

Talking Points: U.S. Food Security Policy

- **On May 1, President Bush asked Congress to provide \$770 million to support food aid and development programs, bringing to nearly \$1 billion the total additional USG funds to address the food price crisis announced since mid-April.**
- **The United States is on track to provide a total of nearly \$5 billion to fight global hunger in 2008 and 2009. The United States is the largest provider of food aid in the world; U.S. provided approximately 50% of world food aid from 2001-2006 .**
- **The United States is pursuing an integrated, three-pronged strategy to combat the food price crisis through short- and long-term actions that:**
 1. Target countries made vulnerable by rising food prices.
 2. Provide assistance to countries capable of rapidly increasing staple food production.
 3. Support trade liberalization and increasing the use of advanced agricultural technologies.
- **We are coordinating our efforts with the international community, including the UN, G8, World Bank, and other stakeholders.**
- **Immediate assistance efforts will focus on countries that:**
 - International organizations have identified as countries of concern;
 - Are highly dependent on food imports;
 - Have high poverty levels and weak or non-existent safety nets;
 - Have significant food price inflation; and
 - Have U.S. operations in-country to speed aid delivery.
- **Development assistance to attack the underlying causes of the food crisis will initially focus on Africa and will aim to:**
 - Increase agricultural productivity by targeting countries that can rapidly increase staple food supplies;
 - Alleviate transportation, distribution, and supply-chain bottlenecks;
 - Leverage investments from other sources (e.g. private sector);

- Advance policies to encourage open markets and increased trade in food supplies.

➤ **The United States encourages other governments to:**

- Conclude an ambitious agreement in the Doha Round this year that increases market access for agricultural products and reduces trade-distorting subsidies;
- Lift restrictions on agricultural exports; and
- Expand research, promote science-based regulation and encourage the adoption of innovative technology, including biotech.

There are many factors contributing to increased food prices, biofuels are just one. Significant factors that are responsible for the increase in food prices include:

- Large increases in fuel and transportation costs;
 - Steep increases in agricultural inputs (e.g., fertilizers, pesticides, seeds);
 - Two years of poor harvests in exporting countries due to adverse weather;
 - Export restrictions in many countries;
 - Low world grain stocks;
 - Reduced global agricultural research and development; and
 - The unprecedented – and very welcome – economic growth and associated increase in demand for food products worldwide, and especially in developing economies.
- Through significant investment in research and development of next generation technologies, we are working to ensure that biofuels production and use do not lead to environmental and food security concerns.

IN ADDITION:

- **The President has repeatedly asked Congress to support his proposal to use up to 25 percent of food aid appropriations to purchase crops directly from farmers in the developing world.**
- **Our Famine Early Warning System (FEWS NET) is playing a significant role in managing the risk of food insecurity in 25 countries.**

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