



News Release

The Coalition For Agriculture's Future

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Coalition For Agriculture's Future Sets Annual Meeting For March 20

For Immediate Release
Nampa, Idaho – March 12, 2012

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Idaho is losing its historic farm and ranch lands at an alarming rate of some 7,000 acres a month. So if you are interested in helping to do something about that, to preserve and protect Idaho's agricultural economy and its historical social role in Idaho, then you'll want to attend the 2013 annual meeting of the Coalition for Agriculture's Future at 1:00 p.m. on March 20th at the Hampton Inn & Suites in Nampa, CAF officials said today.

The Hampton Inn and Suites is located at 5750 East Franklin Road near the Idaho Center.

Agriculture has long been the backbone of Idaho economy and is credited by many with being a saving influence during the recent recession that decimated the state's construction, high tech and service industries.

However, U.S. Department of Agriculture statistics show that since 1982 total farm and range land in Idaho has dropped from 13.9 million acres to 11.4 million acres, a decline of 2.5 million acres or 18%. That translates to a loss of approximately 7,000 acres a month, about 11 square miles.

A recent University of Idaho study of the Canyon County agricultural economy, paid for in part by the Coalition, revealed that the loss of 10 acres of cultivated farmland results in the loss of one job and a \$160,000 hit to the Canyon County economy.

Some seed companies in the Treasure Valley are already having to export growing operations to overseas locations because they cannot find enough suitable farmland in southwestern Idaho.

The CAF was formed in 2008 specially to deal with the rampant, largely uncontrolled development that was consuming huge amounts of historic productive farmland.

The Coalition is formed from approximately 30 of the area's largest agribusinesses, financial institutions, ag-related associations and other companies and individuals with agricultural interests in the Treasure Valley, according to CAF Executive Director Roger Batt.

"The Coalition has made major strides in its efforts to combine managed growth with the preservation of agricultural lands. The annual meeting is designed to outline both past accomplishments and to establish its goals for the coming year," Batt said.

Coalition members are also concerned that the loss of traditional farming will lead to the loss of the agricultural heritage and traditions that have forged the values and character of Idaho's people and crafted the foundations of responsible stewardship of its natural resources.

You can learn more about the Coalition at its web site: www.agriculturesfuture.org.