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Eliza T Greene
13450 Skyline Blvd
Oakland, CA 94619

April 16, 2009

Financial Assistance Programs Division
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service
1400 Independence Avenue, SW.
Room 5237S
Washington, DC 20250-2890

**Re: Docket Number NRCS- IFR-08005" Environmental Quality Incentives
Program (EQIP) Final Rules**

Dear Secretary Vilsack,

In these hard economic times and with concerns over food safety, water quality and conservation at an all-time high, it's important to not only stand up for family farmers but to encourage best agricultural practices.

As a result of these factors, I think it's important that the USDA stop using taxpayer dollars to bailout factory farms and help support sustainable and organic farmers that protect the environment and build strong rural communities.

The USDA needs to ensure that the EQIP rule be clarified, in accordance with the 2008 Farm Bill, and that EQIP assistance is available to all farmers and ranchers for comprehensive whole farm conservation planning.

The final EQIP rule must also require NRCS State Conservationists to rank and process applications for organic conversion assistance in a separate funding pool that makes clear that the limit of \$80,000 over a 4-year period applies only to organic conversion payments and not all EQIP payments made to organic farmers and ranchers.

I recommend that the NRCS amend the EQIP rule to prohibit the use of EQIP funding for animal waste storage, treatment or transportation for new or expanding CAFOs and that the EQIP rule does not allow waivers to increase assistance to CAFOs above the \$300,000 payment limit.

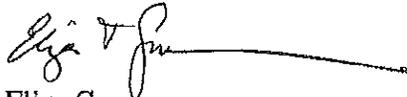
Numerous studies have proven conclusively that corporate CAFOs have negative impacts on water quality, decrease the value of their neighbor's property, and harbor antibiotic-resistant bacteria that threatens human health.

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It's time that organic farmers and ranchers stand on an equal footing with conventional producers in funding amounts they receive from EQIP. This can easily be done if the USDA follows the rules of protecting the people and our collective resources over the interests of giant corporate agribusinesses.

Please stand up for independent family farmers and ranchers and swiftly enact these recommendations.

Sincerely,



Eliza Greene

United States Department of Agriculture



Natural Resources Conservation Service
P.O. Box 2890
Washington, D.C. 20013

MAY 07 2009

Eliza T. Greene
13450 Skyline Boulevard
Oakland, California 94619

Dear Ms. Greene:

Thank you for your letter of April 16, 2009, in regard to Docket No. NRCS-IFR-08005, the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) Interim Final Rule, as published in the *Federal Register*. The conservation provisions of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (2008 Farm Bill) and the Administrative Procedures Act offer the public the opportunity to submit official comments on Agency regulations and other documents published in the *Federal Register* during the official public comment period indicated with each published regulatory document.

Regulatory changes generally are being published as interim final rules, enabling full implementation of the programs while public comment is assessed. NRCS acknowledges your letter of recommendation. Your comments will be analyzed and given full consideration in the process of moving to final program rules. The preamble for final rules will include our analysis of public comments and their disposition with regard to the final rules.

Again, thank you for your official comment. If we can be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Thomas W. Christensen".

THOMAS W. CHRISTENSEN
Deputy Chief for Programs

cc:

Leslie Deavers, Acting Farm Bill Coordinator, NRCS, Washington, D.C.
Edward Brzostek, National EQIP Program Manager, Financial Assistance Programs
Division, NRCS, Washington, D.C.
Maggie Rhodes, Team Leader, Program Allocations and Management Support Team,
NRCS, Washington, D.C.

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