

Locals tell Congress what's on their minds



"If farmers got a fair price for what they grew, government intervention through an elaborate credit system would be unnecessary and undesirable."
 — Cheryl Cook, Communications Coordinator, Pennsylvania Farmers Union.



"Farmers who voluntarily put part of their cropland into a conservation use are presently penalized when the next diversion program is adopted by having their acreage bases reduced. At the same time, the operator who ignores soil conservation is rewarded by having a larger acreage base for the diversion program."
 — David Ball, Manager, Dauphin County Conservation District.



"Credit is not the ultimate answer to the current financial stress in agriculture. We urge you to bring this message to your colleagues in Washington — profitability must be returned to agriculture."
 — Gene L. Swackhammer, President, Farm Credit Banks of Baltimore.



"We do not believe that it is right for farmers to plow up highly erodible land and then ask for government assistance when production fails."
 — Melvin Durboraw, Congressional spokesman, Pennsylvania Farmers Association.



"I am not asking for subsidies or government handouts but simply suggesting additional public investments which will pay dividends. These dividends would be in keeping the soil where it belongs, rather than creating silted streams, rivers and bays."
 — Ralph McGregor, East Berlin dairy farmer.



"There is nothing harder for me to do as Secretary of Agriculture in Maryland than to sit in my office and tell a farmer that there is no means of helping him out of his financial problems."
 — Wayne A. Cawley Jr., Maryland Secretary of Agriculture.



"In my community, roughly half the farmers who got into farming with FmHA money are now bankrupt; the other half are struggling. In the meantime, FmHA farmers with their lower priced, almost unlimited funds, have driven up the cost of almost everything the rest of us in agriculture utilizes, including fertilizer, equipment, rent and land values."
 — Paul McPherson, New Park grain and fruit grower.



"We are confident that every family farmer in Maryland who is eligible under the law for Farmers Home services, and has a possibility of surviving in farming by any reasonable prospect, is going to be able to operate through this year."
 — G. Wallace "Pat" Caulk, Maryland Director, Farmers Home Administration.

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