

Monday, Jan. 14, 2008

Cardoza understands organic farming

In support of your editorial "Pelosi, name Cardoza to farm bill committee" (Jan. 4), I'd like to offer an additional reason why Rep. Dennis Cardoza should be invited to the table -- his leadership on behalf of organic farmers such as myself.

Representing a district in the state with the most organic farmers and the largest amount of certified organic cropland, few in Congress understand the needs of organic farmers better than Cardoza. Selected to chair the Subcommittee on Horticulture and Organic Agriculture by members of the House Committee on Agriculture, he has worked hard to ensure that farm bill programs meet the unique and critical needs of organic farmers. In fact, without Cardoza's efforts, the Department of Agriculture's main organic research program, responsible for fostering much of the knowledge we rely on to enhance our production practices, would have received no money in the House bill.

As push comes to shove over how to rectify the discrepancies between the House and Senate versions of the farm bill, we can count on Cardoza to stand up for organic farmers, but first we need to get him invited to the table.

JOHN M. TEIXEIRA

Firebaugh