



## **Farmers Supporting Independent Agriculture**

*“Promoting local economics through a faith-based framework that seeks to establish relationships between landowners and local farmers.”*

**Beason, Illinois**

**Fall 2006**

### **FSIA Develops Family Farm & Rural Community Loan Program**

FSIA, in conjunction with local Central Illinois banks and agricultural suppliers, has developed the Family Farm and Rural Community Loan program. The loan program will provide operating loans to local family farmers at very competitive interest rates provided they purchase their inputs from participating local agricultural suppliers. Family farmers are the backbone of the local economy, and as they are pushed out by absentee mega-farm operations, local communities suffer too. Local family farmers spend hundreds of thousands of dollars in local communities every year, and as they lose out to absentee mega-farm operations local communities lose out on the money they would have spent. Absentee mega-farm operations suck money out of our local communities while farming the land in an environmentally unsustainable manner.

The Family Farm and Rural Community Loan program will help address this problem by keeping local farmers in business by providing attractively priced loans and by also ensuring that they spend at local agricultural suppliers. Money will stay in the community, and will continue to circulate as the agricultural suppliers will also tend to spend locally. FSIA is working to create this innovative partnership between farmer, bank, and supplier, which will benefit many farmers

and rural community members throughout Central Illinois. Watch for upcoming announcements!

### **FSIA Meets Again with University of Illinois Farm Management**

FSIA leaders met with Doug Beckmann, the Senior Associate Vice President for Business and Finance, along with University Farm Managers in Urbana to discuss the university's farm management policies that are harming family farmers. The university trustees decided to seek high bid cash rent payments on virtually all of its 26,000 acres of farmland, land that was originally given to the university. FSIA leaders learned that the policy change was driven by one trustee, who also manages his own farmland by seeking highest bid cash rent payments.

FSIA is working to address this unsound policy decision because it is harming family farmers and local communities as the university attempts to balance its budget on the backs of families in Central Illinois. In order to add less than 0.1% to its annual budget, the university is pricing local farmers out of business and greatly increasing the financial pressure on farm families who choose to continue farming university farmland. This decision directly contradicts the farm management policies recommended by the university's own College of Agricultural, Consumer, and Environmental Sciences.

## **FSIA Leaders Meet with Illinois Legislators About Rural Community Reinvestment**

FSIA leaders traveled to Springfield to meet with Illinois Representatives Rich Brauer (100<sup>th</sup> District) and Raymond Poe (99<sup>th</sup> District) to talk about rural community reinvestment and the FSIA Family Farm and Rural Community Loan Program. FSIA leaders talked about the economic disinvestment problems that absentee mega-farmers cause for rural communities, and then described how FSIA is working to address the problems by creating solutions that encourage local reinvestment. Both representatives reacted positively to the work that FSIA was doing in Central Illinois, and offered their support for FSIA's ongoing work.

### **About FSIA**

FSIA is a faith-based community organization that represents the interests of family farmers and local communities throughout Central Illinois. FSIA was started by family farmers in Logan County who wanted to participate in decision-making that directly affects them and their communities. FSIA works to ensure the survival of family farms, preserve the local economy, and promote sound land stewardship practices.

### **FSIA Improves Local Communities**

FSIA members participate in decision making that benefits local communities. FSIA negotiates with landowners, agribusiness, and banks in order to change practices and policies that harm local communities by attracting absentee mega-farm operations to our area. FSIA empowers local residents to participate in decision making that impacts local families and communities. Farmers and business people, church and community members, and both rural and urban residents are all FSIA members. Join us in working together for change in our rural communities in Central Illinois!

## **Join FSIA!**

*Your annual membership dues and contributions directly support the work of Farmers Supporting Independent Agriculture.*

Name:

---

Address:

---

Telephone:

---

E-mail:

---

Annual Family Membership: \$25.00

Please make your check  
payable to: FSIA

Send to:

FSIA  
2322 – 2000<sup>th</sup> Street  
Beason, IL 62512

Farmers Supporting Independent Agriculture  
2322 – 2000<sup>th</sup> Street  
Beason, IL 62512



**Next Meeting:**

Tuesday, November 7

7:00 pm

Logan County Farm Bureau

120 S. McLean Street  
Lincoln, IL

**For More Information Contact:**

Larry Huelskoetter  
217-949-5471  
biglar@dtinspeed.net

or

Joel Janisewski  
309-830-2233  
joelj@insightbb.com

**FSIA is a member organization of the Central Illinois Organizing Project.**

CIOP is a faith-based community organization that empowers God's people to become full partners in the decision-making process on issues that affect their families, communities, and region.

Visit CIOP on the web: [www.ciop.org](http://www.ciop.org)