

ACTION UPDATE ON COMMUNITY FOOD PROJECTS IN THE FARM BILL

August 15, 2007

Thank you for all your efforts to date on behalf of Community Food Projects and other progressive farm bill legislation. Unfortunately, despite all your efforts, funding for Community Food Project (CFP) remains discretionary at \$30 million and not mandatory as it has been for 10 years. This means that right now, **CFP HAS NO MANDATORY FUNDING FOR FY 2008**. We need your help to change this in the Senate Farm Bill.

The key next step** is to get CFP mandatory funding into the Senate's initial draft of the Farm Bill. Your efforts right now can make a big difference as to this outcome! **THE NEXT FEW WEEKS ARE CRITICAL FOR INPUT TO THE SENATE'S VERSION.

NEXT STEPS FOR CFP ADVOCATES: Contact your Senators about Community Food Projects and ask them to fund CFP as close to \$30 million in MANDATORY money as they can.

A. Calls and letters: As with the House, this is a great strategy for your Senators:

- 1. Call both your Senators** and ask them to demand MANDATORY funding for Community Food Projects in the Senate mark up of the Farm Bill. If you don't know your Senators' contact information, call the Capitol Switchboard at **202-224-3121**. Or look it up here:
http://clerk.house.gov/member_info/index.html
http://www.senate.gov/general/contact_information/senators_cfm.cfm

ALL Senators are important to contact, but if your Senators is on the Agriculture Committee, they **ESPECIALLY** need to hear from you because they are on the Senate Agriculture Committee and will be marking up the Farm Bill in September. To see if your Senator is on the Agriculture Committee, go to <http://agriculture.senate.gov/sen.htm>

These quick phone calls will take only a few minutes of your time, but could make a huge impact on whether this program continues. Enclosed are talking points and background on Community Food Project for you to use in your calls.

2. Faxed letters: If you can, request your Senators' FAX numbers and compose a brief letter. See talking points enclosed and add **something** about your own CFP projects or others in the district. (Note: emails are **not** preferred because they tend to get lost or ignored. Calls are recorded and faxed letters go right to the appropriate aide. Regular mail is not advisable).

B. Meeting with your legislators—especially in the Senate—is vital during this recess! Decisions are still being discussed and deals are being brokered, and WE NEED YOU to stress the importance of small but powerful programs like Community Food Projects and the need to adequately fund them with **mandatory money**. Contact their local offices for appointments. Meeting with aides who handle the farm bill can be very effective.

C. Project site visits: While Congress is officially on recess, your legislators are likely to be in their home states and districts, attending summer fairs and events. **Many of them will even accept invitations** to tour community food projects such as farms, community gardens, farmers' markets, and other activities that highlight local food systems, **especially if you invite the press along too!** It's easy to find your legislators—just call their local office and ask to speak to their scheduler. They may also post events on their websites.

D. Letters to the Editor and editorials in local papers have also been extremely successful, and we encourage you to continue submitting them. Sample op-eds and letters to the editor can be found at www.foodsecurity.org/policy under "Farm Bill Materials".

Updates, background, alerts and links on the Farm Bill (and there are others):

- Community Food Security Coalition: www.foodsecurity.org/policy
- Farm and Food Policy Project: www.farmandfoodproject.org

Thank you for all your hard work and support, and we look forward to working together to make a big impact as the Farm Bill moves to the Senate.

This message is sponsored by the Community Food Security Coalition and its partners.