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### DAVE BARRY

Farm Security: The mohair of the dog that bites you

If you're like most American taxpayers, you often wake up in the middle of the night in a cold sweat and ask yourself: ``Am I doing enough to support mohair producers?"

I am pleased to report that you are, thanks to bold action taken recently by the United States Congress (motto: ``Hey, It's not OUR money!"). I am referring to the 2002 Farm Security Act, which recently emerged from the legislative process very much the way a steaming wad of processed vegetation emerges from the digestive tract of a cow.

The purpose of the Farm Security act is to provide farmers with "price stability." What do we mean by "price stability?" We mean: your money. You have already been very generous about this: Last year alone, you gave more than \$20 billion worth of price stability to farmers. Since 1996, you've given more than a million dollars apiece to more than 1,000 lucky recipients, many of which are actually big agribusinesses. Some of the "farmers" you've sent your money to are billionaires, such as Ted Turner and Charles Schwab, as well as major corporations, such as Chevron, DuPont and John Hancock Mutual Life Insurance.

But that is NOTHING compared with how generous you're about to get, taxpayers! Thanks to the Farm Security Act, over the next 10 years, you'll be providing farmers with 70 percent MORE stability, for a total of \$180 billion. At this rate, in a few years farmers will be so stable that they'll have to huddle in their root cellars for fear of being struck by bales of taxpayer-supplied cash raining down on the Heartland states from Air Force bombers.

Perhaps you are asking yourself: ``Wait a minute! Isn't this kind of like, I don't know . . . *welfare*?"

No, it is not. Welfare is when the government gives money to people who produce nothing. Whereas the farm-money recipients produce something that is critical to our nation: votes. Powerful congresspersons from both parties, as well as President Bush, believe that if they dump enough of your money on farm states, the farm states will re-elect them, thus enabling them to continue the vital work of dumping your money on the farm states. So as we see, it's not welfare at all! It's bribery.

But let us not forget the element of National Security. This is where your mohair comes in. As you know, "mohair" is the hair of any animal whose name begins with "mo," such as moose, mouse, mongoose or moray eel.

No, wait, sorry. "Mohair" is actually wool made from the hair of a goat. During

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WWII, mohair was used to make military uniforms, so it was considered to be a strategic material, and Congress decided that you, the taxpayer, should pay people to produce it. But of course today mohair has no vital military purpose, and so . . . you are STILL paying people to produce it! And thanks to the Farm Security Act, you will continue to pay millions and millions of dollars, every year, to mohair producers!

As I say, this is for National Security. If terrorists, God forbid, ever manage to construct a giant time machine and transport the United States back to 1941, and we have fight World War II again, WE WILL BE READY.

You will also be thrilled, as a taxpayer, to learn that the Farm Security Act provides new subsidies for producers of lentils and chickpeas. And not a moment too soon. This nation has become far too dependent on imported lentils and chickpeas. Try to picture the horror of living in a world in which foreigners, in foreign countries, suddenly cut off our lentil and chickpea supply. Imagine how you would feel if you had to look your small child in the eye and say, ``I'm sorry, little Billy or Suzy as the case may be, but there will be no lentils or chickpeas tonight, and all because we taxpayers were too shortsighted to fork over millions of dollars in support for domestic lentil and chickpea producers, who thus were forced to compete in the market like everybody else, and . . . HEY, COME BACK HERE!"

Yes, that would be a horrible world, all right. And that is why I totally support the Farm Security Act. I hope you agree with me, though I realize that some of you may not; in fact, some of you may be so angry about this column that you've decided to never read anything by me again.

Well, guess what: I don't care! Thanks to the Humor Security Act recently passed by Congress, I'll be getting huge sums of money from the federal government to continue grinding out these columns, year after year, even if nobody wants to read them!

No, that would be stupid.



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Dave Barry, Writer: Big Trouble. Dave Barry, author of numerous books and a weekly syndicated column with the Miami Herald, is well known for his scathing wit and deep insight into current political issues, exploding toilets, current economic trends, exploding whales, the future of America, exploding pop-tarts, and international relations. Dave Barry, author of numerous books and a weekly syndicated column with the Miami Herald, is well known for his scathing wit and deep insight into current political issues David McAlister Barry (born July 3, 1947) is an American author and columnist who wrote a nationally syndicated humor column for the Miami Herald from 1983 to 2005. He has also written numerous books of humor and parody, as well as comic novels. Barry's honors include the Pulitzer Prize for Commentary (1988) and the Walter Cronkite Award for Excellence in Journalism (2005). You asked, Dave Barry answered! Here's the first of eight #AskDave video segments featuring Dave's responses to the questions you submitted! Question #1 is from fan Dave Smythe, who asked: "I am traveling to Florida tomorrow. More Miami pro-tips from Dave Barry in the seventh installment of the #AskDave video series! Question #7 is from Gary Ellsworth, who asked: My 17 year-old son and I will be in Miami in March to watch a Heat game. What is the one piece of advice you would give us while visiting the area?"