

VICFA Begins National Fund

From the Editor

With the establishment of National Independent Consumers and Farmers Advocates Fund (NICFA Fund) by unanimous vote at the July 2006, VICFA meeting, VICFA launched its national effort to fight NAIS. As part of that effort, VICFA has contracted with Carl Little as our lobbyist to further our efforts on the national and state levels. Carl Little, Indiana attorney and former chief of staff for Congressman John Hostetler of Indiana, came to the July meeting to interview with VICFA and brief us on his overall strategy (see “Letter from the July, 2006 VICFA Meeting” for more details).

VICFA’s political experience, the dedication of our members and allies, and the fact that Congressman Bob Goodlatte, chair of the House Agricultural Committee (a pivotal position on NAIS), is from Joel Salatin’s district put us in a unique position to lead this national effort. The NICFA Fund, a separate fund within VICFA, will allow us to work with individuals and groups from all over the country with Carl Little to fight NAIS on the national level. The VICFA Mission Statement for the NICFA Fund (also passed unanimously), “VICFA opposes any government funded or managed National Animal Identification System,” will no doubt be embraced by leaders of the independent farm and local food movements all over the country, if not the world.

Carl brought home to us, several times, that legislators in Washington—and even in the Virginia General Assembly still--don’t really even know that we exist. When they think “farmers” they think Cargill, Tyson, ADM, Milk Cooperatives and the rest of industrial ag. They need to meet us in person and see our farms and meet the consumers who demand our farms’ products. Joel Salatin has graciously offered to host, at his Polyface Farm, an afternoon for farmers, consumers and legislators to meet on the actual soil of a working small farm.

On August 19, 2006, from 1:00 – 6:00 we’ll be hosting a Farm Food Voices type event called “Farm Food Security Day” just for this purpose. See the flyer on p.7 for all details and mark it on your calendar! We’ll need everyone to call their Virginia and Federal representatives and senators to invite them! Keep your eyes peeled for Action Alerts in the coming days.