

Speaker Biographical Statements

The Importance of Organic Agriculture in the U.S. in Coming Years

October 30, 2007, 2:30-4:30 PM

Dirksen Senate Office Building, Room 628

Eric Chivian M.D.

Director

Center for Health and the Global Environment, Harvard Medical School

Welcome and Introductions

Dr. Eric Chivian is Founder and Director of the Center for Health and the Global Environment, and an Assistant Clinical Professor of Psychiatry, at Harvard Medical School. In 1980, he co-founded (with Professors Bernard Lown, Herbert Abrams, and James Muller) International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, recipient of the 1985 Nobel Peace Prize.

During the past 16 years, Dr. Chivian has worked to involve physicians in the United States and abroad in efforts to protect the environment, and to increase public understanding of the potential human health consequences of global environmental change. As part of these activities, he was senior editor and author of MIT Press' Critical Condition: Human Health and the Environment.

In 1996, Dr. Chivian founded and became director of the Center for Health and the Global Environment at Harvard Medical School, the first center at a medical school in the United States focusing on the human health dimensions of global environmental change. The Center is an official "Collaborating Center" of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

Currently, he directs a project under the auspices of the United Nations Development Programme, UNEP, the U.N.'s Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), and the World Conservation Union that is preparing the most comprehensive report yet available on the subject "Sustaining Life: How Human Health Depends on Biodiversity," which will be published in 2008 by Oxford University Press, and presented to the CBD, the U.S. Congress, and other policy-maker bodies.

Dr. Chivian also runs Pairidaeza Farm, a small, heirloom, IPM fruit orchard in central Massachusetts that grows apples, peaches, pears, Asian pears, apricots, plums, cherries, and grapes.

Dr. Chivian has lectured widely in the U.S. and abroad, and has appeared on national television and radio and in the print media in many countries. He has over 40 publications.

The Honorable Jon Tester

Senator, State of Montana

Policy Implications of Increasing Organic Agriculture in the U.S.

Whether in the U.S. Capitol or on his farm near Big Sandy, Montana, Sen. Jon Tester isn't afraid to roll up his sleeves to get work done.

Tester and his wife, Sharla, farm the same land his grandparents homesteaded nearly 100 years ago. He was elected to the U.S. Senate on Nov. 7, 2006, after a long history of public service in the Big Sky State. He served as chair of the Big Sandy School Board and on his local Soil Conservation Service Committee before running for the Montana Senate in 1997.

Tester served two four-year terms in the Montana Legislature, quickly gaining the respect of his colleagues on both sides of the aisle and rising to leadership roles soon after being elected. In 2005, he was chosen to serve as the President of the Montana Senate. He credits his leadership success to the values he learned growing up on the farm--hard work, straight talk, honesty and integrity.

Under Tester's leadership, the Montana Legislature improved funding for public education and cut taxes for thousands of small businesses. Tester also led the fight to implement a statewide Country of Origin Labeling (COOL) program. He sponsored legislation requiring all public utilities to gradually use more renewable energy, and he carried a bill giving tax credits to companies that generate wind power in Montana. Tester also fought to make employee health insurance affordable for small businesses.

Tester was born in Havre, Montana, on August 21, 1956. He graduated from the College of Great Falls in 1978 with a Bachelor of Science in music. In addition to farming and running a custom butcher shop, Tester also worked as a music teacher for Big Sandy Public Schools.

The Testers now grow organic wheat, barley, lentils, peas, millet, buckwheat and alfalfa. They plan to come home to Montana as often as possible to hear from Montanans, take care of chores and visit their children and grandchildren.

Kathleen A. Merrigan, Ph.D.

Director

Agriculture, Food and Environment Program, Tufts University

History of the National Organic Program Standards

Professor Kathleen A. Merrigan directs the Agriculture, Food and Environment M.S. and Ph.D. programs at the Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy at Tufts University in Boston, Massachusetts.

From 1987 to 1992 Kathleen worked for the U.S. Senate Agriculture Committee and its then Chairman Patrick Leahy. In this role, she was the primary author of the Organic Foods Production Act of 1990, mandating national organic standards and a program of federal accreditation. In 1995, while working as a senior analyst at the Henry A. Wallace Institute for Alternative Agriculture, Kathleen was appointed by the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture to a 5 year term as an environmental representative on the National Organic Standards Board tasked by Congress to determine allowable production materials and standards for the emerging National Organic Program (NOP). In 1997 the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) published its first proposed organic rule that was successfully denounced by organic advocates across the country. Kathleen, working on the steering committee of the National Campaign for Sustainable Agriculture, helped lead the fight that generated an unprecedented 275,603 comment letters to USDA. In 1999 President Clinton appointed Kathleen Administrator of the U.S. Department of Agriculture Agricultural Marketing Service, a billion dollar agency with diverse responsibilities. Chief among these was publication of a new proposed organic rule and final rule, which Kathleen oversaw until her political term expired in January of 2001. In addition to her integral role in the development of the NOP, Kathleen served on the board of directors of the Organic Farming Research Foundation, assisted the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in writing its first-ever policy paper on organic agriculture, was recipient of the Organic Trade Association's 2000 Leadership award, and currently sits on the board of directors of The Organic Center.

Kathleen holds a Ph.D. from MIT in environmental planning and policy, a Master of Public Affairs from the LBJ School of Public Affairs at the University of Texas, and a B.A. in political science and English from Williams College.

John Reganold Ph.D.

Regents Professor of Soil Science

Washington State University

Comparing Organic with Conventional Farming—What Research Has Been Done?

John Reganold, WSU Regents Professor of Soil Science, is one of the premier scientists in the world in sustainable agriculture. He received his bachelor's degree in German from the University of California at Berkeley, his M.S. in soil science from the University of California at Berkeley, and his Ph.D. in soil science from University of California at Davis. He has taught and conducted research at Washington State University for 22 years, and has numerous publications in Science and Nature. He has received numerous University awards and honors and has been awarded extramural grants for research and teaching. He has published what many consider to be the seminal article on sustainable agriculture in Scientific American, and his textbook *Natural Resource Conservation: Management for a Sustainable Future* is widely used.

Frederick L. Kirschenmann Ph.D.

Distinguished Fellow

Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture, Iowa State University

Organic Agriculture in a Global Warming World

Frederick L. Kirschenmann, a longtime leader in national and international sustainable agriculture, is Distinguished Fellow for the Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture at Iowa State University. From July 2000 to November 2005, he served as the Center's second director since its creation in 1987. Kirschenmann came to the Center from south central North Dakota where he operated his family's 3,500-acre certified organic farm. He continues to oversee management of the farm and has an appointment in the ISU Department of Religion and Philosophy.

Kirschenmann holds a doctorate in philosophy from the University of Chicago, and has written extensively about ethics and agriculture. He has held national and international appointments, including the USDA's National Organic Standards Board. In 2006, he was appointed to the 19-member National Commission on Industrial Farm Animal Production operated by the Johns Hopkins School of Public Health and funded by Pew Charitable Trusts to conduct a two-year examination of key aspects in the farm animal industry.

Kirschenmann's academic credits include several years teaching and as administrator, culminating in a position as academic dean at Curry College in Boston, Massachusetts. In 1976 he returned to the family farm when his father became ill. By 1980, the farm was certified organic, one of the early operations to make the transition. The farm is a natural prairie livestock grazing system that combines a nine-crop rotation of cereal grains, forages, and green manure.

Kirschenmann Family Farms has been part of a number of research studies. It also has been featured in national publications including *National Geographic*, the *Smithsonian*, *Audubon*, *Business Week*, the *LA Times* and *Gourmet* magazine. In 1995, Kirschenmann was profiled in an award-winning video, "My Father's Garden," by Miranda Productions, Inc.

In 2001, Kirschenmann received the Seventh Generation Research Award from the Center for Rural Affairs for his work in sustainable food and farming systems. He also was named a 2002 Leader of the Year in Agriculture by *Progressive Farmer* publications. His essay, "Ecological Morality: A New Ethic for Agriculture," appears in *Agroecosystems Analysis*, a monograph published by the American Society of Agronomy, Crop Science Society of America and the Soil Science Society of America.

The Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture was created by the Iowa Legislature to develop sustainable agricultural practices that are both profitable and conserve natural resources. Since his appointment to the Center, Kirschenmann has been a frequent speaker, engaging audiences to help shape a new vision for agriculture. New Center directions include research initiatives in marketing and food systems, ecology and policy.