

THE AMERICAN AGRICULTURE MOVEMENT
AND THE TOBACCO INSTITUTE:

A WHITE PAPER

TI0116-0417

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The American Agriculture Movement recently entered into an association with a new friend and ally, The Tobacco Institute. The Tobacco Institute (TI) and the American Agriculture Movement (AAM) have a common interest in safeguarding the well-being of American farmers that make this relationship worthwhile.

Both TI and the AAM are concerned with America's agricultural policy and its effect on farmers. The AAM lends support to all farmers; many are tobacco farmers.

Both organizations are concerned about the threat of excise taxes. Excises are regressive taxes that hurt the poor as well as the farmers whose products are being taxed. AAM's interest is farmer-specific -- the effect of the tax on individual farmers. TI's interest is commodity-specific -- the impact the tax could have on tobacco farmers' markets.

The Tobacco Institute can provide support for the American Agriculture Movement in a variety of areas, including:

- public relations
- research
- coalition building

These areas of assistance are spelled out in more detail below.

Public Relations Assistance

The Tobacco Institute, through its public affairs division, is well equipped to help the AAM with an assortment of public relations needs, including:

- **Membership Information:** The Tobacco Institute will assist the AAM in developing a membership brochure. This brochure will explain what the American Agriculture Movement is, what it does and why membership is important to farmers. The brochure will be distributed to the membership and to prospective members as an informational tool.
- **Issues Materials:** TI will assist AAM in developing issues materials to identify the issues of concern to the AAM. These brochures will be distributed to the general public, Congress and the media. They will be used in coordination with specific issue events, or simply as background to support the AAM's positions.
- **Consultative Public Relations:** TI will be available to assist and advise the AAM, as appropriate, in coordinating events, holding press conferences, meetings, and issuing publications on an array of issues. This assistance will help the AAM take advantage of timely situations to promote its position.

- **Membership Programs:** The Tobacco Institute will help the AAM develop a comprehensive membership program that takes full advantage of the broad-based membership AAM already has established, and identifies additional populations for membership.

Research Assistance

The Tobacco Institute, as the association representing the cigarette manufacturers, supports research on a variety of issues. TI can draw upon a large pool of information and expertise that it will make available to the AAM.

- **Research:** TI will provide background information and research on issues of interest to AAM. This informational source may serve as a back up to AAM's existing network of information.
- **Economist Support:** TI will make available to AAM economists who can write articles and editorial commentary containing hard economic evidence that supports the AAM's position. They can also write and give testimony for Congressional hearings.

Coalitions

The American Agriculture Movement and The Tobacco Institute have developed strong networks of groups that share common interests. The new relationship between the two organizations will provide opportunity to share these networks. Through the years, TI has developed solid relationships with many tax and agriculturally oriented groups that can work with the AAM on appropriate issues. By the same token, the AAM has built a network of agriculture groups that can help protect the interests of tobacco farmers.

Working together, the AAM and TI can form a strong alliance to defend the interests of American agriculture.