

Ken Cook, president and co-founder of Environmental Working Group, is widely recognized as one of the environmental community's most prominent and effective critics of establishment agriculture and U.S. farm policy.

- On November 2, [food policy authority Michael Pollan named Cook](#) one of “the world’s 7 most powerful foodies”, along with First Lady Michelle Obama, nutritionist Marion Nestle and *The New York Times’* columnist Mark Bittman.
- On November 19, [The Times' Bittman listed EWG](#) among 25 people and organizations for whom he was thankful as Thanksgiving approached.
- In its 2011 [roster of Washington’s top lobbyists, The Hill](#), the newspaper of Capitol Hill, said Cook “is at the forefront of challenges to corn ethanol and subsidies for Big Agriculture, upcoming hot-button issues as Congress tackles energy matters and starts work on a new farm bill.”
- Cook was voted the “Ultimate Green Game Changer” in 2009 by the readers of *The Huffington Post*. As Arianna Huffington put it, “The EWG is an environmental superhero with a full set of digital tools in its arsenal.”

Cook is a principal architect of the landmark conservation provisions of the 1985 farm bill, which for the first time attempted to shift U.S. farm policy from a narrow focus on maximum crop production to conservation of land, water, wetlands and wildlife. The legislation was the most important environmental farm policy reform of recent years, affecting more than 400 million acres of privately owned - and publicly subsidized - farmland.

EWG’s online database listing every farm subsidy recipient in the nation and the amount of money each receives has generated thousands of stories about America’s broken farm policy. A *New York Times* profile of Cook said the website helped “transform the [2002] farm bill into a question about equity and whether the country's wealthiest farmers should be paid to grow commodity crops while many smaller family farms receive nothing and are going out of business.” Cook and EWG played a similarly prominent role during the crafting of the 2008 farm bill.

In the 1990s, EWG’s research on pesticides was a major factor in the passage of the landmark pesticide reform law, the Food Quality Protection Act. EWG was among the first organizations to draw attention to the health threat posed by the weed-killer atrazine, conducting the first extensive tests for the chemical in tap water in 29 Midwestern cities.

Cook has addressed food and agriculture policy in numerous interviews, including *60 Minutes*, *the CBS Evening News*, *NBC Nightly News*, *the Today Show*, *MSNBC*, *CNBC*, *FOX Business News*, *CNN’s Anderson Cooper 360*, *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *Associated Press*, *Reuters*, *The Los Angeles Times* and *The San Francisco Chronicle*.

Cook testifies regularly before House and Senate committees, has briefed top Congressional staff and has met with senior Obama administration officials, including Secretary of Agriculture Thomas Vilsack and Environmental Protection Administration chief Lisa Jackson.

Cook earned a B.A. in history, B.S. in agriculture and M.S. in soil science from the University of Missouri-Columbia. He is a board member of The Organic Center and the Amazon Conservation Team. He is married to Deb Callahan and lives in northern California with their young son, Callahan.