

Food for Peace Program

Agriculture Coalition

- **Food for Peace is the Gold Standard for Food Aid.** The FFP program is the largest and most diverse, reliable, and effective food security program in the world. Food for Peace has a strong track record of reducing malnutrition and increasing incomes and food supplies for very poor and vulnerable populations.
- **For nearly 60 years American agriculture has played a significant role in alleviating world hunger.** Under the President’s proposal, U.S. taxpayer dollars would be diverted to support foreign competitors. Because many of the communities that receive food assistance are food insecure, cash or vouchers are likely to lead to purchases of locally imported foods, not locally-produced foods. There is no guarantee that cash or vouchers would be used to buy locally grown food because many areas serviced by USAID do not have the capacity to produce food for all their citizens. American farmers, on the other hand provide a steady pipeline of reliable, safe, and top quality commodities.
- **According to a fact sheet by USAID, cash or voucher systems are MORE expensive than U.S.-procured commodities.** In FY 2012, the International Development Assistance (IDA) – the food aid program that relied on cash/voucher or local-regional methods – was **44% more expensive** per metric ton than U.S. food aid provided for emergencies under the Food for Peace Program. In 2012, IDA local-regional purchase/cash transfers averaged **\$2,112** per metric ton compared to **\$1,188** per metric ton for emergency Title II programs. Even subtracting out the 42% of the IDA program that was used for cash transfers, the cost per ton averaged \$1,225 for the local-regional procurement and food voucher components, still higher than P.L. 480 Title II emergency aid. [See <http://www.usaid.gov/what-we-do/agriculture-and-food-security/food-assistance/quick-facts/fiscal-year-2012-food-peace>; <http://www.usaid.gov/what-we-do/agriculture-and-food-security/food-assistance/quick-facts/fiscal-year-2012-emergency-food>]
- **The program is one of our most effective, lowest-cost national security tools.** Bags of U.S.-grown food bearing the U.S. flag and stamped as “From the American People” serve as ambassadors of our Nation’s goodwill. Bags of foreign-supplied food –whose quality and safety are unknown – but which bear the U.S. flag – would place the food assistance program’s credibility and our national reputation at risk.
- **There is NO evidence that cash transfers or locally procured food would lead to timely delivery of food.** To improve timeliness in food aid delivery, the U.S. has been prepositioning U.S. commodities overseas. USAID has six warehouse sites around the world where prepositioned food is ready to be moved at a moment’s notice to respond to emergency needs. In emergencies, USAID can tap into up to 100,000 tons of food that it has prepositioned in warehouses at the U.S. Gulf post and additional sites overseas to expedite response. It is disingenuous to compare LRP with US in-kind food aid without acknowledging that Prepositioning has virtually taken away the delivery time differential. With prepositioned U.S. commodities, higher quality food is just as available as locally procured.
- **There is no evidence that the food aid proposal would reach 2-4 million more people.** A briefing paper provided by USAID states that the President’s proposal would reach “2 to 4 million more people with equivalent funding” but provides no data to support this claim.
- **We strongly support maintaining the structure of and current funding for the Food for Peace program.** It has a proven track record in reliability, transparency and effectiveness. We support continuing the U.S. food aid system and fully support improvements to the program such as increasing prepositioning of commodities overseas and the integration of improved fortified foods.
- As President John F. Kennedy said: “Farmers can bring more credit, more lasting good will, more chance for freedom, more chance for peace, than almost any other group of Americans ... if we recognize that food is strength, and food is peace, and food is freedom, and food is a helping hand to people around the world whose good will and friendship we want.” The present Administration’s proposal promotes the idea that “cash is strength, cash is peace, and cash is freedom.”