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MEETING NOTES

1) Family Farm & Rural Community Loan Program

- FSIA leaders along with urban FSIA supporters from Decatur, Champaign, and Springfield met with Regions Bank on December 12th to address the bank's poor dealing with FSIA
- In January, Regions Bank gave FSIA a proposal describing low interest loans for family farmers who buy agricultural inputs locally. FSIA's leaders and supporters stood-up for local family farmers and Regions Bank agreed to deal in good faith with FSIA and local family farmers
- FSIA leaders meet with Regions Bank in Decatur on February 7th to discuss the proposal and steps for moving forward

2) University of Illinois - Farmland Management.

- FSIA testimony at the board of trustees meeting has been postponed until the Tuesday, March 13th meeting in Urbana (watch for upcoming announcements about FSIA involvement!)
- FSIA leaders met with trustee David Dorris in Bloomington to discuss board's cash rent policy. He comes from a long line of southern IL family farmers, and he expressed concern about the unintended impact of the board's cash rent policy on family farmers and rural communities.
- FSIA is drafting a family farm friendly policy proposal that will be shared with Mr. Dorris. He said that he would present the proposal to the board of trustees and lobby on its behalf.

3) 2007 Farm Bill - National People's Action

- Discussion is heating up around the country about the 2007 Farm Bill.
- As a part of National People's Action (NPA), FSIA is playing an important role in setting the organization's agenda for 2007 Farm Bill policy positions that benefit family farmers.
- FSIA is participating in NPA's gathering in Washington, D.C. on March 18-20. In D.C., FSIA leaders will meet with ag. staffers from Rep. Johnson and Sens. Durbin and Obama. (FSIA can pay for travel for a few leaders who wish to participate. Please reply if you are interested.)

Please pass this update along and watch for more news to come!