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***Background Information:***

**AN EXCERPT FROM**

**A NEW LOOK AT AGRICULTURE**



Redefining agriculture's role in our  
economy, landscape, environment  
& social culture

**EXCERPT #2**

***Purpose of the Concept Paper***

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## Purpose of the Concept Paper



The purpose of the concept paper, “A New Look at Agriculture,” is to take a new look at the role that agriculture plays in our economy, landscape and environment. It strives to underscore the importance of agriculture to our *personal* well-being as well as to the well-being of local and global economies.

**This paper is called “A New Look at Agriculture.” That’s because there is a tendency in our planning and policy making, and even our every day lives, to think of agriculture as expendable ... if we even think of it at all.** For this reason, the paper is directed particularly to policy makers in an effort to inform them of the consequences of their actions on agriculture, and to show them what actions can be taken to benefit all segments of society that rely agriculture.

The concept paper describes the obstacles faced by agriculture and actions that can be taken to overcome them. These actions are grouped under two major headings:

### **ECONOMICS**

- Goal #1** **Improve profitability for producers.** *Section 1* identifies steps that can be taken to assure an economically viable agriculture for producers. These steps include improved marketing strategies to develop new markets and new crops, improved trade policies and improved consumer education.
- Goal #2** **Create a conducive business climate** for the entire agriculture industry. *Section 2* identifies steps conducive to a strong agribusiness environment – including regulatory simplification; business inducements aimed at strengthening ag industries, suppliers and markets; and ways to tie together economic and environmental issues to both promote business and protect the environment.
- Goal #3** **Ensure adequate infrastructure.** *Section 3* identifies the infrastructure needed for a viable agriculture industry – support for research, roads, airports, ports, rail lines and water management; improved labor policies; and constructive involvement of agriculture in environmental restoration projects.

### **ENVIRONMENT**

- Goal #4** **Enhance environmental compatibility.** *Section 4* identifies production practices that enhance compatibility with the environment – such as Best Management Practices, or BMPs, and ways to encourage private stewardship.
- Goal #5** **Integrate agriculture into the landscape.** *Section 5* identifies steps that federal, state and local governments can use to integrate agriculture into the landscape and retain the societal benefits that are derived from agriculture, such as water recharge, open space and wildlife habitats.

This paper also contains eight brief articles (Excerpts 5-10 and 16-18) that elaborate on several themes central to the future of agriculture. It is hoped this paper will provide you with a new understanding about agriculture – about how it affects you *personally*, every day and how you can become involved to help ensure a viable future for this critical industry.