

# An Open Invitation To Treasure Valley Residents

## **From the Coalition for Agriculture's Future**

### **Help Us Preserve and Protect Idaho's Agricultural Heritage and Traditions**

Our Coalition is dedicated to the belief that agriculture has forged the values and character of Idaho's people and crafted the foundations of responsible stewardship of its natural resources. We firmly believe that the continued loss of rural agricultural lands to urban development has begun to severely limit the ability of Idaho's agricultural industry to produce the sustainable volume of crops required to meet the food needs of the world. We also are concerned that Idaho's agricultural heritage and traditions are being lost to urban development as concrete and asphalt in residential subdivisions replace land historically used to grow crops.

Let us be crystal clear: The Coalition is not anti-growth or development. But we do believe that Idaho and its people must find, develop and implement new methods and strategies that incorporate a planned integration of urban and rural interests. We must not unintentionally or deliberately sacrifice agricultural land on the alter of unmanaged or uncontrolled urban development. To do so is to risk losing the agricultural heritage that has made Idaho the great state it is today.

There is no time to waste. Since 1975 Idaho has lost more than 4.1 million acres of agriculture land and about 3,000 family farms to residential, commercial and industrial development. For example, from 1997-2002, Canyon County lost **25 percent** of its agricultural acreage and Ada County lost **7 percent** to development, according to the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation.

You will hear more from us in the future as we work to educate and alert the public about threats to our agricultural heritage, traditions and economy posed by irresponsible urban development of historic agricultural lands. We will also work closely with elected officials to help them better identify, understand and incorporate critical land management principles and practices that balance development and preservation of agricultural lands.

Our Coalition membership represents more than two dozen of Idaho's largest agri-businesses, agriculture and related industry associations, financial and insurance institutions, food related and other companies and individuals. We invite you to join us in our efforts.

**To learn more about the Coalition, its membership and goals, and the issue of declining agricultural lands, please visit our website: [www.agriculturesfuture.org](http://www.agriculturesfuture.org).**