

National Farmers Union -- 2008 Special Order of Business
Buy Fresh - Eat Local Consumer Food Movement

WHEREAS, American farmers and ranchers produce the most affordable, abundant, safe and healthy food supply in the world. However, today's food safety and inspection systems are in need of an overhaul. Increasingly, imported food products are flooding grocery store shelves, many of which are not inspected for quality or safety. Regulatory agencies lack the authority and resources to inspect the high volume of imported food products; and

WHEREAS, consumers are reconnecting with the source of the food they purchase and are actively pursuing knowledge on how their food is produced, by whom and under which conditions. This consumer movement and demand for fresh, source verified, direct from the farm food is an exciting economic opportunity for family farmers and ranchers; and

WHEREAS, the United States is facing a crisis of unacceptable nutrition including undernourishment and obesity. Poverty and hunger continues to be a problem across the country with too many families unable to put enough food on the table each day; federal nutrition assistance programs provide as little as \$1 per day to help those less fortunate. Additionally, the lack of access to nutritious foods leads to poor health and fuels our nation's obesity epidemic.

WHEREAS, the quality of fresh farm products has been demonstrated to deteriorate daily as it moves further away from the farm. Buying fresh, locally produced food will therefore improve the nutritional value to the consumer by a factor of 200-300 percent, compared to food transported long distances. As energy prices escalate, the Buy Fresh – Eat Local Consumer Food Movement becomes more valuable and more important.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, NFU wholly supports further development of the buy fresh -- eat local consumer food movement. A producers' price is based upon quality and freshness; in turn, consumers and their families receive high quality, fresh products they want and can trust. We encourage cooperative development and public-private partnerships to expand opportunities for producers to market their products directly to consumers.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, NFU urges Congress to take decisive action to protect our nation's food supply from adulterated imported food products. America's food safety inspection system is broken and cannot effectively handle the large quantity of imports each year. A new food safety inspection system must be created that will meet the challenges of our modern food system and ensure the safety of the U.S. food supply.