



DELEGATE APPROVED RESOLUTIONS

UNITED FARMER AND RANCHER CONGRESS September 10-13, 1986

"Strengthening the Spirit of America"

STEERING COMMITTEE

American Agriculture Movement, Inc.
Family Farm Organizing Resource Center
Farmers Fair Credit Committee
Federation of Southern Cooperatives

Iowa Farm Unity Coalition
National Catholic Rural Life Conference
National Council of Churches
National Farmers Organization
National Farmers Union

National Orange
National Save the Family Farm Coalition
North American Farm Alliance
Women Involved in Farm Economics



FARM PRICES

WHEREAS, The rural crisis is caused by the lack of profit in agriculture;

WHEREAS, This lack of profitability is due to low farm prices; the prices we receive are too low to cover our full costs of production;

WHEREAS, Farm prices are primarily made in Washington, by the actions of Congress and the President through his Secretary of Agriculture. For all major commodities and milk, farm prices are set by the Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) price support loan levels dictated by the 1985 Food Security Act;

BE IT RESOLVED, Farm prices on primary commodities must be increased immediately by raising the Commodity Credit Corporation floor level to at least the cost of production with a fair return, and they must be indexed to the true parity formula to insure that they rise and fall in relation to costs. This legislation should be based on the successful Steagall Amendment of 1942.

WHEREAS, Low livestock prices are forcing ranchers and livestock producers to fail at unprecedented rates, even though there is insufficient domestic meat production to meet domestic demand;

BE IT RESOLVED, That import restrictions be placed on beef and pork to ensure that domestic market prices at the producer level rise to parity levels equal to grains.

WHEREAS, Subsidies, primarily deficiency payments, have been promoted by grain exporters and processors as a substitute for fair prices in the marketplace, and they have been a disaster for US producers, taxpayers, workers in farm-related industries, and for farmers around the world;

BE IT RESOLVED, Producers must receive parity prices in the marketplace, not from taxpayers. Deficiency payment subsidies should then be abolished.

WHEREAS, The Sec. of Agriculture has the power, by law, to raise CCC non-recourse loan levels to 90% of parity, and to conduct producer referendums on mandatory supply management of all basic commodities;

WHEREAS, The huge turnout in the recent referendum among commercial wheat producers, (those with bases over 40 acres), is a strong mandate, with nearly half of the nation's commercial producers participating and nearly 60% voting in support of higher prices;

BE IT RESOLVED, Agriculture Sec. Lyng shall abide by the poll, and immediately raise CCC loan rates on wheat and conduct a binding poll among commercial wheat producers;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Sec. Lyng shall conduct a poll on higher prices and mandatory supply management among all producers.

WHEREAS, Working people have found that minimum wage laws, collective bargaining, and cooperatives are important to economic well-being;

BE IT RESOLVED, Collective bargaining for all agricultural products should be encouraged, including strengthening of the Capper-Volstead Act, and producer-owned and controlled cooperatives should be supported.

WHEREAS, Below cost of production prices have forced producers to boost their production in hopes of maintaining the cash flow needed to pay bills;

WHEREAS, This expansion of production has caused serious harm to the environment, forcing farmers to plant highly erodible land, drain wetlands, sodbust prairies, and to apply fertilizer and chemicals beyond safe levels;

WHEREAS, The resulting expanded production has far exceeded the needs of the market, creating unsold stocks which are costing taxpayers billions of dollars to store, and which are clogging our transportation and storage facilities to the detriment of exports and domestic sales;

BE IT RESOLVED, Existing stocks above necessary emergency reserves should be reduced in an orderly manner for useful purposes, including food aid, encouragement of ethanol production, expansion of conservation programs, and export promotion;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Producer-approved mandatory supply management programs must be developed to insure that these stocks do not build-up again. For storable commodities, tobacco, and milk, controls must be based on bushels, pounds, or bales. For fruits and vegetables, this includes marketing orders. Referendums among producers on mandatory programs should be conducted among commercial producers, not absentee owners. There must be a producer-consumer board to insure that farm programs are fairly implemented.

WHEREAS, More and more agricultural production, especially poultry, and livestock are grown under contract to large corporations or absentee owners;

BE IT RESOLVED, Payments and conditions of contracts should be fair to growers and under jurisdiction of the Packers and Stockyard Act. All government programs available to contracting entities must also benefit contracts growers.

WHEREAS, Manipulation of prices and supply by speculators, exporters, and commodity traders has contributed to the hardship faced by US producers;

BE IT RESOLVED, There should be an investigation into the total marketing system, including the activities of commodity futures traders and speculators on both crop and livestock prices, leading to laws which will curb abuses in the current system, and government crop reports should be released under conditions where they cannot be used by speculators to force down prices.

WHEREAS, The disastrous drought in the Southeast is a reminder of the forces of nature that producers must contend with, and that the existing crop insurance program is inadequate to meet our needs;

BE IT RESOLVED, Alternative methods of crop insurance be explored, including the creation of a farmer-owned and held disaster reserve.

WHEREAS, The leadership of both the House and Senate Agriculture Committees is failing to perform their duties and failing to address the problems of America's family farmers and ranchers;

BE IT RESOLVED, Both the House and Senate Agriculture Committees must be chaired and lead by strong advocates of family farmers and ranchers, which may require the replacement of current leadership;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That all government programs will be targeted to benefit family farmers and ranchers.

CREDIT

WHEREAS, The deliberate setting of farm prices below the cost of production has forced farmers and ranchers to go deeply into debt to cover losses;

WHEREAS, Real interest rates for farmers have nearly tripled since the early 70's, primarily as a result of federal budget deficits and the manipulation of interest rates by the Federal Reserve Board;

WHEREAS, The epidemic of foreclosures and bankruptcies which have resulted from low farm prices and high interest rates have forced land, machinery, and livestock values to drop by as much as 50% or more;

WHEREAS, This decline in values is a serious threat to the banking system of our nation, with as much as \$50 billion in debt being unrepayable;

BE IT RESOLVED, An immediate federal moratorium on farm, small business, and rural bank foreclosures should be enacted, until prices return to profitable levels for a period of at least five years. This is necessary to prevent further liquidations which will force asset values even lower;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, A federal program of mandatory mediation linked with federal and state-government assisted debt-restructuring should be enacted immediately to help keep rural lenders solvent and family farmers on their land, similar to the program in the Farmer's Fair Credit Plan and the Minnesota Mediation law.

WHEREAS, Congressionally mandated lenders, like the Farm Credit System and the Farmers Home Administration, are required by their enabling legislation to assist family farmers and ranchers;

WHEREAS, These lenders have been found to be deficient in many of their practices, leading to illegal foreclosures, which have resulted in numerous lawsuits, and court settlements which have been extremely expensive for taxpayers;

BE IT RESOLVED, An independent and private audit and investigation of all such lenders should be conducted, including the impact of such practices as variable interest rates, arbitrary land value reductions, favoritism, tiered interest rates, denial of credit on the basis of race, sex, or age, lobbying against fair farm prices, retaliation against producers who are active in the farm movement, failure to exercise forbearance, and the use of bill collection agencies to seize farm family assets. The results of this audit must be made public;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Unbiased administrative law judges be required to preside and rule on all FmHA appeals;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Taxpayer funded bailouts of the Farm Credit System or other lenders should be made conditional upon demonstration that such funds benefit producer-borrowers, including writedowns, restructuring, lower interest rates, and a 2% cap on the spread between their cost of money and what they charge borrowers. They must demonstrate their intention to keep present owners on their land, and that they have recommitted themselves to their original purpose and mission.

WHEREAS, State judges often sit on the Boards of Directors of banks and have other similar conflicts of interest;

BE IT RESOLVED, That any judge with ownership or managerial interest in any financial institution shall not sit in judgement of any debtor-creditor dispute.

WHEREAS, Nearly one-third of our farmers and ranchers are near insolvency, and another one-third are in serious trouble, many of whom will be forced off their farms in the near future;

BE IT RESOLVED, All efforts should be made to help farmers who are forced out by this crisis to get back into profitable production. Changes in the US Bankruptcy Code should be adopted, including a deletion of the trustee provision in Chapters 11 and 13, and the adoption of "cram down" provisions. "Returning farmer" programs must be initiated by all leaders, including the provision allowing foreclosed farmers the right of first refusal to buy or rent their land back at current market value.

WHEREAS, A number of state legislatures have passed resolutions calling for the repeal of the Federal Reserve Act of 1913;

BE IT RESOLVED, Congress should call for an immediate audit of the Federal Reserve System, and the repeal of the Federal Reserve Act of 1913.

WHEREAS, Our rural independent bankers are an important part of our farm communities;

WHEREAS, These banks are in deep financial trouble due to the inability of their farmer and farm-business customers to repay their debts;

BE IT RESOLVED, Special assistance to independent rural banks shall be adopted by Congress and state legislatures, including the full implementation of existing assistance, like special accounting procedures that permit bankers to write-off bad farm loans over a 15 year period;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Laws preventing the spread of monopoly banks, such as prohibitions on interstate banking, must be strengthened;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Harassment of rural banks and borrowers by the FDIC must end immediately;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the FDIC be accountable to Congress who shall set rules and regulations to make them accountable.

IMPORTS, EXPORTS, AND FOREIGN POLICY

WHEREAS, Imports compete directly with unsold stocks of US-produced agricultural and food products;

WHEREAS, Some of these imports are cash crops which are produced by multi-national food corporations on land needed by people in those countries to grow food for their own survival;

WHEREAS, Food imports now exceed exports, which are drastically increasing our trade deficit;

BE IT RESOLVED, The US must enter immediately into multi-lateral negotiations aimed at achieving "fair trade" among nations, not so-called "free trade" as advocated by the grain trading multi-nationals. These negotiations must insure that US health and safety standards are met, that we are not creating more hunger through our imports, and that we will not further increase our unsold stocks here in the US;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Imports of agricultural and food products should not be allowed into the United States at less than 110% of parity, and this would supercede all multi-lateral agreements.

WHEREAS, Agricultural imports compete directly against unsold stocks of US-produced agricultural and food products, some of which are brought into the US without the same health and safety standards required of US producers;

BE IT RESOLVED, That imported agricultural and food products must be labeled as to the country of origin to the consumer. Foreign agricultural and food imports must be required to meet the same standards and intent of utilization as required by law in the US;

BE IT RESOLVED, The Secretary of Agriculture must enforce the provisions of Section 22 of the permanent farm law, the 1949 Act, in order to protect domestic supply control programs if threatened by imports;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, In those areas of the US bordering provinces of foreign countries where massive subsidization destroys markets and hurts American farmers, special consideration must be made to make corrective adjustments necessary to prevent the elimination of the farmers in that area.

WHEREAS, The United States is an important market for the agricultural production of many developing nations who rely on these exports for foreign exchange earnings in order to service their foreign debts;

BE IT RESOLVED, The US should participate in international commodity agreements to help assure fair world market prices for the products of the developing countries in order to maximize their export earnings.

WHEREAS, US domination of world trade means we set world prices for most basic commodities, primarily through domestic price and production policies;

WHEREAS, When the US sets farm prices below the cost of production, it forces down world prices, reducing foreign exchange earnings of other exporters;

WHEREAS, This intentional lowering of world prices by the US forces other countries around the world to increase their production just to service their foreign debt, thereby reducing the market for US exports;

WHEREAS, The lowering of US farm prices results in a reduction in US export earnings, due to the relatively inelastic nature of world food markets, further worsening our nation's trade deficit;

WHEREAS, The current two-tiered price support program of target prices and CCC loans is an enormously expensive system of export subsidies, costing over twice in taxpayer dollars as the total value of the exports being subsidized. For example, in 1986 US taxpayers will pay over \$6 billion to subsidize corn exports only worth \$3 billion;

BE IT RESOLVED, Domestic US farm policies should not be allowed to set world market prices artificially below parity, and we should enter into multi-lateral negotiations with all major exporters and importers of our major export products on issues of price, quality, marketshares, and carryover stocks;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Farm exports should be measured in price per unit of production, total dollars earned and volume.

WHEREAS, The reputation of the US as a reliable supplier to the world market has been seriously harmed by our use of political embargos;

WHEREAS, The blending of foreign matter into our grain by US exporters has also caused tremendous damage to our reputation;

BE IT RESOLVED, There must be a total end of political embargos, and we must stop the intentional contamination of high quality grain and all agricultural and food products with foreign matter as first steps to re-establishing us as a reliable, quality supplier.

WHEREAS, Third World development assistance by multi-lateral agencies, such as the World Bank and the IMF, are often based on austerity measures, which reduce the potential market for US goods in affected countries, and on the replacement of farming to meet local food needs with cash crops for exports, often in direct competition with US farmers;

BE IT RESOLVED, The US should not participate in multi-lateral agencies who impose austerity measures which deliberately lower the standard of living or which encourage the displacement of food crops grown for local consumption with cash crops grown for exports;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, US resources should not be used to encourage increased export competition with the expressed purpose of maintaining and increasing profit to US Banks that have loaned money to these countries.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Provisions in the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade which protect domestic supply management programs for unrestricted imports must be maintained and strengthened in the upcoming round of CAPT negotiations.

CONSERVATION AND PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT

WHEREAS, Low farm prices set by federal farm legislation have forced many producers to attempt to maximize yields in order to maintain adequate cashflow to pay their bills;

WHEREAS, The system of deficiency payment subsidies has been based on the number of bushels produced, thereby encouraging producers to maximize yields to receive the largest subsidy possible;

WHEREAS, This intensification of production has included the plowing and planting of unsuitable land, including wetlands, fragile prairies, and other highly erodible land causing severe soil erosion problems;

WHEREAS, This intensification of production has included the overuse of fertilizers and chemicals, often resulting in contamination of our water;

BE IT RESOLVED, That set-aside acres once designated cannot be used as such again until all other cropable acres of that farm have been set aside, without the permission of the county committee;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That proper land stewardship must be practiced;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Farm commodity programs which force producers to intensify their production, including the setting of low prices and payment of subsidies based on quantity produced, must be abolished.

WHEREAS, Insufficient farm income makes it impossible for family producers to maintain adequate conservation measures on their land;

BE IT RESOLVED, Producers must receive a great enough return for their crops and livestock to maintain and improve soil and water conservation measures, in addition to covering costs of production and family living.

WHEREAS, Below cost of production feedgrain price has resulted in the elimination of many family beef and dairy operations and the replacement of their grazing cattle with crop production of corn, soybeans, or wheat;

WHEREAS, These crops are often environmentally inappropriate for the hillsides and prairies where cattle once grazed, resulting in immediate and significant soil erosion and water contamination problems;

WHEREAS, This uncontrolled irrigation has greatly increased the production of crops of which we already have large unsold stocks;

BE IT RESOLVED, Irrigation expansion should be controlled at the state level to protect precious water supplies and to prevent the further expansion of crops of which we now have unsold stocks;

WHEREAS, Federal farm policies that keep seed grain prices below the cost of production place family beef and dairy producers at a disadvantage;

BE IT RESOLVED, Cheap grain policies must be eliminated, and policies to encourage the re-introduction of cattle in place of crops where environmentally appropriate must be implemented;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the enormous damage already caused by the elimination of cattle in certain region requires immediate remedial action, including educational programs for producers and assistance to local soil conservation programs.

WHEREAS, Increased pollution of water and soil from pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers possess a threat to society;

BE IT RESOLVED, That stricter standards for testing and licensing of all these products be established and all entities, including government agencies, be required to meet the same standards and be accountable for the testing and licensing of these products.

WHEREAS, Disposal of toxic and hazardous materials are damaging human health and the environment;

BE IT RESOLVED, That all waste shall be disposed of responsibly, or not produced at all.

WHEREAS, Many traditional pesticides, herbicides, and fertilizers are proving to have damaging environmental and health effects;

WHEREAS, Farmers seek alternatives to these products;

BE IT RESOLVED, That increased research and education be undertaken in USDA, Land Grant colleges, and other educational facilities in biological farming, appropriate small farm technology, transitional and non-chemical practices.

WHEREAS, Any repository for nuclear or other waste could place farmland and water resources in jeopardy for representative sites;

BE IT RESOLVED, No repository can be located in any area where aquifers or surface water supplies or productive farmland can be contaminated. A safe above ground site shall be determined;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this Farm Congress endorse the efforts of the National Nuclear Waste Task Force in asking for deletion of funds to Department of Energy until a safe above ground storage is proven safe;

BE IT RESOLVED, That no entity, private, corporate, or government, be allowed to evade its criminal or civil responsibility, by any means including bankruptcy, for the pollution or degradation of natural resources.

WHEREAS, The new Conservation Reserve program and new swamp and sodbuster prohibitions are steps in the right direction of long-term soil and water preservation;

WHEREAS, Proposals for Conservation Easements would also be very beneficial to both producers and future generations;

BE IT RESOLVED, The Conservation Reserve program should be expanded, including the increasing of funding to insure that producers are fairly compensated, and a Conservation Easement program should be implemented to further protect our future food supply;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That current deficiencies in the administration of the existing Conservation Reserve program, including the exclusion of highly erodible land which is currently under conservation practice, and problems with the sod and swampbuster programs be addressed by state as well as federal agencies.

WHEREAS, The takeover of land by insurance companies, the federal government, other lending institutions, and absentee landowners has proven to be disastrous for soil and water conservation efforts;

BE IT RESOLVED, That all efforts be made to keep farmland in the hands of family producers, and to enforce strict conservation requirements on all land foreclosed or repossessed by government or private lenders;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That land foreclosed by FHA, Farm Credit System or insurance companies shall be taken out of production for 10 years unless the original owner can redeem.

WHEREAS, Current utilization of oil, high sulfur coal and nuclear energy creates environmental contamination and waste disposal problems; and

WHEREAS, High oil imports cost this nation \$40 billion and up annually;

WHEREAS, Proper technology is now available to develop a strong conservation program in the process;

BE IT RESOLVED, That a program should be developed that will have a sustainable food and energy system to utilize farm products for food and fuel that will also enhance conservation of soil and water, and air quality.

WHEREAS, Water resources are insufficient in quantity and quality in different areas of the country;

BE IT RESOLVED, There must be adequate funding for PL 566, and that expenditure priorities be given towards construction of facilities rather than administration in drought areas.

LAND OWNERSHIP AND CONTROL

WHEREAS, The ownership and control over their land is the most fundamental need and right of family farmers and ranchers;

WHEREAS, Farmers and ranchers have been losing their land at a record pace in recent years;

WHEREAS; Black and other minority farmers have faced this crisis much longer and more intensely than others, and now face total extinction within the decade if current policies do not change;

BE IT RESOLVED, National policies must be changed to maintain a maximum number of owner-operated family farms and ranches;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Specific land reform measures must be established to assist displaced producers to get back into agriculture;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Special assistance to limited resource farmers must be strengthened.

WHEREAS, Black farmers are losing their land two-and-one-half times faster than white farmers, with the real danger that there will be no Black farmers left by the year 2000;

WHEREAS, The 1982 US Civil Rights Commission study, entitled "The Decline of Black Farming in America," reported many actions and inactions on the part of USDA, and particularly the Farmers Home Administration, that have contributed to this problem;

WHEREAS, Black farmers face the same problems as all other farmers, including low prices and high interest rates, and they must face the additional problems of racism and discrimination;

BE IT RESOLVED, Discrimination and FmHA and Farm Credit System practices must end immediately, and there must be more minority personnel within these agencies, especially at the county decision-making level, and more minority representation on ASCS, FmHA, and other agricultural advisory committees;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Special programs through the 1890 Land Grant Colleges and community based organizations should be established to provide special technical assistance services for each county to assist minority, small, and low income producers;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That in the southeast, after offering land in the FmHA inventory to the original owners for repurchase, no less than 20% of this land be made available to new and existing Black farmers with adequate financing;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, The Department of Justice must insure that the rights of all minorities to equal opportunities in dealings with agricultural lenders and programs, public and private, are protected.

WHEREAS, The Native American people in the United States have lost over 88 million acres of land since 1887;

WHEREAS, The Native American farmers and ranchers are losing their lands because of liquidation and foreclosure, and that literally thousands of these Indian ranchers are being forced to vacate their ranches and farms; and

WHEREAS, The tribal economies of these agricultural tribes are facing receivership and bankruptcy;

BE IT RESOLVED, That national policies be established to deal with Native American governments to insure that Indian owner-operators be maintained.

WHEREAS, The current economic crisis in agriculture is forcing many producers to sell their farms at extremely low prices;

WHEREAS, Many of these farms are being bought by non-farm investors, lending institutions, and foreign corporations;

BE IT RESOLVED, All efforts be made to restrict and control foreign and non-farm corporate ownership of farmland, including the strengthening of existing anti-corporate ownership laws.

WHEREAS, In the 1930's a great deal of land was foreclosed on and then resold to the original owners or sold to others without the mineral rights, which was a grave injustice;

BE IT RESOLVED, Mineral rights should stay with the land.

WHEREAS, Lenders are repossessing huge amounts of agricultural land in every state of the nation;

WHEREAS, Farmers being displaced are victims of our government's policy of rigged low prices;

WHEREAS, Land reform is essential to putting families back on farms;

BE IT RESOLVED, Land foreclosed by any lender be resold to the original owner or, with their permission, to immediate family.

WHEREAS, The US government has increased and continues to increase its acquisition of private lands through foreclosures and repossessions;

WHEREAS, The US government's acquisition of private lands, increases taxes to its citizens by reducing the revenues to local communities;

BE IT RESOLVED, All efforts be made toward the return of government-owned agricultural and timber lands acquired by foreclosure or repossession. Where possible, this land should be made available through a new "National Homestead Act."

WHEREAS, Tenant farmers who have developed their rented land in order to build up their bases, often lose access to this land,

BE IT RESOLVED, Tenant farmers must not suffer economic hardships when they lose their rented land, and some adjustment shall be made in future farm programs for tenant farmers to obtain a "qualifying base" on newly rented land.

WHEREAS, The Federal Government is growing crops on military bases;

BE IT RESOLVED, The Government shall be prohibited from growing crops or leasing such military land;

WHEREAS, Currently a significant number of agricultural land acres are being developed for non-agricultural uses;

WHEREAS, Taxes on agricultural land in many areas are based on values other than the agricultural value of the land;

WHEREAS, The accelerated and non-restrictive development of land for permanent non-agricultural purposes is detrimental to the nation;

BE IT RESOLVED, The government should offer incentives to farmland owners to keep their land in agriculture.

WHEREAS, BLM and Forestry Departments are systematically denying permit holders water rights and erosion control improvements and denying existing grazing rights;

BE IT RESOLVED, Federal and state governments shall take steps to insure protection of the land and grazing rights.

RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

WHEREAS, The ripple effects of low farm prices are being felt all across rural America, as businesses, schools, churches, and local governments are hurt by farmers inability to shop, support their children, or to pay their bills or taxes;

WHEREAS, This has led to the closing of many rural and agriculture-related businesses, banks, churches, hospitals and other community services, thereby creating the loss of many jobs;

WHEREAS, This loss of businesses and community services has led to the destruction of whole towns, and the forced exodus of rural residents to the cities in search of work and adequate services;

WHEREAS, The de-population of rural America is enormously wasteful, with the abandonment of existing rural community infrastructure, like schools, houses, roads, sewers, and business facilities on the one hand, and on the other hand creating the need to build new facilities in our already over-crowded cities;

BE IT RESOLVED, All federal, state, and local policies encouraging the de-population of rural America be reformed immediately, and that new policies be enacted to stabilize, and ultimately to increase the number of farm families on the land.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED; Emergency assistance should be made available to currently ineligible persons, like displaced farmers and small business owners, and that special assistance to these individuals be provided by both state and federal governments;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Food stamps, fuel assistance, and other government assistance programs should be made available to all rural people in need, and all factors which often make farmers and business people ineligible for these programs should be removed;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, The United States Congress shall continue to provide adequate funds to FmHA's Farmer and Housing programs, and insure that they are operated as they were originally intended; to help rural citizens;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the US Congress continue to provide adequate funds for the Economic Development Administration, the Soil Conservation Service, the Cooperative Extension Service and other federal agencies important to the rural economy and our way of life.

WHEREAS, The production of raw materials for processing is currently the least profitable link in the food and feedstocks chain;

BE IT RESOLVED, Processing plants, ethanol production facilities and other value-added industries should be established in rural feedstock areas;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That Federal, state and local governments enact policies that facilitate financial security for locally controlled cooperatives. Furthermore, policies should be enacted that are supportive of interstate compacts, and that assist farmers to locally produce, process and market new and existing crops.

WHEREAS, Nearly one-third of our nation's citizens and voters live in rural America, outside of cities and suburbs;

WHEREAS, Rural people have suffered a great deal under the current economic and fiscal programs of our government, with very little say in the decisions which deeply affect our families and our future;

WHEREAS; The US Constitution and Bill of Rights guarantees each and every person the right and responsibility of political participation, providing us with peaceful, non-violent means of changing government policies and practices which we find harmful to ourselves and our communities;

BE IT RESOLVED, In order to reverse current economic and social policies designed to liquidate many family farmers and ranchers, and to replace these with Parity Farm programs policies which will restore profitability to family agriculture and prosperity to America, rural residents must actively participate in electoral and grassroots politics;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That to achieve true economic and political democracy in rural America, hired non-family workers in agriculture must receive a fair wage and be afforded the same protective legislation in the areas of unemployment insurance, minimum wage, and health and safety standards in the workplace, and child labor and those rights enjoyed by other workers under the provisions of the National Labor Relations Act;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Rural citizens should reject all calls for violent confrontations and all attempts to blame particular religious or ethnic groups for the rural economic crisis.

TAX AND FISCAL POLICIES

WHEREAS, Instead of insuring farmers and ranchers of fair prices in the marketplace, Congress has often enacted tax loopholes supposedly to help producers, but which have primarily benefited non-farm investors and speculators who are buying out family operators forced out by the crisis;

WHEREAS, Tax loopholes, and write-offs against non-farm income, have enabled non-farm investors to unfairly compete against family operators, who must earn their living from selling their production at a profit, not by "farming the tax system";

BE IT RESOLVED, The current efforts to change the federal tax law should include the elimination of non-farm income write-off provisions and all tax incentives for non-farm investors;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Tax incentives for all sustainable agricultural practices (including forestry and fishing), and soil/water conservation measures should be expanded;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Tax advantages to foreclosures must be eliminated.

WHEREAS, Rural communities are facing extreme shortfalls in tax revenues at the same time that demands for public service are increasing;

WHEREAS, The current system of basing school district funding on property taxes is creating an enormous burden on property owner;

BE IT RESOLVED, School district financing should be based increasingly on progressive state income taxes;

BE IF FURTHER RESOLVED, Property taxes should be altered to be based on productive value of the land;

WHEREAS, Federal budget deficits are placing an enormous drain on the credit markets of the United States and around the world, driving up interest rates to farmers and the rest of society;

WHEREAS, This deficit is caused by a combination of government spending, tax loopholes which have allowed corporations and wealthy individuals to avoid paying their fair share, and a lack of earned income in the economy thereby reducing tax revenues;

WHEREAS, One of the largest expense items creating this deficit is the fraud, waste and runaway budget of the Pentagon. Some of these Pentagon expenditures are also used to support exploitative foreign regimes under which cheap labor ultimately deprives American workers of their jobs;

WHEREAS, Wasteful deficiency payment subsidies used to subsidize US farm exports are a huge part of the deficit, equaling nearly twice the entire amount of Gramm-Rudman cuts in 1986;

WHEREAS, The Gramm-Rudman bill is making the situation worse, by diverting the public attention from the real causes of the crisis, and by forcing cuts in specific programs of enormous benefit to the economy;

WHEREAS, The only long-term solution to the budget crisis is to restore prosperity to all sectors of our economy, including agriculture and other raw material sectors, not just to defense corporations and multi-national banks;

BE IT RESOLVED, The Gramm-Rudman Act should be repealed, and all cuts made be immediately restored;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the federal deficit be reduced by a combination of savings through reduction in Pentagon budgets, elimination of farm deficiency payment subsidies, once parity prices are received in the marketplace, closing of tax loopholes, and fiscal responsibility in government;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That policymakers concentrate on restoring prosperity to the entire country as the primary means of resolving the federal budget deficit crisis.

WHEREAS, Inheritance tax remains a barrier to the passing of family farms and ranches down to daughters and sons who want to continue as agricultural producers;

BE IT RESOLVED, Inheritance tax law must be reformed to encourage the passing of farms and ranches down between generations.

WHEREAS, Changes in the tax laws have a significant effect on production agriculture and rural communities;

BE IT RESOLVED, An impact statement, addressing the economic consequences of prospective changes in the tax law, be prepared by Congressional policymakers 180 days in advance of their consideration.

WHEREAS, Financial losses incurred by agricultural producers are placing many financial institutions in danger of collapse;

BE IT RESOLVED, Agriculture producers be permitted to exchange certain tax losses from previous years in lieu of their agriculture debt to lending institutions;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, These lending institutions be allowed to utilize these credits to offset future income taxes, thereby averting the need for continued capital infusion into financially troubled agricultural lending institutions.

FOOD ASSISTANCE, QUALITY, AND SAFETY

WHEREAS, Hunger and malnutrition have increased dramatically in the United States and around the world, both among urban and rural people and farm families;

WHEREAS, Private efforts to serve the hungry, including food banks, pantries and other community efforts are taxed beyond their capacity;

WHEREAS, Local community efforts for feeding the hungry should be supported with food and financial means to address local needs;

WHEREAS, Stored surpluses of grain and commodities should be released for distribution to domestic and foreign food programs with mandatory accountability;

WHEREAS, Millions of men, women, and children who qualify for food assistance are unaware of these programs and are wrongly denied benefits;

WHEREAS, Regulations need to be changed at federal levels; County Supervisor interpretations and education of the farmer and Department of Family Services office workers should be mandatory, uniform and nationwide;

WHEREAS, Non-producing assets should be deleted from state and federal regulations, and qualification for assistance shall be based on taxable income base;

BE IT RESOLVED, The entire Food Stamp program shall be reviewed and revised nationwide immediately;

BE IT RESOLVED, Each state delegation at this Farmer and Rancher Congress elect one representative to oversee regulations, organizations, and agencies which affect our agricultural industry.

BE IT RESOLVED, Food assistance by both state and federal governments should be expanded to insure that no persons go hungry or malnourished. Stored unsold stocks should be released to foreign and domestic food.

WHEREAS, The introduction of artificial food products, chemical additives, and food irradiation is expanding quite rapidly, often without regard to full safety considerations;

BE IT RESOLVED, Strict health standards be applied to any and all food products, additives, and processes, including imports, and that economic and social factors be considered before approval is given to these products.

WHEREAS, Synthetic bovine growth hormones (BGH) are currently being reviewed for authorization for commercial release;

WHEREAS, Specific reservations about this technology exist, including effects on human and animal health, high costs of the products and projected increase cost to taxpayer, and the further lowering of milk prices paid to producers, destroying the rural economy in our dairy regions;

BE IT RESOLVED, Authorization of commercial release of BGH be deferred and demand that Congress study and consider the full range of consequences before any authorization of BGH or any other synthetic growth hormones.

WHEREAS, Prices paid to farmers must be increased to protect family farmers and ranchers and to keep our food system out of the hands of speculators and corporations;

WHEREAS, Experience has shown that food processors and distributors have raised retail food prices dramatically whenever farmers have attempted to get fair prices, primarily to pit consumers against farmers;

WHEREAS, Retail food prices have continued to rise, even when farm prices have fallen, further alienating farmers and consumers;

BE IT RESOLVED, Processors and distributors must not be permitted to raise retail food prices beyond any actual increase in raw agricultural products which result from price increase in the marketplace due to the enactment of a Parity Farm program;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Congress should investigate the price fixing practices of the food industry, and expand anti-trust legislation to allow farmers and ranchers to sue for damages when hurt by monopoly control;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, A mutual education program between farmers and consumers be established to improve communications and cooperation, including the use of commodity promotion funds for this purpose.

WHEREAS, The restoration of fair prices in the marketplace to farmers will add approximately \$14 billion to the nearly 350 billion dollars spent on food in the United States, an approximate increase of 4%;

WHEREAS, This additional cost may be a burden to the unemployed and others who are unable to support themselves at this time;

WHEREAS, The restoration of fair prices in the marketplace will save approximately \$35 billion in deficiency payment subsidies in 1986;

BE IT RESOLVED, A significant portion of the funds saved by restoring fair farm prices will be used to purchase US farm products to greatly expand our food assistance programs, including food stamps, WIC, and the school milk and lunch programs to insure that low-income families will not be hurt;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Food Assistance program regulations should be reviewed and revised to insure unified and fair national and state regulations. To assure this takes place, the House Select Committee on Hunger must be re-instated.

WHEREAS, Low farm prices have forced many producers to greatly expand their use of fertilizers and chemicals in hopes of expanding production;

WHEREAS, There have been numerous incidents of poisoning of farmers, farmworkers, food handlers, and consumers caused by chemical residues;

WHEREAS, There is increasing market demand for alternative production methods including low-spray and organic methods;

BE IT RESOLVED, Public safety will become a more primary consideration in the promotion of new production methods;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Alternatives to energy and chemical intensive methods of production, including organic and integrated pest management alternatives, must be encouraged especially if it will lower costs of production and increase health and well-being, including expanded research, training, and extension through the private sector as well as through state and federal governments.

WHEREAS, Retail food prices have continued to rise while prices paid to farmers have fallen;

WHEREAS, The end result of this injustice is the farmer's share of the food dollar falling, while food prices are at record levels;

BE IT RESOLVED, Farmers and consumers should work together in local, producer controlled marketing cooperatives to lower food costs and to raise the price received by producers, thereby increasing the farmer's share of the food dollar.

RESOLUTION ON EDUCATION ISSUES

WHEREAS, There is great need for understanding the Farm Crisis and its effects on hunger and the economy of the nation and the welfare of this nation's people;

WHEREAS, The income from raw materials produced by agriculture industries turns over 5 to 7 times in the economy;

BE IT RESOLVED, That the economics of agriculture and its importance to the well being of our nation be taught as an essential component at all levels of our education system.

WHEREAS, The research and extension programs of 1862 and 1890 Land Grant Colleges are too often based on a "bigger is better" and a "60 is too old" philosophy and do not utilize the existing resources and skills of the rural citizens;

WHEREAS, Agricultural research and extension programs do not adequately serve small, minority and limited resource farmers;

BE IT RESOLVED, That taxpayer funded research and extension programs must be monitored by farmers to assure that they serve the interests of family farms, and that they are operated without discrimination.

WHEREAS, It is important that the issues facing rural America, and values which underlie rural life be understood by all Americans;

WHEREAS, The media plays a critical educational role in communicating and explaining these issues and values;

BE IT RESOLVED, That all research and development work carried out in the Land Grant College System must be publicly funded and that at least 50 percent of the R & D budget be allocated to the development of sustainable or regenerative alternatives to present agricultural practices;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That each Congress delegate shall develop a clear strategy for publicizing the results of the Congress when they return home. This should include a "Letter to the Editor" campaign and personal and ongoing outreach to all area media contacts;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That farm groups work with their local media to provide ongoing assistance and resources in covering agricultural issues, and in presenting clear and realistic portrayal of rural life and rural values;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That farm groups must develop educational outreach and exchange programs that will communicate our concerns to urban citizens;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That local rural media outlets must take on the role of providing a "grassroots" communication network on keys issues, and providing information on crisis resources and assistance.

DROUGHT IN THE SOUTHEAST

WHEREAS, Farmers in the Southeast are hit by the worst drought in a century;

WHEREAS, This drought disaster is on top of the worst farm economic disaster in 50 years;

WHEREAS, Farmers and rural communities will be losing millions of dollars in lost crop income;

WHEREAS, In many counties as much as 90-100% of the main cash crops have been lost;

WHEREAS, The exodus of family farmers off their land is accelerating to five times the rate of past years in the Southeast;

WHEREAS, Present government programs are totally inadequate first putting farmers in jeopardy with government imposed low prices, offering only more loans as relief;

WHEREAS, The need for direct assistance through hay, grain and seed relief will continue to be needed into the spring and even fall of 1987;

WHEREAS, Farmers from the Midwest, North, West and all over our country, who are in desperate need themselves due to the present farm economic depression, have opened their hearts and created a mass movement "farmer to farmer" providing relief and setting an example for government and the rest of the nation;

WHEREAS, Farmers have demonstrated to the country what can be done if we unite and join together in finding help and solutions for our emergencies;

WHEREAS, Grain bins in the Midwest are overflowing while farmers are starving;

BE IT RESOLVED, That an immediate moratorium on all farm and home foreclosures and forced liquidations be enacted;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the federal government make surplus and stored grain available to limited resource farmers at no cost, based on loss and assessed need, but without counting any crop insurance payments; this is done to provide relief to Southeast farmers, create an opportunity for higher prices for Midwest farmers and lower taxpayer costs;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That our "farmer to farmer" efforts to provide donated hay and grain to farmers in need, must continue and build upon the strength of uniting farmers across geographic, racial and commodity lines; and which has shown the power of joint involvement of community organizations, churches, labor unions and citizens groups cooperating to solve problems; and which has the power to generate a more permanent and lasting government supported and financed solution to the drought and other problems facing family farmers in the Southeast.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the US Senate pass H. R. 5288 emergency drought legislation, with the inclusion of the following list of specific changes,

PROPOSED CHANGES IN HR 5288--

--09/04/86

Section 2. DEFINITIONS: Add "hail damage" or "excessive hail damage" to the list of disasters in 2. (1).

Section 3. EMERGENCY FEED DONATIONS: In 3 (a) add language which distinguishes between contract growers and integrators so that the benefits go directly to the contract growers, esp. in poultry and swine operations. In 3 (b) (1) (A and B) add language to clarify and specify what conditions apply to the Secretary's waiver of the 72-hour supply rule and how the reasonable expectation of significant losses will be determined.

Section 4. EMERGENCY LIVESTOCK FEED ASSISTANCE: In 4 (a) (1) add language which extends this coverage to individual farmers and ranchers who demonstrate need even if they are not located in officially designated disaster counties; and change the reimbursement level from 50 percent of cost to 80 percent of cost.

Section 5. DISASTER PAYMENT PROGRAM: In 5 (a) add to the list of covered producers so that it includes hay, tobacco, orchards, vegetable crops, etc.

Section 6. MILK PROGRAM PRODUCER ASSESSMENTS: Change the language of 6 (a) and (b) so that milk producers do not incur double assessment payments or so that the payments are deferred until the end of the program.

Section 7. COST-SHARING FOR SOIL CONSERVATION ETC: In 7 (b) change "not less than 50 percent" to "100 percent."

Section 8. PAYMENTS: No changes suggested in the meeting.

Section 9. CREDIT FOREBEARANCE: In 9 (1) and (2) the existing "should" and "are encouraged" soft language to "must" and "are required" language. In addition, insert a formula, such as commodity prices falling below x level, which will specifically determine when an area is considered an economic or natural disaster area.

Section 10. COORDINATION OF ASSISTANCE EFFORTS: This whole section should be redrafted from its present "sense of Congress" form into specific legislation to bring the coordination of agricultural disaster assistance into line with the assistance coordination structures already used by FEMA in other kinds of disaster assistance.

DIRECT ACTION

As a result of the United Farmer and Rancher Congress non-violent DIRECT ACTION will be taken coordinated nationwide through a national phone tree headed by the Congress State Coordinator with local input to:

- A. Bring attention to the urgency of the national rural crisis with the citing of specific solutions.
- B. Educate, solicit and mobilize urban and rural support--domestic and international.
- C. Elect pro-family farm candidates on a non-partisan basis.
- D. Lobby and impact state and national legislation.

In conclusion, all people are encouraged to be COURAGEOUS, AFFIRMING, INVOLVED, CREATIVE, and SPECIFIC when addressing DIRECT ACTION.

*Note this committee recommends that the Coordinators of this Congress compile and distribute a book of successful local direct action with resourceful people listed.

ACTION WORKSHOP

As delegates to the United Farmer and Rancher Congress, we affirm the following strategies, tactics, and programs as appropriate and necessary for dealing with lenders.

1. Adocate and counseling programs.
2. Crisis hotlines.
3. A national clearinghouse and coordinating body to disseminate information and provide training on farm credit advocacy.
4. State legislation that is protective of debtors including the right of first refusal to lease or repurchase foreclosed land.
5. The use of stockholder leverage within the Farm Credit System.
6. Affirmation of the use of lawsuits to defend farmers from foreclosure and halt illegal acts by lenders.
7. Farmers should take the offensive in negotiations.
8. Use of publicity and public sensitivity to expose unfair credit practices and support reform efforts.
9. A limit on the time allowed for the processing of loan applications and decisions made on farmer proposals presented for restructuring.
10. An end to creditor intimidation of farmers.
11. Reaffirmation of the argument that it often costs lenders more to foreclose than to negotiate and restructure in good faith.
12. Continuous, vigorous and ongoing public education of farmers on their legal rights.

SUMMARY OF FARM VOTE '86 MEETING

1. Show the nation that rural people are a powerful force through a non-partisan rural voter turnout campaign.
2. Convince the winners of the November elections that the rural vote is powerful, thereby making them more accountable to their rural constituency.
3. Need for the participants of the United Farmer and Rancher Congress to come out with a unified national press effort to raise the power of rural voters.

NATIONAL, STATE-WIDE AND LOCAL MEDIA STRATEGY

The objective is to hold GOTV countywide meetings in all rural counties in 15 targeted farm states on the Sunday afternoon prior to the November 4 elections. These meetings would be organized around a 30 minute "Get Out The Vote" satellite broadcast where nationally known individuals talking about the importance of participating in the electoral process and encourage viewers/participants in the country meetings to join in the national Farm Vote '86 campaign. On the following day, Farm Vote '86 volunteers would take a list of 20 or more identified likely voters and call in advance of the election to make sure they vote.

MINORITY REPORT

ECONOMIC & POLITICAL DEFENSE OF THE FEDERAL RESERVE SYSTEM

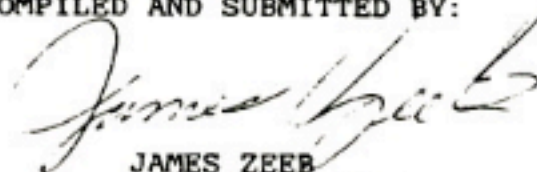
PART II

The Resolution contained in the U.F.R.C. credit platform calling for repeal of the Federal Reserve Act of 1913 is not in the best interest of our nation's agricultural economy. Such action would destabilize both credit resources and the general agriculture economy by creating a pork barrel economy in which the wealthy and politically powerful could control both national, fiscal and monetary policy.

An independent Federal Reserve, free from the direct political tom-foolery of Congress and the Presidency is most able to administer and regulate for the good of all classes of Americans. Controlling and regulating a stagnant and sick economy as we are experiencing today, is no way to win friends. Many diverse groups of Americans blame everything on the Federal Reserve from trade imbalance to inflation. The fact is that the Federal Reserve must administer its policy in an imperfect world made more imperfect by runaway Congressional deficit spending, ill-advised trade policy, catastrophic farm programs, unfair tax policy, etc. The "Fed", in effect of all this, becomes a national lightning rod for the political storms brewing now throughout our nation among many diverse groups of Americans. The Federal Reserve may not be perfectly innocent on all counts, but it does often take unwarranted criticism that would be more appropriately directed at Congress.

We in the farm movements need to launch a public education program to enlighten some of our fellow farmers. Some of our friends and neighbors are obsessed so deeply with the abuses of the Federal Reserve, they have their eyes closed to abuses in other sectors of society and government.

COMPILED AND SUBMITTED BY:



JAMES ZEEB

ILLINOIS DELEGATE, U.F.R.C.
RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE MEMBER

MINORITY REPORT

INFLUENCE ON COALITIONS OF U.F.R.C. PARAGRAPH FIFTEEN OF CREDIT PLATFORM

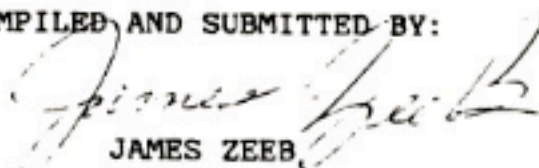
PART III

Progressive farm organizations including friends in organized labor, advocacy groups, anti-defamation leagues, etc. have come to be wary of the call to abolish the Federal Reserve. In some instances, those individuals and groups making the call are motivated by a demented, extremist, political philosophy that encompasses anti-Semitism, anti-Catholicism, and a twisted belief in the dynamics of local economies and local law as the highest order of government. While, certainly, not all advocating an end to the Federal Reserve System are extremist in their political beliefs, "abolishing the Fed" has become synonymous with right-wing, para-military, hate peddlers to many politically active Americans.

Since most of our efforts in organizing coalitions are directed at those people and groups of the more liberal political persuasion, it becomes imperative to discourage the obsession some of our farmers have with abolishing the Federal Reserve System. I doubt many of our farmers could ever hope to qualify as bona fide, first order, extremists, we must be vigilant, nevertheless, in the tone we set in our farm policy. The inclusion of paragraph fifteen of the credit policy of the U.F.R.C. is so inconsistent with the message of the total policy draft, it is somewhat ludicrous. However, the first question emerging from our liberal St. Louis friends was, "Why are farmers so inconsistent in their political beliefs?" "Where are they really, in the political spectrum?"

It is doubt that will prevent successful coalition building. We need more awareness in our farm ranks about the value of good, consistent, political platforms so our friends in organized labor and other supporting groups see us as solid in our political stance and style. Repeal of the Federal Reserve Act of 1913, as is written in the Credit Policy of the U.F.R.C. Platform, makes us appear a trifle confused, if not downright wacko!

COMPILED AND SUBMITTED BY:



JAMES ZEEB

ILLINOIS REPRESENTATIVE TO RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE