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FOOD CHAIN NEWS TOPIC
A Federal Farm Fiasco
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Consultant Burleigh Leonard

Should the U.S. eliminate its Farm Bill?

It began as an effort to help farmers farm in hard times, but grew into an effort to help just about everyone do everything for everybody all the time.
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The federal government's efforts to manage the nation's food chain began with the Federal Farm Loan Act of 1916, and was made permanent in a provision in the Agriculture Adjustment Act of 1938 that says, in effect, that if Congress does not pass a Farm Bill, the federal government will then have to provide financial support to farmers by artificially inflating the prices of the commodities farmers produce.
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Thus milk that now sells for $2.10 might have to be sold for $5.20!
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To avoid this onerous "permanent law," the federal government dutifully passes a Farm Bill every five years, give or take.
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However, over the course of a century, the federal government's Farm Bills have grown to include provisions, like Food Stamps, that are designed to help just about everyone up and down the food chain.
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As a consequence of its desire to help everybody, the federal government now finds itself well over $16 trillion in debt, and unable to agree on the provisions of a new Farm Bill. This leads us to ask…
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Should the U.S. eliminate its Farm Bill?