

From: kenandcorrie@centurytel.net
Subject: Fw: Farm Bill Comments
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----- Original Message -----

From: Ken Roberts
To: FarmBill@usda.gov
Sent: Saturday, June 18, 2005 9:12 PM
Subject: Farm Bill Comments

1. The U.S. will only be competitive with other countries if we have a committee that continuously monitors our costs and inputs versus other countries. Then we can be compensated accordingly. Right now in the rice market, world market price is 16 dollars per barrel. Delta prices are 11 dollars per barrel. So our LDP payments that are tied to the world market price is very low. We are repaying our payments for the 2003 overpayment, so we are pretty much farming with no government help. Break even prices for most small farmers is 14 dollars per barrel. So we know we will not pay off at the banks. 2. I know of no new farmers in my area of Louisiana. I am 29 years old and I cannot afford to stay in rice farming when I cannot pay off my loans. Please listen to this... Farmers are the ONLY people who pay RETAIL prices for our goods bought (diesel, oil, parts) and sell for WHOLESALE. Could wal-mart buy at retail prices and sell at wholesale prices? The only way I know to recruit new farmers would be to give them tax breaks or discount prices on goods important to farming. Its not like our business doesn't effect you reading this letter. Did you eat cereal or oatmeal this morning? These discounts are actually benefiting all Americans, not like you are giving breaks to someone who will not give it back...with an essential need...Food, Water, Shelter...essentials. Why would a young person want to worry about trying to pay back loans when inputs have tripled but market prices are equal to what farmers made in the 1970's. I know I would rather sit in a refinery and make 25 dollars per hour than get prices equal to when people made 2 dollars per hour. This lack of cost of living would have to be offset with discounts with our inputs. 3. The FSA centers in my area are adequate at distributing assistance to producers. These are the most pressing issues in rice country at this time. Thank you for this opportunity. Ken Roberts. Rice Farmer.