

7 Billion Reasons to Give Thanks for American Agriculture

Written by Sen Chuck Grassley

Tuesday, 22 November 2011 16:11

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By U.S. Senator Chuck Grassley

From Washington, we hear a lot of big numbers rolling off the tongues of politicians, policy wonks and pundits. Let's talk turkey. Trimming the fat and finding slices of savings is increasingly difficult. Ideological and political beliefs run bone-deep for many lawmakers who come to the table representing opposing points of view from different geographic regions and cross-sections of the U.S. population.

Yet there is a common thread that seems to connect the American electorate, whether we align ourselves as urban or rural; young or old; liberal or conservative. People are fed up with the way Washington works.

Years of unrestrained government spending have blown the lid off of fiscal discipline, putting America's long-term prosperity at risk. Overpromising, over-regulating and overreaching will not help America's entrepreneurs, big thinkers, farmers, small business owners and other leaders out-innovate, out-educate and out-build our competition in the 21st century.

In the U.S. Senate, I work to do right by Iowans who have entrusted me to represent the interests of our state in Washington. I keep a close eye on the three branches of the federal government to make sure no one in the bureaucracy thumbs a nose at the rule of law or breaks the trust of the taxpaying public.

Family farmers have a sun-up to sun-down work ethic borne out of necessity to get the job done. Conscientious stewardship of one's financial and natural resources are basic to a farm's long-term prosperity and requires sacrifice and commitment. Risk is a 24-hour occupational hazard. Consider on-the-job work safety, natural disasters, swings in commodity prices and farm exports dependent upon international trade agreements. Farmers shoulder a burden of risk that's largely out of their control.

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In good times and in bad, farmers weather the highs and lows of cyclical markets and the whims of Mother Nature.

Putting affordable food on the table is important now more than ever. The world's population reached seven billion this fall. In times of economic uncertainty and public discontent around the world, food security is a non-negotiable standard of public policy. It's a common thread that unites all of humanity, whether urban or rural; young or old; liberal or conservative.

As Washington works to help revive the U.S. economy, I'll continue working for American agriculture.

That includes helping to make sure independent producers and beginning farmers have a level playing field to compete and capture a fair share of the consumer's food dollar; adopting reasonable caps on farm program payments; and, breathing common sense into federal regulatory regimes, such as the EPA's ridiculous effort to regulate farm dust.

During this season of Thanksgiving, Barbara and I salute the family farmers who have chosen a noble profession and way of life to earn a living. Thanks to their stewardship, America's agricultural abundance is helping to feed, clothe and fuel a growing world population 365 days a year.