committee to include mandatory funding for Farm to Cafeteria programs in the Child Nutrition Reauthorization (CNR) is a step towards expanding the connections between farmers and consumers. The funding level of \$40 million over 10 years is less than the \$50 million requested over a shorter timeframe, but it is significant to have mandatory, not discretionary, funding in the bill. The Senate must still vote on the legislation and the House needs to take both Committee and floor action. Support for overhauling the nation's child nutrition programs and their connection to childhood obesity received a major push when Michelle Obama launched her "Get Moving" campaign in early February. Will Allen of Growing Power in Milwaukee (also in *FRESH the movie*) spoke at the White House event.

While Congress debated the final details of the health care proposals, the first USDA/DOJ workshop was held in Ankeny, IA, on March 12. This signaled hope for judiciary enforcement of our nation's anti-trust laws and for determining the next steps for USDA/DOJ after the workshops. There is also a focus on the livestock title provisions of the 2008 farm bill requiring USDA to issue rules defining what "undue preference" means in livestock markets. These issues are not new to many within NFFC, but elevating the issue to a national stage with Attorney General Holder, Assistant AG Varney and USDA Secretary Vilsack is significant.

Other articles in this newsletter highlight the details of the workshop and the Town Hall meeting the night before. As part of La Via Campesina and the U.S. Working Group on the Food Crisis, NFFC is elevating the messages of food sovereignty, food justice and the need to expose corporate control of the food supply to the U.S. Social Forum in Detroit, June 22-26.

To contact your Senator or Representative to support our asks, please call the Capitol Hill switchboard at 202.224.3121. You may also call the White House Comment Line at 202.456.1111 or visit the website at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/contact>.

Brief History/Background on Concentration Issues:

During the Clinton Administration, efforts were made to issue rules at USDA to stem the excessive control of packers in the livestock markets (the WORC rule). On April 1, 2004, NFFC hosted a dairy farmer meeting in Syracuse entitled "Concentration and Market Power in the Dairy Industry". More than 170 farmers, researchers, government officials and media reps attended this important meeting and helped to illuminate this crisis situation. Then-New York Attorney General Spitzer stated, "It was clear to me that whether it be on the Wall Street trading floors or in the barns and farms of upstate New York, fundamental fairness must be maintained in order for markets to operate efficiently."

In late 2004, other Attorneys General joined Spitzer in urging the DOJ to investigate Dairy Farmers of America (DFA). While the investigation was initiated, no DOJ action was taken. Major media spurred by the meeting in Syracuse, investigative reporting by Andy Martin (then with Chicago Tribune), repeated public events, meetings and actions at the Chicago Mercantile Exchange (CME) in Chicago and international coverage in the Financial Times raised the public awareness on this issue.

A Fair Trade Neighborhood by John Kinsman

David said, "I can furnish the carrots but first I must ask my wife how many we can spare." A week later he brought in 16 pounds of freshly dug beautiful carrots. This was February 20, 2010. He told us how he had to guess where they were as he dug through two feet of snow to find them under last fall's mulch of leaves. Mary Ellen brought in her squash. Melvin offered potatoes and onions. Omer had extra cabbage. Marilyn and her mother offered to make applesauce from apples from a local orchard. Steve had grass fed beef roasts to offer. Chef Muhammed offered to prepare the food with the help of his chef friend Bert.

We were 15 people sitting around a table in Sacred Heart Catholic church hall, planning a free meal for 150 persons at St. John's Lutheran Church kitchen. We represented four rural-urban Catholic parishes and several Amish neighbors. Our plan was to use organic local food obtained with fair trade prices from the producers. Some of us felt we were on a "mission impossible" with our idealistic plans until people around the table started making offers, and soon we had enough cash to pay the producers a fair trade price. We were amazed that all of these resources came together within a 10-mile radius. On February 28, 250 people flocked to our exciting free community meal planned for 150! After this meal fit for royalty, plans are being discussed for more.

The devastating June '08 floods brought out the best in local relief volunteers, two of whom became part of the team who decided that there were other serious problems in our community needing attention. Why not activate the existing Social Action and Peace & Justice commissions of our local parishes? There was a lot of brainstorming around the economic and social poverty in both our urban and rural neighborhoods. We discussed the disparity of high-priced food of questionable quality in grocery stores while local farmers were being destroyed by low prices. Rural Life director Tom emphasized the sacredness of food, that food was more than just another commodity and deserved everyone's respect - producers as well as consumers. It was decided to concentrate on connecting local food producers with local urban eaters. As we met together our urban neighbors were amazed at the amount of great food produced by their farmer neighbors that people regularly drove 150 miles from Chicago to buy.

Piece by piece we have been able to help our group see how farm programs, free trade and other politics fit into the food puzzle. The seven principles of Food Sovereignty and Family Farm Defenders' "20 Ways to Promote it in Your Community" became very real to them. Despite a rather reluctant start, volunteers are now eager to take turns writing short food-related articles for weekly church bulletins. After feeling it was a lost cause to have our institutions source local food, we learned of a hospital 100 miles away that had developed a successful local food-sourcing model. Wonder of wonders, the food manager of our hospital expressed interest in the model and attended a meeting to learn more about it. The model is a cooperative of farmers, urbanites and hospital food service personnel with some decision-making power. For our April meeting we are inviting representatives from the model group to meet with representatives of four of our local hospitals. Summer meeting agendas will include invitations to "farm to cafeteria" program organizers in Madison school districts to share experiences.

The farmers and consumers on our committee are discussing contracts to enable the farmers to produce the amounts of certain foods that consumers want. A local foods directory is being assembled with space for ongoing additions. Future plans call for garden seeds and garden plots to be made available to our neighborhood people who are financially, socially or otherwise handicapped. Local farm tours are being planned to allow consumers to see how healthy food is produced. This kind of activity is discovering a new world in our neighborhood. We enjoy many good laughs as our urban neighbors learn of the resources and limitations of farmer neighbors just as we learn more about theirs.

Dairy Update

On March 2, 2010, NFFC's dairy subcommittee sent their second letter in a year to USDA Secretary Vilsack. The letter requested USDA to use their authority as granted by the Agricultural Marketing Agreement Act of 1937 (7 U.S. Code) 608c (18):

"...to ensure a viable domestic dairy infrastructure or to immediately implement a \$20.00 floor price to reflect the minimum cost of production levels seen across the country. Costs for fuel, feed, fertilizer and seeds have all skyrocketed in the past year. Meanwhile, consumers have yet to benefit from lower prices at the supermarket for dairy products and Kraft Foods has shown record profits for the last quarter of 2009, earning 45 cents on revenue of \$11.1 billion."

If supply and demand is not driving down farmers' milk prices, what is? NFFC has worked tirelessly to expose the flawed dairy pricing system that prices milk based on cheese traded at the Chicago Mercantile Exchange. There is almost near perfect correlation between the price of cheese at the CME and farm gate milk prices. The December 2008 \$12 million fine leveled by the Commodity Futures Trading Commission on Dairy Farmers of America for price manipulation at the CME was finally public confirmation that the dairy pricing system has been controlled by a handful of powerful interests at the expense of America's dairy farmers.

The Department of Justice launched a two-year investigation into DFA in 2005, but the findings were never released under the Bush Administration. We urge USDA to examine its authority under 608c (7) and immediately look into the antitrust abuses by dairy cooperatives and other entities that are causing serious economic harm to dairy farmers. USDA should also request DOJ to take action on the pending DFA investigation. The upcoming workshops coordinated by USDA and DOJ are very important, yet they should in no way cause a delay in action for existing violations of our nation's anti-trust laws.

The workshop reviewing concentration in the dairy industry will likely be held June 25 (Madison, WI), a month after the workshop in Alabama and three months after the Iowa workshop. Lack of competition in agriculture is ruining livelihoods, communities and the rural fabric of our nation. The loss of dairy farms and farmers across the country, including the suicide of one after killing his 50 milking cows, exemplifies the desperation felt by those unable to receive a decent price - a living wage - for one's labors and product. As dairy farmer Gretchen Maine of Waterville, NY, stated recently, "...we are concerned that there will soon be no family-owned dairy farmers left, which will destroy more and more of rural America, not to mention the supply of available fresh, local dairy products. We have a broken system that needs fixing."

In another example that the Administration is focused on industry concentration, on Monday, March 29, Assistant Attorney General Christine Varney traveled to Batavia, NY, to hear from farmers and consumers how anticompetitive practices drive down farmgate prices as retail prices remain high. Several NFFC dairy subcommittee members were part of the crowd of roughly 200 attending the meeting arranged by Sen. Schumer (D-NY). In January Varney's office filed an antitrust lawsuit against Dean Foods.

S. 1645, the Federal Milk Marketing Improvement Act of 2009, was introduced by Senator Arlen Specter (D-PA) in August 2009 and has been referred to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry. Efforts are underway to get more co-sponsors and for Congress to push for immediate action by Secretary Vilsack to raise the support price; please urge your Senators to support this bill and your congressional representatives to sponsor a similar bill in the House!

Legislative Briefs and Administrative Actions

Animal Identification

On February 5, 2010, USDA announced that it would scrap its plans for a national animal identification system and develop a more flexible framework for US animal disease traceability. USDA's efforts will:

- Apply only to animals moved in interstate commerce (with intrastate commerce overseen by States);
- Be administered by States and Tribal Nations;
- Encourage the use of lower-cost technology; and
- Be implemented transparently through federal regulations and the full rulemaking process.

USDA will revamp the Secretary's Advisory Committee on Animal Health to address specific issues, such as confidentiality and liability, and expects to take additional steps to further strengthen protections against the entry and spread of disease. These include: accelerating actions to lessen the risk from diseases--such as TB--posed by imported animals; initiating and updating analyses on how animal diseases travel into the country; improving response capabilities; and focusing on greater collaboration and analyses with States and industry on potential disease risk overall.

In Wisconsin, Amish farmer Emanuel Miller, Jr. won in the State's case against him for refusing to tag his cattle per the WI 2005 mandatory livestock registration law. The judge ruled that forcing Miller to tag his cattle would bring him and other Amish out of isolation from the modern world and compromise his religious beliefs.

DOJ/USDA Competition Workshops

May 21, 2010 - Poultry Industry

Alabama A&M University, Normal, AL

Focus: production contracts in poultry, concentration, buyer power

June 25, 2010 - Dairy Industry

University of Wisconsin, Madison, WI

Focus: concentration, marketplace transparency and vertical integration in the dairy industry

Aug. 26, 2010 - Livestock Industry

Colorado State University, Fort Collins, CO

Focus: beef, hog and other animal sectors; GIPSA

Dec. 8, 2010 - Margins

U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1400 Independence Ave., D.C.

Focus: prices paid to farmers vs. prices paid by consumers

The DOJ and USDA are still accepting comments regarding the workshop topics, and all comments received will be publicly posted. Paper copies should be sent to: Legal Policy Section, Antitrust Division, U.S. Department of Justice, 450 5th Street, NW, Suite 11700, Washington, D.C. 20001. Electronic versions should be sent to: agriculturalworkshops@usdoj.gov. Additional updates, information, agendas and speakers, will be posted on the Antitrust Division's website at:

<http://www.justice.gov/atr/public/workshops/ag2010/index.htm>.

Genetically Engineered Alfalfa Rule Comments

NFFC joined more than 290 organizations in a letter to USDA on their proposed ruling on the deregulation of Roundup Ready GE alfalfa based on their draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). "Despite its mission to protect *all* agriculture, the USDA has unfortunately and fundamentally failed to account for the foreseeable significant harm from this proposed action on organic - the fastest growing segment of US agriculture." More than 200,000 negative comments were submitted prior to the March 3 deadline. Monsanto appealed the court's decision requiring USDA to prepare an EIS, and the Supreme Court will hear their case later this year.

Health Care

On March 23, 2010, President Obama signed into law the health care reform bill. Tax breaks and insurance reforms will begin this year and increase gradually until 2014 when the full program will be in effect. At that time, funding will be available for farming, fishing and ranching organizations to educate their members on their coverage options. The law will help to lower costs for small business owners by creating an insurance pool for each state, thus providing more health plan choices. Businesses with up to 100 employees and the self-employed may participate in the pools. Tax credits and cost containment provisions will help to lower overall inflation rate of health care costs, while other insurance reforms will prevent discrimination regarding pre-existing conditions and expand access to affordable coverage, particularly for lower-wage employees. In addition, rural hospitals will have access to more physicians.

TRADE Act (H.R. 3012 and S. 2821) Trade Reform, Accountability, Development and Employment

This has been referred to the House committee on Ways and Means and to the Senate committee on Finance, respectively. Please urge your Representative and Senators to co-sponsor the TRADE Act! For more info visit www.citizenstrade.org.

Organic Pasture Rule

On February 12, 2010, USDA announced details of the final regulation regarding access to pasture for organic livestock operations. The main components of the rule include:

-Animals must graze pasture during the grazing season, which must be at least 120 days per year;

-Animals must obtain a minimum of 30 percent dry matter intake from grazing pasture during the grazing season;

-Producers must have a pasture management plan and manage pasture as a crop to meet the feed requirements for the grazing animals and to protect soil and water quality; and,

-Livestock are exempt from the 30 percent dry matter intake requirements during the finish feeding period, not to exceed 120 days, and must have access to pasture during the finishing phase.

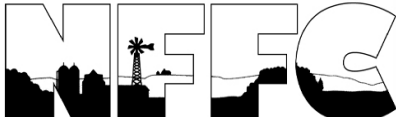
The final rule becomes effective 120 days after publication, June 17, 2010. Operations already certified organic will have one year to implement the provisions. Operations which obtain organic certification after the effective date will be expected to demonstrate full compliance. Comments on the exceptions for finish feeding provisions only of ruminant slaughter stock may be submitted before April 19, 2010. The specific questions to consider and instructions for submitting comments are available on the NOP website at <http://www.ams.usda.gov/NOP>.

Food Safety

The current bill before the Senate, S. 510, threatens to hurt most the small farmers raising food for local markets. NFFC and several member groups signed a Senate letter requesting support for an amendment to be introduced by Sen. Tester (D-MT) that would remove small, direct market food facilities from the jurisdiction of this bill; please ask your senators to support this amendment!

Farm Bill Livestock Title

The 2008 farm bill requires USDA to define the meaning of "undue or reasonable preference" in the Packers and Stockyards Act. Regulations should be released soon and USDA needs to hear from farmers and consumers during the comment period. For more info visit <http://worc.org> or to sign up for updates visit <http://rafiusa.org/contractrules.html>.



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First Class

**Support Family
Farms!**

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Supporting Earthquake Recovery in Haiti

In the wake of the devastating earthquake that killed more than 100,000 people and left nearly two million homeless in the poorest country of the western hemisphere, folks still seek effective ways to express their solidarity. Here are some good options:

Agricultural Missions is an 80-year-old ecumenical organization that has fostered long-term partnerships in Haiti with the capacity to respond to disasters such as this latest earthquake. Tax deductible donations to support their solidarity work in Haiti can be made out to Agricultural Missions, Inc (AMI) with 'Haiti recovery' written in the memo line, and mailed to Agricultural Missions, 475 Riverside Drive, Rm. 725, New York, NY 10115.

Partners in Health was founded by Dr. Paul Farmer, has worked in Haiti for years, and is probably the largest intact healthcare provider left in the country following this horrible disaster. For updates on their grassroots efforts and information on how to support PIH visit: http://www.pih.org/inforesources/news/Haiti_Earthquake.html

Doctors without Borders/Medicines sans Frontiers which operates in over 60 countries including Haiti is also already on the ground providing critical medical assistance and needs further support. For updates on their Haiti work and how to donate visit: <http://doctorswithoutborders.org/news/country.cfm?id=2323>

Grassroots International is another good way to support grassroots recovery efforts in Haiti. They established a Haiti Earthquake Relief Fund, working through the Haitian Platform to Advocate Alternative Development (PAPDA) and the Platform of Haitian Human Rights Organizations (POHDH). To find out more visit: <http://www.grassrootsonline.org/news/press-releases/grassroots-international-establishes-earthquake-emergency-relief-fund-haiti>

Dates To Save:

April 16 - FFD April 17th events - Chicago, IL and Madison, WI

April 17 - International Day of Peasant Struggle - Worldwide (see p. 5, www.familyfarmdefenders.org, www.viacampesina.org)

April 21 - 'Food, Inc.' on PBS - <http://www.pbs.org/pov/foodinc/>

April 22 - EARTH DAY

May 17-19 - National Farm to Cafeteria Conference - Detroit, MI

May 21 - USDA/DOJ Workshop - Concentration in Poultry Industry - Normal, AL

May 24-24 - National Hmong American Farmers, Inc. Conference - Fresno, CA

June 25 - USDA/DOJ Workshop - Concentration in Dairy Industry, Madison, WI

June 22-26 - US Social Forum - Detroit, MI. To participate in the Grassroots Mobilization Committee, contact NFFC.

August 19 - Federation of Southern Cooperatives Annual Event - Birmingham, AL; **August 20-21 - FSC Annual Meeting** - Epes, AL

NFFC Board Meeting - early fall; date and place to be determined