

Small farm economics essay

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How many times has the US population heard that large farms are more productive than small farms? The public perception is heavily influenced by the media. The most common stance on small farm economics is usually sided with the large corporate farms, especially in large court battles.

Here in the United States, the question was asked more than a half-century ago: what does the growth of large-scale, industrial agriculture mean for rural towns and communities? Small family owned and operated farms are still alive in America today through opposition to factory farms, incentives from the United States government, the controversy over animal rights, and the awareness of the slow food movement. “ For all the frills of their haute cuisine, the French harbor a deep affection for the foods of their heartland: ingredients and dishes that lay bare their rural origins. That is one of the things that struck me as I got to know the Auvergne...a land of remote farm villages tucked amid the extinct volcanoes of the Massif Central mountain range, France. It seems almost a distant and far off proposition, where the people of a particular part of a country prefer to have home grown authentic food, and not crops and meat that has been produced in factory farms or large slaughterhouses. More bushels of grain is not the only goal of most farm production; farm resources must also generate wealth for the overall improvement of rural life.

This includes better housing, education, and better health services. This is not the goal of large farm production today in America. This quote from an essay written in 2003 sums up the situation in the Great Plains today as a result of farm expansion, “ We’ve transformed agriculture into something that needs far less labor and a lot more capital and technology, and a lot of

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people have been displaced as a result,” says John Cromartie, a population researcher at the USDA. “ In a sense, the Great Plains is a victim of its own success, because the number of jobs available in agriculture no longer matches the population in the region. Hansen)” Most large farms in the US produce one crop such as corn or wheat, and they produce thousands of acres of the same crop. This leads to no diversity in the region lending other crops to be imported when they could just be grown alongside the major cash crop.

Works Cited Hansen, Brian. “ Crisis on the Plains. ” CQ Researcher 13. 18 (2003): 417-448. CQ Researcher Online. CQ Press. Centerville IMC, Centerville, OH.

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