

# AGEC 410 – Agricultural and Food Policy

## 4- Policy Interest Groups (PIGs)

Both positive and negative aspects

Strategies:

1. Political Action Committees (PACs)

2. Compromise

3. Coalitions

4. Logrolling:

## 5. riders

Subgovernments:

controls agenda, keeps outsiders out

Executive, Congress, and PIGs as a coalition

Traditional agricultural “Iron Triangle”

Consists of:

Congressional agricultural committees

USDA

Mainline farm organizations

Weakened in recent decades

new actors

short-term coalitions

weaker mainline farm organizations

## A. General Producer Lobby Groups

Represent the broad interests of a diverse agriculture

Historically the dominant groups, but less so

1. American Farm Bureau Federation (AFB) early 1900s

2. National Farmers Union (NFU)

3. National Grange 1867

4. National Farmers Organization (NFO) 1950s

5. American Agriculture Movement (AAM) 1978

6. Farm women groups

American Agri-Women (AAW)  
Women Involved in Farm Economics (WIFE)  
Concerned Farm Wives

7. Family Farm Coalition

8. Religious organizations

## B. Commodity Organizations

Focused on specific commodities,  
Access to check-off funds  
Linked to sub-committee system  
Growing force in recent decades

National Association of Wheat Growers (NAWG)  
American Soybean Association (ASA)  
National Corn Growers Association (NCGA)  
National Cotton Council (NCC)  
National Milk Producers Federation (NMPF)  
National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA)  
National Pork Producers Council (NPPC)

Question: Why does the corn growers association so actively support continuing the U.S. sugar program?

Question: Who is a producer ? Should agribusiness firms be included?

## C. Cooperative Lobbies

Focus on maintaining special privileges

National Council of Farmer Cooperatives (NCFC)

National Rural Electric Cooperative Association  
(NRECA)

## D. Agribusiness Lobbies

limited government interference

limiting preferences for coops

promoting flow on inputs and outputs

Grocery Manufacturers of America (GMA)

Food Marketing Institute (FMI)

American Frozen Foods Institute

National Grain and Feed Association (NGFA)

American Feed Manufacturers Association (AFMA)

North American Grain Export Association (NAGEA)

American Bakers Association

American Meat Institute (AMI)

International Dairy Food Association (IDFA)

Sweeteners Users Association

## E. Consumer Food Lobby

### Tend to seek:

- stronger federal inspection
- increased labeling for nutrition
- expanded food stamps
- direct farmer marketing
- reduced additives
- sustainable agriculture
- adequate supplies

### Organizations:

- Public Voice for Food and Health Policy, Ellen Haas
- Consumer Federation of America, Carol Foreman
- Congress Watch (Public Citizen), Ralph Nader
- Consumers Union
- Community Nutrition Institute

## F. Nutrition, Food Safety, Quality Lobby

Focus is on diet and health:

Center for Science in the Public Interest

Health Research Group (Nader again)

Society of Nutrition Education

## G. Hunger Lobby

Concerned with hunger, malnutrition, and adequate food supply in U.S. and world

Grew out of world food crisis of 1970s

Bread for the World

World Watch Institute – Lester Brown

Food Research and Action Center

## H. Resource and Environmental Lobby

Concerns include:

- endangered species
- water quality
- fertilizer/ pesticide use
- biotech

Main lobbies:

- Sierra Club
- Environmental Defense Fund
- Natural Resources Defense Council
- Friends of the Earth
- National Audubon Society
- National Wildlife Federation
- Environmental Working Group
  - check out their web site with farm payments
- Animal rights groups
  - PETA, Animal Liberation, etc

## Example: Trout Unlimited

Mission: to conserve, protect, and restore North America's cold water fisheries and their watersheds.

How:

1. Protect coldwater habitat by:  
promoting balanced land development,  
sound forestry and agricultural practices,  
integrated watershed management
2. Work with fishery managers to maximize health  
and numbers of **wild** trout
3. Protect coldwater resources by monitoring water  
quality
4. Identify and protect Blue Ribbon streams
5. Support policies to protect habitat and **wild** fish
6. Sponsor seminars, meetings on fisheries issues
7. Preserve coldwater species today and in future
8. Introduce children to fishing and conservation

Summary of PIGS

A long list of groups.

Some are focused, others broad.

Some have great influence, others are on the edge.

Influence ebbs and flows over time.

All make some claim to represent your interests  
(whether you want them to or not)