

LWV MEETING  
March 20, 2014

Notes

The regular meeting of the Lincoln County LVW was held at the Newport Library. The following members were in attendance: **Genevie Rosin, Ruth Kistler, Jack Kistler, Mary Benvaed, Ruby Miller and Jane Sharp.**

Ruth announced the the posters announcing the program “My Land, Your Land” would be displayed this week at various sites throughout the community.

The focus of this meeting was to discuss the updated Agriculture Study Consensus Questions. Ruth announced that this is an updated study with the purpose being to determine our existing position. She talked about federal subsidies and crop insurance. Direct Payments include **Mortgage Loans** where the government offers loan assistance to give farmers the ability to hold on to their crops and **Disaster Payments** which helps farmers get necessary crop insurance.

The group agreed that these assistance programs should be structured to support the small farmer. Support should be given to those farmers that restrict use of chemicals and those that are not polluting or destructive to the surrounding environment. They should be directed to small farms rather than to large commercial farms that are profitable without the need for government assistance.

The remainder of the meeting was spent on the Agriculture Study Consensus Questions as follows:

Discussion and votes were held on the AGRICULTURE UPDATE STUDY CONSENSUS QUESTIONS, with our position given at the end of each question

**1. Should government financial support for agriculture be directed to:** The group affirmed the following positions:

- a) Disaster assistance – **YES**
- b) Crop insurance – **YES**
- c) Farms that supply local and regional markets – **YES**
- d) Subsidized implementation of best management practices – **YES**
- e) Commodity crop programs, e.g. corn, soybeans, sugar, cotton, wheat – **YES**
- f) Commodity livestock program - **YES**
- g) Commodity dairy program – **YES**
- h) Specialty crops, e.g. fruits, vegetables, nuts, etc. – **YES**
- i) Other production methods, e.g. organic, hydroponic, urban, etc. farms – **YES**

**The League has supported this support in the past for the small farmer. Ruth objects to commodity subsidies to large corporate farms because of the power and control it provides them**

**2. What changes should government make regarding direct payment - programs to farm operators?**

Ruth believes they should eliminate those to large corporate farms

- a) Eliminate direct payments to farm operators – **Ruth believes direct payments to large corporate farms should be eliminated**
- b) Update the rules for direct payments to farm operators to support sustainability **YES**
- c) Broaden the types of farms that are eligible – **YES**
- d) Broaden the types of crops that are eligible – **YES**
- e) Effectively enforce existing rules – **YES**

**3. What changes to current crop insurance programs should government make?**

- a) Extend to more types of crops – **YES**
- b) Link to the use of conservation practices – **YES**
- c) Limit insurance for the cultivation of marginal and environmentally sensitive land – **YES**
- d) Cap amount of premium subsidy to a single farm operator – **YES** –**Genevieve suggested this be defined more specifically i.e., identify what a single farm operator is. This is currently too broad a definition and should be more specific on the definition of a single farm operator**

**4. Should government act on any of the following?**

- a) Revise anti-trust legislation to ensure competitive agricultural markets – **YES**
- b) Enforce anti-trust laws as they relate to agriculture – **YES**

- c) Promote alternative marketing systems, including regional hub markets, farmer cooperative, farm markets, etc. – **YES**

**5. Which of the following approaches to animal management should government achieve?**

- a) Transparently collect and disclose data about regulated animal feeding operations or aquaculture operations and about the health of animals in such regulated operations – **YES**
- b) Apply and enforce existing clean air and clean water regulations to animal or seafood management facilities - **YES**

**6. Which of the following approaches to animal waste management should government require or bring about?**

- a) Treat animal waste with environmentally sound technologies for all regulated AFOs – **YES**
- b) Prioritize federal funds to mitigate existing environmental challenges (such as Environmental Quality Incentives Program, cost share, loans, etc.) rather than construction of new facilities – **YES. We need new, higher standards**

**7. Which of the following approaches to research and development (R&D) should government fund or accomplish?**

- a) Basic research - **YES**
- b) Independent third-party (such as an academic institution) risk assessment of products developed using any new technology - **YES**
- c) Research that advances the continuation of diversified and sustainable agricultural systems - **YES**
- d) Research that advances the continuation of diversified and sustainable agricultural systems - **YES**
- e) Seed banking research, and other means that promote and preserve genetic diversity - **YES**
- f) Both transparency in the reporting of research studies related to approval of new products and respect for intellectual property rights of private enterprises engaged in research - **YES**
- g) Research on long-term effects of new crops, products and processes - **YES**
- h) Development of new practices and technologies to promote conservation for all types of farms – **YES Gen believes that this is particularly important**

**8. Which of the following approaches food safety should government perform or fund?**

- a) Clarify and enforce pre-market testing requirements for new foods and food additives developed using any new technology - **YES**
- b) Require developers to monitor all food products developed using any new technology after releasing to the market – **NO This should be monitored by an unbiased third party, not the developers.**
- c) Withdraw marketing approval if products are shown to be unsafe **YES. Jack recommends that all products found to be unsafe should be recalled.**
- d) Require post-market monitoring of approved pharmaceutical applications in animal production for human health and environmental impacts – **YES**
- e) Require developers of new products to provide data and other materials to independent third-parties (such as academic institutions) for pre- and post-market safety assessment as appropriate - **YES**
- f) Limit use of antibiotics in animal production to treat and control disease - **YES**
- g) Fund independent third-party (such as academic institutions) risk assessment of long-term and multiple exposures from foods on human health and the environment - **YES**
- h) Promote crop management practices that decrease dependency on added chemicals (pesticides, herbicides, and synthetic fertilizers) – **YES**
- i) Fund, train and add personnel for assessment and compliance functions of regulatory agencies - **YES**

**9. How sufficient are the following regarding current food labeling?**

- a) Nutrition Facts on food labels - **INSUFFICIENT**
- b) Nutrition Facts on food labels as a means of consumer education - **INSUFFICIENT**
- c) Common allergen labeling – **INSUFFICIENT**
- d) Health and ingredient claims that consumers can understand – **INSUFFICIENT**

**Jack pointed out that we need to have information that customers can understand and interpret correctly**

**10. Which of the following should government achieve regarding marketing and ingredient claims on food labels?**

- a) Define (and approve for use) health and safety marketing terms (e.g., immunity support, humane, pasture-raised, natural, etc.) – **YES**
- b) Regulate the use of images or other sensory advertising – **NO CONSENSUS Sometimes images are misleading. It is understood that images can be misleading and not realistic to regulate**
- c) Require that ingredient marketing claims accurately represent what is in the required ingredient list – **YES**

