



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Farm and Foreign
Agricultural
Services

Farm Service
Agency

1400 Independence
Ave, SW
Stop 0501
Washington, DC
20250-0501

September 5, 2008

Mr. Robert Eichhorn
16th Street, Hotel Room 508
3161 16th Street
San Francisco, California 94103

Dear Mr. Eichhorn:

Thank you for your letter of July 11, 2008, and your electronic mail message of July 14, 2008, to Secretary of Agriculture Edward T. Schafer, concerning your complaint about Hutterite colonies receiving payments under USDA programs.

You contend that what you term a "closed admission policy" should be a basis for determining Hutterite colonies ineligible for payments and benefits under USDA programs.

An "open admission policy" is not an eligibility requirement for participation in USDA programs. We consider this matter closed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "John A. Johnson".

John A. Johnson
Deputy Administrator for Farm Programs



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1400 Independence
Ave, SW
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20250-0517

Mr. Robert Eichorn
16th Street Hotel, Room 508
3161 16th Street
San Francisco, California 94103

OCT 14 2008

Dear Mr. Eichorn:

This is in further response to your complaint about Hutterite colonies receiving payments under USDA programs. It is your contention that what you term "new evidence" should be a basis for denying payment to a Hutterite colony. You also object to this matter being considered closed.

Again, an "open admissions policy" is not an eligibility requirement for participation in USDA programs. A nonprofit religious organization can, in fact, be eligible for the payments you seek to deny. There is no applicable statutory or regulatory requirement for an entity to offer employment positions to the public. Likewise, your characterization of USDA payments to an eligible program participant as an "investment" requiring the public to receive a return of equal value has no support in statute or regulation.

We fully understand that you have your opinions and believe there is a "problem" that needs to be fixed. You are entitled to your opinions. However, there is neither a statutory nor a regulatory basis for denying the payments for the reasons you suggest. As indicated in our prior response, we consider this matter closed. We will provide no further response.

Sincerely,

John A. Johnson
Deputy Administrator for Farm Programs



"Robert Eichhorn" <robertone@email.com>

Subject: E-MAIL REPLY (Please do not respond to this e-mail)
From: RA.DCWASHING2.RD-FSA-ECMM
To: robertone@email.com
Date: 03/04/09 12:57 PM

March 3, 2009

Mr. Robert Eichhorn
robertone@email.com

Dear Mr. Eichhorn:

Thank you for your electronic mail message of February 17, 2009, to Secretary of Agriculture Thomas J. Vilsak, concerning farm subsidies given to Hutterite colonies in the United States. The Secretary has asked that I respond to you on his behalf.

We are aware of the information provided in your letter. We understand you do not agree with our response on this matter. However, as indicated in our previous response dated September 5, 2008, we consider this matter closed.

Again, thank you for your mail message.

Sincerely,

/s/Candace Thompson

Candace Thompson
Acting Deputy Administrator for Farm Programs