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PRESS RELEASE

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IATP President to Speak at National Summit on Agriculture and Rural Life

Democratic Presidential Candidates Will Present Plans for Rural America

Minneapolis - Mark Ritchie, President of the Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy (IATP), will give the keynote speech at the National Summit on Agriculture and Rural Life this Saturday in Des Moines, Iowa. The Summit will include most of the Democratic Presidential candidates.

Ritchie's talk, "Renewing the Countryside, Renewing the Nation," will discuss the rich history of rural America, the challenges these communities face, and policy approaches to revitalize the rural countryside.

"There are some real opportunities to revive and strengthen rural communities," said Ritchie, an Iowa native. "Many rural communities are hurting right now. Part of the national debate over the next year will be whether we are going to bring jobs to rural America, promote a new bio-energy plan, and a reform our failed farm policy, or we're going to continue down the same difficult road we're on."

IATP joins a host of other rural advocacy groups and the League of Rural Voters in organizing the daylong Summit to showcase new directions in rural economic policy. The Summit will be held on November 15, 2003 at the Hotel Fort Des Moines in Des Moines, Iowa. The morning will focus on the state of rural America, economic development strategies, farm policy, building a healthy environment and communities, and global trade and rural America.

The Summit will culminate in a plenary session where Democratic Presidential Candidates will discuss their plans to address the economic devastation that has impacted rural Americans and take questions from the audience.

Speakers include:

Mark Ritchie, Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy
Darryl Ray, University of Tennessee/APAC
Mike Duffy, ISU/Leopold Center
George Naylor, Iowa CCI/National Family Farm Coalition
Chuck Fluharty, Rural Policy Research Institute
Lisa Davis Cook, Iowa Citizen Action Coalition
David Osterberg, Iowa Policy Project
Ralph Paige, Federation of Southern Cooperatives

Rep. Richard Gephardt, Presidential Candidate
Senator John Kerry, Presidential Candidate
Governor Howard Dean, Presidential Candidate
Rep. Dennis Kucinich, Presidential Candidate
Carol Moseley Braun, Presidential Candidate

The Institute for Agriculture and Trade Policy promotes resilient family farms, rural communities and ecosystems around the world through research and education, science and technology, and advocacy.