

10 MYTHS FROM THE MAINSTREAM MEDIA ABOUT U.S. FARM POLICY

- 1** – **Myth:** Rich farmers get all the money from the Farm Bill.
• **Reality:** Sixty-eight percent of the Farm Bill goes to nutrition programs. Eleven percent goes to farm commodity programs. And eight percent goes to conservation programs.
- 2** – **Myth:** Farmers don't need government support. They're getting rich off rising food prices.
• **Reality:** Farmers receive less than 20 cents of the food dollar. Costs of production have skyrocketed. Since 2002, farm expenses have increased 45 percent.
- 3** – **Myth:** Rich farmers benefit the most from the Farm Bill.
• **Reality:** Big agribusiness companies like Monsanto, Cargill and Archer Daniels Midland are the big winners. They reap the bounty, while farmers do the work and take the risk.
- 4** – **Myth:** Only rich farmers receive subsidies.
• **Reality:** Middle and small scale family farmers also receive subsidies—and in some ways are more reliant on them to survive when times get tough.
- 5** – **Myth:** If we eliminated subsidies, the market would level the playing field for family farmers.
• **Reality:** Without ensuring a fair price, family farmers would more easily succumb to market volatility.
- 6** – **Myth:** Farm subsidies are the main problem with the Farm Bill.
• **Reality:** Price deregulation is the problem with the Farm Bill. Instead of targeting subsidies, the Farm Bill should ensure farmers receive a fair price from big agribusiness companies, and consumers are not gouged at the supermarket.
- 7** – **Myth:** Our current farm programs are outdated fossils from the Great Depression.
• **Reality:** Our current farm programs are nothing like what was passed in the 1930s, which ensured farmers a fair price, cost taxpayers little and required conservation measures to qualify. Our current programs are a result of the disastrous 1996 Farm Bill, which removed the last pillars of the New Deal farm program.
- 8** – **Myth:** The Bush Administration was the voice of reason pushing to cut subsidies for rich farmers.
• **Reality:** The Bush Administration insisted on keeping a certain type of subsidy that went to farmers, regardless of price, because it was legal under World Trade Organization rules. The reason? Because they want to strike a WTO deal for their big business friends before they leave office.
- 9** – **Myth:** Farmers benefit from expanded exports.
• **Reality:** Farmers don't export. Grain companies like Cargill and Archer Daniels Midland do. These companies make a habit of buying low and selling high and are reaping record profits.
- 10** – **Myth:** Agriculture doesn't deserve special treatment from government.
• **Reality:** Food is different than computers or car parts. It is essential for life and health. Food production has an enormous impact on the land, water and air. Farming is inherently risky, full of unknowns like bad weather, pests, disease and price volatility. It is in all our interest that government, rather than agribusiness, helps to manage agriculture.