



# Coalition for Agriculture's Future

55 SW 5th Ave, Suite 100, Meridian, ID 83642

(208) 888-0988 ~ [www.agriculturesfuture.org](http://www.agriculturesfuture.org)

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## FACTORS RESULTING IN REDUCTION IN AGRICULTURAL LANDS

Over the last 30 years, Idaho's total farm and ranchland has declined by approximately 7,000 acres a month.<sup>1</sup> In other words, every month Idaho loses 10.9 square miles of farmland, an area of land twice the size of the city of Middleton.

- Since 1982, total farmland in Idaho has dropped from 13.9 million acres to 11.4 million acres, a decline of 2.5 million acres or 18%.
- Since 1982, the average size of an Idaho farm has dropped by more than 120 acres, a decline of 19.4%.
- Ag land loss rate has accelerated since 1992 due to rapid Idaho population increase
  - State's population has increased by 60 percent since 1990 resulting in intense demand for land for urban and commercial growth and development.<sup>2</sup>
  - Demand for housing has fueled dramatic increase in the price residential developers are willing to pay for agricultural land which is then rezoned for residential use.
  - The increased land purchase/rental costs have discouraged or financially limited agricultural expansion.
- Local planning & zoning ordinances have intentionally or unknowingly benefitted residential or commercial projects at the expense of agriculture in an effort to enhance tax revenues; subdivision or individual parcel development has created spot zoning breaking up land use continuity.
- Idaho statutes and County comprehensive plans have not provided prospective agricultural investment the general land use reliability required to stimulate new or enhanced expansion or development.
  - State's population has increased by 60 percent since 1990 resulting in intense demand for land for urban and commercial growth and development.<sup>2</sup>
  - Demand for housing has fueled dramatic increase in the price residential developers are willing to pay for agricultural land which is then rezoned for residential use.
  - The increased land purchase/rental costs limit agricultural expansion discourages new development
  - Lack of reliable land use statutes and ordinances results in new development being exported outside Idaho and the U.S.
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1. *Idaho Agriculture Statistical Services*, USDA 2. *U.S. Census Bureau*

## **WHAT THE COALITION IS DOING TO ATTACK THE PROBLEM**

- **Working with the Idaho Legislature to strengthen statutory protection of agriculture**
  - **House Bill148 strengthened Idaho’s Land Use Planning Act**
  
- **Working with County government to revise comprehensive plans, planning and zoning ordinances that promote or allow unwise development of traditional or new agricultural lands**
  - **Canyon County “Planned Community” Conditional Use Permit eliminated. This CUP process led to an explosion of spot residential subdivision developments in the middle of traditional agricultural lands.**
  - **Canyon County Comprehensive Plan rewritten to include strong segment on agriculture**
  - **Working with Payette County on rewrite of Comprehensive Plan**
  
- **Informing and educating both the public and all levels of government about the economic value to and impact on Idaho of agriculture**
  - **Highlighting the absolute need for current agricultural land levels to be safeguarded and development of new farmlands be encouraged**
  - **Reviewing county ordinances and comprehensive plans, then meeting with officials to discuss ways to enhance the protection of agricultural lands**
  - **Presentations to Idaho legislative committees, county commissioners, civic groups**
  - **Testifying on ag-unfriendly zoning applications**



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## MEMBERS

Crookham Company ~ Dorsing Seeds ~ Harris Moran Seed Company ~ Nunhems USA, Inc. ~ Monsanto Vegetable Seeds ~ Syngenta

## ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Ada County Farm Bureau ~ Atlas Products Inc. ~ Canyon County Alliance for Responsible Growth ~ Canyon County Farm Bureau ~ Dairyland Seed Company ~ Del Monte Foods ~ Doug Gross Farms ~ Greenleaf Farms Inc. ~ Idaho Crop Improvement Association ~ Idaho Dairymen's Association ~ Idaho Eastern Oregon Seed Association ~ Idaho Mint Growers Association ~ Idaho Seed Analysts Association ~ Nevill Enterprises, Inc. ~ Novozymes Biologicals ~ ~ NW Farm Credit Services ~ Pioneer Hi-Bred International ~ The Hartwell Corporation ~ The McGregor Company ~ Wild West Seed Inc.