

Government-led reform has worked for the poorest in Zimbabwe despite a despotic regime. Let's talk, if we can, about how much better a set of policies to enfranchise poor farmers against pure free-market thinking might work within a democratic regime. Such thinking used to happen in the United States.

In 1972, the National Coalition on Land Reform—note the use of the term—had important ideas about what could happen to fight poverty, feed the country, and revitalize rural areas in the U.S. It is time that such a discussion was again on the table. The trouble is that there are few tables around which the conversation might begin, and none of them are at the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The closest the U.S. government has come are a few tokens of support for beginning farmers, most of which have been stripped out before the new Farm Bill emerged from committee.

Ultimately, the Farm Bill assumes that every small farmer wants to become a specialty producer selling to restaurants. But what about those farmers who want to feed their local schools, elder-care facilities, Head Start programs, or homeless shelters? The Farm Bill may contain multitudes, but it can't contain this. In any case, a land reform conversation is bigger than the purview of the Department of Agriculture. There's no simple policy to address this. But it's possible to imagine a set of ideas

that 1) allow a new generation of landless Americans to steward the land for the public good; 2) build a vibrant and productive rural economy; and 3) make rural retirement possible without poverty.

At a minimum, these would involve:

- \* Ceilings maximum acreage on agricultural land ownership. A 1970s Congressional bill would have prohibited corporations with more than \$3 million in non-farm assets from buying land;
- \* Conservation easement legislation to guarantee that small farmland remains in production and under small-farm ownership;
- \* Student debt forgiveness in exchange for farming;
- \* Farmworkers' right to organize and to living wages;
- \* Investment in rural healthcare infrastructure;
- \* Financially secure retirement options for rural elders; and
- \* Support for the agroecological farming needed for 21st Century agriculture.

These were ideas that were part of a national conversation forty one years ago at the First National Conference on Land Reform, which took place in April 1972 in San Francisco, bringing together representatives of the Inter-Religious Coalition on Housing, the NAACP, Friends of the Earth, and dozens of other organizations.

They knew what we know now: That progressive land reform in the United States could address a range of environmental and

social problems, encouraging sustainable climate-change ready farming, providing (literally) green jobs, and reimagining rural America.

We already, for example, forgive student debt in exchange for public service. If we can support the young teachers who nourish the minds of America's next generation, might we not support those graduates nourishing those students' bodies? A student loan payment could become a land payment under the right policy. The agencies that can and should start discussing this include the Department of Agriculture, Social Security Administration, the Internal Revenue Service, and the Department of Justice Department of Education?

We aren't naïve. There will be resistance to tilting the playing field away from speculators and Big Ag. Agricultural land is "like gold with yield."

It's hard enough to imagine the government doing right by Social Security, let alone by linking that conversation with farming. Yet by supporting the elderly and investing in the young, we can choose to build a food system today that will feed all Americans tomorrow.

Such a food system will need to address the deep concentrations of power that lie at the heart of the modern food system. For that to happen, we'll need to talk about some awkward subjects.

**So pull up a chair and let's begin!**

All 32 cheeses  
rBGH Free!  
Eleven organic!  
One grassfed!

## Family Farm Cheese - Order Form

HELP SUPPORT FAMILY FARMS

*Cheese Made by Cedar Grove Cheese, Plain, WI*

Farmers get a guaranteed fair price of \$3.00 (for rBGH -free) and \$3.50 for organic every pound you buy!

Type of Cheese	cost/lb	#of blocks	total price
Mild Cheddar	\$6.00		
Colby	6.00		
Marble Colby	6.00		
Monterey Jack	6.00		
Farmers	6.00		
Reduced Fat Cheddar	6.00		
Reduced Fat Colby	6.00		
Mozzarella	6.00		
Muenster	7.00		
Butterkase	7.00		
Havarti	7.00		
Medium Cheddar	7.00		
Garlic Dill	7.00		
Jalapeno Pepper Jack	7.00		
Tomato Basil	7.00		
Provolone	8.00		
Sharp Cheddar	8.00		
Extra Sharp Cheddar	8.00		
Baby Swiss	8.00		
Smoked Cheddar	8.00		
Organic Pepper Jack	8.00		
Organic Tomato Basil	8.00		
Organic Colby	8.00		
Organic Farmers	8.00		
Organic Monterey Jack	8.00		
Organic Mozzarella	8.00		
Organic Muenster	8.00		
Organic Mild Cheddar	8.00		
Organic Medium Cheddar	8.00		
Organic Sharp Cheddar	8.00		
Organic Unpasteurized Cheddar	8.00		
Grassfed Cheddar	8.00		
<i>Thank you for supporting domestic fair trade. Your purchase helps keep WI farmers on the land!</i>		<b>shipping</b>	
		<b>TOTAL</b>	

### Shipping Information

We ship all our cheese **USPS Priority Mail** 2-3 day delivery

**The flat USPS rate is \$11.35 per box regardless of weight or destination.**

Most cheeses are also available at a wholesale discount in 5 lb. and 40 lb. blocks. If you are ordering a larger quantity, please call FFD at 608-260-0900 to discuss shipping options.

### Order by fax

608-260-0900

### Order by phone

608-260-0900

### Order by mail

Family Farm Defenders  
P.O. Box 1772  
Madison, WI 53701

### Payment Methods

Enclosed CHECK made out to  
Family Farm Defenders

CREDIT CARD:  Master Card  Visa

Card Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Card Holder's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

### Ordered by

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

### Ship to different address than above

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_