

**TESTIMONY By**

**Nick Volz**

**Elkhart, IA**

**BEFORE THE**  
U.S. HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

Des Moines, IA  
April 30, 2010

It is a pleasure to offer testimony today based upon my experiences as a grain farmer.

Good afternoon, my name is Nick Volz and I am a fifth generation farmer and have been farming for 37 years in Elkhart, IA and the surrounding areas. Where my wife and I live today, is a century farm.

I am currently raising corn and soybeans, and in the past have raised specialty corn and parent seed corn. Also, have produced seed soybeans for 20 years and specialty soybeans for Dupont for 5 years. We no longer produce specialty crops because the premiums have declined so it is not worth the extra expense in producing it.

In addition, my dad gave me 12 sows when I was 12 years old and after graduating, I farrowed up to 80 sows and continued this until 1998.

My son, Todd, after graduating from Iowa State University, started farming in 1996. With limited row crop acreage available to him, he found a niche in the production and selling of hay. He currently has 300 acres. He has also needed to do non-farm businesses to meet his cash flow. These included, landscaping and snow removal.

In 2002, my son and I started finishing 3200 head of feeder pigs a year and continued that for 5 years. It was not profitable and we stopped producing pigs in 2007. With the high cost of grain and protein, it was no longer feasible. Also, as a small producer, we were unable to get contracts because of size and were no longer be able to market the hogs. It would often take 3 to 4 weeks to get a delivery date.

We have always participated in the farm programs. However, we decided not too enroll in the ACRE PROGRAM. Reason being, with the lack of price protection and smaller DCP payments, we didn't believe there were any benefits for our operations. Instead of decreasing prices in the ACRE PROGRAM, the support prices should be raised to offset the high production costs.

We have always believed in soil conservation and have installed at least 12,000 feet of designed grass waterways. Some of these waterways are close to 30 years old and have served their purpose in conserving the soil. When the Conservation Security Program was announced, I thought we fit the program well, however, it was never funded to the extent of where the money would have been placed where needed. Programs like this are needed to help conserve the soil to ensure that life long productivity continues.

Payment limits are important and the money saved should be put into conservation programs to help enhance and protect our soils.

We belong to a number of organizations including corn and soybean associations, but I am not here to represent these organizations.

I am honored to participate in this testimony. I do believe that all of this is important to enhance the 2012 farm bill. And would like to see future meeting like this be held during January and February so that our short window of opportunities to plant will not effected.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify before you today. I would welcome any questions or discussions about what I have spoke about today.

Committee on Agriculture  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Information Required From Non-governmental Witnesses

House rules require non-governmental witnesses to provide their resume or biographical sketch prior to testifying. If you do not have a resume or biographical sketch available, please complete this form.

1. Name: Arick Volz
2. Business Address: 3550 NE 126th Ave  
Elkhart, IA 50073
3. Business Phone Number: 515-210-0242
4. Organization you represent: Volz Farms Inc
5. Please list any occupational, employment, or work-related experience you have which add to your qualification to provide testimony before the Committee:  
Farmed for 37 years Corn, Soybeans  
and Livestock
6. Please list any special training, education, or professional experience you have which add to your qualifications to provide testimony before the Committee:  
Attended Iowa ~~St~~ State University
7. If you are appearing on behalf of an organization, please list the capacity in which you are representing that organization, including any offices or elected positions you hold:  
Owner Operator

Committee on Agriculture  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Required Witness Disclosure Form

House Rules\* require nongovernmental witnesses to disclose the amount and source of Federal grants received since October 1, 2007.

Name: Nick Volz  
Address: 3550 NE 126th Ave Elk River Pa 50077  
Telephone: 515-210-0242  
Organization you represent (if any): Volz Farms Inc

1. Please list any federal grants or contracts (including subgrants and subcontracts) you have received since October 1, 2007, as well as the source and the amount of each grant or contract. House Rules do **NOT** require disclosure of federal payments to individuals, such as Social Security or Medicare benefits, farm program payments, or assistance to agricultural producers:

Source: \_\_\_\_\_ Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

Source: \_\_\_\_\_ Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

2. If you are appearing on behalf of an organization, please list any federal grants or contracts (including subgrants and subcontracts) the organization has received since October 1, 2007, as well as the source and the amount of each grant or contract:

Source: \_\_\_\_\_ Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

Source: \_\_\_\_\_ Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

Please check here if this form is NOT applicable to you: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

\* Rule XI, clause 2(g)(4) of the U.S. House of Representatives provides: *Each committee shall, to the greatest extent practicable, require witnesses who appear before it to submit in advance written statements of proposed testimony and to limit their initial presentations to the committee to brief summaries thereof. In the case of a witness appearing in a nongovernmental capacity, a written statement of proposed testimony shall include a curriculum vitae and a disclosure of the amount and source (by agency and program) of each Federal grant (or subgrant thereof) or contract (or subcontract thereof) received during the current fiscal year or either of the two previous fiscal years by the witness or by any entity represented by the witness.*