

Monsanto Waffles on Go-Slow Pledge for GM Wheat

Asks Farmers to Pledge Support Despite Buyer Rejection

Last summer, wheat farmers in Montana and North Dakota found a letter from Monsanto in their mailboxes. For months, wheat buyers and consumers in Europe, Japan, and other major customers for hard red spring wheat had been warning farmers that they would stop buying any wheat if Monsanto's genetically modified variety is planted. Farmer opposition to Monsanto's wheat was growing.

"I recognize that the introduction of a biotech product in wheat requires a responsible and thorough approach," wrote Monsanto's North American Vice-President, Carl Casale, "and we have identified several key commitments that we will meet prior to commercially launching Roundup Ready wheat." Casale promised that before "commercially launching Roundup Ready wheat," Monsanto would:

- Complete studies establishing food and environmental safety and get regulatory approvals;
- Convince governments and buyers overseas to agree to thresholds for allowable contamination of conventional wheat;
- Create a cost-effective system to segregate GM from non-GM wheat; and



- Line up buyers willing to use genetically altered wheat.

So far, Monsanto has not met any of these pledges. Critics question whether segregation is physically, biologically, and economically possible. Buyers overseas and in the U.S. have voiced continued opposition to Monsanto's wheat, and not one customer has said they would buy it.

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Jury Finds Captive Supplies Illegal, Awards Ranchers \$1.28 Billion

On February 17, a jury in Montgomery, Alabama found that IBP, the nation's largest beefpacker, had used illegal cattle contracts to manipulate cattle prices and cost U.S. cattle producers \$1.28 billion.

"The jury's verdict today is a vindication of WORC's efforts over the last ten years," said Mabel Dobbs, a rancher from Weiser, Idaho and Chair of WORC's Livestock Committee. "For ten years we

have said that IBP and other packers use these secret deals, called captive supplies, to manipulate markets, and that they violate the Packers and Stockyards Act. We proposed a common sense solution to this problem to the United States Department of Agriculture the same year this case was filed. USDA has never acted on that proposal, because the agency did not believe the packers' use of captive supplies violated the law. Today, the jury agreed with us."

WESTERN ORGANIZING REVIEW

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WORC is a regional network of seven grassroots community organizations that include 8,750 members and 48 local chapters. WORC helps its member groups succeed by providing training and by coordinating regional issue campaigns. Celebrating 25 Years of Grassroots Leadership and Action.

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25 years of Grassroots Leadership & Action

by Reed Kelley

As I sit down to finish this [past deadline], my first column as chair of the WORC board, we've just received some great news related to a major WORC concern, captive supply. A citizen jury, in the federal district court of Montgomery, Alabama, decided in favor of cattle producers in the long-awaited trial of Pickett vs. IBP, now Tyson Meats.

Since the mid-90's, WORC's done some of the heavy lifting on this issue by petitioning the U.S. Department of Agriculture for relief through enforcement of the Packers and Stockyards Act of 1921. A former key economic advisor to WORC was a critical witness in the trial. Our "Captive Supply" Petition can now provide guidance for "injunctive relief" from the industry structure that the Montgomery jury found unlawful. These last few months we've been pursuing captive supply reform legislation in Congress. I join other members of the WORC community in expressing deep appreciation to the cattlemen, their attorneys and all their supporters—many of whom spent time just being there in that Montgomery courtroom—and the jury, which spent weeks learning about today's U.S. cattle market. I also thank the WORC team and my predecessors who hung in there devising and pursuing the WORC Petition. These include John Smillie, the lead WORC staff, Jeanne Charter, who stimulated early development of the idea, and those recent past chairs I consider mentors—Linda Rauser, North Dakota, Skip Waters, Wyoming, and Shane Kolb, South Dakota.

WORC is about communities—and to many of the rural communities in our seven state area, cattle production is very important—that's why the issue of cattle markets, agricultural markets in general, are so very important to WORC. As Herreid, South Dakota, auction barn owner, Herman Schumacher, told the Montgomery jury about his part of the country, "we are cattle!" The continued ability of our communities to "make a living" on agricultural production is not only extremely important to WORC members, but is important to the nation.

It is most disconcerting to note, however, what we're up against. William J. Gill, in his book, *Trade Wars Against America* (Praeger Publishers, 1990),

states that "only those nations which intend to eventually surrender their sovereignty completely will abandon protectionism in trade to the extent the U.S. has in recent decades." It's been nearly 15 years since he wrote that!

Today we're finally hearing some concern about the out-sourcing of U.S. jobs and production. Our trade deficits are at all time highs. I appreciate the further connection Gill makes between the "free trade" ideology and the environment - "the present frenetic state of world trade [movement of goods to and fro without any real connection to necessity] is a conscienceless waste of the Earth's resources."

As we enter this 25th year of WORC's existence, we have much to celebrate in terms of the success and health of the organization. I look forward here in the Review to recollections of WORC's history and a big celebration in December. It is wonderful that we've got a great start (over 1/3) on our "Home on the Range Capital Campaign" for the new (rehabilitated) office building in partnership with the Northern Plains Resource Council. I am reminded as I write this that I must immediately make my donation and thank all of you that have already made yours. The planning underway to make this old building a model for energy efficiency is inspiring.

Pat Sweeney has expressed for all of us the excitement of giving the old building new life and renewed purpose. Hopefully this excitement and celebration will infect all of us that are part of WORC—refreshing our abilities to challenge unfettered energy development, a government unwilling to give consumers a choice in food quality and source selection, an apparent unwillingness to protect our own productive capacities, forced contribution to "government speech", and the mantra of "free trade." We live in exciting times.



Bits & Pieces

WORC Appoints New Board Chair

In December, the WORC Board of Directors chose Reed Kelley, a member of the Western Colorado Congress, to serve as Chair for 2004. Reed ranches in Meeker, Colorado. The Board chose Richard Parks, a member of Northern Plains, to be the Vice-Chair. He is a fly-fishing guide and sporting goods store owner from Gardiner, Montana.

WORC also chose Donald Nelson, a member of the Dakota Resource Council, to serve as the Secretary/Treasurer. Donald farms and ranches near Keene, North Dakota. Other board members are Shirley Effling and Shane Kolb from Dakota Rural Action, Wayne Fisher from DRC, Jack Thornborrow and Connie Clapier from Idaho Rural Council, Dena Hoff from Northern Plains, Pat Dirr and Chuck Koch from Oregon Rural Action, Skip Waters and Donley Darnell from Powder River Basin Resource Council, and Peggy Rawlins from WCC.

Mabel Dobbs is serving another term as Chair of the Western Organization of Resource Councils Education Project.

Northern Plains Wins Clean Water Suit

Two and a half years after filing a lawsuit to oblige the methane industry to comply with the Clean Water Act, MDU Resources' coalbed methane-producing subsidiary has agreed to get Clean Water Act permits for wastewater pits it builds in U.S. waterways.

At issue is the construction of unlined pits to store salty coalbed methane wastewater. In August 2001, Northern Plains sued Fidelity Exploration and Production Company—an MDU subsidiary—for failing to obtain Clean Water Act Section 404 permits before constructing dozens of wastewater pits in U.S. waterways.

In a settlement agreement signed on January 1, 2004, Fidelity agreed to remove some of wastewater pits and obtain Clean Water Act 404 permits for the remaining. Designed to minimize the impact of rocks, dirt, and other fill material on water quality, Section 404 requires companies and individuals to obtain a permit from the Army Corps of Engineers before constructing in U.S. waterways.

“The U.S. Clean Water Act is not an option,” said Roger Muggli, a Northern Plains member. “It takes hard work to keep our rivers and streams clean. With



WORC held its Advanced Principles of Community Organizing February 5-7. “The training exceeded my expectations. Information gained from other participants was great,” said Jim Margadant, Rapid City, South Dakota.

little rain and so many people dependent on clean water for irrigation in southeastern Montana, there's a lot at stake. At Northern Plains, we're committed to keeping our water clean not just for ourselves, but for our kids and grandkids.”

Amy Frykman, Northern Plains staff

DRA Appeals Amendment E Ruling

Dakota Rural Action and the South Dakota Resources Coalition filed an appeal with the U.S. Supreme Court on the Eighth Circuit Court's ruling on Amendment E on January 29. The State of South Dakota has also filed an appeal. Amendment E is a state constitutional amendment that limits non-family farm, corporate ownership of livestock. Voters approved Amendment E in November 1998. Immediately after the election, the South Dakota Farm Bureau challenged the constitutionality of the amendment, and a district court judge ruled the amendment unconstitutional in May 2002. The appeals court upheld that decision on October 31.

Robin Bagley, DRA staff

BLM Returns CBM Assessments

An ongoing effort by the Powder River Basin Resource Council has prompted the U.S. Bureau of Land Management to send two Environmental Assessments back to the Buffalo Field Office for more work. Powder River has been reviewing some BLM

permits to drill and environmental assessments on coalbed methane projects and focusing on the adequacy of protections for landowners and compliance with BLM's Record of Decision on the Powder River Basin Environmental Impact Statement. A team of staff and landowners Bernie and Eric Barlow and Tom and Helen Jones uncovered the flaws in the documents. "What we discovered is that the BLM is not doing a cumulative analysis of the impacts of discharging CBM water onto downstream landowners," said Bernie Barlow. "We challenged these permits in order to protect our land."

Jill Morrison, PRBRC staff

DRC Members Concerned with Adequate Bonding

Proposed changes in North Dakota's oil and gas rules have members of the Dakota Resource Council concerned about proximity of seismic shot holes to water wells and the adequacy of bonds. The proposal would halve the distance between seismic shot hole operations and water wells, from 1,320 feet to 660 feet. "This is a disaster waiting to happen," said Donny Nelson, a DRC member from Keene, "With the prospect of coalbed methane exploration coming to North Dakota, we should be considering how to tighten bonding rules, not how to relax them."

Cindy Klein, DRC staff

Idaho Rural Council Fights Factory Farms

With discovery of mad cow disease in a large dairy herd in Washington and locating some of herd mates (free of mad cow) in a dairy in Idaho's Magic Valley, focus on livestock and human health issues related to factory farms has been intense. Even before the recent mad cow scare, the American Public Health Association had passed a resolution requesting a nationwide moratorium on large-scale factory farms. Idaho Rural Council staff and members have been busily collecting evidence that factory farms could pose significant public health risks, due to the volumes of waste and its disposal. IRC members are also challenging a factory farm in King Hill located near the community's groundwater source.

Rich Carlson, IRC staff

2004 WORC Calendar

Principles of Community Organizing Training
Fargo, ND April 24-27

WORC Board and Staff Meeting
Deadwood, SD June 3-5

Principles of Community Organizing Training
Laramie, WY August 21-24

Western Colorado Congress Annual Meeting
Montrose, CO October 9

Dakota Resource Council Annual Meeting
Jamestown, North Dakota.....October 23

Powder River Basin Resource Council Annual Meeting
Douglas, WY October 30

Northern Plains Resource Council Annual Meeting
Billings, MT November 12-13

WORC Board and Staff Meeting
Billings, MT December 2-4

WCC Wants Biopharm Regulation

Members of the Western Colorado Congress want to know more about a closed door meeting between local and state officials and Meristem Therapeutics, a French biotech firm interested in biopharming. In a search for potential biopharm locations, Meristem visited Rifle, Colorado.

"All we know so far is from the news media," said Peter Crowell, a member of WCC's biopharm committee. "If this is so great for Rifle, why don't the country commissioners and mayor hold a meeting to tell their constituents all about it?"

Bill Patterson and DeAnna Wolston, WCC staff

ORA Hires Organizer

Judy Talley joined the staff of Oregon Rural Action as community organizer in November. She is responsible for ORA's energy campaign and organizing efforts in Umatilla County. As a fourth generation Kansan from a wheat growing family, Judy says she was "taught the values of a pioneering spirit, self-determination, self-sufficiency, and stewardship of resources."

2003 Congressional Voting Records

These tables show how members of Congress from WORC states voted on our priority issues in 2003 – the first session of the 108th Congress. A “+” indicates a vote in support of WORC’s position. A “-” indicates a vote in opposition to WORC’s position. “NV” indicates that the member did not vote. You can find out how members of Congress from other states voted online at www.worc.org.

House of Representatives

H1-Oil & Gas: Vote on passage of an amendment to strike the oil and gas title of H.R. 6, the energy bill. WORC supported passage of this amendment, which was offered by Representative Ron Kind (D-WI) and failed 171-251. Vote #142.

H2-Coal: Vote on passage of an amendment to strike the provisions in H.R. 6, the energy bill, which would weaken federal coal leasing law. WORC supported passage of this amendment, which was offered by Representative Nick Rahall (D-WV) and failed 208-212. Vote #143.

H3-Energy Bill: Vote on final passage of H.R. 6, the energy bill. WORC opposed passage of this bill, which was sponsored by Representative Billy Tauzin (R-LA). The bill passed 247-175. Vote #145.

H4-Clean Water: Vote to instruct members of a House-Senate conference committee to strike a provision in the energy bill, H.R. 6, exempting oil and gas construction from the Clean Water Act. WORC supported passage of this motion, which was made by Representative Bob Filner (D-CA) and failed 188-210. Vote #618.

H5-Country-of-Origin Labeling: Vote to strike the provisions in H.R. 2673, the 2004 Agriculture Appropriations bill, which would delay implementation of the country-of-origin labeling program for meat and meat products until 2006. WORC supported passage of this amendment, which was sponsored by Representative Dennis Rehberg (R-MT) and failed 193-208. Vote #354.

	H1 Oil & Gas	H2 Coal	H3 Energy Bill	H4 Clean Water	H5 COOL
CO-01 DeGette	+	+	+	+	+
CO-02 Udall	+	+	+	+	+
CO-03 McInnis	-	-	-	NV	-
CO-04 Musgrave	-	-	-	-	-
CO-05 Hefley	-	-	-	-	+
CO-06 Tancredo	-	-	-	-	-
CO-07 Beauprez	-	-	-	-	-
ID-01 Otter	-	-	-	-	-
ID-02 Simpson	-	-	-	-	-
MT-AL Rehberg	-	-	-	-	+
ND-AL Pomeroy	+	-	+	+	+
OR-01 Wu	+	+	+	NV	+
OR-02 Walden	-	-	-	NV	+
OR-03 Blumenauer	NV	NV	NV	+	+
OR-04 DeFazio	+	+	+	NV	+
OR-05 Hoolley	+	+	+	NV	+
SD-AL Janklow	-	-	-	-	NV
WY-AL Cubin	-	-	-	-	+

Senate

S1-Energy Bill: Vote on final passage of H.R. 6, the energy bill. WORC opposed passage of this bill. The bill passed 84-14. Vote #317.

S2-Energy Bill: Vote to end debate and vote on final passage of the conference report for H.R. 6, the energy bill. WORC opposed the motion to end debate. The motion failed 57-40. Vote #456.

S3-Country-of-Origin Labeling: Vote to table an amendment instructing members of a House-Senate conference committee to support full funding for country-of-origin labeling. WORC opposed the motion to table the amendment. The amendment was sponsored by Senator Tom Daschle (D-SD). The motion to table was made by Senator Bennett (R-UT). The motion failed 36-58. Vote #443.

S4-Dorr Nomination: Vote to end debate and move to a vote on the nomination of Thomas Dorr to be Under Secretary of Agriculture for Rural Development. WORC opposed Dorr’s nomination. The motion failed 57-39. Vote #454.

	S1 Energy Bill	S2 Energy Bill	S3 COOL	S4 Dorr Nom.
CO Allard	-	-	-	-
CO Campbell	-	-	NV	-
ID Craig	-	-	-	-
ID Crapo	-	-	-	-
MT Baucus	-	-	+	+
MT Burns	-	-	+	-
ND Conrad	-	-	+	+
ND Dorgan	-	-	+	+
OR Smith	-	-	+	-
OR Wyden	+	+	+	+
SD Daschle	-	-	+	+
SD Johnson	-	-	+	+
WV Enzi	-	-	+	-
WV Thomas	-	-	+	-

WORC & Northern Plains Buy Building

On December 30, WORC and Northern Plains closed on a building and the seven adjacent lots at 220 South 27th Street. The building, a vacant grocery store, lies in an emerging downtown area. WORC and Northern Plains plan to renovate it to become a model of energy efficiency and environmental design. This building lies within the downtown redevelopment district and has sat vacant for seven years.

Our next purchase goal is to acquire the three city owned lots to the north of the property. This will secure enough additional space for parking and will maintain control of the entire site for development. The city has a process for purchase which we intend to initiate immediately. It should take us about 60 days to finalize this purchase.

Next Stages in Renovation

We hired Randy Hafer and High Plains Architects to conduct an energy feasibility study and design for the renovation of the building. The team includes a professional engineer who will complete

the analysis of all the proposed energy efficiency and conservation features for the building, as well as, the architects who will provide the design. These include insulation, lighting, passive and active solar, photovoltaic and other energy features.

Once the energy feasibility study on the design is finished, we will make decisions on the final renovation and construction with completion of detailed plans and city permits. Construction is expected to begin around May 1.

Jan Falstad of the *Billings Gazette* was contacted about our purchase and plan and wrote a great story which appeared in the Gazette on Sunday, January 11.

Northern Plains Chair, Mary Fitzpatrick, also did TV interviews which appeared the following week. We have received many great calls because of the story and some wonderful feedback on the project.

WORC and Northern Plains would like to thank the early and lead donors of the campaign whose commitment has allowed us to raise the funds to secure the building and help us reach over one-third of our fundraising goal in just seven months.

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Trade Agreement Threatens Family Farms and Ranches

U.S. and Australia Finalize Free Trade Agreement

Despite missed deadlines, opposition from both sides of the ocean, and the need for Presidential intervention, the United States and Australia have finalized a free trade agreement.

This trade agreement threatens the livelihoods of family farmers and ranchers by including sensitive agricultural products such as beef, lamb and sheep, wool, wheat and dairy. In addition, it provides language that protects the patenting of newly developed plant varieties and animals.

“The U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) negotiated away the future of American agriculture without any input from family farmers and ranchers like me,” said Gilles Stockton, chair of WORC’s Trade Team and a Northern Plains member, “That’s blatantly undemocratic.”

Increased imports of Australian agricultural products mean lost jobs on American farms, ranches and in rural communities. As family farmers and ranchers are driven out of business, the communities that are maintained by agriculture will also lose jobs.



Trade and Beef

The U.S. Australia trade agreement creates further problems in an already concentrated beef industry.

Three packers control and pack over 80% of all beef in the U.S, IBP (now owned by Tyson); Swift (formerly ConAgra’s Fresh Meats subsidiary); and Cargill’s Excel division.

Additionally, Australia’s largest meat packer, Australian Meat Holdings, is owned by Swift.

“Multi-national corporations are global traders, whose only allegiance is to their profit, and exploit both importing and exporting countries at the cost of cattle producers and the consumers,” said Gilles Stockton, WORC Trade Team Chair.

According to a USTR fact sheet:

- The Australian beef quota, currently at 378,000 tons, would grow 18.5% over the next 18 years. During that time, any beef imported below the increasing quota would be tariff free. After the 18-year phase out period, tariffs would be at zero.
- Most Australian lamb and sheep meat tariffs would be immediately reduced to zero with the rest reduced over the next four years.
- Although there is no proposed change for tariffs above the quota for dairy products, under the agreements the dairy quota would grow from \$40.5 million to \$55 million in the first year and “build from there.”
- Tariffs on wheat and cereal flour mixes would go to zero immediately.

Stockton said the agreement tries to mollify U.S. producers by phasing in more beef imports from Australia over the next 18 years. “We’ve yet to see the impact of more imports from trade agreements with countries in South and Central America,” he said. “These agreements will spur a stampede of beef imports that will overrun the American cattle industry.”

Dakota Resource Council Trade Taskforce Chair, Link Reinhiller, agrees, “These trade agreements must keep their country’s economy strong and viable as well as the economy of their trading partner. Trade agreements must not weaken any segment of an economic structure.”

-- Jeri Lynn Bakken

Country of Origin Labeling Fight Continues

Supporters of Country of Origin Labeling narrowly lost a hard fought battle to fund labeling for meat and meat products in the omnibus spending bill.

Opponents of Country of Origin Labeling included a provision in the 2004 Omnibus Spending bill that postpones funding for the labeling of meat and meat products until 2006. Supporters of food labeling worked hard to remove this language by filibustering the full spending bill.

Senate Ends Debate and Passes Spending Bill

In a vote on January 22, the Senate ended the filibuster and debate on the spending bill. Sixty votes were needed to invoke cloture and continue debate; the vote passed by only two votes. Immediately after the cloture vote, the Senate passed the spending bill which postpones Country of Origin funding until 2006.

The fight is not over. Congressional supporters of Country of Origin Labeling are considering options for immediate implementation of the law.

There are a number of solutions under consideration. Some possible solutions include attaching an amendment to another bill for 2004 funding of the full labeling law and including funding in the 2005 Federal Spending Bill.

Country of Origin Labeling became law as part of the 2002 Farm Bill. That law mandated labeling of muscle cuts and ground beef, pork, and lamb; fresh and frozen fruits and vegetables; fish and shellfish; and peanuts by September of 2004.

Supermarkets and grocery stores will be required to provide country of origin information on a label, stamp, mark, placard, or other clear and visible sign.

--Jeri Lynn Bakken

Energy Bill Stalled, But Not Dead

The energy bill has been stalled in the Senate since November, but its supporters are vowing to work to do all they can to pass the bill.

Senate Energy Committee Chairman, Pete Domenici (R-NM), has introduced a new version of the bill, in which the tax breaks have been pared down, but the rollbacks that threaten clean water and public health, trample private property rights, and slash public review of oil and gas permits are unchanged.

The Senate will vote on the new bill, S. 2095, during the week of February 23.

In November, the Senate fell two votes short on a vote to end debate on the bill, which would have paved the way for a vote on final passage. (WORC state delegation votes are listed in the Congressional voting record on page 6.) Since then, the bill's supporters have been trying to find a way to get the two votes they need to pass the bill.

-- Sara Kendall

Supreme Court to Decide Checkoff

The U.S. Justice Department asked the U.S. Supreme Court to review an appeals court ruling that the national beef checkoff program is unconstitutional.

In July, the 8th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that American beef producers do not have to pay a \$1-per-head fee on cattle sold in the United States. WORC and the Livestock Marketing Association are parties to the lawsuit.

"The government's decision to take this to the Supreme Court could delay the inevitable end of this unfair, undemocratic and unconstitutional program," said Mabel Dobbs, a rancher from Weiser, ID and Chair of WORC's Livestock Committee. Ranchers, unfortunately, will continue to pay a checkoff fee as long as the case is still in court. As we have said before, it is only a matter of time."

--John Smillie

Mining Industry Cheers Bush Administration Waste Ruling

A new legal opinion issued by U.S. Interior Secretary Gale Norton will allow mining companies to dump unlimited amounts of toxic waste on public lands owned by U.S. taxpayers.

“This outrageous reversal directs the government to quit enforcing existing federal law,” said Steve D’Esposito of the Mineral Policy Center. “It puts clean water and community health at increased risk, with an open invitation to dump

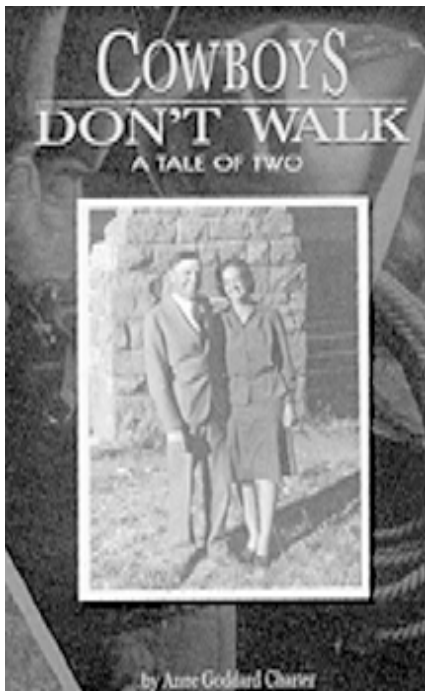
massive quantities of toxic mining waste on unlimited amounts of our public lands.”

The new opinion reverses a Clinton administration ruling that enforced an obscure provision of the 1872 Mining Law that limits miners to five acres of public land for mine processing and waste for every twenty acres of public land used for mining. The law was written at a time when most mines were shafts, not huge open pits like today’s mines.

The mining industry has cheered the ruling.

--Sara Kendall

Discover *Cowboys Don't Walk: A Tale of Two* by Anne Charter



Mrs. Charter's book is a moving portrait...Her book shows us that individuals willing to work hard, and believe, can prevail.

— Robert Redford

Boyd and Anne Charter were founding members of Montana's Northern Plains Resource Council. The husband and wife team united with their ranching neighbors to resist the coal-hungry corporations that wanted to turn their beloved Bull Mountain homes into strip mines.

Struggles with the land, animals, weather, wildfire, politicians and one another make for a uniquely American chronicle. The Charters' story demolishes the myth that 20th century Western ranch families were happily insulated from the complexities of the modern world. Their hard-learned observations serve well to inform succeeding generations.

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Energy Reforms Pushed At State Legislatures

Groups in Wyoming and Colorado are taking their agenda for responsible energy development and renewable energy to the state legislatures again this year, and keeping the pressure on state legislators to act.

Bill to protect surface owners fails to clear Wyoming House

A bill designed to address conflicts between landowners and those who develop the oil and gas beneath their land died in the Wyoming Legislature after failing to garner enough support in either the House or Senate.

On February 13, the Wyoming Senate voted 17-12 in favor of introducing the “Surface Owners’ Accommodation Act.” The bill needed two-thirds support, or 20 votes, for introduction during an off-year budget session. A few days earlier, 27 House members out of 60 voted to introduce the bill, and 32 voted against introduction. In December, the Judiciary Committee voted unanimously (11-0) to refer the bill to the full legislature for possible introduction.

“In my eight years in the Legislature, I don’t think we’ve worked on a bill in which we’ve spent this much time,” said Sen. Ken Decaria (D-Evanston), who sat on the Judiciary Committee and sponsored the bill in the Senate.

“The Joint Judiciary Committee did a thorough and excellent job of drafting a good bill which had very limited, if any, negative consequences for the industry,” said Nancy Sorenson, chair of the Powder River Basin Resource Council. “The bill did not reflect all wishes of the surface owner nor all those of the minerals industry—it was a good, solid compromise.”

Among its provisions, the bill would have required oil and gas operators to: (1) give written notice to surface owners at least 60 days before entering their property, (2) enter into good faith negotiations with surface owners to reach a surface use and



damage agreement, and (3) provide a damage and reclamation bond or other “financial assurance” in the event an agreement is not reached.

Bill to boost renewable energy advances in Colorado House

A bill has been introduced in the Colorado legislature again this year to require Colorado’s investor owned utilities to gradually increase the portion of electricity they produce from wind, solar, small hydroelectric, biomass, and geothermal energy to 900 megawatts by 2010. This threshold would equate to nearly 10% of the state’s total electrical power. The bill is being sponsored by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Lola Spradley (R-Beulah).

On February 4, the bill passed the House Transportation Committee on a vote of 12-1, and a few days later it passed the full House by a 39-26 vote.

Wind farms will bring in much needed, good paying jobs to rural Colorado, and landowners can earn between \$2,000 and \$4,000 per wind turbine per year. For energy consumers, a renewable energy standard can lend some price stability to electricity rates.

-- Kevin Williams

Grassroots Development in Senegal

By Dena Hoff

In May of 2003, I had the privilege of attending a conference in Dakar, Senegal, on “Mutually Supportive Agricultural and Trade Policies.” After the conference, I joined family farmers from Nicaragua, Jakarta, Korea and translators from Paris and Korea on a tour of rural villages to view cooperative, grassroots development projects.

We were hosted by the Federation of Non-Governmental Organizations of Senegal (FONGS), an organization of 29 farmer organizations throughout Senegal in 3,000 villages. Of the more than 150,000 members, 55% are women. The objective of the FONGS is to uplift the status and identity of farmers by recognizing their natural skills and knowledge, their stewardship of natural resources, and helping farmers build lasting sustainable agricultural systems to ensure food sovereignty.

We stayed in Theis at an African bed and breakfast. The simple accommodations brought many comparisons with American bed and breakfasts to mind. Our hosts were very gracious and friendly during the entire stay. Despite the fact that we would be communicating in five languages, Wolof, the local language, French, Spanish, Korean, and English, we all managed, partly through the universal language, laughter.

After a breakfast of white bread and instant Nescafe, a van came to take us to our first visit to the Federation of Association Payments of Louga (FAPFAL). There we met with the association President, the general secretary, and the manager. In 1987, when the state withdrew from agriculture, farm leaders realized the leadership and organizational void left when NGO’s would leave after one or two years, and decided to build a local farmer association. They began their campaign with literacy training, and then joined the FONGS to begin education on production methods.

Village farmers learn management of natural resources, how to use fertilizers, how to produce and save quality seed, and how, most importantly, to feed the local population through the long dry seasons.

Although the rainy season was to have already started, all we saw were endless expanses of red sand with trees which had their branches trimmed high to use for animal feed. Our hosts assured us that in three months time, all the sand would be covered in grass.



The people of the village built their own headquarters and warehouse with member fees and the profit from their production, and now supply shops in 20 villages with basic staples, sparing villagers long trips to bigger towns to shop. We visited one of these shops in Kelle Gueye, a simple cement building managed and run by four women who do all their record keeping and book work in a notebook. We also saw a peanut seed warehouse owned by the cooperative full of high quality peanut seed. Farmers get the seed they need to plant, and pay it back at harvest time. The village woman in charge of the seed oil production told us how the production of the oil and sale as a natural insecticide and ingredi-

ent of soap had improved the well being of the village. The demand is great, and because production methods are slow and primitive, can’t be met, but the village young people are

able to earn money by harvesting the pods, which make a great fertilizer.

Members in the many villages are building a communications network, both internal and externally. We were able to visit radio station PENC-mi, so named after a local tree under which village meetings are held, in the village of Fissel. Their broadcasts cover most of Senegal, and address education, health, environment, children, agriculture, and what-

What we do in this country to change our farm and trade policy affects people all over the globe.

ever interests their listeners. No commercials are allowed! Although the station was started with financial help from Oxfam's in U.K. Netherlands, and France, member association funds support the station and ten full time employees.

After the state withdrew from agriculture, the World Bank and the International Monetary System (IMF) imposed structural adjustment policies which basically left local farmers and villagers to "sink or swim". This caused the FONGS to begin a credit and savings program for farmers which has been very successful.

The ideal that the associations strive for is the farmer voice to be heard in every level of development programs. This requires lots of education, since many are used to settling for whatever they get, and don't visualize themselves as having a larger role in shaping the policies which control their lives.

On the way home, watching a farmer seeding millet with a donkey and a walk behind seeder into the dry sand, I realized that we aren't the only "next year" people in the world. Farmers everywhere have

faith that their next crop will again come up, grow, and provide them sustenance for another year.

By organizing and working together cooperatively, farmers and villagers in rural Senegal have managed to achieve a better life by direct participation to manage knowledge, power and wealth. They face many challenges, many externally imposed by

the push for industrial agriculture, with the accompanying grab for control of the land, natural resources, and economy by multinational corporations with the backing of the World Bank and the IMF.

I felt such a kinship with the Senegalese farmers and their love for the land and the

ability to live a simple life joyfully. I have been given so much, I am obliged to stand up for these people at Cancun to fight for Food Sovereignty and for the right to control their own destiny in a way that they decide for themselves without having a future not of their own choosing imposed on them by outsiders.

I would like to go back to Senegal in the rainy season to watch the crops grow, and pick up the many conversations started with farm leaders on how we can work together to devise agriculture and trade policies which benefit all people, not just a handful of corporations.

It was inspiring to see the tremendous progress being made by people working together with very limited resources in a harsh environment. I think the farmers of Senegal should be an inspiration to all of us here who think giving in to the powers that be is an option. Thanks to the FONGS for giving me this wonderful opportunity to meet resourceful people and see how much I had in common with them.

What we do in this country to change our farm and trade policy affects people all over the globe. Although we have fewer farmer voices, we need to add them to the many farmer voices all over the world saying, "We will work together to decide our own future in a way that is fair and life-giving to all peoples and all life forms on this planet."



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Hoping Monsanto will get the message

Yet Monsanto distributed a letter at the annual meeting of the National Association of Wheat Growers in Atlanta in January, threatening to stop all research into biotech wheat unless it gets “strong and unambiguous support” for commercial release of Roundup Ready wheat.

Monsanto’s Michael Doane told *Western Producer*, a Canadian agriculture newspaper, that Monsanto would send a similar letter to Canadian farmers asking them to publicly support Roundup Ready wheat.



Vice-President Carl Casale promised farmers that Monsanto would go slow on GM wheat in this letter from last May.

Last summer, the Canadian Wheat Board – which markets all Canadian wheat – asked Monsanto to withdraw its pending applications for regulatory approval, citing the severe market risk. A University of Manitoba survey released in August found that nearly 90% of Canada’s wheat farmers said they would not grow it.

U.S. wheat industry organizations are more ambivalent about Monsanto’s wheat. Their policies support biotechnology in general, but ask that biotech developers like Monsanto ensure market acceptance before releasing new varieties. “Right now, Roundup Ready wheat doesn’t meet our criteria,” said Darrell Hanavan, chair of a biotechnology committee of the major U.S. wheat groups, in response to Monsanto’s letter.

“Simply put, our customers don’t want it,” said Chester wheat farmer Tom Osterman, a member of the Northern Plains Resource Council. “We can’t afford to lose our wheat markets, so why fool with them? I just hope Monsanto finally gets the message.”

Will Monsanto Drop GM Wheat?

“If full farmer support is not pledged, that could be construed as shifting our focus to other crops,” said Michael Doane, explaining his letter to the wheat groups.

“Asking wheat farmers to pledge full support for genetically engineered wheat is like asking us to voluntarily go out of business,” said Northern Plains’ Osterman. “Why would we plant what we can’t sell?”

— John Smillie

Buyers Reject Genetically Modified Wheat

Many overseas customers who buy wheat from the United States have said they will not buy any of our wheat if farmers grow Monsanto’s genetically modified wheat. Here are some of their recent statements. To see more, go to www.safefoodfight.org

Egypt, July 2003: “They [Egyptian buyers, millers and consumers] know GMO wheat is not in the pipeline now, but they don’t want to see it... Buyers don’t want it.”

— Hassan Abdel Ghaffar, Cairo-based senior marketing specialist and programs manager for U.S. Wheat Associates, quoted by Robert Schubert, CropChoice USA.

Ethiopia, May, 2003: “These days consumers world wide have serious concerns regarding genetically modified foods.... we [will] purchase only non GM wheat... we request your due consideration of these economic and market factors in deciding whether to introduce GM wheat.”

— Amarabeh Alemu, Dire Dawa Food Complex S. Co., letter to US Department of Agriculture.

Italy, March 2003: “If genetically modified wheat is introduced in the United States, we plan to buy wheat from non-GM sources. It would be regrettable if we could no longer purchase wheat from the United States.”

— Silvio Grassi, Administrator, Molino Grassi.

Captive Supply

Meatpackers acquire more than half of all cattle and hogs they slaughter through arrangements known as captive supplies – livestock that packers either own themselves or control through contracts with farmers and ranchers. These livestock are called captive because they are tied to one packer instead of being subject to normal market forces of supply and demand.

Four companies buy 80% of the cattle and half of the hogs that end up as steaks and chops on American dinner tables each day. In such a concentrated market, buyers (the packers) can use captive supplies to manipulate markets – much as Enron is alleged to have used its dominant market share and unregulated forward contracts to manipulate energy markets. The estimated cost to family farmers and ranchers from the increased use of captive supplies amounts to more than \$1 billion per year for cattle alone.

Senator Mike Enzi (R-Wyoming) has introduced the Captive Supply Reform Act (S. 1044), to address this problem. Here are sources for more information about captive supplies, the Captive Supply Reform Act, and other efforts to restore competition in the livestock industry. Find WORC's petition for rulemaking on captive supplies, testimony and public comments from the Captive Supply Forum in Denver in September 2000, GIPSA reports on captive supplies, and competition in the livestock industry.



National Farmers Union
www.nfu.org

NFU has been representing farmers and ranchers in all states and for more than 100 years with a primary goal of sustaining and strengthening family farm and ranch agriculture.



R-CALF USA is a national non-profit cattle association representing only cow/calf producers and independent stockers and feeders.



Food Marketing Policy Center
www.fmpc.uconn.edu

The Food Marketing Policy Center conducts research on food and agricultural marketing and related policy. FMPC provides information that contributes to improving performance of food production and marketing systems.

**Grain Inspection,
 Packers and Stockyards Administration**



GIPSA
www.usda.gov/gipsa
 Helping market livestock, poultry, meat, cereals, and related agricultural products, and promoting fair and competitive trading practices.

Pickett, et al. v. IBP, inc.

Cattlemen's Antitrust Lawsuit
 Court Ordered Website for Class Member Information

Pickett et al v IBP, Inc.
<http://endcaptivesupply.lawoffice.com>

Court-ordered website set up by plaintiff's attorneys for the class action lawsuit, Pickett v. IBP. Court filings, notices and forms, and links to further information.



Organization for Competitive Markets
www.competitivemarkets.com

OCM is a multidisciplinary, nonprofit group of farmers, ranchers, academics, attorneys and policy makers dedicated to reclaiming the agricultural market place for independent farmers, ranchers, and rural communities.

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