

MR. CARLIN: Thank you very much.

16 Thank you very much. Kathy Timmons?

17 MS. TEBBITS: Tebbits.

18 MR. CARLIN: Our apologies if we didn't
19 get you on a list officially, but --

20 MS. TEBBITS: I don't know how that
21 happened. I just signed one list and that might
22 have been it. I'll have to use two pairs of glasses
23 here and I'll just continue where Marge left off and
24 I just appreciated what she had to say so much
25 and, in fact, I just wanted to thank everybody for

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1 the really high level of discussion here today. We
2 don't get much of that out here in the woods.

3 I helped to start the Oklahoma Food Coop,
4 www.oklahomafood.coop, and that was sort of in
5 response to a problem. I was working for the
6 Cherokee nation, and I'm not here as an official
7 representative of the Cherokee Nation, but we
8 organized what we called the small farm project.
9 And we were looking at ways of how can we help to
10 keep people on what is today, you know, a hundred
11 year aftermath of the allotment process so that
12 people can like keep their culture and still live
13 rural and not get dragged out into urban
14 economies where they aren't able to learn their
15 language and practice religion and stuff like that.

16 One of the ideas that we came up with
17 was that we would start the Oklahoma Food Coop
18 and on Thursday of this week there will be about
19 \$30,000 worth of Oklahoma farm goods straight
20 from the farm or nearby that will go to a
21 centralized location and we'll all just -- a bunch of
22 volunteers will bag it up into groceries and send it
23 back on the same trucks that brought in the
24 vegetables at the beginning of the day.

25 And what we're finding after doing that --

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1 we started that like a couple years ago and, you
2 know, we do a quarter of a million dollars worth of
3 production every year and we've got about, maybe
4 800 coop members and maybe -- probably about
5 200 farmers who participate. But what we found
6 in the course of that process is that we on several
7 occasions have been sort of approached by the
8 Department of Ag, State Ag Department and others
9 with non -- with compliance issues that have to do
10 with regulations. And I think what's happened
11 historically is that we've designed our food system
12 to be a highly effective centralized food system

13 that doesn't really address the local, the ability to
14 have more decentralized local systems.

15 So in the course of looking at some of the
16 problems we faced, like when the FDA department
17 came in and wouldn't let us deliver the chickens
18 that day, is that we came up with kind of like a
19 list of obstacles and barriers to farm direct
20 marketing. And they have to do with the fact that
21 we mostly operate under a monopsony. Monopsony
22 I think is what it's called, where we have systems,
23 like systems that are run by just a handful of very
24 large producers and it has limitations on the
25 amount of diversity.

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1 So I wanted to just toss out what I think
2 are some ideas that might be breadcrumbs that can
3 be used in the direction of looking for alternatives
4 to kind of like create systems in a way that there
5 is more diversity, there's more food security,
6 there's more opportunity for genetic diversity,
7 more opportunity for public health and safety
8 issues to be addressed by a diversification as
9 opposed to a centralized kind of like setting.

10 And one would be to increase more open
11 market. One way to do that would be to exempt
12 small farms from a lot of the ag regulations. Some
13 of the areas that that turns out to be a problem in
14 are inspection, processing, farm direct sales rules,
15 farmers market rules. There's some exceptions for
16 farmers markets and producer coops.

17 And then also a lot of times farmers can't
18 have agents, you know, it has to be like directly
19 from the hands of the farmer to the hands of the
20 consumer. So in specific ways, there are a lot of
21 ways that we could look at how the USDA does that
22 and then how that filters down to the state level
23 and is interpreted by the state as a way of solving
24 some of those problems.

25 If we increased labeling so that

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1 consumers can actually see more about the
2 products they buy, then they can make conscious
3 choices to support the kind of farming that is
4 consistent with the values that they want to
5 perpetuate.

6 And the other really big thing, and I can't
7 say it in less than a minute, it has to do with
8 caustic externalizations and removing subsidies
9 all the way across the board. I realize that we
10 have to balance issues like hunger and poverty in

11 this country and producing enough food for, as you
12 say, three billion people soon to be four billion
13 people. To get to that point, I think we have to be
14 able to put the assistance directly to where it
15 helps people who are in poverty.

16 And we also need to address the really big
17 issue. If we can do this one then the problem will
18 be solved and that's overshoot of the carrying
19 capacity of the earth. That's kind of a big topic to
20 leave on.

21 MR. CARLIN: Thank you, Kathy. Again,
22 we apologize for not connecting.

23 MS. TEBBITS: Well, I realized you --

24 MR. CARLIN: We didn't forget you.

25 MS. TEBBITS: Yeah. Thank you.

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1 MR. CARLIN: Thanks a lot.

2 MR. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, could I have
3 30 seconds of your time, please?

4 MR. CARLIN: Let me --

5 MR. MILLER: And I apologize about my
6 remark.

7 MR. CARLIN: I want to think about it,
8 but first, is there anybody else that thought they
9 were on the list and I haven't called? Okay.
10 You've got 30 seconds and it's going to be 30
11 seconds.

12 MR. MILLER: I'm not a neurologist or a
13 veterinarian, but I was a fishery biologist. Now,
14 when we raised fish in a fish hatchery in order to
15 do a check, some of you seem to be quite
16 knowledgeable on that thing. Whenever we wanted
17 to check our lots for diseases, we had to use 60
18 fish in order to get a 95 percent. Tyson is talking
19 about 11 birds out of a flock. You know, I find a
20 little bit of a problem with that. And that's only
21 95 percent and that's hopefully, you know --
22 otherwise when you go to 97, you had to kill 120
23 fish, et cetera, et cetera, but at 11 birds per flock
24 I don't think they're even coming close to 95
25 percent. Thank you.

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1 MR. CARLIN: Thank you. And I thank all
2 of you for your -- remind us of your name for the
3 record.

4 MR. MILLER: Dwayne Miller.

5 MR. CARLIN: Dwayne Miller. And make a
6 note, he's not very friendly. Okay. I thank you
7 all. I thank the commissioners for their
8 attendance and participation and I don't think

9 anybody embarrassed anybody. You all did a
10 pretty good job. I'm proud of you.
11 (HEARING CONCLUDED AT 5:53 P.M.)