

NFU Says World Food Security Depends On Farmers' Security

ROME, Italy — Leaders of the National Farmers Union who attended this week's World Food Summit in Rome made the case that food security for the world's hungry depends on the security of the family farmers who produce the food.

NFU President Dave Frederickson lamented the fact that 800 million people worldwide are malnourished while many nations have a surplus of commodities that depress farm prices. "We have the production," Frederickson said, "yet people continue to starve. Governments around the world must get serious about the commitments they made at the World Food Summit in 1996."

Frederickson was referring to a goal developed at the 1996 meet-

ings to reduce the world's hungry by half by 2015. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, which hosted the 1996 and 2002 summits, states that the number of hungry people must be reduced by 20 million per year to reach the 2015 target. In the five years since the summit, the annual decline in world hunger has been less than half the target.

"Low commodity prices are not contributing to food security," said Frederickson. "Politics by a number of governments around the world have pushed the idea that if we lower our prices enough, demand will increase. On the contrary, the low-price mentality has led to a concentration of wealth, power, land for the industries downstream

from the farmer such as processing, retailing and transportation."

Disappointment surrounded this week's meetings since only two heads of states from industrialized nations attended, said Frederickson. The Farmers Union leader said it was also disappointing that farmers were not better represented. Frederickson said farmers should be at the table whenever food and hunger is discussed.

"One attendee from the Afri-

can region suggested holding a farmers' summit that would allow the need for economic security for farmers to be discussed. We'd support such an initiative," Frederickson said.

Frederickson suggested the nations that have had assistance developing their economies, such as Japan and European countries following World War II, have not only solved their hunger problems, but also have become valuable trading partners to other industrialized nations. "That

development always begins with a stable agricultural production system," he said.

Frederickson led a Farmers Union delegation to the summit that included NFU Vice President Alan Bergman, Wisconsin Farmers Union President Bill Brey, North Dakota Farmers Union President Robert Carlson, Minnesota Farmers Union President Doug Peterson, NFU Counsel Dave Velde and NFU Administrative Vice President Clay Pederson.

Conservation Districts Announce Poster Contest Winners

HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — The Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts, Inc. (PACD) announced June 5 the winners of the 2002 PACD Poster Contest.

The contest, open to students in grades K-12, offers young people an opportunity to express their views on natural resources and the environment through art.

The two poster contest themes for 2002 are "The Gift of Trees" and "Exploring Nature in Your Neighborhood."

The winners of the 2002 PACD Poster Contest are Leah Kuhn, York County; Julie Ivicic, Centre County; Alisha Webb, Bedford County; Molly Lower, York County; and Melissa Hullihan, Northumberland County.

These five students will each be awarded a cash prize and a framed certificate, courtesy of the PACD Auxiliary, and will be invited to attend the PACD Awards Luncheon Program,

where their posters will be unveiled to the audience.

Individual entries to the PACD Poster Contest previously captured first place in a competition conducted by their county conservation district. Winners of the PACD statewide poster contest will be forwarded to the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) to represent Pennsylvania in the NACD National Poster Contest.

The PACD annually hosts a poster contest for students in grades K-12. The contest is sponsored by the PACD Auxiliary and is open to students from public and private schools. Annual poster contest themes vary based on National Wildlife Week activities, NACD Stewardship Week activities, and the availability of PACD supporting materials.

For more information on the 2002 PACD Poster Contest, visit www.pacd.org

Publication Showcases Urban-Rural Cooperation

WASHINGTON, D.C. — A new publication and Web site released by American Farmland Trust and The United States Conference of Mayors highlight unprecedented cooperation between rural and urban leaders on policies that will promote smarter land use decisions affecting farms and cities.

Town Meets Country: Farm-City Forums on Land and Community reports on the results of five meetings held around the country to explore land use issues facing urban and rural communities. The forums revealed that farmers and urbanites have a common enemy: land-wasting sprawl development.

"Sprawl hurts farms and cities alike by drawing development out onto the fertile countryside surrounding cities," said American Farmland Trust President Ralph Grossi.

"We need to recycle abandoned industrial brown fields and revitalize urban areas in order to safeguard our green fields from development."

"Protecting farmland and agriculture is extremely important to the overall quality of life within cities," said Charlotte Mayor Patrick McCrory, who chairs the U.S.

Conference of Mayors Environment Committee. "More than half of our food is grown on farmland near cities. We must protect this resource for future generations of city residents."

The model farm-city forums were held in Cedar Rapids, Iowa; Charlotte, North Carolina; Rochester, New York; and in both Everett and Tacoma, Washington.

One of the most surprising results of the forums was that many participants reported that they had never before sat down to discuss land use issues with their counterparts from the city or countryside.

Don Stuart, American Farmland Trust's Pacific Northwest regional director, who coordinated the forums in Tacoma and Everett, Washington, said, "Farms cannot exist without cities and cities cannot exist without farms."

It's a relationship that goes back to the dawn of history. Working together, farmers and urbanites can be a powerful force to control sprawl."

To extend resources and information to all communities around the country, AFT and USCM have set up a Web site with details on how to organize a farm-city forum, including sample agendas and invitations. This, as well as the publication, can be found at www.farmland.org/farm-city-forum, and www.usmayors.org.

The new publication and Web site emerged from a national level partnership between AFT and The U.S. Conference of Mayors formed in June of 1999 to focus on issues concerning the preservation of America's farmland and the revitalization of cities.

Although the partnership is unique, AFT also works closely with a number of organizations dedicated to smart growth. AFT President Ralph Grossi serves as chairman of Smart Growth America, a nationwide coalition promoting a better way to grow: one that protects farmland and open space, revitalizes neighborhoods, keeps housing affordable, and provides more transportation choices.

The summer issue of *Foraging Around*, the newsletter of the Pennsylvania Forage and Grassland Council, is scheduled July 13 in *Lancaster Farming*. The section is scheduled to include feature information about Project Grass. Included: grazer features, grass-fed beef reports, and news and notes for the grazer and hay grower.



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