

the

VOICE

of the American Agri-Woman



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We can do it together!

“WAVES OF CHANGE”

A SPECTACULAR GLIMPSE INTO AGRICULTURE'S FUTURE

American Agri-Women members and their families will be offered a chance in a lifetime at the upcoming November AAW Convention, being hosted by California Women for Agriculture in Monterey. The convention theme is Waves of

Change, and participants at this year's event to be held at the Monterey Plaza Hotel and Spa on historic Cannery Row, November 10-13, 2005, will experience many unique and spectacular attractions. One of the most anticipated events will be the banquet and awards gala on Saturday, which will be held at the world renowned Monterey Bay Aquarium in an exclusive special event for participants.

The planning committee is hard at work, lining up **world class speakers** on the subject of change, and participants should expect to be challenged to “think outside the box” when it comes to the new realities of agribusiness in the 21st century. Topics will range from how to adapt to the new world and thrive on change, to the revolution in the food chain and food service sectors of agribusiness and the potential impacts on all agribusiness sectors, to cutting-edge predictions on priority trends in agriculture and nutrition.

Participant and spouse tours will feature an **exclusive look inside one of the world's most innovative and diverse agricultural areas**, California's coastal agricultural

industry. Participants will see everything from artichokes to wine grapes in coastal Steinbeck country. Workshops will complement the program with opportunities for leadership development by expanding

Participants will also be offered a unique **opportunity to sample some of the area's best cuisine and wine** as part of the Monterey County Vintners and Growers Great Wine Escape on Friday night, with special wine pairing dinners at some of the best restaurants in the area. Post convention tours will offer options to view the historic and scenic attractions of the Monterey/Carmel area on Sunday from the unique perspective of a movie tour, or to participate in the Grand Finale of the Great Wine Escape at the Inn at Spanish Bay, at a specially discounted rate on Sunday.

Finally one of the most spectacular venues in the world will provide the gala finale to the Convention events, with the **final AAW banquet being held at the famous Monterey Bay Aquarium**. This exclusive and private banquet event will allow participants unprecedented access to the spectacular aquarium exhibits and multi-story tanks in the newly renovated section of the aquarium.

A recent Zagat Survey® stated that the Monterey Bay Aquarium is the “No. 1 aquarium in the United States; No. 3 top-rated family attraction in the United States.” Participants will literally be able to experience an ocean wave in a new exhibit where waves break over their heads, as a fitting way to end the AAW Convention themed Waves of Change!



**The Monterey Bay Aquarium—
that's a diver in there!**

on the topic of strategic change with implementation strategies, to fun hands-on activities. Regional meal “Showcases of California's Agricultural Bounty” and regional wine tasting will daily highlight a healthy and flavorful array of California agricultural products.

President's Column



By Carol Marx
AAW President

The AAW members who attended Mid-Year and finalized our 2005 Policy Positions deserve a bow. Those positions contained in this issue are the result of their intellect, thoughtful debate and plain hard work. Thank You to each of you and bravo!

Plan now to help bring those positions to the decision-makers in Washington, DC, by attending the AAW Fly-In, June 5-8. As we raise our voice for agriculture we also experience the culture and excitement of our nation's capitol. Details are on the following pages.

Our gratitude goes to Syngenta Crop Protection for once again providing superb and challenging training for AAW members Katie

Edwards, Florida Agri-Women; Betty Jo Smith and Gail Dettwyler, Oregon Women for Agriculture; Lynn Figone-Gallagher, California Women for Agriculture; Jennifer Novak, Valerie Ann Velde and Tania Gunnink, Minnesota Agri-Women; Linda Gerlach and Penny Lauritzen, Illinois Agri-Women; Tenneil Hirsch, Sigma Alpha; Maureen Davey, Montana Agri-Women; and Wanda Kinney, Kansas Agri-Women.

Remember the AAW motto, We Can Do It Together. Our success relies on uniting our voices, skills and hard work for a greater impact for agriculture. Remember too, there is magic in our 'Together.' 'Together', we learn, laugh, share frustrations and adventures. At day's end our 'Together' gives each of us so much more than we ever expected: encouragement, loyalty, inspiration and friendship. Find a way to be involved with AAW, locally or at a national event. 'Together' it's the GREATEST!

Action needed!!

We need secure rural schools and counties

By Ina Pluid, Timber Chair

Federal lands in a county eliminate that county's ability to develop these acres for generating economic wealth or to have them on their tax rolls. That can represent over 75% of the land base in much of the west.

Historically the Forest Service recognized these counties' plights and paid 25% of the gross timber sales money to the county the harvest occurred in. These monies were divided between schools and roads.

This plan worked very well until the late 80s when timber harvest started plummeting, as much as 80% in some counties. Payments were severely curtailed, jobs were lost and mills closed. Local governments and local schools suffered greatly.

The Craig & Wyden Bill provided safety-net payments to these counties, based on the top three years' timber receipts of each county. Of these receipts, 80-85% came directly to the counties. The remaining 15-20% is set-aside for natural resource conservation projects in forest management according to the needs of the community.

Those who want all timber harvest stopped on public lands want county payments decoupled from the actual harvest, and establish one more entitlement program subject to the whims of Congress.

Our rural counties want no decoupling. We want sustainable forestry practiced at all levels of forest and public lands management.

Reauthorization of S 267 and HR 517 will keep the safety-net payments to our rural counties.

Please urge your Congressional delegates to support these bills!

American Agri-Women Executive Committee

President	Carol Marx 4150 Oak Grove Rd. Rickreall, OR 97371 (503) 362-6225 Fax: (503) 362-2253 president@americanagriwomen.org AAW Phone: (503) 581-6610
1st Vice President Resolutions, Vital Issues	Yvonne Erickson 34115 County Hwy 74 Battle Lake, MN 56515 Phone/Fax: 218-495-3321 resolutions@americanagriwomen.org
Vice Pres. Communi- cations	Dana Hoffman 11180 Alembic Rd. Leonardville, KS 66449 Phone: (785) 293-5539 communications@ americanagriwomen.org
Vice Pres. Education	Doris Mold P.O. Box 8192 St. Paul, MN 55108 Cell Phone: 612-414-7574 Fax: 715-822-6341 education@americanagriwomen.org
Secretary	Katie Edwards 1850 Old Dixie Hwy Homestead, FL 33033 Cell Phone: 305-281-7323 secretary@americanagriwomen.org
Treasurer	Kathy Rhoads 26669 Kingston Pike Circleville, OH 43113 Home: (740) 474-4649 Office: (740) 474-2028 Fax: (740) 474-3939 treasurer@americanagriwomen.org
Past Pres.	Kathy Reavis 5910 N. Shary Rd. Mission, TX 78574 (956) 585-8128 Fax: (956) 585-0191 pastpresident@ americanagriwomen.org

AAW Web Site:

www.americanagriwomen.org

E-mail Address:

info@americanagriwomen.org

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Articles and suggestions are always welcomed by the editor:

Arlene Kovash, Page Craft

11425 Pedee Creek Rd

Monmouth, OR 97361

Ph: (503) 838-3512 • Fax (503) 838-6851

E-mail: akovash@aol.com

Please send address changes to:

Carolyn Kleiber, Membership Chair

PO Box 111

Hillsboro, KS 67063

Ph: (620) 947-3094 • Fax: (620) 947-2476

carolyn@agpowerinc.net

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Adopted by the Voting Delegates of American Agri-Women

Kansas City, Missouri
April 3, 2005

Fax: (503) 362-2253

American Agri-Women is a national coalition of women's farm, ranch, and agri-business organizations and individuals formed in 1974. We, as women's agricultural organizations and individuals, unite together to communicate with one another and with other consumers to promote agriculture for the benefit of the American people and the world.

2005 American Agri-Women Positions

AGRICULTURE BUSINESS & ECONOMICS TAXATION

Capital Gains Tax on the Sale of Farmland

AAW supports broadening of the \$250,000/\$500,000 exemption available on the sale of a personal residence to apply to the sale of farmland.

FFARM Accounts

AAW supports passage of the Fish, Farm and Ranch Risk Management Account concept, which would allow farmers and ranchers to set aside a percentage of income during high-income years to be taxed later during lower income years. American Agri-Women supports deferral of self-employment tax on that amount as well.

Health Insurance for Self-Employed Individuals

AAW applauds the acceleration of the deduction for health insurance for the self-employed up to 100%. However, AAW supports moving the deduction from page one of Form 1040, where it is deductible for federal income tax only, to schedule F or C, where it is deductible for self-employment tax as well.

Estate and Gift Tax

AAW is concerned that the popular move to eliminate the estate tax carries with it a return to carry-over basis. This would mean that farm heirs (as well as other heirs) would not get a stepped up basis for property they inherit, making property acquired via inheritance and later sold subject to very large capital gains taxes. While we do not object to the elimination of estate tax, we call for transparency in the ultimate product and a fair analysis of all related provisions. In lieu of total elimination, AAW supports an individual exemption of \$5 million to \$10 million, indexed for inflation.

Long-Term Security and Retirement

AAW supports authorization of the "Lifetime Annuity Payout" (LAP) as a way to help Americans plan for a secure retirement. The concept of the LAP involves taxing annuity payments at the lower capital gains rates if the lifetime income option is elected.

Optional Social Security Tax for Farmers

AAW supports a change in the rule for payment of optional Social Security Tax, tying the amount that an individual farmer can pay into the system each year to the minimum amount that will provide him or her with four calendar quarters of coverage. The optional program, as originally set up, did provide four calendar quarters of coverage.

Simplification of Depreciation Rules

AAW is concerned with the increasingly complex tax rules involving depreciation of capital assets and supports the implementation of a simplified method of recovering the cost of machinery, equipment and other assets used as a part of a trade or business.

Depreciation Recapture on Retirement

AAW supports a change in the depreciation recapture rules when farm and other business depreciable assets are sold on retirement or cessation of business. Currently the amount of depreciation taken on most assets is recaptured as ordinary income, thereby eliminating the benefit of a more favorable capital gains tax rate for most businesspersons who sell their business assets on retirement.

Mobile Machinery Tax Exemption

AAW supports legislation to maintain the existing definition of "highway vehicle" for tax purposes, exempting certain classes of mobile machinery that are licensed for highway travel but which, in practice, only travel public roads to convey permanently mounted machinery to job sites. We support codification, as follows, of the test for classifying mobile machinery as exempt from the relevant excise taxes:

- specified machinery is permanently mounted to the chassis;
- the chassis is designed to serve primarily as a mount and mobile carriage for the machinery; and
- the chassis could not (without substantial modification) be used to transport any load other than the machinery mounted to the chassis.

INSURANCE

Health Insurance

AAW supports legislation allowing associations to offer group health insurance plans to individual members and small businesses.

Health Insurance, Prescription Drugs & Medicare

AAW supports the concept that citizens of the United States should have access to the best medical service available. Any legislation should reflect that view.

AAW advocates adequate service at the lowest possible cost.

AAW respects and supports continued research.

AAW supports the coverage by health insurance and Medicare of the reasonable cost of outpatient drugs.

AAW supports the right of Americans to legally purchase medications from the most economical source.

AAW supports Medicare payments to rural health professionals and facilities at the same level as their urban counterparts.

AAW supports a proposed change in Medicare to include paying for nutrition counseling for those over age 65 and the disabled population who suffer from conditions like high blood pressure, high cholesterol and diabetes. AAW supports a health care system:

- that continues to develop and to use paraprofessional programs in rural communities as well as programs to encourage doctors and nurses to locate in rural areas;
- that increases competition in the form of voluntary purchasing alliances to help smaller employers and individuals buy insurance at a reasonable rate rather than in the form of government-mandated bureaucracies;
- within which decisions for specific testing and hospital stays should rest with the medical professionals.

Long-Term Care Security

AAW supports continuations of government assistance in caring for the elderly who are truly without resources.

AAW, at the same time, supports government incentives for private sector solutions, such as long-term care insurance, so that individuals and families are encouraged to take personal responsibility for long-term care planning.

Crop Insurance

AAW supports reforms to the crop insurance program that would provide adequate coverage, which is actuarially sound, at an affordable price for all commodities in all regions of the country.

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AAW believes that participation in crop insurance should be voluntary.

AAW believes that benefits from crop insurance should not be subject to a gross income test.

AAW believes that eligibility for government crop disaster payments should be contingent on the producer's participation in crop insurance, when a crop insurance program is available.

AAW continues to believe that participation in crop insurance should not be a requirement for participation in other farm programs, other than disaster payments. Participants should have the option to not participate in the crop insurance program and thus not be eligible to collect insurance or government disaster payments.

AAW supports the strict enforcement of crop insurance regulations with regard to abuse of the program. Producers should be held to the highest standards. Those who commit crop insurance fraud should be held accountable and fined at the maximum level.

LEGAL CONCERNS

AAW supports the legislative process for determining major agricultural policy.

AAW strongly opposes any federal agency expanding their regulatory authority without going through the legislative process.

INTERNATIONAL TRADE ISSUES

International Trade Negotiation And Policy

AAW supports the strict implementation of all international trading rules to prevent unfair practices by competing nations and to assure unrestricted access to domestic and world markets. Furthermore, we believe that all trade agreements should be continually evaluated.

AAW supports equivalent sanitary and phytosanitary regulations as part of any free trade agreement.

AAW opposes the use of false trade barriers, such as requiring the labeling of biotech products, in trade negotiations and policy development.

AAW supports cooperative efforts for international market development and promotion programs.

Trade Promotion Authority

AAW supports Presidential Trade Promotion Authority (TPA), with the restriction that non-trade issues such as labor and the environment may not be included, nor should they be considered as side agreements.

Sanction Reform

AAW believes that unilateral sanctions have not proven effective means to further foreign policy goals and are disruptive to international food trade.

International Organizations and Trade Agreements

AAW recognizes the World Trade Organization as the primary international forum for world trade.

AAW encourages the U.S. Trade Representative and/or the WTO to review the developing nation status definition.

AAW supports further liberalization of trade in agricultural products, which can be achieved through the WTO.

AAW supports balanced, fair international trade agreements that open international markets to U.S. agricultural products, provide for minimal production distorting supports and eliminate export subsidies and single desk exporters.

DOMESTIC TRADE ISSUES

Transportation

AAW believes that all vehicles operating within U.S. borders must meet uniform safety standards.

Labeling

AAW supports mandatory Country of Origin Labeling (COOL) on all domestic and imported agricultural and aquaculture products at the final point of sale to consumers. Ideally, this would include restaurants. The country of origin should be clearly stated and large enough to be easily identified by the consumer. Imported foods should meet the same grading and safety standards as domestic products.

Market Consolidation

Consolidation of retail supermarkets and the questionable practice of the use of slotting fees lead AAW to support strong Congressional oversight of market consolidation. AAW believes that retail consolidation restricts trade and decreases market access for small farmers.

RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Telecommunications

AAW supports a full range of ownership of telecommunications infrastructure including entrepreneurs, large corporations, municipalities, and other units of local government.

Rural Economic Development

We also urge family farmers to investigate agritourism and alternatives which might add profit to the farming operation.

COMMODITIES

National security requires that priority must be restored to utilize U.S. resources to produce the basic benefits of food, clothing, shelter, and fuel. The U.S. needs a safe, abundant, and secure food, fiber and fuel supply.

AAW recognizes that U.S. farmers and ranchers continue to provide a safe and abundant food supply in a healthy environment.

The future well-being of the world depends upon modern, progressive production capabilities and practices of U.S. agriculture.

Further, AAW supports legislation that will enhance domestic and international market growth and also supports legislation that exempts food from trade embargoes.

In the event of a natural disaster, AAW supports timely government assistance to affected agricultural producers.

AAW supports an efficient and modern transportation infrastructure, which enables U.S. farmers' and ranchers' access to domestic and world markets. The proposed dam removals, the railroad monopolies, and the general lack of transportation infrastructure maintenance put all U.S. agriculture and industry, and the world food supply in jeopardy.

Technology Fee

AAW supports payment of the technology fee on biotech seed by all who use the seed—not just those in the United States.

The requirement that this additional fee be paid on all biotech seed planted in the United States results in a distinct trade disadvantage to U.S. farmers by increasing their cost of production.

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DAIRY

AAW believes that federal orders best serve U.S. dairy policy, dairy producers, handlers and consumers when structured and administered with uniform and equitable classified pricing regulations based on product utilization and market returns, regardless of geographic location.

The Dairy title of the Farm Bill enacted in 2002 appropriately recognized the need for intervention when prices fall below certain levels and, further, appropriately addressed the issue of regionalism.

AAW believes that future Federal Farm Policy should include a permanent intervention program which will facilitate farm business planning and financial confidence. Further, we believe that Federal Farm Policy for dairy should eliminate all regional barriers and should enhance domestic and international market growth.

GRAINS

AAW supports and promotes alternative uses of all grain and related by-products produced in the United States. We support a national energy policy that includes a renewable fuels standard (RFS) for all transportation fuels and less dependence upon foreign oil.

LIVESTOCK

AAW is concerned about the future availability of new products to safeguard the health of animals. It is imperative that the scientific data be factual when determining the risk of antibiotic use on food producing animals. Increased global demand for meat, milk and eggs compels agriculture to use the latest technological tools. We support appropriate agricultural policies and adequate funding in agricultural research and extension through the Agricultural Research Service and the Extension Service to ensure the necessary increases in productivity of food producing animals.

AAW supports an infectious disease monitoring and testing program of imported and domestic animals and meat in order to maintain consumer confidence and market stability.

AAW opposes announcements of suspect cases of infectious zoonotic diseases. AAW supports announcements of confirmed cases of infectious and zoonotic diseases.

AAW supports interstate shipment of meat from state-inspected processing plants where state regulations are equal to or exceed federal regulations.

AAW urges the USDA to work with state and federal animal health officials to identify all animals imported into the United States.

AAW recommends that any federally mandated surveillance and food safety programs be accompanied with adequate federal funding.

AAW supports Country of Origin Labeling (COOL) to promote consumption of U.S. products.

AAW urges Congress to promote policy and regulations that encourage flexibility by the livestock industry to make responsible management decisions on breeding, marketing, environmental conditions, and other issues that affect the welfare of animals.

AAW supports research and education into standards of care that ensure animal welfare and profitable ways to raise livestock set by marketing demands. This should require the use of sound, verifiable, peer-reviewed science.

AAW believes a national premise registration and animal identification program is essential for animal producers, the food production sector and the government for effective traceability and public confidence.

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

AAW commends the U.S., Department of Agriculture for increasing fruits and vegetables in federal food programs. We encourage the expansion of these federal food programs throughout the U.S. Consumption of fresh produce provides tremendous health and economic benefit to both consumers and growers.

Specialty Crop Competitiveness

AAW supports the U.S. Trade Representative establishing a position in the agricultural office solely for specialty crop trade matters.

A competitive specialty crop industry is necessary for the production of an abundant, affordable supply of highly nutritious fruits, vegetables and other specialty crops, which are vital to the health and well being of all Americans.

U.S. specialty crop growers believe that there are numerous areas of federal agriculture policy that must be improved

to promote increased consumption of fresh produce and increase the competitiveness and efficiency of specialty crop producers.

NEW CROPS/NEW USES

AAW supports research efforts into the utilization of alternate/new crops (such as industrial hemp) for new commercial food and fiber uses.

NATURAL RESOURCES

AAW believes in the multiple uses of natural resources. Firsthand experience is the best and most reliable source of expertise. We support policies that promote and ensure abundant, renewable natural resources and a healthy, productive environment.

For national security, priority must be restored to utilize our resources to produce basic benefits of food, clothing, shelter and fuel.

Government agencies that have the power for decision-making affecting natural resource industries need to be held accountable for their decisions.

PUBLIC LAND AND ANIMAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

AAW expects government to meet the same standards imposed on citizens and businesses regarding the management of natural resources and wildlife.

AAW supports continuation of the Federal Animal Damage Control program as a priority responsibility of agencies involved in wildlife management to protect private and public property.

AAW supports active, responsible management of wildlife. Wildlife overpopulation, overgrazing, polluted streams, passing of disease from infected animals and extensive crop damage are but a few intolerable consequences of wildlife mismanagement.

LAND USE

AAW believes that good stewardship of our resources is best assured by those who have made both financial and labor investments to become owners and caretakers of their land. Even though local, state and federal governments own at least 40% of the land in the United States, some groups seek additional purchases

of private property by, or through, the government. The continued purchase and taking of private property by the government erodes the very foundation on which this country, its principles, freedoms, economy and the health and productivity of its resources are based.

AAW recognizes that a family farm or ranch is a form of business enterprise in which the entrepreneurial decisions are made by individuals engaged in the production of food, feed, fiber, fuel, forest products and/or flora for profit, which provides a major source of income and capital for investment.

AAW supports the preservation of our nation's sovereignty and our Constitution as the supreme law of the land. AAW opposes any authority given to the United Nations regarding the use or management of any federal, state or private properties.

AAW opposes the designation of Scenic Byways and the resulting restrictions on private lands.

SALE OF PUBLIC LAND

AAW supports the sale of public lands to the private sector. Government ownership and management of land is costly. Our citizens cannot afford the multiple and compounded expense plus loss, or loss of revenues, that could be generated through the responsible use of those lands by the private sector.

AAW opposes preferential treatment to sellers or buyers of private land through tax incentives or other measures to non-profit entities.

AAW supports a policy of no net loss of taxable private property.

AAW expects Congress to fully appropriate and to disperse PILT (Payment in Lieu of Taxes) to local governments, as required by law.

AAW supports access to public lands for multiple uses. Multiple uses include but are not limited to agriculture, grazing, mining, forestry, habitat and recreation.

AAW supports restricting and monitoring the conditions by which private non-profit groups can purchase land with the intent to sell or transfer ownership of that land to the government. The intent by government to acquire or take the use of land, or the land itself, should be an open process and readily available to public review.

AAW supports efforts to prevent entities from setting up "shell" foundations in order to obtain funds exceeding the \$50,000 per entity cap on conservation payments.

PRIVATE PROPERTY RIGHTS

AAW supports legislation that reinforces our citizens' constitutional property rights and requires just and complete compensation for the taking of private property.

AAW strongly supports legislation that considers "takings" as the devaluation of land by:

- Regulatory action,
- Activities that negatively impact adjacent land, or
- Activities that impact landowner's rights in any way.

AAW contends that water is property [the Hage vs. United States Takings case, January 26, 2004]. Any reallocation of the water permitted for private use by government is a taking. Government should compensate the owners of privately held water when the public deems a necessary beneficial use of that water.

AAW strongly supports private property owners and the sovereignty of states above the federal government regarding allocations of water within their borders. We urge Congress to take no action that would impair state authority in allocating water rights and use of the legal rights of water right owners.

AAW supports the return of federal projects, with funding, to the state or local governments when it is mutually beneficial. Local and state governments' participation, supervision and control will guarantee that projects are appropriately completed and maintained for the benefit of the environment and communities.

Eminent Domain

Eminent Domain should only be used for public safety and/or welfare. We are opposed to the use of Eminent Domain for economic development and additional tax revenue accruing from such development.

ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT

The nation's security depends upon our military and domestic food and energy supply and must therefore take precedence over the regulations of the Endangered Species Act (ESA).

AAW supports the value of human life

and safety above any other species whether endangered, threatened or not listed.

Funding for the Endangered Species Act needs to be discontinued, until such time as the Act is reauthorized.

AAW supports legislation to:

- a) Require the use of sound, verifiable, peer-reviewed science giving equal weight to historical data of the land before a listing is approved;
- b) Eliminate subjective biological units (sub-species, populations, stocks) and pursue recovery of only significant species;
- c) Require that the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Critical Habitat designations be completed before restrictive regulatory action is taken. This should require concurrent social, economic and environmental cost/benefit analyses and compensatory adjustments for takings deemed necessary for species protection.
- d) Ensure protection of property owners from regulatory takings by local, state and national agencies.
- e) Allow a state or private property owner who is sued for an alleged ESA violation to continue with existing farming, logging, fishing or mining practices until the suit is resolved.
- f) Require feasible recovery plans and selection of recovery measures that are most cost effective and have the least negative social and economic impact. Plans should be reviewed and evaluated every five years.
- g) Allow for administrative appeal of qualified major decisions and/or judicial review by qualified affected parties.
- h) Exclude a specie from consideration as endangered or threatened, or de-list it, if it is abundant in any location.
- i) Acknowledge "extinction" as a natural process of evolution.

INVASIVE SPECIES

"Invasive Species" is a major new environmental concept and needs to be addressed in open debate on its own

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merit (or lack thereof) before legislation should be passed.

AAW does not view all non-native species as invasive. Therefore the definition needs to be defined on a specific set of scientific criteria. AAW believes this distinction needs to be made clear in open debate.

FORESTRY AND TIMBER

Trees are the most abundant of the world's renewable resources. Forests cover more area of land today than they did one hundred years ago. Over the past decade North American forests have expanded by nearly 10 million acres. Timber creates jobs, fuels the economy, and generates tax dollars. Forested lands provide necessary fiber and goods for consumers, habitat for hundreds of species and methods that cool and clean the environment. It is environmentally irresponsible to waste a resource as valuable as timber.

Timber Harvest

Restoring the commercial harvesting of the forest is necessary to reestablish forest health. AAW urges the Administration and Congress to allocate sufficient funds to fully implement the goals of national forest plans, which include enforceable sustainable harvest targets, recreation, watershed management, wildlife, grazing rights for domestic livestock, and forest health. The Healthy Forests Initiative and the National Fire Plan also need to be fully funded.

Litigation should not be allowed to hinder the implementation of these programs. When the agencies involved have approved a timber project, litigation must not be able to stop the progression of that project. If the decision does go to court, court costs and costs of delays should be borne by the litigant, when the litigant loses.

AAW urges Congress to protect the American public's right of access to and use of our national forests with an adequate system of maintained roads. Roads should be treated as an investment in the future of the national forest system. Existing roads should be left intact and maintained for border security, fire management, other emergency services and historical purposes.

Until such time as forest plans are approved and fully implemented, AAW supports reauthorization and full funding

of the Secure Rural Schools Act that offers counties the option of receiving direct safety-net payments instead of the 25%-fund receipts from national forests.

WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Civil Works

AAW supports the maintenance and continued development of dams, levees and other engineered facilities that provide multiple benefits to people and nature.

AAW urges Congress to immediately reaffirm the initial, established purpose of the U.S. Corps of Engineers and Bureau of Reclamation. The purpose of flood control, navigation and irrigation projects have served both the government and the economic development efforts of this country.

AAW supports the funding and construction of new 1200-foot locks and maintenance of the existing 600-foot locks for the Upper Mississippi River and Illinois Waterway System.

AAW supports the conclusion of the Upper Mississippi River Comprehensive Plan to create a plan for systemic flood protection for the Upper Mississippi and Illinois Rivers.

AAW opposes the use of Inland Waterways and Harbor Maintenance trust funds for operations and maintenance. Trust funds should fund only new construction as intended when authorized.

AAW supports the retention of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in the U.S. Department of Defense, Department of the Army.

Flood control, irrigation, energy production and transportation should remain as primary purposes for public water storage and management investments. Fish and wildlife "protections" and other environmental concerns should be added using peer-reviewed science to ensure that social-economic costs are justifiable, with devaluation and/or harm to individuals, communities, or states being fully compensated.

We urge Congress to disallow these immense public investments to be arbitrarily and capriciously destroyed. Prior to any purposeful alteration or destruction of these public investments or their uses, the government should show peer-reviewed scientific and economic proof that this action is vital to national security and

necessary for benefit to humans as well as to the environment, as required under the original intent of the authority of the Corps of Engineers.

AAW advocates policies that promote abundance of water resources.

Water Treaties

AAW urges the U.S. government to enforce ALL treaty obligations, including the 1944 United States-Mexico Water Treaty.

Water Contracts, Water Rights And Ownership

AAW urges Congress to honor its contractual obligations to agricultural water users throughout the West who rely on federally constructed water projects for irrigation supplies. Full contract supplies are essential to maintain the West's productive farmland, which helps feed and clothe our nation and the world.

AAW does not support land retirement as a means of relieving the U.S. government's contractual obligations to provide water and/or drainage service to the West.

AAW opposes foreign ownership of water and water treatment and distribution utilities.

Wetlands

AAW objects to a national policy of avoiding impacts to wetlands, versus previous policy of minimizing impacts to wetlands.

AAW objects to public funds supporting easements or buyouts to non-profit groups for large-scale wetlands restoration that removes agricultural land from local tax rolls and other local economic activity.

WATER QUALITY

Livestock

AAW supports EPA accepting state regulations governing Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFO's) as functionally equivalent for National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits.

Non-Point Source

AAW supports a national water quality policy on nonpoint source pollution that gives states the control to develop and manage water quality programs specific to the states' own watershed issues.

Programs under the Clean Water Act should promote the use of voluntary best management practices (BMPs) by rural landowners, agricultural producers and urban natural resources users.

Given flexibility within state programs, local watershed stakeholder committees can develop and implement total maximum daily loads (TMDL's) designed to incorporate BMPs and monitoring as key components to the protection of water resources and the prevention of future impairments.

Data & Monitoring

AAW strongly promotes funding the monitoring of targeted waterways and the collection of data for accurate decision-making in the allocation of state resources for water protection programs.

AAW expects the federal and state elected officials and agency staff decision-makers to use credible, historical data to establish reasonable and attainable year-round water temperature standards for rivers and streams.

ENERGY

A well-developed diverse domestic energy supply is critical to national security. Advantages of this supply would be to ensure lower costs and guarantee supplies for electricity and fuel, plus improve air and water quality.

AAW supports the use of alternative fuels, such as ethanol, biodiesel, and biomass fuels, because:

- a) Alternative fuels are an abundant renewable resource,
- b) Alternative fuels are important to our nation's energy security, and
- c) Alternative fuels are environmentally friendly.

AAW supports the development of hydrogen fuel and fuel cell technology.

AAW supports research efforts to identify agriculture's role in carbon sequestration. Carbon sequestration, the process by which carbon gases are captured and stored, presents potential technological solutions to the build-up of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere.

As the oxygenate methyl tertiary butyl ether (MTBE) is phased out due to its propensity to create ground water contamination, the family farm and ranch organizations continue their call to replace MTBE with fuel additives made from products grown on U.S. farms.

PUBLIC UNDER- STANDING & AWARENESS AGRICULTURAL LABOR

AAW supports equitable enforcement of and compliance with laws affecting agricultural labor.

Agriculture needs a reliable guest worker program. We need the capacity to access an available and legal workforce. AAW believes that it is in the interest of our national security to create a way for workers to safely enter the U.S. on a temporary basis, fill empty jobs, and return to their home countries.

ANIMAL WELFARE

AAW supports the responsible use of animals in research.

AAW supports legislation establishing stricter federal criminal penalties and civil remedies for violent, threatening, obstructive, and destructive conduct that is intended to injure, intimidate, or interfere with animal enterprises and research, and establishes assistance for security programs at research facilities.

AAW supports limiting liability of farmers from lawsuits filed by consumers.

AAW supports the right of farmers to protect their records from public scrutiny.

AGRICULTURAL CHEMICALS

Methyl Bromide

AAW supports the continued use of methyl bromide in the U.S. through the Year 2010 and beyond, to provide fairness and equity with other developed nations in the world. Sound science to date shows that methyl bromide is neither a carcinogen nor a reproductive toxicant. Elimination of this tool, would impose unnecessary severe economic impact on the U.S. farmer. We support research for alternatives to methyl bromide.

Phosphine Fumigation and Food Quality Protection Act Resolution

AAW urges Congress to direct EPA to cease implementation of new restrictions for aluminum/magnesium phosphine fumigants.

Anhydrous Ammonia Fertilizer

AAW supports the chemical industry's anti-methamphetamine task force activities regarding the prevention of the use of anhydrous ammonia for illegal purposes.

Chemical Registration

AAW urges Congress to continue oversight of EPA in its review of Section 18, Section 24C and Crisis Exemption requests by the states, manufacturers and third parties. States should be given authority to issue these temporary labels once EPA has established chemical residue tolerances for the threatened crop.

AAW supports the counterpart regulations jointly developed by EPA, NOAA, USFWS and USDA to streamline the FIFRA regulatory process and harmonize it with the requirements of the ESA. The new program

- a) enhances protection afforded to endangered and threatened species,
- b) makes endangered species assessments more uniform and consistent for all products regulated under FIFRA and
- c) develops a process that ensures timely and continued access to safe and necessary pest management tools.

FOOD SAFETY

AAW strongly supports scientific evidence that the proper handling, preparation and processing of all final products minimizes the risk of bacterial contamination. EPA should adhere to best professional scientific judgment and original Congressional intent in developing agency policy.

AAW strongly supports the Food & Drug Administration's decision to allow the irradiation of ground beef and encourages the FDA to allow irradiations of other food products. Illness due to food-borne pathogens can be greatly reduced with this additional tool, enhancing food safety.

To maintain a safe and abundant food supply for the American people and the world population, AAW supports the implementation of animal health emergency management and eradication programs, traceability of all food products, Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point, continued worldwide surveillance activities, monitoring of the status of foreign and domestic animal diseases, and inspections at the border.

BIOTECHNOLOGY

AAW supports the development and incorporation of biotechnology in agricul-

2005 AAW Positions

tural research and production. Biotechnology gives greater flexibility to agricultural producers in making responsible management decisions by reducing input costs, increasing crop yields, promoting integrated pest management, and providing environmental protections to our natural resources.

AAW supports the coordinated framework and extensive testing procedures of the U.S. regulatory agencies (EPA, FDA, USDA,) that ensure the safety of biotechnological products.

AAW firmly believes it is unnecessary, confusing and costly to the consumer to label biotechnological products or processes.

If implemented, AAW believes that the Biosafety Protocol should be based on risk assessments and sound peer review science.

AAW condemns the activities of bioterrorists who destroy agricultural property and research; valuable research that has tremendous potential benefit to the farmer and the consumer. These new genetically enhanced products have the capability of improving human health and solving world environmental and nutritional problems.

AG RESEARCH

AAW supports continued research and development of tools and techniques that would support the advancement of agricultural production and processes (i.e. nanotechnology and other techniques) in the United States for the industry and the consumer.

TERRORISM

AAW condemns all forms of terrorism. As providers of this nation's food and fiber supply, we recognize the need to increase our vigilance to protect the commodities vital to America and the people and communities of rural America that provide them.

GLOBAL ISSUES

AAW recognizes the need for an international forum for countries to discuss their differences and cooperate on problems of common concern.

AAW opposes granting any authority to the United Nations regarding the use or management of any federal, state, or private properties of the United States.

AAW opposes granting any taxing authority to the United Nations.

AAW supports the concept that the U.S., not the U.N., establish the criteria to be met by developing nations prior to receiving U.S. food aid.

EDUCATION

AAW believes in an educated public. Furthermore, agricultural education and education about our nation's food and fiber system should be based on factual information and sound science. We encourage agriculturalists to work cooperatively on common issues through education.

AAW supports the intent of the Carl D. Perkins Act, which maintains funding for vocational (career and technical) agriculture education.

AAW supports the continued funding of public and private agricultural research to ensure a stable and safe food supply for our nation.

AAW supports a national Agriculture in the Classroom (AITC) program with continued funding and support for a national director.

AAW recognizes the dangerous consequences of obesity in our society and supports the education of U.S. consumers about food choices based on sound science.

American Agri-Women is an organization serving as a communications link for those who join the coalition. Members work on national issues of mutual interest and concern. A national convention is held annually to discuss and take action on those concerns.

American Agri-Women works in areas of legislation, regulations, consumer relations, promotion, and education. We are consumers as well as producers and have a unique point of view to offer.

To contact AAW about our positions go to our website at www.americanagriwomen.org.

U.S. Court of Appeals delivers mixed verdict on livestock-water quality requirements

On February 28, 2005, the U.S. court of Appeals Second Circuit in New York determined two key rulings related to the USEPA's proposed requirements of a National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit of all Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFOs). Size of farm varies by specie – roughly 100 beef cows and up.

- 1) The Court ruled that livestock producers will be required to apply for a Clean Water Act discharge permit based only upon actual, not merely "potential," discharges into waters of the nation. EPA cannot require all CAFOs to either apply for NPDES permits or otherwise demonstrate that they have no potential to discharge. The Clean Water Act authorizes EPA to regulate, through the NPDES permitting system, only the discharge of pollutants. Therefore, if operations do not have a discharge, they do not need a permit.
- 2) The Court decided that Nutrient Management Plans (NMP) are effluent limitations that must specifically be included in an NPDES permit and approved by the permitting authority. Unfortunately, the Court also said that NMPs must be open to public comment, thus exposing the details of a producer's operations to public scrutiny before a permit can be issued.

Senate Committee announces first ESA hearing this Congress

The Senate Environment and Public Works Subcommittee on Fisheries, Wildlife and Water plans to convene an overview hearing on the ESA on Thursday, May 19, 2005, in Washington, DC. While details on the exact scope of the hearing and witnesses have yet to be released, the hearing will set the stage for pursuing ESA improvements in the Senate. Subcommittee Chairman Lincoln Chafee (R-RI) appeared with Senator Mike Crapo (R-ID), House Resources Committee Chairman

Richard Pombo (R-CA), and Representative Greg Walden (R-OR) several months ago to announce a collaborative bicameral effort to bring about updates to the ESA. Additional details on the Senate hearing will be circulated as they become available.

Fly-In & Symposium Itinerary

SUNDAY, JUNE 5, 2005

3:00 p.m. – Meet at hotel to discuss agenda and issues.

MONDAY, JUNE 6

8:30 2005 AAW Symposium: "Taxing Agriculture's Bounty," USDA Jamie Whitten Administration Building, Room 107-A.

Noon – Lunch in USDA Executive Dining Room

1:00 Agency visits and tour of White House

5:00 pm – Reception or an Embassy visit

TUESDAY, JUNE 7

Morning – Briefings at USDA

Lunch on the way to the Hill

Afternoon – Capitol Hill visits to Congressional offices. Contact your Congressional delegates ahead of time for appointments.

4 pm – Speakers on the Hill

5 pm – Congressional reception

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 8

8:30 a.m. – Agency visit prior to departure. Fly-In concludes at approximately noon.

Resource Center honors Gail McPherson

By Eunice Guell, President AAW Resource Center

The directors of the AAW Resource Center have voted to name the Fly-In scholarship in honor of Gail McPherson. This scholarship is for an AAW member who is a first-time attendee at the Fly-In in Washington, DC.

Gail McPherson, of New Park, Pennsylvania, is a former president of the Resource Center, a lifetime member of AAW and a founding mother of our agriculture-based organization. She was instrumental in writing "The Prime Truth, Goals, and Strategies" as a guide for our actions.

Gail has promoted ag products and education to thousands of consumers. She has been tireless in her pursuit of truth and is a remarkable Christian woman.

For information about the scholarship, talk to your state president.

AAW Fly-In Registration Form

Registration Fee: \$85 (no partial registration).

Send form with payment, ASAP, to:

AAW, c/o Kathy Rhoads, Treasurer
1051 S.R. 56 East, Circleville, OH 43113
Phone: 740-474-4649
Email: treasurer@americanagriwomen.org

Name _____

Address _____

Phone & Fax _____

E-mail _____

*Date of Birth _____

*Social Security Number _____

(*We must have this information for security clearance at various agencies, including USDA)

Affiliate _____

Special interests and issues (legislative or regulatory)

Senate and House Bills in which you are particularly interested _____

Planned arrival date and time in DC _____

Via (plane and airport, car, etc.) _____

Do you want us to find you a roommate? _____

Comments and suggestions _____

During the Fly-In we are staying at the Holiday Inn on The Hill, 415 New Jersey Ave., NW. Phone #202-638-1616 or 800-638-1116. Rates are single/ double \$165, triple/quad \$185. Call Carol Marx, 503-362-6225, for room availability.



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See AAW's website or the next newsletter for the 2005 Convention registration form.

Ninth Circuit says environmental activists must prove harm to species, not just allege it, to invoke ESA

Idaho Rancher's Case Means Environmentalists Can No Longer Terrorize Property Owners with Baseless Allegations

In an important victory for western property owners, the United States Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals has ruled recently for Pacific Legal Foundation and Idaho rancher Verl Jones' family, in a closely watched case that addresses the standard by which injunctions can be issued under the Endangered Species Act.

The Ninth Circuit's ruling clarifies for the first time that environmental plaintiffs must present actual evidence that a species is likely to be harmed before an injunction can be issued against a property owner, and that a lack of evidence of past harm is indicative of the likelihood of future harm.

For years, environmental plaintiffs have been able to get injunctions ordering private property owners to cease legal activity on their land on the basis of mere allegations alone. PLF has long argued, as it did in the Joneses' case, that there must be an evidentiary showing of real

harm to a species before a court can issue an injunction that would result in serious economic harm to the property owner. The Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals agreed.

"The court said environmentalists have to prove their case, not just allege it," said Russ Brooks, managing attorney for Pacific Legal Foundation's Pacific Northwest Center. "The court's decision means that environmental activists can no longer use the Endangered Species Act as a weapon against property owners without a shred of evidence that any species is actually being harmed."

"This decision should give a lot of property owners hope where they have felt powerless against environmentalists' frivolous lawsuits for years," added Brooks. "It's been a long time coming, but the tide is turning and it's turning for the rights of property owners and reasonableness in environmental laws."

Pacific Legal Foundation

American Agri-Women

Calendar of Events

June 5-8, 2005

Fly-In to Washington, DC,
Holiday Inn on the Hill.
1-800-638-1116. Call Carol
Marx, 503-362-6225, for room
availability.

June 30 Veritas nominations due

July 1 Nominations due for AAW
office

August 1 Leaven Award
nominations due

August 25 Resolutions for consid-
eration at annual meeting
due

November 10-13, 2005

AAW Convention, Monterey,
CA, hosted by California
Women for Agriculture

[AAW Website](#)

www.americanagriwomen.org

[AAW Phone & Fax Numbers](#)

Phone: (503) 581-6610