Together Toward a Sustainable Future: Let’s Plan to Celebrate!

Dateline: 2030

In every community across the world communities are gathering in unprecedented numbers to celebrate an achievement, years in the making.

Today’s celebration acknowledges the collaborative work of a broad coalition of communities, leaders, and organizations who came together in 2017-18 with a shared vision and a common purpose: Propose, pass and implement a farm bill written to empower communities and farmers to depend on healthy ecosystems to sustain life, restore health to ecosystems and cool the planet.

In 2017 the nation’s water sources and soils were under threat from the industrial agriculture’s dependence on toxic chemicals. Irrigation of millions of acres of commodity crops was depleting groundwater sources at unsustainable rates. The industry’s practices were a major contributor to greenhouse gases. Despite the billions of public dollars in annual subsidies to the industrial food chain, food scarcity and affordability remained a serious problem for farmers and communities alike.

The industry’s reach was not limited to the United States. It spanned across the globe. Looking at the evidence, the coalition drew the only conclusion they could. The industry’s dependence on practices that eroded the health of ecosystems necessary to sustain life eliminated it as a candidate for future investment. Systemic change was the only option.

For decades a powerful combination of subsidies, policies (aka the Farm Bill) and trade agreements had advanced the industry’s success. The coalition recognized that this powerful combination could serve their purpose to provide a pathway for successful local development.
The coalition’s key strategy was to propose and pass the **Community Food & Water Farm Bill.** This bill provides communities and farmers with the public investment to create local economies designed to be dependent on healthy ecosystems for growing food with regenerative practices, restore health to ecosystems and communities and sequester carbon.

The bill provides every community with the tools they need to make food and water security and climate readiness integral to the success of local economies.

In the brief span of years since the bill was adopted, we have made remarkable progress:

- Communities have set a clear set of objectives and plans for achieving them.
- Already a number of rivers formerly contaminated by fertilizers and pesticides have revived.
- Hundreds of small-scale, regenerative farms ring metropolitan areas supplying neighborhood food hubs with locally sourced, affordable sources of food—both cooked and unprepared.
- Those hubs have become vital gathering spaces for community and research centers for collecting local ecological knowledge.
- Across regions and states, the centers are collaborating to share knowledge and create partnerships to measure success in cultivating food and capture carbon.
- Rural and urban communities are connected by a common purpose and young people are returning to the land.

The enduring challenge of climate remains, but with public resources invested in economies designed to address it effectively, communities are focused on creating vital partnerships across regions and borders to provide a foundation for the future generations.

Today we celebrate the courage and commitment of the coalition of leaders who set us on the path toward a sustainable future.

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