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## National Taxpayer and Free Market Nonprofits Announce New Joint Venture

**WASHINGTON, D.C.**— Five nationally known groups that favor spending restraint have announced their intention to close, April 1, 2012, on a 1,000 acre farm in downstate Illinois. The Heartland Institute, Citizens Against Government Waste, the National Taxpayers Union, Americans for Tax Reform, and Taxpayers for Common Sense will jointly own and operate the new venture.

The farm, named “Greenback Acres,” will serve as a profit center and living laboratory for the organizations. Instead of aiming to produce marketable food or fiber, the farm will seek profits entirely by taking advantage of federal agricultural subsidies.

“Instead of raising corn or cattle, we will be raising cash at Greenback Acres,” said Ryan Alexander, President of Taxpayers for Common Sense. “After years of working to stop the subsidy gravy train, we figured we’d take it for a ride and harvest the cornucopia of agriculture subsidies sown by Congress.”

“This will give a whole new meaning to “buying the farm,”” added Citizens Against Government Waste President Tom Schatz.

“Unlike the overwhelming majority of family farmers, who actually hew to the outdated notion that they should make money by growing things, caring for their land, and selling their products at market prices, we plan to take advantage of every loophole, subsidy, absurdity, and program in existence,” explains Greenback Acres general manager Lirpa Sloof. “Although it may seem a bit hypocritical, it would be foolish for us to pass up a perfectly legal opportunity to begin soaking taxpayers everywhere in order to obtain the resources needed to continue our fight against wasteful spending.”

Sloof says the farm provides a variety of surefire taxpayer-supported moneymaking strategies. Among them:

- The least productive and toughest to cultivate strips of land will join the “Conservation Reserve Program” that will pay the farm’s owners *not* to grow corn or other marketable crops. They weren’t going to anyway, but they are happy to take the cash.
- Because of the land’s history of corn production, Greenback Acres will be eligible for “direct payments” even though no corn will actually be planted in the future.
- The farm’s management will take advantage of heavily taxpayer-subsidized crop insurance by planting highly speculative crops subject to frequent market fluctuations in erosion or flood-prone areas.

- Taxpayer-subsidized crop insurance will produce guaranteed returns—if natural events prevent the crops from being planted or destroy the crops, taxpayers will pick up the bill. Likewise, if Greenback’s owners unwittingly achieve an actual harvest, they will collect a check from taxpayers if revenue from selling the crops dips below the guaranteed level that was insured.

“When we looked at the astonishing range of guaranteed-money programs available to farms, we realized it was such a good deal we couldn’t afford *not* to take advantage,” said Eli Lehrer, vice president of The Heartland Institute. “After all, usually you need to be a member of Congress before the taxpayers start paying you good money for doing absolutely nothing.”

"I can't wait to be guaranteed an annual salary that's twice that of the average American family thanks to price controls and subsidies," said Kelly William Cobb, government affairs manager at Americans for Tax Reform. "Plus, taxpayers are going to pay us not to farm on half of our land!"

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**For Additional Information Please Contact:**

*Steve Ellis, Vice President, Taxpayers for Common Sense, (202) 546-8500, [steve@taxpayer.net](mailto:steve@taxpayer.net)*

*Eli Lehrer, Vice President, The Heartland Institute, (202) 615-0586, [elehrer@heartland.org](mailto:elehrer@heartland.org)*

*Leslie Paige, Vice President, Citizens Against Government Waste, (202) 467-5334, [lpaige@cagw.org](mailto:lpaige@cagw.org)*

*Peter Sepp, Executive Vice President, National Taxpayers Union, (703) 683-5700, [pressguy@ntu.org](mailto:pressguy@ntu.org)*

*Kelly William Cobb, Government Affairs Manager, Americans for Tax Reform, (202) 785-0266, [kcobb@atr.org](mailto:kcobb@atr.org)*

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