

May 21, 2007

The Honorable Leonard Boswell, Chairman
House Agriculture Subcommittee on Livestock, Dairy and Poultry
United States House of Representatives
1427 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Boswell:

The undersigned agricultural organizations commend you for your recent introduction of The Competitive and Fair Agricultural Markets Act of 2007 (H.R. 2135).

As representatives of the ranchers and farmers of America, we look forward to a Farm Bill that restores profitability and fairness to agricultural markets. We believe that your competition reform bill and its companion bill in the Senate (S. 622) represent the benchmark for providing producers with critical market reforms.

These reforms are needed because the continuing concentration in livestock production has moved beyond what is necessary for efficiency and become solely an effort to gain market power, access and total control. As a result of this concentration, efficient producers have left or will be forced to leave livestock production. The resulting impact on rural communities will have lasting consequences that will harm producers, rural economies and consumers.

While many of us support other competition and marketing provisions including, but not limited to, reform of the beef checkoff, instituting a ban on packer ownership and ending the practice of captive supply, we all agree that H.R. 2135 must be viewed as the foundation from which other issues can grow. The work of your subcommittee on the 2007 Farm Bill must contain the competition reforms outlined in H.R. 2135 to be considered a success for American agricultural producers.

We look forward to working with you and your colleagues on the 2007 Farm Bill and ensuring that market reforms outlined in H.R. 2135 are included.

Sincerely,

- National Farmers Union
- U.S. Cattlemen's Association
- Agriculture and Land-Based Training Association (CA)
- Alabama Contract Poultry Growers Association
- Alabama Sustainable Agriculture Network
- Alliance for a Sustainable Future (PA)
- California Coalition for Food and Farming
- California Dairy Campaign
- California Farmers Union
- California Institute for Rural Studies
- Catholic Rural Life, Archdiocese of Dubuque (IA)
- Cattle Producers of Washington
- CCAR
- Center for Rural Affairs
- Center United Methodist Church (NC)
- Concerned Citizens of Central Ohio
- Cornucopia Institute (WI)
- Dakota Resource Council
- Endangered Habitats League (CA)

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Competition Coalition

- Erehwon Health Retreat (NY)
- Family Dairies USA (WI)
- Family Farm Defenders (WI)
- Farm Fresh Rhode Island
- Florida Organic Growers and Consumers Association
- Food and Water Watch
- Georgia Poultry Justice Alliance (GA)
- Heartland Center (IN)
- Independent Beef Association of North Dakota
- Independent Cattlemen of Nebraska.
- Independent Cattlemen's Association of Texas
- Indiana Farmers Union
- Institute for Agriculture & Trade Policy
- Iowa Farmers Union
- Kansas Cattlemen's Association
- Land Stewardship Project (MN)
- Michigan Farmers Union
- Midwest Organic & Sustainable Education Service
- Montana Cattlemen's Association
- National Catholic Rural Life Conference
- National Hmong American Farmers, Inc.
- National Latino Farmers and Ranchers Trade Association
- National Poultry Justice Alliance
- Nebraska Livestock Market Association
- Nebraska Wildlife Federation
- North Carolina Contract Poultry Growers Association
- North Dakota Farmers Union
- Northern Plains Sustainable Agriculture Society
- Ohio Environmental Council
- Ohio Farmers Union
- Organic Consumers Association
- Organization for Competitive Markets
- Pennsylvania Farmers Union
- Powder River Basin Resource Council of Wyoming
- RAFI-USA
- Rural Life Ministry, Office of Social Justice, Diocese of Gary, Indiana
- Social Concerns Office of the Diocese of Jefferson City
- Southern Sustainable Agriculture Working Group
- Sustainable Agriculture Coalition
- Texas Farmers Union
- Western Organization of Resource Councils
- Western Sustainable Agriculture Working Group
- Wisconsin Farmers Union
- Wisconsin National Farmers Organization

cc: House Agriculture Subcommittee on
Livestock, Dairy and Poultry