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Financial Assistance Programs Division
United States Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Room 5237S
Washington DC, 20250-2890
Fax: 202-720-4265

RE: Docket Number NRCS -IFR-08005 EQIP Final Rules

Dear Secretary Vilsack,

This moment is such a special opportunity for change. It really is true that the changes that really matter are on the policy level. Please take this chance to lead the way in expecting agricultural best practices from our national food system.

Please take this chance to strengthen independent farmers, and not to just secure the system as business as usual. In the challenges of climate change and the uncertainty of the future, supporting sustainable and more local food systems is a move that will ensure the well being of Americans well into future generations.

Please ensure that the EQIP rule be clarified and that all farmers have access to EQIP assistance.

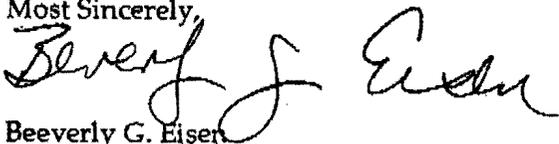
The final EQIP rule really should allow state conservation groups to rank applications, and the \$80,000 should go only to organic conversion payments.

I recommend that NRCS amends 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.

I want the term organic to mean something about high quality agriculture, not just be an upscale niche-marketing angle.

Please stand up for independent ranchers and organic farmers and enact these changes, even as agribusinesses will tell you it can't be done. It can and it should.

Most Sincerely,


Beverly G. Eisen