Wisconsin Farmers Union

2020 Policy Book

Let Us Reason Together

Adopted by delegates at the
Wisconsin Farmers Union 89th Annual Convention

January 31- February 2, 2020
Rothschild, WI

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What is Wisconsin Farmers Union?

OUR MISSION: Wisconsin Farmers Union, a member-driven farm organization, is committed to enhancing the quality of life for family farmers, rural communities and all people through educational opportunities, cooperative endeavors and civic engagement.

OUR HISTORY: Farmers Union was founded in Point, Texas, in 1902, by a group of ten farmers and other citizens who organized to help bring about a more economically secure way of life for farmers. Wisconsin Farmers Union was chartered in 1930 through the assistance of the Northwest Organizing Committee, which helped to establish the first county and local organizations in Wisconsin in the 1920s. The organization of Wisconsin Farmers Union was simultaneous with the development of the Farmers Union Central Exchange cooperative (later Cenex, and now, CHS), and WFU President A.N. Young and Wisconsin Farmers Union Secretary-Treasurer William E. Sanderson served on the FUCE co-op's board of incorporators.

OUR GOALS: Farmers Union is committed to providing effective grassroots leadership to build a sustainable economic system in which family farms and rural communities thrive and prosper. Guided by its cooperative, legislative and educational ideals, Farmers Union continues to work for the advancement of the quality of life of people everywhere. Goals include a strong family farm structure of agriculture that protects farmland, provides a secure and sustainable food system, promotes cooperative endeavors and preserves the cultural and economic health of rural communities.

OUR ACTIVITIES: Farmers Union's holistic approach to improving the quality of life for farmers and all citizens can be seen through its various programs and activities. Wisconsin Farmers Union has held informational meetings for its members and the general public on topics including farm business ventures, the state budget, renewable energy and the Farm Bill. The Farmers Union adult and youth education program teaches all ages about cooperatives, leadership and active citizenship. The *Wisconsin Farmers Union News* provides information and education to members on recent and upcoming events and farm issues. As more and more members use email, news and information are transmitted over the Internet. A group of Farmers Union members gathered together to create the Wisconsin Farmers Union Specialty Cheese Co., LLC. The company has been sold to Arthur Schuman, Inc.

OUR PARTNERS: Farmers Union works with a variety of farm, consumer and other groups with similar missions. Wisconsin Farmers Union's roles in these organizations vary from coalition member to policy and drafting partner, to conference planning, to board representative.

OUR STRUCTURE: The Wisconsin Farmers Union board is made up of nine district directors. Wisconsin Farmers Union staff oversee day-to-day operations from the state office in Chippewa Falls, a satellite office in Madison and at the Kamp Kenwood facility. Nearly two hundred volunteers work at the county and local levels as officers and in other leadership roles in the areas of youth education, membership, legislation and programming.

Wisconsin Farmers Union Board of Directors

DISTRICT ONE:
LINDA CEYLOR
First elected in 2017
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Phone: 715-567-1010
Email: hillsidedairyfarm@yahoo.com
Counties: Ashland, Barron, Bayfield, Burnett, Douglas, Iron, Lincoln, Oneida, Polk, Price, Rusk, Sawyer, Taylor, Vilas and Washburn

DISTRICT TWO:
LAUREN LANGWORTHY, Secretary
First elected in 2018
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Phone: 715-503-0096
Email: llangworthy@wisconsinfarmersunion.com
Counties: Dunn, Pepin, Pierce and St. Croix

DISTRICT THREE:
ED GORELL
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DISTRICT FOUR:
JEN SCHMITZ
First elected in 2020
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Counties: Buffalo, Jackson, La Crosse, Monroe and Trempealeau

DISTRICT FIVE:
DARIN VON RUDEN, President
First elected in 2008
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Phone: 608-852-4272
Email: dvonruden@wisconsinfarmersunion.com
Counties: Crawford, Grant, Green, Iowa, Lafayette, Richland, Rock and Vernon

DISTRICT SIX:
CHRIS HOLMAN, Treasurer
Filled empty seat in 2016, First elected in 2018
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DISTRICT SEVEN:
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DISTRICT EIGHT:
RICK ADAMSKI, Vice President
First elected in 2016
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AT-LARGE:
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WISCONSIN FARMERS UNION

Special Orders of Business – 2020

DAIRY POLICY REFORM

OVERSIGHT OF LARGE LIVESTOCK FACILITIES & CONCENTRATED ANIMIAL FEEDING OPERATIONS (CAFOs)

CONCENTRATION IN THE AGRICULTURE INDUSTRY

HEMP

BADGERCARE AND BADGERCARE PUBLIC OPTION

FAMILY FARMERS SHAPING CLIMATE CHANGE POLICY

MEAT PROCESSING INFRASTRUCTURE

Special Order of Business - 2020

DAIRY POLICY REFORM

U.S dairy farms are an important segment of our nation's economy. As one of the world's largest dairy-producing nations, the industry provides roughly $140 billion in economic output, $29 billion in household earnings, and more than 900,000 jobs.

Despite dairy's economic contribution to our nation, federal programs are failing producers who face difficult economic conditions. Between 2014 and 2018, roughly 7,500 U.S dairy farms went out of business as low milk prices failed to cover the average cost of production. Meanwhile, total cow numbers increased slightly and milk production remained relatively stable. The overproduction of milk and the inability for the market to stabilize following an economic downturn accelerated the loss of dairy farms throughout the U.S, particularly in dairy-heavy states like Wisconsin.

Wisconsin Farmers Union recognizes efforts made by Congress to improve federal dairy programs, but the Dairy Margin Coverage program does not address the fundamental problem of oversupply. Federal dairy policy must provide *both* a safety net for family dairy farms in all regions and of all herd sizes, *and* a mechanism to manage milk supply to meet profitable demand.

A 2019 economic analysis of programs to improve dairy farm profitability showed that a system of managed growth in dairy production would have had a positive impact on the dairy economy. The results show increased milk prices, reduced price volatility, fewer dairy farm exits, and reduced government expenditures.

There is growing support among U.S dairy farmers, farm organizations, and members of congress for managing dairy production growth without issuing a strict quota, prohibiting expansion, or halting trade.

Therefore, WFU calls on Congress to establish a mandatory program for managed growth based on market demand and price stability. Such a program should increase farmer profitability by:

1. Elevating milk prices
2. Preventing overproduction
3. Reducing milk price volatility

Such a program should also:

1. Allow for beginning farmer entry
2. Reduce government expenditures
3. Respond to global market conditions
4. Be national and mandatory so that all dairy producers participate
5. Allow for planned growth when the market can accept additional milk
6. Be designed in such a way that any production base does not acquire value
7. Have meaningful farmer input in development, implementation, and governance

Special Order of Business – 2020

OVERSIGHT OF LARGE LIVESTOCK FACILITIES AND CONCENTRATED ANIMAL FEEDING OPERATIONS (CAFOs)

WHEREAS, state standards under ATCP 51 regarding acceptance, regulation, and enforcement of CAFOs have failed; and

WHEREAS, ATCP 51 has failed to enable towns and counties to protect their people, land, water, and health; and

WHEREAS, Wisconsin towns and counties bear the weight of those failures in damaged roads, reduced property values, and depleted economic development; and

WHEREAS, per state statute 93.90(2)(a) the Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) shall appoint a Technical Committee to review ATCP 51 and make recommendations at least every four years; and

WHEREAS, DATCP convened Technical Committees in 2010, and 2014, and 2018 but has made no changes to ATCP 51 as a result of the committee's work or summary reports; and

WHEREAS, state statute 93.90 fails to provide guidance for implementation of the Technical Committee's recommendations; and

WHEREAS, state statute 93.90 does not authorize DATCP to impose a cap on the fee that local units of government can charge for a livestock siting permit. State statute 66.0628(a) already requires that "any fee that is imposed by a political subdivision shall bear a reasonable relationship to the service for which the fee is imposed" and "may not exceed the political subdivision's reasonable direct costs,"; and

WHEREAS, state statute 93.90 does not authorize DATCP to restrict a local unit of government's ability to require a permitted facility to provide a bond or other financial assurance to ensure that the permitted facility, and not taxpayers, will shoulder the financial responsibility for site cleanup in the event of a farm bankruptcy or costly manure spill.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, Wisconsin Farmers Union urges the legislature to amend the statute to require that the findings of the Technical Committee must be presented in writing to the Board of DATCP, and that the Board must present a scope statement to the Wisconsin Secretary of Agriculture within 90 days, and if DATCP fails to take action on the scope statement within 6 months, the scope statement must be sent to the Joint Committee for Review of Administrative Rules and scheduled for a public hearing.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Wisconsin Farmers Union recognizes the authority of ATCP 51 to set statewide, minimum standards and procedures for CAFOs but supports lifting the preemption of local control in ATCP 51 and allowing local governments to pass more stringent standards and procedures that are based on reasonable and scientifically defensible findings of fact that clearly show that the standards are needed to protect water and air quality and public health or safety without seeking DATCP or DNR approval.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Wisconsin Farmers Union calls upon DATCP to take steps immediately to remove the fee cap in ATCP 51, relying instead on the existing statutory requirement that any fee imposed by a town or county must be reasonable.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Wisconsin Farmers Union calls upon DATCP to take steps immediately to remove the provision in ATCP 51 that prohibits towns and counties from requiring permitted facilities to provide a bond or other financial assurance to protect taxpayers from a costly cleanup.

Special Order of Business – 2020

CONCENTRATION IN THE AGRICULTURE INDUSTRY

WHEREAS, deregulation of industries has been a commonplace occurrence over the past four decades which has rolled back many of the protections to independent agricultural interests and farmers that were established to foster competition and a healthy marketplace; and

WHEREAS, enforcement of federal antitrust laws has diminished over the past few decades, with very few meaningful investigations into mergers and acquisitions of large scale agricultural producers, suppliers and processors; and

WHEREAS, a decline in the vitality of rural communities has coincided with this concentration in agricultural and retail food markets with family farms bearing the brunt of this injustice; and

WHEREAS, the movement towards fewer bigger suppliers of Ag inputs and markets for farm products has been accelerating in the past decade.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that Wisconsin Farmers Union strongly demands that the Wisconsin Department of Justice and the United States Department of Justice, as well as other regulatory agencies, aggressively investigate this situation and initiate action to level the playing field for family farmers and return meaningful competition to the marketplace;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that WFU calls on the WI DOJ and US DOJ to follow through on the antitrust investigation and to aggressively prosecute violators of antitrust laws;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that WFU urges the federal government to increase its oversight of consolidation and vertical integration in the agriculture industry and to establish a constant dialog within agriculture about market control and antitrust concerns;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that WFU opposes the investment in arable lands in all countries by institutional investors (corporations, commercial and investment banks, pension funds, life insurance companies, endowments, high net-worth individuals, sovereign wealth funds, all of which apply to both domestic and foreign entities, amongst others). These lands should primarily be owned, managed, and farmed, if so desired, by domestic family farmers.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that WFU urges DATCP to vigorously enforce the law limiting ownership by foreign entities to 640 acres of land in Wisconsin.

Special Order of Business - 2020

HEMP

WHEREAS, until 2016, hemp had not been legally grown in Wisconsin since 1957, causing a lapse in experience and education in hemp production and processing; and

WHEREAS, there is a significant lack of infrastructure and equipment for harvesting and processing hemp in Wisconsin that severely restricts the potential growth for farmers and the overall hemp industry; and.

WHEREAS, hemp fiber has utility in a wide variety of applications, such as textiles, paper, construction materials, and biofuels; and

WHEREAS, the allowable level of THC in Hemp is set at an arbitrarily low 0.3% based on faulty taxonomy from the 1970s and a global marketplace standard for fiber and grain, forcing Wisconsin hemp farmers to source seeds from a select few breeding companies; and

WHEREAS, under current regulations, a farmer must destroy an entire hemp crop at the time of harvest if it tests nominally higher than the current THC limit of 0.3%; and

WHEREAS, it has been determined that a THC level of up to 1% is not sufficient to cause a detectable psychoactive effect; and

WHEREAS, DATCP THC testing fees are currently $250 per test, prohibiting farmers from expanding field and breeding trials of Hemp; and

WHEREAS, DATCP THC testing sampling time is crucial to the results of the hemp farmers' crop success, creating a situation where late sampling causes crop destruction; and

WHEREAS, a disproportionate number of people of color have been targeted, arrested and charged with crimes related to non-violent cannabis possession and distribution, and the state has set hemp licensing to exclude individuals with prior drug felonies reaching back 10 years.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that in order to create a robust and diversified seed-sourcing and seed-saving program in Wisconsin, and to protect against the monopolization of hemp genetics, Wisconsin Farmers Union advocates for the formulation of an open-source Hemp seed-saving program, as well as legislative initiatives to protect farmers' rights to develop new strains, plant hemp seed, and sell hemp seed without unnecessary restriction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that WFU calls on DATCP to lower the fee of an individual field location/varietal test from $250 per field test to $50 per field test, and to remove the requirement for a background check and any permitting or licensing application deadlines. It is also pertinent that hemp farmers receive DATCP compliance testing results within 3 days of sampling, to give the opportunity to attempt crop THC dilution techniques to pursue the DATCP retest option, making it a viable second chance option to receive a passing test result.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that WFU suggests the allowable THC content of hemp, as defined by state and federal law, to be raised from 0.3% to 1.0%. In order to comply with the current federal standard of .3% THC, farmers and state certified processors be allowed to remediate the THC to a level of compliance through the extraction process and re-test the hemp product at its consumer-ready form.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that WFU supports removing the ban on individuals applying for hemp licenses that have served and completed sentencing for a nonviolent cannabis related felony.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that WFU supports educational initiatives in the area of production, processing, and marketing of hemp by using available Farmers Union resources to host statewide hemp workshops in partnership with Industry Agents, University of Wisconsin-Madison Division of Extension, local Technical Schools, and Farmers.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that WFU Supports educational initiatives that work to inform the public about Hemp production in Wisconsin and its potential and current impact on Wisconsin's Agricultural Economy.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that WFU supports adding hemp to the list of prohibited crops in Wisconsin's anti-corporate farming law.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that WFU calls on the state legislature to appropriate funding for a grant program for building hemp fiber processing facilities that would open market opportunities for more farms to produce hemp in Wisconsin.

Special Order of Business – 2020

BADGERCARE & BADGERCARE PUBLIC OPTION

WHEREAS, self-employed individuals, including many farmers, find it difficult to obtain affordable health insurance; and

WHEREAS, farmers are sometimes excluded from private health insurance plans entirely because of the risks inherent in farming; and

WHEREAS a lack of affordable health insurance options is a roadblock to prospective farmers getting into farming and a significant cost and area of vulnerability for continuing farmers; and

WHEREAS, BadgerCare plus has efficiently provided public health care coverage statewide to Wisconsin residents with low income, and could, according to the Legislative Fiscal Bureau, offer health insurance to Wisconsin residents at a significant cost savings.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, Wisconsin Farmers Union supports legislation to create a public option to buy into BadgerCare, available to any resident of Wisconsin no matter their income.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Wisconsin Farmers Union advocates for the inclusion of the BadgerCare public option on the Healthcare.gov marketplace, thereby allowing Wisconsin residents s to apply federal premium subsidies to make health insurance even more affordable.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Wisconsin Farmers Union opposes cuts to funding and/or more restrictive eligibility requirements, including work requirements, for Medicaid and BadgerCare Plus.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Wisconsin Farmers Union urges the governor, state legislature and Wisconsin Department of Health Services to pursue a Medicaid strategy that:

a.) Prioritizes maintaining eligibility for the largest possible number of residents, opting for modest premium and copay increases rather that wholesale exclusion of participants;

b.) Maintains service delivery centers throughout the state, and not just online, recognizing that many rural residents lack access to high-speed internet;

c.) Leverages all available federal dollars to support Medicaid programs, including the immediate acceptance of the federal Medicaid expansion funding provided through the Affordable Care Act.

d.) Incorporates a methodology that recognizes the fluctuating annual income levels that are characteristic of farming and other self-employment.

Special Order of Business – 2020

FAMILY FARMERS SHAPING CLIMATE CHANGE POLICY

Food security, a healthy landscape, climate mitigation, and a prosperous rural America can only be attained through a strong family farm system of agriculture.

A bold proposal to transform our society is needed to address the effects of climate change. However, current bills before Congress such as the Green New Deal (H.R. 109) and the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act (H.R. 763) appeal primarily to an urban voter base and do not recognize the essential contribution of rural America. The farming community recognizes that current bills include proposals that could either help or harm agriculture. However, we believe doing nothing will lead to far greater harm and that national climate change legislation has the potential to unite urban and rural communities under a common vision for a just and sustainable society.

Wisconsin Farmers Union urges Congress to make passing legislation to address climate change a national priority. Further, we believe climate legislation must include all forms and interpretations of sustainable agriculture as a pillar. For example, regenerative agriculture protects and enhances natural resources and farming communities through healthy soils, farm biodiversity, and farmer economic stability and resilience. These ground-proven methods benefit farmers through healthy yields, higher profits, more control over the future of their operations and less dependence on agribusiness for inputs purchased in a highly consolidated marketplace. These practices also help mitigate the impact of climate change on rural America and food security.

Farmers and rural communities are uniquely positioned to meet the goals set forth in any future climate change legislation. We have the available land base for alternative energy and the opportunity to transform farming practices to sequester excess carbon and improve the health of the environment. We need to have a seat at the table as the climate change legislation is being developed.

Family farm agriculture must be protected under and included in any climate change legislation. For example, National Farmers Union Policy has no less than 30 individual positions that align with the core values of the Green New Deal.

WFU Supports:

1. Research, cost share, and other voluntary incentives to help family farmers adopt practices and infrastructure that mitigate climate change and sequester carbon without placing additional regulatory burdens on farmers
2. Efforts to ensure that regenerative agriculture policies increase market opportunities for family farmers.
3. USDA Climate Hubs coordinating climate information, agronomic and risk management support, and programs that enhance marketing options to allow family farmers to effectively utilize opportunities to enhance profits while mitigating climate change.
4. Energy efficiency, renewable energy production, and further development of the bioeconomy on family farms and in rural communities
5. Cooperation and collaboration among family farmers to build and expand market infrastructure that will allow consumers to choose agricultural products that create climate benefits.
6. New opportunities for family farmers to articulate their climate mitigation efforts with consumers through food processors and retailers
7. Protecting family farmland from carbon-intensive suburban sprawl development
8. Protecting competition in the markets that family farmers buy from and sell into, allowing for more prescriptive demands of excessively consolidated markets.

WFU urges Congress to appoint a Climate Change Rural Task Force to inform and articulate a Rural and Agricultural Plank in the emerging Climate Change legislative platform.

Special Order of Business – 2020

MEAT PROCESSING INFRASTRUCTURE

WHEREAS, small and mid-scale livestock farmers form an important part of our rural economies and are essential to meeting an increasing consumer interest in sustainable meat and increasing demand for Kosher and Halal meat in Wisconsin; and

WHEREAS, throughout Wisconsin rural communities lack infrastructure to support and encourage more of these farms to form and to grow in production, and specifically many meat processing facilities that serve small and mid-scale livestock farms have closed in recent years and continue to struggle; and

WHEREAS, pasture-based farms are in a position to grow in market share and economic importance, and farmers in many chapters identify lack of access to processors as a barrier to viability; and

WHEREAS, this lack of access to meat processing services for small and mid-scale farms gives additional market advantage to corporate-owned, vertically integrated operations over family farms; and

WHEREAS, the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation is in a position to help support economic development that enhances agriculture and rural communities in Wisconsin, but presently does not have rural communities on the agenda; and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that in order to foster an environment in which family farms have equitable market access and the ability to be economically sustainable and grow, Wisconsin Farmers Union advocates for the WEDC to offer financial support to increase the capacity of and start new state and USDA-inspected meat processors throughout the state.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that WFU urges increased support from County Economic Development agencies,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that WFU urges DATCP to streamline regulation to help facilitate small-scale processors, as well as processors that offer USDA, organic, Halal, and Kosher certification; as well as mobile and other on-farm processing facilities and use of animal by-products and waste;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that WFU supports allowing meat and poultry products sales across state lines if they have been inspected through state, Meat and Poultry Inspection (MPI) programs.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that WFU supports the formation of cooperatives and other business structures that form to address specific local and regional processing needs, and offers assistance to chapters to do so.

I. PREAMBLE

In our constantly changing society, there are certain goals and values we consider to be fundamental—to be preserved as part of the American dream and democratic ideal. These basic aims grow out of personal faith, understanding of nature, and duty to country. We cherish our belief in the dignity of the individual, in the basic freedom of our Bill of Rights, and in the importance of every person having the opportunity to think for themselves. No institution has given more eloquent expression of this American spirit than the family farm. The family farm has maintained a unique role in America since colonial times. Placing ownership, management and labor in the family farm was our forefathers' democratic answer to the systems of landless peasantry from which they had fled. The family farm concept embraces much more than a belief in the superiority of the family farm as an economic unit of agricultural production. The family farm concept includes ethical considerations of humane treatment of workers and animals, just pay for farm workers, just prices for farm products, careful stewardship of natural resources, protection of open spaces, stabilization of family units in rural economies and the preservation of viable rural communities - for the shared benefit and future of both rural and urban citizens.

The Farmers Union symbol, a triangle constructed with education at its base and complete with cooperation and legislation on the sides, represents a structure that takes on more importance than ever before. This triangle mandates that the organization is dedicated not only to the advancement of the profession of family farm agriculture, but also to articulating and illuminating the issues facing family agriculture for a populace increasingly disconnected from the means of its food production and from its rural places.

Wisconsin Farmers Union holds the policies herein as fundamental to the preservation of democracy, to the retention, succession, transition and increase of independent farm families on the land, to the support of thriving rural communities, and to the protection of public access to healthy rural spaces - for the purpose of enhancing the quality of life for all people everywhere for generations to come.

A. MISSION STATEMENT

Wisconsin Farmers Union, a member-driven farm organization, is committed to enhancing the quality of life for family farmers, rural communities and all people through educational opportunities, cooperative endeavors and civic engagement.

B. THE DEFINITION OF A FAMILY FARM

We believe that family farming is fundamental and basic. It is the cradle of American freedom and democracy. American prosperity can never be secure without prosperous, efficient family farm agriculture. Family-owned and -operated farms have been at the forefront of rural development in the country, and have historically provided sustenance for farm families and rural communities and plentiful reasonably priced food for all America. Now, the family farm system is being severely threatened by agricultural concentration and industrial models of farming to the detriment of family farmers, rural communities and food security for the nation and the very definition of what constitutes a family farm operation is in question. **Therefore, the definition of the family farm must include those farm economic units in which the family provides the significant majority of labor and management for the enterprise and receives a significant amount of its gross income from the farm.** Wisconsin Farmers Union supports targeting such benefits and support that may be available to this family farm unit.

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports programs and policies that recognize and reward farms as multifunctional operations; as providers of food, fuel, fiber, flowers, and ornamental plants, but also for their irreplaceable contributions to land stewardship, resource conservation, and rural culture.

II. AGRICULTURE PROGRAMS AND THE FAMILY FARM

A. FARM AND NUTRITION PROGRAMS

Wisconsin Farmers Union reaffirms our position that federal governmental policies and programs are essential to protect family farmers against the hazards of the marketplace where almost everyone else, except the farmer, is protected. The power of public policy must be used to sustain the independent farmer in an economy that is otherwise strongly concentrated. Family farmers must be protected against the economic sacrifices that may be necessary to balance our nation's trade and ensure world peace.

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports tying nutrition assistance and farm assistance programs together in the Farm Bill.

1. SUPPLY ADJUSTMENT MECHANISMS

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports a federally oriented supply management system, which would reduce costly over-production, ensure adequate income for farm families and provide the public with sufficient supplies of safe and nutritious food. If farm programs continue to contain no supply adjustment mechanism, farm policies will continue to encourage excess production of crops, and excess production will continue to depress farm prices now and into the future with no relief in sight. Wisconsin Farmers Union continues its effort for an effective supply adjustment mechanism for all major commodities.

2. PAYMENT PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY AND LIMITATIONS

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports eligibility requirements that require farmers have adjusted gross income no greater than $100,000 adjusted annually for inflation and an annual aggregate limit of federal government farm payments to individual producers to $75,000, excluding weather-related disaster programs. Non-active farmers and farm investors who have no operating earnings at risk in farming should be ineligible for receipt of USDA/FSA assistance. Wisconsin Farmers Union supports attaching soil and water conservation standards (conservation compliance) to eligibility for federal and state farm programs.

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports premium reductions and other incentives to include perennial crops and cover crops in the rotation.

3. COMMODITY MARKETING AND PRICES

Wisconsin Farmers Union believes our production and marketing practices can and must be adjusted to give farm families full opportunity to earn and receive an income comparable with Americans in other lines of work and that will make farming attractive to future generations. It is important to educate consumers, voters and politicians on the benefits of a fair pricing system for all agricultural products.

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports the creation of a safety net or price supports based only on a percentage of historical production.

To ensure greater transparency of cash trading in dairy products at the Chicago Mercantile Exchange, Wisconsin Farmers Union calls for a permanent federal agency to oversee cash trading in agricultural commodities, and that the agency have investigative and penalty powers.

Wisconsin Farmers Union opposes any change to the Agricultural Producer Security Fund that would reduce financial protections for farmers.

4. DISASTER ASSISTANCE

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports a permanent federal farm disaster program.

5. CONSERVATION PROGRAMS

a. CONSERVATION STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM (CSP)

CSP is successful and should be fully-funded. Full funding of CSP will provide the hay and grazing program called for by Wisconsin Farmers Union and encourage and assist in financing better conservation stewardship of soil and water.

b. ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY INCENTIVE PROGRAM (EQIP)

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports full funding of EQIP for practices such as planting cover crops, nutrient management planning, stream bank fencing, barnyard runoff control, wildlife food plots, and no-till planting methods. Wisconsin Farmers Union supports a voluntary approach to the environmental stewardship concept of EQIP, with a prohibition on EQIP payments to CAFOs.

c. CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM (CRP)

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports CRP and Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) to retire environmentally sensitive land and allow limited haying. We support expanding acreage from the current cap to 30 million acres.

6. COMMODITY CHECK-OFF PROGRAMS

a. REVIEW OF CHECK-OFF PROGRAMS AND REFERENDUM

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports a systematic and public review of all the commodity check-off programs overseen by USDA. This review should assess if and how the check-off programs are working in the best interest of the farmers.

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports a referendum of all affected producers in each check-off program for farmers to indicate if they want the check-off to continue or to amend and improve the use of the funds.

In order to end abuse of programs, Wisconsin Farmers Union supports greater safeguards to ensure that organizations engaging in lobbying activities do not receive or derive benefit from checkoff dollars.

b. ORGANIC CHECK-OFF

Wisconsin Farmers Union does not support the creation of an Organic Research and Promotion Program, aka an Organic Checkoff.

7. COMMODITIES & LIVESTOCK

a. DAIRY POLICY

In many years, the average cost of production for a hundredweight of milk exceeds the price paid to farmers. As a result of farm prices falling below parity, dairy farmers' quality of life has suffered. Wisconsin Farmers Union supports a shift away from federal farm policy based on agricultural subsidies, and a return to federal farm policy using parity pricing as a conceptual framework or guideline. WFU supports an equitable means of pricing milk that does not create disadvantages for family farmers.

WFU's Dairy Producer Survey indicated that dairy farmers in Wisconsin were losing nearly a dollar per hundredweight in 2016. Large numbers of dairy farmers also indicated that milk price volatility contributed to stress, reduced re-investment in the farm, and deterred future generations from taking over the farm.

Milk price volatility has increased dramatically since the mid-1980's, due to a combination of diminishing government price support levels, increased international trade in dairy products, and the loosening of regulations on speculation in commodity markets.

The Federal Margin Protection Program (MPP) utterly failed to mitigate milk price volatility or support dairy farmers during the period of low prices between 2014 and 2018. State programs such as the Dairy 30x20 Program, with its stated goal of increasing Wisconsin milk production to 30 billion pounds annually by 2020, further exacerbates the oversupply that is driving down prices for dairy farmers.

WFU urges Congress to overhaul or eliminate the Dairy Margin Coverage Program, and replace it with a policy that makes price stability the top priority for dairy policy. The following have been shown to mitigate dairy price volatility, and should be considered:

1. Price support levels that are high enough to constitute a floor, but not so high that they encourage overproduction and constitute a burden on taxpayers.
2. Management to deter oversupply.

Congress should seriously consider expanding the Livestock Gross Margin-Dairy program, which has worked much better than the MPP to protect farmers from heavy losses.

WFU supports the concept of tax-deferred savings accounts for farmers, to encourage farmers to set aside money that can be withdrawn in cases of price collapse or natural disaster. We support suspension of the Dairy 30x20 program in periods where there is an over-supply of milk.

WFU urges dairy cooperatives to implement internal oversupply management systems that apply proportionally to all members to harmonize their supply of milk with their processing capacity. Oversupply management should not be achieved by summarily dropping existing members. WFU encourages farmers who are members of cooperatives to advocate within their coops for supply management, in order to avoid costly dumping of milk due to oversupply.

WFU urges farmers to use the risk management tools at their disposal:

- On-farm diversification of income streams;
- Reduced reliance on purchased inputs, to lessen the impact of feed cost variability;

- Use of forward contracts and hedging to reduce instability and uncertainty in farm income.

WFU supports efforts by the Commodities Futures Trading Commission (CFTC) to impose position limits on speculators trading in agricultural commodities. Agricultural commodities markets should exist for the benefit of those with a stake in the industry, and not simply speculators seeking to make money off of growing price swings in commodities.

1. DAIRY MARGIN COVERAGE PROGRAM

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports a Dairy Margin Coverage Program that:

a. Supports family farmers, allowing them a reasonable return for their product to maintain a viable business operation, including upkeep and improvements, while also supporting a family household.

b. Provides all dairy farms with a reasonable opportunity for protection, regardless of the size and type of operation, with reduced premiums for those producing under 4 million pounds of milk per year.

c. Includes mandatory and meaningful supply management provisions.

d. Provides the flexibility necessary to accommodate expanding operations.

2. NATIONAL POOLING

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports national Class I milk pooling because fluid milk is no longer a regional product. We further support the inclusion of all U.S. regions in the Federal Milk Marketing Order.

3. MILK PRICING

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports amending the milk pricing formula so that farmers' pay price reflects a blend price of all cheeses, including specialty cheeses, rather than the CME price of cheddar. We further support alternative product price formulas that provide a profitable pay price to dairy farmers.

4. COOPERATIVES WORKING TOGETHER (CWT)

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports the CWT program, which has worked to provide farmer-controlled inventory management. The CWT program should be audited annually by an independent agency. Wisconsin Farmers Union has supported the CWT program in the past and recognizes its part in efforts to maintain a viable milk price. We consider CWT a short-term solution that must be tied to a long-term supply management program.

5. DAIRY INCENTIVE STABILIZATION

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports the concept of a self-funded Incentive plan that utilizes cull cow sales to create long-term stability, and keeps dairy operations profitable.

6. INVENTORY MANAGEMENT

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports passage of legislation to establish a long-term inventory management program for dairy, based on daily reporting. We favor a mandatory program to prevent Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) stocks from becoming excessive. We urge the government to utilize the Dairy Export Incentive Program (DEIP).

7. MILK PRICE REPORTING

Due to allegations of unjust milk pricing, Wisconsin Farmers Union urges that all milk purchased and sold in the U.S. be reported to the Secretary of Agriculture on a monthly basis and be made available to the public. The prices reported to USDA and published should include the basic price as well as any sale to a particular plant. It also should include any differences attributed to patron size or location. WFU also desires a requirement making the provisions of private contracts between milk buyers and farmers be reported to the Secretary and that the terms of those contract provisions be made public.

8. USE OF MILK CHECKOFF FUNDS

Wisconsin milk producers pay a 15-cent per hundred pounds of milk (cwt.) check-off for research and promotion of natural cheese and other dairy products. Wisconsin Farmers Union opposes using check-off funding for promoting the use of imported casein and MPC in the use of natural dairy products. We also oppose diverting dairy check-off funds for uses unrelated to promotion and research of dairy product consumption.

Wisconsin Farmers Union encourages the Wisconsin Dairy Council division of the Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin to use 5 cents of the 15-cent check-off to purchase Wisconsin dairy products for use in Wisconsin schools, to encourage dairy product consumption among children.

9. ASSESSMENT OF IMPORTED MILK PRODUCTS

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports current legislative action to establish an assessment fee on all imported dairy products that is the equivalent of the assessment charged on domestic products.

10. MILK PROTEIN CONCENTRATE; ULTRA-FILTERED MILK PRODUCTS

Imported products such as casein, milk protein concentrate (MPC) and ultra-filtered (UF) milk products, blends and food preparations have benefited from a significant loophole in U.S. dairy trade policy and have distorted the U.S. dairy market. Casein and MPC imports are entering the U.S. because they are not limited under the Harmonized Tariff Schedules of the WTO. In addition, casein, MPC and UF products are being used in the current production of standardized cheeses, although they do not meet the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's (FDA) definition of milk. Wisconsin Farmers Union supports the following:

a. Maintaining FDA's current definition of milk to prevent casein and MPC from being used in standardized cheese;

b. Actions that restrict the importation of casein, MPC, dairy blends and food preps;

c. Properly informing consumers about the use of casein, MPC/UF dairy blends and food preps in food production, including labeling;

d. Making casein, MPC and other dairy blends subject to Tariff Rate Quotas on a milk equivalent basis within the milk import quota;

e. Strong penalties for the dairy plants using casein, MPC and dairy blends in standardized cheese production;

f. Requirement of an end-use certification on all imports of MPC, dairy blends and food preps;

g. Bringing a trade action against nations that are dumping subsidized MPC, dairy blends and food preps;

h. Disallowing MPC for human consumption until it meets the necessary generally regarded as safe (GRAS) requirements; and

i. We oppose government subsidization of the production of MPC. Wisconsin Farmers Union should work with allied organizations toward the above ends.

j. Labeling cheese as "free of imported MPCs and casein."

k. Increased enforcement of FDA rules regarding the use of MPC in Wisconsin cheese by DATCP, and the inspection of warehouses and documentation of statewide MPC usage in cheese manufacturing.

11. DEFINITION OF MILK

Wisconsin Farmers Union opposes any changes in the FDA definition of milk, cheese or other products made with milk. Wisconsin Farmers Union opposes the use of the word milk to designate any product not derived from mammals.

12. GRADE A FLUID MILK STANDARDS

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports efforts by the National Dairy Board, the National Milk Producers Federation and other dairy cooperatives and state agencies to revise the standards for Grade A fluid milk products to that equal to or exceeding the fluid milk standards set by the state of California.

13. PASTEURIZED MILK ORDINANCE (SOMATIC CELL COUNT)

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports reducing the allowable Somatic Cell Count to 400,000 over a six month rolling average.

14. RAW MILK

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports legalization of raw milk sales under the following conditions:

a. Direct sales from producer to consumer

b. Products are labeled as unpasteurized milk products

c. Products meet or exceed Grade A standards

d. Seller must register with the Department of Agriculture Trade and Consumer Protection.

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports shielding farmers from civil liability in the event that someone is harmed from the consumption of raw milk due to consumer negligence.

15. TERMINATION OF SERVICE

Milk processors should be required to give farms 60-day notice before any changes to premium structure or required fees and give 90-day notice before termination of service. In absence of a catastrophic or health-related

event, farmers should be required to give 30-day notice of discontinuing their relationship with their processor. Farms producing over 2 million pounds per year should be required to give 30-day notice of any increase in annual milk production over 30 percent.

b. HAY AND PASTURE

Hay and forage crops for hay and managed pasture should be considered program crops for purposes of government payments. Farmers who grow forage crops for hay or pasture get no direct financial assistance from farm programs, and the land used for these important crops is effectively disqualified for USDA assistance, even though the crops are very sustainable and well-suited in conservation plans. Their use should be encouraged, not penalized, as is presently done. Wisconsin Farmers Union should increase its efforts to promote the importance of these crops and renew its effort in obtaining much-deserved financial assistance comparable to other crops that can be grown on the same land. Funding for a full-time grazing support person at the state level must be allocated.

c. ORGANIC AGRICULTURE PROGRAMS

Wisconsin Farmers Union recognizes the importance of organic farming as a method to help family farms remain viable. Organic farming is a management-intensive farming system designed to achieve a balance in the agricultural and livestock systems similar to that found in natural systems.

In order to maintain the distinct market of organic agriculture, we support the maintenance and enforcement of a strong national standard. We urge the USDA to continue to maintain a National Organic Standards Board complete with adequate funding.

We urge USDA to adopt other additional rules, such as the Organic Livestock & Poultry Practices Rule, as requested by the National Organic Standards Board to further strengthen the standard.

We urge USDA to enforce the rule requiring organic producers to pasture ruminants for the entire growing season. This should be defined as not less than 120 days and require that at least 30% of the animals' dry matter come from pasture during the growing season. Failure to enforce this rule has resulted in CAFOs, with as many as 10,000 cows, being certified as organic, even though they have not met the pasturing requirement.

In addition, we urge USDA to require all replacement animals be organic in origin, defined as an animal that has been raised as organic at least 90 days prior to gestation, once the farm is organic certified.

We support protection for organic producers from chemical drift and/or GMO cross-pollination and provide reasonable redress for any damage caused.

We support organic food products with proper labeling.

We support funding at the state level for full-time organic agriculture support person at DATCP.

d. FRUITS, VEGETABLES, HORTICULTURE, AQUAPONICS, AND AGROFORESTRY

Wisconsin Farmers Union encourages federal and state policies to increase investment in research, marketing and risk management targeted toward specialty (nuts, fruits, vegetables, horticulture, aquaponics, and agroforestry) crop production with a focus on sustainable practices and local and regional distribution systems.

Current USDA policies penalize participating producers when they grow fruits and vegetables. Wisconsin Farmers Union supports flexibility in USDA crop commodity programs to allow occasional fruit and vegetables production and maintain full program eligibility.

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports the USDA Tree Assistance Program, which provides assistance to orchard and vineyard owners whose stock is damaged by natural disasters.

e. HEMP

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports the import of hemp seeds from outside the United States, and the end of restrictions surrounding the transportation of hemp seeds and live plants across state boundaries.

f. HONEY/POLLINATION

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports agricultural research and education to encourage innovative approaches to protecting honeybee health and improving genetic stocks of honeybees. Continued monitoring of pest populations and pest control methods is necessary, especially in light of the outbreak of colony collapse disorder.

In addition to honey bees, numerous species of pollinators are now at risk of becoming endangered species. At least half of our bumble bee population is also in decline along with butterflies, moths, bats and birds all contributing to pollination. The continued loss of pollinators will have severe economic impact on Wisconsin agriculture affecting many nut and fruit crops including cranberries, many vegetable crops, and other traditional crops.

Wisconsin Farmers Union calls on the University of Wisconsin to launch a scientific study of new strains of mites and pests and systemic and environmental factors, such as extensive utilization of genetically modified crops and harsh and lengthy changes occurring as a result of climate change that might be weakening honey bee colonies and the production of honey. We also call on UW to study native bees, moths and butterflies serving an important role in crop pollination.

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports efforts to ensure a pure, accurately labeled honey supply.

Honey is an important agricultural product, and honey bees also provide pollination services for other agriculturally-significant crops such as soybean, canola, fruits, and vegetables. Given the harm that insecticides pose to honey bees, Wisconsin Farmers Union supports awareness education stating that insecticides should only be used in the case of an actual infestation that would result in a set level of crop deterioration if left untreated. We strongly encourage the use of Integrated Pest Management Practices to help pollinators.

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports a ban on neonicotinoids, which cause honey bee and native bee immune suppression, nosema infection, disorientation and death (see also 8. Less Harmful Pesticides under G. Research in Section XIII. Quality of Life in America).

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports the creation of more pollinator habitats through NRCS and encourages more state and federally funded programs to increase pollinator habitats.

Sweet yellow and white clovers are an important source of nectar for honeybees. Wisconsin Farmers Union opposes any attempt to classify sweet white or yellow clover as an invasive species, or to prohibit the sale or planting of sweet clover seed.

g. HORSES

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports lifting the ban on the slaughter of horses in the United States.

h. RABBITS

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports an exemption from licensing requirements for rabbit processing, or, in the absence of an exemption, the creation of a "rabbit processing license" for small producers to process their own rabbits for sale.

i. HOGS

The cost of oral fluids testing for selling feeder pigs is onerous to small producers. The current rope-test is ineffective for collecting samples on hogs with normal outdoor stimulation which do not exhibit the behavior necessary to collect a saliva sample - under-stimulated and over-stressed conditions in confinement which lead to rope chewing and its accompanying saliva. Wisconsin Farmers Union supports withdrawing the oral fluids testing for selling feeder pigs or instituting an effective sample collection procedure be developed that will work on ALL kinds of hog farms, not just confinement operations.

8. FEDERAL CROP INSURANCE

a. DIVERSIFICATION OF CROP INSURANCE OFFERINGS

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports the continuation and improvement of diversity within the federal crop insurance program. Crop insurance for all eligible commodities should be reasonably and comprehensively covered throughout the US and not restricted to a few growing areas. Therefore, Wisconsin Farmers Union supports the availability of federal crop insurance programs and products that protect against yield and/or quality losses to support the diversity of crops that can be grown and recognize the changing infrastructure and markets available to farmers and producers in Wisconsin.

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports continuation, improvement, and promotion of Whole Farm Revenue Protection.

b. USDA GUIDANCE ON COVER CROPS AND CROP INSURANCE

Cover crops have become an accepted and highly-regarded agronomic practice. Farmers in the future will increasingly need tools such as cover crops to improve water quality while improving crop productivity and nutrient efficiency.

In 2013, the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), the Risk Management Agency (RMA), and the Farm Service Agency (FSA) of USDA jointly established "Cover Crops Termination Guidelines," intended to serve as the cover crop management guide for all USDA agencies. Although these guidelines were designed to provide more certainty in treatment of cover crops compared to previous RMA guidance, the current guidelines nonetheless have still created uncertainty for producers. One particular area of concern has been the RMA's application of the requirement that a cover crop be "terminated" before an insured crop is planted. The RMA currently defines termination of a cover crop as "growth has ended." This definition has been interpreted strictly so as to deny farmers

crop insurance coverage even if only small amounts of the cover crop survive after normal and reasonable efforts to terminate the cover crop. These and other problems have inhibited effective coverage for producers and discouraged farmers from using cover crops.

The RMA's longstanding Good Farming Practices (GFP) Handbook is an established process to review all other farmer practices to determine eligibility for insurance and has worked for many years to distinguish eligible from ineligible losses. Wisconsin Farmers Union calls on RMA to eliminate the Cover Crops Termination Guidelines, and replace them with the Good Farming Practice (GFP) determination process.

We further call on the RMA to amend its definition of termination of cover crops to "the date on which a practice is applied that historically and under reasonable circumstances results in termination of the targeted plants," in any RMA guidance referring to "termination" of cover crops.

c. CROP INSURANCE PAYMENT LIMITATIONS

Wisconsin Farmers Union strongly advocates that the federal crop insurance subsidies be restricted to be applied to farmers with an adjusted gross income no greater than $100,000 adjusted annually for inflation and that federal subsidy for premium payments be no greater than $75,000 per farmer to stimulate a more level playing field for producers. Authorized crop insurers receiving federal crop insurance subsidies should be required to transparently report the profitability of their insurance operations.

d. FARMERS' RIGHTS IN A CROP INSURANCE DISPUTE

In light of the fact that a wrongful denial of a crop insurance payment can result in additional expenses and loss of income for farmers during the period that a case is in arbitration, Wisconsin Farmers Union calls on the Risk Management Agency to clearly establish that a farmer has a right to pursue damages against the insurance company in arbitration cases, particularly in the event that the denial of a crop insurance claim was arbitrary or discriminatory.

9. FARM SERVICE AGENCY

Wisconsin Farmers Union confirms our strong support for the current USDA county-based election system. We oppose the Secretary of Agriculture or any federal entity appointing USDA county committee membership.

We advocate for strong educational campaigns to help farmers make informed decisions about the options afforded to them by programs offered in the current farm program.

Wisconsin Farmers Union calls upon Congress to direct USDA to modernize to make effective its customer service platforms, loan application and servicing systems online, starting with FSA, and authorize funding to do so.

WFU supports Congress directing the FSA to streamline the application process. Congress should increase funding for loan authority across all FSA loan programs to ensure that they keep pace with demand and meet statutory participation targets for beginning and socially disadvantaged farmers.

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports decreasing experience requirements for direct farm ownership loans from three years to two.

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports making FSA programs available to beginning farmers who are co-mingling cattle with other operators.

B. SOUND SCIENCE

1. ANIMAL PATENTING AND CLONING

The scientific community's capacity to work with genetic material already has resulted in the ability to clone some animal species, and manipulate others. This technology has proceeded faster than society's thinking about the possible ramifications and impacts of the technology. Concerns about ethics, health, stewardship and the culture of animal husbandry require thought and scrutiny. Therefore, Wisconsin Farmers Union urges government institutions to establish advisory committees composed of farm producers, consumers, and the scientific community to study these issues and make recommendations as to future policy in this arena.

2. GENETICALLY MODIFIED ORGANISMS

A number of food biotechnology firms are directly marketing genetically modified organisms (GMOs). In response, scientists and consumers have raised concerns about environmental impacts and the validity of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's regulatory process concerning the safety of genetically altered foods. Further, many foreign trading partners refuse to import products that are genetically altered thereby dampening our food exports.

Wisconsin Farmers Union demands rigorous standards regarding GMO toxicity trials and long term testing to allay health concerns; we urge the following:

a. GMO seeds, crops, and animals or animal products be adequately labeled and stored, so that they do not interfere with the export or import of crops and commodities into countries that have concerns about them.

b. Seeds with the Terminator Genes, i.e., a gene to insure that seed will not reproduce, may not be marketed. Wisconsin Farmers Union opposes the use of tax dollars in developing terminator technology.

c. Farmers retain the right to save and plant seeds and breed and reproduce animals derived from proprietary organisms on their own land.

d. We support setting Wisconsin state inspection fees at an appropriate level to maintain strong state inspections. We also urge the Wisconsin state legislature to allocate sufficient funding for food and dairy inspections. Maintaining a high degree of food safety is the responsibility of all.

3. GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE

Wisconsin Farmers Union urges policymakers to consider the scientific evidence indicating that atmospheric levels of carbon dioxide are increasing and global climate change is occurring as a result of human activities. Climate change is happening and is caused by human activity and there is no acceptable justification for either federal or state authorities to avoid implementing the various means to mitigate and correct in an expeditious manner the adverse effects of climate change.

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports federal climate-change legislation provided that its application to farms is administered by the USDA instead of the EPA.

C. FOOD SECURITY AND SOVEREIGNTY

In the interest of food security, Wisconsin Farmers Union believes that a widespread network of many independent family farms is superior to a few very large food production and processing companies. In the event of disease outbreaks, natural disaster, major nuclear or industrial accidents, or in the event of war or acts of terrorism, a concentrated food supply would leave parts of the country and world more vulnerable to hardship than would be experienced with a family farm system.

The concentration of farm ownership also tends to disenfranchise many at the benefit of few, causing financial and social turmoil over time. The family farm efficiently utilizes resources to produce and distribute food and dispose of waste products through energy, labor or transportation systems.

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports establishing a revolving farmer-owned reserve of commodities to provide an adequate supply of raw materials for use as emergency food or renewable energy.

1. FOOD INSPECTION

a. Wisconsin Farmers Union supports consolidating food inspection into a single agency and creating and/or maintaining food inspection guidelines as stringent as the USDA meat inspection guidelines.

b. We support granting the USDA mandatory recall authority.

c. We support research into best handling practices for specialty crops, including nuts, fruits and vegetables.

d. We support setting Wisconsin state inspection fees at an appropriate level according to the size of operations and to allocate general purpose revenue to maintain sufficient numbers of state inspector positions.

e. Wisconsin Farmers Union supports food safety legislation that is scale appropriate. This includes support for Cottage Food laws and other rules and laws that maintain necessary food-safety provisions yet allow for increased opportunity for small-scale and local processed food enterprises.

2. RISK MANAGEMENT

Wisconsin Farmers Union recognizes the importance of risk management and food safety within the domestic food system. Wisconsin Farmers Union supports the repeal of the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA). But recognizing that it has been enacted, WFU supports implementing FSMA in a manner that:

a. Allows family farms, CSAs, food hubs, and cottage food ventures, regardless of scale, to remain profitable forms of business;

b. Allows those who employ sustainable and/or organic farming practices to do so without additional and unnecessary hardship resulting from FSMA;

c. Allows the continued growth and vitality of local food systems and value-based supply chains;

d. Supports diversified farming systems;

e. Supports beginning farmers without creating undue barriers in terms of FSMA compliance.

f. Considers the ramifications FSMA will have on the quality of produce and contains viable produce washing requirements which would not lower the quality of fresh produce;

g. Recognizes that the responsibility for risk management and food safety within the domestic food system should be shared among both producers and consumers;
h. Allows adherence to National Organic Program standards for raw manure, compost applications, and agricultural water usage.

Wisconsin Farmers Union Encourages the FDA to create a FSMA advisory panel comprised of farmers representing various types and scales of operation diversity.

3. FOOD BIOSECURITY

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports the increase of inspections of imported agricultural products, a limit on the number of ports where foreign foods enter the U.S., and sufficient federal funds to protect our agriculture supply and our ports from bioterrorism.

a. Wisconsin Farmers Union calls for enforcement of importing food products only from nations with USDA-comparable food inspection/sanitation standards, including milk protein concentrates.
b. Wisconsin Farmers Union calls for disallowing imports of agricultural products from nations that have experienced outbreaks of diseases that could contaminate the food supply until those nations' agricultural exports have been deemed safe.

4. FEDERAL SEED, ANIMAL AND GERMPLASM PRESERVATION

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports a national policy that assures and adequately funds the USDA National Center for Genetic Resources to acquire, evaluate, preserve and provide as much as feasibly possible a broad collection of genetic resources for plant, animal and germplasm diversity in the US.

5. ANTIBIOTIC USE

With regard to limitations on antimicrobial use by farmers and ranchers, Wisconsin Farmers Union supports policies that:

a. Require independent monitoring of data on the use of antibiotics in animal agriculture.
b. Encourage USDA to increase testing for pathogens and antibiotic residues in processing plants, and ensure prompt notification and consequences for animal sellers whose slaughtered animals test positive for violative levels of antibiotics.
c. Permit the use of antimicrobial drugs to treat animals showing signs of illness.
d. Permit the use of antimicrobial drugs to control the spread of disease in a herd or flock, when one or more animals in the herd or flock show signs of illness.
e. Discourage the use of antimicrobial drugs for preventative purposes in healthy animals.
f. Eliminate the use of antimicrobial drugs for growth promotion.

6. FOOD WASTE

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports the voluntary recommendations set forth in the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) food recovery hierarchy to prevent and deter food waste; encourages the USDA to study techniques to reduce or recover food waste; supports educational efforts to increase public awareness of food waste and exploit methods to reduce such waste; and advocates for active municipal composting, especially with regard to recycling food waste.

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports a federal and state tax credit or deduction to tax liability for farmers who donate food to hunger relief organizations.

7. LOCAL SEED PRODUCTION

A decentralized system of seed production is vital to the security and self-determination of family farms, the nation and humanity. Wisconsin Farmers Union supports local, state, and federal initiatives that will encourage the development of local seed production, including, but not limited to:

a. Tax breaks and other financial supports for seed companies focused on sustaining heirloom and regional varieties, conforming to open-source seed policies such as those proposed by the Open Source Seed Initiative, and sourcing their seed from family farms and indigenous peoples.
b. Encouraging land grant universities to return to the development of open-source seeds.
c. Legal protections for seed companies affected by the drift of genetically modified organisms.
d. The offering of Tax Increment Financing funds for local seed companies.
e. The development of federal and state grants for beginning seed farmers.

D. TRUTH IN LABELING

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports all manufacturer efforts to provide transparency of any and all products and practices along the supply chain, in response to the demand of consumers. The Wisconsin Farmers Union opposes any efforts to deny consumers access to such information or any regulatory efforts to conceal or confuse at any point along the supply chain.

1. COUNTRY OF ORIGIN LABELING (COOL)

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports the COOL requirements as mandated in the 2008 Farm Bill and urges its expansion to the labeling of all food products distributed and sold in the U.S. Wisconsin Farmers Union supports country of origin labeling for all meat and dairy products.

2. ORGANIC FOOD PRODUCTS

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports proper labeling of organic food products.

3. GENETICALLY MODIFIED ORGANISMS (GMOs)

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports labeling GMO products. Wisconsin Farmers Union maintains that QR codes or the requirement to call a telephone number or visit a website in order to find product ingredients are not adequate to inform consumers, and are not in the spirit of package labeling.

4. CLONED ANIMALS

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports the use of milk or meat products from cloned animals when those products are labeled as such.

5. SYNTHETIC BOVINE GROWTH HORMONE

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports the continuation of standards for labeling milk and dairy products, enabling farmers and consumers to have the opportunity to choose whether to use or consume synthetic BGH. Wisconsin Farmers Union supports labeling laws to allow milk to be labeled r-BST free.

6. IRRADIATED FOOD LABELING

Food products that have been irradiated must be labeled as such, and appropriate educational materials should be made available to consumers.

7. LAB- OR FACTORY-CULTURED MEAT-LIKE PRODUCTS

Wisconsin Farmers Union asserts that products labeled as "meat," and products bearing species-specific designations such as beef, pork, chicken, turkey, lamb, fish, etc., must come from the carcass of a slaughtered animal. Products derived from culturing or reproducing animal proteins or tissues outside of the body of a living animal must be clearly labeled as "lab-grown," "produced in a factory," "not derived from harvested livestock," or similar labeling.

E. PREMISES REGISTRATION AND ANIMAL IDENTIFICATION

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports premises registration as implemented by the State of Wisconsin, as well as national premises registration, provided that it is funded by the general public and not by farmers. Wisconsin Farmers Union supports Wisconsin dairy farm permits as a form of registering their premises, thereby not adding cost or paperwork for dairy farms.

We support the USDA's new strategy to place the sole responsibility of animal identification in the states.

We support state livestock organizations' efforts to find best ways to address the issue of compatible traceability of disease management.

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports the current systems of animal identification used by farmers and processors and do not support the National Animal Identification System (NAIS). Any additional mandates for animal identification will result in costs disproportionately borne by farmers and ranchers.

The use of proprietary information collected through any trace back programs should be subject to strict limits and should not be available to the private sector through the Freedom of Information Act. Wisconsin Farmers Union supports state funding of the Wisconsin Livestock Identification Consortium. Animal identification programs must not be used as a means for packers and processors to transfer liability to the original owner of the animal; instead, trace-back information should mitigate producer liability for contaminated food products.

III. ENERGY

A. FEDERAL POLICIES

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports a balanced national energy policy that would effectively address energy conservation and research, maintaining an adequate supply of existing energy sources and the implementation of alternative energy sources. We promote the increased use of corn-based and most critically, cellulosic-based, ethanol or other viable alternative fuels such as biomass; biodiesel; methane and other agriculture-derived products.

Clean, efficient energy should be affordable to all, with adequate supplies to meet the needs of Wisconsin and the U.S. Energy sources should be diverse and developed as close to points of use as possible rather than depending upon long distance and vulnerable transmission and transportation networks.

We urge the establishment of a national petroleum reserve to ensure an emergency supply for agriculture and other essential industries.

Wisconsin Farmers Union urges policymakers to consider the true costs of energy when making fuel decisions: the cost of importing energy, the national defense costs associated with trading with hostile countries, and the costs of greenhouse gas emissions on the environment.

Wisconsin Farmers Union asks for farmers to be considered part of the solution, rather than the problem, in establishing a clean, independent energy policy. Wisconsin has the ability to sustainably produce biomass crops, oilseed crops and animal fats to be used for energy. We support the community-based development of localized, decentralized alternative energy and encourage tax credits and incentives for the proliferation of on-farm or community-based energy sources. Wisconsin Farmers Union is committed to partnering with rural electric coops to develop a positive vision for rural renewable energy into the future.

Wisconsin Farmers Union affirms its support for the research and development of the various types of renewable energy in Wisconsin to provide a stronger market for Wisconsin farmers, a local supply of byproduct feedstuffs for dairy and livestock producers, and a safer additive for gasoline and diesel fuel that will also decrease our dependence on foreign oil.

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports measures that increase conservation as well as the use of renewable fuels. Both measures are needed to ensure a clean and diversified energy economy. Wisconsin Farmers Union supports a revenue-neutral carbon fee and dividend such as the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act of 2019 (HR-763). The goal of such a policy should be to meet or exceed the emissions reductions required to meet the targets adopted in Paris at the 21st meeting of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports the national 25 x 25 program, which calls for renewable energy to comprise 25 percent of the U.S. energy supply by 2025.

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports research and initiatives to explore ways for farmers to produce energy that does not contribute to global climate change.

B. STATE POLICIES

1. RENEWABLE ENERGY BUYBACK PROGRAM

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports a program administered by the Public Service Commission that will set utility payment rates for small renewable energy producers who want to create and feed energy into the electric grid. By establishing known buyback rates, it encourages distributed generation of renewable energy and enables farmers, small businesses, homeowners, churches and others to install renewable energy systems.

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports increasing the statewide feed-in tariff/net metering to cover systems up to 40 kilowatts, so that owners of such systems will have the assurance that they will be paid at the retail rate, on a monthly basis, for energy produced over and above what is used by their household, business, or farm.

Wisconsin Farmers Union opposes raising the connection rates for public utilities to acquire electricity from individual home-owners and farmers beyond the present levels, and in fact in some cases advocates lowering these rates and costs which exceed the actual cost of connection equipment.

2. LOW CARBON FUEL STANDARD

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports the establishment of a Low Carbon Fuel Standard (LCFS) in Wisconsin. An LCFS calls for a reduction in carbon emissions from transportation fuels, based on the carbon content of all fuels and transformations in the market over an extended period of time. This standard should take into consideration the energy production potential of Wisconsin, instead of being based on other states' LCFS, such as California.

3. FOCUS ON ENERGY PROGRAM

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports better tailoring of Focus on Energy programs to better meet the needs of farmers and rural residents, including those who use propane for heating. This includes a commitment to robust funding for customer-sited renewable energy under the Focus on Energy Program as well as supporting electric cooperative programs that support energy efficiency and renewable energy in lieu of the Focus on Energy Programs.

4. RENEWABLE ENERGY FINANCING

Wisconsin Farmers Union endorses customers hosting renewable projects such as solar, digesters, small hydro, and wind systems provided through third-party financing.

5. FAIRNESS IN STATE ALTERNATIVE ENERGY SUBSIDIES

If the state of Wisconsin will provide financial assistance to induce larger farming livestock operations to install anaerobic digesters, Wisconsin Farmers Union in the spirit of even-handedness calls for the state to also provide equitable financial assistance to other farmers in their installation of alternative energy production systems.

6. PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION (PSC)

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports requiring the PSC to develop a clear, consistent and stable framework for supporting increased investments in distributed renewable generation, whether customer-driven (e.g. behind-the-meter solar or direct sale to utility) or utility-driven (e.g. community solar). Policies for facilitating small-scale renewables include reasonable export rates for customer-sited renewable generation, safeguards against discriminatory billing and interconnection practices, and reasonable terms/tariffs that enable utilities to apply customer-sited generation towards their environmental or renewable energy requirements.

7. WISCONSIN'S RENEWABLE ELECTRICITY STANDARD

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports an increase of Wisconsin's Renewable Electricity Standard to 25% by 2025 (comprised entirely of renewable energy generated in the state).

8. ELECTRIC AND HYBRID VEHICLES

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports the development of a robust electrical vehicle charging network. Wisconsin Farmers Union opposes additional state fees on hybrid or electric vehicles.

C. LOCAL POLICIES

1. COMMUNITY SOLAR

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports community solar generation, and encourages communities to offer such programs to local citizens.

D. BIODIESEL

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports:

1. Consumer and distribution incentives to further the inclusion of biodiesel in Wisconsin. Biodiesel is a cleaner, homegrown, renewable fuel that reduces our consumption of fossil fuels and supports Wisconsin agriculture.

2. A recommendation to focus state resources to increase the use of biodiesel and the availability and reliability of biodiesel fuel sold in Wisconsin.

3. Expanding the distribution network for biodiesel fuel throughout the state by instituting tax incentives for wholesale and retail distributors.

4. Increased use of biodiesel fuel through the development of informational and educational materials and programs for the public and diesel product manufacturers.

5. State adoption of a definition of biodiesel that conforms to current federal standards.

6. Establishing proper testing labs and enforcement resources for biodiesel fuel within the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection or the Department of Commerce.

7. Elimination or reduction of the state road tax for biodiesel and Straight Vegetable Oil (SVO) fuel.

Wisconsin Farmers Union opposes the reduction of federal subsidies for biodiesel production until the biodiesel industry becomes established at a self-sufficient level.

E. ETHANOL

The ethanol industry is important to the U.S.'s independence from reliance on foreign oil and to the local agricultural economy. Wisconsin Farmers Union supports:

1. Federal subsidies for locally-owned ethanol production, research, and development until the industry becomes established at a self-sufficient level.

2. Biomass production of ethanol from any potential source.

3. The continuation of the ethanol import tariff. Biofuels should not be exported or imported until energy independence is achieved.

4. Aggressive and ambitious cellulosic ethanol development and production, geared to rapidly developing necessary technology, to compliment traditional ethanol supplies of motor fuels.

5. Extensive research on usage and marketing of distillers' grain for feed and other value-added uses.

6. Development of infrastructure to improve pipeline distribution and accessibility to filling station/pumps of biofuels across the U.S.

7. Government purchase and use of flex-fuel vehicles fueled with renewable fuels.

8. Blender pumps to be available at all fueling stations throughout the U.S.

9. Implementation of the federal regulation allowing e30 to be used.

10. Implementation of a federal 30 percent ethanol mandate. We oppose any reduction to the Renewable Fuel Standard.

11. Vehicle manufacturers improving motor fuel efficiency and expanding availability of ethanol compatible powertrains.

F. ETHANOL WAIVERS

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports:

1. The Renewable Fuel Standard mandate to blend ethanol to at least 10 percent with gasoline be restored to its originally intended level.

2. At least 10 percent of the gasoline sold in the US be non-exempt for refiners to receive waivers exempting their blending under the Renewable Fuel Standard.

3. The Environmental Protection Agency be required to mandate that blended ethanol be no less than 18 billion gallons per year or the maximum amount of production generated. No further waivers to the Renewable Fuel Standard should be granted if that limit is not met.

G. WIND ENERGY

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports community-based development and distribution of electric generation from wind. With today's technology, farmers have the ability to supply a substantial portion of the nation's electricity from wind and recognize new income potential.

We call for federal legislation to require all utilities to allow community-based wind projects access to the electric grid by actively pursuing power purchase agreements.

In order to help expand the use of smaller wind energy systems, we support net metering for systems up to 100kW. Wisconsin Farmers Union supports billing small wind generators on an annual basis. Net metering allows bidirectional metering of electricity, measured by one meter, where there is no discrimination between electricity produced and electricity consumed by the small electricity consumer-generator.

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports uniform wind siting standards that are consistent and enforced, ensuring transparent regulatory and approval processes that protect public health and safety, and are based on peer reviewed literature, research, and sound science. Wisconsin Farmers Union supports the development of a system of uniform testing standards for wind turbine systems, to enable potential buyers to compare systems.

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports a comprehensive policy that protects landowners from speculation and unfair contracts in the development of natural resources such as wind development.

1. WIND ENERGY LANDOWNERS' RIGHTS

Wisconsin Farmers Union calls for the following principles in any wind turbine siting contract:

a. Prohibition of non-disclosure or secrecy clauses in leases. Non-disclosure clauses serve only to protect the interests of the contractor/developer. Landowners should be allowed to review leases with attorneys, lenders and other holders of leases to ascertain the relative value of a lease offer;

b. Establishment of a registry of current standard wind leases and that they are made accessible to the public. A registry allows landowners to compare offered leases with standard leases and better ascertain the relative value of a lease offer. It also allows landowners to compare other lease terms with standard leases;

c. Prohibition of mandatory arbitration clauses. Mandatory arbitration requirements are becoming more common in contracts. Prohibiting such clauses in contracts will ensure the right of civil litigation for landowners in lease disputes and help balance the legal interests of landowners and developers;

d. Limiting length of lease options. Limiting the term of lease options will prevent companies from tying up large tracts of land for extended periods, thus encouraging the use of lease options for actual development instead of speculation;

e. Authorizing collective bargaining of leases. Allowing landowners to bargain collectively for standard lease terms throughout a region or development project would encourage fairness in the application of lease terms among multiple landowners;

f. Bonding and reclamation protections. This would encourage responsible energy development and transmission at outset of the lease by providing funds up front for reclamation of land after turbine, tower or project life has expired;

g. Prohibition of prior investment as a condition of lease or option of fulfillment. This discourages the use of option development to coerce investment by landowners;

h. Prohibition of farmland ownership by energy development or generation companies. Compliance would ensure that agricultural land remains in the hands of producers and retains the agricultural value of the land used in energy development;

i. Prohibition of rights of first refusal by developers. Developers should not be able to obtain the right of first refusal in lease options/contracts. Right of first refusal allows a developer to tie up land, and/or reduce marketability of landowner's land without purchasing an option;

j. Disclosure of actual lease payments in contracts. This requires that actual lease payments, potential premiums and formula used determine said premiums be established and disclosed as a condition of a final lease agreement during negotiation of a contract;

k. A five working-day cooling-off period after a lease agreement is signed. This allows a landowner a window to reconsider if, for example, their attorney has an objection to the contract language;

l. Prohibition of severability of surface rights and wind. Land ownership should not be severed from natural resources associated with the surface.

H. ALTERNATIVE FERTILIZER/PLANT FOODS

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports research to develop alternatives to petroleum-based nitrogen. We urge our regional cooperatives to become more involved in manufacturing of basic plant food nutrients and ownership of such facilities.

I. ANAEROBIC DIGESTERS

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports research to make anaerobic digesters a profitable venture for smaller livestock operations. Wisconsin Farmers Union further supports funding and development assistance for community digesters.

J. ELECTRIC UTILITY DEREGULATION

Proposals have been discussed to deregulate the electric power industry. However, Wisconsin Farmers Union believes deregulation would benefit a few large industrial users of electricity and the stockholders of a few investor-owned utilities, while increasing electricity costs to residential (rural and city) ratepayers, small businesses and farms. Wisconsin Farmers Union opposes adoption of legislative or regulatory action at either the national, state or local level that may have negative effects on rural consumers.

K. ELECTRIC TRANSMISSION LINES

Any new high-voltage transmission lines constructed in the State of Wisconsin may impact unique eco-regions and scenic landscapes that possess important environmental values. The construction, operation, and maintenance of future transmission lines may significantly impact agricultural practices as well as regional ecology. New high-voltage transmission lines should only be approved when demand for electricity is clearly demonstrated by a publicly transparent assessment process carried out by an independent public agency and not a private developer. Increased need for electricity should first be addressed by development of non-transmission alternatives and local resources including energy efficiency, wind power, solar power, demand response, and energy storage.

When the construction of new transmission lines is being considered, Wisconsin Farmers Union demands that local governments are provided adequate information and input into the permitting process. Wisconsin Farmers Union also asks that when new transmission lines are built, farmers and landowners are fairly compensated, including adjacent property

devaluation. New transmission lines should be constructed with the capability to accept energy generated by renewable-energy facilities along the line.

Wisconsin Farmers Union advocates for the following principles when developing or enhancing the energy generation and transmission system:

1. Maximizing cost-effective conservation, efficiency, and load management;

2. Relying to the greatest extent possible on state-based renewable generation;

3. Supporting local ownership of energy generation that includes dispersed renewable energy, which contributes to the local economy and creates jobs;

4. Minimizing the size, scale, voltage and environmental impacts of electric transmission.

5. Basing decisions on a full comparison of alternative solutions, including aggressive energy efficiency, demand side management, distributed generation incentive programs, and scheduled low voltage improvements to meet in-state reliability.

6. Requiring the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin to provide the public easy to understand cost-benefit comparisons of non-transmission and transmission alternatives that the Public Service Commission writes, and that take into account short and long-term monetary and environmental impacts over the life of the project;

7. Requiring the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin to provide this cost-benefit information to the public and at Environmental Impact Statement scoping meetings;

8. Requiring the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin to contract with an impartial third party to conduct an equally comprehensive economic and environmental impact analysis of various transmission and non-transmission alternatives and to include this in the agency's Environmental Impact Statements.

Wisconsin Farmers Union may intervene in any Public Service Commission proposal to construct new high-voltage transmission lines within any region of Wisconsin. WFU may file public comments as part of the Environmental Impact Statement processes carried out by the federal Rural Utility Service and State of Wisconsin Public Service Commission and Department of Natural Resources.

L. STRAY VOLTAGE

Wisconsin Farmers Union urges the state legislature and involved state agencies to require power companies to correct stray voltage problems and electrical pollution, and to provide financial reimbursement to injured parties. Possible remedies include compensating farmers for damage from electrical pollution and requiring necessary upgrades in the existing electrical transmission system. We support legislation that defines objectionable current flow on grounding rods and prohibits utilities from returning current through the earth.

M. NUCLEAR POWER

We oppose lifting the moratorium on new nuclear fuel generation in Wisconsin. Additionally, we oppose new nuclear waste storage sites in Wisconsin.

N. TAX CREDITS

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports federal tax credits for solar, wind energy, geothermal, and other renewable and alternative energy sources at the level of 30% and tax credits for combined heat and power (CHP) systems at the level of 10%. We support the extension of production tax credits to provide financial incentives for wind energy development. We support a national Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) of 25 percent by 2025 that includes a strong local ownership component. We also support making the Federal production tax credit for wind energy more applicable to farmers by extending the Federal production tax credit to offset schedule F income.

IV. INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND AGRICULTURE-RELATED INVESTMENT

A. INTERNATIONAL TRADE STANDARDS

Wisconsin Farmers Union will aggressively seek the inclusion of the following provisions and objectives in U.S. trade policy, international trade negotiations and agreements to be contained in any international trade negotiations and agreements:

1. Acceptance of the multi-functionality of production agriculture.

2. Requirement that all commodities be fully negotiated and no preferential treatment be granted to specific commodities.

3. Initiation of a commodity-by-commodity study on the impact of an agreement on exports and imports, which should be made public.

4. Development of an effective mechanism to offset the negative impact of differences in exchange rates.

5. Retention of Domestic Trade Remedy Authority.

6. Elimination of unilateral sanctions on agricultural and medical products.

7. Coordination of efforts internationally to reduce the anti-competitive results of increased concentration in agriculture.

8. Preservation of U.S. rights and policy flexibility to provide economic safety net assistance to agricultural producers, including inventory management and Trade Adjustment Assistance for agriculture.

9. Support for international cooperation to achieve improved commodity prices by balancing supply and demand.

10. Imported food or feed must have been produced, processed and packaged under standards consistent with U.S. standards.

11. A U.S. ban on all imports of dairy, livestock and poultry, including any products containing hides or feathers, from any nations with documented Foot and Mouth Disease.

12. Verification that farmers and farmer organizations in local counter-party importing countries are receptive to the terms of the proposed treaties.

13. Requirement that all trade agreements comport with the Trade Reform, Accountability, Development, and Employment (TRADE) Act, which requires that all trade agreements include provisions that ensure other countries have environmental, food safety, health, and labor standards equal to or greater than those in the United States.

14. Seeks to improve harmonization of health, consumer and worker safety, human rights, and environmental standards using scientific criteria, without limiting the ability of nations to establish higher domestic standards in cases where scientific questions remain or important domestic concerns exist.

Wisconsin Farmers Union is opposed to fast track authority for future trade agreements.

We oppose protectionist measures of any kind except for those necessitated by verifiable national security reasons that are verified by multilateral non-governmental entities such as the United Nations and World Trade Organization.

B. EXECUTING STABLE TRADE PRACTICES FOR AGRICULTURAL PRODUCE AND AVOIDING TARIFFS BY CONSTRUCTIVE, COLLABORATIVE NEGOTIATING

The vast majority of farmers rely on exports both to act as a release valve for their overproduction and to be a major factor in deterring price drops for their commodities. Whatever criticisms, however valid, against bilateral and multilateral trade agreements and the World Trade Organization (and its predecessor, the General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs) may exist, foreign trade for US agriculture is essential for both exports and imports and much of US farming. Protectionist measures such as embargoes and tariffs destabilize commodity markets, create artificial incentives that distort market structures and economically rational market functions, induce inefficiencies, and raise consumer costs. Recent US trade policy utilizing tariffs and non-tariff trade barriers have resulted in needless, ineffective, and non-productive trade wars with retaliatory tariffs on US agricultural produce. The amount of payment in the USDA's Trade Reconciliation program of $28 billion only marginally compensates farmers for their lost market share in their traditional markets and the lost revenue accruing from the extraordinary drop in commodity prices (for soybeans, dairy, wheat, corn, pork, etc.), that exacerbates the continued loss of farm income.

Wisconsin Farmers Union prefers open market access, to the extent that it does not destabilize market supply management, where farmers can compete with other exporters of agricultural products, rather than relying on US government compensation subsidies. Notwithstanding the aforenoted, the USDA and the federal government should provide

compensation payments to farmers in an amount that actually covers farmers' market losses and their lost income in commodity prices when the federal government causes farmers' lost revenue because of deficient policy.

Wisconsin Farmers Union advocates that the US Administration, the US Trade Representative, and the US government use more conciliatory approaches in resolving trade disputes with US' traditional and major trade partners, rather than ineffective practices like tariffs and embargoes.

Wisconsin Farmers Union calls on Congress, the US Trade Representative, and the Administration to desist from injudiciously applying tariffs, to negotiate trade relations in a more collaborative, open, and non-confrontational approach to settle trade imbalances and disputes, and to make better use of organizations such as the World Trade Organization in addressing trade imbalances and disputes.

Wisconsin Farmers Union calls upon these same parties to remove tariffs imposed on certain US imports from traditional trade partners which will result in the removal of retaliatory tariffs on US farm exports. Wisconsin Farmers Union requests that the USDA increase its appropriations (a) for expanding traditional US agricultural product export markets that have been harmed because of imprudent US trade policy resulting in loss of market share and (b) for developing new markets.

C. OWNERSHIP OF FARMLAND BY INSTITUTIONAL INVESTORS IN ALL COUNTRIES

Wisconsin Farmers Union opposes the investment in forestlands and arable lands in all countries by institutional investors (corporations, commercial and investment banks, pension funds, life insurance companies, endowments, high net-worth individuals, sovereign wealth funds, all of which apply to both domestic and foreign entities, amongst others). These lands should primarily be owned, managed, and farmed, if so desired, by domestic family farmers. We also urge DATCP to vigorously enforce the law limiting ownership by foreign entities to 640 acres of land in Wisconsin.

V. AGRIBUSINESS CONCENTRATION AND ANTITRUST

A. FEDERAL ANTI-TRUST LAWS

Enforcement of federal anti-trust laws has been ineffectual for decades, with very few meaningful investigations into mergers and acquisitions of large scale agricultural producers, suppliers and processors. Farmers are facing the increasingly deleterious effects of lack of competition in numerous markets. For example, when four large beef packers control over 80% of the market, it does not allow for a fair, competitive market environment. This is true in beef, poultry, hogs, dairy, grain, seed, fertilizer, farm equipment, and transportation. Lack of competition in these markets, as well as in the retail food sector, has coincided with a decline in the vitality of rural communities.

Given the rapidly changing nature of the marketplace, we call for the U.S. Department of Justice to write guidelines on monopsony and oligopsony in anticipation of further concentration of buyers, as well as sellers, in the marketplace.

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports state policies that limit vertical integration within agricultural industries in order to protect family farms from unfair competition and monopolistic (or non-competitive) business practices.

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports policies to limit vertical integration and to protect family farms from unfair competition and monopolistic (only one seller) oligopolistic (only a few sellers), monopsonistic (only one buyer), and oligopsonistic (only a few buyers) business practices. Federal regulators should enforce current laws utilizing structural definitions as well as marketplace impacts, and revise and reform applicable legislation to insure fair market pricing and the avoidance of non-competitive market control.

1. ANTI-TRUST ENFORCEMENT BY THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE AND FEDERAL TRADE COMMISSION

Wisconsin Farmers Union calls for a congressional investigation of monopolistic business practices and growing concentration of ownership in the agricultural sector. Wisconsin Farmers Union calls on the U.S. Department of Justice and the Federal Trade Commission to more rigorously appraise merger and acquisition permits and to aggressively prosecute violators of antitrust laws. We urge enforcement of all antitrust laws pertaining to agribusiness concentration.

2. USDA GRAIN INSPECTION, PACKERS AND STOCKYARDS ADMINISTRATION

Wisconsin Farmers Union urges the USDA to adopt more stringent GIPSA rules such as those currently under consideration.

B. WISCONSIN ANTI-CORPORATE FARMING LAW

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports state policies to limit non-family corporate farming in the state.

Wisconsin Farmers Union calls upon the Wisconsin State Legislature to update Wisconsin's anti-corporate farming statute to prohibit non-family corporations, partnerships, or Limited Liability Corporations (LLCs) from owning farmland or farming operations. A family corporation, partnership, or LLC is one where all of the shareholders or partners meet at least one of the following criteria: Shareholders are related by blood or marriage, they live in the county or county adjacent to the county where the farm operation is based, and/or all shareholders of the corporation are actively engaged in the farm operation in question.

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports adding hemp and cannabis to the list of crops listed in Wisconsin’s anti-corporate farming law.

C. ADDRESSING THE IMPACT OF LIVESTOCK CONCENTRATION

In 2010, 2015, and 2019, the Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection (DATCP) assembled teams of technical experts to recommend updates to the technical standards on odor, setbacks, engineering, and nutrient management for the state's large livestock facilities, including Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFO's). The Livestock Siting Technical Committees’ recommendations reflect the best available science and practice, and Wisconsin Farmers Union urges DATCP to adopt the recommendations of the most recent committee.

The DATCP technical committees did not address economic or social impacts of large livestock facilities. Wisconsin Farmers Union urges DATCP to consider the social and economic impacts of livestock operations when reviewing and adjusting the ATCP 51 rules. More consideration must be made to the effects of unchecked expansion of very large livestock operations. If these necessary changes cannot be made within the limitations of the livestock siting law, Wisconsin Farmers Union urges the state legislature to revisit the legislation to better address the needs of farmers, rural communities and municipalities.

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports lifting the preemption of local control of siting of large livestock operations.

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports the following changes to the Livestock Siting Rule:

1. Increased setbacks.
2. Require stricter engineering standards for controlling leachate.
3. Require bonding of CAFOs so local communities are not burdened if bankruptcy or disaster cleanup occurs.
4. Increased fees to cover all real expenses involved with processing, consulting, and investigation of the permit application to be paid by the applicant.
5. Add air emission standards that protect health, safety and welfare of citizens.
6. Require financial responsibility for polluted wells, road repairs, and damage created by CAFO operations.
7. Assure local governments' rights to develop ordinances related to manure spray irrigation.

D. BAN ON PACKER OWNERSHIP

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports reform of packer ownership of livestock operations and opposes vertical integration of livestock operations.

E. PACKERS AND STOCKYARDS ACT

We support enforcement of the Grain Inspection Packers and Stockyards Act (GIPSA) to enforce anticompetitive/antitrust laws. WFU supports the GIPSA rules as proposed in 2010.

F. PATENTING LIFE

Wisconsin Farmers Union declares that all living things, all species of native plants, animals, living organisms, and life itself and their basic genetic traits and make-up exist for all of humanity and nature itself and cannot be patented nor may be permitted to be used for monopoly-controlled purposes. As stewards of nature, particularly related to life for plant, animal, and micro-organism, no monopoly control of related life, even in the case of human-made biotechnologically developed life, should be permitted to the extent that humanity and nature is deprived of the use thereof.

G. RESTRICTING GMO PATENT RIGHTS AND ENFORCING GMO LIABILITIES

Wisconsin Farmers Union recognizes the rights of genomic companies to earn a profit on their human-made living matter, but opposes the extension of those rights after the product has entered the stream of commerce or after the leasing right has been acquired and paid. Wisconsin Farmers Union demands that US patent law be changed to reflect the above.

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports the seed sovereignty rights of all farmers, especially those in the developing world. Seed sovereignty includes the right to retain their seed for future planting. Wisconsin Farmers Union demands that monopolized patent rights be restricted and be shared through greater competition when the public good and welfare of society necessitates.

H. GRAIN FARMERS RELEASE OF CONFIDENTIAL PROPRIETARY DATA TO SEED AND IMPLEMENT COMPANIES

Wisconsin Farmers Union encourages farmers to be cautious in releasing their confidential and proprietary information to seed and implement companies who can be expected to take on an ever larger share of farmers' profits, increase farmers' dependency on input providers, and promote greater concentration of direct and indirect control and influence over individual farmer-entrepreneurial operations.

Wisconsin Farmers Union recommends that farmers who enter into such service agreements to consider appropriate remuneration in fees or sale proceeds for the transfer of this data.

I. RIGHT TO REPAIR AND OPPOSITION TO MONOPOLY CONTROL OVER PURCHASED EQUIPMENT AND TECHNOLOGY

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports Fair Repair and Right to Repair legislation that would allow farmers and independent mechanics access to diagnostic software, information, and other tools in order to repair modern equipment.

WFU supports the rights of farmers to retain the right to repair equipment purchased inclusive of related technologies without violating warranty.

J. U.S. SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION (SEC) CONTROL OF COMMODITY FUTURES, OPTIONS, AND OTHER MARKETS FOR AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES

Increasingly over the last decade commodities markets no longer are truly indicative of supply and demand. Index and hedge funds and other speculative investors have undue influence on markets. Under this erratic volatility engendered by speculators who have no other interest than short-term speculative profit-taking, farmers find it increasingly difficult to plan for production and attain profitability. Therefore, the Securities and Exchange Commission must assure that investors in

these financial instruments related to agricultural commodity markets do not disrupt the important supply-demand functions exercised by these markets.

Wisconsin Farmers Union calls upon the SEC to ensure market transparency and to ensure that that speculative profit-taking by a select minority of investors does not destabilize supply and production of necessary food and feed products.

Wisconsin Farmers Union opposes any weakening through legislation or regulation of the Dodd-Frank "Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act" related to swaps, futures, options, and other instruments regulated by the Securities and Exchange Commission as they pertain to commodity financing and hedging.

K. TRANSPARENCY IN BUSINESS ENTITY OWNERSHIP

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports legislation previously introduced in Congress that would require business entities to list the true beneficial owners at the time of incorporation, in order to prevent shareholders and partners from evading taxes or legal liability.

VI. COOPERATIVES

History shows that co-ops are a powerful means by which American farmers can further their own well-being in our market economy. As unique business organizations, cooperatives comprise an important segment of the American economy. Cooperatives are based on the fundamental principles of ownership and control only by member/patron users, initial financing by member/patron users, with distribution of benefits to patrons based on their participation in the cooperative business, protection of the interests of small and mid-size members and exemptions from the anti-trust laws.

Experience has demonstrated that any substantial deviation from these fundamental principles has eventually proven fatal to cooperatives and detrimental to their farmer members. Further, cooperative incorporation statutes of the various States as well as the Capper-Volstead Act of 1922, the Cooperative Marketing Act of 1926, federal income taxation rules, and many other laws recognize fundamental cooperative principles. These statutes allow substantial flexibility for innovative cooperative business practices and structural adaptation to modern times.

The promotion and encouragement of farm cooperatives should be emphasized as an effective means to increase farmers' bargaining power. We reaffirm our belief in the cooperative principles, including:

- One-member, one-vote
- Continuing education
- Voluntary and Open membership
- Patronage refund
- Competitive prices
- Limited return on investment
- Political and religious neutrality
- Autonomy and Independence
- Cooperation among Cooperatives
- Concern for Community

Wisconsin Farmers Union believes cooperatives should set aside the full amount of educational funds permitted by law.

We oppose modification of any state laws or additional state laws that will have the effect of eliminating requirements and definitions that establish the essential cooperative characteristics of ownership and control by member/patron users, financing by member/patron users, and distribution of benefits to patrons based on their participation in the cooperative business.

We oppose the use of the label "cooperative" to refer to any entity that does not meet the above-stated criteria.

A. CAPPER-VOLSTEAD ACT

1. The rights of agricultural producers to act together to handle, process and market agricultural products through cooperative activity, as guaranteed under the Capper-Volstead Act of 1922, must be continued. These same rights should be formally extended under law to farm supply and consumer cooperatives.
2. The rights of cooperative members to organize and operate regional and interregional cooperatives (marketing agencies in common) or to merge with other cooperative associations should not be restricted by law or government regulation. However, we are not in favor of regionals absorbing local cooperatives until other options of maintaining local control have been exhausted, including merger or joint venture with a nearby cooperative. When necessary for a regional to absorb a local cooperative, we strongly urge every effort would be made by the local members or a nearby cooperative to purchase the cooperative back when it is feasible. We demand that regional cooperative boards work together, and with local cooperatives, to help them continue operating for the benefit of the members.
3. The responsibilities of administering the Capper-Volstead Act should remain with the U.S. Department of Agriculture.
4. Because cooperative businesses are member-owned and controlled, we oppose any governmental regulation that would infringe upon the rights of cooperative members to determine the policies or operation of their cooperative.
5. Value-added cooperatives maintaining cooperative principles of member-ownership and control should be supported by Wisconsin Farmers Union.
6. Wisconsin Farmers Union opposes modification of any state laws that will have the effect of eliminating requirements and definitions that establish the essential cooperative characteristics of ownership and control by member/patron users, financing by member/patron users, and distribution of benefits to patrons based on their participation in the cooperative business. We encourage vigilance against such actions and support renewed educational efforts to preserve the critical cooperative principles that have served American farmers and others in rural America for more than two centuries.

7. Wisconsin Farmers Union opposes co-ops joining legal defense fund schemes to avoid full equity payment to co-op patrons. Wisconsin Farmers Union encourages co-ops to follow the 1922 federal law, the Capper Volstead Act, which requires co-ops pay back a minimum of 20 percent of earnings as cash to members for a given fiscal year.

B. CONDUCTING COOPERATIVE BUSINESS

1. Member-Owners should take an interest in the business operation of their cooperatives and should attend annual meetings to receive directors' and management reports and holding the Board of Directors responsible to represent the best interests of members.
2. Members of boards of directors should be elected from among the members; persons carefully selected who have sound business judgment, Wisconsin Farmers Union philosophy and who will not use their position for personal advantage. Ideally, the elective process assumes more than one candidate for each position. We recommend patrons consider elected nominating or candidate search committees.
3. Directors should set policy and direction for the cooperative. Managers should be charged with the responsibility of managing day-to-day operations. To ensure that directors of cooperatives are responsible to their member-patrons, only member-patrons should be involved in the selection and election of directors. Delegates representing co-op members must be regular voting members of that cooperative and should be elected by the members. Executive compensation at producer coops should be based on the level of returns to producer members.
4. Several larger cooperatives have adopted by laws that allow managers to acquire directorial status and voting rights on the cooperative board. Core cooperative principles require that directors of co-ops are the "producers at risk," and the managers serve an advisory role. Grassroots control of cooperatives is lost when non-producers serve as directors. The direction and purpose of cooperatives can be changed considerably when "at risk" members no longer guide the co-op. Wisconsin Farmers Union opposes proposals to allow local or regional managers or other non-producers to become voting directors.
5. In light of the growing trend of consolidation and mergers among manufacturers of farm inputs such as seed, fertilizer, and implements, Wisconsin Farmers Union calls for all member-driven and -controlled cooperatives to place pressure and influence on manufacturers of farm inputs to reduce their level of profitability at the expense of farmers.
6. Either spouse should be able to represent the family farm in voting at cooperative meetings.
7. We are opposed to a cooperative forming a public corporation in order to sell stock on Wall Street as a means to raise capital. This is a departure from cooperative principles. We oppose the regional cooperatives leasing or purchasing property from local cooperatives and delivering products directly to local co-op patrons. We are opposed to undemocratic trends in cooperatives including corporatization and managerialization of cooperatives.
8. Wisconsin Farmers Union affirms the value of transparency in the carrying out of cooperative business. Wisconsin Farmers Union discourages the practice of cooperatives prohibiting board members from publically expressing a dissenting opinion on matters of concern to the cooperative.
9. We urge systematic retirement of patronage stock so the capital requirements of co-ops are provided by the current member-users of the co-op.
10. We oppose a rebate system based on purchase volume.

C. COOPERATIVE FINANCING

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports the current 50 percent membership criteria for CoBank borrowers. We oppose any effort of CoBank to lend money to non-cooperative agribusiness.

We urge the government to initiate federal funding programs along the lines of the original REA program to assist farmers in forming value-added cooperatives.

D. CREDIT UNIONS

Wisconsin Farmers Union encourages the organization and growth of credit unions. We oppose any effort to impose a tax on member-owned non-profit credit unions. We support maintaining the National Credit Union Share Insurance Fund as a separate and independent agency from other federal deposit insurance systems. We support the right of all Americans to choose how and where they deposit their earnings and transact their personal financial business.

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports that any change in credit union structure to a bank must be made by a majority vote of its membership.

E. COOPERATIVE MERGERS AND CONSOLIDATION

Retaining local cooperatives is the last hope of survival for many communities. Wisconsin Farmers Union urges local

cooperatives to consider sharing services. We encourage the formation of new umbrella cooperatives formed by existing cooperatives for the purpose of bulk purchases or sharing services.

We oppose joint ventures or mergers between cooperatives and multinational corporations that diminish member control over the cooperative.

F. COOPERATIVE AFFILIATIONS

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports and promotes the expansion of agricultural marketing, supply and service cooperatives on local, regional and national levels. We recommend that farmer-owned and -controlled cooperatives work together whenever and wherever possible to obtain more marketing and bargaining power for farmers. We encourage marketing cooperatives, especially in dairying, to continue their efforts toward the creation of marketing agencies in common for the purpose of improving marketing efficiency and producer prices.

G. BLOCK VOTING

Because the "one person, one vote" principle upon which the individual democratic rights of this country was founded has been eroded by permitting block voting by cooperatives on behalf of their farmer-members, Wisconsin Farmers Union strongly supports repealing "block voting" provisions wherever they exist in cooperative America. Individual farmers need to be afforded an opportunity to disagree with their marketing cooperatives whose interest may differ from that of the farmer.

H. OUTSOURCING PRODUCT

Some regional cooperatives have begun buying or selling goods from outside interests that are normally sourced from members. Such examples include buying extra-territorial and sometimes distressed milk at prices well below prices paid to members, selling unbranded fuels to nonmember companies at lower prices than typically negotiated with member co-ops, and purchasing commodities from outside the U.S. for prices lower than those paid to members selling the same commodity.

These practices are often detrimental to co-op members and local co-ops. Such practices often result in undercutting members and local co-ops prices, and eroding their position in the marketplace. Wisconsin Farmers Union strongly urges such cooperatives to curtail such practices and develop compensation formulas to ensure that those harmed by such initiatives be promptly compensated. Prompt compensation might involve cooperatives holding any additional income derived from such practices in escrow, and disbursing payments to its members within the same fiscal year.

I. USDA COOPERATIVE DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

The Cooperative Marketing Act of 1926 provides for a USDA program of research, technical assistance and educational programs on the cooperative form of business. Wisconsin Farmers Union supports revitalization of cooperative services programs in USDA, restoration of agency status, and support for cooperative specialists in rural development state offices.

J. WISCONSIN COOPERATIVE LAW

The Wisconsin State Legislature has passed legislation regarding a change in Wisconsin Cooperative Law, and this change undermines the Cooperative Principles. These changes allow 20% of cooperative board seats to be given to non-members, cooperative members lose the ability to review financial records older than five years, and members of a cooperative holding company may lose the time-honored principle of one member one vote. Additionally, removal of the 8% patronage dividend cap will prioritize outside investments and diminish the role of traditional member investments.

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports educational efforts for cooperatives to resist implementing these changes in their own bylaws and operations. We support educational efforts for cooperatives to implement bylaws that restore member rights to access the records of their cooperatives.

VII. RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports rural development programs that benefit rural Wisconsin. We urge the direction of rural development initiatives to sustain and increase viability of family farms and rural businesses that will result in prosperous rural communities. Rural economic development is economic development for Wisconsin. Agriculture generates tens of billions of dollars per year for the Wisconsin economy, and provides hundreds of thousands of jobs. We support state efforts to grow Wisconsin's rural economy.

A. DEFINING DAIRY MODERNIZATION

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports the work of the state to assist family-sized dairy farms and businesses to be competitive in a rapidly-changing marketplace. We call on state and federal policy makers to explore alternative sources of capital for growing Wisconsin dairy infrastructure while strengthening family farms and farmer-owned and controlled cooperatives. State programs dedicated to providing assistance to dairy farmers and the dairy industry should consider that modernization is not simply about large-scale expansion.

B. LOCAL AND REGIONAL FOOD SYSTEMS

Wisconsin Farmers Union support efforts to grow, manufacture, and distribute agricultural products for local and regional food systems, which may include community-supported agriculture, local feed supplies and farmers' markets, as well as medium-scale value-chains that support close and just producer-consumer relationships. Wisconsin Farmers Union supports the Buy Local, Buy Wisconsin grant program, which seeks to develop an infrastructure to support the distribution and consumption of Wisconsin-grown and -processed food in Wisconsin institutions and retail establishments.

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports the Local Food and Market Supply Act (The "Local FARMS Act") passed in the 2018 Farm Bill. Wisconsin Farmers Union supports programs that help communities prosper through farm to fork investments, and supports job creation by improving programs and policies that help grow local and regional food economies.

C. PASTURE-BASED FARMS

Pasture-based systems have many benefits that offer opportunity to family farms to continue and find renewed prosperity in the agricultural landscape including improved flexibility, diversification, growing and direct market appeal, fulfilling lifestyles, increased sustainability, and means of generational transfer as well as numerous environmental benefits. Wisconsin Farmers Union recognizes the promise and appeal of pasture-based agricultural systems and supports the formation of voluntary marketing, educational, and promotional programs for pasture-based systems that seek to increase consumer demand for pasture-raised products and prominence of these production systems in agriculture.

D. VALUE-ADDED AGRICULTURE

Many farmers are searching for ways to remain viable as agricultural producers. Adding value to commodities and capturing a greater portion of their market value has been shown to be an effective means of keeping many farms viable. Wisconsin Farmers Union supports programs that will provide planning grants to producers who are considering development of "value-added" marketing and/or processing enterprise on their farm. One such program is the Wisconsin Agriculture Development and Diversification (ADD) Grant, which provides small grants to help stimulate Wisconsin's agricultural economy through the development or exploration of new product, markets or technologies. Further, WFU supports the formation of cooperatives and other marketing structures to facilitate the marketing of value-added products.

E. RIGHT TO FARM AND LIVESTOCK SITING

Wisconsin Farmers Union believes in the right to farm, but not the right to pollute or to harm our neighbors' rights. We call upon the Wisconsin legislature to preserve the current right to farm laws that protect family farmers in Wisconsin and the property rights of all. Wisconsin Farmers Union calls on the state to re-evaluate whether the Livestock Siting Board is the best system for balancing the protection of farmers' rights with the rights of the community and the environment. Social and economic impacts should be major factors in the decision making process for siting very large livestock operations. If the Livestock Siting Law is not able to meet these expectations, Wisconsin Farmers Union supports legislative action to ensure that state law helps keep family farmers in Wisconsin.

F. RURAL TOURISM

Tourism provides an economic bonus to rural areas. Family farmers stand to benefit by educating the urban public about farm lifestyles and issues, since they hold a unique position in our society. Wisconsin Farmers Union should seek opportunities to involve the organization and its members in efforts to promote and expand rural agri-tourism. Family farmers should share the benefit from the economic advantages of tourism. Farmer ties to tourists enlighten the non-farm

public on important agriculture issues and their relationship to the greater culture and economy. Wisconsin Farmers Union supports a state program to provide aid in maintaining barns, silos, and other traditional farm buildings.

G. LOCAL CONTROL

A number of important issues currently facing farmers and rural residents, including livestock siting, wind turbine siting, sand mine siting, single-use plastics, and water quality and quantity, are inherently issues of local concern. Local units of government (towns and counties) are better able than state or federal governments to tailor their policies to fit local conditions and preferences. In addition, citizens are closest to and therefore most able to monitor and influence the activities of their local unit's government.

Wisconsin Farmers Union urges local units of government to make full use of their zoning, planning, and taxation authority to better protect citizen health, safety, and welfare. State aid to local units of government should be increased in order to support these functions.

Wisconsin Farmers Union opposes state and federal preemption of local government authority except when the need for preemption has been clearly demonstrated.

Wisconsin Farmers Union encourages citizens to become actively engaged in local government affairs.

H. MAINTENANCE OF ROADS AND HIGHWAYS

1. FAIR SHARE FOR LOCAL ROADS

Local roads are the backbone for Wisconsin commerce and industry, stimulate growth and promote a healthy economy. The percentage of state transportation funds devoted to local road projects is shrinking. The overall size of the state Transportation Fund is also shrinking because motorists are driving less, driving more fuel efficient cars, buying fewer gallons of gasoline and paying less in gasoline taxes. Local governments are subject to tight levy limits on local levies, and state shared revenue has been cut for local governments, which further restricts the local governments' ability to fund local road maintenance. For these reasons, Wisconsin Farmers Union supports an amendment to the State of Wisconsin constitution that requires that one half of all revenues in the state Transportation Fund be distributed to local governments in the state of Wisconsin.

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports the following options for increasing funding for road projects: general fund/income tax, gas tax, vehicle registration fees based on gross vehicle weight, local sales taxes, new vehicle tax, and local wheel taxes.

2. LOCAL CONTROL OVER ROAD FUNDING OPTIONS

Based on the fact that local governments know their transportation priorities better than the state and federal government, Wisconsin Farmers Union supports giving local governments the authority to design policies that address the unique transportation challenges in their communities. This would include the authority to raise the funds necessary to keep their infrastructure in place. WFU also supports changing regulations so that local governments have the flexibility to pursue realistic options that fit within their budget.

3. SEASONAL WEIGHT LIMITS FOR AGRICULTURAL OPERATIONS

Given current debates in Wisconsin regarding overweight manure hauling Wisconsin Farmers Union should be a leader in the discussion to find an equitable, negotiated solution to support family farmers and the farm supply and contracted services businesses, while at the same time respecting the common pool resources of municipalities and communities, such as roads and other infrastructure.

Because of the time frame in which farmers can get their manure pits empty in the fall of the year, and because of the length and weight of tractors, trucks, and tankers, Wisconsin Farmers Union approves a fall seasonal weight limit for manure similar to the fall weight limit for crops, such that manure hauling equipment can be 15 percent overweight between September 10 to November 30.

4. IRRIGATION ORDINANCE

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports policies that would prohibit irrigator end guns to spray over or onto any public paved roads, graded roads, or trails.

I. WINERY AND CIDER-HOUSE HOURS AND SAMPLES

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports lifting the current 9 PM limit for winery and cider-house hours, and also supports granting tasting rooms the ability to sample and sell wines and ciders made by other producers.

VIII. QUALITY OF LIFE IN AMERICA

A. GENDER AND MINORITY EQUALITY

Wisconsin Farmers Union recognizes the important role of women and minorities in agriculture as farmers and ranchers and supports gender and minority equality in all aspects of agricultural and rural life. WFU advocates that all local, state, and federal farm programs and agencies, as well as WFU, operate without assumptions of roles in farm ownership, operation, and participation and that proper notification and documentation within these programs and agencies occur without regard to race, color, religion, creed, national origin, ancestry, gender, gender expression, sexual orientation, family/parental status, age, disability, socio-economic or military status.

B. CIVILITY AND TOLERANCE IN CIVIC LIFE

As members of Wisconsin Farmers Union, we pledge to have respect for people of all abilities, beliefs, cultures, races, age, and sexual and gender identities. We support teaching tolerance and inter-group relations in our schools and our communities. We call upon all of us at all levels of society to speak up and never accept or allow hate speech or acts.

Wisconsin Farmers Union commits to policies and practices of gender, disability, and racial justice and recognizes our responsibility to address the complex structural inequities to create equitable outcomes for all.

C. IMMIGRATION REFORM

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports the reform of U.S. immigration law by the US Congress in order to demonstrate the hospitality of the American people, and improve enforcement of the law and meet the labor needs of U.S. agricultural producers in a context that considers-the inclusion of guest workers in state and federal tax structure, and the human rights of these guest workers.

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports fair immigration reform including paths to citizenship for asylum-seekers and children of undocumented immigrants.

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports the state of Wisconsin in authorizing resident identification so that undocumented individuals can qualify for the following:

1. Proper licensing for driving: creating a limited purpose driver's license, permit, or identification card for a Wisconsin resident who has not been assigned a Social Security number or cannot establish legal presence in the United States, which will make transportation safer.
2. Necessary medical care in order to reduce the overall cost of healthcare to society.
3. Regular public education of children to make them responsible contributing members of society.

Wisconsin Farmers Union advocates that all persons receive a family-supporting wage.

Wisconsin Farmers Union calls on the Federal Government, including the administration and the Congress, to grant temporary visas for undocumented farm workers and their families in the same way that the administration has employed for other undocumented residents through Executive Order.

Wisconsin Farmers Union calls on Congress to develop a permanent guest worker program with a pathway to U.S. citizenship.

D. EDUCATION

Wisconsin Farmers Union believes in adequate and equal education opportunities for all and an educational system that will deal effectively with the growing stigma of illiteracy in our nation. We believe that it is a shared responsibility of local, state and national government to finance our schools. We support efforts to remove the major portion of school funding from the property tax that was never intended to support the burden of education. WFU urges state government to provide 66 percent of the funding needed by local school districts. WFU is opposed to public school funds going to support independent charter schools and vouchers for private schools. We favor the continuation and expansion of federal programs to provide financial assistance to qualified students in higher education and vocational training.

Wisconsin Farmers Union calls on the Wisconsin Legislature to reverse all provisions within 2017 Act 59 (the 2017-19 Biennial budget) and any related legislation that reduces, eliminates, or circumvents minimum educational qualification of a bachelor's degree to obtain licensure to teach in Wisconsin schools.

1. EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports the four-year old kindergarten program and the Student Achievement Guarantee in Education (SAGE) program that provide funds for early childhood education and reduced class size.

2. AGRICULTURE EDUCATION

Wisconsin Farmers Union encourages schools to add (or maintain) agriculture curricula as part of their course offerings. In addition, we support agricultural extracurricular and inter-curricular activities at the high school and collegiate levels.

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports maintaining the policy of allowing certain agriculture courses, as approved by the Department of Public Instruction, to count as science credits to be applied to state requirements for high school graduation.

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports every effort to continue and expand educational programs supportive of family farm agriculture and rural communities. We encourage educators to consider innovative approaches to family agriculture, including organic, value-added and sustainable agriculture.

3. NATIONAL FARMERS UNION EDUCATION

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports NFU's efforts to educate the general public, consumers and policy makers about issues of family agriculture. Wisconsin Farmers Union urges the NFU expand its programs such as the Farmer's Share information that it so successfully puts together.

E. NUTRITION

1. SCHOOL MILK

Studies show a large percentage of children in the United States are calcium deficient. Nine out of ten teenage girls and seven out of ten teenage boys do not get enough calcium in their diet. Less than half of all children age six to eleven consume the recommended amount of milk.

USDA must retain cow's milk as the beverage qualifying for reimbursable school meal programs. Because less than 60% of public and private schools participate in the state funded program, Wisconsin Farmers Union members encourage greater participation by local schools in the Wisconsin School Day Milk Program by having the state fully fund the program. Wisconsin Farmers Union supports efforts to make school milk r-BST free. We support the installation of milk vending machines in all schools. Wisconsin Farmers Union supports the inclusion of whole milk in the school milk program.

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports having traditional milk as well as the availability of a nutritionally-equivalent milk alternative beverage to all school children.

WFU supports making available to children who are lactose intolerant an A2A2 certified milk, should research show it to be effective.

2. UNIVERSAL BREAKFAST PROGRAM

Studies prove that a student that eats breakfast performs better academically and has better behavior. Wisconsin Farmers Union supports a nutritious, low sugar Universal Breakfast Program. Of the 50 states, Wisconsin is near the bottom in utilizing funds for school breakfast programs. USDA commodities must be provided for school breakfast programs.

3. SNACK MILK PROGRAM

Wisconsin Farmers Union urges the USDA to provide a snack program that includes milk or dairy products.

4. GOVERNMENT NUTRITION PROGRAMS

Wisconsin Farmers Union calls upon state and federal lawmakers to fully fund programs that provide locally produced foods to school cafeterias and government nutrition programs including state institutions.

In addition, Wisconsin Farmers Union supports full reinstatement of the dairy portion of the Women, Infants and Children program (WIC).

Wisconsin Farmers Union calls on the USDA to expand funding and programs for nutrition for the elderly.

5. SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM

Wisconsin Farmers Union calls upon the state of Wisconsin and USDA to make funds available and programs requirements re-written to support the procurement, preparation and service of local foods, allowing for nutritious meals that also support local and regional farmers and processors. WFU also calls for state and USDA investment in school districts so that they can develop the necessary infrastructure to return to scratch cooking and provide a livable wage to school cafeteria workers.

Wisconsin Farmers Union calls upon the USDA to mandate that all foods and commodities used in the School Lunch Program (and other federally-subsidized school nutrition programs) contain only products and ingredients certified as safe under FDA's safety program.

Meals described in this section should be free for all non-voucher public k-12 students.

6. FAST FOOD INDUSTRY

While Wisconsin Farmers Union appreciates the efforts of the fast food industry to offer nutritious meals to their customers, we call upon the industry to provide higher quality, nutritionally packed meal items. Nutritionally deprived diets lead to higher levels of obesity and chronic disease. Further, we call upon the fast food industry to purchase raw commodities from local producers.

F. COUNTY PROGRAMS

1. COUNTY EXTENSION PROGRAMS

As a land-grant institution, the University of Wisconsin has a long history of providing education to its citizens, as articulated in the Wisconsin Idea: "the borders of the state are the borders of the university." Users of the University of Wisconsin Extension (UWEX) Program want county UWEX programs to be effective. However, county governments are increasingly limited to provide funding for extension programs due to decreasing tax returns and additional spending burdens that have arisen due to cuts at the state level. In addition, some county boards have lost sight of the usefulness of UWEX programs in their counties because of their unfamiliarity with the program. Therefore, Wisconsin Farmers Union strongly urges the state legislature and the governor to take action to increase funding levels for university extension programs so that county governments are not expected to bear the majority of the costs.

2. COUNTY FAIR PROGRAMS

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports the full funding of county and state fair premiums by the state of Wisconsin and the creation of a statewide fair coordinator position within the DATCP.

G. RESEARCH

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports research and education within the University of Wisconsin that is balanced – supporting the interests of family farms as well as agribusiness. University research, extension and university educational curricula must not support the interests of agribusiness at the expense of family farmers. Wisconsin Farmers Union calls on the University of Wisconsin education and research community to develop and address the needs of family farmers and rural communities including the following issues.

1. DAIRY ECONOMICS

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports research that examines the flow of money within the Wisconsin dairy economy; alternatives to federal dairy policy; potential state action to enhance the profitability of Wisconsin dairy farmers and processors; and recommendations for dairy policy changes that would enhance the viability of Wisconsin dairy farms.

WFU supports filling a position at the center for dairy profitability that will support the dairy farm benchmark system.

2. VALUE-ADDED AGRICULTURE

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports efforts to document the existing value-added producers in Wisconsin and their contribution to the Wisconsin agriculture economy. Wisconsin Farmers Union supports research that develops alternative processing methods for small scale and on-farm processing and explores alternative products from Wisconsin commodities. Wisconsin Farmers Union supports examining the feasibility of changing regulations and zoning ordinances that inhibit small scale and on-farm production and sale of finished food products.

3. CENTER FOR INTEGRATED AGRICULTURAL SYSTEMS

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports the work of the UW Center for Integrated Agricultural Systems (CIAS) and encourages the continued funding of the Center. CIAS is one of the few programs at the UW that focuses on the needs of the diverse farm-sized structure in Wisconsin and the diverse crops and products produced.

4. HEALTH CARE RESEARCH AND ADVOCACY

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports efforts among college and University campuses, departments, schools and supportive advocacy or charity organizations to collaborate in constructing a comprehensive solution to the problems of access to and affordability of health care. Wisconsin Farmers Union calls upon members of these entities to provide leadership in clearly articulating the principles of a comprehensive solution, to correct public misinformation and work with lawmakers and public leaders to facilitate the adoption of a structure for health care system that would serve all Wisconsin residents.

5. HEMP

Wisconsin Farmers Union joins all major agricultural associations in Wisconsin in supporting cultivation of hemp and in adopting means to promote its infrastructure development and encourages university research to improve crop varieties and cultivation and processing techniques and to develop new end-uses for hemp.

6. GRAZING RESEARCH

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports the creation of more intensive dairy grazing research facilities in active and retired research facilities. Forage research in the state should also include the research needs of small to medium size rotational grazing as well as larger farms that may focus more on stored forages. Wisconsin Farmers Union supports research on the nutritional composition of milk, meat, and poultry from intensive grazing systems.

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports the Grazing Lands Conservation Initiative, which provides funding for grazing education

and helps farmers develop managed grazing plans.

7. FARM-BASED ENERGY

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports research on farm-based energy, including small-scale anaerobic digesters, biofuels, and energy crops for biomass and biofuels.

8. LESS HARMFUL PESTICIDES

In light of the deleterious effects that pesticides (insecticides, fungicides, herbicides, and fumigants) have on pollinators, natural enemies, and other beneficial insects, Wisconsin Farmers Union supports research that would reduce or eliminate the need for these pesticides, promote the development of pesticides that target only insects detrimental to crop health, and support beneficial insect communities.

9. CLIMATE CHANGE

Farmers' livelihoods are tied to the weather, leaving farmers especially vulnerable to changes in climate caused by greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Farmers are also in a unique position to mitigate the impacts of GHG and adapt to changing climate by:

- reducing GHG already in the atmosphere through sequestering carbon;
- investing in perennial crops and cover crops that can hold soil in place especially on land vulnerable to soil erosion during extreme precipitation events;
- employing no-till practices
- utilizing rotational grazing
- contributing field level data on the impacts of extreme weather on production, such as early spring impacts, seasonal drought conditions, and insect patterns; and
- leading the business community in energy alternatives to conventional electricity production.

Therefore, Wisconsin Farmers Union encourages farmers to participate in partnerships with climate researchers to understand how farmers can anticipate and adapt to climate change most effectively, and engage in beneficial mitigation strategies.

H. HEALTH CARE

1. COMPREHENSIVE SYSTEM OF HEALTH CARE

Wisconsin Farmers Union members believe that access to quality health care including mental health care should be a right of all people rather than a privilege. Wisconsin Farmers Union supports a comprehensive single-payer system of health care which offers affordable and accessible health care for all.

2. EXPANDED MEDICARE

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports expanding Medicare coverage to include medications, medical transportation and expansion of home-based health care for the elderly and disabled. Rural health care resources should receive comparable public reimbursement in comparison with urban counterparts. Wisconsin Farmers Union opposes any and all privatization of Medicare or payment limitation subsidy and advocates for increasing and/or expanding the payroll withholding tax (FICA) rate to assure the Medicare trust fund remains solvent.

3. CONTROLLING PRESCRIPTION DRUG COSTS

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports efforts to empower Medicare and Medicaid to negotiate with pharmaceutical companies for lower drug prices for Medicare and Medicaid patients and also make those lower drug prices available to Americans with private health insurance. The maximum price for any negotiated drug should be in line with average global prices. We also support efforts to ensure retail pharmacies make all prescription medications available for purchase, including branded and generic drugs.

4. HEALTH INSURANCE EXCHANGE

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports the development and implementation of a health care exchange in Wisconsin to increase competition in the market and provide consumers increased information and a wider choices of insurance plans. The exchange should be overseen by an independent, non-partisan board. Companies with 100 or fewer employees should be mandated to participate in the exchange in order to create a large pool, for the benefit of all consumers. The exchange shall provide full, "apple-to-apples" comparisons of all policy components, including but not limited to, co-pay and deductibles, co-insurance, preventive care coverage, and pre-existing conditions.

5. HEALTH (OR MEDICAL) SAVINGS ACCOUNTS

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports affordable and available health insurance for all individuals regardless of age, gender,

ethnicity or preexisting conditions. Wisconsin Farmers Union supports insurance policies of community rating where all individuals share in the cost and risks of health insurance. Health Savings Accounts (HSAs), as currently designed, provide an incentive for those who are younger and healthier to 'opt out' of traditional health insurance pools thereby raising health insurance rates for those remaining in the pool. Wisconsin Farmers Union opposes HSAs as an adequate solution to reforming the health care system.

6. TAX DEDUCTIBILITY FOR HEALTH INSURANCE

Wisconsin Farmers Union urges the IRS to allow farmers to use their health insurance as a deduction on their schedule F form, rather than a tax credit on the 1040 form.

7. MEDICAID

Wisconsin Farmers Union calls upon the federal government to fully fund Medicaid so that Wisconsin receives equitable reimbursement, and opposes Medicaid moving to block grant status. Wisconsin Farmers Union calls for the state of Wisconsin to apply Medicaid eligibility at least to 138 percent of poverty level, and to accept all available Federal funds in order to do so.

8. COMMUNITY PARAMEDICS AND EMTs

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports the Community Paramedic and EMT approach as an option for municipal governments to pursue in order to better serve their rural residents in hard-to-reach areas. Wisconsin Farmers Union also believes that the Wisconsin legislature and private companies in the health care industry should treat Community Paramedics and EMTs as covered providers that are eligible for reimbursement by insurance companies for the services that Community Paramedics and EMTs provide.

9. PREVENTION OF AGRICULTURAL WORKER SUICIDE

According to the Wisconsin Suicide Prevention Strategy report (2015), "individuals aged 45-54 were at greatest risk of dying by suicide. Nearly four out of five persons who died by suicide were male, while approximately three out of five patients hospitalized for self-inflicted injury were women." Physical health and job problems were life stressors involved in 23% and 21% of suicides with known causes. The 2018 Farm Bill re-authorized the Farm and Ranch Stress Relief Network, allocating $10 million in annual funding until 2023 to address training for behavioral specialists for farmers, and the establishment of hotlines. Wisconsin Farmers Union supports the full funding of the Farm and Ranch Stress Relief Network and all similar programs that support suicide prevention.

I. CANNABIS

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports the legalization and substantial taxation of cannabis in the state of Wisconsin under the following conditions:

1. Growers are required to obtain a permit.
2. Each grower is limited to growing no more than a specific number of plants and/or acres.
3. Restrictions on who may grow cannabis in the state of Wisconsin are consistent with Wisconsin State Statute 182 (Wisconsin's Anti-Corporate Farming Law).

We recommend that the state retroactively expunge nonviolent convictions related to cannabis.

J. RURAL ACCESS TO TECHNOLOGY AND INFORMATION

1. TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND BROADBAND ACCESS

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports efforts and regulation to reduce concentration and assure competition in the marketplace for telecommunications, including mobile phones and mobile internet, as well as high-speed broadband access for rural Americans. Wisconsin Farmers Union supports classifying internet service as a public utility in order to safeguard internet neutrality, to ensure a well-informed public with full access to information. Wisconsin Farmers Union supports public-private efforts that ensure adequate and affordable high speed broadband access to all households and small businesses in Wisconsin.

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports the use of taxpayer dollars to provide monetary incentives to broadband developers provided they guarantee 30 mbps download speeds and 5 mbps upload speeds to household customers and enforce no data caps now or in the future.

Furthermore, Wisconsin Farmers Union supports, for the purpose of facilitating timely improvement of service and efficient use of taxpayer funds, first consideration be given to reclamation bids for existing cable or phone systems before funding new installations.

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports removing burdensome regulations, such as a three-year feasibility study, on municipalities desiring to provide internet service.

a. NET NEUTRALITY

On Dec. 14, 2017, the Federal Communications Commission voted on a rule change that could threaten net neutrality, the principle that internet service providers must treat all data on the internet the same – not speeding up, slowing down, or blocking any content, applications, or website.

In the absence of net neutrality, internet service providers could block, slow down, or charge users' money for specific website and online content. An example of this would be Verizon charging users more to use the Google search engine, since Verizon owns Yahoo, and would likely prefer consumers use it, instead.

In an age where high speed internet is essential to education, lower-income citizens won't be able to afford access to the same information as higher-income citizens. Marginalized groups, who depend on the internet to get their message out or connect with each other may be silenced or blocked. Essentially, the privatization of the internet is a civil rights issue.

For farmers and rural residents, net neutrality would compound an already glaring issue – rural broadband access and service provider monopolies. According to the FCC, roughly 710,000 people in rural Wisconsin lack access to higher download speeds. In areas that do not have access to high speed internet, the costs of service are often escalated. When only one company offers internet service, they can charge more for less. While service providers in urban areas compete for customers, residents in rural areas often have to take what they can get. If net neutrality is repealed, rural residents may have to pay even more.

Net neutrality provides a level playing field for everyone. Freedom of information is what makes our society thrive as well as provides the opportunity for people to fix problems. If we are to continue to evolve as a civilization, we need to stand up to greed and corporate control.

Wisconsin Farmers Union strongly encourages the United States Congress to pass a Resolution of Disapproval under the Congressional Review Act (CRA), a vehicle to overturn the FCC's net neutrality repeal with a simple majority vote in both the Senate and House.

2. LIBRARIES

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports adequate funding for rural libraries. Wisconsin Farmers Union calls upon local, state and federal governments to renew their commitment to America's libraries. It is through a well-informed public that democracy is best served. Libraries provide access to information for all. Wisconsin Farmers Union opposes any efforts to cut funds for libraries. Funding for rural libraries, material for the blind and visually impaired must be restored. WFU encourages county payments under state statute 43.12 (1)(b) to be increased to 90% from the current level of 70%.

3. POSTAL SERVICE

Wisconsin Farmers Union opposes changes in postal policy that will result in reduced, less frequent or inefficient mail service for rural areas or which would result in increased postal rates. We oppose further privatization of the postal service.

K. SOCIAL SECURITY REFORM

The current Social Security system is widely supported and has stood the test of time in providing for the needs of elderly and disabled people. Social Security must be a mandatory, universal system. Therefore, Wisconsin Farmers Union supports the maintenance of the public Social Security system and opposes efforts to replace Social Security with a private retirement program. In order to be viable and assure benefits far into the future, we support removing the $128,400 cap on taxable income. We also support the Social Security system that provides funds for retirement and disability. We believe that the Social Security Trust Fund should be an independent fund, protected from being used by the federal government to meet other financial obligations.

L. SUPPORT FOR VETERANS SERVICES

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports full funding of Veterans Administration programs to provide services to our veterans.

Wisconsin Farmers Union also supports maintaining the current network of County Veteran Support Officers (CVSOs) as called for in state statute (Chapter 45, Subchapter VIII, 45.80).

Wisconsin Farmers Union encourages DATCP to work with local, state and national organizations that support veterans who wish to enter into agriculture, including supporting long-term grant funding through the Farm Bill.

M. CAMPAIGN FINANCING

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports legislation in Wisconsin and at the federal level that will provide for full public financing to candidates who agree not to accept special interest contributions and who agree to campaign spending limits. Wisconsin Farmers Union also supports consideration of the Maine model of campaign finance. The Maine model allows candidates to choose whether or not to accept public financing, and also assures publically-financed candidates a one-to-one match of funds raised by privately financed opponents. Publically-financed candidates under this system are required to receive a minimum number of

small donations to qualify.

Wisconsin Farmers Union further supports legislation that requires reporting of contributions and disbursements by independent expenditure groups.

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports a ban on political fundraising by members of the state legislature during state budget deliberation.

The United States Supreme Court's disastrous 2010 ruling in *Citizens United v. FEC and 2014 ruling in McCutcheon v. FEC* opened the doors to virtually unlimited campaign spending. Wisconsin Farmers Union calls upon the United States Congress to pass and send to the states for ratification a constitutional amendment reversing those decisions, and clarifying that corporations are not people and money is not speech, in order to reverse.

N. NONPARTISAN REDISTRICTING

Both major political parties have gerrymandered Wisconsin voting districts to their advantage. Partisan redistricting leads to the creation of "safe districts" that favor incumbents and lean heavily toward one party, rather than districts that are conducive to competitive races and moderate candidates. This partisan approach to redistricting polarizes the political dialogue, disenfranchises the minority in a given district, and causes elections to be decided at the primary level.

Wisconsin Farmers Union believes that citizens' democratic right to vote is diminished and voter turnout is reduced when voters do not get to vote on competitive races or have meaningful choices at the polls. In November 2016, the United States District Court for the Western District of Wisconsin struck down Wisconsin's state legislative district maps on the grounds that they violated both the First Amendment and the Equal Protection Clause of the 14th Amendment because they deprived minority party voters of their right to be represented. The experience of the state of Iowa demonstrates that effective non-partisan redistricting is possible, and the Iowa model can serve as a model for Wisconsin.

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports the creation of a nonpartisan entity to perform all future redistricting for city, county, state and federal offices in the state of Wisconsin. Such a commission should conduct redistricting according to logical geographical and jurisdictional boundaries, striving to keep communities of interest intact.

O. RANKED CHOICE VOTING

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports the use of Ranked Choice Voting in Farmers Union board, federal, state, and local elections in order to better capture voters' intent and to encourage participation of third-party candidates.

P. REGULATING PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION OF WISCONSIN

Wisconsin Farmers Union advocates for a number of regulatory and legislative reforms of the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin that will strengthen the ethical safeguards and regulatory procedures of the PSC and strengthen the PSC's regulatory and consumer oversight of Wisconsin utility monopolies.

Q. PUBLIC INTERVENOR

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports restoration of and state funding for the position of Public Intervener.

R. NATIONAL FARMERS UNION INSURANCE

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports the sale of National Farmers Union Insurance products in Wisconsin.

S. URBAN AGRICULTURE

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports the adoption of local ordinances allowing agriculture use in all zoning districts. WFU supports the adoption of local ordinances allowing for the building of small-scale farm infrastructure, such as hoop houses.

T. COMMON SENSE LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports limiting the percentage of committees that can meet on any day or in any week, and the number of bills they can consider at one meeting, so that legislators can attend the majority of their committee meetings, and fully vet the legislation in front of those committees.

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports limiting the number of bills that can be considered on any floor session day or in any session week so that legislators have time to review all legislation they will be voting on.

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports preventing committees from holding an executive session the same day as a floor session for that house, so that legislators can focus their attention on the bills they will consider on the floor.

IX. ECONOMICS AND THE FAMILY FARM

A. BEGINNING FARMER PROGRAMS

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports state and federal policies—such as low interest loans, grants and tax incentives—that provide adequate financing to help maintain Wisconsin's family farm tradition and provide special assistance to beginning family farmers and minority farmers. Wisconsin Farmers Union supports the University of Wisconsin Center for Integrated Agricultural Systems' School for Beginning Dairy and Livestock Farmers, School for Beginning Market Growers, Eco-Fruit Initiatives, Dairy Grazing Apprenticeship Program, and other similar programs. Wisconsin Farmers Union supports the maintenance and expansion of on-the-ground technical assistance for Wisconsin farmers through the UW Extension systems, DATCP and private consultants.

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act and the inclusion of farming in the Public Service Loan Forgiveness program as an incentive to increase the number of beginning farmers.

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports legislation that would forgive a portion of the student loans carried by new farmers in their first five years of farming.

B. FARM CREDIT

Wisconsin Farmers Union recommends that the Farm Credit System (FCS) remain a viable source of agricultural credit and recommit itself to assisting family agriculture by restructuring loans, lowering interest rates and debt mediation procedures. As a growing number of commercial lenders eliminate their agriculture portfolios, and consolidation in the banking industry results in fewer borrowing options for farmers, the farm credit system should remain faithful to its original mission of serving the credit needs of the agricultural community. The Farm Credit System (FCS) must continue to be owned by American agriculture and not be subject to foreign or non-agricultural ownership. We believe the Farm Service Agency (FSA) should effectively address beginning farmers' credit needs.

C. TAXATION

Wisconsin Farmers Union reaffirms our position that taxes should be levied on the ability to pay. Tax reform should address itself to property tax relief. We favor maintaining the state's share of public school funding at 66 percent or higher. We call on the State to examine current spending and revenue-generating policies. We endorse the tax relief benefits under the Farmland Preservation and Homestead Credit programs, and support expanding these programs to provide property tax relief to more family farms.

Most family farmers do not have sufficient income to invest in retirement plans, since any income they have goes into sustaining and paying off their farms. Farmers' cumulative investment in and funding of their farms should be considered as a retirement fund (such as a traditional IRA or Roth IRA) sheltered by state and federal tax laws.

1. SHARED REVENUE TO MUNICIPALITIES

Over the last 70 or 80 years, the state has required local governments to implement certain policies while only funding a portion of its implementation. This is known as Revenue Sharing. Wisconsin Farmers Union opposes inadequate funding from the state to local municipalities for the services that the state directed the locals to implement. Wisconsin Farmers Union reaffirms its long-standing support for 2/3 state funding for public education.

2. REAFFIRMATION OF THE FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY OF LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

Wisconsin Farmers Union strongly supports local government. Wisconsin Farmers Union believes that our local government officials are fiscally responsible, and therefore do not believe it is necessary to enact a constitutional amendment to freeze property taxes at their existing level. Rather our state legislators and government officials should work to balance their budget by reviewing existing governmental spending and revenue sources.

3. CONSTITUTIONAL SPENDING LIMITS

Wisconsin Farmers Union does not support the use of constitutional spending limits (also known as the "Taxpayer Bill of Rights") as a deceptive and misnamed effort by some of the Wisconsin legislature to usurp local control and build power at the state level. The Wisconsin state constitution empowers local government to determine local affairs including the taxing of property. While recognizing the obligation of the state to support its portion of shared revenue and school funding, Wisconsin Farmers Union opposes any state legislative efforts or constitutional changes to limit local government's ability to change the rate of taxation on property.

4. PRIVITIZATION OF PUBLIC ASSETS

Privatization of government services such as schools, prisons, drinking water and wastewater treatment facilities and military services and one-time sales of public assets such as power plants is increasingly being promoted as a means to address

immediate fiscal deficits. However, such strategies fail to solve the structural issues causing the deficits in the first place, and end up costing taxpayers more in the long run.

Therefore, Wisconsin Farmers Union supports retention of public services in a judicious manner and opposes the privatization of deregulation of public services necessary for the well-being of the public good and society.

5. MINIMUM WAGE

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports an increase in the minimum wage, such that all individuals receive a living wage.

6. NATIONAL AND STATE SALES TAX

Wisconsin Farmers Union opposes a national sales tax.

We support the continuation of the state sales tax exemption on all items of agricultural production, including buildings.

7. FEDERAL & STATE ESTATE TAX

In lieu of estate tax repeal, Wisconsin Farmers Union supports estate tax relief for family-owned farms, ranches and small businesses in order to facilitate the transfer of those enterprises to the next generation. WFU recommends that individual estates worth less than $5.6 million (11.2 million for couples) be exempt from the estate tax, and that any portion of an estate that exceeds the exemption level be subject to a 40 percent tax rate. Simplified exemption qualification rules and requirements should be created, along with the implementation of graduated tax rates.

Wisconsin Farmers Union opposes shifting tax liability from the estate tax to the capital gains tax through the elimination of the "step-up" in basis provisions.

We support the Wisconsin Estate Tax using the federal estate tax guidelines.

8. FEDERAL CORPORATE TAX RATES

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports the following with regard to corporate tax rates:

a. Federal and state corporate tax rates should be set at levels no less than those applied to individual income tax rates.

b. Corporate tax credits applicable in federal and state taxes should be significantly reduced, such that tax credits are not greater than 10% of income before tax.

c. Elimination of the Modified Accelerated Cost Recovery System and the 200% Declining Balance Method for accelerating depreciation. These systems allow corporations to abnormally reduce their taxable income, thereby putting greater tax burden on individual income earners and smaller business entities.

d. The total corporate tax burden in the U.S. should be comparable to the tax burden for corporations in other developed countries.

9. FEDERAL DEBT REDUCTION

Wisconsin Farmers Union advocates for a "both sides of the coin" approach to reducing the federal deficit that includes both increasing federal revenue and decreasing federal spending. Specifically:

a. Federal and state tax burdens should be shifted increasingly through steep progressive tax rate growth to wealthier income brackets, particularly for adjusted gross incomes of greater than $250,000 per household and at rates federally no less than 38% applicable for adjusted gross income in excess of $ 250,000.

b. State and federal tax regulations should eliminate, or at least severely restrict, tax credits for income earners with adjusted gross incomes greater than $250,000;

c. State and federal tax regimes should restrict the payment of government benefits to households with adjusted gross income (AGI) greater than the national median income (which averaged $53,046 between 2008 and 2012);

d. Short-term capital gains taxes should be increased;

e. To aid the Federal government in achieving debt reduction, Wisconsin Farmers Union supports a reduction in all government military spending.

f. Wisconsin Farmers Union supports elimination of the Mining Depletion Allowance.

10. LIMITING SECTION 179 SINGLE-YEAR EXPENSING

The Wisconsin Farmers Union calls for the federal government to reduce overall corporate welfare, including to farmers, to reduce the maximum allowable annual deduction under Sect. 179 of the IRS tax code, so that it more evenly benefits all users and farmers and stimulates a more even playing field among all farmers, and promotes a more equitable tax regime.

11. A FAIR AND FISCALLY SOUND FEDERAL TAX POLICY

In response to 2017 Tax legislation, Wisconsin Farmers Union calls for either:

a. significant cuts in military spending to offset the proposed billions of dollars in lost tax revenue; or

b. a reevaluation of the wisdom of deep income tax cuts. Wisconsin Farmers Union opposes cutting taxes if it will result in either cuts to bedrock government programs like Social Security, Medicare, or Medicaid, or deepening of the already-unsustainable federal deficit.

Wisconsin Farmers Union specifically supports taxing capital gains and dividends the same as other income. Wisconsin Farmers Union opposes the elimination of the deduction for state and local taxes on the federal tax return, because it would make overall tax collections less progressive. Wisconsin Farmers Union reaffirms the general principle of progressive taxation, with the wealthy paying a higher percentage of their income in taxes than the poor. Wisconsin Farmers Union urges the heaviest reliance on the income tax in funding essential government programs.

12. LABOR GAINS EXEMPTION

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports efforts to implement a "Labor Gains Exemption" for family farm agriculture. This may be accomplished by increasing the standard deduction for all family members' contributions to a family owned farm. This standard deduction should be in the form of a refundable tax credit to enable refunds of these credits if no taxes are due.

D. ESTABLISHMENT OF A WISCONSIN STATE BANK

Wisconsin Farmers Union strongly advocates that the state of Wisconsin establish a wholly owned state bank, like the Bank of North Dakota, to partner with Wisconsin state-licensed banks in stimulating state economic growth through underwriting or participating in loans for agriculture (farming), industry, commerce, secondary market real estate, and student loans where obligors are only state residents and whose loan proceeds are used only in the state and that all revenues of the state are deposited in this state bank and a portion of the profits are returned to the state.

E. FARM LABOR

Farm labor is the most important part of the success of family farms.

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports fair, just, and safe labor practices on farms that impact all race, color, religion, creed, national origin, ancestry, gender, gender expression, sexual orientation, family/parental status, age, disability, socio-economic or military status with payment of family-supporting wages, promoting both individual and community integrity.

Wisconsin Farmers Union affirms the necessity of maintaining farm workplaces that are free from all harassment, all violence, and all discrimination.

Wisconsin Farmers Union recognizes the critical importance of undocumented farm and other laborers in our society, opposes any legislation that deports non-violent, law-abiding residents, and advocates for a path to citizenship.

F. LAND USE PLANNING

1. WORKING LANDS INITIATIVE

In order to effectively preserve farmland, funding for the purchase of agricultural conservation easements should be increased. The state should prioritize these purchases by striking a balance between productivity, price and proximity to development pressures. Many farmers and ranchers cannot afford the cost of agricultural land to increase their acreage, nor can young would-be farmers afford to begin farming. Purchases of development rights, funded through Working Lands or the Stewardship program, give farmers economic incentives to farm their productive land.

Additionally, the state must provide as much assistance as possible to educate landowners and local governments about the organization of agricultural enterprise zones, which are necessary for land to be eligible for the Working Lands program.

We allow Wisconsin Farmers Union to support individual members' agricultural enterprise zone applications with letters of support if the applications reflect traditional Farmers Union values.

2. FARMLAND PRESERVATION

The Farmland Preservation Program has been valuable in helping to ensure the economic vitality of Wisconsin agriculture since 1977. Wisconsin Farmers Union affirms its endorsement of the Farmland Preservation Program as a valuable tool for improving the economic condition of our members. Revisions to the program as part of the Working Lands Initiative have strengthened Farmland preservation, with an emphasis on collecting early release fees and the continuation of a refundable tax credit.

Given that Wisconsin is ahead of most states in losing farmland and the USDA census showed that the state lost 620,000 acres of farmland between 2007 and 2012, Wisconsin Farmers Union calls for renewing the funding of the Purchase of Agricultural Conservation Easements (PACE) program in order to provide the needed tools for the state and willing landowners to permanently preserve farmland.

3. USE VALUE ASSESSMENT

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports use value assessment and the agricultural forestland classification for lands owned by Wisconsin family farms. A state investigation should be made regarding the practice of using use value assessment as a tax shelter for developers or other non-farmers. We support an acreage cap on use value assessment for those who are using it as a tax shelter until such investigation takes place.

4. COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports the goals of Comprehensive Planning. Wisconsin Farmers Union supports efforts by municipal governments, township officials, and all citizens to work together to create community planning that emphasizes the preservation of community character and community values and discourages urban sprawl and the loss of farmland.

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports economic development, funding, and incentives that benefits family farmers, workers, and businesses, not to the detriment of Wisconsin citizens, communities, or environment. We also call for transparency in all state-supported economic development.

5. TRANSFER OF PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports the Transfer of Development Rights for effective land planning. The transfer or sale of one parcel of land's development rights to the owner of another parcel allows the development on one parcel while preventing development of the other, by placing a conservation easement or deed restriction on the parcel transferring its development rights. Transfer of Development Rights protects farmland and other natural areas permanently, and it keeps land private and on the tax rolls. It provides farmers with a financially competitive alternative to development and helps keep farmland affordable.

6. EMINENT DOMAIN

Eminent Domain has historically been a right of governments to seize private property for public use, such as highway and infrastructure projects, with compensation given to the property owners. State legislatures have recently begun granting eminent domain authority to private corporations that are not elected by the public or held accountable to voters. Governments have declared land and homes in adequate condition "blighted" in order to use eminent domain authority to seize property and turn it over to private corporations.

Wisconsin Farmers Union is concerned by the 2004 U.S. Supreme Court decision, *Kelo v. New London, Connecticut.* Wisconsin Farmers Union opposes the implementation and use of eminent domain whereby unrelated private entities, be they individuals or corporations, become the beneficiaries of farmers' or private persons' assets and no direct benefit to the local public occurs.

Fair and balanced eminent domain guidelines should protect the rights of individual property owners as well as promote the public good. Wisconsin Farmers Union opposes any reduction in landowner rights in eminent domain proceedings. We also oppose allowing private businesses to condemn public land.

We call for comprehensive revision of Wisconsin's eminent domain statutes in order to:

- Revise the definition of "blight" to ensure that it is limited to properties that are abandoned, dangerous, or in disrepair.
- Limit the power of eminent domain to units of government that are accountable to voters. Private, public and/or foreign-based corporations should not have the power of eminent domain.
- Ensure that there is a clear and demonstrated public purpose for any use of eminent domain.
- Permit landowners to have a representative of their choosing in condemnation proceedings.
- Ensure that offers to purchase in eminent domain proceedings reflect the full value of the property being acquired and adjacent property devaluation.
- Consider how taxpayers and the public at large should be compensated for the loss of wetlands, farmland, and green space when property is acquired via eminent domain.
- Investigate eminent domain statutes in other states, such as Minnesota's "Buy the Farm" law.

While we wait for years for Wisconsin's eminent domain statutes to be revised, WFU calls on Wisconsin counties and towns to explore the more immediate option of passing community rights ordinances that would immediately prohibit business corporations from exercising eminent domain authority over the property rights of private landowners.

7. ADVERSE POSSESSION

Wisconsin Farmers Union calls for a change in the laws related to Adverse Possession, such that a landowner wishing to bring a court case related to Adverse Possession must first seek resolution of the issue with their local municipality, similar to the process for reviewing fence disputes. A court should give great deference to the decision of the local municipality in adverse possession cases.

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports re-instatement of laws prohibiting local units of government from obtaining property through Adverse Possession.

8. SAND MINING

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports local control of frac sand mining, and does not support state regulation that would preempt the ability of towns and counties to craft their own regulations tailored to their individual circumstances.

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports efforts by local governments to effectively evaluate and manage the development of these industrial sand mining and processing operations.

Wisconsin Farmers Union encourages communities to consider the use of zoning as a planning tool for addressing this issue, along with negotiation of development agreements between local governments and the mining, processing and transportation businesses involved.

Wisconsin Farmers Union strongly urges the development of adequate regulatory and monitoring capacity within appropriate state agencies to assure that accurate and timely information is available, and that transparent regulatory compliance is assured.

Wisconsin Farmers Union encourages towns and counties to accurately account for the income-generating capacity of this potential mine, and to establish fees, property tax provisions, or impact assessments to ensure that the economic benefits of frac sand operations are shared by all of the local residents that are negatively affected by mining operations.

Wisconsin Farmers Union encourages local governments to require robust reclamation plans and bonding sufficient to cover the costs of returning land to a pre-mined state.

9. SULFIDE MINING

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports reinstating “prove it first” legislation that requires mining companies to provide specific proof that a sulfide mine can run for 10 years and be closed for 10 years without polluting groundwater and surface waters with acid drainage.

X. THE ENVIRONMENT AND THE FAMILY FARM

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports a rational, nationwide environmental policy. We believe that family farmers are great contributors toward preserving the environment and that society is interested in rewarding their contributions. Farmers work hard and take great pride in providing a safe and healthy product while contributing to the health of our planet through their care of the land. We oppose efforts to dilute federal and state environmental standards for air, land and water. We support environmental programs that financially encourage farmers to adopt conservation and environmentally friendly practices.

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports programs that recognize farms as multifunctional and rewards farmers for their contribution to land stewardship, protecting clean air and water, open spaces, and wildlife, supporting Wisconsin's rural heritage, supporting small town and rural economies and Wisconsin tourism.

A. SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

Wisconsin Farmers Union encourages the growing interest among farmers, consumers and environmentalists in adopting and promoting sustainable agriculture practices that protect the soil and reduce the need for artificial pesticides and fertilizers.

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports the allocation of resources for dedicated DATCP staff to assist Wisconsin farmers and landowners in implementing organic and pasture-based farming systems and work on market development to support these systems.

We support increased emphasis on public interest research at the University of Wisconsin with a higher priority placed in interdisciplinary research on the social, economic and environmental effects of agricultural policies, technologies, chemicals, and biotechnologies. We support funding for the UW Center for Integrated Agricultural Systems. Wisconsin Farmers Union encourages the UW to include water quality parameters in nutrient management and soil conservation planning and supports the work that has begun on that front. We encourage the UW to establish policies to expand the availability of public information and disclosure of all research projects, whether publicly or privately funded.

Wisconsin Farmers Union advocates that DNR, DATCP, and NRCS set state guidelines to address the pollution of water resources through reasonable regulations of nutrient application on karst landscapes to protect public health and safety.

Wisconsin Farmers Union advocates for the prohibition of winter spreading of manure on karst landscapes that lack sufficient soil depth to protect groundwater from contamination.

Wisconsin Farmers Union calls for exemptions or cost sharing mechanisms for farmers that lack the capacity to comply with these regulations to ensure that farmers do not face undue financial hardship from these measures. Wisconsin Farmers Union advocates for sufficient funding for county land and water conservation staff to work with farmers to ensure they are not unduly burdened by these regulations.

B. CONSERVATION

1. WISCONSIN COUNTY CONSERVATION STAFFING

County Conservation staffing grants pay approximately one third of the combined salaries of county conservation staff. County conservation staff have a role in the provision of billions of dollars in cost share funds to farmers and landowners, who use those funds to invest in their farms and improve soil and water quality. County Conservation staff also ensure that farmers maintain eligibility for farmland preservation tax credits, which can be reinvested in farm businesses.

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports robust federal, state and county funding for county conservation staffing, and the creation of a system of uniform job descriptions to be overseen by the state Land and Water Conservation Board.

2. CARBON SEQUESTRATION CREDITS

Carbon sequestration is an innovative way to enhance income for producers and protect our environment. Therefore, Wisconsin Farmers Union should continue and expand the trading of carbon credits and the potential for inclusion of carbon sequestration as an agricultural conservation practice for green payments.

3. GREENHOUSE GAS REDUCTION

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports the reduction of Greenhouse gas emissions in our states and we jointly support the following actions:

a. Establish greenhouse gas reduction targets and timeframes consistent with the Midwest Governors Association member states; and

b. Develop a market-based mechanism to help achieve greenhouse gas reduction targets; and

c. Join the climate registry to enable tracking management and crediting for entities that reduce greenhouse gas emissions; and

d. Develop and implement other associated mechanisms and policies as needed to achieve the greenhouse gas reduction targets such as a low-carbon fuel standard, a tax on carbon emissions by non-farm generators of hydrocarbons, and regional incentives and funding mechanisms.

4. IMPROVEMENT OF SOIL HEALTH THROUGH MANAGED GRAZING, COVER-CROPPING AND REDUCED TILLAGE

a. Wisconsin Farmers Union strongly advocates that its members and farmers engaged in cash cropping grain and vegetables employ sound stewardship soil management through multi-year crop rotation, use of different cover crops, and no-till or minimum till practices.

b. Wisconsin Farmers Union strongly advocates that permanent groundcover and managed grazing dairy and livestock systems are the Best Management practice to control soil erosion and phosphorous pollution in our nation's fresh water resources.

c. Wisconsin Farmers Union supports increased funding for conservation practices that increase the soil health on any farm.

5. SCIENCE-BASED TRIALS OF ROWCROPS INTEGRATED WITH PRAIRIE STRIPS (STRIPS)

Wisconsin Farmers Union encourages the implementation of Science-based Trials of Rowcrops Integrated with Prairie Strips (STRIPS) into row-cropped fields in Wisconsin, incentivized by costs-share opportunities through the Farm Service Agency's Conservation Reserve Program; NRCS's Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP); the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Partners Program; and Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP) grants for soil and water protection.

6. CONVERSION OF MARGINAL LAND AND WORLD CARBON SINK GREEN ZONES INTO CROPLAND

Wisconsin Farmers Union advocates that marginal lands and world carbon sink green zones be protected from industrial cash-crop farming and opposes conversion of marginal land, inclusive of wetlands, highly erodible land, grasslands, and tropical rain forests into farming, and that the U.S. takes the lead in providing the funding that would make this sequestration possible.

C. PROTECTION OF WATER BY THE STATE

The use of water is a basic human right with inherent rights and responsibilities, and is a public trust to be used for the good of all. Water is not a commodity for exchange in the marketplace. Wisconsin Farmers Union supports the following principles for water management in Wisconsin:

Wisconsin Farmers Union calls for the protection of Wisconsin's groundwater resources and recognition of the connection between ground and surface waters. Wisconsin Farmers Union supports new legislation and policy, which includes the development of adaptive management, locally-driven tools, as well as state-wide mechanisms to protect the quantity and quality of groundwater, equitably available for all interests, including water necessary to support healthy ecosystems. This includes support for nutrient trading mechanisms that are designed to allow participation by those who have already implemented practices and provides incentives for those landowners moving toward desired nutrient levels, using a broad suite of conservation practices. Wisconsin Farmers Union supports watershed management efforts by public-private partnerships, and encourages farmers to be active participants in such efforts.

1. GROUNDWATER MAPPING

WFU supports the development of coordinated, statewide groundwater mapping efforts. Wisconsin Farmers Union respectfully encourages, on behalf of all counties, that the state legislature makes available additional resources for counties to plan and implement groundwater testing and mapping that will lead to better understanding, protection, and utilization of our groundwater and drinking water supplies. We support adding additional positions at the Wisconsin Geologic and Natural History Survey and at UW-Stevens Point for the purpose of groundwater testing and mapping. All groundwater testing results should be recorded in the Center for Watershed Science and Education at UW-Stevens Point so as to improve the accuracy of the well water viewer.

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports legislation authorizing the state to fund detailed bedrock and depth-to-bedrock surveys in all counties that have not yet commissioned the production of highly detailed maps and models for groundwater vulnerability and movement.

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports the use of groundwater mapping technology to enable science-based siting, zoning, well-permitting, nutrient management planning and waste management decisions at all government subdivisions, including township, village, city, county and state levels, as well as the DNR.

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports targeted application of "special rules" to all "sensitive areas" of the state with notable vulnerabilities to contamination by land-spread manure, industrial waste or commercial and residential fertilizers.

Wisconsin Farmers Union encourages the acknowledgement of detailed groundwater mapping, modeling and predictive technology in all pending groundwater legislation, including the following provisions:

The DNR shall use groundwater mapping technology to trace draw-down and contamination events to their sources, and hold permit holders accountable for appropriate fines and penalties, including loss of permits.

Permit holders shall be required to purchase insurance for fines and/or compensation and clean-up costs of draw-down and contamination events that are verifiable through said mapping technology, with insurance held in the name of private individuals rather than corporate entities.

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports the use of temporary development moratoria imposed by those local and county government subdivisions which have commissioned groundwater mapping surveys until such time as the surveys are completed.

2. PROTECTION OF WATERS IN SENSITIVE AREAS

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports efforts to preserve the quality of all waters in Wisconsin. Furthermore, we support changes to NR 151 that will restrict manure and other waste application rates and the spreading of these materials on frozen soils in areas of the state deemed to be sensitive areas. These sensitive areas would include places with shallow soil depth above Karst bedrock, areas with sandy soils, and areas where the groundwater quality standards are not being met.

D. PEAK PHOSPHORUS

Wisconsin Farmers Union encourages the acknowledgement of peak phosphorus, its effects on agriculture, and calls for a prioritization of research into this area. Wisconsin Farmers Union calls for further study on how to minimize the entry of phosphorus into place. In addition, Wisconsin Farmers Union supports the use of state and federal resources to improve manure management in the area of capturing more of the Phosphorus that is being put into and onto the ground.

E. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

The Wisconsin Farmers Union opposes any weakening of the Environmental Protection Agency and affirms the increasing need for its function in the face of a deregulatory environment.

In addition, Wisconsin Farmers Union calls on the EPA and other applicable regulatory agencies to conduct a complete, transparent, and scientific study of the impact that construction and ensuing maintenance and infrastructure of a "wall" between the U.S. and Mexico would have on the migratory and residential habitats of migratory species (i.e. monarch butterfly) and species listed under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 before any such construction begins.

F. RESTORATION OF THE FEDERAL CLEAN WATER ACT

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports federal legislation to reestablish the original intent of the Clean Water Act of 1972. Federal legislation must replace the term "navigable waters of the U.S." with its definition from the 1972 Act "waters of the U.S." in order to reestablish and clarify the historically understood scope of the Clean Water Act. This change will enable the CWA to achieve the original goals of restoring and maintaining the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the nation's waters.

1. Because non-point source pollution which is coming largely from our farms remains the major, unresolved cause of water pollution in Wisconsin and in the US, Wisconsin Farmers Union advocates that more effective agronomic practices such as cover-cropping, no or reduced tillage, inserting more small grains into the rotation system, terracing on highly erodible land, and enhanced buffer strips should be employed.
2. Exemptions for normal agricultural activities need to be enforced to the extent that pollutant runoff-reduction agronomics are employed.
3. Wisconsin Farmers Union supports in principle and in practice the EPA's and the Army Corps' intent to implement the basic objectives of the Clean Water Act and the Clean Water Regulations.
4. Wisconsin Farmers Union understands (a) that channels of pollutant runoff come from more than traditionally understood navigable waters, come from upstream at the source of pollutants, namely also from intermittent and ephemeral streams and waterways, and incorporate all the waters referenced under the Clean Water Authority Restoration Act, and (b) that, with or without using the word navigable, the Clean Water Act in no way results in the taking of private property which would contravene the US Constitution.

G. ENSURING RESPONSIBLE CHEMICAL USE

Wisconsin Farmers Union recognizes that the responsible use of agricultural chemicals is an important and essential production tool for farmers. Farmers understand and accept the responsibility for using these chemicals in a safe and responsible manner, and for following all regulatory provisions, including the completion of appropriate training, record-keeping, and application protocols. Regulatory standards should support farmers who are committed to maintaining these standards, and should also

provide fair and reasonable provisions for addressing those situations where either accidental problems or unauthorized use and practices occur, especially if harm is cause to adjacent crops, farms, people, animals, pollinators or the environment. Wisconsin Farmers Union advocates for the establishment of provisions for responsible and timely allocation of responsibility and compensation for damages.

We support:

1. A first-time fine to the applicator for spray drift that trespasses onto a neighboring property of $1,000. A second-time offender should be fined at least $2,000. The fine can be increased if certain circumstances can be proven -- for example, that the spray was applied during weather conditions that make it more likely for the spray to drift onto another's land, such as during a fog or damp and moist conditions. The fine can also be increased for drift onto a pasture with grazing animals, for drift onto vegetable gardens, commercial fruit and vegetable beds, greenhouses, hoop-houses, high tunnel greenhouses, apiaries, residences, or people.
2. Establishing a compensation fund to make victims of spray drift whole for their losses.
3. Requiring applicators to take continuing training classes every two years.
4. Policy that requires pesticide- and herbicide-use permit holders disclose agrichemical usage to neighbors upon request.
5. Independent and objective research regarding the human and environmental impacts of agricultural inputs for pest and weed control, as well as research into alternatives to pest and weed control methods that are not harmful to humans and the environment.
6. Policy that prioritizes human and environmental health and safety with regard to regulating the use of agricultural inputs.
7. Policies and regulatory efforts to label agricultural products as containing neonicotinoids and that products containing neonicotinoids be properly labeled as such.

Wisconsin Farmers Union believes that the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) process for vetting agricultural chemicals is inadequate to for protecting public health. The scientific studies on which herbicide and pesticide approvals are based should be performed by government or university scientists, not by scientists employed or paid by agrichemical manufacturers.

H. SECONDARY CONTAINMENT UNITS

Wisconsin Farmers Union seeks environmentally responsible and economically reasonable containment requirements to ensure that stored products are not released in the event of a storage container failure, Wisconsin Farmers Union supports regulations requiring farmers to install secondary containment for liquid bulk fertilizer stored in individual tanks of sizes similar to or greater than retail fertilizer dealers or pesticides in containers greater than the manufacturers' mini bulk containers for a period of longer than 15 days. Further, we support cost-sharing programs to fund such a prevention program.

I. AG CHEMICAL CLEANUP FUND

The state of Wisconsin has created an Agricultural Chemical Cleanup Fund, which is funded by a tax on purchases of agricultural chemicals. Clean-ups of all spills in Wisconsin are covered by the fund, even though chemicals purchased out-of-state but ultimately used in-state, are not subject to the fee. Wisconsin Farmers Union supports closing this loophole by making all Wisconsin users subject to the requirement, regardless of point of purchase.

J. LAND SPREADING OF INDUSTRIAL WASTE

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports stringent restrictions and regulations on the allowed land spreading of industrial and municipal waste sludge and liquid, including class B bio solids. Alternative disposal sites and processes should be identified to eliminate the risk of surface and groundwater contamination, protect the health and safety of citizens, and protect the soil and water of agricultural lands, from which the nation's food is produced. Final decision-making authority for determining disposal sites and methods must be vested in the citizens who are directly affected by the site.

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports educating the public about the potential hazards of spreading and need for testing industrial and municipal waste sludge relative to what has been spread and landowner liability. We further support nutrient standards be established similar to current nutrient management plans farmers follow.

K. DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

1. NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT

The state and the DNR own large tracts of land in Wisconsin, much of it in marsh- and low-land, a habitat for wildlife. Much of the farmland in Wisconsin drains into these lands. Wisconsin Farmers Union believes state- and DNR-owned land should also be required to have Nutrient Management Plans in place. We further support nutrient standards be established similar to current nutrient management plans farmers follow.

Any farmer who must complete a mandatory Nutrient Management Plan should have access to 100 percent cost sharing from the state or Federal government.

2. NUTRIENT TRADING

Legislation has been proposed to encourage the trading of phosphorous nutrient credits to reduce the amount of phosphorous reaching various bodies of water. Wisconsin Farmers Union supports the concept of economically rewarding land use practices that reduce nutrient loss. Any legislation that rewards these land use practices should include provisions that ensure transparency, accountability, and enforcement. Furthermore, any such legislation should be applicable to all farm-land owners, not just large land owners. Land owners with existing conservation practices should be financially rewarded for having a good land use practice already implemented.

3. MANURE MANAGEMENT

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports the development of standard rules and regulations for manure management enforcement. We further support a minimum of 80 percent cost sharing to family farmers for mandatory manure storage and diversion programs.

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports a requirement that Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFO's) of 1,000 or greater animal units provide financial security to cover the cost of emptying and/or retiring a manure storage facility at the end of its useful life or in the event of a manure leak or overflow. Such financial security could be in the form of a performance or surety bond, insurance, guarantee, letter of credit, certificate of deposit or designated savings account, or deposit to a state fund created for this purpose. Wisconsin Farmers Union urges the state of Wisconsin to fund agronomy research exploring the benefits of composting, compared to other forms of manure storage.

Wisconsin Farmers Union advocates that manure haulers display on the truck or tractor the name of the farm generating and contracting manure-hauling. Wisconsin Farmers Union calls on legislators and the DNR to impose heftier fines for spillage and accidents and allocate and deploy personnel as needed to monitor accidents that will deter future accidents and have the means to cover cost of accident clean-up through adequate fines.

4. DNR REFORM

a. DNR SECRETARY

While it is recognized that many advocate for reform of the Department of Natural Resources, Wisconsin Farmers Union urges that any legislation intending to reform the DNR not lessen the environmental integrity of state law or enforcement of environmental law by the Department.

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports efforts to remove politics from the management of Wisconsin's natural resources by restoring the appointment of the DNR Secretary to the Natural Resources Board.

b. DNR FUNDING AND STAFF

Wisconsin Farmers Union calls for the increase in capable and qualified personnel to adequately and periodically monitor the performance of high capacity wells and concentrated animal feeding operations to ensure the integrity of and long-term adequacy of natural resources and the protection of the health of the citizenry in their respective areas.

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports the reallocation of DNR wastewater management resources to focus on field work to monitor compliance with pollution permits and nutrient management plans.

c. HABITAT STAMP

WFU supports the development for all public land users of a Habitat Stamp to generate wildlife funding for public and private lands.

5. INVASIVE SPECIES

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports DNR efforts to protect our environment from invasive species but not at the burden or expense of the landowner.

We support mandatory enforcement of noxious weed laws, on Conservation Reserve Program lands, and land owned by lending institutions, absentee landowners and the government including town, county and state road right-of-ways. We support the inclusion of multi-flora roses, purple loosestrife, European buckthorn, wild chervil, and wild parsnip on the state's noxious weed list. Further, we support the creation of programs that would pay farmers to eradicate it.

6. WISCONSIN POLLUTION DISCHARGE ELIMINATION SYSTEM (WPDES) PERMITS

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports increasing the fees required for a WPDES permit for CAFOs from $1,000 to $5,000, so that taxpayer costs incurred by DNR staff time and research are repaid by CAFO operators.

7. GENERAL PERMIT FOR CAFOS

Wisconsin Farmers Union believes that proposals for very large livestock operations must be individually scrutinized and that any effort to make permits easier to obtain must result in heightened enforcement of state regulations of specific areas of concern. WFU further supports the timely implementation of new environmental standards by supporting the ability for DNR to modify an existing general or specific WPDES CAFO permit to incorporate new statutory or administrative code.

8. DNR CONTROL OF AND MONITORING OF WATER USE IN HIGH-CAPACITY WELLS

Wisconsin Farmers Union strongly supports the need and requirement that a state agency, such as the DNR, have the ability to set conditions, inclusive of monitoring, such as electronic flow meters on all applications for high-capacity wells and receive adequate state funding to undertake such monitoring, and that the state legislature provide the DNR with such authority.

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports the use of groundwater in each locally based aquifer provided that the aquifer maintains its ability to regenerate annually so that all local residents maintain access to locally generated water without undue burden.

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports an active, multi-stakeholder Groundwater Advisory Committee to establish meaningful groundwater protections and planning in the state.

In any proposed groundwater legislation, Wisconsin Farmers Union supports the following provisions:

a. When evaluating a high capacity well permit, the DNR shall account for the cumulative impacts of all high capacity wells in the area to ensure no adverse impacts on the surrounding water resources.
b. The DNR shall consider the surface water impacts of groundwater withdrawals by high capacity wells.
c. All water withdrawals from high capacity wells shall be monitored electronically and reported to the DNR on an annual basis.
d. The DNR shall conduct a periodic review of permitted withdrawals from high capacity wells to ensure no adverse impacts are occurring on surrounding water resources permits for the reconstruction, repair, or replacement of a high capacity well in the same general location of the original well that do not result in additional withdrawal of groundwater need not be obtained from the DNR.
e. Upon ownership change of a property with a high capacity well, the new owner is not required to apply for a permit for the existing well if the existing business or property usage remains the same.
f. The DNR shall review high capacity well permits in a timely manner, but no high capacity well shall be approved without a thorough review.

9. DNR SUPPORT FOR FARMER-LED WATERSHED COUNCILS

Wisconsin Farmers Union urges the State of Wisconsin to change the eligibility criteria of the Lake Protection Grant: Lake Management Plan Implementation program to include farmer-led watershed councils and the agricultural organizations that support those councils.

L. WILDLIFE/ANIMALS

1. WOLVES

Wisconsin Farmers Union does not support the 2014 relisting of wolves as an endangered species and supports return to state control of wolf management.

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports the full implementation of DNR's wolf management plan.

2. OTHER PREDATORS

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports efforts in controlling cougars and other species that hinder livestock agriculture.

3. CHRONIC WASTING DISEASE

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports more robust efforts by Department of Natural Resources to control and contain chronic wasting disease. Moreover, WFU supports mandatory testing of all harvested white tail deer and advocates for sufficient funding and resources for prompt testing, analysis, and reporting in order to assess the extent of and contain the spread of chronic wasting disease. We support adequate remuneration to farmers if animals and livestock need to be destroyed.

WFU further supports mandatory testing of all game farm animals being transferred from one farm to another.

4. WILD TURKEYS

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports the expansion of wild turkey hunting in Wisconsin. We support a licensing system rather than a permit system for harvesting wild turkeys. Production agriculture landowners should be allowed to harvest two turkeys per year on their own property.

5. ANIMAL WELFARE

Wisconsin Farmers Union supports educational programs to inform the public and animal rights groups on the true nature of animal care on family farms. Family farms base their survival on the personal and humane care to their animals. Farmers share activists' concern about the welfare of animals. Wisconsin Farmers Union supports a farmer's right to grant or deny access to a farm, and to grant or deny permission to distribute images of the farm. We further believe that those who violate the law in the pursuit of their values and beliefs should be prosecuted to the full extent of the law, and should be made to provide full restitution for damages incurred by crime victims.

Farmers Union condemns the misrepresentation of animal husbandry practices and the distribution of those images.

6. NATIONAL DAIRY ANIMAL WELL-BEING INITIATIVE

Wisconsin Farmers Union opposes the National Dairy Animal Well-Being Initiative, which employs a third-party auditor to monitor the welfare of farm animals, due to potential added costs to producers and consumers.

XI. WISCONSIN FAMILY FARMERS AND THEIR ORGANIZATION

A. WFU KAMP KENWOOD

Wisconsin Farmers Union Kamp Kenwood is a valuable, unique and irreplaceable facility that has provided education and recreation for generations of Wisconsin Farmers Union members and their children. It is in Wisconsin Farmers Union's best interest to own and operate the WFU Kamp Kenwood property and to solicit funds for maintenance and improvement in the present property.

B. EMERGING LEADERS AND FUE LEADERSHIP PROGRAMS

Wisconsin Farmers Union believes that developing the next generation of farmer leaders is critical for the future of farming and rural communities. Wisconsin Farmers Union is committed to providing educational events and resources to the state's future farm and rural leaders through the Wisconsin Farmers Union Emerging Leaders program and the FUE Leadership program.

C. PARTNERSHIPS WITH OTHER COOPERATIVES

Farmers Union has a rich history of promoting and collaborating with cooperative organizations and businesses. Wisconsin Farmers Union supports the development of cooperatives in many sectors of business, including agriculture supply, worker-owned and marketing coops, credit unions and food coops. Cooperatives are an important tool for Farmers Union members to engage in a democratic form of business and support their communities. Wisconsin Farmers Union appreciates the many cooperatives and credit units, including the CHS foundation, which makes possible many of our educational opportunities on cooperatives and rural issues.

XII. CONCLUSION

We, the members of the Wisconsin Farmers Union, have formed this program through free, democratic procedures. We direct our officers and employees to promote this policy and our delegates to the National Farmers Union convention be bound to this policy. We pledge ourselves to support and promote this program.

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