



**Agriculture of the Middle:
New Strategies to Support America's Mid-sized
Family Farmers**

June 8, 2010 | 2:00pm to 3:00pm
Senate Agriculture Committee Room, Russell 328-A

Introduction by Ferd Hoefner, Policy Director, National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition

Presenters:



Regina Beidler (VT)
Organic Valley

Diana Endicott (KS)
Good Natured Family Farms

Karl Kupers (WA)
Shepherd's Grain

Gary Pahl (MN)
Pahl's Farm

Cheeseboard and afternoon snacks from Organic Valley and DC Central Kitchen

Please join the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition (NSAC), Farm Aid, Organic Valley, Heifer International US Country Program, and a panel of four producer-entrepreneurs for a congressional briefing on Agriculture of the Middle: New Strategies to Support America's Mid-sized Family Farmers.

In recent decades, many mid-sized farmers and ranchers who rely on farming as a main source of income have been severely challenged in the marketplace. Too small to compete individually in international agricultural commodity markets, they are also not often well-positioned to market directly to local consumers. While the number of very small and very large farms and ranches has increased, mid-sized family farms continue to disappear. Arguably the backbone of America's rural communities and economies, this loss of mid-sized family farms has a detrimental impact that extends well beyond the farm.

The panel will discuss innovative business models and marketing approaches that are already succeeding in creating new opportunities for mid-sized farmers in many parts of the country. They will also cover the ways in which existing federal programs can support these efforts by providing the research, credit, and infrastructure investments necessary to scale up and expand their models.

For more information, contact Jess Daniel, policyintern@sustainableagriculture.net, 202-547-5754