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**NATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR SUSTAINABLE
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DRAFT NCSA ORGANIC COMMITTEE
2007 FARM BILL FOR ORGANIC

March 23, 2007

I. CERTIFICATION COST SHARE RE-AUTHORIZATION

- Mandatory funding of \$25 million for the 5-year life of the Farm Bill
- Increase the annual funding cost share eligibility from 75% not to exceed \$500, to 75% not to exceed \$750 per farm
- Standardized reporting requirement for Agency and States to allow for better program analysis

II. CONSERVATION SECURITY PROGRAM

- Full funding as an Entitlement program with high environmental standards
 - Not limited to specific watersheds
 - Technical assistance funding commensurate with nationwide program
- Corrections to Rules, including:
 - Organic practices and systems designated as priority enhancement payments
 - Easy “crosswalk” between organic certification and CSP
 - Dual Eligibility procedure
 - Continuous enrollment for certified Organic farmers
 - Certified Organic Farm plans accepted as part of requirement for higher tiers.

III. ORGANIC CONVERSION

- **National Organic Conversion and Stewardship Incentives Program** – a new program at NRCS
 - Extensive technical and educational assistance
 - Financial incentives based on adoption of conservation plans for organic farms
 - New National Organic Technical Committee
- Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) --
 - make organic conversion a national EQIP priority
 - technical and financial assistance for making the transition to organic agriculture
 - incentives for established organic producers to adopt advanced organic practices or to address additional resource concerns not already covered by their certified organic farm plans.
- Direct and guaranteed credit should be made available during conversion years

IV. SEEDS AND BREEDS FOR THE 21ST CENTURY -- Initiative To Re-Invigorate Public Plant And Animal Breeding Capacity And Development

- Amend the National Research Initiative (NRI) to list “classical plant and animal breeding” as one of the priorities for competitive research grants, and modify term limitations for NRI research grants to reflect longer-term nature of breeding programs.
- Reauthorize the ARS National Genetic Resource Program established in the 1990 Farm Bill (§1632) and increase support for the collection, preservation and evaluation of germplasm collections. Direct ARS to accelerate long-

term research on plant and animal breeding.

- Enact a successor to the Initiative for Future Agriculture and Food Systems; include classical plant and animal breeding as a priority national program.

V. COMPETITIVE MARKETS IN ORGANIC

- Amend Agricultural Fair Practices Act of 1967 to require good faith bargaining with associations of producers, and remove loopholes that have made the Act difficult to enforce.

VI. RESEARCH TITLE – A Fair Share for Organic Agriculture Research

Federal agricultural research dollars dedicated to organic food and farming are disproportionately low in relation to the total amount of federal agriculture research dollars and to size of the organic industry. Although organic currently represents about 3 percent of total U.S. food retail market, the share of USDA research targeted to organic agriculture and marketing only represents about 0.6 percent annually (\$12 million). In order to adequately meet the public research and data needs of the rapidly growing organic sector, the 2007 Farm Bill should reauthorize valuable organic research programs at higher funding levels, and make sure that existing USDA research and data collection efforts are expanded to include organic-specific activities

- Combine existing CSREES organic research programs into one Integrated Organic Program (IOP), with combined mandatory funding of \$15 million annually. This would include the existing Organic Farming Research and Extension Initiative, which was authorized through the 2002 Farm Bill with \$3 million in annual mandatory funding, and Organic Transition Program, which has received about \$1.9 million in annual discretionary funding.
- A permanent National Program Leader for Organic Agriculture should be created at the Agriculture Research Service (ARS), with at least \$25 million annually to be dedicated to organic-specific research, to be increased commensurate with the relative growth in the organic sector. Also, the National Agriculture Library should strengthen its efforts to disseminate organic research results.
- The 2002 Farm Bill included the Organic Production and Marketing Data Initiative to require USDA data collection agencies to collect and publish segregated organic data. While some efforts are underway within ERS, AMS and NASS to collect and publish such data, these efforts must be expanded to meet the needs of organic producers, processors and consumers.
- Amend the National Research Initiative to require competitive grants to be used to foster classical plant and animal breeding (see “Seeds and Breeds” section above).

VII. GMO LIABILITY LEGISLATION – The Federal Farmer Protection Act

The USDA/NOP regulations only prohibit the intentional *use* of any genetically engineered technology in growing, handling or processing an organic crop or product. Shipments of organic products may be rejected should any genetically engineered material be detected. This has resulted in financial losses because of “contaminated” product, with farmers and processors increasingly bearing the cost of expensive testing and detection.

- Establish a liability regime so that farmers suffering economic and other losses from contamination with genetically engineered material can recoup their losses from the manufacturers of genetically engineered seeds.

VIII. RISK MANAGEMENT AGENCY/CROP INSURANCE PROGRAM

- Organic farmers should not have to pay the 5% additional fee surcharge they currently must pay to be covered by a crop insurance program.
- When an organic producer incurs a loss they should be reimbursed at the price their organic product would have received.
- The Adjusted Gross Revenue program should be improved and expanded to be offered nationally.

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