

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

October 18, 2007

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

Dear Colleague:

We write to invite you and your staff to attend a congressional briefing entitled "The Importance of Organic Agriculture in the U.S. in Coming Years." The briefing is being organized by the Center for Health and the Global Environment at Harvard Medical School. It will take place on Tuesday, October 30, 2007, from 2:30 - 4:30PM in Room 628 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

Organic farming has been one of the fastest growing segments of agriculture in the U.S. and in several other countries since the early 1990s. Sales have increased by roughly 20% each year, reaching almost \$14 billion in the U.S. in 2005. In 2006, there were more than 76 million acres farmed organically around the world. With its potential for improved energy efficiency and greater tolerance to drought, organic agriculture also offers new opportunities for rural America in a changing climate.

Senator Jon Tester, who has farmed in Montana organically for almost 20 years, will join several of the country's leading experts to discuss the potential of organic agriculture in coming years.

### **The program will include:**

- **Welcome and Introductions**—Eric Chivian M.D., Director, Center for Health and Global Environment, Harvard Medical School; Shared the 1985 Nobel Peace Prize for co-founding International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War; Runs Pairidaeza Farm, an heirloom fruit orchard in Central Mass.
- **Policy Implications of Increasing Organic Agriculture in the U.S.**—Senator Jon Tester
- **History of the National Organic Program Standards**—Kathleen Merrigan Ph.D., Director, Agriculture, Food and Environment Program, Tufts University
- **Comparing Organic with Conventional Farming—What Research Has Been Done?** John Reganold Ph.D., Regents Professor of Soil Science, Washington State University
- **Organic Agriculture in a Global Warming World**—Frederick L. Kirschenmann Ph.D., Distinguished Fellow, the Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture, Iowa State University; Runs the Kirschenmann Family Farm, a 3500 acre certified organic farm in North Dakota

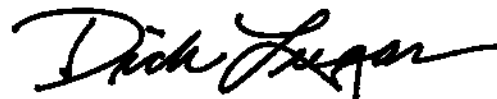
Discussion to Follow

This briefing is free and open to the public; no reservations are required. For further information, please contact Matt Jennings in the Office of Senator Tester ([Matt\\_Jennings@tester.senate.gov](mailto:Matt_Jennings@tester.senate.gov)) or Margaret Thomsen at the Center for Health and the Global Environment (617-384-8533 or [margaret\\_thomsen@hms.harvard.edu](mailto:margaret_thomsen@hms.harvard.edu)).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jon Tester". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Jon Tester

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dick Lugar". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Richard Lugar