

Dear Senator or Representative:

As a resident of Southern Arizona, I am concerned about the far-reaching effects the Farm Bill will have on my community. Below are the programs I'd like you to support in the 2007 Farm Bill as it goes through Congressional re-authorization this year.

Strengthen Local Farms and Food Systems

- Promote renewable energy programs on farms throughout rural areas.
- Reduce commodity subsidies for large corporate farms, which allows small farmers around the world who grow and produce food, to better compete in local markets, and enables them to stay on their lands.
- Increase investment in small and midsized farms that produce food to feed people.
- Assist small and mid-sized farms meet the rising demand for sustainably produced fruits and vegetables.
- Assist small and mid-sized farmers access new markets and participate in value added agriculture products such as small-scale juice and meat processing and packaging businesses.
- Develop programs to assist potential farmers, such as young people, minorities, documented migrants, and women, and increase their access to land and equipment.
- Increase funding and access for EQIP grants which provide financial and educational support to farmers for conservation projects, and promote environmentally conscious farming practices.
- Fund USDA Community Food Projects Competitive Grants Program (CFP) for \$60 million annually to support community food security innovations, including the procurement of locally grown products by institutions, underserved areas, and food banks; urban food production; food policy councils and food system networks; and other possibilities.
- Support living wages, increased community resources, and workforce protections for farm workers and their families.

Allow Schools and Institutions to Buy Local Foods

- Remove restrictions that keep school districts and institutions from using preferences for locally grown food when buying food for their meal programs.
- Increase funding and infrastructure for Farm to Cafeteria programs.
- Expand the School Fruit and Vegetable Snack Program nationwide.

Increase Accessibility of Food Stamps

- Increase the minimum amount of Food Stamp dollars given monthly from \$10 to \$32.
- Make Food Stamp applications less complicated. The minimum amount given and the complex application process are often reasons why eligible people don't sign up.
- Provide funding for more EBT machines at Farmers' Markets to process Food Stamp cards.
- Eliminate '96 regulations that exclude documented immigrants and single adults from the program.
- Allow families to deduct things like childcare, education and retirement savings from the amount of assets a family has when their eligibility for Food Stamps is calculated.

Expand Nutrition Programs

- Increase benefits to Senior Nutrition Programs as well as WIC (Women, Infants & Children).
- Increase the amount of money going to WIC and Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Programs for vouchers that can be redeemed by low-income families and seniors at Farmers' Markets for fresh fruits and vegetables.
- Increase the amount of fresh fruits and vegetables distributed by food banks.
- Increase funding for TEFAP commodity food programs.

The health of our communities depends in large part on the food we eat. I encourage you to give your full support to these measures so that we can promote a healthy population today, and an environment that will allow future generations to achieve the same.

Print Name _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____

Print Address: _____ Zip: _____

Please return signed letter to Community Food Bank (Attn: Kitty), PO Box 26727, Tucson, AZ 85726-6727 or call 622-0525