

AFW-1 Comments
Recommendation 39
Agricultural soil carbon management-conservation/no-till
Agricultural soil carbon management-organic farming

This is critical not only for GHG, but for the current crisis in soil erosion.

The economic impacts of any legislation must be determined and be a part of the decision.

Less government. This is a FREE country. No mandates or government control of private property. There should be a cost/benefit analysis required.

The benefits do not justify the costs using sound science. More taxes, regulations and red tape is not what will help Montana.

The Federal Govt is already dictating to producers and now the State government wants to do the same? Do these two levels of government communicate?

How would rebates be funded? How would state legislation encourage expansion of federal programs? We need to balance the federal budget to stop borrowing money from our grandkids.

No-till is only effective in reducing GHGE, IF fertilizers and pesticides are reduced or eliminated.

Now you are in the area of my degree. Government involvement in agriculture is and has been a mistake.

very good

Perennial grains and grasses.No plowing, soil building, moisture retaining, etc. farmers can't afford new equipment. Take into consideration better made, older machinery that farmers can work on. The new machinery has to be worked on by computer wizards.

We'd like to encourage organic means of food production.

All aspects of society will need to make measurable progress - including the agriculture industry. Land management is essential to attain a balanced, liveable environment for all living creatures.

I would strongly support these programs if it were not that large ag corporations seem to be the main beneficiaries

Let the farmers/ranchers decide for themselves what is BMP - not some idealog. Artificially increasing the prices of food commodities will only hurt the poor. Be mindful of the premise here.

What does legislation to encourage accomplish? Where does the money for the rebates come from?

No new incentives. Just remove the disincentives for good behavior. Remove the subsidies that bad boys get now for their bad behavior that threatens public health and the environment, and the market will force them to be good boys.

At what cost? Most farmers are skeptical about climate change so I'd be interested to hear from them? Farm machinery isn't cheap.

I see no relationship here between energy conservation and organic farm acreage? It appears to be one of those legislative add-ons for whatever reason.

Farmers will do this on their own if the technology exists. They want to keep as much of their top soil as possible.

Great idea.

We should absolutely be encouraging no till and no cultivation of native grasslands.

When I read this report it was obvious there were few agricultural producers on the panel. Much of Montana's cropland is already in no-till farming practices and sequesters huge amounts of CO₂. The prime encouragement for this type of technology is economic returns and cost savings and federal programs have little to offer. CRP has hurt rural areas and they will never recover from the huge amount of lost farms and young people. EQIP and CSP are OK but will always be underfunded by Congress in favor of urban help.

Encourage & incentives - good words.

Individuals can only do so much with this issue, we need strong and numerous government action of many forms and formats...

Seems pretty ridiculous to think we can strong arm farm equipment manufacturers into providing "rebates". Did anybody check with John Deere Inc. on this? Sounds like an "organic farmer" wrote this recommendation.

Look to the UN-intended consequences. Let the market do its job. Like most government involvement in an issue, it is well intentioned, but will ultimately make the situation more cumbersome and expensive.

Yes! Support organic and small farmers! Small scale farming often uses little machinery and relies on human labor! Also support the local food markets!

A wonderful idea... Irrigated farming is wasting Montana's fresh water and draining its rivers and aquifers. See John Wesley Powell...

Energy efficiency is its own reward.

Other states use NO TILL farming and I am surprised Montana does not.

Be careful not to encourage an increase in herbicides.

Organic farming is expensive and an inefficient use of land. The ethanol fiasco has already significantly raised food prices. No-till sounds great, but what happens with weeds and yields per acre?

I love this one! Make it mandatory that all subdivisions have a community garden if under a certain acreage and an organic farm if over.

Yes, yes, yes!

Any soil preservation programs should be coupled with programs in reduction of petroleum intensive products such as herbicides and pesticides, which would have added benefits of producing healthier food products.

you can not legislate personal behavior.

Yes, but more needs to be done with organic. In some cases the FDA blocks out potential producers and in others it supports industrialization, which is not what the organic movement supports. We need to grow and produce as much as possible of our food locally and organically.

Ag should be particularly targeted for reduced energy inputs.

This call for the state to legislate regarding federal programs.

Nothing in organic farming indicates lower GHG emissions. This should not be part of the proposed regulations.

NO.....

keeping in mind that prairie soils should not be sod-busted to meet 'organic' standards for non-pesticide soil base. we must protect our native resources!!!

Incentives, please.

Another big YES!

Not clear about what that entails.

i believe these are absolute must haves for a future of more and more expensive shipping costs-a home grown food supply makes a secure state

Most farmers have adopted this technology if they can do to cost savings. Organic farming may actually be more expensive due to the lower production per acre of most crops. Organic products in the stores are already significantly more expensive.

I support organic farming and eat a lot of organic food but don't think the government should be pushing this. Let the market decide!!

no more legislation period. EQIP programs do not reach the intended audience. these type of programs are reaching those already making the type of changes the programs are designed to help start. Rules are being bent to allow those same people to participate and show how good of job they are doing with enrollment.

What will this cost in lost production and overall farm income?

Like ag needs more welfare.

Most agriculture is using best management practices as far as they economically can now. Organic farming is NOT more energy efficient -- it is often worse in energy consumption than the same volume of production using conventional methods.

IF THE MARKET REALLY WANTS THIS.

Organic farming target is very modest, considering how few acres are organically farmed now. Caution that CRP doesn't lead to new lands being plowed up.

Much of the EQIP program now goes to delivering irrigation water. Not solution to the climate change problem. Not enough focus on organic conversion.

Organic makes sense for farmers (higher profit margins)and makes sense for consumers (less exposure to harmful pesticides). Let's do what it takes to supply 75% of the food Montanans eat from Montana farmers and ranchers. It was possible in the 1950s, so why isn't it possible today?

NO NO NO

Local food production would dramatically improve the mileage the average food item travels before reaching one's plate. Encourage in-state slaughter facilities and distribution channels for farmers.

Yes. This should be high priority. Organic for our health, and reduction of petroleum-based fertilizers/pesticides, and no-till for health of soil, helping soil be a sink for CO₂.

I think this one takes the cake. CRP is a leading contributor to the demise of rural America. Also if you want to increase bio-fuel and not take food out of production you will need to take CRP out of storage and plant bio-crops. You have a few good ideas like no-till farming but you wrap it up in a stupid idea like adding to CRP...sounds like a Jensen idea again!

subsidize the organics at a higher level. They make sense as far as green house gases go, but also make sense environmentally, and if more people farm organically, more people are needed--thus increasing the rural population

There goes America as the bread basket of the world. Who is going to feed the starving people after you are done?

Yes, yes, yes. I really like this!!

With the prices rapidly increasing, conserving natural resources is a matter the free market can handle without government mandates.

Local farmers should decide how best to farm their own land, not the government.
Keyota was never ratified

Enough farm welfare already! Quit paying them for not farming land that they did not farm anyway except once just to get paid to not do it.

over my head

And why is organic farming better? The world is going hungry and we pay farmers not to produce. That makes sense. We should be providing aid to third world countries with food, not funds and the government should pay our farmers fairly for their products to do so.

BMPs good; organic farming will just decrease yields and increase the acreage in cultivation - bad idea.

This Action Plan was not a Montana grassroots Plan. It was the same plan written for California and other states. I doubt whether any Montana farmers had any input in this section.

these ideas sound good on paper but are hard to put into practice for small and medium farmers due to the cost of specialized equipment.

<http://www.righttalk.com/asx/ggws.aspx>

IS THIS ALL A JOKE? DON'T YOU GUYS HAVE BETTER THINGS TO DO?

Any legislation comes with an enforcement clause. This will be a direct increase in Government at the expense of the people, and one should look at the BMPs currently used before one says this system is broke.

Can someone prove that organic farming is more efficient in the reduction of CO₂, Cows are needed to produce manure, and Cows produce both CO₂ and methane. Much more than humans.

We want FEWER federal programs and LESS government here in Montana. Please do not expand federal programs here. And let farmers do their business without intervention. If you want cleaner air, water and food, offer farmers incentives to grow crops organically -- in the traditional sense of the word.

We need to realize that the government has a fiduciary relationship with the people to protect our environment. We need to push this incentive to get the government to change the way they handle pollution.

The ag folks are opposed to this missive against their current practices.

Keep the fed out see above.

If we are increasing our acreage by converting traditionally farmed cropland, then I am in full support of this measure. However, I do not wish for public lands such as parks or recreation areas to be turned over into farmland.

Facilitate locally based agriculture which can avoid significant GHG production for transportation to markets.

Stay out of our private property rights and business.

Won't ag producers do this on their own as they are better stewards of the land than govt telling them how to do their job. Seems like a lot of this is current practice.

This is already happening the best thing the state can do is get out of the way.

Standards must be higher. Increase cropland managed using BMP's by 30% by 2015 and 80% by 2020. Increase organic acreage to 50% of all land in cultivation in Montana by 2025.

Won't ag producers do this on their own as they are better stewards of the land than govt telling them how to do their job. Seems like a lot of this is current practice
This is also extremely important.

do not need politicians telling farmers how to farm

This is OK if applied as incentives or encouragement. We need to educate the people on climate change issues, then let them lead the way as they see fit to change their lifestyles.

Is there anything you can do without government regulations and intervention. This is disgusting.

Federal issue.

A good idea.

No more government.

An emphasis on organic farming will benefit both the environment and the availability of locally produced, healthy food for Montanans.

The aforementioned federal programs do not need any more expansion. The federal agencies are already understaffed to deal with the current workload, and almost all who can use these programs, are.

Montana's 93 million acres of soil surface far exceeds that of many states. Montana thus has greater opportunity to sequester CO2 in its farm (and forest) soils than many other states. And just as Malaysia seeks payments for forest retention, Montana can strive for settlements based on its retention of farm and forest soils. This will also benefit the plant and animal species of Montana.

con games tax breaks for the rich

No fertilizers with petroleum. Just say NO

"Government is not the solution to our problems, it IS the problem"

Stay out of our farming practices! We know best how to farm, not some state agency telling us how to do it.

Support local farmers, local food networks as well. Excellent policy goal.

Also, make organic pest and weed products widely available to homeowners in Montana. I tried to find some last summer and couldn't.

Pay farmers not to grow food when the world is starving, and pay them to grow food that we make into expensive and inefficient fuel in a high pollution chemical process.

Not enough capacity to make a difference in Montana

yes! economic incentives for the transition to more efficient machinery and organic practices

This sounds too expensive for the gains it would achieve.

Just say no to Federal Subs....

Organic farming and no-till are generally mutually exclusive. Organic methods that produce less product per acre are not helpful.

Increase cropland managed using BMP's now. The organic plan is great!

These programs have served to empty out the population and economic opportunities for Eastern Montana. Do we really want to encourage more of it???

BMP? Best Management Practices? I know what they are as concerning logging and forest roads. What else?

Good idea but the oil and petroleum companies are very invested and entrenched in our agricultural businesses. These companies have a lot of investment in tilling of our lands. So without clear and strong legal oversight this will be another area that people and corporations will find ways around.

Organic farming has problems. Lowers production, increases diseases.

For the most part farmers are now the best stewards of the land and are farming at the lowest possible expense. In some cases organic is not the answer.

Really great, progressive ideas and plans!

Too much legislation.

Biggest incentives should go to SMALL farmers

We have a world wide food shortage, if we go to organic farming this will only get worse. Also there are some studies that indicate that organic foods are actually less healthy.

Way too costly to tax payers. Why can't farmers work when we are working? Why should they get paid to "no-till"? How are you going to get all your renewable resources, if they aren't planting? Too costly.

No till agriculture represents the single most effective way to increase and maintain carbon sequestration. In fact it is probably the only efficient way to do so via the natural environment as a carbon sink.

Organic farms are the way of the past and the way of the future. The petrochemical farm has had its heyday and is on the way out. Not right away but eventually and sooner rather than later. This recommendation makes intuitive sense and the working group should be applauded for their correct assessment of the farming situation and the trends of food production in the state.

Maybe all farmers and rancher should return to the days of horses. When the State of Montana starts to walk and not ride. Remember the afore mentioned statement ... "Lead by example?"

Not needed. Do our "law makers" know more about farming than our farmers. I think now.

community gardens and garden plots given to citizens tax free need to be started--look at Russia's dacha and subsidiary plot movements!!!

No, these farmers already get paid enough for doing nothing

All of these are 'feel good' expensive bulls**t legislation. Global warming is NOT a fact (cold records set last winter in the southern hemisphere) so it might be Northern hemisphere warming, but not global. Secondly, latest studies of the sun spots (that control global temperatures more than humans) indicate that within 20 years we will be back in a 'mini-ice age'. Not politically correct, but MUCH more accurate.

Ag still needs to produce food and make a living doing it. The organic farming goal is unrealistic.

Encourage, a good idea.

Absolute nonsense. Organic chemistry is based on carbon compounds. They are formed in nature. Leave them alone and let them grow. Tilling the soil helps retain moisture . . . save water.

Good idea. Buy the farmers, too.

WHO PAYS FOR THIS THE TAX PAYER?

This distorts free market factors.

This is a scam.

Stop importing food from countries that have lower environmental and lower food quality standards and our farmers will be able to profit selling organic foods.

is this another form of welfare for the poor farmers and ranchers? Rumor has it that all a farmer has to do to double their income is to get a second mail box.

This one is a tough call. Most farmers and ag related businesses struggle now. Rebates would be good.

Much more important than transportation. These goals would be much too low.

Just more regulations.

Discourage plowing native vegetation.

Apparently this is a BIG DEAL (New Yorker article in february...good example of bigger payoff for doing less, could be good for our state and farmers.

Phase out pesticide use altogether and provide strong incentives for organic farming. What happened to the "Victory Garden" attitude back in WW II (before my time)!

then maybe organic foods won't cost so much!!

Work to include small and organic farms in the farm bill.

Until the Chicago Climate Exchange recognizes organic farming as an agricultural practice which is eligible for carbon credits I am reluctant to include it in this recommendation. It is being considered for inclusion so it may be beneficial to provide some funding for research to identify the farming protocol which would be acceptable to the CCX. The CCX does accept properly managed grazing land. As grazing land encompasses such a large part of the state I believe that should be a larger component of this recommendation.

These seem to be short term fixes that will be used to by votes. Invest in long-term solutions first.

With unprecedented prices in farming & stable cattle prices, this is the first opportunity in a generation for farmers & ranchers to financially gain & secure their futures. The vast majority of farmers & ranchers know more about stewardship & conservation than the rest of us. Quit making recommendations on how they should do their job & learn how they are doing it now.

keep out federal regulation, all regulation must be kept local.

More government mandates. Farmers are the best conservationists as their livelihood relies on the best use of land. This just serves to increase their expenses!! Organic farming is a good way to raise weeds. Agriculture is already addressing these issues. Market forces and farm bill provisions will also be part of the mix. Do not need state legislation. How would incentives be funded?

I would like to see this this more aggressive.

The farmer, rancher has a tough time making ends meet now because of government control. Leave them alone

Most programs provide incentives to take land out of production. If cellulosic ethanol or biodiesel increase in use, we will need more land in production, not less.

Excellent. Try for shorter time frame. We have the knowledge NOW!

No Position

Farmers that adopt no-till are already seeing the benefits. Not needed. Organic farms is a MARKET thing. Good grief. Don't you understand ag-econ?

CSP, CRP, EQTP, all have destroyed the rural economies in Montana. Without activity there is no need for supplies. We need to grow our own food - not purchase from other countries

Economic incentives = tax payer subsidy. If no-till farming generates an economic benefit to farmers, they will use this method without the state providing unnecessary incentives.

Eastern Montana has lost population due to the use of CRP as a retirement opportunity. The dollars those retirees get from CRP are spend out-of-state. Our main streets have taken the brunt of the economic fallout, as have our schools. I am 100% opposed to any support for these programs.

Farmers will implement whatever is economical.

There should not be an incentive to sodbust/plow native prairie. Although I support organic foods, it is cheaper to plow new prairie than to not use pesticides for several years to bring already farmed land into compliance. NO SODBUSTING OF NATIVE PRAIRIE!

Bad idea

Yes--this is good for the land and long-term sustainability as well.

We'd better have a legal way to transport these products once they leave the field. They will need to be transported in trucks or on trains.

Does this mean we could take money from schools to pay the very people who tilled the land releasing the carbon to till less so carbon can build part way back to teh level it was.

Farmers already have too many rules

More government programs is NOT the answer here. Free markets will best allocate resources between food production and energy production. Organic farming usually has a significant yield penalty, and has to get a premium price in order to be economically viable, but too much supply of organic products will destroy the premium.

To quote the farmer "you pay - we play"

Let the market dictate.

I am definitely for responsible farming.

These are not only key for GHG reduction and sequestration but crucial for avoid the desertification of the land through the leaching of salts from excessive watering and other various forms of erosion.

LETS ENACT POPULATION CONTROLS AND WE WONT HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT GROWING MORE!!!

Important! We can do this!

Respondent does not have sufficient information or knowledge to rank this recommendation.

Economic incentives to organic farming. Their practices save tax payer dollars in wastewater treatment, health care, etc.

conflicts with national programs

What does ag community say about these goals? Reasonable?

There are plenty of farm subsidy programs already. we need to ensure those continue and are the most efficient.

Wheat is at \$18 per bushel - why do we want to encourage more CRP that makes our little towns into ghost towns?

If new programs or promotion of existing ones are to continue it is important to ensure that native range and forest is not disturbed just to implement these programs -- too much native range has been lost to programs such as 'frivolous' CRP projects.

BMP ?

CRP to perennial biomass production. Research supportive practices that complement No-till such as finding means to reduce chemical use under no-till.

Organic farming eliminates most of the pollution including green house gases. It should be strongly promoted

there is climate change. But mans impact is limited. Maybe as little as less than 3-5% need cost benefit analysis

Consumers have the choice of what they buy and it should remain that way.

let market forces dictate farming, I'm tired of subsidizing farmers. All industries must compete globally now.

I support this as long as "organic farming" does not necessarily mean organic certification. There are more localised versions of certification that provide for a more accurate assessment of sustainable farming and are far more attainable for a small family-owned farm. For example: Montana Homegrown.

Where is all the money coming from? A sales tax?

Need incentives to farmers to stop using pesticides, fertilizers. Grow on a smaller scale.

Some, if not most, no-till regimes utilize fossil-fuel based herbicides (and pesticides) lavishly, which is (a) a bad idea and (b) possibly not necessary. That is the reason for my "4" rating rather than a "5".

No till increases herbicide use. You better look how your want to balance this out. Energy usage and carbon sequestration are not the only issues.

Only if private funds are used, no tax payer dollars.