

# National Farmers Union

## “Broaden Your Horizons”



## Section 5: Adult Education

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## Lesson 1

### Is there an app for that? Problem Solving

<b>Unit Objective:</b>	Students will learn how to problem solve using the <i>Seven Step Method of Problem Solving</i>
<b>Grades:</b>	Adult Education
<b>Materials:</b>	NFU History handout for each student (found at the end of section 5)
<b>Length:</b>	1 hour
<b>Background:</b>	Since Farmers Union was founded in 1902 family farmers have come across many obstacles that they have had to overcome. The problems and the solutions that Farmers Union has faced are varied. From one of the very first issues of urging the establishment of a parcel post system to currently advocating for family famers in DC, problem solving is a very big part of the FU culture. In this lesson, students will look over FU history, and critically think about problems that were addressed and the solutions that were implemented. They will also practice problem solving in their own capacity, coming up with efficient methods using the <i>Seven Step Method of Problem Solving</i> . Problem solving is a very pivotal part of any career path, and learning how to effectively come up with realistic solutions is a key ingredient to being successful.
<b>Adapted From:</b>	Clarkson.edu

#### **Teaching Strategy:**

- 1) Ask students: *Tell me about a problem you have had recently and the solution you came up with for that problem. How did you arrive at that solution?* Let a handful of students reply, keep track on the whiteboard of how they managed to come up with a solution, i.e. pros vs. cons, charts, etc. Explain: *In every career path employees have to deal with problems on a daily basis, some bigger than others. Can you think of one career that does not have to deal with problems in some capacity? When you are dealt with a problem in life having a system that you can rely on to come up with solutions is always an effective way to solve a difficult situation. Today we are going to be looking at a method called the "Seven Step Method of Problem Solving".* Write the steps on the board:
  - ✓ Identify the problem, make it simple and "big picture"
  - ✓ Establish what you want to achieve, write it down, ask yourself: How will I know when I completed this project? What does the solution need (criteria) and what is limiting me (constraints)
  - ✓ Gather Information, research, don't be afraid to use past experiences
  - ✓ Brainstorm possible solutions, make a list
  - ✓ Choose the best solution, making trade-offs to find the best solution, compare against your constraints and criteria

- ✓ Implement the solution
- ✓ Test and evaluate the solution, does it need to be modified for better results?  
Do I have to re-do some steps? **(5 minutes)**
- 2) Go over it with the students step by step. Make sure to emphasize that the steps are not always followed in order and sometimes students may get stuck on steps. **(10 minutes)**
- 3) Hand out the "Farmer Union History" and the "Over a Century of Service to Family Farmers & Ranchers" handout. Explain: *Since Farmers Union was founded in 1902 family farmers have come across many obstacles that they have had to overcome. The problems and the solutions that Farmers Union has faced are varied,* have students read and look over independently. Have them make a list of problems and solutions that they come across while reading **(15 minutes)**
- 4) *Discuss: Name some problems FU has overcome or faced? What were the solutions?* Write the problems that students come with on the board. Explain: *We are now going to look at problem solving from our own perspective and how we can use the Seven Step Method of Problem Solving to help us come up with solutions. I am going to give you a hypothetical problem to solve, please go through the seven steps and come up with a solution to the group. Break class up into groups of 3-4. Write the problem on the board: Situation #1: You are an astronaut who helped set up a new community on the dark side of the moon where it is very cold and dark. You need food to survive, but it is very expensive to ship food from Earth. Design an ecosystem to meet your needs. What problem do you need to solve first? (Hint: Why do things not grow on the moon already?) Be creative: Design specific producers, primary consumers, and secondary consumers. Remember to describe any special non-living factors in your ecosystem. (Question from: [www.learnnc.org](http://www.learnnc.org)). Give the groups 15 minutes to come up with solutions using the *Seven Step Method of Problem Solving*. Have groups present their solutions to the class; make sure to go over how they came up with that solution and the steps. Did the first solution work? Did they have to repeat any steps? **(15 minutes)**.*
- 5) Now have the students work individually, using a problem that they are facing in their own lives, have them use the *Seven Step Method of Problem Solving*. After 8-10 minutes have students come back together and share solutions. **(10 minutes)**

## Lesson 2

### Elements of Success: Resume Review and Cover Letters

<b>Unit Objective:</b>	Students will learn how to successfully write a cover letter and resume
<b>Grades:</b>	Adult education
<b>Length:</b>	1 hour
<b>Materials:</b>	<i>NFU Writing Sample</i> handout for each student, sample resume and cover letter for each student (found at the end of section 5)
<b>Preparation Needed:</b>	Make sure to have enough handouts for each student
<b>Background:</b>	Being able to market yourself and your accomplishments is the first step in the door for landing your dream job interview. In this lesson students will look at several factors that make a great resume and cover letter, including writing samples from a past NFU president and examples of resumes and cover letters.

#### **Teaching Strategy:**

- 1) As students come into the classroom hand them an index card. Tell them: *Write the three qualities or skills that you possess that make you the best possible hire for your dream job and separates you from the rest of the candidates.* Give students about 5 minutes to brainstorm. Now tell them: *On the back of the index card write down your three biggest professional accomplishments.* Once again give them 5 minutes to brainstorm. Explain: *When you are in the process of applying to any job, you have to think about yourself as a business: this means that you have to be backable (are you likely to succeed). Resumes and cover letters can help you market yourself and showcase to your future employer that you are 100% backable. (10 minutes)*
- 2) Explain: *Resumes are a short summary of a person's work experience and talents. When you are writing a resume remember to keep it simple and keep it to one page. You do not want to put ALL of your work experience on your resume, focus on the skills the job you are applying for needs and showcase them through your past experience. Make sure to go in reverse chronological order when listing job experience, with your most recent job first. Do not be afraid to be creative with your resume, color, graphs and other innovative techniques can catch the eye of a new employer, just make sure it is appropriate for the job you are applying for. Cover letters are a place to showcase your skills, interests and accomplishments. A good cover letter can separate you from other candidates. You should also send a cover letter in with a resume even if an employer does not ask for one, do not be afraid to showcase your personality in a cover letter. A cover letter should not just be a*

*duplicate of your resume, instead use it as a chance to sell yourself. Research the job beforehand and see what skills and qualifications the company wants and showcase them in your cover letter. Remember to use specific examples and do not be afraid to elaborate.* Hand out the sample resume and cover letter (attached at the end of the section) every student should get one of each. Have the students split up into teams of 3-4 and critique each one. After 10-15 minutes come back in as a class and go over the different critiques the group gave each one. Make a list of the good and bad qualities on the board as a visual for the class to see. **(20 minutes)**

- 3) Now have the students get back into groups to read and critique the *NFU President's Letter*, have them pick out three positive things they like about the writing style. Have the class come back together and go over each group's list. They should pick out examples of leadership and persuasive writing qualities that they would like to use in their own cover letters. **(10-15 minutes)**
- 4) Have the students write a cover letter and resume for their dream job. Remind them to keep in mind all of the skills they learned today. They will take out the index card that they wrote on at the beginning of class and they must incorporate the qualities, skills and accomplishments that they listed into their cover letter and resume. They can do this hand-written or if computers are available they can work on Microsoft Word **(20 minutes)**

## **Lesson 3**

### **Realistic Goals for the Future**

<b>Unit Objective:</b>	Students will learn how to make a SMART Goal
<b>Grades:</b>	Adult education
<b>Length:</b>	1 hour
<b>Materials:</b>	Trash cans, paper towels, tin foil
<b>Preparation Needed:</b>	You will need to make a ball out of paper towels wrapped in tin foil for each student.

**Background:** A goal is simply something that you would like to achieve or accomplish. Goals can be oriented towards many aspects of life; some goals are career driven while others may be more personal. Goals help us strive to be the best versions of ourselves and help us in many ways. In this lesson SMART Goals will be introduced and will teach students how to narrow the focus on their goals so they are tangible and achievable, setting themselves up for success.

**Lesson Adapted From:** <http://www.ncpublicschools.org>

## Teaching Strategy

- 1) Write this quote on the board for students to see as they walk in the room: "A goal is a dream with a deadline", Napoleon Hill. Explain: *A goal is simply something that you would like to achieve or accomplish. Goals can be oriented towards many aspects of life; some goals are career driven while others may be more personal. Goals help us strive to be the best versions of ourselves and guide us in many ways.* **(5 minutes)**
- 2) Ask students: *Have you ever set a goal and achieved it? What did you learn about achieving a goal through this experience? Have you set a goal and not achieved it? What got in your way that you could change next time? What did you learn in the attempt?* Give students time to reflect and answer these questions; it may be a good exercise for them to write down the answers so they can visually see them. **(5 minutes)**
- 3) Explain: *Today we are going to cover SMART Goals.* Pass out the SMART Goals handout. Write the acronym SMART on the board. Explain: *When creating goals, the more specific and thought out they are, the more realistic and achievable they become. Each letter in the word SMART stands for something,* at this time go over each letter and explain. **(5 minutes)**
- 4) Now it is time for the class to test out their new skills. Bring out the empty trash cans that you prepared before class and the paper balls wrapped up in aluminum foil. Tell students: *Each student will get two balls, and they must shoot them until they get both of their balls in the trash can. You have a class goal for 50% of the class to make 100% of their balls into the basket in \_\_\_\_\_ minutes* (students determine the time, write this goal on the board). Ask the class to go over if this is a SMART goal. Go over the rules of the game: *Each student will stand 8 feet away from the basket when they are shooting (you can use tape to mark a line). You should have two students per trash can; once a student makes a ball into the trash can it stays in there.* Before students start, ask them if they want to take *Action Steps* to help achieve their goal (give them hints i.e. taking practice shots). Make sure you give them time to take their action steps. **(10 minutes)**
- 5) Start the game and make sure to keep time. Have the class come back together after 50% of the class made 100% of their balls into the basket. Debrief: *Was the goal accomplished? How could the class change the goal or outcome to be more successful?* **(10 minutes)**
- 6) Have each student now work independently on one short- term and one long-term goal for the future on the *SMART Goal* worksheet. **(10-15 minutes)**

## *SMART GOALS*

**S-** specific what do you want to achieve? Write down details and outline the main objective.

**M-** measurable how do you know when you achieved this goal? Make the measurements quantitative and use numbers when you can. Are your measurements tangible, will you know when you reached your goal?

**A-** achievable goals should challenge you but you also must have the knowledge and skills needed to achieve the goal. What are your obstacles and restraints? Are you giving yourself enough time?

**R-** relevant is this something you are willing to put the work in to achieve? Does this goal fit in with your life and your plans?

**T-** timely what is the time frame in which you want to achieve this goal? What is your long and short-term plan for this goal? What are the benchmarks I need to set?

What is my LONG Term SMART Goal?

What is my SHORT term SMART Goal

## Lesson 4

### Mock Interviews

- Unit Objective:** Students will learn how to prepare for interview questions successfully
- Length:** 70 minutes
- Grades:** Adult education
- Materials:** Index cards, one for each student. Job postings/listings, bring in jobs section of the newspaper or check job sites such as idealist.org, goodfoodjobs.com or monster.com, you will need one for every two students, but you will need to make a copy so each pair has a copy of the same job listing.
- Preparation:** Make enough employer and employee cards for each pair of students. Make sure that each job listing has a matching employee and employer card.
- Lesson Adapted**
- From:** FFA.ORG
- Background:** Interviewing skills are essential for successful career. In this lesson students will learn about the interview process from both the view of employer and potential employee. They will also learn how to market themselves, including learning how to highlight their own skills and achievements.

#### **Teaching Strategy:**

1. As students enter the classroom, hand each student an index card with an assignment written on it, the cards will either say employer or employee. Half the students will be employers and half the students will be employees **(5 minutes)**
2. Separate the “employers” and the “employees”. The “employers” will be given a list of questions to ask their potential employees as well as a local job listing they will be interviewing for. Employees will be given the same local job listing and time to prepare for their interview **(5 minutes)**
3. The employers and employees will match up, matching similar job postings (they will be numbered, 1’s match with 1’s, 2’s with 2’s, etc.). The employers will have 5 minutes to interview the employees. After 5 minutes the roles will switch giving 5 minutes in between to prepare. **(15 minutes)**
4. Everyone should come back together and discuss the activity. The debrief in this activity is very important, as students will have struggled in different areas and may have many questions and thoughts. **(10 minutes)**
5. Hand out the “Questions Asked by Employers” handout to each student. Have them pick two questions from each category and write down their personal response. **(10 minutes)**
6. Have the pairs get back together, this time they will hand each other the 8 questions that they prepared an answer for to their partner and conduct



the interview with those questions, after the interview is over they will switch spots. **(15 minutes)**

7. Have the group come back together and discuss what the difference was between preparing and going into an interview without prep. *Hand out the Tips for Interviewing* worksheet **(10 minutes)**

### **Tips for Interviewing:**

As a candidate, ask yourself the following:

What are the most important skills/qualities that this prospective employer is looking for from their preferred hire?

Which of these skills do I have?

What are your three most valuable skills/qualities that you can offer to this prospective employer (ideally you want these three skills/qualities align with those that the employer is seeking above)

Most interviews start with the question “Tell me about yourself.” This question is your opportunity to give them a brief overview of your background (either personal or professional) as it relates to why you’re the perfect candidate.

Think of at least three separate stories from your past that demonstrate these three most valuable skills and your accomplishments

Make sure the stories have a beginning, middle, and end, and that each one showcases one (or more) of your most valuable skills. The Story should: Identify the challenge/problem/issue (Beginning) Talk about your approach to the issue – what skills did you rely upon. What was the outcome? Identify your accomplishments, what you learned, and circle back to how it relates to that Valuable Skill/quality of yours.

Having these stories ready to tell ahead of time are perfect for:

Answering questions that start with: “Tell me about a time when...”

When you’re asked a question that you don’t have the answer to, rather than say I don’t know, or making something up, ask yourself: “What are they trying to learn about me with this question?” Then use one of your three stories that relates.



# Susan Jones

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## Objective

To work in a creative environment that maximizes my abilities as a leader in our community.

## Education

### Georgian Court University (2011-2013)

Master of Arts

With a focus of using sustainable agriculture in a low income school district to increase food literacy

### Georgian Court University (2008-2010)

Bachelor of Arts in English

Minor in Nutrition

*Cumulative GPA of 3.7, Dean's Scholar 2010, Sigma Mu, Honor Society Member, Presenter at 2009 GCU Student Conference*

### Lynchburg College (2005-2007)

*Member of Varsity Women's Soccer Team, Captain of Women's Varsity Soccer Team 2007, Scholar Athlete Award*

## Experience

### Professional Soccer Trainer (2007-current)

Sky Blue (2009-2010)

Stafford Soccer Club (2007-current)

*Train and coach youth soccer players, manage camps, perform evaluations, manage coaches*

### Substitute Teacher (2011-current)

Pinelands Regional High School

*Teach students, follow prescribed lessons*

### Physical Education Teacher (2012-2013)

Josiah Quincy Upper and Lower Schools

*Teach students about movement and physical health in an inner-city environment*

### Junior Varsity Girls' Soccer Coach (2012)

Montrose School

*Coach and help develop 75 soccer players*

### Cabin Counselor (2012)

Farm and Wilderness

*Supervise and maintain the safety of eight campers, lead white water canoe trip, run canoe apprenticeship, teach sustainable gardening,*

### Grant Writing Internship (2012)

Grow My City Green

*Write grants to provide funds for an inner-city garden program*

## Skills

- Proficient with Microsoft Office
- Writing, editing, proofreading
- Successful grant writing
- Knowledge SNAP Program
- Leadership and management aptitude
- Works well in a team environment
- Goal-oriented
- Able to meet deadlines
- Experience in fund raising and networking within the community
- Comfortable public speaker
- Certified in CPR and First-Aid
- SOLO: Wilderness First Responder certified
- American Red Cross Lifeguard certified

## SAMPLE COVER LETTER

To whom it may concern,

This is an amazing opportunity, and I have the organizational skills, ambition, and personality to fulfill the responsibilities of this position. I have just finished my M.A. and I am excited to bring my skills into the community. My graduate research consisted of promoting food literacy in low-income school districts by implementing high school kitchen garden programs. I ran and designed two school garden programs while collecting data on all the participants. I worked specifically with high school students.

I spent time in Vermont and Boston teaching children and teenagers how to grow their own food and how to bring their knowledge back to their own communities. I have been coaching and training soccer the past six years and enjoy working in a team environment. I feel it is the best way to learn and grow as an educator and individual. I played collegiate soccer at Lynchburg College in VA. My career at Lynchburg was very successful, winning the ODAC championship three out of my four years and reaching the Sweet 16 twice and the Elite Eight in 2007, my junior year. I was also All Conference and Captain going into my senior year.

The past six years I have been training and coaching professionally. I worked for Sky Blue FC, New Jersey's professional women's soccer team, training and running camps throughout the state. I also have been working for Stafford Soccer Club, training youth teams from U6-U18, running camps and coaching. I have coached JV and Varsity at the Montrose School outside of Boston as well as JV at Southern Regional High School in NJ.

I hope to get the opportunity to speak with you further. I would love to add to your team.

All the best,  
Susan Jones

## Farmers Union History

Farmers Union was founded in 1902, in Point, Texas. Our founder, Newt Gresham, was orphaned at age 10 and sent to live with his brother who was a tenant farmer in Alabama. From age 10 on, he worked up to 15 hours a day in the dusty fields of Alabama. As an adult, he returned to school and became a newspaper man. He was a man of ideas who saw the need to create an organization to unite farmers and represent their best interests. Gresham struggled to develop a structure that would not only benefit farmers, but would survive through the years. Gresham published a newspaper called the *Graphic Truth*, where he expounded on his ideas. His ideas were often considered radical at the time. Gresham worked and reworked his ideas and eventually shared them with nine of his fellow farmers. Together, the ten of them held scores of meetings across the Texas countryside and on August 28, 1902, almost a full year after the first meetings began, the ten-man corporation secured a charter for a farm organization from the state of Texas.

The first official meeting of Farmers Union (Farmers Educational & Cooperative Union of America) was held on September 2, 1902, in a country schoolhouse. In the beginning, secret passwords were required for entrance into Farmers Union meetings and new members underwent elaborate initiation ceremonies. The organization's growth spread like wildfire. Membership estimates ranged all the way from a half a million to several million by 1906. Newt Gresham died suddenly in 1906 due to a ruptured appendix. In 1903, he said, "I would be willing to die now if I could be assured that Farmers Union would survive." It is doubtful that at the time of his death Newt Gresham realized the significance and power the organization he had helped to create would have on future generations.

In 1906, Charles Barrett, a veteran of the Farmers Alliance and a Georgia farmer, became president and served for 22 years. Charles Barrett was a visionary leader and possessed a gentle personality. His calm, stable leadership was just the healing salve our troubled organization needed. One of his contemporaries at the time stated, "When trouble appeared, Barrett came on the ground never to stimulate more trouble, never to take sides in a conflict, but always to bring parties around a common table."

As a member of the Farmers Alliance, Barrett had lobbied in Washington, D.C. There he developed many important contacts and earned lasting respect. Barrett was welcomed to the White House by several presidents from Roosevelt to Coolidge. Theodore Roosevelt was even persuaded to become a Farmers Union member! Even after Barrett resigned in 1928, he remained in Washington to represent National Farmers Union. Barrett's presidency was pivotal for a number of reasons, but perhaps the greatest of his accomplishments was to transform a southern protest movement into a viable national interest group which marked the entry of a permanent farm public onto the political scene.

In 1940, another important leader, James Patton, was elected to serve as president of NFU. At 38, he became the youngest man ever to be president of NFU. Patton was our sixth national president and served 26 years. One of his first actions to unify the organization was to establish the NFU

headquarters and move national staff scattered throughout the country to Denver, Colorado. During the 1940 convention, delegates raised the dues and changed the composition of the national board of directors. Patton explained, "We took the politics out of it. Whenever someone is elected state president, that person automatically becomes a member of the NFU board." Patton, like Barrett, also had tremendous respect in Washington, D.C.

Franklin D. Roosevelt asked Patton to be his Secretary of Agriculture; Patton declined. Patton and President Harry Truman were on a first name basis. President Kennedy greatly respected Patton's advice and many Farmers Union leaders received political appointments in the Kennedy Administration. Lyndon B. Johnson and Patton had worked together as young men and at Patton's urging, Johnson declared "war on poverty." If Charles Barrett can be credited with giving Farmers Union a national presence, then Jim Patton must be credited with giving Farmers Union an international presence. Patton was an American delegate to the founding meeting of the United Nations, served on the founding board of CARE, and was elected twice to the presidency of the International Federation of Agricultural Producers (IFAP).

To date there have been 13 National Farmers Union presidents, all of whom have had the knowledge and vision to help the organization become a nationally known and well respected general farm organization.

#### **National Farmers Union Founder and Presidents**

<b>Founder</b>	Newton Gresham	1902-1906
<b>Presidents</b>	Charles Barrett	1906-1928
	C.E. Huff	1928-1930
	John Simpson	1930-1934
	E.H. Everson	1934-1937
	John Vesecky	1937-1940
	James Patton	1940-1966
	Tony Dechant	1966-1980
	George Stone	1980-1984
	Cyril Carpenter	1984-1988
	Leland Swenson	1988-2002
	David Frederickson	2002-2006
	Tom Buis	2006-2009
	Roger Johnson	2009 –

## Over a Century of Service to Family Farmers & Ranchers

- 1902** Founded by grassroots farmers concerned with stability and farm income
- 1903** Forms first marketing cooperative
- 1906** Urged establishment of parcel post system
- 1911** Pushed for direct election of U.S. senators
- 1916** Demanded program of low-interest, long-term credit, resulting in the enactment of the Federal Farm Loan Act establishing 12 Federal Land Banks and advocated voting rights for women
- 1921** Successfully lobbied for adoption of Packers and Stockyards Act
- 1922** Supported Capper-Volstead Act
- 1926** Farmers Union Terminal Association began operating
- 1927** Launched Farmers Union Central Exchange (now CHS, Inc.) as a Subsidiary of Farmers Union Terminal Association
- 1929** Established Farmers Union Marketing and Processing Association
- 1930** Established Farmers Union youth education program
- 1933** Advocated incorporation of farmer-elected committees to administer farm programs
- 1935** Played a key role in operation of Rural Electric Association resources as Cooperatives
- 1936** Became chief architect and promoter of the Commodity Exchange Act
- 1943** Proposed school lunch programs be made permanent
- 1944** Began urging establishment of rural telephone service through the Rural Electric Association
- 1945** Founding member of Cooperative for American Remittances to Europe (CARE). Farmers Union is one of the non-governmental organizations that supports and sponsors the United Nations
- 1954** Succeeded in passage of school milk legislation by Congress and sought refund of federal gas tax on agricultural non-highway uses
- 1966** Waged war on poverty by instituting the Green Thumb program (now Experience Works), which still today places low-income, older workers in jobs
- 1971** Blocked efforts to eliminate USDA as a cabinet-level agency

- 1974** Included in newly formed World Hunger Action Council & promoted development of rural health co-ops
- 1976** Won authorization for Small Business Administration to make loans to farmers
- 1978** Achieved adoption of legislation requiring foreign owners to disclose U.S. farmland holdings. Backed creation of National Consumer Co-op Bank
- 1979** Carried out massive "Save Our Co-op Campaign"
- 1980** Won lobbying effort to impose capital gains taxation of foreign investors holding U.S. farmland
- 1982** Succeeded in having part of the military budget shifted to humanitarian food aid using surplus U.S. commodities
- 1983** Worked to protect family dairy farmers by helping to develop dairy legislation to reduce excessive milk production and secured passage of emergency farm credit legislation to defer FHA loans to help keep farmers in business
- 1984** Achieved court ruling requiring the Farmers Home Administration to disclose options to troubled borrowers
- 1985** Pressured the Food and Drug Administration to slap the hands of four large chemical companies that were promoting bovine growth hormone (BGH) without FDA approval
- 1990** Promoted regulations to set national standards for organically-produced foods
- 1991** Influenced Congress to reauthorize the Older American's Act
- 1993** Raised awareness of problems associated with international trade agreements
- 1995** Fought for price-oriented farm bill and against disassociating farm programs and price
- 1996** Succeeded in adoption of legislation to allow farmers and ranchers to increase income tax deductibility of health insurance premiums to 80 percent.
- 1997** Launched the "Change the Cheese Exchange" campaign which effectively took the National Cheese Exchange out of the Basic Formula Price
- 1998** Conducted a nationwide marketing flexibility campaign aimed at removing the caps placed on loan rates and were successful in securing \$7 billion in farm relief
- 1999** Held "Rural Unity Day" events in Farmers Union states to bring together farm groups, business owners, bankers, church groups and Congressional delegations to heighten awareness of the farm crisis and its impact on all segments of the community. "Put The Unity Back in Community" events were successful as Congress delivered \$8.7 billion in farm relief
- 2000** Farmers Union organized the largest farm rally on the U.S. capital mall in two decades. The rally included a broad group of nearly 40 farm, labor, religious, and rural development organizations concerned that



- 2008** Led coalitions urging Congress to investigate the causes of high food prices, especially following drops in commodity and energy prices while food prices continued to rise.
- 2009** Joined a coalition of organizations calling on Congress to address speculation in commodity markets.
- 2009** Worked with USDA on implementation of the permanent disaster program, as mandated in the 2008 Farm Bill.
- 2009** Successfully lobbied for an additional \$250 million in emergency dairy assistance funding.
- 2009** Successfully lobbied for increased funding for nutrition programs and food stamp benefits, emergency food purchases, and expanded access to and delivery of school meal programs.
- 2010** Successfully lobbied for comprehensive health care legislation that will increase rural Americans' access to affordable health insurance.
- 2010** Successfully urged Congress to extend renewable energy tax credits (VEETC, Biodiesel).
- 2010** Helped secure a waiver to increase the allowable ethanol content of gasoline to 15 percent for model year 2007 and newer vehicles.
- 2010** Successfully advocated for the Food Safety Modernization Act of 2010, which safeguards our national food supply.
- 2010** NFU formalized its strategic partnership with OwnEnergy, a leading community wind developer.
- 2010** Successfully lobbied for the appropriation of \$40 million in grant money for farm to school programs, standards for healthier school meals and snacks, and an increased reimbursement rate for school lunches.
- 2011** Urged Congress to support the priorities of family farmers and ranchers in the 2012 Farm Bill, including an effective safety net, an improved dairy program, strong renewable energy programs, a commitment to conservation, outreach to beginning farmers and incentives for local foods production
- 2011** Lobbied the House and Senate Agriculture Committees to include family farm and supply management provisions in their proposal to the Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction
- 2011** Held four briefings on Capitol Hill with livestock producers to educate Congressional staff about the need for a strong GIPSA rule
- 2011** Urged Congress to oppose changes to the Renewable Fuels Standard
- 2011** Worked with biotech industry leaders, the Department of Justice and USDA to discuss pending patent expiration of agricultural biotech traits and ensure farmers are able to access and use more affordable generic products
- 2012** Organized the Beginning Farmer Institute which helps develop leadership and advocacy skills for new and transitioning farmers

until 1940. The Home Office of the National Farmers Union was wherever the President hung his hat or the National Secretary kept the records and the check book, which he seldom brought to Board meetings because there were not funds to pay the Directors' meager travel expenses.

When I was elected President, the Farmers Union had 81,000 members and approximately a \$30,000.00 per year budget. Today we have 215,000 dues-paying members and our operating budget for 1965 is \$680,500. Farm population has dropped 89% in those same 25 years.

I do not in any way claim credit for this dramatic change -- thousands of people helped. I give special credit to Glenn Talbott, C. E. Huff, Tony Dechant and especially a very understanding Board of Directors, the 5 Northwest States, Colorado and Oklahoma, plus the Regional Co-ops in the Northwest, Farmers Union Jobbing of Kansas City, led by Harry Witham and Pat Nash, the State Farmers Union Insurance Companies in Oklahoma, Arkansas, Colorado, Montana and later the National Farmers Union Insurance Companies which I started in 1932 in Colorado with the Farmers Union Mutual Life Association, a death benefit assessment association.

In the last 34 years, the people of the Farmers Union have built many but not enough successful cooperatives, local, state and regional. The States of Colorado, Wyoming, Oklahoma, North Dakota and Montana have built successful State Insurance Companies, mainly in the fire insurance field. Although, as you know, Oklahoma and Kansas have set up their own Casualty Companies. Oklahoma paid the

National Farmers Union a negotiated sum for the business our National Farmers Union Property and Casualty Company had built in Oklahoma. Kansas, although having received large subsidies, set up a company in direct competition with National Farmers Union Property and Casualty Company without any semblance of recognition of the thousands upon thousands of dollars National Farmers Union and its insurances had poured into Kansas Farmers Union and Kansas Farmers Union insurance development.

We have built power and prestige in Washington, all over the United States and the World.

We have been more than a farm organization. We have built strong working relationships with National Church groups of all faiths, with organized labor, with people of good will from every walk of life. We have built an "image" of responsibility, prestige and genuine-effect influence in public affairs.

We were able to survive the Eisenhower, Benson interregnum. During this period everything was done to place Rural America in a bad light; everything was done to harass farmers; everything was done to destroy the federal farm programs. Farmers Union and its co-ops stood out like the Rock of Gibraltar in a great hurricane and saved the basic federal farm programs with the help of great agricultural leaders in Congress.

My reason for going into this lengthy background Farmers Union story of the thirties is this:

We have built a much larger membership, some very substantial business institutions, a fine reputation all over the world and a very powerful status in Washington, D. C.

However, we are in the early stages of a new Social Revolution which is so much deeper, far reaching and revolutionary and will have such great impacts on Rural America that it is imperative that Farmers Union leaders and their members hammer out the necessary policies to keep abreast and ahead so that the organization can grow and get the most out of the "Great Society" social and economic Revolution. Billions of dollars will be spent and thousands of new leaders will be developed.

We are engaged in a major war in Viet Nam. All indications are that the President intends to escalate the war. Some feel that this may result in war with China unless we invade China or bomb her nuclear installations. I cannot believe anyone -- even our "War Hawks" -- would be so foolish as to do this. The war in Viet Nam, of course, creates new hatreds and new opportunities for neo-facists, McCarthyites and negativism. The war in Viet Nam also creates almost insurmountable problems for getting money for the Great Society farm, social and economic programs.

To us, as farmers, it means that there are always plenty of excuses to cut non-military appropriations and thus postpone Parity of Income for farmers and the effective implementation of the Great Society's social and economic revolution.

Rural America is going to be repopulated. Rural America is going to be revitalized. Rural America's poverty and slums are going to be eliminated. Millions upon millions more people will be living in Rural America in a few short years than there are now. They will have little to do with farming or farmers unless Farmers Union finds

way to coalesce with them in a common cause. We have already taken the steps to internationalize agricultural commodity pricing and marketing, through the Agricultural Act of 1965.

We are currently losing the battle against Wall Street's capital barons and Chain Store vertical integration. We must find a positive workable countervailing economic power against vertical integration.

Several million acres of very valuable farm land, principally in California and the West, under the 160 Acre Limitation Law will come on to the market in the next few years. But like De George's fiasco in the Imperial Valley in California, nothing will happen unless we find some new answers.

We have no practical way in which family farmers can obtain the land because there is no adequate source of financing. We need a multi-billion dollar revolving fund to enable family farmers to buy this rich California land as it comes on the market and to create a Land Transfer Fund to enable new and young family farmers to enter farming.

Farmers Union itself must make up its mind whether it is really for a land policy, a tenant and farm worker's minimum wage policy that will really eliminate poverty and guarantee Parity of living in all of its aspects so that families living on the land will be secure as to tenure, as to income, secure as to health, education, housing, market basket, Social Security and all the social and cultural amenities other people enjoy. In short, are we really prepared to go all the way to establish family farms as the basic policy of this country.

Farmers Union must decide on one of two courses:

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First, will we join the Crusade of Conscience with labor, Churches and people of good will to create a "Great Society" controlled by the people or, second, will we break up as in the early 1930's into factions quarreling among ourselves over worn-out, out-dated commodity programs which do more for the big commercial family farmer and the factories in the field than they do for the struggling young or older family farmers who are hanging on by tying a knot in the end of the rope and hanging on in poverty to save their lives and their homes.

Farmers Union will either gear itself to take advantage of the new Revolution of the Great Society while at the same time doing everything to get appropriations to make Parity of income for farm and rural people a reality or we will repeat our early 1930's history, which was the greatest tragedy any organization could suffer except complete extinction.

Gunnar Myrdal says the reason the Swedes succeed is they do a few "Big Things" well.

America needs a short and long range national and international food policy. The cost of implementing it should be, if necessary, subsidized by the whole Public NOT by the Producer alone.

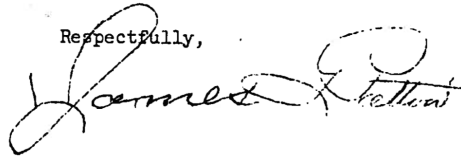
America needs a Land Policy; the preservation, improvement and building up of a quality Rural America with as many family farms as are needed with 250 rural cities of 125,000 maximum population right out in Rural America with job opportunities for all who want to live in a beautiful country side; a country side where we have cleaned up our air, our water in lakes and streams and a country side oriented to people NOT commodities.

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In closing, I wish to say that the most vital single ingredient needed in Farmers Union now and in the years ahead is integration among ourselves and our institutions. All must have compassion and tolerance, all must promote tolerance/<sup>and</sup>cooperation. We cannot afford to foster bitterness and division. We must practice genuine cooperation among ourselves and the rest of Rural America.

I hope that when the coming Convention is over that all of you will close ranks, compromise your differences and unify in a common effort in behalf of the people of America, especially the rural people and most especially the Farmers Union members. This can be done by making an unqualified unified effort from all elected leaders, Local, State and National.

Respectfully,



- Attachments: 1. A list of legislative achievements in last 30 years.  
2. Xerox copy of Richard Wilson article.





