

**National Farmers Union -- 2008 Special Order of Business  
Farm Bill**

**WHEREAS**, the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 expired on September of 2007; and  
**WHEREAS**, the U.S. House of Representatives passed the *Farm, Nutrition and Bioenergy Act of 2007* on July 27, 2007 by a margin of 231-191. This legislation makes significant investments in specialty crop production, conservation initiatives, nutrition programs and renewable energy efforts, while at the same time continues a strong safety net for America's farmers and ranchers; and

**WHEREAS**, the U.S. Senate passed the *Food and Energy Security Act of 2007* on December 14, 2007 by a margin of 79-14, the widest margin of support for a farm bill since 1973. The legislation includes substantial investments for conservation initiatives, renewable energy programs, nutrition programs and rural development efforts; and

**WHEREAS**, following a series of listening sessions held nation-wide, NFU made recommendations to Congress regarding which policies were of priority to family farmers and ranchers. Among those priorities was the establishment of a purely counter-cyclical safety-net tied to the cost of production, establishment of a permanent disaster program, a comprehensive renewable energy title, specialty crop investments, increased conservation investments, livestock competition title, a strong nutrition title with a eat-fresh/buy local component, and implementation of mandatory country-of-origin labeling; and

**WHEREAS**, both the House and Senate – passed farm bills include authorization for a permanent disaster program for weather-related losses, which will provide assurance to producers in the event of extreme weather conditions. The single biggest hole in the existing safety net was the lack of a permanent disaster assistance program; and

**WHEREAS**, National Farmers Union has been the organization leading the charge to reestablish competitive and transparent markets for producers. The inclusion of a livestock competition title in the Senate-passed farm bill contains many of NFU's market reform policies, including implementation of mandatory country-of-origin labeling; interstate shipment of meat; livestock a ban on packer ownership of livestock; establishment of an Office of Special Counsel; prohibition of mandatory arbitration and many contract reforms; and

**WHEREAS**, the 2002 Farm Bill provisions have been extended until March 15, 2008. Further, the Congressional Budget Office will release an updated baseline budget for agriculture on March 15, which is expected to dramatically reduce the budget for agriculture spending.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, National Farmers Union reiterates its strong support for a purely counter-cyclical safety net tied to cost of production. Rapidly rising costs of production, as a result of fertilizer, fuel and land expenses, have minimized the increase in market commodity prices received by producers. The design of the counter-cyclical safety net in the 2002 Farm Bill resulted in savings of more than \$23 billion in federal expenditures.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, National Farmers Union strongly urges the Administration to work with both bodies of Congress in resolving differences between the two pieces of legislation so that a farm bill can be enacted immediately.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, NFU calls upon the next president of the United States to pledge their support for restoring competition into agricultural markets by making antitrust enforcement a top administrative priority. Further, the next president should select an Attorney General who will pledge to enforce current antitrust laws and suggest to Congress necessary modifications to keep pace with the changing agricultural economy.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, National Farmers Union supports allowing the non-expiring provisions of the Agriculture Adjustment Act of 1938 and the Agriculture Act of 1949 to take effect, rather than extending the current farm bill for one or two years.