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FLAG Submits Comments to USDA in Response to GIPSA Rulemaking

ST. PAUL, MINN. — In November, Farmers' Legal Action Group, Inc. (FLAG) submitted two sets of comments on the proposed rules issued by the Grain Inspection and Packers and Stockyards Administration (GIPSA) at 75 Fed. Reg. 35338 (June 22, 2010), making a case for a return to fairness in the markets for slaughter livestock.

One set of comments was filed on behalf of the Western Organization of Resource Councils (WORC) and the Campaign for Family Farms and the Environment; the other set of comments was filed on behalf of the Rural Advancement Foundation International – USA (RAFI) and the Coalition for Contract Agriculture Reform (CCAR). Both sets of comments focus on the Packers and Stockyards Act (P&SA) and promoting fair competition and ensuring fair trade practices in livestock and poultry and swine production markets.

These comments are available in the “Comments to Rules” section of the FLAG website (www.flaginc.org) They address a wide range of problems that livestock and poultry producers face as a result of two prominent methods used to accomplish vertical integration or coordination in today's highly concentrated agricultural commodities markets: (1) the use of production contracts in the poultry industry, and (2) the use of captive supplies procurement methods (forward contracts, marketing agreements, and packer ownership of livestock) in the hog and cattle sectors.

FLAG is a nonprofit law center in St. Paul, Minnesota, dedicated to providing legal services and support to family farmers and their communities in order to help keep family farmers on the land.

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