Revitalizing Our Rural Communities and “Feeding the World” Better Without Factory Farms

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795 million people are starving

But we feed 56 billion farm animals
How did we get here?
An Adaptive Program for AGRICULTURE

A STATEMENT ON NATIONAL POLICY BY THE RESEARCH AND POLICY COMMITTEE OF THE COMMITTEE FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
INTRODUCTION

THREE POSSIBLE APPROACHES TO THE PROBLEM
The Laissez-Faire Approach
The Protectionist Approach
The Adaptive Approach

LESSONS OF THE PROTECTIONIST APPROACH

ROOTS OF THE AMERICAN FARM PROBLEM
- Swiftly Rising Productivity
- Declining Use of Labor Relative to Capital
- The Slow Growth of Demand for Farm Goods
- The Low Responsiveness of Demand to Price Changes
- The Inadequate Flow of Resources Out of Farming

THE MEASURES TAKEN

CONSEQUENCES OF THE POLICIES FOLLOWED SINCE 1947

THE CHOICES BEFORE US

A PROGRAM FOR AGRICULTURAL ADJUSTMENT

A. Attracting Excess Resources from Use in Farm Production
   An Improved Labor Market
   1. High Employment
   2. Education
   3. Mobility
      Job Information
      Retraining and Movement
   Adjustment of Agricultural Prices
The remaining costs (of approximately $3 billion) relate to items not dealt with in this statement, including farm housing, research, rural electrification certain commodities, such as wool, and the cost of aid to underdeveloped countries equivalent to that now provided in the form of surplus farm goods.

4. As we emphasized in the early portions of this statement, it is the very heart of the farm problem that a massive adjustment needs to be made in the human resources now committed to agricultural production. Small adjustments in the farm labor force will not suffice.

What we have in mind in our program is a reduction of the farm labor force on the order of one third in a period of not more than five years.

This, we think, would be large enough and fast enough to offset the effects on farm output of new technology and investment. It would thereby contribute to the basic goal of a net reduction of the resources — human and other — now employed in farming.

This is a high, but not an impractical, goal.

If the farm labor force were to be, five years hence, no more than two thirds as large as its present size of approximately 5.5 million the program would involve moving off the farm about two million of the present farm labor force, plus a number equal to a large part of the new entrants who would otherwise join the farm labor force in the five years. The total number of workers leaving farming in the five years would amount to 3 to 4 per cent of the present nonfarm civilian labor force of some 65 millions. This would be some 400,000 to 500,000 persons a year. That is considerably less than an addition of 1 per cent a year to the nonfarm labor force. However, a small percentage extra addition to the annual increase of the nonfarm labor force is a large matter when it is viewed as an addition to the number of people newly becoming nonfarm job seekers each year. Statistical projections indicate that the nonfarm labor force will be rising by about 1 1/4 million persons a year (including present migration in farming) over the next five years. If something like half a million additional new entrants come from the farms, the annual increase will be about 1 1/4 million persons, or some 40 per cent more than projected.
Benefits:

1) add two million people to the urban labor pool, which would tend to depress wages overall and lead to cheaper labor costs; and

2) Lower the cost of raw materials for food and clothing companies;

3) Increase the return on corporate investment in agriculture.
Between 1950 and 1970 the number of the farms in the U.S. was cut roughly in half before the rate of decline leveled off. [Source US Dept. of Commerce & USDA]
Distribution of USDA Agricultural Subsidies By Farm Size, 1995–2014

- The largest 1% of farms received 25% of subsidies ($64 bn)
- Smallest 80% of farms
  - $29 bn (11%)

Total $255.2 billion from 1995–2014

- Largest 20% of farms
  - $226 bn (89%)

Data Note: Total does not include $67.6 billion for crop insurance subsidies because disaggregated data is not available by farm size. If crop insurance subsidies were included, total USDA agricultural subsidies would be $322.7 billion.
Source: Environmental Working Group Farm Subsidy Database 1995–2014
Corporate Concentration in the Meat Industry
Percentage controlled by the four largest firms in each industry

- **Beef**: 83.5%
- **Pork**: 66%
- **Chicken**: 58%
- **Turkey**: 55%

Anything above 45% is highly concentrated and market abuses are expected.
7.1 billion of the 9.8 billion farm animals raised and slaughtered each year in the United States come from just 25,000 industrial-scale animal factories like this one.
Why should we *all* care?
335 million tons
(1 ton per U.S. citizen)

7.6 million tons

Source: Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future
Livestock –vs- Human (also an Animal) Waste Management
80% of antibiotics sold in the United States are used on food-producing animals.
ANTIBIOTIC RESISTANCE
from the farm to the table

RESISTANCE Animals can carry harmful bacteria in their intestines

When antibiotics are given to animals...
Antibiotics kill most bacteria
But resistant bacteria can survive and multiply

SPREAD Resistant bacteria can spread to...

animal products
produce through contaminated water or soil
prepared food through contaminated surfaces
the environment when animals poop

EXPOSURE People can get sick with resistant infections from...

contaminated food
contaminated environment

Impact Some resistant infections cause...

About 1 in 5 resistant infections are caused by germs from food and animals.
Source: Antibiotic Resistant Threats in the United States, 2013

Learn 4 steps to prevent food poisoning at www.foodsafety.gov

Learn more about antibiotic resistance and food safety at www.cdc.gov/foodsafety/antibiotic-resistance.html
Learn more about protecting you and your family from resistant infections at www.cdc.gov/drugresistance/
protecting_yourself_family.html
Climate change widespread, rapid, and intensifying – IPCC

#IPCC
#ClimateReport
Meat & Dairy: No. 1 Source of all Human-Caused Greenhouse Gas Emissions (24%)

Global Warming Potential = 23

- Meat & Dairy: 18%
- Other: 82%

Global Warming Potential = 68

- Meat & Dairy: 24%
- Other: 76%

The UN FAO states the livestock industry causes 18% of global warming over a 100 year time frame. Over a shorter time period, meat and dairy are responsible for 24% of global warming due to the higher global warming potential of methane over shorter periods of time.

(Assumed Methane Global Warming Potential = 23 @100 years, 68 @ 20 years)

Source: UN Food and Agriculture Organization & IPCC estimates.
Land Use & Degradation
*70 billion farm animals raised annually

*10 billion in U.S.

*6 million are killed for food every hour
A Thirsty Industry

50% Nearly half of all water used in the United States goes to raising animals for food.

It takes more than 2,400 gallons of water to produce 1 pound of meat.

2,400 gallons = 1 lb. of meat

1 pound of wheat takes 25 gallons.

25 gallons = 1 lb. of wheat
We currently grow enough food to feed more than 10 billion people but 50% of it goes to feed livestock.

82% of starving children live in countries where food is grown to feed livestock that are eaten by people in western countries.
Systemic Animal Cruelty
Annual externalized health care costs of U.S. animal food production (in billions USD)

- Heart disease: $143.1 billion
- Cancer: $84.3 billion
- Diabetes: $61.3 billion
- Antibiotic resistance: $23.6 billion
- E. coli poisoning: $0.3 billion
- Salmonella poisoning: $1.4 billion

Total: $314 billion
The problem with our industrial food system

99¢

$5
2020 U.S. Farm Subsidies & Bailouts
$53 Billion
Fruits & Veggies $411m
Grains $37b
Protein & Dairy $115b
Edible Oils $1.66b
Sweeteners & Additives $12b
What Can We Do?
“Ag-vocate” for Policy Reforms that Support the Sustainable Food System We Want…
It’s time to crack down on meatpacking monopolies and help independent farmers transition to sustainable, humane practices.

TELL CONGRESS:
Support the Farm System Reform Act!
Farm System Reform Act

✓ strengthens the Packers & Stockyards Act (anti-trust law) to crack down on the monopolistic practices of multi-national meatpackers and corporate integrators;

✓ places an immediate moratorium on new and expanding large CAFOs, and phases out by 2040 the largest CAFOs as defined by EPA;

✓ holds corporate integrators responsible for pollution and other harm caused by CAFOs;

✓ provides a voluntary buyout for farmers who want to transition out of operating a CAFO
YOU DECIDE...
Vote with your food dollars

https://www.localharvest.org
THERE IS NO PLANET B.