

**Statement of FCA Board Member Jill Long Thompson
at the FCA Board Meeting
April 14, 2011**

I am very pleased that we have reached the point where the Board is voting on a proposed rule to ensure the Farm Credit System strategically addresses diversity in human capital and marketing plans. I appreciate the commitment of FCA employees, particularly Office of Regulatory Policy and Office of General Counsel staff, for their hard work in developing this proposed rule. I am disappointed, however, that the purpose of the proposed rule, ensuring a commitment to diversity in the Farm Credit System, has been expanded to include the provisions on pages 6 and 7 related to the advancement of local food systems. I have long been a strong advocate of locally grown and marketed foods and believe it is important that the Farm Credit System recognize the potential opportunities in that market. But, the issue at hand is diversity in employment and diversity among the borrower population in the Farm Credit System. Addressing the kinds of farming operations financed by the System is a separate issue. To me it makes no sense to combine two significant, but very distinct, issues into one regulation. Combining them diminishes the significance of each and I would hope we could address both of these important issues separately in the future.

As everyone here knows, the issue of diversity in the System has been a priority for me since the first day of my appointment to the Board. And I truly appreciate that we have reached this moment. I am uncomfortable, however, that we are combining two important issues into one regulation; nevertheless, I will be voting in support of this proposed rule because we need to keep moving forward to advance diversity in the Farm Credit System.