

ENVIRONMENTALISTS FOR BERNIE

WHY TWO MAINE FARMERS SUPPORT BERNIE SANDERS: ELIOT COLEMAN & JIM GERRITSEN

Eliot has been farming for fifty years. Jim has been farming for forty years. Our decades of family farming experience have taught us how to spot a winner whether it's a new crop, a new technique for improving the soil or a newly designed piece of equipment.

Now, when it comes to politics, it's only once every generation or two that a true leader of Bernie Sander's stature comes along. From our farms in Maine we have watched and admired Bernie in nearby Vermont for many years. In every way and from every angle, Bernie is absolutely authentic. He is the real deal. To know Bernie is to love his generous spirit and his ceaseless commitment to the public good. Republican, Democrat and Independent Vermonters who know him best elected Bernie to the U.S. Senate with an unprecedented 71% of the vote.

In this critical and landmark Presidential election, Bernie Sanders has zeroed in on income inequality and corporate greed as the defining issues of our time—and very sadly, the chief reason behind the hopelessness and frustration which has settled like a thick fog over this wonderful country.

Whether you are a farmer, a file clerk or a fireman, you intuitively understand that the deck has been stacked against the 99% of us who make up the working class. Once upon a time, working hard allowed you to lift yourself up and provide a better life for you and your family.

However, under the burden of gross income inequality—at desperate levels not seen since the Great Depression—all bets are off. Examples of despair are around all of us: students drowning in debt, single mothers forced to work two jobs just to keep a roof over their family, veterans who bravely served their country and upon returning home are abandoned by their government when they most need help for physical or mental challenges gained from their service. Stagnant wages and decades of declining purchasing power for the working class stand in stark contrast to the unbridled greed of Wall Street and the astronomical compensation provided to corporate CEOs.

Bernie Sanders has dedicated his entire life to righting wrongs. In the Democratic tradition, he courageously stands up for the powerless, the disadvantaged and for the interests of the middle class. He has taken on the powerful moneyed interests who through contributions and collusion have worked to buy our democracy out from under us.

Bernie's consistent record is clear. It was the twenty-one year old Bernie Sanders who was arrested for his praiseworthy role in the Civil Rights struggle in the 1960s South.

As Mayor of Burlington during the 1980s, Bernie displayed extraordinary executive competency. He brought together disparate groups and created strong and enduring alliances which built affordable housing, spurred entrepreneurial growth and strategically increased good paying jobs for women.

His many years in the House and the Senate have distinguished Bernie as a principled leader willing to work with anyone in order to advance the country's common good. Bernie's stands are courageous, as expressed in his opposition to the war in Iraq; visionary as in his 2013 Senate attempt to clarify the Constitutional right of States to pass mandatory GMO Labeling legislation; and compassionate as in his successful co-sponsoring of legislation with Senator John McCain to secure essential funding for American veterans.

In agriculture, Bernie has worked tirelessly to keep family farmers on the land. He understands that an essential element of national security is robust internal food security. As a longtime champion of the family farmer, Bernie has been protecting the interests of every citizen, urban or rural, North or South.

Time and again, Bernie Sanders has demonstrated himself to be the ultimate defender of the peoples' interest. Bernie is leading the strong opposition to Senator Pat Robert's (R-KS) new draconian Biotech-backed 'DARK Act', which would federally pre-empt the right of States to pass mandatory GMO Labeling laws and thereby invalidate universally-supported laws on the books in Maine, Vermont and Connecticut.

There are countless reasons for the 99% to support Bernie Sanders for President. His consistent efforts—over many decades—on behalf of working people, and his uncompromising refusal to be bought off by corporate interests set him apart from every other candidate.

On the other hand, Hillary Clinton, Bernie's Democratic opponent, has received a \$335,000 check for delivering the keynote address at the biotech industry's yearly gathering in 2014 where she coached Monsanto and the biotech industry's top lobbyists how to deceive the American public about the safety of GMOs.

Like millions of Americans across the country, farmers have grown weary of these deeply conflicted relationships that politicians have grown increasingly comfortable with. Unfortunately, Hillary has done herself no service with her longstanding cozy relationships with predatory corporations like Goldman Sachs, Walmart and Monsanto.

Now is the time to choose. And here in New England, these two Maine farmers choose Bernie Sanders. It's time to put a President back in the White House that understands the value of hard work, honest wages and honoring the social covenant of previous generations that led with the belief we all are our brother's keepers.

Beyond Bernie's strong qualities as an unparalleled American leader is the fact—consistently supported by national polling—that Bernie Sanders is the strongest candidate the Democrats can run against the Republicans in November. Regardless of whether the Republicans nominate Trump, Rubio or Cruz, polls indicate Bernie beats them all and by significantly greater margins than Hillary Clinton.

So Bernie Sanders is both the best candidate and the strongest candidate for President. We hope you will unite with farmers, vote for Bernie and join us in the Bernie Revolution. Family farmers pledge we will fight along side Bernie. We will help Bernie turn this country around, put the people first, and restrain Wall Street greed once and for all. Working to elect Bernie—and then keeping the pressure on to pass his bold agenda—we will make this country great once again for our people, for our children and for our children's children.

Eliot Coleman produces fresh vegetables year-round at Four Season Farm in Harborside, Maine. Jim Gerritsen grows Maine Certified Seed Potatoes and other seed crops with his family on Wood Prairie Family Farm in northern Maine.