

the

VOICE

of the American Agri-Woman



April/May 2007, Volume 34, Issue 3

We can do it together!

Redefining Agriculture — Advancing in New Directions

Come find out how agriculture is being redefined and is advancing in so many directions, at the 2007 AAW Convention in St. Paul, Minnesota, November 8-10.

We have a full schedule of activities planned, including an opportunity to participate in pre-convention workshops and socializing on November 7. November 8-10 we have our meetings, great speakers,

StART sessions, tours, hospitality suite, our own very special Redefining Agriculture Festival and Welcome to Minnesota Buffet, and our culminating banquet.

Finally, we will wind down convention with a worship service followed by a post-convention tour, allowing you to see some of the local area on the 11th.

Registration information

and forms will be available via the newsletter, mail and online. Early registration is \$250 and late registration will be \$300.

We are doing our best to help students by charging a substantially reduced registration fee of \$150 for early registrants. The University of Minnesota Collegiate Agri-Women are also offering “home-stays” for college students during convention. Students choosing this option would stay with women from the University of Minnesota Collegiate Chapter during convention as their guests. Since campus is 10-15 minutes from the hotel this will be a good option for students looking to keep costs down.

You can help us get more students to convention as well. Consider offering scholarships for students from your area. No students in your area? You could contribute to the convention fund that is helping students attend at a less expensive rate. You may send a contribution to this fund to: Margene Newton, 2007 AAW Convention Treasurer, 12361 300th St., Rothsay, MN 56579. Checks should be made payable to: 2007 AAW Convention. Questions? Contact Doris Mold at 715-822-6347 or doris@sunriseag.net.

Optional pre and post convention activity fees are yet to be determined. Look for additional registration information in the next Voice, on the website and in the President's Newsletter.

We are excited to have you visit us in Minnesota!



AAW thanks Syngenta Crop Protection for their continued support to enhance our leadership skills to better tell agriculture's message to our consumers by sponsoring the 2007 Leadership At Its Best Program. Participants this year were, back row: Jamie Foster, Florida; Steve Powell, Leadership Staff; Marcie Williams, AAW 1st Vice President; Jennifer Salzer, Minnesota; Megan Reeck, Minnesota; Rosemary Hansen Crubel, Kansas; CarrieAnn Arias, California; Mary Christine Ludwig, Illinois; and Judy Kenney, Maine. Front row: Debbie Robbins, Virginia; Debbie Brady, Florida; Yvonne Erickson, AAW President; Joan Webster, California; Maggie Howley, Montana; Ann Christensen, Minnesota; Joy Cadena, Texas; Charlotte Rasmussen, Wisconsin; Heather Raulerson, Florida; and Neil Strong, Syngenta. The theme of improving communication skills was woven through organization leadership, public speaking, working with the media, understanding communicating styles, and using business etiquette.

President's Column



By Yvonne Erickson
AAW President

AAW expresses our gratitude to the members attending the Mid-Year Meeting held in Kansas City. They updated the position statements following member input. The process streamlined by committee chairs making recommendations prior to the meeting. Discussion time allowed the needed final changes. The process flows smoothly with the overall Strategic Action Response Team (StART) chair Karen Yost. Team coordinators Kathy Reavis, Pat Magee, Dolly Lillis, and Rae Desautel work with committee chairs to complete the process. Anytime AAW takes a stance on an issue, the position statements are our guidelines. The section of the newsletter makes for handy referrals and may warrant filing.

The Strategic Planning Committee selected the three purposes of AAW:

- 1) Increase consumer understanding of why and how AAW members and agribusiness do what they do.
- 2) Networking within and outside of AAW.
- 3) Leadership development and effectiveness of AAW members and others engaged in advancing the success of agribusiness.

Mid-Year participants determined the assignable and measurable tasks necessary to achieve the purposes. The Strategic Planning Committee's next step is to prioritize the tasks and to determine the costs, both time and financial, for implementation. They willingly worked overtime to produce an energized focus for AAW.

Leadership training and support provided by Syngenta once again proved to be dynamic. Fifteen members have joined the "Syngenta sisterhood" as referred to by one of this year's participants. The leadership development and relationship building skills are assets for AAW and the agricultural industry.

Check out the details for the Washington, D.C. Fly-In and consider attending June 10-13. As always, it is an action-packed agenda.

It is rewarding to see our members activating their memberships. There are many opportunities for AAW members of all interests. Thanks for all your efforts to make AAW effective and successful.

Yvonne

NEXT DEADLINE IS 6/15/07

Getting a report in to the AAW Voice is a great way to advertise your organization! Please send your articles to the editor at akovash@earthlink.net. If you aren't on this list and haven't sent an article in the last year, please feel free to send it now!

Affiliates:

- Montana Women in Timber
- Idaho Agri-Women
- Nat'l Shorthorn Lassie Association
- Oregon Women for Agriculture
- Colorado State Wool Growers Aux.
- California Women for Agriculture
- Minnesota Agri-Women
- Texas Produce Association
- National Peach Partners
- Oklahoma Women for Agriculture
- North Dakota Agri-Women
- Ohio Holstien Women

Committees

- Natural Resources Committees: Animal Resource Management, Land Use, Timber, and Water Resources and Quality

Whitmore Scholarship, Nominating Committee

- **Anyone who hasn't sent a report yet!**

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American Agri-Women 2007 Positions



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Adopted by the Voting Delegates of American Agri-Women

Kansas City, Missouri
April 1, 2007

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.

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

AGRICULTURE BUSINESS & ECONOMICS

TAXATION

Capital Gains Tax on 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. AAW 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 & 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.

INSURANCE

Health Insurance

AAW supports legislation that allows 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 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 chronic conditions (i.e. high blood pressure, high cholesterol and diabetes).

AAW supports a health care system:

- within which decisions for specific testing and hospital stays should be determined by medical professionals.

- 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-managed bureaucracies;
- that employers with temporary or part-time employees will be exempt from legislation that would require them to pay for health care expenses.
- that supports private enterprise delivery of our nation's health care system.

Long-Term Care Security

AAW supports continuation 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 to:

- Provide in all regions of the country affordably priced, adequate coverage that is actuarially sound and voluntary
- Exempt the benefits of crop insurance from the gross income test
- Require participation in crop insurance for eligibility in government crop disaster programs.

AAW supports requiring crop insurance for only crop disaster programs and not for other federal agriculture programs. 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.

AAW opposes the effort to adopt an

agreement among the states to elect the President by national popular vote under which participating states agree to allocate each state's electoral votes to the Presidential slate receiving the largest national popular vote total.

AGRICULTURAL LABOR

AAW believes that no single industry should be targeted with the enforcement of and compliance of laws affecting labor. Agriculture needs 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 and legally enter the U.S. on a temporary basis, fill empty jobs, and return to their home countries.

Guest Worker Program

AAW supports a guest worker program that ensures that U.S. employers have access to a legal workforce as proposed by the Agricultural Jobs Opportunities Benefits and Security Act (AgJOBS Act).

AAW supports the creation of an ID card for employment. The cards would be issued by a U.S. government agency. An employer, when presented with the card, could rely on that card as an indication of the individual's legal status to work in the U.S.

AAW believes that the current foreign agricultural worker program (H2-A) is ineffective and must be reformed. We support reform to H2-A that eliminates the housing requirement; eliminates the requirement that jobs be seasonal in nature; and makes available an unlimited number of H2-A visas.

Border Protection

AAW supports enforcement of border security.

TRADE & INTERNATIONAL 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 believes that quality standards for imported products should meet the same standards required for U.S. products. Imported foods should meet the same grading and safety standards as domestic

products.

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

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 U.S. is a distinct trade disadvantage to U.S. farmers by increasing their cost of production.

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

Border & Port Inspections

AAW supports USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service having the responsibility for border and port inspections with the appropriate increase in funding. Less than 2% of agri-products entering the country are inspected. We believe that more attention should be given to inspecting our food supply at the ports of entry.

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 to be an 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 (WTO) 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 commercial vehicles operating within U.S. borders must meet uniform safety standards.

AAW supports reform of the Jones Act-Merchants Marine Act of 1920 so that shipping costs can be competitive for the U.S. producer.

The Jones Act currently places severe restriction on U.S. businesses and agriculture by requiring that merchandise being transported in part or in entirety by water between U.S. points—either directly or via foreign ports—must travel in U.S.-built, U.S.-manned, and U.S. citizen-owned vessels. No other U.S. industry or its customers are bound by such restrictions.

Consumers are paying to protect U.S. water-borne vessels from international competition in the domestic maritime market.

The U.S. (Jones Act) fleet does not have enough qualified carriers. Farmers in the southeast can purchase Canadian grain shipped through the same route. Not a single U.S. coastal freighter larger than 1,000 ton run along the East coast. Hawaiian beef producers often choose to have their beef processed in Canada because of the lack of cattle carriers and the prohibitive cost to airfreight cattle to the U.S. mainland. It is cheaper to send cattle to the mainland by air than by water because there are no qualified livestock carriers in the Jones Act Fleet.

Labeling

AAW supports mandatory Country of Origin Labeling (COOL) on all imported agricultural and aquacultural 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 products should meet the same grading, phytosanitary and production standards as domestic products.

Market Consolidation

AAW supports strong Congressional oversight of market consolidation. AAW believes that retail consolidation restricts trade and decreases market access for small farmers.

RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Rural Economic Development

AAW urges family farmers to investigate agri-tourism and alternative crops, which might add profit to the farming operation.

Telecommunications

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

Rural Hospitals

AAW supports continued appropriation of federal funds to keep rural hospitals operational and modern.

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 the government granting any authority to the United Nations regarding the use or management of any federal, state, or private properties of the U.S.

AAW opposes the U.S. government 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. We support giving "food" in food aid rather than dollars. We recognize that the U.S. needs to provide a steady level of food aid, every year, on which the international humanitarian community can rely.

AAW opposes the reauthorization of any designated biosphere reserves within the U.S. or its holdings and any new designation of reserves in the future.

AAW opposes the use of U.S. land holdings for barter of U.S. debts to foreign nations. U.S. lands are owned by people of the United States of America and were never intended to use for barter. Every effort should be made to re-instate those holdings that have been transferred.

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 & 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.

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.

AAW recognizes the need for intervention when dairy prices fall below certain levels; we urge lawmakers crafting the 2007 Farm Bill to thoroughly examine this issue.

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 byproducts 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 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 supports mandatory 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, disease surveillance, marketing, environmental conditions, and other issues that affect the livestock industry and the welfare of animals.

AAW supports a voluntary national premises registration and animal identification program for effective track and trace, animal health and public confidence in the U.S. food supply.

AAW believes there is a need to further develop the national animal identification system to be cost-effective to producers.

AAW supports legislation to clarify that Congress did not intend to regulate manure under the Comprehensive Environmental Recovery Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA) or the Environmental Protection and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA), known as Superfund laws.

SPECIALTY CROPS

AAW supports a competitive specialty crop industry, which includes edible and non-edible crops.

U.S. specialty crop growers believe that there are numerous areas of federal agriculture policy that must be improved to increase the competitiveness and efficiency of specialty crop producers.

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

FRUITS & VEGETABLES

AAW commends the U.S. Department of Agriculture for increasing fruits and vegetable consumption 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.

HORTICULTURE

AAW supports the development of industry-driven, science-based, voluntary, Best-Management Practices (BMPs) as well as associated cost-share programs and other incentives to assist nurseries in meeting water quality standards and other environmental goals.

AAW supports continued research and development of biological, physical, cultural and chemical tools necessary for nursery growers and landscape maintenance professionals to incorporate Integrated Pest Management (IPM) strategies into their overall management regiments.

AAW insists that the scientific foundation and biological integrity of Quarantine-37 must never be compromised. It is a scientifically-sound, biologically-based barrier designed to minimize the introduction of new, damaging, exotic pests and diseases into the U.S.

POLLINATORS

AAW supports rebuilding viable and vibrant pollinator communities across all lands to improve resiliency and functional redundancy in pollinator populations and to improve long-term profitability of agriculture. Pollinators are vital to production agriculture. Most fruit, vegetable, forage and seed crops plus crops that provide fiber, drugs and fuel require the pollination services provided by managed and native or "wild" pollinators.

AAW supports promoting pollinators through further revisions to USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) field office technical guides and conservation practices.

NEW CROPS/NEW USES

AAW supports research efforts into the utilization of alternate/new crops for new commercial food, fiber, and energy uses.

AAW supports funding of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to support research on plant-based feeds necessary to develop the regulatory structure for an offshore aquaculture industry in the U.S.

NATURAL RESOURCES

AAW believes in the benefits of multiple uses of natural resources.

We recommend policies that promote and ensure abundant, renewable natural resources and a healthy, productive environment.

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

Government agencies that are using the power of decision-making to affect natural resource industries need to be held accountable for their decisions. There should be:

- Specific timetables
- Timely efficiency reports
- Analysis of public and private costs of implementation
- Balancing of harms
- Effect of no-management actions

Public Land & Animal Resource Management

AAW expects government to comply with 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 natural 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 more than 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 or organizations using government funds erodes the very foundation on which this country, its principles, freedoms, economy and the health and productivity of its natural 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 within the boundaries of the U.S. and its holdings.

AAW opposes the designation of Scenic Byways, flyways, waterways or any other designations and the resulting restrictions on private lands in the U.S.

PUBLIC LANDS

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 a policy of no net loss of taxable private property.

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

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.

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

AAW opposes the designation of additional wilderness areas. Wilderness areas are wild lands with special "legal" protections granted by the U.S. Congress that cannot be changed. They cannot be managed to save species, habitat or old growth forests, or to suppress fire. Natural forces prevail. In 1964, when the Wilderness Act was passed, there were 9.1 million acres set aside in 13 states (54 areas). In 2007 there are almost 107.5 million acres in 44 states and Puerto Rico (702 areas).

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 fairly 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.

EMINENT DOMAIN

Eminent Domain should not be used for the purchase of property from a private owner to transfer to another private or commercial owner. When property is taken, the owner must be fully compensated at fair market value for property, expenses and lost income. We are opposed to the use of Eminent Domain for economic development and additional tax revenue accruing from such development.

AAW strongly opposes the taking of private property by postings on the Internet only. Government agencies considering the acquisition of properties by Eminent Domain should at a minimum send a certified letter with return receipt requested to the property owner of record on the county tax rolls, notifying him of the open public meeting called to decide the issue, at least 90 days prior to the meeting, and publish a newspaper legal notice.

Before exercising Eminent Domain, every effort should be made to use existing public land.

ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT

Our 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 sustaining human life and safety above any other

species whether endangered, threatened or not listed.

Funding for the Endangered Species Act (ESA) needs to be discontinued until such time as the Act is re-authorized and the means for funding re-evaluated.

AAW supports the following:

- Require the use of sound, verifiable, peer-reviewed science giving equal weight to historical data of the land before a listing is approved;
- 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;
- Ensure protection of property owners from regulatory takings by local, state and national agencies. If property is taken, owner must be fully compensated for loss of property at fair market value, for loss of income and expenses;
- 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;
- Require feasible recovery plans and selection of recovery measures that are most cost effective and have the least negative social and economic impact;
- Allow for administrative appeal of qualified major decisions and/or judicial review by qualified affected parties;
- Exclude a specie from consideration as endangered or threatened, or de-list it, if it is abundant in any one location;
- 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 before legislation should be passed.

AAW does not view all non-native species as invasive, nuisance, noxious, or harmful. It is well known that migratory flyways can and do change. Weather, volcanic eruptions and earthquakes can and do cause variations to migration. Oceanic currents can and do cause variations to historic ranges of species. These and other acts of nature cause relocation of species. Therefore the phrase, “invasive species” needs to be defined as a specific set of scientific criteria.

AAW believes this distinction needs to be made clear in open debate.

FORESTRY & TIMBER

One-third of our nation’s landscape is forested. There are more acres today than 100 years ago. Trees are abundant, natural and renewable. The earth needs forests and their resources.

Healthy forests provide goods, recreation and wildlife habitat, clean and cool the air, and protect our water and fisheries. Active, good forestry practices can keep our national forest healthy and protect them against catastrophic destruction from insects, disease and fire. These actions create jobs, fuel the economy and provide tax dollars, both locally and to our nation. For 20 years management efforts have been stopped through litigation revolving around “wilderness” and “roadless” areas and the Endangered Species Act.

AAW urges Congress to release to multiple use the acres that do not qualify for wilderness and settle the 40-year-old issue of roadless designation.

AAW urges Congress to provide funding to implement the Healthy Forest Initiative. Deteriorating forest health has resulted in recent catastrophic wildfires. In 2006, the 9.6 million acres that burned dumped an estimated 30 million tons of CO2 into the air. A major part of the Forest Service’s budget is now spent on managing these wildfires.

AAW urges Congress to provide authority to implement the Healthy Forest Initiative. A single tree can absorb 10 pounds of carbon in a year from the atmosphere. The best sequesters of carbon are healthy growing green trees. Old and decaying trees release carbon back into the atmosphere and become part of the carbon problem. Timber owners market carbon credits. Fuel reduction through commercial harvest of timber and biomass would renew forest health and rural communities. Woody biomass can be a major contribution to the 25 x ‘25 solution.

AAW urges Congress to fully fund and implement the Northwest Forest Plan that guarantees harvest levels. Half of the promised annual harvest level (1.1 billion board feet) has not been met since 1994.

AAW urges Congress to re-authorize the full funding of the Secure Rural Schools and Communities Act until such time as active management and harvest is re-established on public lands. The SRSCA was never a paid in lieu of taxes (PILT) payment, but rather a substitute for the 25% Forest Fund.

AAW opposes the Bush Administration’s proposed sale of national forest lands. This proposed funding for the SRSCA offers only a temporary solution.

AAW opposes the sale of national forest lands to fund the purchase of more federal lands.

AAW urges the 2007 Farm Bill to recognize the importance of private forests as part of the rural landscape. Fifty-seven percent of our nation's forests are privately owned and more than one-third of these acres is part of a farm. Increased cost-sharing toward environmental quality incentives, tax incentives for developing renewable energy sources, habitat improvement, water restoration, and expanding and protecting forest product markets will encourage private forest owners to keep and manage these forests. We annually lose one million acres of harvestable timber to development.

AAW urges Congress to amend the Equal Access to Justice Act. Requiring a significant bond based on losses incurred by delays, limiting amounts awarded and requiring plaintiffs to pay government's attorneys' fees if they lose would deter frivolous lawsuits.

WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Civil Works

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

AAW urges Congress to immediately reaffirm the initial, established purpose of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Bureau of Reclamation. The purposes 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 implementation of 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. 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, such as dams, 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 continue to enforce 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.

AAW opposes federal purchase of privately-held water rights in cases where the water right would then be held by the federal government.

Wetlands

AAW objects to a 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.

AAW supports the Supreme Court ruling that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers does not have jurisdiction over wetlands that are not adjacent to navigable waters.

WATER QUALITY

Livestock

AAW opposes efforts to regulate livestock manure as hazardous waste under CIRCLA or other environmental laws.

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 and 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, current records on historical data to establish reasonable and attainable year-round water temperature standards for rivers and streams.

AAW supports the U.S. EPA assisting states in establishing a designated-use classification system for state surface waters. *A designated system would allow for water quality standards to be applied by type of stream. For example: an agricultural irrigation or drainage ditch should not be required to meet the same standard as a pristine stream.

AAW opposes government grants to non-profit organizations for nitrate credit trading schemes to municipalities. *Activist group purchased land and shut off levee pumps in Illinois 2007.

ENERGY

A well-developed diverse domestic energy supply is critical to national security.

AAW supports the 25 X '25 Initiative of having 25% of the U.S. energy being produced by renewable agricultural sources by the year 2025. 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, wind energy, and biomass fuels, because:

- Alternative fuels are an abundant renewable resource;
- Alternative fuels are important to our

- nation's energy security; and
- Alternative fuels are environmentally friendly.

PUBLIC UNDERSTANDING AND AWARENESS

CONSUMER AWARENESS

AAW supports mandatory Country of Origin Labeling as passed in the 2002 Farm Bill. We believe that consumers should be empowered with the knowledge of where their food and fiber are produced.

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.

AAW supports legislation that 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.

AAW opposes the Horse Slaughter Prevention Act.

CROP PROTECTION

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 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 cost effective 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, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and USDA to streamline the Federal Insecticide Fungicide, & Rodenticide (FIFRA) regulatory process and harmonize it with the requirements of the ESA. The new program ensures that regulatory protections are in place for threatened species and 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.

AAW supports scientifically sound, positive standards that instill consumer confidence in the safety of American agricultural products.

AAW strongly supports the Food & Drug Administration's decision to allow the irradiation of food products and education on how to minimize food-borne pathogens.

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 (HACCP), continued worldwide surveillance activities, monitoring of the status of foreign and domestic animal diseases, and inspections at the border.

AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH

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

BIOTECHNOLOGY

AAW supports the development and incorporation of biotechnology in agricultural 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 biotechnological products by the U.S. regulatory agencies (EPA, FDA, and USDA).

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

AAW believes that any of the Biosafety Protocol that is implemented should be based on risk assessments and research-based science.

AAW condemns the theft or destruction of agricultural research and intellectual property. Research has tremendous benefits to the farmer and the consumer. These genetically enhanced products have the capability of improving human health, and solving world environmental and nutritional problems.

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 production of agriculture products (food, feed, fuel, fiber and flora and the inputs required for production).

AAW supports efforts to educate producers about ways to safeguard our nation's food and fiber supply and agricultural inputs from acts of terror.

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.

Fly-In & Symposium Tentative Itinerary

SUNDAY, JUNE 10, 2007

3:00 p.m. - Briefing at Hotel
5:00 p.m. - Bus Tour
8:00 p.m. - Optional Dinner

MONDAY, JUNE 11

7:30 a.m. - Option to attend a Lock Up, for release of USDA world agricultural supply and demand and crop estimates (done by 9:00)
8:00 a.m. - Bus Departs hotel for USDA, w/optional breakfast in USDA cafeteria
9:00-11:45 a.m. - AAW Symposium: Guest Farm Worker Reform
12:15 p.m. - Lunch at ACLI - American Council of Life Insurers
1:45 p.m. - Meet with Dept. of Energy
4:00 - Royal Netherlands Embassy
5:45 - 7:00 p.m. - Reception sponsored by Farm Credit Council
7:30 p.m. - Return to Hotel or Union Station

TUESDAY, JUNE 12

8:00 a.m. - Bus departs for USDA
8:45 a.m. - Speaker on trade from the European Union Commission to USA
9:30 a.m. - Briefings at USDA
12:00 p.m. - Lunch on the Hill provided by Americans for Secure Retirement
Speakers: Senators Barack Obama (D-IL) and Sam Brownback (R-KS)
1:30 - 4:00 p.m. - Capitol Hill visits to Congressional Offices
5:00 - 5:30 p.m. - Meeting in House Ag Committee Room, 1301 Longworth Building - Speaker: Rep. Collin Peterson (D-MN), Chairman, House Ag Committee
5:30 - 7:30 p.m. - Congressional Reception, in same room

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 13

9:00 - 10:30 a.m. - Meetings at EPA or the Corps of Engineers
11:00 a.m. - Bus makes drops at Reagan International Airport and at Hotel

Gail McPherson scholarship still available

The Gail McPherson scholarship is for an AAW member who is a first-time attendee at the Fly-In in Washington, DC. For information about the scholarship, talk to your state president.

AAW Fly-In Registration Form

Registration Fee: \$100 (no partial registration). Please register by May 15 if possible and send your check with this form to:

AAW, c/o Kathy Rhoads, Treasurer
1051 S.R. 56 East, Circleville, OH 43113
Phone: 740-474-4649
E-mail: 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 _____

Do you want us to find you a roommate? _____ yes _____ no

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.) _____

Comments and suggestions _____

Hotel reservations may be made by calling the Holiday Inn Capitol, 550 C Street, SW, at 202-479-4000. Rooms are \$199 for 1-4 occupancy, with two double beds. Call by May 5, 5 p.m. EDT for those rates. Or contact Arlene as she reserved an extra room in case.



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**See AAW's web site or the next newsletter
for 2007 Convention details!**

For AAW rates
for the Fly-In at the
Holiday Inn Capitol
in DC, make your
reservation ASAP!
Phone number is on
page 11.

GET READY TO SAIL!

American Agri-Women have scheduled a
seven-day **AAW Fundraiser Cruise** to the

Western Caribbean

leaving January 27, 2008 from Tampa, FL.

Carnival cruise lines will donate \$35.00 per person or
\$70.00 per stateroom (based on 2 people per stateroom).
Carnival has given us a discounted group rate for this cruise
so we hope you will consider matching the \$70.00 per
stateroom Carnival donation when you book your cruise.
We have the opportunity to have fun, schedule an onboard
meeting and raise money for AAW.

We have held 50 staterooms and need to start putting
names on them ASAP. All it takes is \$250.00 per person
deposit to hold a cabin. Final
payment will be due 11/13/07.



If you have any questions,
please call

Alice Dettwyler 503-371-1399
or Donna Mantie at Newberg Travel
800-234-6968.

American Agri-Women

Calendar of Events

- May 31 – Fly-In registration due
- June 10-13, 2007 – Fly-In
See page 11 for registration info
Holiday Inn Capitol, 550 C
Street, SW, Washington, DC.
For more information, contact
www.holidayinncapitol.com.
- 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 meet-
ing due
- November 8-10, 2007 AAW
Convention, St. Paul, MN

AAW Web site

www.americanagriwomen.org

AAW Phone & Fax Numbers

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Fax: 218-495-2659