

Rio 2012 Prep Com
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Statement by Farmers Major Group On the Green Economy

Farming is about nourishing the world's people. It stands as a critical green endeavour. **Every form of agriculture must continuously improve the way in which it produces food. It requires treatment as a separate issue.**

Agriculture has been working to adopt techniques like conservation tillage which protects soil and water. But in the 20 years since Rio, farmers have increasingly had to do it on their own. Total investment in agriculture development has dropped dramatically since the 1980's.

Most concerningly, the vast majority of farmers are small holders, and they are part of the world's most poor and vulnerable. They have few options, virtually no resources, and need help to achieve social, economic and environmental goals. They need the tools and choices to enable them to earn a fair price and achieve food sovereignty.

At Rio +20 we will be calling for more efforts in agriculture to:

- 1) Do more with less – finding ways to meet food production while minimizing the ecological footprint of agriculture, including agro-ecological practices
- 2) Use a knowledge-based approach – applying best practice to all forms of agriculture, starting with revitalization of extension systems
- 3) Reduce poverty – farmers represent one half of the world's poor and are often women. Despite high-profile promises, woefully few resources have truly begun to flow to them

The mechanisms to implement these goals are identified in Agenda 21 and CSD-17. They include land reform with an emphasis on land tenure for women, income protection, the precautionary principle, better access to markets, improved information sharing, good animal stewardship, nutritious food, access to microcredit and early warning systems for climate. They face emerging challenges such as drought and disaster risk reduction that need attention.