



INSTITUTE FOR AGRICULTURE AND TRADE POLICY
2105 FIRST AVENUE SOUTH
MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA 55404 USA

PRESS RELEASE

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Contact: Andi McDaniel, 612 871-1521, andi@rtcinfo.org
Ben Lilliston, 612-870-3416, blilliston@iatp.org

New Book Features Agrarian Landscapes in North America and Europe

Farming Plays Crucial Role in Biodiversity, Cultural Heritage

Minneapolis – A new book looks at farm landscapes across Europe and North America emphasizing the beauty and benefits of these regions while highlighting common challenges and solutions shared by the two continents.

The book, *Values of Agrarian Landscapes: Across Europe and North America*, is a project of the Centre for Agriculture and Environment based in the Netherlands, and Renewing the Countryside and the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy (IATP) based in the Minnesota.

The 144-page book is full of great photographs and historical insight. It takes the reader from the Dutch peat lowlands to the Montana prairie, from the Iberian Peninsula to the Hawaiian Islands, including interviews with local farmers, politicians and conservationists. Readers will also meet unique animals like the Black-tailed Godwit, the Iberian Lynx, and the Blue-Winged Teal.

The benefits of the landscapes are common to both continents – habitat for wildlife, absorption of rainfall, cultural heritage and social connections. Both continents also use a series of public policies and incentives to foster more sustainable development in the regions where the landscapes exist, and explore private initiatives by landowners, farmers, businesses, conservationists, and communities.

“Agrarian landscapes are integral to the way we live in both Europe and North America,” said IATP President Mark Ritchie. “Left to the free market they will continue to disappear, with consequences to both countries’ lands and people. This book is crucial to the debate over our future—no environmentalist, policymaker, planner, organizer, or politician should be without it.”

“As a society, we often overlook the multiple values that agrarian landscapes can provide,” said Jan Joannides, Executive Director of Renewing the Countryside. “We think in terms of the products coming off the fields, and neglect the other values - majestic landscapes, biodiversity, critical wildlife habitat. Furthermore, these landscapes often hold important meaning to us from a cultural perspective.”

The book concludes with a series of policy recommendations designed to support farm landscapes on both continents. These recommendations include: 1) fair market prices that reflect

costs on efficient small and moderate-sized farms; 2) encourage sustainable agriculture; 3) support landscapes and conservation; 4) green space and landscape protection from urban sprawl; 5) private initiatives such as regional labels and agritourism; 6) innovation through improved research, testing and public education.

“Thank you so much for the wonderful book,” said Bill Vorley, of the International Institute for Environment and Development based in Great Britain. “This is a masterpiece in its own right, and a breakthrough in global consciousness raising.”

Agrarian Landscapes was published by Reed Business Publishers in Amsterdam and can be ordered online at: <http://store.rtcmarket.org> or by calling 1-866-378-0587. For a review copy, reporters and reviewers can contact Andi McDaniel at 612 871-1521, andi@rtcinfo.org.

The Centre for Agriculture and Environment (CLM) is a Dutch foundation aiming at the promotion of a sustainable, multifunctional agriculture and at improving the relationship between the farming community and society - clm.nl.

Renewing the Countryside strengthens rural areas by championing and supporting rural communities, farmers, artists, entrepreneurs, educators, activists and other people who are renewing the countryside through sustainable and innovative initiatives, businesses and projects - renewingthecountryside.org.

The Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy works globally to promote resilient family farms, communities and ecosystems through research and education, science and technology, and advocacy. Find out more at - iatp.org.

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