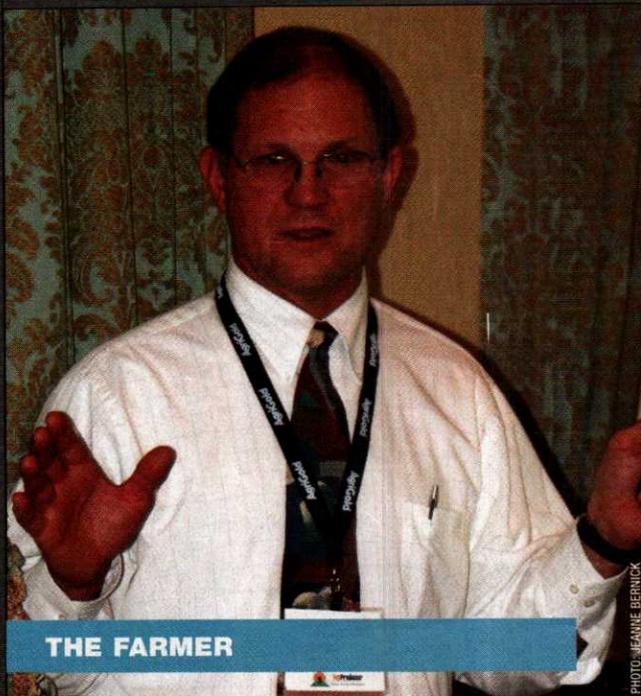
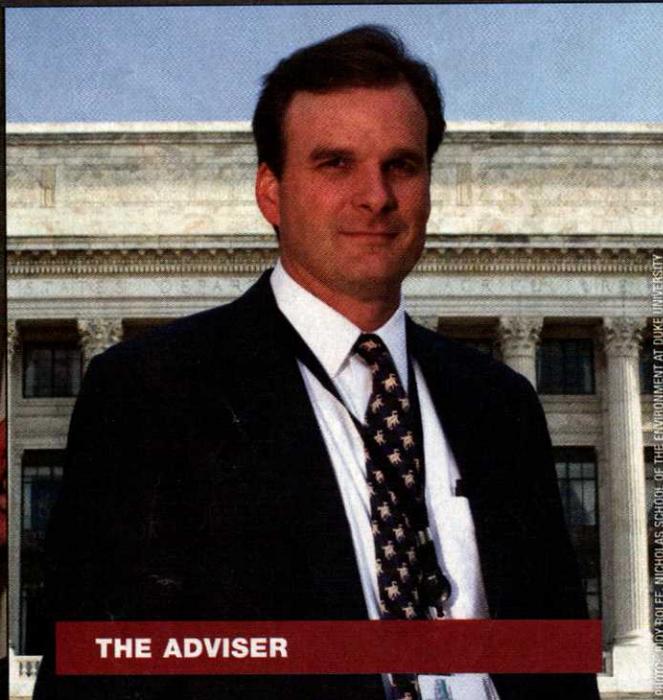


>> Interviews by Jeanne Bernick



THE FARMER

Dick Wittman, grain, cattle and timber producer, serves on the Agricultural Carbon Market Working Group.



THE ADVISER

Robert Bonnie is a vice president at the Environmental Defense Fund and a senior adviser to the USDA Secretary.

> *Keep Your Voice at the Table*

Denial or opposition to climate change remediation proposals is not an option for the farm community. We need to analyze the basis for global concerns and shape solutions with votes. To avoid costlier Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regulation in favor of

“More farmers need to get engaged or we will be the losers.”

cap-and-trade and its revenue potential, agriculture has several policy positions to advocate and protect.

The Agricultural Carbon Market Working Group has supported cost exposure mitigation, unre-

stricted access for agriculture to offset markets, agriculture exemption from emissions caps and jurisdiction by USDA—not EPA.

All debate aside, we should examine our own carbon footprint and say, “I’m doing everything I can to conserve energy, reduce emissions and offset climate change.” If we did, there would be no need for a regulation or legislation. ■

> *Farmers and Ranchers Will Profit*

The U.S. must take a leadership role in addressing climate change. USDA is committed to work with Congress to ensure that agriculture is part of its efforts.

Well-designed legislation will not only make agriculture part of the solution but provide

“Billions of dollars of income will be available to farmers.”

significant benefits to American farmers and ranchers. Two recent studies, one from USDA and another by the University of Tennessee, indicate that farmers and ranchers will profit from new markets for

renewable energy and from a robust offsets market that rewards them for conservation tillage, improved fertilizer use and reductions in methane. Confronting the challenge of climate change not only presents rural America with the opportunity to help achieve energy independence and mitigate climate change but also the chance to revitalize small communities. ■ >

>> Interviews by Jeanne Bernick



PHOTO: AMERICAN SOYBEAN ASSOCIATION

THE GRASSROOTS ORGANIZER

Bart Ruth, grain producer and 25x'25 Steering Committee member, is past president of the American Soybean Association.



PHOTO: USDA

THE CONSERVATIONIST

Bruce Knight is principal and founder of Strategic Conservation Solutions and former chief of USDA NRCS.

> *Better than Regulation*

Cap-and-trade legislation has the potential to provide modest positive net returns for U.S. agricultural producers, but only if it's constructed correctly.

To gain agriculture's support, the legislation must allow multiple offsets for agricultural credits

for bioenergy production, USDA jurisdiction for offset programs, protection for farmers who are early adopters and certainty that agriculture will not be capped.

While agriculture and forestry are

poised to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, the legislation fails to recognize the contributions.

Properly constructed cap-and-trade legislation is far more palatable than an Environmental Protection Agency-led regulatory approach. Regardless of your views on climate change, fear of a regulatory approach should warrant your attention on that point alone! ■

“Without participation by agriculture, a positive outcome remains elusive.”

> *Stop Fighting Climate Change*

Climate change is real. Most agree that some sort of action should be taken—be it legislation, regulation or international treaty. But who among the largest emitters of greenhouse gases must take action and when? Who will pay for it?

As a former regulator, I assure you that a legislative compromise

will be better and more affordable for farmers than regulatory action by the Environmental Protection Agency. Our individual actions do make a difference. Yet some farm

“A legislative compromise will be better and more affordable.”

leaders are prepared to fight legislation, and environmental leaders want action regardless of costs to food production and the economy.

There will be winners and losers. However, the agriculture community needs to be at the table as climate change legislation is debated, so that any farmgate solutions can be achievable, affordable and practical. ■