



## *A Dialogue on Food and Agriculture in the 21st Century*

### Frequently asked questions

#### ***What is the Dialogue Project?***

Organized and lead by Farm Foundation, NFP, the Dialogue Project will generate opportunities for stakeholders across a broad spectrum of perspectives to deliberate on food and agriculture issues, and the alternative policies and approaches to deal with those issues. The intent is to reduce polarization of issues by creating opportunities for participants to expand their understanding of and respect for differing approaches to and opinions on agricultural and food system issues. Dialogue Project tools may include such tools as blogs, community meetings, issue papers and conferences.

#### ***Who will be part of the Dialogue Project?***

The full range of stakeholders will be encouraged to participate, including:

- Active leaders across the entire food and agricultural value chain, regardless of size or type of operation.
- NGOs with missions related to food and agriculture, and actively engaged in the food and agriculture system because of interest in such issues as protection of natural resources, or social justice, such as poverty, labor and global and domestic food security, food safety and quality, and animal welfare.
- Active and engaged citizens concerned about food, how it is produced, and the environmental, social, cultural and economic effects of food and agricultural systems. They may or may not be directly involved in either of the two groups above.
- Young citizen leaders, including college and university students outside of colleges of agriculture, with a passion for specific issues related to food and agriculture.

#### ***What are the goals of the Dialogue Project?***

- Engage individuals in varied activities that provide opportunities to expand understanding of or possibly gain first-hand experience with food system challenges.
- Help reduce polarization of issues by creating opportunities for participants to expand their understanding of and respect for differing approaches to and opinions on agricultural and food system issues.
- Generate opportunities to expand appreciation of the diversity and complexity of agricultural and food system issues.
- Encourage deliberations on how public policies may shape agriculture and food systems in the decades ahead.
- Identify areas of common ground on food and agricultural policies for the 21<sup>st</sup> century to help the full range of stakeholders focus attention on key challenges that must be addressed to feed the world over the next 40 years.

### ***Why was this project developed?***

By 2050—a mere 39 years away—the world’s population is forecast to increase 50%, with the demand for agricultural production expected to double. It is critical that attention be focused now on how to produce adequate food supplies while protecting natural resources. The challenge is not an issue for the future but a clear and present concern. Failure to meet this challenge will mean a future of increased hunger, poverty and environmental degradation.

The United States cannot meet this challenge alone. Yet as the world’s leading agricultural producer, the nation has a moral responsibility to lead the way with a coherent food and agricultural policy focused on the needs of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Regrettably, discussion about the future of agriculture and the food system has generated a discordant choir of voices, posing a critical barrier to the development of the policies needed to meet the challenge of providing food, feed, fiber and fuel to a growing world population.

At present, the debate appears centered around two alternative visions for the future of agriculture:

- Large-scale farms driven by science and technology connected to consumers through global supply chains, and
- Small-scale farms connected to consumers through local food networks.

In reality, both visions will shape the future. All agree that the best use must be made of all natural resources if agriculture is to meet the challenges agriculture faces in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Local food systems and small-scale farming play a critical role in keeping good farmland in production in the shadow of the nation’s urban areas, and in meeting the rising demand for fresh, locally-produced food. At the same time, an assessment of the distribution of global population and arable-land resources make it clear that the challenges ahead cannot be met without trade and large-scale agriculture.

As an alternative to the increasingly polarized debate which has emerged, Farm Foundation, NFP has is launching this initiative.

### ***How will the Dialogue Project be carried out?***

Farm Foundation, NFP brings to this project 78 years of experience in non-advocacy public policy education on issues related to food, agriculture and rural communities. Activities of the project are expected to include such tools as a food and agriculture blog to encourage debate and discussion, and a network of regional discussion groups, as well as seminars and conferences. For each activity, the full range of stakeholders on an issue will be encouraged to participate.

The Foundation has named a Project Steering Committee to ensure a diversity of ideas and approaches are incorporated in the initiative. While it is not feasible for every sector or geographic region to be represented on the Steering Committee, a full range of stakeholders will be involved in specific activities. Steering Committee members are:

- Tim Amlaw, Sustainable Food Development, Ltd.
- Bo Beaulieu, Southern Rural Development Center
- James Borel, DuPont/Pioneer
- Lynn Broaddus, Johnson Foundation at Wingspread
- Bill Buckner, Bayer CropScience
- Jim Christenson, University of Arizona

- Jason Clay, World Wildlife Federation
- Jeff Conrad, Hancock Agricultural Services
- Billy Cordasco, Babbitt Ranches
- Jack Fisher, Ohio Farm Bureau
- Maurice Foxworth, Joyner-Kersee Foundation
- Bob Frazee, Mid-Atlantic Farm Credit System
- Corny Gallagher, Bank of America/Merrill Lynch
- Ralph Grossi, California farmer
- Michael Jacobson, Center for Science in the Public Interest
- Larry Kaagan, Kaagan Research Associates
- A.G. Kawamura, Orange County Produce
- Ejnar Knudsen, Passport Capital
- Jeremy Kranowitz, Keystone Center
- David Lee, Feeding America
- Jo Luck, formerly of Heifer International
- Gary MacDonald, MacDon Industries
- Klaas and Mary Howell Martens, Martens Farm and Lake View Organic Grain
- Larkin Martin, Martin Farm
- West Mathison, Stemilt Growers
- Ted McKinney, Elanco
- Jimmy McWilliams, Texas State University
- Paul Muller, Full Belly Farm, California
- Rich Musselman, American Humane Association
- Amy Mydral Miller, Culinary Institute of America
- William Nelson, CHS Foundation
- Jack Odle, Progressive Farmer
- Robert Paarlberg, Wellesley College
- Jane Preyer, Environmental Defense Fund
- Cheryl Queen, Compass Group North America
- Beth Sauerhaft, Pepsico
- Mark Scholl, Entira
- Andrew Wainer, Bread for the World

***Who is funding the Dialogue Project?***

To maximize the project's impact, financial support will be needed from all sectors of the food and agriculture value chain. As is the practice for Foundation projects receiving outside funding assistance, the project activities are directed by the Foundation, not the project funders. Objectivity is always at the forefront of Farm Foundation work.

***Why is Farm Foundation, NFP leading this project?***

Farm Foundation, NFP, is uniquely positioned to lead this Dialogue Project. The Foundation serves as a catalyst for sound public policy by providing objective information to foster deeper understanding of issues shaping the future for agriculture, food systems and rural regions. Farm Foundation does not

lobby or advocate. The Foundation's 78-year reputation for objectivity allows it to bring together diverse stakeholders for discussions on evolving, complex and controversial issues.

Much of the Foundation's funding is from its endowment. But as demand increases for the Foundation's work, support from private individuals, other foundations, businesses and government partners is critically important.

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