

**Agricultural Council of California
American Farmland Trust
California Association of Resource Conservation Districts
California Association of Winegrape Growers
California Coalition for Food and Farming
Community Alliance with Family Farmers
Defenders of Wildlife
Environmental Defense
Marrone Organic Innovations, Inc.
Natural Resources Defense Council
Richard Rominger
San Joaquin Resource Conservation District
Sustainable Conservation
Western Growers Association
Western United Dairymen**

September 6, 2006

The Honorable Dennis Cardoza
United States House of Representatives
435 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Cardoza:

The above listed signatories, as members of the California Roundtable for Agriculture and the Environment, appreciate the opportunity to work with you in the development of the 2007 Farm Bill.

We agree with you that the upcoming 2007 Farm Bill presents California with an opportunity to increase funding for farm bill programs that benefit both California's agricultural economy as well as its environment. The Farm Bill has evolved into one of the most important conservation funding mechanisms in the country today. Farm Bill programs provide landowners with needed resources and opportunities to address their environmental goals and meet regulatory objectives. They also help contribute to state and federal policy objectives of protecting floodplains from development, protecting agricultural and range lands, enhancing wildlife habitat, and protecting air and water quality.

The draft version of legislation that you are circulating for input and feedback provides a strong foundation for continued conversation regarding the important programs and titles included in the 2007 legislation. While many of us have additional priorities we would like to see addressed in reauthorizing the farm bill, both within the conservation title and other titles, we applaud your effort to propose reforms that can be widely supported by agricultural and environmental stakeholders. We are also pleased to see you taking a leadership role within the California delegation as it will be critical for the California representatives – both those representing urban and rural interests – to work together in a united effort on the Farm Bill if we are to have any hope of improving California's farm bill allotment.

Each of our individual organizations look forward to having the opportunity to review and provide input on this vital piece of legislation and look forward to working with you as this moves forward.

Sincerely,

Donald G. Gordon Jr. President
Agricultural Council of California

Ed Thompson, California Director
American Farmland Trust

Tacy Currey, Executive Director
California Association of Resource Conservation Districts

Karen Ross, President
California Association of Winegrape Growers

Claudia Reid, Policy Director
California Coalition for Food and Farming

David Runsten, . Executive Director
Community Alliance with Family Farmers.

Kim Delfino, California Program Director
Defenders of Wildlife

Kathryn Phillips, Manager
California Clean Air for Life Campaign
Environmental Defense

Pam Marrone, CEO/Founder
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Jonathan Kaplan
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Molly Watkins, Vice President
San Joaquin Resource Conservation District

Ladi Asgill, Project Manager
Sustainable Conservation

Hank Giclas, Vice President Strategic Planning,
Science and Technology
Western Growers Association

Paul Martin,

Director of Environmental Services
Western United Dairymen

cc: Secretary A.G. Kawamura, California Department of Food and Agriculture
Secretary Mike Chrisman, California Resources Agency
Secretary Linda Adams, California Environmental Protection Agency